

# **The Statement of the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission on Landslide in Hpakant, Kachin State Statement No. (8/2020)**

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1. The Commission is greatly saddened and shocked by the news of loss of lives in a landslide at a mining site in Hpakant Township, Kachin State, on the morning of 2 July 2020. Loss of lives is also the loss of the right to life.
2. Reportedly, over 160 unfortunate people were feared dead in the tragic event. Although it was the worst that has ever happened, this landslide is not the first one and there were some similar tragedies in the past as well, involving loss of many lives.
3. One can easily understand what kind of circumstances have driven those feared dead to risk their lives at those mining sites. Mining operations have been going on in those areas over a decade and it defies understanding why the concerned mining companies have not bothered to carry out human rights due diligence and the necessary risk assessment in their operations at the dangerous sites, though their earnings amounted to billions of dollar a year.
4. The United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights call for due diligence to be practiced by the State and Businesses.
5. The MNHRC is of the view that it is high time the businesses enjoying unfettered freedom to operate unscrupulously should be regulated , asked to conduct human rights due diligence in the conduct of their businesses and to give sympathetic consideration to the issue of remedies as necessary.
6. The MNHRC would like to extend its heart-felt condolences to the bereaved families of those feared dead in the landslide.

The Myanmar National Human Rights Commission

Date – 3 July 2020