

# Rhododendron News

Bimonthly Publication since 1998



Chin Human Rights Organization

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CHRO.CA

Volume XVIII, Issue IV

July-August 2015



Press conference on natural disaster in Arakan and Chin States, and Magwe and Sagaing Regions (Photo: CHRO); landslides destroyed roads and houses in Chin State, below



Photo: The Chinland Post

**Chin Human Rights  
Organization (CHRO)**

2-Montavista Avenue,  
Nepean, K2J 2L3,  
Canada

Ph: 1-613-843-9484  
Email: [info@chro.ca](mailto:info@chro.ca)  
Web: [www.chro.ca](http://www.chro.ca)

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## Arbitrary Taxation & Extortion

### Govt officials take bribes from job applicants

**04 July 2015** -- The authorities in Chin State are criticized for taking bribes from interviewees who were looking for jobs in government departments.

Heads of the Hakha District and Thantlang general administration departments were accused of accepting bribes from the applicants.

An applicant from Thantlang Township said on condition of anonymity: "I learned from other applicants that money was required to get a job. So, I tried to find the money which was actually more than our family could afford, and gave it to the interviewer."

The applicant said that they had heard the interviewees who had been able to pay more would be given the job.

Another applicant said that they had wanted the job and that they had offered the money, adding: "The authorities might say they didn't demand it. But the fact that bribery is accepted is a big issue."

The authorities were also slammed for making applicants wait hours for the job interviews.

"We were informed we needed to get to the office at 9am. We didn't get interviewed until 3pm and were told to come back the next day," complained the applicant. #

**"I learned from other applicants that money was required to get a job. So, I tried to find the money which was actually more than our family could afford, and gave it to the interviewer."**

**- A job application from Thantlang Township**

### Matupi authorities demand money from butchers

**MATUPI, 15 July 2015** -- The authorities in Matupi, Matupi Township, Chin State forcibly demanded money from local butchers, a butcher who asked not to be named reported to the Chin Human Rights Organization.

He said that they had to pay 4,000 kyats to the Veterinary Department for a medical check-up, 5,000 kyats to the Municipal Department and 8,000 kyats to the Police Forces every week. He added that these payments were made whether they opened their shop or not, in addition to an annual licence fee of 6,600,000 kyats which had to be paid in April.

He said: "When we informed the Municipal Department of the need to renovate the butcher's shops, Van Khaw, from the Municipal Department, told us

that we had to do it on our own as we are the licence holders. And when we said that we would do it on our own if they reduced the amount of money we paid on a weekly basis, he threatened us that our licence would be cancelled if we didn't make the payment."

The shops rented out to Matupi residents by the Municipal Department are in bad conditions and are in urgent need of repair, according to the butcher. He said: "The problem is that we are wrestling with dogs entering and snatching pieces of meat from our shops."

The Matupi butcher said that they were threatened their licence would be cancelled if they were not able to make mithun meat available on a regular basis, adding: "One mithun costs between 500,000 kyats and 700,000 kyats. It is every expensive but if we can't make the meat available once a week, then we are threatened." #



(Photo: Khonumthung News)

## Soldiers extort money from cattle trader

**24 July 2015** - Soldiers from the Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion No. 268 based in Rihkhuaadar, Falam Township extorted money from a local trader on 30 June.

The trader, whose name remains anonymous, said that Sergeant Myo Myint, Lance Corporal A. Sein and Private Kyaw Oo forcibly demanded 2,000,000 kyats for

20 cattle.

He was stopped in Tuisenzang village, Tedim Township while he was taking the cattle belonging to Mang Sian Mung towards Mizoram State of India for sale.

He said that he would not make money from the trip as he had given a lot to the soldiers.

The owner, Mang Siang Mung, had bought the cattle in Kalay, Sagaing Region.#

## Freedom of Religion

### Authorities order Christian pastor to stop construction

**07 July 2015** -- The authorities in Yesagyo, Magwe Region issued a letter to the Chin Christian pastor on 29 June, ordering him to stop construction of a building on his compound.

Rev. Zun Hlei Sum told the Chin Human Rights Organization that he had received the letter from the Yesagyo Municipal Department and that he had been told to immediately halt the construction.

The letter, signed by U Myint Han, an officer of the Yesagyo Municipal Department, warned that action would be taken if he didn't stop the construction as instructed, according to the pastor.

Sum said that he had just been arranging the house, under construction, in preparation for a Christian

meeting to be held in his compound next week.

Late last month, some residents threw stones at his building, threatening the Chin Christian family.

Sum said that he had learned they were Buddhists who had not been happy with the court's decision last year.

In May 2014, the Yesagyo Township Criminal Court had dropped charges against the Chin pastor.

He said that the *Ma-Ba-Tha* (Race, Language, Religion) committee members had also got involved, behind the scenes, in organizing the attacks.

"I have reported the cases to the police and ward administration authorities following the first incident on 22 June. But they haven't come to see us yet," Sum added.#

## Other Human Rights Violation

### Chin political party objects to destruction of Christian cemetery

01 July 2015 -- The Chin League for Democracy strongly condemned the destruction of a Christian cemetery in Taungphila, Kalaymyo of Sagaing Region.

The party said that it had objected to the authorities wiping out the cemetery without the knowledge of the Chin Christian group that owned the place.

A group of government officials led by U Maung Htoo, chairman of the Kalay District Administration Committee, had ordered the annihilation of the grave-

stones including fences and over 400 frangipanis on 4 June 2015.

In their letter sent to the Union government on 1 April this year, the Sagaing authorities had been aware of the fact that the cemetery legally belonged to a Christian fellowship comprised of Baptist, Assembly of God, Four Square and Roman Catholic denominations.

The CLD said that the authorities had acted against the laws regarding land confiscation and that what they had done could be seen as discriminatory measures against people of different religions and races.#



A transformer installed in Matupi town, Chin State (Photo: CHRO)

### Transformer installed despite residents' objection

**MATUPI, 10 July 2015** -- Lian Thang, head of the Matupi Town Electric Department, told the Power Seven company to put up a transformer in front of a resident's house despite the house owner's strong objection, Pu Bithang reported to the Chin Human Rights Organization.

He said that it was being installed in front of Pu Bikhaw B's house on the Matupi-Hakha main road in Sanbawng ward and that it was not safe for vehicles and people passing by as it was only about 4 feet away from the edge of the road.

Bithang, son of Pu Bikhaw B, said: "When we told the company to change the site, they told us that they were just following the instructions. So when we told Lian Thang about it, he said that it could not be

moved as the work had already started."

Lian Thang added: "I can't change the site. If you want to, you can write about this online, and report to any government departments. We have never heard anyone being electrocuted in Matupi. It is not dangerous for people."

Thang also said that the initial site chosen for the transformer installation had been another place about 50 feet away from the main road but it had been cancelled as the company had found it difficult to carry required materials, which could cost a lot.

The transformer is set up for Matupi as part of the National Grid power lines and the installation project is taken as a contract by the Power Seven company.

House owner Pu Bikhaw B wrote a letter to relevant government departments for changing the site but he has not received any response yet.#

## Road construction forces removal of gravestones in Hakha

**17 July 2015** -- Dozens of families in Hakha are forced to transfer their relatives' tombstones following a new road construction which will run across the cemetery.

At least 60 families have already moved the remains of the dead bodies and their tombstones to a new cemetery for fear that the authorities would destroy them.

Families said that they had started transferring as they had realized that the government-run road construction would pass through the cemetery and that they would be demolished without their knowledge.

A resident in Dawrthar ward said in the *Hakha Post*

that the authorities had said the road would not go through the cemetery but the road had been constructed very close to the tombstones, adding: "We were worried that they would be destroyed."

Ral Kham, a leader of the town elders, said that they had announced residents would be informed whether the tombstones needed to be removed or not, but that people had started on their own initiative.

Pa Thang, a resident in Thantlang, about 20 miles from Hakha, said that people had had to move tombstones because of new projects, without receiving any support from the government.

According to sources, there are about 200 tombstones in the current Hakha cemetery.#

## Humanitarian & Development Situation

### Communities provide relief aid to Paletwa conflict-victims

**11 July 2015** -- Paletwa Khumi communities in the US, Malaysia and Singapore contributed fund towards helping villages displaced by clashes between the Burma Army and the Arakan Army.

According to the *Khumi Media Group*, members of a community-based committee gave a total amount of 3,000,000 kyats (around 3,000 US dollar) to the villagers on Tuesday.

Peter Lawilu, a KMG editor, told the Chin Human Rights Organization that the victims were very happy to have received the contribution, adding: "They are encouraged as they know they are not forgotten."

There are more than 350 Khumi Chin IDPs (internally displaced persons) who are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, according to the Chin Human Rights Organization.

Lawilu said: "Most of the victims are now in the outskirts of Laungtin village. They are gradually getting used to their new place but are still struggling as the rainy season has already started. They are in need of our help."

He added that the villagers were not dependent only on humanitarian assistance and that they tried to find ways to support themselves every possible way, adding: "They also build makeshift schools to teach their children."

A Khumi community leader, who asks not to be named, said that officials from government departments had visited and made some donations.

"However, we haven't heard much about Chin communities, churches and organizations providing assistance to the victims, their Chin fellows," he added.

According to the Khumi community, Burma Army soldiers are still at the village of Pyin So, whose residents had fled following the attacks late March this year by the Arakan Army.

The community called on the Chin State government to provide necessary humanitarian assistance and find long-term solutions to problems facing the conflict-victims in Paletwa township.#

"They also build makeshift schools to teach their children."

## Telenor to construct phone towers in Matupi

**18 July 2015** -- A Norwegian telecommunications company, Telenor, has begun construction work to plant mobile phone towers in Matupi in the southern part of Chin State.

It said that the construction had started on 16 July and

that it would be finished in a month.

The plan included the erection of two towers in Matupi town, one near Ngalang village and other smaller ones in villages, according to the *Chin World Media*.

The company said that they expected to make the service available to the public in Chin State for use early next year. #

## Landslide-hit villagers struggle in new place in Falam

**19 July 2015** -- Zalai villagers resettling in a new place called Lungpi in Falam Township, Chin State are struggling for their survival.

They had moved out from their village, Zalai, which was hit by heavy landslides in August 2013.

Ms Hmun Thlau and Ms Hrinthim said in the *Chinland Today* that they were collecting stones and making gravel for road construction but they couldn't find enough work to support their families.

"We have to send our children over the age of 16 to work in Mizoram State of India. But they do not earn enough for us," said the two women.

They indicated that they had not received any support from the authorities yet since they had moved to the new village.

"Some of our children have to go to middle and high schools in Falam as we have only a primary school in our village. It is very difficult for us," they added.

The villagers had temporarily stayed in shelter in a jungle soon after Zalai, home to about 400 people, was put in danger by landslides. #



Destruction in Paletwa Township (Photos: Khumi Media Group)

break the following day.

"Some houses were afloat while others were carried away by a strong current. As it happened in the middle of the night, people were not able to keep many of their belongings safe," he added.

According to the *Khumi Media Group*, 20 households from Ward No. 1 and another 10 from Ward No. 2 were inundated.

## 30 houses flooded in Sami

**26 July 2015** -- Heavy rains caused a high rise in the water level of the river Pui on Saturday night, flooding 30 houses in Sami town, Paletwa township, Chin State.

Ai Maung Hla, a youth leader in Sami, said that it had started raining from around midnight until day-

Hla said that families hit by the flood were temporarily staying at the houses of relatives and neighbours.

"We, the youth group, are trying to get detailed data about the victims and their needs," Hla said.

As of today, the affected villagers have not received any assistance. #

## Authorities blamed for ignoring landslide-hit victims in Matupi

**27 July 2015** -- Residents in Matupi town, Chin State have criticized the authorities for taking no action to help victims affected by landslides.

Salai TH, who asks not to be named, said that a house belonging to Boi Luep had been in danger of collapsing because of the landslide, and that officials from government departments had come and gone back without doing anything to help deal with the situation.

"U Maung Maung, a sergeant from the Matupi Police Force, visited the site on Sunday but he just left without even saying anything to the locals," he said.

"Today, members of the fire brigade department came in the morning. They also left without doing anything," Salai TH said.

He added that no officials from the town and ward general administration offices had been seen on the scene.

Meanwhile, landslides and flash floods have destroyed houses and roads in other parts of Chin State.#



(Photos: Chin World Media and Lairawn Times)



## Landslides hit Chin State, Kalay

**28 July 2015** -- Heavy rains have caused landslides in Chin State and Sagaing Region, destroying houses and roads.

In Hakha, at least five buildings were destroyed by landslides and families were urged to evacuate from their houses to safer places.

"We have had heavy rains for a few days. Actually, it has continuously been raining since Saturday," Nu Sui, a Hakha resident, told the Chin Human Rights Organization.

"It is not only the landslides but also flash floods that have brought houses to destruction and displaced many families," said Sui.

Some state and boarding schools are being closed in the capital as the rains continue, according to sources from Hakha.

Private cars and several buses are blocked on the Hakha-Mandalay road by landslides.

In Kalay, Sagaing Region, many houses are flooded, and university and colleges are being closed.

### 25 July, Paletwa Township

In Sami, about 30 houses have been flooded as the water level of Pui river rises following heavy rains.

### 25 July, Matupi Township

A heavy landslide taking place in Khuabawi ward, Matupi town has put a house, belonging to Bawi Lung, in danger.

### 27 July, Falam Township

A road leading to the Basic Education Primary School No. 3 in Falam was destroyed around 10am by landslides, following heavy rains.#

## About 700 buildings evacuated in Hakha after landslides

**31 July 2015** -- About 1,000 families have evacuated their houses in Hakha, Chin State as flash floods and landslides continue following continuous heavy rains.

It is estimated that about 7,00 buildings, including government offices, schools and private houses, have been left empty as they are in danger of collapse.

Salai Thawng, a Hakha resident, said: "Rains continue and an increasing number of houses are being destroyed or getting unsafe for families to live as there are cracks on the ground."

The victims, estimated to be more than 2,500, are now being sheltered temporarily at churches and halls.

Mai Sui, from Hakha, told the *Chinland Guardian*: "Victims from nearby villages such as Khuabe, Beute

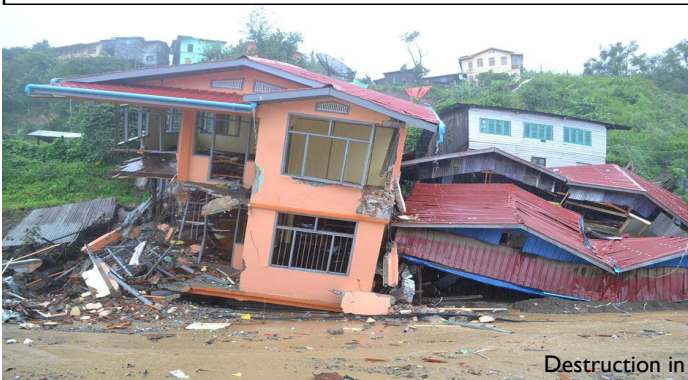
and Hniarlawn are also fleeing to Hakha as their places are severely affected."

"They walked on foot in the rain without eating anything on the way. I saw some children completely wet and feeling cold. They said they hadn't had any food for nearly two days. It's very heart-breaking," she added.

According to sources, at least two wards in Hakha - Khuahlun and Dawrhun - have been completely deserted.

"We are in a very dangerous situation. Hakha is now being cut off from all corners as the roads are swept away. Shops have run out of stock including rice, oil and other stuff. If this continues for another few days, we all will run out of food," said Thawng.

Community leaders said that they had not got the exact number of victims and damages but it was likely to increase. #



Destruction in Hakha (Photos: Lian Hakha)



## Govt must quickly respond to disaster: Chin organizations

**01 August 2015** -- Burma's government has been urged to take immediate action to provide humanitarian assistance to disaster-hit victims in Chin State and other parts of the country.

The Chin National Front and the Chin Human Rights Organization called on the State and Union governments to 'quickly and meaningfully respond to the disaster'.

In a statement released today, they

said that the government should allow 'unfettered access for local and international aid organizations' to provide effective relief and rehabilitation for thousands of victims.

During an emergency meeting convened in Rangoon today, the two parties formed the 'International Chin Humanitarian Information Network (iCHIN)' to raise awareness of humanitarian issues facing the Chin people in Burma.

It also aims to collect data on damage caused by heavy landslides and floods in Chin State, and parts of Sagaing and Magwe Regions and Arakan State.

Meanwhile, eight Chin political parties and other civil society groups wrote a letter to President Thein Sein today, requesting timely food supplies to be provided by helicopter to victims.

The groups indicated that the victims in Chin State had been in a very difficult situation as landslides and flash floods had destroyed roads and bridges.

Thousands of people are being displaced and left homeless by the unprecedented level of continuous heavy rains causing landslides, mudslides and floods. #

## Houses destroyed in Rezua and Zotung areas

02 August 2015 -- Landslides destroyed more than 20 buildings and forced residents to evacuate at least 16 houses in Rezua and Zotung areas of Chin State.

The damage comprised six houses in Rezua, six in

Siatlai, four in Lotaw, and five in Lungngo villages.

Khamh B Lian said: "Roads are completely lost and communication has been cut off. We believe that other villages are also affected by this natural disaster."

He said that paddy fields, estimated to be almost 60 acres, had been swept away by floods.#

## Residents abandon villages in Tedim township after landslides

10 August 2015 -- People in at least five villages in Tedim township, Chin State have deserted their places, severely affected by landslides.

All Kahngen villagers, 127 people of 40 households, arrived in Tedim on foot yesterday after having abandoned their houses.

Paupi, from Tedim, said that they were taking shelter in a Baptist church building.

"We received news that all residents in Vongmual and Tuisau villages are also arriving here soon as their places are no longer safe," said Paupi, a Tedim community leader.

He said that Laibung villagers were moving to Akluai village and that Tuivial residents would find a new place nearby to resettle.

Five villagers from Kahngen, about 18 miles away

from Tedim, are being taken to the Tedim hospital as they suffer from diarrhoea.

Paupi told the *Chinland Guardian* that they had not received any humanitarian assistance from outside the town, adding: "As we are running out of food supplies, we are in urgent need of support."

In Hakha township, residents in at least two villages, Khuabe and Beutu, had abandoned their places since the beginning of this month.#

"We received news that all residents in Vongmual and Tuisau villages are also arriving here soon as their places are no longer safe,"

- Paupi, a Tedim community leader.

## Humanitarian aid given to families short of rice in Thantlang

11 August 2015 -- The World Food Program provided rice and yellow split peas for families running out of food in Thantlang town, Chin State last Saturday.

Salai Peng, a Thantlang resident, said that they were facing food shortages after roads leading to the town had been destroyed by landslides since late last month.

353 families with an estimated number of about 2,000 from Wards No. 1, 2 and 3 received rice and

yellow split peas, according to the *Chinland Post*.

The ration, according to Peng, was basically calculated based on the number of family members and consisted of about 24 cups of rice and four cups of yellow split pea per head.

Peng also said that the distribution had been managed by a group of the town-elders, the township general administration office, and deacons of the Christian churches.

Recent heavy rains had caused landslides, mudslides, flooding and flash floods across Chin State, destroying roads, bridges, houses, and even whole as well as villages.#

## Chin State to take longer to recover from disaster

**12 August 2015** -- Chin communities and organizations said that rebuilding what had been destroyed by landslides in Chin State would take much longer than in other parts of the country.

They highlighted that people in the country's western state had lost not only their houses but also their land in the destruction caused by the tropical storm known as Komen.

Dr Sui Khar, a general secretary of the Chin National Front, said in his speech at a press conference held in Rangoon last Wednesday: "What had happened in Chin State was different. Even if the rains stop, people can no longer get back to their houses, use the roads and go back to their villages because they are completely destroyed or not safe for them to live in anymore."

Hundreds of houses were destroyed, many more put in danger of collapse and residents forced to abandon their villages following heavy rains that had caused landslides, mudslides and flooding.

According to the State government and local communities, part of the capital, Hakha, has to be completely abandoned and residents should be relocated.

Salai Bawi Lian Mang, Executive Director of the Chin Human Rights Organization, said that the authorities should take action more quickly and effectively in collaboration with local communities.

"They must provide necessary support for their immediate needs. What they said to the people must be tangible and instantly translated into action," Mang said.

Chin State, the least developed and one of the most mountainous regions, is the only state in the country that has no airport.

Cung Lian Thawng, from the Chin Committee for Emergency Response and Rehabilitation, said that people in Chin State had been trapped as bridges and roads had been destroyed, adding: "Now, food shortages are being feared as food supplies and humanitarian aid cannot be transported and delivered."#

## Kachin donate 100 million for landslide-hit Chin victims

**14 August 2015** -- The Kachin Independence Organization made a donation of 100 million kyats towards helping victims affected by landslides in Chin State.

The Chin National Front said that the contribution had been received yesterday and that it would be given out in nine townships.

Dr Sui Khar, a general secretary of the Chin National Front, said: "We are grateful to have received the payment. In consultation and collaboration with local communities, it will be distributed."

In an emergency meeting held in Rangoon today, Chin communities said that the whole region was directly or indirectly affected by heavy rains causing major landslides, flash floods and flooding.

Khar said: "Today, we have Chin representatives

from across the state, Arakan State, Magwe and Sagaing Regions, and other parts of the country. We hope that we can discuss how the donation can be channelled through to people on the ground."

The communities admitted that they were not able to get detailed information about the actual situation, including damage and loss, in their areas as roads and bridges had been destroyed.

"Collecting data is really challenging. We don't have Internet access and very limited telephone services, especially in villages. We are still trying hard to get more information," Hau Kim Mung, from Tonzang Township, told the Chin Disaster Response Coordination meeting.

Chin churches, communities, organizations and individuals from inside and outside of the country have also been making contribution towards helping victims stranded in their places.#

## Mizo youth group donate rice for Hakha victims

**15 August 2015** -- The Young Mizo Association, from India, gave 200 rice bags (1 rice bag weighs about 50kg) for landslide-affected victims in Hakha, Chin State.

The Hakha Rescue Committee said that they had received the donation on Wednesday morning.

Chan Hrem, a HRC secretary, said in the Hakha Post: "We are very grateful to the central YMA. The rice is distributed through ward administrators to families who have run out of food."

As of today, there are 6,051 people of 1,285 fami-

lies currently taking shelter at seven different camps in Hakha, according to the statistics by the Chin State government.

Landslides had destroyed roads and bridges connecting Hakha with Kalay and Mandalay, Sagaing Region - where basic commodities and goods are imported from.

The committee said that there were many victims who were not staying at the camps and that families across the town were running out of food owing to road destruction.

The Young Mizo Association, originally called the Young Lushai Association, was established by Welsh Christian Missionaries and pioneer Mizo Christians on 15 June 1935.#

## Truck carrying humanitarian aid destroyed in road accident

**19 August 2015** -- A truck carrying rice bags and other goods donated for landslide-affected victims in Hakha, Chin State skidded and plunged about 300 feet off the road early this morning.

The accident took place on the slippery road near Chawngtlai village in Mizoram State, India, injuring the driver who was later admitted to the Khawzawl hospital and destroying the vehicle.

Salai Dawt, a leading member of the Chin Emergency Relief Committee in Delhi, said: "The vehicle was carrying 250 rice bags and some edible goods from Champhai to Farkawn. Out of the total, 28 bags of

rice were ruined."

The remnants of the donation, given by the CERC, were being taken in a vehicle towards Farkawn village with the help of the Young Mizo Association (YMA) and Mizo Hmeichhia Pawl (MHCP), a women group.

Truck owner Pu Lalthanmawia said that he would contribute necessary bags of rice for the damage, according to the CERC, a committee formed by Chin refugees stranded in the Indian capital.

"We are grateful to all those helping the driver and his assistant, and sorting out our contributions. These were bought in Aizawl with fund raised by Chin refugees. We hope that the Hakha victims receive them safely," said Salai Dawt.#

## Burmese actor helps Chin victims carry rice

**27 August 2015** -- Landslide-affected victims in Chin State were taken by surprise when Wai Lu Kyaw, a Burmese movie star, carried rice on his back for them.

The actor, who founded the Wai Lu Kyaw Foundation, yesterday walked on foot with a bag of rice (about 50kg) towards Zokhua village, about 20 miles away from Hakha.

Salai Thang, a Hakha resident, said: "Quite a lot of people have come and gone. But he is different from them. He stays with the victims and shares their burden.

Whatever and whoever he is, he sets an example for all of us."

His foundation donated 100 bags of rice, gallons of oil and bags of salt for Chin victims, whose villages have been cut off from communication by major landslides that had destroyed roads and bridges.

A member of the Myanmar Red Cross Society, Kyaw is known for his active involvement in humanitarian and relief work.

He had also visited other parts of the country, affected by recent flooding.#

## Burma's celebs visit landslide-struck Hakha

**28 August 2015** -- A troupe of singers, musicians and movie stars yesterday arrived by helicopter in Hakha, Chin State, giving comfort and support to landslide-hit victims.

The group comprising actor Lwin Moe, Chin actress Zung Cer Mawi, better known as Thet Mon Mying, and her husband, Iron Cross members Lay Phyu, A Nge, Myo Gyi, Chit San Maung and Khin Maung Thant visited the devastated areas and victims at camps.

Mai Dim, a Hakha resident, said: "We feel encouraged when they come to Hakha in person. And I also believe that people feel they are not forgotten and left alone in the disaster."

Together with Aung Ko Win, owner of the Kan-bawza company, who facilitated the trip, they provided financial donations and other goods for humanitarian and reconstruction needs.

The group flew back to Kalay, Sagaing Region early this morning after spending a night in the Chin capital owing to bad weather conditions that had made it impossible for them to return yesterday.#

Destruction in Tuikhingzang (Photo: Sang Uk Cung)



## Mudslides destroy village in Tonzang Township

**29 August 2015** -- A village called Tuikhingzang, aka Hakhalay, in Tonzang Township, Chin State was struck by mudslides at about 3am in the morning yesterday.

Ngun Lal, a Chin resident in Kalay, Sagaing Region, who went to the scene at dawn, said: "The village has been completely under thick mud and it has got to be abandoned."

Tuikhingzang, a hillside village bordering Kalay Township, Sagaing Region, is home to 352 people of 66 households.

He said that the mudslides had taken place gradually and that residents had managed to run away from the incident although it had been at night.

"The villagers said that the hill above their village had been affected by recent heavy rains causing landslides and soil erosion. Debris and mud which had been piling up on the hillside had started flowing toward the village, thus flooding the houses," said Lal, chief editor of the *Chin Times*, a local newspaper in Kalay.

No one is reported dead and injured.

Some of the victims are taking shelter at a temporary camp built near Thado village in Tonzang Township while others, mostly women and children, are staying at Khampat village and in Kalay with the help of Chin communities and churches.

Hung Ngai, chief minister of the Chin State government, had made a visit to the village, according to government sources.#

## Event & Protest

### Thantlang protest demands amendments to constitution

**12 July 2015** -- Residents in Thantlang town, Chin State walked to the street yesterday, demanding amendments to Article 261 of the 2008 constitution.

They said that they would like to request the amendment to the Article in accordance with the public wishes.

Siang Cung Bik, an event organizer, said in the *Hakha Post* that they had mainly opposed the provision indicating the State chief minister would be appointed by the Union president.

He added that they had called for the chief minister to be elected and for the establishment of a genuine federal State government.

They also called for an amendment to Article 436 which says that the prior approval of more than 75 per cent of all the representatives of the Union Assembly (Pyidaungsu Hluttaw) is required to amend most provisions of the constitution.

Organizers said that they had peacefully marched along the main road and that officials from the Immigration and Population Department, and the Police Force had provided security services.#

Demonstration in Thantlang  
(Photo: The Chinland Post)



### NLD provides election training in Sami

**15 July 2015** -- The National League for Democracy gave training in election to residents in Sami town, Paletwa township, Chin State late last month.

The NLD organized its first program to educate Sami locals on election in preparation for the upcoming November 8 general election.

Ai Myo Htet, an NLD youth secretary, said that they had taught them what they had got to know about election, including how to cast their votes.

He added that they had also helped them correct errors in details of the voters collected by the State Election Commission.

"There are many errors such as names and National Registration Card numbers. We work together with the locals to make correction," Htet said.

The Sami training, held from 23 to 24 July, was attended by about 200 people.

Ai Aung Shwe, an NLD youth assistant secretary, said that they had also planned to organize election training in Mindat and Tedim towns in the near future.

According to sources, there are more than 50,000 eligible voters in the whole of Paletwa Township and at least 10 political parties are to stand for election.

The NLD said that they would contest in five constituencies in the Chin township, which shares borders with Arakan State and Bangladesh.#

## Political parties hold conventions in Hakha

**22 July 2015** -- The Chin National Democratic Party and the National League for Democracy in Hakha Township held general meetings in preparation for the November 8 general election.

The CNDP organized its general assembly on 17 July with 170 members in attendance, confirming and announcing candidates for constituencies in Hakha Township.

And the NLD elected its candidates to contest in the Hakha Township constituencies at its general

meeting held on the same date.

Also, the Chin League for Democracy provided election training at its office branches in Hakha from 20 to 23 July.

The CLD said that it would contest in eight townships of Chin State, Arakan State, two townships of Kalay and Tamu in Sagaing Region, and Rangoon.

On 7 July, the Chin Progressive Party held its conference in Kalay, Sagaing Region.

The Union Election Commission announced that political parties can submit a list of their candidates between 20 July and 8 August.#

## Situation of Refugees

### Chin refugee hit dead by car in Malaysia

**14 July 2015** -- A Chin refugee man identified as Ngun Leng was hit to death by a car in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia while crossing the road at about 5pm yesterday.

The 25-year-old Chin, from Lungkhin, Hakha Town-

ship, died on the spot in a hit-and-run accident taking place near Taman Sungai Besi.

Information regarding the car and its driver is not yet known, according to the Faiceu newsletter, published in Hakha Chin in Malaysia.

The body of Ngun Leng is taken to a hospital in Kuala Lumpur for a post-mortem examination.#

### Chin refugee knifed by Indonesian in Malaysia

**24 July 2015** -- A Chin refugee man was stabbed on the right side of his chest by an Indonesian worker in Serdang, Kuala Lumpur at night on 22 July.

Cung Bawi is being treated at a Kajang hospital for his injuries after he was attacked with a knife around midnight by the Indonesian with three accomplices.

"The four Indonesian workers took him onto the third storey of the building under construction. Luckily, security guards at the site called the police and he was taken to hospital," said Salai TL Thang, a Chin refugee in Malaysia.

"The Indonesian worker kept asking Bawi to give him a coil of wire for electricity but Bawi told him

that it belonged to his boss. So, he didn't give it to him. That's the main reason behind the attack," Thang added.

According to the Faiceu Media Group, all the construction workers ran away from the site in fear of raid and arrest by Malaysian authorities.

Bawi, originally from Hriangkhan village, Thantlang township, Chin State, is currently living in Pasar Pudu, Kuala Lumpur, with his wife and their young child.#



Cung Bawi being treated at a hospital in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia  
(Photo: Faiceu Media Group/Facebook)

## Other News

### New school in Falam Township short of teachers

**02 July 2015** -- A new high school branch, opened last Tuesday in Tio village, Falam Township, Chin State is in serious need of teachers.

There are only 11 teachers, five assistants and three school staff for more than 600 students in the village, which borders India.

A Tio resident, who told the *Chinland Today* on condition of anonymity, said

that there were not enough teachers for students and that new buildings were needed but the authorities had not done anything yet.

Students from nearby villages including Vutbuak and Kawilam in Tedim Township, and Lianhna, Cawhte, Tircirh and Hmuhluah in Falam Township also go to the Tio school.

Tio, with about 400 houses now, had started its own community-based teaching without any school building in 1993 before it was granted a government-run primary school in 1998.#

There are only 11 teachers, five assistants and three school staff for more than 600 students in the village.

### Village admin crashed to death by car in Falam township

**08 July 2015** -- A vehicle plying regularly between Falam town, Chin State and Kalay town, Sagaing Region hit Siah Khur dead in Zonglei village near Valung in Falam Township on 4 July.

Khur, a 54-year-old village administrator of Hmunli, died in the accident while he was travelling on his bike toward Kalay.

His body was taken to the Falam General Hospital in the evening for a post-mortem.

The vehicle's driver is said to have run away following the accident and has not been since found.#

### New political party registered to contest in Chin State, Sagaing Region

**10 July 2015** -- The Union Election Commission granted the registration to a new political party that will contest the upcoming general election in Chin State.

The Zo Ethnic Region Development Party, headquartered in Rangoon, received its new official status yesterday.

Kham En Nang, a leader of the party, said that they would try to stand for election in Tedim and Tonzang townships in Chin State, and Kalay and Tamu townships in Sagaing Region.

He added that the party would focus on increasing awareness of the name 'Zo' among the Chin and on regional development.

The UEC this week announced the 8th of November as a date for the general election in the country.

Sources confirm that at least 13 political parties are to contest in Chin State although detailed information on the total number and their candidates is not available yet.

According to the announcements by the UEC, there are 330 constituencies for the Lower House (Pyithu Hluttaw), 168 for the Upper House (Amyotha Hluttaw), 644 for region or state Hluttaws and 29 for region or state Hluttaws for national races.#

## Saihmun health centre destroyed by fire

**21 July 2015** -- The sub-rural health centre in Saihmun, Falam township, Chin State was burnt to the ground at about 1am this morning.

The State Health Department said that the wooden building mainly used as an office and dispensary had been completely burnt and that they didn't know the cause of the fire.

No casualties were reported in the incident.

According to the department, a public health supervisor from the Falam General Hospital is being temporarily assigned to a vacant post in the village where one midwife is supposed to be in charge.

There are only 298 sub-rural health centres in Chin State, the least developed region that has 1,407 villages. #



Roads leading to Hakha, Chin State destroyed (Photo: Salai Mazawn & Lairawn Times)



## Hakha coach services stop as landslides continue

**30 July 2015** -- Coach and minibus services in Hakha, Chin State have been suspended for three days following landslides caused by heavy rains.

The shuttle from Hakha to Mandalay, Mandalay Region and Kalay, Sagaing Region has come to a standstill as landslides destroy roads.

Pa Mawng, a Hakha passenger travelling towards Mandalay, told the Chin Human Rights Organization: "Just over about 20 miles from Hakha, landslides swept away the road. We couldn't continue our journey so we went back to Hakha."

Sources said that at least ten vehicles had been stranded between Zokhua and Ruavan villages on the Hakha-Mandalay road.

Salai Ling, a Hakha resident travelling from Kalay town, Sagaing Region, said that their minibus couldn't move on as the road had been completely lost and that he had had to rent a motorbike to continue his journey.

The Taungzalat bus company said that they had to stop providing services until the roads were made safe enough for them to take passengers on.

Mai Sui, from Hakha, said: "It is still heavily raining. Landslides continue to happen in the town and nearby villages. We hear news that many roads are destroyed across Chin State."

She said that a lot of people were afraid their houses would be taken away by landslides, especially during the night. #

## Government

### CM cancels plans to construct Hakha police quarters

**03 July 2015** -- Hung Ngai, chief minister of the Chin State government, cancelled plans to construct new police quarters upstream of the lake in Hakha.

Siang Mang, chairman of the Hakha elders, told the *Chinland Post* that the chief minister had made the decision after inspecting the site.

"The Hakha elders informed the police commissioner that we objected to the construction plans although work on part of the area had already started," added Mang.

He said that the issue had been brought before State ministers for discussion and that the chief minister had been informed of the result.

Police Commissioner Myint Lwin had been criticized for avoiding meeting with the town-elders and community leaders regarding the matter. #

### CM rejects permission to hold Paletwa seminar on Chin history

**PALETWA, 22 July 2015** -- Hung Ngai, chief minister of the Chin State government, rejected the plan to use a banner 'Paper Presentation on Chin History' for a seminar held in Paletwa town yesterday, Mai Aung Ma Phyto reported to the Chin Human Rights Organization.

Phyto, one of the event organizers, said that the Kaladan Development Foundation and the Gender and Development Initiative had held the seminar at the Anglican Church hall in Rihkha ward, adding: "We had planned to have the first session for reading historical collections made by the Chin History Collection Committee (Rangoon) and documents submitted during the 2013 Chin National Conference."

However, as the Chief Minister said that those historical documents could be read in the seminar only after they had been submitted to the Myanmar Historical Commission, it was held with the banner reading 'Discussion for the Chin', instead of 'Paper Presentation on Chin History', according to Phyto.

She complained: "When Han Win Aung, head of the Paletwa General Administration Office, informed the administrator of the Rihkha ward in a letter, he used the word 'dinner party'. It was not a dinner party organized by State Minister Kyaw Ngein for the Paletwa Township General Administration Office head. We were later allowed to use 'Discussion for the Chin' only after we requested them for it."

About 80 participants, including representatives of Chin tribes (Mro) based in Kyaukdaw and Myauk-Oo towns in Arakan State, attended the seminar. #

### Chief Minister rejects land request for resettlement in Hakha

**20 August 2015** -- Hung Ngai, Chief Minister of the Chin State government, refused a proposal of land for resettlement requested by landslide-affected victims in Hakha.

Residents in Khuahlun ward made a request for a new location in the western part of the town to resettle after their place had been completely destroyed by landslides.

However, the chief minister responded to them negatively, adding that it had been reserved for construction of a new police quarter and academy.

Khua Kung, a Khuahlun community leader, said in the *Hakha Post*: "We are now homeless. We approached him as our father to help us, he shouted at us instead of wiping our tears. He made our sadness worse."

Khuahlun residents are currently taking shelter at temporary camps arranged by both the State govern-

ment and local communities after having abandoned their devastated ward early this month.

Kung said that they had gone to Hung Ngai's office on 17 August and that their second attempt had failed again as he had not wanted to meet with them.

Hakha community leaders and town-elders are planning to write a letter to President Thein Sein regarding the issue. #

## President cancels his planned trip to landslide-hit Chin State

**23 August 2015** -- The authorities said that President Thein Sein had called off his plan to make a trip to landslide-affected Chin State owing to bad weather.

Van Thawng, State minister of agriculture and live-stock, said: "The President has waited three days in Kalay town, Sagaing Region. Unfortunately, he is not able to come this time because of the weather."

The president returned to Nay Pyi Taw this evening as the weather conditions had not improved sufficiently for the helicopter to fly to a mountainous town like Hakha.

He said that he would make another attempt to visit Hakha, the State's capital, in the near future, according to the Chin minister.

Meanwhile, the State authorities had made preparations to welcome the country's supremo for three consecutive days, ordering selected high school students and government employees to turn up at the venue around 7:30am.

A government employee, speaking to the Chin Human Rights Organization on condition of anonymity, said: "We were told to get to the golf course on Friday, Saturday and this morning, too. We waited the whole day each day without eating properly."

Salai Kian said that they had seen a helicopter arriving in Hakha on Friday and that they had thought it had been the President, adding: "We didn't know what happened to his helicopter."

Major landslides, believed to have caused by heavy rains, have destroyed hundreds of houses, roads, and bridges, made thousands homeless and forced residents to abandon several villages in Chin State.#

## President OK's disputed land request for resettlement in Hakha

**24 August 2015** -- Hakha residents of Khuahlun ward, completely destroyed by landslides, sighed with relief when President Thein Sein gave the green light to their request.

Van Thawng, State Minister of Agriculture and Live-stock Breeding, said during a press conference yesterday that the request by the victims for a new location to resettle had been granted.

"Chief Minister Hung Ngai told the President about the issue when they met in Kalay, Sagaing Region. The President said that what the public had wanted had to be given," said the Chin minister.

Earlier this month, the Chief Minister had refused their request, saying that the location chosen had been kept aside for construction of new police buildings.

Salai Bawi Lian Mang, Executive Director of the Chin Human Rights Organization, who is visiting Hakha, said: "This is a clear indication of the centralized governing system being practiced in the country. Like other ethnic nationalities, we would like to have a State government that practices a de-

mocratic and federal system."

President Thein Sein cancelled his plan to visit devastated Hakha, the capital, owing to bad weather after having stayed in Kalay, Sagaing Region for over two days.#

**"This is a clear indication of the centralized governing system being practiced in the country. Like other ethnic nationalities, we would like to have a State government that practices a democratic and federal system."**

**- Salai Bawi Lian Mang, Executive Director of the Chin Human Rights Organization**

## Interview

### HIV/AIDS conditions in Chin State: interview with STD team leader Dr Mang Biak Kung

14 July 2015 - The number of HIV/AIDS-infected victims is on the increase, according to recent media reports. In an attempt to find out the actual situation in Chin state, the Chin Human Rights Organization talks to Dr Mang Biak Kung, team leader of the Sexually Transmitted Disease at the Chin State Health Department in Hakha.

**Chinland Guardian: What is the current statistics of people infected with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) in Chin State?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** According to our records, there are over 200 people, including men, women and children, who live with HIV/AIDS in Chin State.

**Chinland Guardian: The Charity Social Service, a non-government organization, was quoted as saying that there are more than 500 victims in northern parts of Chin State and in Kalay, Sagaing Region. What is your comment about it?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** I have no special comments about the organization. But in reality, the State Health Department must be informed if an organization is planning or has done something related to medical care for HIV/AIDS victims in Chin State. We are not in cooperation with any organizations including international non-governmental organizations (INGO), non-governmental organizations (NGO) and civil society organizations (CSO) if they don't sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) and get permission from the State Health Department. That's how we work.

**Chinland Guardian: How reliable and accurate is the statistics from the Health Department?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** The overall statistics from the State Health Department are cross-checked as much as possible to be reliable. However, there are challenges and problems when it comes to the number of HIV/AIDS victims in Chin State as this kind of disease is totally different. There is some discrimination and stigma attached to being infected with HIV/AIDS not only in Chin State but also across the country.

**Chinland Guardian: Tell us more about the Chin victims.**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** The most common causes of the HIV/AIDS infection are sexual transmission, blood transfusion and needle-sharing.

**Chinland Guardian: Do they receive necessary support from the State government?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** Most of the HIV/AIDS patients in Chin State receive necessary care and support from the Health Department. For instance, they are provided with antiretroviral therapy (ART), other preventive measures and nutritional support.

**Chinland Guardian: What kind of preventive measures has the State government (including the State Health Department) taken from spreading in the future?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** The Ministry of Health, the Department of Public Health and the National AIDS Programme have been taking preventive measures and providing care and support as well as rehabilita-

-tion.

**Chinland Guardian: How effective are they?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** Yes, they are effective. But there are many challenges in terms of providing medical care for the HIV/AIDS patients. Moreover, there are more challenges when it comes to dealing with migrant worker mobile population, social stigma and discrimination facing the patients in our society.

**Chinland Guardian: When was the first victim recorded in Chin State?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** The first case in Chin State was recorded at the Hakha General Hospital in 1995.

**Chinland Guardian: Do you cooperate with UN agencies, NGOs or INGOs to combat the disease from spreading?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** Most of the HIV/AIDS prevention and control activities are undertaken by the Health Department with financial and technical support from UN agencies including the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Global Fund.

**Chinland Guardian: What other things are needed to be done in order to take more effective action?**

**Dr Mang Biak Kung:** As you may be aware, it is not easy to provide comprehensive lifelong healthcare for a person. For example, if a person is infected with HIV/AIDS, he has got to receive a lifelong medical care until he passes away. So, in order to take more effective action for HIV/AIDS patients, good political commitment, strong cooperation and collaboration between the Health Department, NGOs, INGOs and CSOs as well as community involvement are needed. #

## **Food shortages feared in Tonzang Township: Interview with Mungte**

10 August 2015 - Tonzang is one of the nine townships in Chin State seriously affected by landslides and flash floods caused by recent heavy rains. However, the humanitarian situation in the State's western part still remains under-reported because of limited communication facilities and road destruction. Mungte, a Tonzang resident and leading community member who has been actively involved in helping the victims, talked with the *Chinland Guardian* about updates on the ground.

**Chinland Guardian: We have not heard much about the situation in Tonzang township. Tell us more about it.**

**Mungte:** Tonzang is affected by flash floods which swept away many bridges, including the major one over Manipur river. Therefore, Tonzang will be isolated until temporary bridges are constructed. The estimated time to restore transportation to Tonzang is one month. People started buying basic commodities soon after they had heard about the destruction of bridges. So, rice and fuel have been out of stock. Consequently, low income families are most affected as they cannot afford to purchase in large quantities.

The main water pipe to the town was also destroyed by landslides and rain water has become the primary water source.

Old Nakzang village was badly hit. It lost 24 out of 29 houses in the village to flash floods. All paddy fields were destroyed and covered by sand and rock. It will not be possible for the villagers to use their paddy fields again. The majority of the village, including children, has moved to Lungtak village for shelter and

food. They will need to find another location to build a new village. About 120 people are in urgent need of drinking water, shelter and food. Local donors are reaching them but only when the stream can be traversed.

New Nakzang village lost five houses and paddy fields to flash floods. Children will not be able to go to school until a new bridge is constructed as the school is situated on the other side of Manipur river. They are also in urgent need of drinking water.

Khamzang village and Takzang village will have to be relocated because of the landslides. The villagers are currently staying at the nearby villages of Lungtak, Phaitu and Salzang for shelter and food.

**Chinland Guardian: We are aware that it is not easy to get accurate data and information because of communication problems. But can you update us on the amount of damage and the number of people affected as far as you can?**

**Mungte:** At least 100 households are affected and nearly 500 people are displaced in four villages. According to the Tonzang Township General Administration Department, flash floods affected 28 houses, 90 households and 594 people, and destroyed 20 bridges, 16 roads (accessible by car and bike) and 1,003.30 acres of paddy fields; and landslides damaged 62 houses.

**Chinland Guardian: How are the victims taken care of? What about women and children? And do they receive any assistance?**

**Mungte:** Affected people are generally given temporary shelter at school and church buildings. No other site arranged for rescue camps has been found.

Food items and drinking water have been supplied to affected villages by various local donors through individual contribution. However, the minimum requirements are not met. Children are still going to schools in nearby villages where they are given shelter.

**Chinland Guardian: Have you received any humanitarian assistance from the authorities or any organizations?**

**Mungte:** Ar Yone Oo, a non-governmental social development organization, provided rice, oil and chick-peas for affected villages. It is so far the most active organization that has taken immediate action toward helping the victims.

Donated rice from Ar Yone Oo and religious organizations are distributed in town under the management of the General Administration Department.

People will run out of food and drinking water in a few days if the main roads and bridges are not reconstructed soon.

**Chinland Guardian: So, people are running out of basic needs?**

**Mungte:** Yes, rice cannot be purchased in town and it is heard that donors are trying to send rice bags to Tonzang. However, it still depends on the road situation – in order to get humanitarian aid to Tonzang.

**Chinland Guardian: What are the urgent needs of the people?**

**Mungte:** 1. Rice 2. Food items 3. Aqua tab, water purification substances and sanitation aids 4. Latrine 5. First Aid kits and essential medical supplies, and 6. Shelter support

**Chinland Guardian: What would you suggest I do if I want to make donations or help victims in Tonzang?**



Victims queueing to get ration of donations made by Ar Yone Oo in Tonzang Township (Photo: Mungte)

**Mungte:** The first priority is food items, water and sanitation supports. You should contact local civil society organizations and Ar Yone Oo. The second is construction materials for affected villages.

For giving any help or support, please contact the following:

Sister Thawn Niang, Roman Catholic Church in Tonzang on 0947173021, 0973203137

Khup Bawi, Ar Yone Oo, on 0949581841

Tonzang Township General Administration Department on 0947172040

**Chinland Guardian: Share with us the overall situation.**

**Mungte:** Overall, we might say that Tonzang is less damaged than any other townships in Chin State. But communication and transportation are significantly more difficult. Limited communication channels have left the township mute until now. Cell phones used are MPT 450 MHz, through which there can be no internet access. There are no public internet shops. And as yet, there is no media run by local groups or associations.

Soon after the heavy monsoon rain, known as cyclone 'Komen', had hit Chin State, landslides and flash floods swept away major transportation routes including bridges, hence blocking the roads to Tonzang. There will be shortages of food and drinking water in a few days if there is no humanitarian aid or support from inside and outside Myanmar. We need you and Tonzang needs your support.#

## Statement

(Photo: CHRO)



### Joint Statement of the Chin National Front and Chin Human Rights Organization on the unfolding natural disaster in Chin State and western Burma

**Date: 1 August 2015**

The Chin National Front (CNF) and Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) jointly issued this statement following an emergency meeting convened in Yangon in response to the unfolding natural disaster, believed to be the worst ever impact of climate change, unprecedented in the history of the Chin people.

Both parties are extremely concerned about the damage that has been caused by the unprecedented level of continuous heavy rains in the area, where thousands of peoples are being displaced and left homeless.

Information we received reveal that much of Chin State, parts of Sagaing and Magwe Regions and Arakan/Rakhine State, face extreme flooding or landslides, forcing many communities to move away from their homes.

At this difficult time, we call on all the Chin people to stay united and resilient. We also call on the State and Union Government to quickly and meaningfully respond to the disaster, as well as to provide unfettered access for local and international aid organizations, with the view of providing effective relief and rehabilitation for the thousands of victims.

We encourage the Chin diaspora in countries around the world to make efforts to contribute generously to all the victims of the disaster.

Finally, we call on the international community to provide timely assistance to the affected Chin communities.

Contact:

Sui Khar

Secretary General-II, Chin National Front (CNF)

094-005-11999 (or) suikhar@hotmail.com

Salai Van Biak Thang

Media Coordinator, Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO)

092-630-75540 (or) vbthang@chro.ca

### **Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO)**

[www.chro.ca](http://www.chro.ca)

2-Montavista Avenue, Nepean, K2J 2L3, Canada

Ph: 1-613-843-9484; Email: [info@chro.ca](mailto:info@chro.ca)