



Statement

(1) The lawsuit filed by the Tanintharyi Regional Government on November 23, 2017, at the Dawei Township Court, accuses the Tanintharyi Weekly of directly and indirectly slandering, undercutting the dignity of, and causing suffering to the Tanintharyi Region Chief Minister, the Tanintharyi Regional Government, and their related administrative activities with its satirical article titled “A Smile for Election Campaign,” on page 14 of Volume 5, Issue 17, thereby amounting to a violation set forth in Article 9(g) of the Media Law of Myanmar.

(2) The Tanintharyi Weekly, which has been published every Monday since 2013, aims to promote good governance and a strong democratic system, not only in the large cities of Myanmar but also in rural areas like Tanintharyi Region, by supporting a system of checks and balances (i.e., legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government) and strengthening the transparency and accessibility of information to the public during Myanmar’s reform and liberalization.

(3) Therefore, the Tanintharyi Weekly has gained strong support from readers and community organizations in Tanintharyi Region, and has continuously grown during its nearly five years of existence.

(4) The Tanintharyi Weekly Editorial Board has always closely followed the Media Law and guidelines of the Myanmar Press Council. The satire titled “A Smile for Election Campaign” in Tanintharyi Weekly Volume 5, Issue 7 was published in line with journalistic standards, as a humorous description that reflects the current era and political landscape.

(5) As The Tanintharyi Weekly recognizes the democratic principle of free and open disagreement and accordingly, we will defend ourselves against the Tanintharyi Regional Government’s lawsuit, in accordance with the law.

(6) In times like the present, with the creation and implementation of a democratic system in Myanmar that can withstand criticism and advance political diversity, this lawsuit will be noted in history to demonstrate how the media is viewed and treated by the Tanintharyi Region Government.

**Editorial Board
The Tanintharyi Weekly
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