

Statement on the Burmese Government's brutal crackdown of peaceful protestors at the Latpundaung Copper Mine Project

Last Thursday's pre-dawn raid in upper Burma left dozens of unarmed demonstrators, the majority of whom Buddhist monks, seriously injured. Security forces used water cannons, tear gas and smoke bombs Thursday to clear protesters from a copper mine in northwestern Burma. We hereby strongly denounce the brutal crackdown against peaceful protesters for the below reasons:

1. Latpundaung area, where the copper mine project is located, is an ancestral agricultural land for many generations of local farming families.
2. This place also is a national monument and religious holy land where the famous Venerable Ledi Sayadaw's residence is located.
3. The former military regime has unlawfully confiscated over 7,800 acres of farm lands that includes sacred religious buildings for the Latpundaung Copper Mine project run by the powerful Burmese military and its partner Wanbao Company, a subsidiary of the North Industries Corporation, China's main weapons manufacturer.
4. The Burmese President U Thein Sein, an ex-military man, who has authorized the crackdowns, does only look to protect the benefits of the military, and therefore, we do hereby strongly condemn his ill-conducts for:
 - Turning a blind eye to the sufferings of local farmers and indigenous families
 - Unlawful confiscation of Burmese national treasure and sacred religious buildings belonging to Venerable Ledi Sayadaw Payagyi
 - Destruction of Burma's nature and environmental resources
5. The Brutal suppression of the Sangha and peaceful protestors occurred on the full moon day of Tazungmone, which is a holy day for all Burmese Buddhists.
6. The Unlawful breakup of the camps and brutal crackdowns of peaceful protestors and sanghas is a crime against humanity.

Therefore, we are hereby demanding:

- To cancel the Latpundaung Copper Mine project immediately and permanently
- To return the lands that have been unlawfully confiscated from local farmers
- To return the sacred buildings belonging to Venerable Ledi Sayadaw Payagyi
- To provide adequate and effective medical treatment to those peaceful protestors and monks who were severely burned, wounded, and maimed by the brutal suppression
- To take appropriate action to the responsible person(s) who ordered this brutal crackdown

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