



Chin National Front
General Headquarters
CHINLAND

The Statement of Chin National Front on the Article of Asia Times Titled “India Stamps on Myanmar’s Rebel”

The Chin National Front was formed on 20 March, 1988 with the goals of securing the self-determination right of the Chin people and to establish a federal Union of Burma based on democracy and freedom. The Union of Burma has been successively ruled by illegitimate military regimes that have suppressed all peaceful demands for democratic political change since 1962. The regimes have not only violated the basic canons of democracy and human rights, but have also denied the Chin people to enjoy their right of self-determination, which include the rights to promote, protect and preserve their national identities through peaceful political life. The Chin National Front welcomes and invites any country, nation, organization, and individuals to join in the effort to restore democracy, freedom and federalism in the Union of Burma.

It was with the most utter shock and regret that we came across the article of Bibhu Prasad Routray appearing on the Asia Times Online Edition on September 16, 2005, which slanderously accused the Chin National Front of “surviving by entering into the production and sale of narcotics, teakwood and precious stones. It had developed an extensive network for drugs and arms trafficking in the region, with links to the arms bazaars in Laos, Cambodia and Thailand, catering to the needs of militant groups operating in India's northeast”. In the interest of justice and truth, the Chin National Front rejects this baseless and slanderous accusation based on the following 3 facts.

First, the Chin National Front has never involved in any kinds of drug-trafficking or arms smuggling business, nor has any reason or capacity to provide arms to the militant groups operating in India’s north-eastern regions. The reason is that there has never been narcotic production in Chin State nor is there any profitable business for teakwood and precious stones in the region as Pibhu Prasad Routray claimed in his article. Any person with the slightest understanding of the actual situations of Chin State would know that these claims are ridiculously untrue, especially given that Chin State is one of the most economically disadvantaged regions in Burma in terms of national resources such as 'precious stones' and teakwood. The Chin National Front has never been engaged in drug-trafficking or arms smuggling business in the past eighteen years. On the contrary, the organization has been committing much of its limited resources and capabilities to the fight against drugs in the India-Burma region for the last several years.

Secondly, The Chin National Front has never been involved in arms trafficking business because it does not have any financial or human capacity to run such kinds of business. The Chin National Front does not have any offices in Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand. Furthermore, the Chin National Front never assigned its members as representative of the

Chin National Front in the aforesaid countries. Therefore, the Chin National has nothing to do with arms smuggling business as accused by Pibhu Prasad Routray.

Thirdly, the Chin National Front is an organization which has been working for democracy, freedom, and human rights in Burma and has focused much of its attention on lobbying efforts and advocacy at international and regional level. This is evidenced by the fact that the CNF has created several offices in Europe and North America in order to generate international awareness and support for the cause of democracy in Burma. The representatives of the Chin National Front regularly participate at the meetings of the United Nations, Un-represented Nations and Peoples Organizations, and other international and regional forums. The Chin National Front has been working closely with several Burmese political organizations which are working for restoration of democracy, human rights and federalism in the Union of Burma.

In addition, Bibhu Prasad Routray deliberately or otherwise confused the millions of readers of Asia Times about the Chin National Army and the so-called Chin Integrated Army, which is led by a fugitive wanted by the Indian authorities for several crimes he committed in Mizoram State. Bibhu Prasad Routray not only violated the essence of freedom of expression but also failed to uphold professional ethic by portraying the Chin National Front as drug-trafficking and arms smuggling organization, basing his allegations on un-confirmed sources. The allegations in his article represents nothing more than a slander, unworthy of any academic or journalistic credits.

On the other hand, it appears that by trying to portray the Chin National Front as a gang of criminals which does not have any noble political agenda, Bibhu Prasad Routray's only motive appears to be making a defence for one of the most brutal military regimes in the world. His baseless and slanderous accusation also rendered the Asia Times, the publisher of his article, as unaccountable and irresponsible news agency, which only produces politically motivated propaganda for millions of readers. The article also taints the Institute for Conflict Management as an institution which employs unethical, unprofessional and unprincipled persons such as Bidhu Prasad Routray.

The Chin National Front strongly urges Bidhu Prasad Routray's slanderous article be corrected on the Asian Times on the basis of the woeful and outrageous lack of supporting facts for his claims. We also call on the Institute of Conflict Management to take necessary actions against Bidhu Prasad Routray for violation of professional code of conduct and ethics in order to maintain their honourable organizational image.

Sincerely,

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The Chin National Front
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