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Chin Human Rights Organization

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**Chin refugees demonstrating in Delhi, India (above), heavy landslides destroying villages in Falam Township, Chin State**

(Photo: Chin Star News, Falam Thuthang & Salai CB Thang )



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## Arbitrary Taxation & Extortion

### ALP accused of extorting money from villagers in Paletwa

17 September 2013:

**R**esidents in Paletwa Township of Chin State said soldiers from the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP) forcibly exacted money from the villagers.

An ALP captain known as U Khaing Lin ordered local shop-owners and families in Myeik-wa Village Tract to provide large amount of money on 3 August 2013.

The villagers were threatened that they would face punishment if they failed to give the money demanded to U Aung Thar Oo, supposedly an ALP member.

According to the Khumi Media Group (KMG), the order was that bigger shops had to give 15,000 Kyats and smaller shops 6,000 while 3,000 Kyats was demanded from families.

A villager, whose name is not revealed for security reasons, said: "We have suffered from this kind of situation for a long time. They [ALP] would order us to give them rice and money, sometimes in the middle of night."

"We don't want to give but we are afraid. On the other hand, the local authorities of Burma's government warn us not to help ALP. So, we don't know what to do at times," the villager said.

Last month, the government of Chin State officially informed the head of Paletwa Township Administration Department that the locals should not pay money to ALP.

The official letter dated 21 August 2013 from the administration head said that, according to KMG, Burma Police Force would arrest and take necessary action against anyone providing money for ALP.

During his visit to Paletwa town in July this year, Pu Hung Ngai, Chief Minister of the Chin State government, was quoted as saying that ALP should not be provided with any money.#

### Locals ordered to repay poverty alleviation loan

**07 October 2013:** Villagers are in a difficult situation as they are forcibly asked to pay back the money that the Rihkhuadar Sub-township administration department had provided as part of the poverty reduction plan.

They have to make a full repayment of their loan with due interests by the first week of October 2013 according to the notice letter issued by the General Administration Officer.

A member of the National League for Democracy in Rihkhuadar Sub-township told

the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) that the locals were in trouble as they were not informed of the deadline in advance.

He said that local farmers borrowed between 200,000 to 400,000 Kyats of loans with little interest in November last year to start animal farming such as chicken, pig, fish and buffalo.

"The problem is that they [farmers] don't know when the money has to be paid back and now their animals are not even big enough for selling. They say that the government's plan to alleviate poverty makes their situation worse," added the local.#

"The problem is that they [farmers] don't know when the money has to be paid back ... the government's plan to alleviate poverty makes their situation worse."

## Forced Labour & Freedom of Religion

### School teachers forced to attend Sunday meeting in Hakha

07 September 2013:

**S**chool teachers in Hakha, Chin State have been forced to turn up at a ceremony tomorrow where an important official of the higher authority is arriving in the capital.

A source from Hakha said the State government officials ordered school teachers, most of them are Christian, to sign a document saying that they would come to a meeting in the morning of Sunday.

A Hakha reporter, who asks to be identified as Salai L, said that the school teachers were forcibly asked to attend the meeting at 9am, with some kind of threat if they don't turn up.

"The teachers are threatened that a one-day wage would be deducted from their salary if they don't participate in the official ceremony," added the Chin reporter.

It is estimated that there are about 200 school teachers, who are Christian in Hakha, the capital of Chin State.

When asked who is coming to Hakha, the teachers said they were not informed of details about the government official arriving in the capital.

A resident whose uncle is a school teacher said: "My uncle does not know who is coming. But he has got to go to the meeting tomorrow, which is Sunday. I will be taking him to the meeting."

"As a Christian, we are not happy thinking that we will not be able to participate in the worship service," added the local Hakha.

In Chin State, school students and teachers have no choice but to go to school on Saturdays and sometimes Sundays as a substitute of a Buddhist day of observance, which falls during the weekdays.#

### Chin Christian govt staff ordered to prepare food for Buddhist offerings

**27 September 2013:** Chin Christian government employees in Hakha say they have been ordered to prepare food to be offered at Buddhist monasteries during the Uposatha day, known in English as the 'Buddhist Sabbath'.

A government staff member in Hakha said that each department had been forcibly asked to do the cooking unpaid, but during or after office hours the day before the Buddhist day of observance.

"There are few Buddhist staff members in each department but it is an order from the authorities that everyone must partake or make contributions for the offerings," added the Hakha government employee.

Another Chin Christian employee indicated that it had been going on for years and still remained normal practice even under Thein Sein's government.

Schools are closed on this Buddhist Sabbath day although it is not a public holiday and students are forced to attend classes in lieu on Saturdays, sometimes even

on Sundays.

In Burma, *uposatha*, aka *ubot nei* in Burmese, is observed two to six days each lunar month.

"Now that we have a new democratic government, we must be given a choice and a chance to freely practice our religion. The authorities know we are Christian but we just have to follow the instructions," said a Chin Christian female.

In the whole of Hakha Township with a population of 52,439, the number of Buddhists is 538, with 8 monasteries and pagodas, according to the government statistics.

A community leader from Thantlang town said: "What we see in our daily lives is a new government with the old system and practices. Observing the Buddhist days is not a new thing at all."

During a meeting with members of the Interfaith Friendship Group in Rangoon last July, President Thein Sein said that protection should be given to freedom of religion and freedom of expression so that democracy in Burma would flourish.#

## Govt urged to address discrimination against Christians in Chin State

**24 October 2013:** Tomás Ojea Quintana, Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Burma, said that the government of Burma should address 'institutionalized discrimination' against Christians in Chin State.

In his report to be presented to the UN General Assembly in New York today, he said that he was concerned about a degree of discrimination against Christians in state government structures and administrative procedures.

"This includes discrimination in access to jobs, especially senior positions, within the civil service," said Mr. Quintana, who made his first visit to Chin State in August 2013.

In Chin State where about 90% of the population are Christian with 11% Buddhist, only 14% of department head positions at the Chin State level and 25% of township administrative officer positions at the township level are held by

Christians, according to the report. He indicated that Christians in Burma's least developed state still face difficulties in securing permission to build and renovate religious infrastructures due to local planning regulations and administrative requirements.

During his trip to Mindat, Chin State, Mr. Quintana visited government-run Na Ta La schools where Christian pupils face coercion to convert to Buddhism, according to the 2012 report Threats to Our Existence published by the Chin Human Rights Organization.

These residential schools are under the authority of the Ministry for Border Affairs and the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

He urged the government to ensure that the cultural and religious rights of the students are fully respected and protected in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Burma is a party.

Contrary to this, Colonel Zaw Min Oo, Minister of Security and Border Affairs in Chin State, has previously denied that there was dis-

crimination against Christian students at the schools, saying the programme was established to help educate orphans and children from poor families.

In response to a question raised by Chin MP Ki Thang Lon during the Chin State parliamentary sessions, he said that the Na Ta La students were trained to become patriotic and good citizens, according to the Chinland Post.

According to the Chin State government's statistics, there are 484 Buddhist and 290 Christian students in nine Na Ta La schools across Chin State, with 18 Christian and 114 Buddhist teachers.

CHRO's Advocacy Director Rachel Fleming welcomed Mr. Quintana's report, saying, "We are delighted that Mr. Quintana has highlighted Chin issues in such a comprehensive way in his report to the UN General Assembly. He also emphasized basic infrastructure problems, and stressed that development should be accountable and non-discriminatory to ensure that it genuinely improves peoples' lives. We couldn't agree more."#

## Christians disappointed over Sunday meeting with Chief Minister

**25 October 2013:** Christians in Matupi Town, Chin State expressed their disappointment over a recent meeting organized last Sunday by Pu Hung Ngai, Chief Minister of the Chin State government.

They said that he summoned the meeting of ministers, department heads, district administrators, local government officials, and community and religious leaders between 7:30 and 9:45am in the morning.

"Some Christian leaders had to cancel their church programs of leading the congregation and others missed worship services," said one of the Matupi

leaders.

According to the Hakha Post, about 250 people participated in the meeting in which a session for handing over a donation of 1million Kyats by a Burmese company for the Matupi Na Ta La school was included.

Arriving around 4:30pm from Mindat Town, Chief Minister Hung Ngai, accompanied by three ministers, department heads and Mindat District Administrative Officers, visited the Na Ta La school and Women's Vocational Training School in Matupi.

About 99% of the population in Matupi are Christian.#

### Christians threatened, ordered to stop holding worship services

**20 October 2013:** Chin Christians in Pan-awt village of Mindat Township are ordered to stop holding worship services under the directions of a Buddhist monk.

Sayadaw U Nandar Thiri, a Buddhist monk based in Pan-awt, sent village administrators on three separate occasions to Christian leaders to discontinue their church services.

A local Christian leader, whose name is not revealed for security reasons, told the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO): "The Buddhist monk sent U Om She, a village administrator responsible for ten households, on 25 August while we were worshipping and he told us to immediately stop our service."

He said that another six people including ten-household administrators namely, U Chaing Hman Ki, U Aung Thang, Daw Shwe Yawng, U Ning Hung and Daw Om Ha Yawng were sent on 9 September 2013 as they learnt that we held a worship service on Sunday, 8 September.

"We were threatened that if we kept on holding our services, the village would be burnt down," he added.

On 19 September, U Tam Thang and U Ha Hung, both from Mindat Baptist Church went to Pan-Awt and held a meeting with ten-household administrators.

They agreed that Christians can freely hold worship services.

On 6 October, another ten-household administrator U Ha Thang was sent to the house of the Christian leader by the Buddhist Sayadaw and said: "If you continued your worship service, your photos would be taken and sent to the authorities."

One of the local Christians said: "In our village of Pan-Awt, each can freely worship and practice his or her religion. This has been practiced for generations because we all are relatives. We live in this village in unity and harmony. Since the arrival of Sayadaw U Nandar Thiri and because of his discriminatory and oppressive measures against Christians, our unity has become weak and we have faced problems related to religious issues and differences."#

"In our village of Pan-Awt, each can freely worship and practice his or her religion. This has been practiced for generations because we all are relatives. We live in this village in unity and harmony.."



## Other Human Rights Violations

### 'Banned' alcohol secretly sold by police in Thantlang

06 September 2013:

**P**olice in Thantlang town, Chin State have been caught selling 'banned' overproof (OP) alcohol from within the compound of their station, sources confirmed.

San Htun Aung, Deputy Inspector of Thantlang Police Force, sold three bottles on two separate occasions to local Chins who pretended to be alcohol-drinkers yesterday, according to the *Hakha Post*.

Pastor Sui Lian Kam, Chairman of Thantlang Churches Fellowship (TCF), one of community-based groups entrusted to deal with alcohol-related issues in the town, said the rumours turned out to be true after their 'undercover' investigation.

"We secretly sent two persons at different times because we wanted to see if the police are actually selling OP alcohol," added Pastor Sui Lian Kam.

With the three bottles bought from the police station, the committee reported to Inspector of Thantlang Police Force Station, asking him to immediately probe into the matter.

"He [Police Inspector] said anyone from outside the police station was not allowed to conduct any investigation. A police officer in charge of the station and other policemen did the search," added the Chin pastor.

While the pastor and his team were waiting, there were about 20 people coming to buy alcohol from the police, the newsletter said.

U San Htun Aung last Wednesday assisted the local anti-alcohol team at Laipawnglung checkpoint in inspecting passengers entering Thantlang town for any alcoholic drinks.

The police have been accused of breaking the rules to ban selling of any alcoholic drinks - a move they supported.

The Thantlang anti-alcohol committee comprising of town-elders, community leaders and Christian pastors called for taking necessary action against the case in accordance with laws and regulations.

Superintendent of Thantlang Township Police Force was quoted as saying that different laws should be applied between a Burman and a Chin when dealing with legal issues at court in Chin State.

Leaders of town communities and township support committee, and TCF as well as Chin MPs said they would stage a concerted protest if the case is handled unfairly and discriminately.

Last Wednesday, the anti-alcohol team seized a total of 70 rum bottles from U Maung Maung Htun, 41, Assistant Headmaster of Na Ta La School in Thantlang, at Laipawnglung checkpoint.

No action has been taken against U Maung Maung Htun while the court fined a local farmer 50,000 Kyats for carrying two cases of beer on a bicycle caught on the same day.

In March 2013 under TCF's leadership, over 1,000 people in Thantlang took to the street in protest against selling and drinking of alcohols, with the help of police forces in the town.

Over 2,000 bottles of overproof alcohol seized were emptied in a public event in Hakha, Chin State. #

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## Chin Christian headmistress sacked for no given reasons

**13 September 2013:** Headmistress Thim Dik, of Thantlang High School, was flabbergasted when she received a letter of her employment termination without any explanation.

An official letter signed by U Myint Ko, Director of Basic Education Department No. 2, Mandalay, said Daw Thim Dik was dismissed from her current post as from the morning of 9 August 2013.

The letter said Daw Mai Thim Dik, who was promoted to Thantlang from Ro Middle School in Mindat Township, was dismissed in accordance with a meeting decision made by committee of educational administration of Minister's Office of Education Ministry.

Director General Tin Myo Kyi also signed the letter that suggests the reason of her removal as departmental requirements that she didn't meet.

The 53-year-old Christian headmistress believed the sudden termination of her work is associated with discriminatory practice and religious issues related to a government-run Na Ta La school in Mindat Township.

### Matters with Na Ta La School

Speaking to the Chinland Post, Thim Dik said she was ordered, just before June this year, by a Buddhist monk to give a list of all the students at Ro Middle School where she worked as a headmistress.

"I said I couldn't give him it at that moment as I was still on my way to Ro village from Mindat town," said Thim Dik.

Later, she was told through a local messenger to send all the students at Ro to a Buddhist monastery by

the Buddhist monk.

Thim Dik replied that she would be jobless if she sent all her students to him, saying: "I can send to you students if they are studying at a Na Ta La school or Buddhist monastery. But you have to give me names of the students and their parents first."

"All my students are Christian and I don't anticipate them wanting to come to your school," added the Chin headmistress in response to a demand by the monk at Ro village.

### Message at church

Recently, Mrs Thim Dik, whose husband is a Christian pastor, addressed a local congregation in Ro village.

"At church, I met only parents, but not their children. I asked them why they didn't take their children to church," she said.

She explained that Christian parents send their children to government-controlled residential Buddhist schools, which in exchange provide basic needs such as rice, chickpeas and oil, to the families.

"I said parents should not allow poverty to drive them to cause their Christian children to convert into a different religion by leaving them entirely in the hands of Na Ta La schools."

She said her message must have reached the Buddhist monk and Burmese teacher Ms Khin Pale Htaik, who works as a school teacher and stays at the Buddhist monk's monastery.

Khin Pale Htaik allegedly then appealed to the relevant authorities for Thim Dik's dismissal and informed her that her name had been sent to authorities, even President Thein Sein.

### Investigation by authorities

Pu Ning Naing, Chin Minister for Development Affairs and Major Aung Shwe Oo, Deputy Director of State Education Department, conducted an investigation following receipt of the allegations, which accused Thim Dik of getting involved in beating up Chin Christian children studying at Na Ta La schools.

When asked about the allegations, the students said they were never beaten up by the Chin headmistress.

Thim Dik added that the two government officials from Hakha also met her during their investigation.

According to the *Chinland Post*, Major Aung Shwe Oo said he was not in a position to make any comments regarding the matter.

### Promotion and termination

Thim Dik had been informed in an official letter dated 9 July 2013 signed by Director General Tin Myo Kyito to the effect that she had been promoted to being Headmistress of Basic Education High School in Thantlang, Thantlang Township, from Ro Middle School in Mindat Township of Chin State.

Sources claimed she had been absent from school on several occasions, to which Thim Dik replied that she followed necessary procedures when it came to holidays.

"I am sure I won't be dismissed because of my performance in relation to school and work," added Thim Dik.

After only a month at the new post, Thim Dik faced this unexpected dismissal.#



## Bootlegged alcohol seized from soldiers in Lungler

**18 September 2013:** Over 100 bottles of OP (overproof) alcohol, which has been banned by communities, were seized from soldiers from Burma Army based in Hakha, Chin State.

The soldier named Phyo Maung and his friend Maung Myo bootlegged the 'banned' alcohol from Hakha and were caught redhanded in Lungler village, Thantlang township last July.

They said, according to the Hakha Post, the alcohol was not theirs but belonged to Kyaw Zin Oo, of Tac-

tical Operations Commands of Burma Army based on Mount Rung of Hakha.

When asked about their smuggling of 'banned' items, they said Kyaw Zin Oo told them that OP alcohol could be freely sold in villages, but not in towns.

The two men were fined 300,000 Kyats for bootlegging according to a decision by a Lungler community-based committee entrusted with the task of tackling alcohol-related issues.

Recently, a public event took place in Hakha where more than 2,000 bottles of overproof rum were emptied in protest against selling and drinking of alcohol, nicknamed 'killer of a nation'.#

## Na Ta La school teacher sued over bootlegging

**01 October 2013:** Thantlang Township Police Force has filed a lawsuit against U Maung Maung Htun, Assistant Headmaster of Thantlang Na Ta La School, for 'bootlegging' alcohol.

The 41-year-old Burmese teacher is accused of smuggling alcoholic drinks without a license after being caught carrying 70 bottles of Mandalay rum in his motorbike on 3 September 2013.

According to the Chinland Post, the case is being reviewed at the Hakha Township Court, assigned by the Falam District Court to which it was first sent upon his official request.

He is due to appear in court in Hakha on Thursday.

Meanwhile, Deputy Inspector U San Htun Aung, who was caught selling alcohol from within the compound of Thantlang Police Force, has been transferred to Tonzang Township, Chin State.#

## Chin pastor injured in Arakan State attack

**05 October 2013:** Chin Christian Pastor Mya Thein, from Kyaukphyu, has been treated for his knife injuries at a clinic after being attacked in Shweli village, Arakan (now Rakhine) State.

The pastor said a mob of Muslims including children and women struck him with bamboo sticks and knives, and threw stones at him while passing through the village in a taxi.

He said he had escaped with driver Ko Yan Naing as the mob stormed their taxi near the Shweli Police Station.

In a video interview, he said: "I was aware of the violence but when I asked the security officer at Shweli bridge, I was told that it was safe to travel."

The incident happened while he was on his way to attend a Christian meeting to be held in Thandwe, about 20 miles from Shweli.

He said he didn't get any protection and help from the security officers and police forces although they saw him being attacked.

"I am just wondering who gave the authority to attack people like this," the pastor said.

Similarly, 40-year-old Thaug Shwe said in the Irrawaddy that he was attacked last Tuesday by a group of Muslims including some women while crossing Shweli village.

At least five Muslims have been reported killed and dozens injured in recent sectarian violence which broke out between Buddhists and Muslims last Saturday in Arakan State.#

### School teachers threatened with salary deduction in Hakha

**08 September 2013:** High school teachers in Hakha, Chin State were threatened with a salary deduction if they didn't attend a ceremony marking the International Literacy Day today.

The government of Chin State reportedly ordered school teachers across the town to come to the event held at Hakha Town Hall at 9am.

One of the teachers, who asks not to be named, said

failing to turn up at the event would result in a deduction of 5,000 kyats from their salary.

"We were also informed that a certain amount of money would be taken away to buy school materials if we didn't participate," added the Chin school teacher, who attended the Sunday event.

The ceremony was also attended by Pu Hung Ngai, Chief Minister of Chin State government and other ministers as well as government officials.

About 50 students in their school uniforms also took part in the ceremony that lasted about 45 minutes. #

## Humanitarian & Development Situation

### Chin parties to meet with State govt over Gullu nickel projects

**04 September 2013:**

**T**he government of Chin State and representatives of four Chin political parties are to hold a meeting on Gullu nickel projects in Hakha this Saturday.

Members of the Chin National Party (CNP), Chin Progressive Party (CPP), Asho Chin National Party (ACNP) and Ethnic National Development Party (ENDP) will present their findings to the government officials.

Salai Ceu Bik Thawng, CNP General Secretary, said the team would conduct a survey on the ground with local

communities until Thursday and would have proper discussions with the State government.

He also said a series of discussions would be held with Burma's Ministry of Mines, Chinese Embassy, and North Mining Company of China in addition to meeting with Chin State government, according to the *Hakha Post*.

Eleven representatives of the Chin parties, led by Pu Zo Zam, CNP Chairman, makes a trip to Gullu Hill in Tedim Township, Chin State, meeting with the local communities.

Meanwhile, about 100 people from political parties, university students, communities and civil society organizations, and media as well as religious groups held a meeting regarding the Gullu nickel projects at Shin Hong Hall in Kalaymyo of Sagaing Region yesterday. #

### Landslides forced two villages to move, school to close in Falam

**11 September 2013:** Heavy landslides caused by continuous downpours in recent weeks have forced villagers of Laizo and Zalai in Falam Township, Chin State to move out of their places.

U Kyaw Nyein, Chin Minister of Forestry and Mines, said the two villages have to be abandoned as they are not safe for people to live in any more.

He said the decision was made based on the results of geological surveys which indicate high danger of possible landslides in the future.

Until today, no details have been set as to when and how the villagers would be accommodated and looked after.

Currently, Laizo and Zalai residents are temporarily taking shelters in the nearby villages and Falam town.

U Kyaw Nyein said in the Voice Weekly that an official letter asking for assistance to the two villages has already been sent to the central gov-

ernment but no response has been received yet.

Sources said landslides still occur in the areas and elsewhere as the rain has not stopped.

Meanwhile, two schools in Falam town have been closed in fear of potential landslides in the surrounding due to heavy rains, according to vcth.net.

Another big landslide on the main road, about 24 miles away from Hakha, toward Mandalay last weekend caused travel and transport disruptions. #

## Survey finds communities distrustful of Chinese mining companies

**17 September 2013:** A survey report by four Chin political parties on the Gullu nickel project in Chin State shows that local communities are expressing a new level of distrust of the Chinese companies.

The report said villagers around the Gullu Hill in Tedim Township are aware of the China-Burma mining project but are not informed of the details of the plans and possible outcomes.

Khin Mar Lar, from Myalin village in Sagaing Region, said: "We read their flyer but it was very unclear. We don't see transparency or accountability in their practice."

Community representative Pu Tuai Cho said local communities should have been consulted with detailed documents and papers related to the project.

The report said the local communities prefer mining companies from a democratic country to those from

China if the project must proceed, although the majority object to its implementation.

Pu Kam Za Hmung, retired university rector from Kalay Town, said: "The project should be implemented only after we have had a federal system and a clear picture of shares from it. This shouldn't happen before 2015 elections."

The Chin parties also met with the Chin State government in Hakha, presented their findings, and held discussions with cabinet members.

However, the Chin State government said they don't have the authority to deal with the mining matter which should be discussed with the central government.

The statement by the Chin parties also said no contract had been signed between Burma and the North Mining Investment Company of China, citing sources from the government of Chin State.

Last April, the Chin State government informed the central government that local communities agreed with the mining project based on a

survey result conducted with 20 villages.

Contrary to that, the Chin parties' report indicates that at least fourteen villages, five from within Chin State and nine in Kalay of Sagaing Region, disapprove of the project.

Furthermore, it places stress on the importance of implementing the project in accordance with the international standards and norm should it go ahead.

The Chin National Party (CNP), Chin Progressive Party (CPP), Ethnic National Development Party (ENDP) and A sho Chin National Party (ACNP) had met with more than 700 people from 14 villages and over 10 organizations in both Chin State and Kalay Town of Sagaing Region from 2-9 September.

In Kalay town of Sagaing Region, the team also held a meeting with representatives of the National League for Democracy (NLD), Zomi Congress for Democracy, 88 Generation, MPs, universities students and youth groups.#

## Power outages hit Hakha and Thantlang in Chin State

**26 September 2013:** Residents in Hakha and Thantlang towns have experienced power outages since Tuesday owing to problems with the Laiva hydropower station.

A Thantlang local said that they had not received electricity for three days and that families without private electric generators had been in the dark.

In other bigger villages and towns in Chin State, groups of families are supplied electricity from privately

owned generators, for which a separate monthly fee is paid.

Hakha residents, who depend on government-run Laiva power, said they had been cut off from the rest of the world as they had not been able to use computers and TV, let alone cope with other effects of the blackout.

Contrary to this, the New Light of Myanmar claimed in a report today that the Laiva hydropower is generating electricity to both Thantlang and Hakha township, the latter being given priority as it is the seat of the Chin State government.

It added that the Laiva dam generates

600 kilowatts and provides power to regiments, departments, 11 wards and three villages in Hakha township and three wards and four villages in Thantlang township.

Chin MP Pu Robin raised a question about issues related to electricity supply in Thantlang at the ongoing Chin parliamentary sessions and was told that arrangements had been underway with the development of the National Power Grid.

In January this year, thousands had taken to the streets in a peaceful demonstration to demand an increase of electricity supply in the Chin capital of Hakha.#

## Hundreds of landslides recorded in Chin State

**07 October 2013:** At least 768 landslides occurred across Chin State between 21 August and 11 September 2013, according to the Chin State government's statistics.

The Ministry of Transport said that its record showed the number of landslides happening only on roads constructed by the government, not by local communities.

It added that the number also included minor incidents that didn't block or completely destroy the roads but posed risks to future landslides.

Ngun San Aung, Minister for Transport, said in the Chinland Post: "The cost of repair and maintenance is estimated to be high. But its details can be revealed at the end of the year."

According to the Chinland Post, the highest number of landslides had been recorded on the Mindat-Matupi road, followed by the Hakha-Falam-Kalay and the Tedim-Tonzang-Taingen.

In Chin State, most of the roads connecting villages are constructed and maintained by local communities with financial contributions from the Chin diaspora. The number of landslides occurring on such roads is, of course, unknown.#

## Concerns grow over increase in Chin 'illegal drug' users

**11 October 2013:** The number of Chin youths residing in Kalay and Tamu Districts of Sagaing Region who use illegal drugs is on the rise.

One of the community leaders said that they didn't have the exact data but they were aware that the situation was getting worse.

A young drug user from an Indo-Burma border town of Tamu said in the Yangon Times that about 60% of youths he knew were on drugs in his area.

Kalay Police Department said that their current records indicated an enormous increase in illegal drug use among young people and that 161 arrests had been made in 2013 alone.

They also said that a total of 651 comprising 574 males and 77 females had been listed as addicts in Kalay Town, where more than 50% of the population are estimated to be Chin.

According to recent reports, an increasing number of students at the Kalay University are taking 'illegal drugs', some being smoked in cigarettes or chewed in betel nuts.

Evidence showed that many different kinds of drugs were used including opium mainly traded from Tonzang and Tedim Townships of Chin State,

heroin and stimulants such as amphetamines and pseudo-ephedrine tablets.

Speaking to the Yangon Times, Chin MP Zo Zam, of the Chin National Party (CNP), said that opium poppy had been cultivated in northern Chin State for years.

He also expressed his concerns over the 'legal status' of Meitei rebels from India's Manipur State who were seen freely moving in the areas in association with Burma's border security forces.

In June this year, Kalay and Tamu District Office senior officers and Township Police Forces were arrested in allegations of involvement in drug smuggling.#

## State govt slow in response to food shortages in Chin State

**October 2013:** The government of Chin State has not taken action in an attempt to address the ongoing food scarcity facing Chin villagers due to unusual weather conditions leading to destruction of their crops and low yields of harvest.

Despite being informed of the situation in December 2012, the State government did not make any efforts in helping the villagers affected by food shortages.

Chin MP Lal Mawng Cung conducted his own survey in his constituency in 2103 and found that at least 11 villages were suffering severe food shortages.

He put forward a question based on his findings during the Chin State parliamentary session from 17 September to 8 October 2013, and asked if the government would provide assistance.

The Chin State government responded with statistics they had collected in 2012: only 38 percent of households in Thantlang township, 36% in Tedim, 26% in Falam, 48% in Hakha, 5% in Kanpetlet, and 34% in Mindat had adequate food supplies in 2012.

Government representatives went on to say that although households didn't have enough food, they could somehow get by with other crops and that no-one had died of hunger in Chin State.

In response to the MP's question about Thantlang township, the Chin State government promised to conduct their own investigation, and if they found evidence of severe food shortages and hunger, they would respond accordingly.

To date, no follow-up investigation has been undertaken by the Chin State government.#

## Event & Protest



Salai Ceu Bik Thawng (second from right on middle row)  
(Photo source: <http://www.ned.org/30years/#the30>)

### Chin activist among 30 most inspiring world young leaders

21 September 2013:

**A** 29 year-old Chin activist has been profiled by Washington DC-based National Endowment for Democracy (NED) as one of 30 most inspiring young leaders around the world working to promote democracy.

Salai Ceu Bik Thawng, General Secretary of the Chin National Party (CNP), is featured alongside 30 young leaders under the age of 30 from more than 20 different countries around the world in commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the world's leading democracy endowment fund created by the United States Congress in 1983.

Other recognized young leaders come from some of the world's most challenging areas: from Zimbabwe to Belarus, Afghanistan to North Korea, Liberia to Kyrgyzstan.

Salai Ceu Bik Thawng is the only young leader from Burma in the NED's "30 under 30" list.

Featuring his profile on its website, the NED said, "In a country faced with numerous challenges to its democratic progress, Thawng is a dynamic young ethnic leader and a model for all of Burma."

Explaining his views on the reform process in Burma Salai Ceu Bik Thawng said, "Transforming the country from military dictatorship to democracy is but one challenge. We need to think about the broader and more substantive issue of how we can achieve harmony and realize peaceful coexistence in a country that is so diverse in terms of religion and ethnicity."

In July this year, Salai Ceu Bik Thawng testified at the European Parliament in Brussels, Belgium highlighting the challenges faced by ethnic political parties in Burma.

Outside of his political role, Salai Ceu Bik Thawng serves as Executive Director of the Cherry Foundation, an organization that promotes civic awareness among various minorities in Burma, and publishes a quarterly journal on ethnic rights, public policy and federalism.

Mandated by the US Congress, the National Endowment for Democracy is a non-profit organization working in support of activists seeking a democratic future in more than 100 countries, according to its website.

Last year, NED gave Democracy Award to five prominent activists from Burma, including Min Ko Naing, Hkun Htun Oo, Kyaw Thu, Dr. Cynthia Maung and Aung Din.#

### Asho Chins held human rights training in Rangoon

28 September 2013: More than 50 Asho Chins attended basic human rights trainings organized by the Asho Development Fund in cooperation with the MustardSeed Myanmar in the former capital of Rangoon on 23-27 September.

The trainings focused on a range of topics including citizen rights, minority rights, basic democracy, peace-building and leadership with the participants from 13 townships of Rakhine State, Magwe, Irrawaddy and Pegu Regions.

According to the MustardSeed facebook, it was the

second time such trainings had been held with members of the Asho Chin National Party (ACNP) and Asho Chin communities from different areas across Burma.

The first training took place with over 40 participants in June this year, emphasizing on capacity building.

In June 2012, ACNP was granted permission to register as a political party and said that it would contest from Magwe, Pegu, Mandalay Regions and Rakhine State in the 2015 elections.

The MustardSeed, founded in October 2011, is committed to working to promote justice, eradicate poverty and improve the quality of life in Burma.#

(Photos: MustardSeed-Myanmar)





Salai Bawi Lian Mang receiving his awards (left) and panellists at the summit (right) (Photo: CHRO)

## Chin rights activist receives NGO Leadership and Excellence Awards

**01 October 2013:** Salai Bawi Lian Mang, co-founder and Executive Director of the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) has been awarded the NGO Leadership and Excellence Awards at the Second World Marketing Summit in Malaysia.

In announcing the award, the organizers said the honor is in recognition of "individuals who embrace leadership by example and in the process help create difference in making the world a better place through their work and contribution to humanity."

"I am honoured and humbled by this award. CHRO is an organization of collective leadership. With this I would like to pay tribute to my colleagues who died defending human rights," said Salai Bawi Lian Mang.

In the years since it was founded in 1995, CHRO has lost three of its field workers while documenting human rights situation on the ground.

The Chin rights activist said he is indebted to all partners and supporters around the world who have supported CHRO and its human rights work in Burma throughout its 18 years of existence.

The primary rights-based advocacy organization for Burma's Chin people, CHRO is engaged in not just monitoring and documentation but also internationally-focused advocacy campaigns, capacity-building trainings, and support for grassroots community initiatives.

"Under Salai Bawi Lian Mang's leadership, CHRO has grown from a small organization run on a shoe-string budget to an internationally respected organization. The award is well deserved and I am really proud of him," said his Chin colleague Salai Za Uk Ling who has worked with the organization for the last 12 years.

CHRO's human rights reports are regularly covered by international media and the United Nations human rights bodies.

The 2013 summit took place at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre with about 2,500 delegates and marketing world leaders on 28-30 September.

Founded in 2011 by Philip Kotler, distinguished Professor of International Marketing at the Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern University and headquartered in Toronto, Canada, World Marketing Summit is committed towards creating a better world by alleviating poverty and upholding human dignity through using marketing principles, theories and models.#

**"I am honoured and humbled by this award. CHRO is an organization of collective leadership. With this I would like to pay tribute to my colleagues who died defending human rights,"**

**- Salai Bawi Lian Mang**



**Rev. Mai Ki**

(Photo: <http://inspiredindividuals.org/individuals/maiki/>)

## Chin female pastor receives prize for women's creativity

**16 October 2013:** Rev. Mai Ki, 38, was awarded the prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life by the Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF) yesterday, the International Day of Rural Women.

The Christian pastor of the Mara Evangelical Church (MEC) in Burma received the award for her humanitarian work in tackling poverty and food shortages in Chin State, the least developed in the country.

She said in the *Ekklesia* news that God was answering the prayers of believers in Burma, adding: "As a rural woman, wherever I go I see people having hope and

trusting each other. We don't have change yet, but in our hearts, we do."

After obtaining a master's degree in Theology in India, she returned to Chin State and founded the Rural Women Empowerment Program in 2006.

Describing her works in the profile, WWSF said she has many life-changing social interventions with the program focusing on issues ranging from income generation to infrastructure building.

"This included the creation of 36 borrowing self-help groups in 15 villages to support women in their rural education and family committees."

Her mission also involves 'strengthening the weak' through empowerment including people with disabilities and educating children as a key foundation stone for development.

In 2012, Rev. Mai Ki, the first female ordained minister of MEC, was named one of Tearfund's Inspired Individuals.

Born to Pu Seko (the late) and Pi Ngomai in a Mara village of Chin State, she is married and has three children.

Established in 1994, WWSF has awarded 395 prizes in over 120 countries, honouring women for their contributions toward improving the quality of life in rural communities.#

## Chin communities celebrate harvest festival

**19 October 2013:** Chin communities from both inside and outside of Burma have organized a series of celebrations marking the end of the harvest season in their culture.

The event, mostly celebrated in the month of October, was historically associated not only with traditional agricultural activities but also with the sanctification of their village from evil spirits.

H. Kham Khan Suan said that it was also a time of sharing and giving thanks, an occasion to pay their homage and respect to the deceased by a visitation to the grave.

Known by various names in different Chin dialects, the festival nowadays involves programmes including show-

case of traditional values and communal feasting.

In Khampat town in Sagaing Region, about 4,000 people are expected to participate in the celebration organized by a group of Kalay-Kabaw-Gangaw-based Chin communities on 16-20 October.

Chins based in the former capital of Rangoon are in full swing for the event to be held at MBC (Myanmar Baptist Convention) hall on 26 October, with a variety of traditional shows, dances and activities.

In Hakha, a grand celebration is prepared to take place on 21 October, Monday, on which date traditional dances from each of the nine townships in Chin State will be performed as part of the programme.

Celebrations also take place in Europe, North America and Asia.#





(Photo: Chin Star News)

## Over 500 Chin refugees demonstrated in Delhi

**30 October 2013:** More than 500 Chin refugees took to the streets in Delhi today, highlighting their 'unsafe' conditions in both India and Burma.

The Chin Refugee Committee (CRC) based in New Delhi said in their statement that it was not yet time for them to return to Burma.

They added that the reforms in Burma had not really changed the lives of the people on the ground and that serious human rights violations still prevailed in the country.

CRC President David Ngun Lian said in the Chin Star

that Chin Christians in Burma still faced discrimination and repression and that they were not safe as refugees in India.

A recent report entitled 'Unheard Plight of Chin Refugee Women in Delhi' said that women asylum seekers in India were more vulnerable and easily targeted for sexual assaults and other forms of exploitations.

The Indian government has been urged to adopt policies that would put an end to all kinds of discrimination and harassment facing women refugees and continue supporting refugees in general from Burma.

According to the UNHCR's statistics, there are 8,306 Burmese refugees in Delhi, of which 3,924 are women.#



(Photos: Chin Star News)

## Situation of Refugees

### Dozens of Chin refugees arrested in Malaysia

**01 September 2013:** In a major 'planned' crackdown on illegal immigrants, Malaysian authorities have arrested over 130 Chin refugees in Malaysia.

The Malaysian authorities raided homes and buildings in Miharja area of Kuala Lumpur, arresting about 100 Dai Chin Christian worshippers today.

One of the Dai community members told Chinland Guardian: "About 30 Malaysian personnel in uniforms went into the room where our people were worshipping. All of them including our pastor and leaders were taken in two trucks."

He said some mothers with babies and children were allowed to remain in the house-based church after community leaders talked to the authorities.

"It happened around 11am this morning. I was just about to join the congregation when the raid occurred," added the Chin eyewitness.

The arrestees said they were threatened when the authorities demanded documents from them.

Speaking from the Bukit Jalil immigration camp in Kuala Lumpur, a Chin detainee told Chinland Guardian over 1,000 people including about 100 Chin refugees are being checked against their documents.

"People who don't have any documents are being treated differently. They are threatened and shouted at by the officers," added the detainee, who asks not to be named.

Malaysian authorities carry out a series

of crackdowns on 'undocumented' immigrants, targeting Chin Christians who are arrested while on their way to church or after church services.

Community-based CRC (Chin Refugee Committee) said about 30 Chin refugees have been arrested according to their record.

"It is quite normal now that Chin Christians are arrested on Sundays after or before church services," said a CRC member.

Malaysian authorities announced earlier it would conduct a three-month nationwide operation on illegal immigrants starting from 1 September 2013, deploying some 135,000 personnel from the Immigration Department, Police, Armed Forces, RELA, Civil Defence, and National Registration Department.

The 'planned' raids would take place mainly in Kuala Lumpur, Selangor, Penang and Johor as well as Cameron Highlands, according to the Malaysian authorities.

71 illegal immigrants, including 60 men and 11 women, from Bangladesh, Indonesia, Burma and Nepal, were arrested in Bukit Raja, Klang and Dengkil, according to The Star news today.

Saravana Kumar, Immigration Department Deputy Director, said those arrested would face immediate deportation after necessary investigation.

The operation, which will run until the end of 2013, targets to nab around 400,000 illegal immigrants across Malaysia, according to Saravana.

It is reported that about 50 Chin refugees, mainly from Dai community, who possess UN refugee registration card, have been released.#

"It is quite normal now that Chin Christians are arrested on Sundays after or before church services,"  
- a CRC member.

### About 200 Chins still detained in Malaysia

**07 September 2013:** Chin refugee communities said an estimated number of about 200 Chins arrested during recent nationwide crackdowns on illegal immigration remain in detention centres in Malaysia.

One of the community leaders told Chinland Guardian that the number of Chin detainees could not be confirmed yet.

"But we know that the estimated numbers include both UN registration cardholders and those undocumented," added the Chin leader, who asks to remain anonymous.

Malaysian authorities arrested over 2,000 people including 555 from Burma, in crackdown operations conducted on Sunday and Monday alone.

Burma's government is sending its delegation to talk with Malaysian authorities to deal with migrant workers arrested.

Ye Htut, a spokesperson from the President's Office, told the Irrawaddy that those identified as Burmese citizens would be deported.

Meanwhile, Malaysia-based UNHCR has started recording names of asylum seekers from Burma, excluding Rohingyas and Arakanese, since last Monday.

Sources from Kuala Lumpur said about 1,700 asylum seekers from Burma have been recorded as part of a new registration programme until the end of this year.#

### Chin refugee mother beaten, family robbed in Delhi

**10 September 2013:** A Chin refugee mother was slapped several times by a group of local people who had a verbal argument with her husband in Delhi, India.

A source from the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) said the 26-year-old mother of three children got beaten up when she tried to help calm down the situation.

The incident started around 9pm at night last Friday when her husband was hit by a rickshaw while on his

way with his son to buy some medicine from the nearby shop.

Subsequently, an argument broke out between the husband and the rickshaw driver, who started to fight with a stick.

Some locals in the areas, who were trying to intervene, slapped the Chin mother when she asked an apology from the rickshaw driver to her husband.

Last Sunday, the same family had 3,500 Indian Rupees stolen from their rented room while they were attending a church worship service in Delhi.

"We kept the money inside our

suitcase but it was not locked with any keys. When we came back from church, we found out that the cloth which was used to wrap the suitcase up got torn and left spreading on the floor. And the money was gone," said the family.

Until today, no information has been confirmed as to who broke in their house and stole the money.

The family said they had been saving the money for weeks to pay their house rent.

Yesterday, the family reported the case to SLIC (Socio-Legal Information Center), an implementing partner of the UNHCR in Delhi.#

### Scores of Chins arrested in Malaysia

**24 September 2013:** Malaysian authorities conducted an operation cracking down on illegal immigrants in Seremban last night, arresting over one hundred Chin asylum seekers and refugees, the Chin Refugee Committee (CRC) said.

Salai Ca Thawng, CRC Coordinator, said: "According to our record as of this morning, 141 Chins are being detained from the operation last night.

They are both UNHCR registration cardholders and those unregistered."

He said the detainees include children and women, saying: "We are collaborating with the UNHCR to reach out to them. We are not yet sure what will happen but we are working hard on it."

The operation took place around midnight, two days ahead of the UNHCR mobile registration planned on 26 September in Seremban, nearly three hours' drive from Kuala Lumpur.

Pu Tluang Awr, Chairman of Mi-E community in Malaysia, said that the majority of those arrested are asylum seekers and refugees originally from Vantlang village in Hakha Township, Chin State.

The arrestees are now being held at the police station in Seremban, the capital of Negeri State, according to CRC.

It is estimated that more than 150 Chins arrested during the previous Malaysian immigration crackdowns earlier this month, are still kept in detention centres.#

## Two-year-old Chin girl sexually assaulted by local teenage boy in Delhi

**14 September 2013:** A Chin refugee girl, aged 2, has suffered from injuries as a result of sexual assault committed by a local Indian boy in New Delhi, according to the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO).

The incident took place on a staircase of the apartment mid-August while the Chin girl was playing outside their rented room. Upon hearing her daughter screaming and crying, the victim's mother told CHRO she rushed out to check on her and found her injured and in serious pain.

Two local children playing nearby told her that a teenage boy, believed to be around 16 years old, had just run away from the scene.

The mother took her daughter to the Women Protection Clinic (WPC), an implementing partner of UNHCR, to seek urgent help. Even though theirs was an urgent case, the security guards at the gate refused entry to the mother and her daughter.

The mother then rushed her daughter to the emergency department of a local hospital. Through an interpreter, she explained what had happened to a doctor on duty. The mother reported to CHRO that the doctor refused to believe her, accusing her of lying. The doctor ordered them to leave the room without conducting a proper examination.

The next day, the mother took her daughter to another UNHCR implementing partner organization, the Social Legal and Information Centre. "A doctor at

SLIC checked the condition of my daughter and confirmed that she has been sexually assaulted," said the mother. "But they just told me I should be taking good care of my daughter and didn't offer me any proper advice."

On a separate occasion a few days later, the girl was again physically assaulted on the staircase by a local boy, believed to be the same teenager.

The mother saw the boy dragging her daughter along the staircase. Upon seeing the mother, the boy ran away as fast as he could.

The girl suffered scrapes and bruises on her arms. The mother reported to CHRO that she didn't dare approach the police or any other organization for fear of being blamed for this second incident.

The girl's mother said: "This has left me deeply affected and mentally exhausted. I expected the UNHCR implementing partners to understand our problem and provide us with proper guidance on what we can do for my daughter's suffering."

"But all of them, including the doctor, just blame me for what had happened instead of helping us as much as they can to ease our pain. No mother in this world will neglect her child. I take good care of my two daughters but I cannot keep my daughter inside our tiny room all day without allowing her to play outside."

According to CHRO, Chin community-based organizations in Delhi have documented over 100 violent assaults against Chin women and children over the past three years.#

## Sick Chin refugee woman beaten up in New Delhi

**23 October 2013:** A Chin refugee named Monica, 25, sick with strange stomach pains, hepatitis C and suspected TB, has suffered injuries from being attacked by a local woman in New Delhi, India on 13 October 2013.

The victim told the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) that she had been beaten up and kicked in her abdomen by the the Indian mother while trying to use water to clean herself up.

She said that when she went to the 'shared' bathroom, she found out that her water bucket was being used by the woman, and requested her to give it back.

"She started shouting at me and using some bad words in Hindi. I was so surprised and went back to my room to lie down on my bed. But she didn't stop shouting."

Eventually, the victim got up again and explained her about her sick condition, saying she didn't want to have any problem regarding the situation.

"The local woman pulled my hair and beat me. I col-

-lapsed on the ground. But she kept on beating and kicking in my head and abdomen. I was badly hurt and my head was bleeding," added Monica.

She also said that some people who also rented in the same building were not offering help but watching during the course of the attack.

Having been informed of the incident, two officers from the Socio-Legal Information Centre (SLIC), an implementing partner of the UNHCR, and one Burmese interpreter made a visit for investigation.

"When the officers arrived, the woman was not here. They talked with the landlord and left around 9pm,"

said Monica.

She added that she was subsequently accused for making a complaint to the officers and that she was forced to leave her rented room.

"I have never come across such a terrible incident in my life. This is my first time. I wish it could be the first and the last as I am not an healthy woman. I couldn't even afford my rent and food, and they have been paid for me by friends," said the Chin victim.

No action has been taken against the perpetrator so far.#

Mary John with her broken leg in Delhi, India (Photo: CHRO)



## 5-yr-old Chin girl hit by motorbike in Delhi

**24 October 2013:** A motorbike driven at high speed by a man hit a 5-year-old Chin girl named Mary John last Thursday, leaving her left leg broken.

It happened around 9am in the morning while her mother Pi Ma Sung was walking her to a daycare centre run by Don Bosco Ashayalam in Jeewan Park of West Delhi, India.

Pi Ma Sung told the Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) that the motorbiker crashed her daughter from behind and that she collapsed on the spot with her leg bleeding.

"The bone between her lower leg and foot was broken. I was so shocked to see the accident happening in front of my eyes that has left my daughter's leg bro-

ken," said the Chin mother.

She also said that the biker, believed to be an Indian, had taken her daughter to a nearby clinic and that he had paid the cost of stitching.

"The biker told me that he had got to go to his office and would come back at 2pm in the afternoon. But he never turns up," added Pi Ma Sung.

She added that she had made a call to the daycare centre and that one of the staff members arrived at the clinic.

"She [staff member] took us to Deen Dayal Upadhyay (DDU) hospital and the doctor bandaged my daughter's leg and provided some medicine for us," said Pi Ma Sung.

Mary John is still on medication and unable to walk.#

## Chin State Government & Chin National Front

### Govt gives full support to Na Ta La students in Chin State

**30 September 2013:** The government of Burma said it provided full assistance for Na Ta La students in Chin State, a Burmese acronym for the Border Areas National Races Youth Development Training Schools.

According to the Burmese version of the *New Light of Myanmar* last Thursday, the government was responsible for all their needs including accommodation, clothes, food, education and health.

They receive a monthly grant of 25,000 Kyats per subject and there are five subjects taught at the Na Ta La schools, run by the Ministry for Border Affairs in collaboration with the Department of Educational Planning and Training.

The total grant per student for the July to February academic year is currently 1 million Kyats.

The Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) reported in 2012 that Christian students at such schools are prevented from openly practicing Christianity and coerced to convert to Buddhism with the threat of military conscription.

The report also indicated that the Ministries for Border Affairs and Religious Affairs cooperate closely in the implementation of the Na Ta La schools programme.

At Na Ta La school No. 2 in Mindat town alone, there are 166 students (115 boys and 51 girls) between Grade -5 and Grade-10, of whom 85 will be sitting for an entrance examination to the University for Development of National Races.

Meanwhile, at the mainstream public schools which are chronically underfunded, families have to pay for their children's costs including school materials and annual fees.#

### Chin State parliament passed 12 draft laws

**18 October 2013:** The Chin State parliament had passed 12 out of 14 draft laws during the sixth regular session of the first Chin State parliament held in Hakha from 17 September to 8 October.

The bills include laws relating to preservation of cultural heritage, construction of roads and bridges, prevention of fire and natural disasters, livestock breeding, use and production of fertilizer, loading and unloading goods, private vehicles, reforestation, electric generation, narcotics and drugs, ports, and honours and awards.

Pu Nah Thang MP said in the Chinland Post that two bills which are pending for further discussions in the next parliamentary sessions scheduled in December this year are laws regarding ownership of private ships, and fisheries.

The government of Chin State were criticised for delay in their submission of drafts of proposed laws to the bill committee ahead of the parliamentary sessions.



Pu Lal Maung Cung MP said in the Hakha Post that the bills had to be submitted to the committee at least 30 days in advance according to the laws.

"Only after the committee reviews them should they be put forward to the parliament for discussion," added the Chin MP.

During the 15-day sessions attended by 20 out of 24 MPs, 52 questions were answered and 9 proposals were discussed.#



The opening ceremony of school computers in Hakha provided by CNF (Photo: Chinland Post)

Thantlang townships, to be followed by the second in Matupi, Mindat, Kanpetlet and Paletwa.

Starting last month, nearly 200 computers have been set up at three Basic Education High Schools in Hakha, with the official opening ceremony scheduled for 9 October.

### CNF provides computers for high school students

**04 October 2013:** The Chin National Front (CNF) has started setting up computers for students at high schools as part of its development programme in Chin State.

The project supported by the Danish government should provide facilities that help students in one of the country's most isolated states to improve their computer and technological skills.

Sources from CNF said it would be implemented in three phases for a total of 30 high schools, excluding high school branches newly upgraded since 2012.

Following CNF's consultation with the Chin State government, the first batch of installations should take place in Tonzang, Tedim, Falam, Hakha and

The schools are also provided with computer desks, accessories and an electric generator with diesel enough for four hours.

Detailed information about the last phase of the project's implementation in villages is yet to disclosed.

There are 49 high schools including branches and affiliates in Chin State, according to the 2008 government statistics.

The 2012 Rangoon agreement between CNF and Peace Committee of Burma's government includes a provision on promoting information technology and computer skills in Burma's least developed state.

According to the *Khonumthung* news, officials from the Embassy of Denmark in Thailand and Dr. Sui Khar, General Secretary-III of CNF, signed an agreement in Bangkok in May this year.#

### CNF to hold public consultation in Rangoon

**15 October 2013:** The Chin National Front (CNF) is to conduct a consultation with the Chin public in Rangoon at Summit Parkview Hotel on 19 October.

The event, arranged in collaboration with the organizing committee comprising representatives from political parties, communities and religious groups, is aimed at seeking and discussing issues affecting the people.

The intention is also to make the public aware of the ongoing peace talks between CNF and Burma's government, and to allow them to participate in the proc-

ess.

Leaders and representatives of Chin political parties, communities and churches, activists, scholars and individuals based in the former capital and nearby are expected to attend the Saturday consultation.

As agreed in the ceasefire deal package, the CNF has organized a series of public consultations across Chin State and in other countries including USA.

It also plans to hold meetings with the Chin public in Mandalay, Kalay and Tamu Districts of Sagaing Region and Magwe Region ahead of the Chin National Conference scheduled in November this year.#

## CNF provides rice for villages hit by food shortages

**28 October 2013:** The Chin National Front (CNF) has provided rice with the help of the Nippon Foundation for villages in Chin State affected by food scarcity.

According to the Hakha Post, more than 450 rice bags were delivered to at least 12 villages in Thantlang and Falam townships, and the CNF also provided financial assistance to cover transportation fees to some places inaccessible by vehicles.

'Unusual' bad weather with heavy rains and strong winds have been blamed for destroying crops and hence bringing yields of harvest to a record low

across Burma's western state.

In response to a question raised by an MP during the recent Chin State government parliamentary sessions, the government indicated that a survey had been conducted and that necessary action would be taken accordingly.

It added that it would also work with the NGOs and INGOs to address the situation should the survey results prove the existence of food shortages.

Local media report that Thantlang, Falam, Tedim, Mindat and Paletwa townships have been hardest hit by the food shortages, with the situation worsened by destruction of roads due to heavy down-pours.#

## Poem

### Silent Distress of A Refugee's Life

Robert Ngun Sang  
Malaysia  
17 September 2012

I cry alone in silence under the endless sky  
I feel so down about my life, so dry and forlorn  
I sit and talk to myself without any movement  
Too many times, I think about my life as a refugee  
It makes me wonder where my life is and will be

Taking up a deep breath, I often shoot a long sigh  
In despair I shake my head and wipe out my tears  
I want to force my eyes shut and go asleep at ease  
But I fear the dreadful dream that haunts my soul  
It makes my nights so unbearable too many times

I walk around all over the places in search of care  
With my heart so burdened and my soul so weary  
And stepping towards a place that I think it home,  
I look up to heaven and murmur for help in whisper  
But there again seems no hope at all too many times

I kneel down and stretch out my arms in prayers  
I go around seeking someone to share my pains with  
But nobody seems to give heed to my cry in need  
Nobody even beside me seems to capture my hunger  
So, still I cry in distress without sound too many times

### Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO)

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