

NLD Statement 109/2000:

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Statement 109 (7/00) (translation)

Today is the 53rd anniversary of Martyrs Day. It was on 19 July of 1947 that General Bogyoke Aung San, father of the Tatmadaw, architect of our independence, leader of the struggle for complete independence, together with other martyrs were assassinated. The assassins were a group of traitors who intended to grab state power the short-cut way by use of force (weapons).

Bogyoke Aung San and the martyrs died as a result of an attempt to solve political issues through violent means by a group of thugs who did not have the people's trust, nor were they imbued with the people's love. They resorted to guns because they did not have the strength which is an integral part of the people's support.

The demise of Bogyoke and his associates was the biggest loss for the people of Burma. They can never be replaced. In Burma's history it will be remembered as the most loathsome incident and the darkest day.

Bogyoke's demise resulted in a waning of Burma's history because it was at a time when the foundation for an independent Burma was being laid. It was at a time when Burma's future was being planned and mapped out. A future for post independence.

Though half a century has gone by since Bogyoke and our leaders were gunned down the nationalities like brothers and sisters still grieve and remember them. We owe those martyrs much. Our present status as an independent state is the equivalent of their lives. They gave their lives, their blood for our independence and we can never repay the debt.

Bogyoke Aung San was a true and good leader. From his youth as a student leader he had no self-interest but with great courage, zeal and industry he adamantly worked for his country and the people. Because of his simplicity and honesty and service for all the people of the country he was greatly respected and trusted by the different nationalities and people who live in this country. The effects of his assassination are still felt in the country.

General Aung San was the father and creator of the Tatmadaw - the Tatmadaw that played an important role together with the people every step of the way for Burma to obtain her independence. The Tatmadaw was born from within the people. Bogyoke Aung San trained them and built them up to work and make sacrifices for the good of the people and not for their own self aggrandizement.

Members of the Tatmadaw have no special privileges. They are not empowered to bully the people. They must respect the wishes of the people. These are the words of Bogyoke Aung San on the occasion of the Officers Graduation Ceremony (13.3.44). "xxxxx The military is not here to persecute the citizens of the country. It is not here to display its power by reliance on its weapons. The military must be the slave of the country. The country must not be the slave of the military. xxxx Though we hold weapons, we must not act unjustly, we are not enemies of the country. We are friends of the people. I am making these statements unequivocally for all to understand. xxx In this country or for that matter in any other country, it is not only the soldier who loves his country. There are others who make sacrifices and serve their country in many ways. Therefore it is necessary to change your attitude and to have the true military spirit xxxxxx"

Bogyoke was making this comparison. The military and the people are like the various grass-like marsh plants and the islands to which they are attached. Both are dependent on each other. Like the bow and the stern of a boat - there has to be coordination and consultation in working together for the good of the country.

Just as there is need for the people to respect the tatmadaw, the tatmadaw must defend all the people of the country. There must be loyalty. This is why Bogyoke Aung San said "this tatmadaw has not been created for one person but for the whole country; not for one party or a group of persons, but that it was for the whole country and all the people xxxxxxxx that is why this tatmadaw must be loyal and defend the whole country and all the people. This is why ours must be a genuine loyalty".

Bogyoke Aung San had in mind the future of the country and the union of all its people so he put much effort in working for unity of all the nationals. The Union of Burma is inhabited by many different ethnic groups. He realised the importance of unity and brotherliness to be established after independence was achieved. Because he and the other leaders were mindful of this they asked for independence of all the frontier regions at the same time as Burma proper. He wanted equal rights for all and equality for all. Having the future welfare of Burma in mind he mentioned "xxxxxx in rebuilding Burma so that the people's wishes can be fulfilled, and every ethnic group living in Burma can shape its own destiny according to its own wishes xxxxxxxx".

He also said "xxxx For the whole country to prosper we need to pool our resources - human, wealth, money - and all work together. If the Burman, the Karen, the Shans, the Kachins and the Chins want to go their own separate ways there will be conflict and no one will benefit. Only by working collectively can we derive results benefiting all. Only by trying it out we will know."

About Burma and democracy and its principles and human rights Bogyoke Aung San also made statements and instructed the people thus:-

"xxxxx We must make the democratic system popular in Burma. Otherwise the people will suffer xxxx The democratic system and independence are compatible. Peace is reassured only by democratic principles. That is why we will build our plans for democracy.xxxxxx" Excerpts from other speeches are:-

"xxxx to express one's views freely, to organize freely, to assemble freely, and to walk freely in single file, to believe, think and imagine freely, to worship freely, freedom from arrest for lawful activities. with education for all xxxx these are the rights and privileges we must have. xxxx".

In the democratic system, laws in the country's government contain provisions for elections for the formation of parliament to govern the country. Parliament is responsible for framing laws. The system of government is one that is responsible to the people. Only then, if the people are dissatisfied with the government a no-confidence motion can be tabled in the parliament and a vote can be taken on it. It is not at all like what the military anashins are forcing the people to do now.

The hopes and precepts given by Bogyoke Aung San are being entirely ignored in Burma today. Democratic rights and human rights have all been lost. The people have suffered and are suffering pressure and persecution at the hands of the mean and despicable successive military anashins. Their paucity in knowledge and foresight, poor administration, willfulness, self-interest and greed has resulted in the people's immeasurable sufferings enduring the bitter shame of being declared the poorest in the world.

In this day and age where knowledge is flourishing in the great wide world, Burma's standing and reputation is pathetic. National education and health have slumped and fallen. A hospitable and vibrant race, fiercely loyal and energetic are being destroyed and manipulated. The national characteristics are changing into dirty lying people. The country suffers the worst human rights violations by the most brutal government. The poorest country in the world. This is now the reputation that Burma has to endure.

Presently, the military anashins are shouting their loudest about national spirit and sovereign power. But the truth is that they are diverting the course of history. They are trying to blot out

what Bogyoke Aung San and the martyrs did to bring the country out of slavery. They are assassinating Bogyoke Aung San and the martyrs all over again.

We are facing a situation that in magnitude and shame exceeds the assassination of Bogyoke Aung San and the martyrs on the 19 July 1947. History will not forgive this.

Bogyoke Aung San foresaw all this and in August 1945 he invited all the political parties and declared:-

"xxx Dictatorship, a creed for hatred between the nationalities xxx a system in which positions are by appointment from above and not through election of the people; a system of rule according to one's whims and fancies, a system where the ruler is out of touch with the people - all these will bring about fascist regimes and the democratic system will not materialize. xxxx "

The fascist regimes that Bogyoke was referring to is exactly the one which Burma is experiencing today under the military anashins.

Furthermore Bogyoke Aung San spoke about isolationism versus intermingling with neighboring countries. This was part of his speech. "xxx We must systematically deal not only with national issues. We must be mindful of issues that effect the different nationalities and the different countries.. By meeting and associating with them we will have nothing to loose but there can be special benefits. In this context our national spirit must be protected and our intention to serve the world and the people of the world must be the moving spirit. xxxxxx "

The Tatmadaw of today needs to truly follow the path and obey the precepts of self-denial that the father of the Tatmadaw Bogyoke Aung San laid down for them. We urge you especially to return to the warmth and comfort that the people can give to you in their hearts.

The country may be independent today, but the people are enslaved. The freedom and independence that Bogyoke Aung San and the martyrs envisioned have not been realized. In acknowledgment and gratitude to the martyrs we urge all the people to join hands with the National League for Democracy in the struggle for our freedom from this 53rd anniversary day till victory is achieved. "Man may die, but the name will never die" is the saying. Similarly the people will forever remember Bogyoke Aung San. This is as definite as definite can be.

Central Executive Committee  
National League for Democracy

Rangoon  
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