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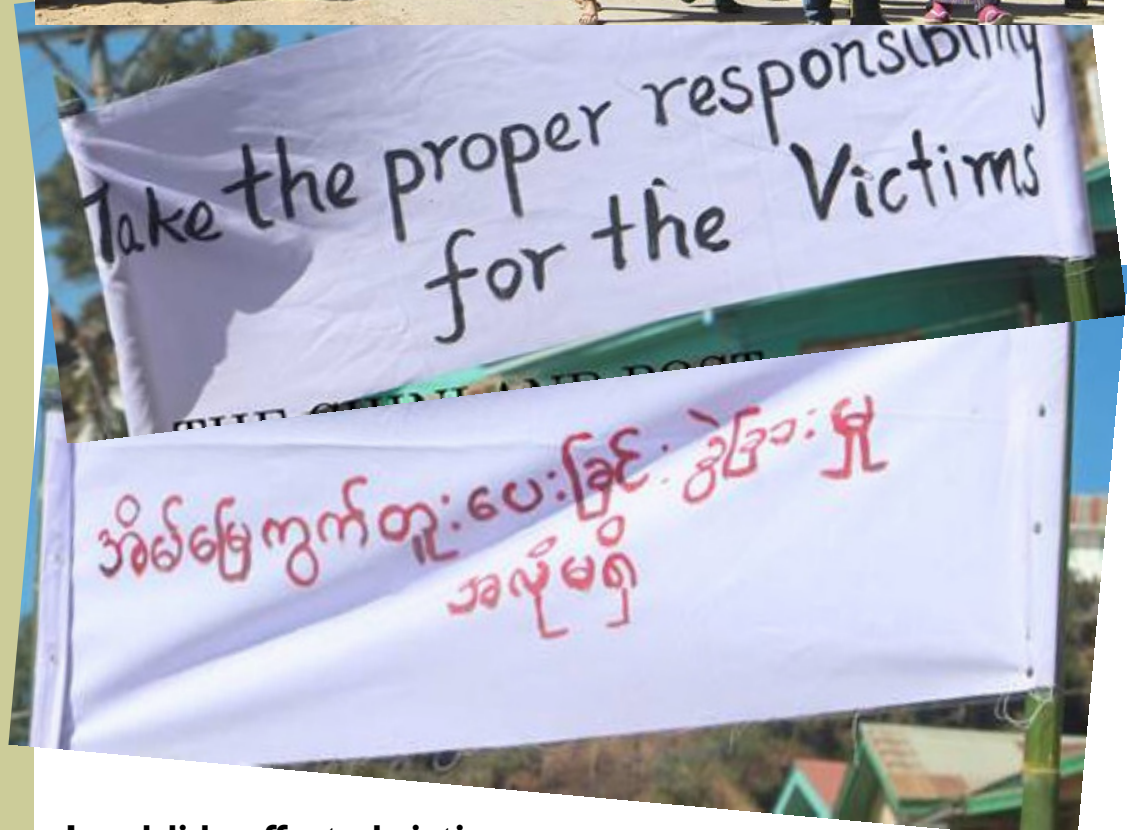
Chin Human Rights Organization

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CHRO.CA

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**Landslide-affected victims
demonstrating in Hakha** (Photo: The Chinland Post)

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Arbitrary Taxation, Extortion & Detention

Arakan Army free seven Chin abductees

04 January 2016 -- The Arakan Army released seven Chin farmers, including two mothers, who were detained in Paletwa Township, Chin State on 31 December 2015.

The two mothers were taken back to their village, Nga-win-taung, around 4pm on New Year's Day while the other five from both Pyinngu and Nga-win-taung were freed yesterday.

AA soldiers stopped and took the villagers away for no reasons while they were on the way to their farms, according to the *Khumi Media Group*.

"People were taken for guide before. But it's different this time because there were two mothers among those detained," a villager told the KMG on condition of anonymity.

KMG Editor Peter Lawilu said that all of the seven detainees were safely back to their villages and in good condition.

"The AA is currently detaining more than seven villag-

ers in the jungle. However, we are not able to confirm the number yet," he added.

He said that Burma Army soldiers camping in the area had not taken any action although village leaders had informed them of the incidents.

There was a brief fire exchange between AA soldiers and the Burma Army near Pyinngu after the two mothers had been returned.

Clashes between the two groups have taken place since March last year, forcing nearly 400 Chin residents to flee their village.

"People live in fear. They dare not go out of the village as they are often captured on the way to their farms. If they cannot go to work on their farms, what will they eat?" Lawilu said. #

Clashes between Arakan Army and Burma Army have taken place since March last year, forcing nearly 400 Chin residents to flee their village.

ALP extorts money from traders in Paletwa Township

06 January 2016 -- The Arakan Liberation Party forcibly demands money from local traders in Paletwa Township, Chin State for crossing the India-Burma border.

Paletwa traders said that the party had established a temporary camp near Landan village, also known as La-ba-wa, and that it had been collecting money from them for months.

They said that they had to pay 200 Indian rupees for each domestic animal including cows, pigs and goats that were taken with them for sale in Mizoram State, India.

"We have to give 100 rupees for a package of goods and 200 rupees for an empty boat if we have to use it," a Khumi Chin trader, who asks not to be

named, told the *Khumi Media Group*.

Peter Lawilu, an editor of the *Khumi Media Group*, said that the extortion had got worse in recent months and that people were not happy about the ALP members having their camp in Paletwa area.

He said: "There is only one way for people in our area to go to India and it is via Landan near Kara-maik village. This is where the ALP sets up its camp."

Lawilu indicated that residents were not informed of the reasons for setting up the camp and for extracting money from traders.

The Arakan Liberation Party that has an armed wing, the Arakan Liberation Army, signed a cease-fire agreement with the Union government of Burma on 5 April 2012. #

Arakan Army soldiers extort rice, pig from Chin villagers

26 January 2016 -- Soldiers of the Arakan Army extorted ten bags of rice (1 rice bag weighs about 50kg) and killed one pig belonging to Tetchaung villagers in Paletwa township last Thursday.

A group of 47 AA soldiers arrived in the village around 12 noon, took the rice bags by force, shot the pig dead and left around 3pm on the same day, according to the *Khumi Media Group*.

The local media reported that the group had arrested five villagers and used them for their guide as they had headed towards Ngwetaung village.

They threatened that their village would be burned to

ashes if the Burma Army were informed of their arrival.

Ai Thang (name changed for security reasons) told the Chin Human Rights Organization that the Burma Army Light Infantry Battalions No. 540, No. 377 and No. 378 based in Tantaung-wa village had somehow already known about the incident.

"We heard that the Burma Army soldiers went to the village in an attempt to chase after the AA members and that they gave 200,000 kyats to the villagers as they lost their rice and pig," said Thang.

A Tetchaung resident said in the *Chin World Media* that the AA soldiers had entered all the houses, ordered all the villagers to gather at the football pitch, cut off the phone lines and extorted all the phones.#

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Arakan Army clashes with Burma Army soldiers in Chin State

27 January 2016 -- A skirmish between soldiers from the Arakan Army and the Tatmadaw broke out on a hill near Laungtan village, Paletwa Township on Monday.

There was an exchange of fire between the two groups and no casualties were reported, according to the *Khumi Media Group*.

A resident in Pyin-chaung-wa village said on condition of anonymity that the fighting had taken place and that three AA soldiers reportedly had surrendered themselves to the Burma Army.

AA soldiers had arrested dozens of Chin villagers and forcibly used them as their guide when they were on patrol in the area.

Yesterday, more than 30 Chin detainees, including women, were released. The KMG said that it had

not got detailed information and not been able to know how many more were still being kept in custody by the Arakan Army.

Since March last year, AA soldiers have been patrolling in Paletwa area and clashing with Burma Army soldiers on several occasions, forcing hundreds of villagers to flee their places into hiding.

Some critics said that the AA wanted to send a signal to the Union authorities and one of the ways was to make noises by clashing with the *Tatmadaw* soldiers and giving pressure to the local residents.

The Union government did not invite the AA in the nationwide ceasefire process, including the recent Union Peace Conference held in Nay Pyi Taw, and turned down its offer of dialogue.

Founded on 10 April 2009 and currently headquartered in Kachin State, the Arakan Army was established to protect the people of Arakan and to promote peace, justice, freedom and development in Arakan State, according to its official website.#

Arakan Army soldiers continue extortion in Chin State

09 February 2016 -- Soldiers of the Arakan Army have been extorting food from villagers in Paletwa township, Chin State for months, according to local residents.

The *Khumi Media Group* said that about 15 AA members had entered Ngating village last Sunday and forcibly taken six bags of rice and five cigarette packages.

It added that around 50 AA soldiers had arrived in Satchaung-wa village at about 8am last Thursday and had taken two bags of rice and other goods worth about 145,000 kyats.

"They didn't pay for them. They just took them from us and walked away," a resident in Satchaung-wa village told the KMG.

The KMG reported that 11 bags of rice and one chicken had forcibly been exacted from Saihtha villagers by another group of AA members on 2 February.

On 25 January this year at Pyin-wa, AA soldiers killed a cow, which was estimated to be worth about 700,000 kyats, and left the village without giving money to the cattle owner.

Last Friday, there was a clash between AA and Burma Army soldiers near Hung village.

The Chin National Front and Chin civil society groups called on the Arakan Army for an immediate end to its operations in Chin State where hundreds of villagers have been displaced by conflict between soldiers from AA and Burma Army.#

Humanitarian and Development Situation

Damage to water supply system leaves Matupi residents with acute shortage of water

12 January 2015 -- Road expansion work in Matupi town, Chin State has destroyed water pipes, leaving hundreds of residents without water.

A Matupi resident, who asked not to be named, told the Chin Human Rights Organization that they had been running out of water for weeks and that they had to buy it or go to a stream nearby for water.

"People have to join a long queue just to get a

bucket of water and are also using motorbikes and cars to fetch water from the stream," he added.

The current cost of a 20-litre bucket of water is 250 kyats, according to the *Chin World Media*.

Despite having been informed of the situation, Mudra, a private company in charge of the road construction, and the municipal department have not taken action to resolve the issue.

"We want to get this fixed as quickly as possible," a town-elder said in the *Chin World Media*.

The CHRO cannot reach Mudra for comment.#

Falam receives increased hours of electricity

13 January 2016 -- The authorities in Chin State yesterday opened a new hydro-electric plant in Vaar village near Falam town only to make an increase in hours of power supply.

The power produced by water from Vaar river generates 500 kilowatts, which will provide electricity for residents in Falam and at least four nearby villages.

Salai Sum, a Falam resident, said: "We had electricity for a few hours once in three days before. Now, we are getting it every other day. But it is irregular and we are not sure about how many hours we will get."

Cin Lian Pau, Minister for Electric and Industry, Nang Za Hmung, Minister for Finance and Revenue, and other government officials attended the opening event with more than 100 participants.

According to the State government, more than 440 out of 1504 villages in Chin State have electricity - with the majority being run by local communities.#

Community radio station to be established in Chin State

14 January 2016 -- Work on the establishment of a community radio station in Chin State that will broadcast in local dialects is expected to start in the near future.

The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC) indicated that the project 'Chin FM Radio Broadcasting' to be implemented in partnership with the Global Chin Christian Federation would begin early this year.

"The radio station would first and foremost allow isolated communities to communicate in local languages with people who otherwise would not be informed of ongoing developments. Alongside the need to inform and educate the Chin population about political developments, the radio will play a significant role in community building and sustainable development," the

WACC posted in its website.

According to the organization, the station - believed to be the first in the country's least developed state - will be built in Hakha, the capital.

This has been welcomed and seen as one of the outcomes from the implementation of provisions in the peace-talk agreement between the Union government and the Chin National Front.

One of the provisions agreed at the Union level peace talk says of the programme 'for each Chin dialectical group with the view of facilitating better interactions amongst the Chin as well as promoting Chin media'.

Despite making attempts in the past, communities in Chin State had not been able to initiate official radio broadcast programmes in local dialects owing to various reasons including difficulty in getting permission from the authorities.#

Over 100 school children get sick in Salen

19 January 2016 -- An outbreak of the unknown disease has made more than 100 school children sick in Salen village, Thantlang township, Chin State.

The State Health Department confirmed the occurrence and said that an investigation was being conducted to find out the cause of the infection.

Sources close to the State government said that a medical expert had been sent from Nay Pyi Taw to carry out an assessment on the situation and had got to the village on Sunday.

Thawng Khan Piang, headmaster of the Basic Education Middle School (branch), said in the Chin Journal it had been very unusual that the students had got infected all at once.

He added that doctors had arrived in the village on Tuesday to give

treatment and that they believed the infection might have been associated with seasonal changes.

However, they said that they had not been able to identify the virus, according to Piang.

Salen is home to about 700 residents.#

Salen school children infected with swine flu: Health Department

26 January 2016 -- The infection that has caused 102 school children and 5 teachers sick in Salen village, Thantlang township is identified as a type of swine influenza, according to the Chin State Health Department.

The Department said that they had conducted an investigation into the situation with the help of an expert sent from Nay Pyi Taw and identified the virus as H3H1.

It also indicated that it might have been the first occurrence in Chin State, if not in the country, adding: "The virus normally affects domestic animals such as pigs and chickens.

Thang Ding, the village headman, said in the Chinland Post that they had to close the school as their teachers and the students got sick all at once.

The outbreak started on 11 January and the symptoms included diarrhoea and cold. Seven doctors from Hakha and Thantlang towns visited the village to give treatment.

As of today, Ding said that about 40 children and the teachers had recovered but the school was still closed.

Currently, Salen has one Middle School with about 200 students and no medical doctor although the village has one Township Health Centre.#

Event and Protest

Landslide-affected victims marching in the streets of Hakha (Photo: The Chinland Post)



Landslide victims hold demonstrations in Hakha

08 January 2015 -- More than one thousand people, mostly affected by landslides, in Hakha marched along the main road on Tuesday and Wednesday protesting against the construction of housing for the displaced at a new relocation site.

They demanded the State authorities to ensure housing construction at the new location to be carried out in accordance with the initial plans designed by experts.

Some of the highlight points involve the need to construct a properly designed drainage system, roads leading to, and in the area, and a hospital in another location rather than the current one selected by the authorities.

Lai Cung, an event leader whose house was destroyed in the landslides, told the Hakha Post that they didn't want the construction to be rushed and completed unsystematically.

"We all take to the streets not because we are running out of food and water but because what have been done in the relocation area are not what have been promised," the Chin leader said.

The two-day demonstrations called for an immedi-

ate end to favouritism and discrimination when it came to the allocation of land and houses to the victims.

During the peaceful marches, the State authorities did not allow demonstrators to walk in front of the new State government office building. Event organizers said that they had to march behind it.

The organizers said that the demonstration would not stop but continue until they received any effective responses from the authorities.

During his visit to the capital last year, President Thein Sein said that construction of new houses in the relocation site would be done before the end of December 2015.

The State government have been criticised for letting Khuabe and Beute villagers move to the new location before Christmas although electricity, water and toilets are not ready for use.

Lai Cung, Christian pastor-cum-leader, said in the *Hakha Post*: "If the current government is not able to finish the construction systematically, they'd better stop and let the new government to take over."

According to the State government, there are 732 families whose houses were destroyed by heavy landslides in Hakha in July last year.#

Chin Media Network The 5th Annual Meeting

FBBC, TEDIM

JAN. 20 - 22, 2016



(Photo: Chin Media Network)

Chin media to meet in Tedim

19 January 2016 -- Leaders and representatives of Chin media from across the country are arriving in Tedim town, Chin State to participate in a meeting organized by the Chin Media Network.

More than 20 people from 16 different Chin media organizations will meet at the fifth CMN annual conference and discuss issues related to media development for three days from 20 to 22 January.

Salai Hung Tun Gei, CMN director, told the Chin Human Rights Organization: "We will be looking into our constitution, and rules and regulations on membership and discuss how the network will be going forward in the future."

"In order for us to legally function in the country, member organizations should be officially registered and independently run," said Gei, a leading editor of the *Chin World Media*.

He added that the meeting would make confirmation of membership for organizations after checking their applications in conformity with the requirements.

Salai Ngun Lal, chief editor of the *Chin Times* published in Sagaing Region's Kalay, indicated the importance of organizing a media event like that in order for

them to strengthen communication and improve the quality of Chin media.

The network has only been able to organize a meeting once a year since 2012, with the first in Thantlang, the second in Falam, the third in Hakha, and the fourth in Mindat.

Financially supported by the United Nations Development Program based in Hakha, tomorrow's meeting will discuss the possibility of meeting at least twice a year, according to CMN leaders.#



Situation of Refugees

Fears of attacks and operations loom at Selayang

KUALA LUMPUR, 25 January 2016 -- Burmese nationals in Kuala Lumpur, especially Selayang, are living in fear after news on possible attacks from local thugs and large scale operations by police are being circulated through social and printed media.

Several social and religious organizations, including churches, have warned their members to stay away from the Selayang market, on the outskirts of Kuala Lumpur after a fight there had triggered massive police operations.

Quoting a source from the Burmese Embassy in Malaysia, a Christian church in Kuala Lumpur reminds its congregation to avoid Selayang for the time being.

"The Embassy of Burma has alerted all Burmese nationals to stay away from Selayang. Let's pray for the situation and do avoid going there if it is not necessary," according to a message printed in the church's weekly bulletin.

A local newspaper also reported that attacks involv-

ing local Indian thugs and Burmese nationals on 13 January have triggered large scale operations by police to track down those involved and to ensure no further clashes occur.

The January fight at the market had left two Burmese nationals, including a two-year-old baby, injured and one Malaysian dead.

It is believed that a long-running feud between migrant workers from Burma and local thugs had led to the gang fight.

The same market, which is also known by the locals as KL's Little Burma, was in tension in 2013 when several clashes and killings between Buddhists and Muslims from Burma were reported. The clashes were often thought to have correlated with ethnic conflict in Arakan State, Burma.

Following those clashes, Malaysian police had rounded up more than 900 Burmese nationals.

Clashes in 2013 also affected the Chin community, with some of them fleeing their homes at Selayang for a few days.

- reporting by Thomas Chong

Malaysia launched non-stop crackdowns on illegal workers

KUALA LUMPUR, 22 February 2016 -- Refugees in Malaysia are facing a hard time as the country's immigration department pledges to launch non-stop and daily crackdowns on undocumented foreign workers.

Malaysia is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention and do not differentiate between refugees and other migrants.

Although Kuala Lumpur tolerates refugees and asylum seekers, including over 45,300 Chins, registered with the UNHCR but many still end up in detention camps.

Datuk Sakib Kusmi, the newly appointed immigration director general, said as of Saturday, 971 un-

documented foreigners were detained in operations launched nationwide.

He said those detained including migrants without documents, workers who are overstaying, and those who own unrecognized documents.

Malaysia has just launched a 'whitening' scheme to legalize millions of undocumented migrant workers.

While urging employers and workers to join the scheme, termed officially as 'rehiring program', the government has warned stern action against those who employ undocumented foreigners.

Under the rehiring program, employers are expected to pay around RM4,000 (US\$952) to legalize every undocumented foreign worker they have hired.

Last Thursday, Malaysia has also signed a memoran-

-dum of understanding (MoU) with Bangladesh to bring in up to 1.5 million new foreign workers to the country.

Before that, the government was criticized by different industry players and worker's rights groups after the announcement to increase levy for foreign workers. Under the new rates, the Malaysian government has planned to double the levy for migrant workers.

If implemented, the restructured levy rate for foreign

workers is expected to bring in an extra income of RM2.5 billion (US\$595 millions) to Malaysia, a petroleum exporter which is hard-hit by the plunging global oil price.

The government, however, has postponed the levy plan after widespread condemnation from employers and politicians.

- Reporting by Thomas Chong

Other News

Arakan Army clashes with Burma Army soldiers in Chin State

27 January 2016 -- A skirmish between soldiers from the Arakan Army and the Tatmadaw broke out on a hill near Laungtan village, Paletwa Township on Monday.

There was an exchange of fire between the two groups and no casualties were reported, according to the *Khumi Media Group*.

A resident in Pyin-chaung-wa village said on condition of anonymity that the fighting had taken place and that three AA soldiers reportedly had surrendered themselves to the Burma Army.

AA soldiers had arrested dozens of Chin villagers and forcibly used them as their guide when they were on patrol in the area.

Yesterday, more than 30 Chin detainees, including women, were released. The KMG said that it had not got detailed information and not been able to know how many more were still being kept in custody by the Arakan Army.

Since March last year, AA soldiers have been patrolling in Paletwa area and clashing with Burma Army soldiers on several occasions, forcing hundreds of villagers to flee their places into hiding.

Some critics said that the AA wanted to send a signal to the Union authorities and one of the ways was to make noises by clashing with the *Tatmadaw* soldiers and giving pressure to the local residents.

The Union government did not invite the AA in the nationwide ceasefire process, including the recent Union Peace Conference held in Nay Pyi Taw, and turned down its offer of dialogue.

Founded on 10 April 2009 and currently headquartered in Kachin State, the Arakan Army was established to protect the people of Arakan and to promote peace, justice, freedom and development in Arakan State, according to its official website.#

AA soldiers had arrested dozens of Chin villagers and forcibly used them as their guide when they were on patrol in the area.

Permission to hold Chin National Day in Rangoon re-applied

11 February 2016 -- Chin committees in Rangoon re-submitted to the authorities their application for permission to celebrate Chin National Day in the former capital on 20 February.

The Chin Literature and Culture Committee of Universities in Rangoon and the Organizing Committee for the Chin National Day celebration said that they had made another request as their initial application had been turned down.

Thang Bu, Chairman of the Organizing Committee, said: "We have already made a new application. A spokesperson from the Region Ministry of Social Affairs told us that it would be alright. So, we hope that we will get a positive answer."

Following the formation of the Event Organising Committee on 9 January, the first application together with other required documents including letters of approval from the police, fire brigade and Ward Administrative Offices was submitted to the Ahlone Township General Administration Department on 27 January.

Samuel, CLCC Secretary, said: "We followed the application procedures and instructions. We did what was needed as suggested but our application was not successful when we received the response."

An official letter issued on 3 February by the Rangoon Region Government stated that permission had not been granted for organizing the events of Chin National Day and Karen National Day at the Franc Hall in Ahlone Township although applications were submitted separately and related to different calendar dates, according to the Chin organisers.

The letter that combined replies to both the Chin and Karen organisers described the reasons as being the fact that the committees are not legally registered.

However, Mai Suitaraw, former CLCC Chairperson and leader of the event organiser, said: "The CLCC is a registered body and has been getting involved in organizing the Chin National Day of celebration for years. The event is held yearly here in Rangoon."

She said that the committee had received permission just two days before the date of celebration, 20th of

February 2015, adding: "Last year, we made our application directly to the senior officials and there were misunderstanding in the process. That was the main reason why the reply was late."

Pachhunga, a leading member of the Chin Organising Committee, said: "This year's celebration will mark the 68th anniversary of Chin National Day. It means it has been going on for 68 years. This is not something new. Why do they reply to us in just one combined letter? Who is actually responsible? These are the questions we don't understand and don't have answers to."

In their new application, the Chin organisers also attached the peace-talk agreements between the Union government and the Chin National Front and other documents containing evidence that Chin National Day was officially held in Nay Pyi Taw, Rangoon, and Hakha.

The Chin committees made their new application to the authorities on 4 February and learned that a decision is currently pending further discussion. #

Chin committees allowed to celebrate Chin National Day in Rangoon

11 February 2016 -- The authorities in Rangoon said that they would give the green light to the plan for an event marking the 68th anniversary of Chin National Day in Ahlone Township on 20 February.

Chin committees responsible for the festival will be granted permission to organize the celebration as scheduled, according to Dr Sui Khar, Joint Secretary - I of the Chin National Front, who was meeting with the event organisers today.

Hours after the meeting, Khar, who communicated with government officials concerned regarding the issue, said that he had received verbal confirmation and that written confirmation would follow soon.

The Chin Literature and Culture Committee of Universities in Rangoon and the Organizing Committee for the Chin National Day celebration applied for permission to the Ahlone Township General Administration Department on 27 January.

However, their application was not successful. They submitted another application on 4 February. #

Rangoon authorities permit Chin National Day celebration

18 February 2016 -- The authorities of Rangoon Region issued an official letter on Monday, allowing Chin committees to celebrate Chin National Day in Ahlone township this Saturday.

The letter signed on behalf of the Chief Minister by Ne Win Aung, Director of the Rangoon Region government, states that permission was granted in accordance with the meeting decision made on 11 February.

Thang Bu, Chairman of the Event Organizing Committee, told the Chin Human Rights Organization: "We are happy about the permission and would like to thank all those involved, especially Dr Sui Khar, for their timely assistance."

Members of the Chin committees responsible for or-

ganizing the event in Rangoon received the letter yesterday, according to Bu.

He said that the event would be held as planned and that they had invited Dr Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong to give a special speech on the history of Chin National Day and the need to continue the historic celebration.

The event marking the 68th anniversary will take place at Franc Hall in the Karen Church compound between 1pm and 5pm on 20 February, with various sessions including live entertainment.

The committees re-applied permission to the authorities after their initial proposal submitted in late January had been refused.

Meanwhile, Chin communities across the globe are in full preparation for celebrating the day in their residing places. It is claimed that President Thein Sein is visiting Hakha, Chin State to participate in the event. #

Government



Photo: THE CHINLAND POST

Union ministers visit Chin State ahead of Chin National Day

19 February 2016 -- Three Union ministers arrive in Hakha, Chin State, around 1pm today, to attend the historic event marking the 68th anniversary of Chin National Day.

Soe Thein, Minister of President's Office; Ohn Myint, Minister of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development; and Win Tun, Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry landed by helicopter in the capital.

They will participate in the opening ceremony of the Chin National Day celebration and will inspect new houses built on relocation site for landslide-affected victims, according to reports by the Chinland Post.

President Thein Sein is expected to attend the celebration tomorrow although sources from the Chin State government cannot make any confirmation.

The three ministers are staying at the Union Guest House. #

Some major events of AA-Tatmadaw conflict in Chin State

2015

- 28 March: Clash between the Arakan Army and the Burma Army takes place near Pyinso village, Paletwa township. AA soldiers detain a Khumi Chin named Ai Ling Min (male), Pyinso villager.
- 10 April: AA-Tatmadaw clash takes place near Pyinso village.
- 15 April: AA-Tatmadaw clash takes place near Pyinso village.
- 27 April: 356 people of 62 families from Pyinso village flee to the Kaladan River bank and near Laungtin village. People from nearby villages flee to the Kaladan River bank as AA soldiers arrest and detain some for no obvious reasons while others are used as guide during their patrol in the area.
- 10 May: AA-Tatmadaw clash takes place near Pyinso village
- 23 May: The tactical commander of the Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion No. 289 orders Pyinso residents to return to their village.
- 10 September: AA soldiers arrest Nga-win-taung villager Ai Nang Pah while on his way home from his farm.
- 11 September: Ai Nang Pah manages to run away as AA threatens to kill him.
- 26 September: Ai Ling Min escapes from AA detention of six months.
- 2 October: The Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion No. 289 takes Ai Ling Min to their base and detains him.
- 21 October: LIB No. 289 frees Pyinso village Ai Ling Min.
- 28 November: The Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion No. 379 arrests Landan villagers Paih Ku (male) and Yan Tan (male) and uses them as local guide during their patrol in the area. What is believed to be landmine (though not confirmed) placed by AA soldiers kills Yan Tan at about 11:30am. Tatmadaw soldiers give 500,000 kyats in compensation.
- 31 December: AA soldiers arrest Khin Ma Aung (male) and Ba Ung (male) at a location about 3 miles away from their village, Pyin-ngu, at about 10am; and Elias, Ma Phyo (mother with a young baby), Pyo Laik (male), Sein Aye (male) and Aye Khin (mother with a young baby) at a location about 1 mile away from their village, Aungpyin-wa (aka Nga-win-taung). AA-Tatmadaw clash takes place near Pyinso village.

2016

- 1 January: AA soldiers who are returning two detainees (females from Nga-win-taung village) up to Pyin-ngu village clashes with Burma Army soldiers who are playing Chin-lone at Pyin-ngu.
- 2 January: AA frees the remaining five detainees, who were arrested on 31 December.
- 11-13 January: A group of about 80 AA soldiers enter Shin-ma-ding village and extort 16 bags of rice, 10 chickens, 1 goat and medicines worth of over 100,000 kyats from villagers without making any payment to owners.
- 22 January: A group of 47 AA soldiers arrive in Dat-chaung-wa village at about midnight, extort 10 bags of rice and shoot dead a pig without making any payment to owners. They threaten villagers at gunpoint not to inform the Burma Army of their arrival and presence in the village.
- 25 January: AA soldiers detain two midwives at about 2pm while they are returning from Hung village during their trip to provide vaccination against polio. AA soldiers (about 150 in number) shoot dead a cow belonging to Ai Khan from Pyinwa village, eat the meat and leave the village without paying its owner.
- 26 January: AA releases two detained midwives and other 33 Chin detainees.
- 29 January: The gun of a lance corporal from the Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion No. 232 went off by accident at about 6am last Thursday, killing a six-year-old boy sleeping upstairs in a two-storey house in Landan village, Chin State. The incident took place while the lance corporal was taking a rest downstairs. The lance corporal gave 100,000 kyats for the funeral to Ngan Nwe, father of the boy.

Continued onto next page.

- 2 February: AA soldiers extort 11 bags of rice and one chicken from Seih-sa villagers without paying the owners.
- 3 February: A group of five AA soldiers arrive in Hung village around 6pm, buy 40 bags of rice at the price of 5,000 kyats per bag and kill a dog belonging to a villager without paying the owner.
- 4 February: About 30 AA soldiers come and take the rice bags. About 50 AA soldiers arrive in Sat-chaung-wa village at about 8am, and extort two bags of rice and goods worth of 145,000 kyats from shops without paying the owners.
- 5 February: AA-Tatmadaw (Battalion Number unknown) clash takes place at a location about five miles away from Hung village at about 2pm. AA soldiers come to Hung village and buy four bags of rice at about 7pm.
- 7 February: About 15 AA soldiers arrive in Nga-ting-wa village and extort six bags of rice and five boxes of cigarette without paying the owners.

Note: Collected by the *Khumi Media Group* and translated into English by the *Chinland Guardian*

Interview

We will work together with the people: Interview with NLD

Chairman Zo Bawi

19 January 2016 -- Zo Bawi, chairman of the National League for Democracy in Chin State, contested the 2015 election and won a victory from the Hakha Township constituency No. 1 for the State Hluttaw.

There has been much speculation that he would be the next chief minister of the Chin State government. He is currently a member of the Central Executive Committee of the NLD.

Question: Why do you think the NLD was successful in the election?

Zo Bawi: It's been 53 years that the country has been under the military rule and I think we won a victory with the help of the public as they clearly understand the fact that there needs to be a change in the country.

Question: Did you expect that the party would be able to achieve this much?

Zo Bawi: Yes, we did. We had even believed that we would be more successful this time than the 1990 election as people had completely understood the work and performance of the military government.

Question: According to the election results, it is likely that the NLD will be able to form the government in Chin State. If that is the case, how will it be different from the current government led by the Union Solidarity and Development Party?

Zo Bawi: They take orders only from the top and lead the public in a very centralized way. We will be using a federal system and will not be totally dependent on the central authority. Full authority will be in our hand at the state level. So, I think we will be able to do what is best for our people and state.

Question: This will only be possible after the federal system is fully allowed and practiced. What will happen before the federal system is in place?

Zo Bawi: At first, we will have to go in accordance with the 2008 constitution. But it will be amended in the Hluttaw (parliament) sessions after the election of the country's president and we will be able to lead the country in accordance with the constitution we draft.



Question: When do you think the amendment can be made?

Zo Bawi: The president will be elected in the first regular session of the first Assembly of the Union. Then, the president will lead the Union government and will appoint the chief minister of all States and Regions. The State Chief Minister will then form the State government. After that, the amendment will take place in the second regular session of the first Assembly of the Union.

Question: Which ministries do you think are not necessary and should be removed?

Zo Bawi: Ministries such as Ministry of Religious Affairs and Ministry for Border Affairs.

Question: What if the military do not agree?

Zo Bawi: We will be the majority and I believe what the president decides will be accepted by the military. And they can become the military for the people.

Question: What will be your priorities on development issues in Chin State?

Zo Bawi: The first priority will be development on roads. A two-way road connecting between Cikha in the north and Paletwa in the south will be constructed. Paletwa can be our main door to Chin State in terms of export and import when the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project is finished. We will also try to preserve and protect our forests and animals, and replace our current farming with other income-generating sources.

Question: Speaking of the Kaladan Project, there are reports highlighting various human rights violations and lack of consultation with local communities in the process. How do you think it should be carried on?

Zo Bawi: Actually, when the military government take on something, the first thing they think about is what they can get from it for themselves. When the NLD leads the government, we will think first for the people. The current government said that the project would be finished in March 2016. Based on what has been completed, we will have to take a proper look at it and decide how best it can be continued.

Question: Tell us how you will keep your relationship with the public when you are in the government.

Zo Bawi: Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said to us: "When we form a government, I want you to have this mindset that we are working for the people. As we will be working for the people, we will maintain a close relationship with the public and we will work together with the people. We will not do anything of our

own accord alone.

Question: As you mentioned Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, what will the NLD be like without her?

Zo Bawi: Since 1988, we have already had our constitution, principles and policies in place. We will keep going accordingly even if Daw Suu is not with us.

Question: You don't have Vice President or Secretary in the NLD central committee. Is it according to the constitution?

Zo Bawi: Well, it is true we don't. Daw Suu is the president and the rest are Central Executive Committee members. We are happy with the leadership. We haven't got any issues or problems regarding the position and the authority. We all are responsible for our own duties and this is what has made us harmonious. But some people get confused about this and say it is the same as dictatorship. In reality, it signifies equality.

Note: The interview was first published in the Chinland Post in Hakha dialect on 13 November 2015.



Main problem facing the Chin is poverty: Interview with Cheery Zahau

21 January 2016 -- Ms Cheery Zahau, human rights activist, contested the 2015 general election for the *Pyithu Hluttaw* (House of Representatives/Lower House). She is one of the 23 women candidates running for the elections in Chin State.

In the *Chinland Guardian* interview, she talked about the reasons why she and her party did not do well in the election and what the new government should focus on.

Chinland Guardian: How do you evaluate the results of the 2015 election?

Cheery Zahau: I very much welcome the new government/parliament to likely be led by NLD that has won over 79 per cent of the seats according to the Union Election Commission report. It concerns me that the ethnic representatives would not be vibrant and not strong enough in the parliament as many of our ethnic parties did not win the November poll. Although the NLD has ethnic elected MPs, they cannot make decisions because it's the party that rules out. The party's priority will overrule the wishes or demands by the community. We welcome the fact that ethnic MPs are given positions, but it is important that this is not just symbolic but it should reflect the real needs and voices of the ethnic communities. I think some people from the ethnic parties who can better serve the community are not elected so it is a great disadvantage for the people.

Chinland Guardian: As a candidate contesting in Chin State, how did you find the whole process and situation of the general election?

Cheery Zahau: It was golden experiences for me as our team visited more than 160 out of 183 villages in Falam Township. I see there is much need for development in infrastructure and services. I also see the potentials of economic development. I see opportunities of expanding economic activities in far remote areas so the communities can earn extra incomes rather than entirely relying on the shifting cultivation. I also see the hidden beauty of Chin State. It is so wonderful to see plenty of untouched natural beauty – far away from main cities and other parts of Burma.

I learnt that most of our people in Chin State are not aware of basic political terms and systems. They do what they are told. Both the NLD and the USDP told the village headmen that they had to vote for the two big parties if they wanted to keep their jobs. Some voters are lured with money and materials. So, the people are so caught up with this kind of campaign. So, we will see if the elected MPs deliver their promises.

Chinland Guardian: And is there anything - regarding the whole process of election - you see differently as a woman candidate?

Cheery Zahau: Our community is very conservative. Because I am a woman and single, my opponents focus on defamatory attack instead of talking about issues concerning the voters. My opponents used nasty/dirty tricks to defame me during the pre-election period. We did not send complaints to the election commission just because of the traditional beliefs that disputes should be resolved privately, not at the political station or courts.

I learnt that most of our Chin community members are not ready to have a woman leader. This will lead us backward as many capable Chin women will not dare to come forward in politics.

Chinland Guardian: Why do you think the Chin Progressive Party was not as successful in terms of the results?

Cheery Zahau: We do not have enough human and financial resources. Our ethnic parties are very weak; we don't have sources of income, apart from personal contribution by the candidates. We were campaigning within 60 days as the official campaign period is 60 days. However, the NLD had been gearing up for the elections more than 12 months.

The NLD accused the CPP of being a proxy USDP - which is not true and not fair. This is just one example and there are many more.

I think we did not prepare enough in advance. We had very limited time.

Chinland Guardian: We have heard people talking about the need for merging Chin political parties and standing for the next election as just one party in Chin State. What do you say?

Cheery Zahau: Yes, we, the Chin parties, need to come together and find ways to merge into one or

collaborate more. Not only CPP and CNDP but other smaller parties that are based on the Chin tribes.

Chinland Guardian: As you have been to places in Chin State, what should the new government, both State and Central, put priority on for the people?

Cheery Zahau: The main problem facing the Chin people is poverty. We should remember that the poverty rate in Chin State is over 73 per cent, the highest in the whole country. So, both the State and Union governments must focus on this.

Chinland Guardian: Will you run for the next election?

Cheery Zahau: It will depend on the people and the political environment.

Chinland Guardian: Your messages to the Chin people as a whole and women in particular.

Cheery Zahau: The people have exercised their rights to vote and they should continue exercising their rights to ensure the government is fulfilling their needs and deliver their promises. I want to express my sincere gratitude to my supporters, voters and campaign teams and everyone who support me.#

In Pictures: Internally displaced victims in Paletwa Township



Chin villagers displaced by conflict between the Arakan Army and the Burma Army in Paletwa Township, Chin State (Photos: Khumi Media Group)

In Pictures: Hakha demonstration by landslide victims



(Photos: The Hakha Post & The Chinland Post)