

NLD Statement 124/2000:

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

Statement 124 (8/00) (translation)

1. Between the townships of Kalemmyo and Minkin (Sagaing Division) there is a long narrow row of hills under the jurisdiction of the Western Division which is the dwelling place of the Auk-stan Zomi Chin people. This place was invaded by military Kha La Ya battalion commander with 17 of his soldiers and 22 members of the USDA on 2 June 2000. They pulled down the houses in the village claiming that this area was within the demarcated Kya-bin forest land. When the villagers cried and begged them not to destroy their houses the soldiers disdainfully responded by setting fire to the broken down houses and property of the villagers. The villagers had to run away with whatever could be saved dragging and carrying the young and the old. They took shelter in the church.

2. Because of this dastardly inhuman behaviour the Zomi Chin people lost three churches, 63 houses and about 600 livestock (chicken and pigs). A total of about 300 are now homeless and penniless. Prior to that, on 10 January 2000, the authorities burnt down the Ah-ma-ka village school which had a staff of 4 teachers and a student population of 67. To this day the children have no school to attend.

3. Auk-sa-tan village on the hill was founded in 1969 with 80 households and a population of 300. They live peaceably and simply, cultivating crops on hill sides and cutting wood. Our information is that this is a Christian village. In March 2000 the Minkin authorities had given notice that this village was to be vacated the latest by 2 June 2000. Other Burmese villages existing in this demarcated area have not been moved. We have been given to understand that this is a deliberate move out of spite against the Zomi village because they belong to the Chin ethnic group and are Christians. Now, these people cannot grow any crops and have to take shelter in neighboring villages or go deeper into the forest and live in temporary huts made with branches of trees exposed to wind and rain. Children have no food and many are sick

4. In Burma today under the rule of the military dictators, if you are not a Burman Buddhist you are discriminated against. The military dictators regard you as an enemy. They offend and disregard the provisions of Articles 12 and 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which declares that no one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with their privacy, family, home or correspondence etc. and Article 18 which gives everyone the right to freedom of religion. We bitterly condemn them for their despicable behavior and attitude and demand that action be immediately taken against those offenders of the law.

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

Rangoon
7 August 2000