

NLD Statement 54/2000:

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

Statement 54 (4/00) (translation)

1. In Kyone-ma-nge township, Irrawaddy division there are 315 cultivators who have to go to Wa-ka-ma town to obtain agricultural bank loans from which an average of Kyats 400 is deducted for the following:

- Kyats 15 per acre
- Kyats 200 for compulsory purchase of calendar
- Kyats 100 - additional.

The total sum illegally obtained from these farmers amounts to over Kyats 126000/-

2. At the paddy purchase centers where "duty paddy" has to be supplied, willingly or unwillingly, a deduction of 16 baskets for every 100 is made to offset the amount of discolored paddy. We have been told that some farmers who cannot supply this "duty paddy" because of losses suffered through insects and pests, have been arrested and imprisoned until the full quota is supplied which they have to purchase from the open market at Kyats 70,000/- per 100 baskets.

3. Each household had to pay the authorities Kyats 2000/- for the cost of digging a 5000 foot long trench for the summer paddy crop. Then again each household had to dig earth at the rate of Kyats 1500/- for "one quota". Written notices containing threats of action for flouting authority were issued to those who did not comply.

4. Diesel oil for the summer paddy crop planting is issued only to those who can pay the money in advance. The authorities sell the remaining diesel oil in the black market and appropriate the money for themselves. An additional sum of Kyats 300/- per bag of fertilizer is charged even though this cost had been included in the costing for paddy sold in advance at the rate of Kyats 2700/-.

5. This exploitation and victimization of the farmers and rural population for the benefit of the lower hierarchy should not be condoned by the upper crust in power. We urge that they take appropriate action to rectify the situation.

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

Rangoon
20 April 2000