

NLD Statement 51/2000:

National League for Democracy  
No: (97/B), West Shwegonedine Road  
Bahan Township, Rangoon

Statement 51 (4/00) (translation)

1 We have been informed that on their own initiative, a group of cultivators in Pan-tawpin village tract, Arakan State, Kyaukpyu District, built up the Jyat-tan embankment in the early part of 1999.

2. After that, at the urging of U Khin Maung Ye (Chairman of the village tract authority), the Lieutenant Colonel who chairs the Kyaukpyu Township PDC gave orders to the eight village tracts in the neighborhood of Pan-daw-pyin Koo-do-seit village tract to take turns in building up the embankments.

3. The villagers of Kandaw, Min-chaung, A-lan-chein and other village tracts collected Kyats 600 each making a total of Kyats 6 lakhs which had to be given to Lt Colonel Ohn Myint to exempt them for this embankment task. Villagers from Gyin-gyi village tract collected one and a half lakhs and paid the chairman U Khin Maung Yi to get exemption from forced labour for embankment building.

4. On the 2nd March 2000 U Khin Maung Yi (chairman ) and three members of his team accompanied by three members of the police force arrived at Koo-do-seik-kye village and gave orders again and issued threats for them to build up the embankment or pay Kyats 3000/-each.

5. The villagers were disgruntled because they had already made payments for this cause and now were hard pressed to make ends meet to survive. They suggested that approaches should be made to other villages.

6. When they realized that they could not achieve anything at this village they helped themselves to intoxicating drinks and behaved outrageously arresting, abusing, assaulting, and even breaking and smashing water pots at the entrance to the village. This aroused the ire of the villagers, young and old. Their tolerance reached its limit and they returned the blows in self-defense. The police constables attempted to open fire but not one shot could be fired. U Khin Maung Yi then grabbed the rifle out of the hands of one policeman and tried to shoot but not a single bullet was released.

7. The villagers were truly inflamed because of this and not only did they retaliate, they seized and captured Chairman U Khin Maung Yi, Maung Way Tin, a member of U Khin Maung Yi's team, and three policemen viz. Maung Khin Thein, Maung Nyunt Chay and Kyaw Aye Sein. Eighty villagers then took their 5 captives to the Infantry Battalion No: 34 at Kyaukpyu town.

8. Our information is that the said U Khin Maung Yi had been removed from his position in 1999 because of criminal misappropriation of a sum of Kyats 7000. He then paid one lakh to the district chairman Lt Col Ohn Myint and was re-instated after three days. U

Khin Maung Yi bragged that he could never be removed from his position during the lifetime of this government. That was the first occasion when he was captured and taken to the Infantry Battalion No: 34 for firing shots with a rifle and threatening and abusing the entire village.

9. His behaviour has not changed. He still exploits the villages and extracts money by devious means and is now building for himself a 20 ton motor launch.

10. Treating the masses in outlying states and regions as slaves to do their bidding by authorities at all levels is reprehensible and condemned by us. We ask the higher authorities not to look away and condone but to take appropriate action immediately.

Central Executive Committee  
National League for Democracy

Rangoon  
19 April 2000