

NLD Statement 114/2000:

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

Statement 114 (7/00) (translation)

1. The SPDC has been using forced labour since the end of May, 2000 to date from residents of Mawlaik township for the repairs to the strategically important Thet-care-kyin/Homalin road, a road which branches off the Ye-U, Kalewa motor road in the Mawlaik township (Sagaing Division). Forced labor is also being used for building bridges to cross streams and indiscriminate collection of money from the people is being practised.
2. Cultivators living in the Mawlaik region including those from Sha-bin, Tain-tha, Kin-tat, Kya-inn, Tat-kone, poverty stricken farm coolies and hired hands have all been forced to work in repairing bridges and roads, carrying stones and rocks, digging soil and doing other manual labour for this strategically important road. Those unable to work have had to pay Kyats 300/-, Kyats 1000/-, Kyats 2700/- as prescribed. Bridge toll is collected by the PDC in Ward 1 and 2 (Mawlaik town) of Kyats 300/- per household. Forced labor for clearing drains and digging gutters in the town is also used.
3. Private motor boats and other craft that arrive at Mawlaik jetty are forced to give free of charge one gallon of diesel oil supposedly for the strategic road. Before they are allowed to proceed a sum of about over Kyats 2000/- has to be paid to the six different authorities that await them at the motor boat association. These authorities include the Police, La- A-Ka, Forest, Military Intelligence and Bureau of Special Investigation.
4. Authorities who are steeped in the practice of "forced labour" have reduced the lives and plight of the Mawlaik farmers to that of slaves who day and night have to work wherever, whenever, whatever forsaking their own needs, their health, their fields, their cultivation.
5. This exposes the brazen lie of the military dictators. They declared to the world and the ILO that they had issued orders for the abolition of laws relating to forced labor. Now, this is clear evidence of they themselves violating the orders they issued. This only goes to fortify the fact that they do not keep their promises, and that orders and instructions they issue are meant to be cover-ups and deceptive.
6. The National League for Democracy strongly and vehemently denounces all this use of forced labor not only in Mawlaik but in every part of the country and the indiscriminate collection of money, the bullying tactics and strategies employed by the military dictators. We issue this reminder that entire responsibility lies with the authorities for these illegal activities.

Central Executive Committee  
National League for Democracy

Rangoon  
25 July 2000