

Some countries use ILO as a political forum to put pressure on Myanmar

YANGON, 15 March—The Information Committee of the State Peace and Development Council held the press conference concerning attempts made by ILO to put pressure on Myanmar on 15-3-2005 afternoon. The press conference was attended by Minister for Information Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan, Minister for Labour and for Science and Technology U Thaung, Deputy Minister for Information Brig-Gen Aung Thein, Deputy Minister for Labour Brig-Gen Win Sein, Maj-Gen Khin Aung Myint of the Ministry of Defence, Director General of Myanmar Police Force Brig-Gen Khin Yi, departmental heads, journalists, members of Myanmar Foreign Correspondents Club, editors of local magazines and journal publishing houses and invited guests. Followings are excerpts from the press statement made by U Soe Nyunt Director-General of the Labour Department concerning some big nations of the western bloc using ILO as a political forum to put pressure on Myanmar in order to install their puppet government in power:

- In order to manipulate our nation through an individual or a party of their choice, some countries of the west are using fabricated and exaggerated information to put pressure on Myanmar.
- Some of the false accusations which we are confronting today are the issues of forced labour, woman's affairs and the use of child conscription.
- Since regaining independence, Myanmar practiced the non-aligned policy and has never been involved in the world's blocs, regional blocs and treaty organizations. Myanmar maintains friendly ties with neighboring countries which in turn promotes the stability and development of the region. Myanmar refrains from interfering in internal affairs of other countries, abides by international laws and conventions of the international community and accepts the leadership of the United Nations Organization.
- Myanmar became a member of the United Nations on 19 April 1949 and a member of the International Labour Organization on 18 May 1948.
- After joining the International Labour Organization, Myanmar ratified nineteen conventions including the "Forced Labour

Convention No.29, 1930". The Forced Labour Convention No.29, 1930 was ratified on 4 March 1955 and in this regard Myanmar did not receive any complaint under ILO convention No. 29 until 1988.

- After the Myanmar Armed Forces (Tat-madaw) took over the state responsibilities in 1988, some big nations started their campaign of misinformation to put political pressure on Myanmar with a view to manipulating the international community. To use Myanmar at their will and to install the government of their choice, ILO has become a forum to put political pressure on Myanmar
- As a first step, 25 labour representatives of International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) started their campaign by accusing Myanmar of failing to observe the Convention No. 29 and therefore action should be taken against Myanmar under article 24.
- In order to clarify the false accusations made by ICFTU, the Myanmar Government forwarded true information of the prevailing situation to ILO in accordance with the procedures of the International Labour Organization. However, in 1993, ICFTU lodged a complaint ILO to take action against Myanmar under article 24. Then again Myanmar replied to ILO with evidences of photos, video documents and testimony. But these were ignored.
- To continue to put political pressure, William Brett, a representative of Trade Union of Britain and other 24 representatives made a complaint to take action against Myanmar in connection with forced labour under Article 26. Although Myanmar provided ILO with sound evidences, ILO discarded Myanmar's responses and an investigation commission was formed in 1996.
- With strong political commitment to put an end to forced labour in the country, the Ministry of Home Affairs issued Order No.1/1997 on 14 May 1999 directing relevant authorities not to exercise the powers under certain provisions of the 1907 Towns Act and the 1907 Village Act.
- In the latest development, ILO proposed to send a high-ranking official team to Myanmar. Myanmar accepted the proposal and replied that although the visit coincided with the reconvening of the National Convention, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General and Ministers concerned would receive the ILO team.

- In the tentative program which was a product of coordination between me and the temporary liaison officer of ILO in Yangon on 8 February 2005, Secretary-1 of the State Peace and Development Council was to receive the Team during their visit in Yangon. When ILO team arrived, it was received by the State Peace and Development Council Member and the Prime Minister(Head of the Government) , the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Labour Minister .
- Although the Prime Minister himself received the Team , ILO team on its part assumed that they could not accomplish the mandate of the Governing Board and left the country on 23 February 2005.
- Afterwards, the ILO team issued a press release demanding certain points to be fulfilled by the Government.
- In view of the abovementioned incidents, we are of the opinion that ILO neglected the aspirations and activities of over 54 million people of Myanmar and the local NGOs representing the people but based their findings on fabrications made by the Free Trade Union of Burma including a handful of expatriates and insurgents at border areas.
- Free Trade Union of Burma (FTUB) was formed by Maung Maung (a) Pyithit Nyunt Wai. In order to form FTUB and to gain access to ICFTU Maung Maung (a) Pyithit Nyunt Wai was assisted by an American named John Osolink Jr of Asian American Free Labour Institute. He is based in Bangkok.
- Maung Maung (a) Pyithit Nyunt Wai is a son of NLD CEC member U Nyunt Wai. While serving as a sale manager of Myanma Gems Corporation at Diplomatic Store, action was taken against him for loss of gems. He was a corrupted service personal. He absconded to a neighbouring country as a dissident in 1989 and uses the guise of a politician.
- Maung Maung joined Da-nya-ta which is made up of expatriates. Maung Maung in collusion with Da-nya-ta secretary Than Lwin sent Myo Aung Thant and Khin Kyaw with explosives to Yangon to assassinate State Leaders and blow up foreign embassies and important places. Before the court, Myo Aung Thant and Khin Kyaw confessed that Maung Maung (alias) Pyithit Nyunt Wai

manipulated the scheme. Here you can see that he has been committing terrorist acts.

- Hence, the court heard the case and declared Maung Maung (alias) Pyithit Nyunt Wai as a fugitive on 15 August 1997 under section 122(2) of Penal Code and section 512 of Criminal Procedure Law.
- Similarly, nine persons who were arrested with explosives confessed before the Court that they received monetary assistance from Maung Maung (alias) Pyithit Nyunt Wai. Thus, it can vividly be seen that Maung Maung (alias) Pyithit Nyunt Wai is a fugitive insurgent terrorist.
- The false information provided by FTUB which is being led by a fugitive terrorist is none other than fabrications.
- Similarly, fabricated news given by a handful of expatriate dissidents and a fistful of insurgents at border areas cannot be true.
- True information and actual situation can be found amidst over 54 million of the people. Authentic news and true facts can be obtained from local NGOs representing the majority of the people.
- We are of the view that by allowing Maung Maung (alias) Pyithit Nyunt Wai who is a terrorist dissident to attend ILO meetings is putting a terrorist in the limelight or in the glare of publicity.
- Although Myanmar provided ILO with facts concerning the accusations in conformity with the procedures of international organizations we were saddened to witness the response which we had received during the past year.
- However, as a responsible member of the international community, Myanmar will continue to comply with the Conventions which she is a party.