STATEMENT 83 (6/99) (translation)

1. Maung Kyi Khine (aged 25 years), son of U Paw Khine, resident of Myoma quarters in De-pai-yin town, Sagaing division was arrested by Police sergeant Tha Doon and some constables at 6:30 a.m. on 23 May 1999 on the charge of swearing at his aunt Daw Khe. Though U Thaung Tin, a person in authority of the quarters, who accompanied the police, offered to take responsibility for the man because of his good character, Maung Kyi Khine was taken away to the police station and was told that he could not be released till 4:00 p.m.

2. The same day at about 10:00 a.m. the family took food for Maung Kyi Khine at the police station but was forbidden contact. At about 6:00 p.m. the family was informed by a friend who had connections with the police that Maung Kyi Khine had committed suicide by hanging himself in the lock up. The family had received no intimation from the police up to that time.

3. The family found no signs of death by hanging when they saw the corpse. There was swelling of the face, back and chest with lacerations in the area above the public bone. The medical report and exhibits which were sent by parcel from the hospital were lost in transit to the post office and recovered only on the 26th May 1999 in a bush along the Ye-u /De-pai-yin motor road.

4. We understand that the Shwebo district police unit investigated the case and Sergeant Sein Win (clerk of the station) confessed having himself killed the man. But the family and the public are not convinced. They suspect that the whole gang of police who have control at the station killed him. Sergeant Sein Win, the confessor to the murder is at large with no action taken against him.

5. The residents of the town are enraged because the Secretary of the De-pai-yin township authority is flaunting publicly and saying "Do you know the times we are living in? It is stability and development times. Problems will be leveled out. What cannot be leveled out will be squeezed out. What cannot be squeezed out foul play will be applied."

6. The total absence of fellow feeling by the authorities in their treatment of the people and their dishonest and cruel actions is causing grave disgust, anger and hatred. We believe that the people have lost faith in the term "rule of law".
7. Because of such events, a sense of insecurity pervades and no matter where they are, outside honestly engaged in legitimate trade or inside suffering imprisonment they feel unsafe. We denounce in the strongest terms the ruthless brutality and the irresponsible and negligent conduct of the authorities. We see a great need for propping up the corroding and declining administrative and judicial pillars of the country and push for reform.

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

Rangoon
30 June 1999