



## **Drop Criminal Defamation Charges Against Kachin Activists**

October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018

We, members of the World Kachin Congress, a network of Kachin communities and organizations around the world, demand that the Burma Army's Northern Regional Command immediately drop criminal defamation charges against Kachin activists Nang Pu, Lum Zawng, and Zau Jat.

The three activists had been charged under Article 500 of the Penal Code for leading a peaceful rally calling for the rescue of innocent civilians trapped by armed conflict in the jungles of Danai township in April 2018. The charges are totally unjust, mere attempts by the Army to exploit archaic laws to silence the legitimate concerns of the Kachin youths. We also call for an urgent stop to the arbitrary arrests and detention of civilians in Kachin and Shan States, as they are major obstacles to peaceful-coexistence and the building of a genuine federal union.

We therefore call upon the elected government of Burma to exert its full executive power in putting a stop to the unlawful practice of mock up charges and arbitrary arrests, a hallmark of military juntas of the past, contradicting every tenet of democracy and human rights.

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