



Chin Human Rights Organization

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Burma/Myanmar

Individual Submission to the UN Universal Periodic Review, March 2015

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ABOUT THE CHIN HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION

The Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO) is committed to protecting and promoting human rights through monitoring, research, documentation, education and advocacy on behalf of the Chin indigenous people and other oppressed and marginalized communities in Burma/Myanmar. Through our work, we envision meaningful social change and the full enjoyment of human rights in a just, free and democratic society, where the equal dignity of all human beings is respected and upheld. CHRO was founded in 1995, by a group of Chin activists committed to documenting and exposing years of systematic human rights violations by State actors, previously unreported and unknown to the international community.

ABOUT THE CHIN PEOPLE OF BURMA/MYANMAR

- Around 500,000 Chin indigenous people live in the northwestern area of Chin State in Burma/Myanmar. More Chin live in areas outside of Chin State, such as Arakan State, Sagaing, Magwe, Bago, and Rangoon Regions. The Chin self-identify as indigenous people, and are ethnically and dialectally very diverse. Despite such diversity, the Chin are unified through a shared history, cultural heritage, geographical homeland, traditional practices, and ethnic identity. The missions of the American Baptist Church starting in the late 1800s served to further unify the Chin people through religion. In a country that is predominantly Buddhist, the Chin are 90 percent Christian. Many communities continue to practice traditional forms of animism, while a small minority in Chin State follow Buddhism.
- Chin State is one of the most underdeveloped and isolated regions in Burma/Myanmar, with inadequate road infrastructure, communication systems, healthcare and education facilities, electricity and running water. Over 70 percent of the Chin people live below the poverty line. Shifting cultivation is the primary subsistence livelihood for the largely rural communities of Chin State, who account for over 90 percent of the population.
- In spite of a ceasefire agreement in effect in Chin State since 2012, CHRO continues to document serious human rights violations. An estimated 150,000 Chin are still seeking refuge in India and Malaysia.