

## Culture and Literature Project

TSYO supports the Ta'ang Culture and Literature Committee to provide trainings about Ta'ang literature in the Ta'ang region and Thai-Burma border. TSYO has been assisting the Ta'ang music group financially and also supporting and promoting young Ta'ang people to compose and release Ta'ang songs. TSYO is currently writing a Burmese-Ta'ang- English dictionary and also plan to release it.



Culture and Literature Photo

## Human Rights Documentation and Information

Since 2004, TSYO members have participated with the Network for Human Rights Documentation on Burma (ND-Burma) to establish and contribute to a common database on human rights documentation in Burma. We have released news concerning the human rights situation in the Ta'ang region to different broadcasting media groups, and we built the ([www.palaungland.org](http://www.palaungland.org)) website in 2008. We currently collect data about land confiscation in the Ta'ang region for our report which we plan to release in the end of 2009.

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# TSYO



**T'ANG STUDENTS AND YOUTH ORGANIZATION**  
*Published in March 2009*

## [MISSION]

The Ta'ang Students and Youth Organization - TSYO is working for peace, justice, equality, to build a Democratic country, and to improve the lives of Ta'ang Students, Youth, and Ta'ang people.

## [GOALS]

- To work for peace and to develop the Ta'ang region.
- To increase the number of Ta'ang youth who can participate as leaders.
- To promote gender equality.
- To build a federalist democratic country with equality and self-determination.
- To end the military dictatorship system.

## [OBJECTIVES]

1. To promote the social status of the whole Ta'ang nationality and students and young Ta'ang through youth capacity building training.
2. To cooperate with democratic organizations and national revolution moments, international youth and women's organizations, students and youth congress and our people for the struggle.
3. To implement the activities to preserve and encourage the value of culture, literature, traditions and national identity of the Ta'ang people.
4. To implement the activities for fighting against the drug dispersion in the Ta'ang region.

5. To provide education and increase awareness of health care issues to fight the health predicament of the Ta'ang people.
6. To advocate the international community and alliance groups to protect Taang people and reduce the human right violations in the Ta'ang region.
7. To safeguard the environment and natural resources of the Ta'ang people and Ta'ang land.
8. To implement the working plan to encourage the ability of Ta'ang youth on education.
9. To implement the work plan to organize to get more support from the Ta'ang people.
10. To work against the activities of the military dictatorship system.

## **[ORGANIZATION PROFILE]**

In 1963, the Palaung State Liberation Party, PSLP started to fight for self-determination and equal rights for Ta'ang (Palaung) people. In 1991, they made a cease-fire with

the Burmese regime. However, some PSLP leaders who were dissatisfied and didn't accept the cease-fire agreement formed the Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF) in the Karen area in Manaplaw in 1992.

Some of the PSLF members wanted to support the Ta'ang youth, and established the Palaung Students and Youth Organization (PSYO) on the Thai-Burma border in 1993. The name was changed to the Palaung Youth Network Group - PYNG during the second meeting on 27 December, 1998.

In March 2007, the first Congress (election) of Palaung Youth Network Group [Ta'ang] was successfully held in a liberated area on the Thai-Burma border.

In 2008 December, the second Congress of PYNG [Ta'ang] decided to change the name of the organization to the Ta'ang Students and Youth Organization -TSYO to reflect that although we are called the Palaung in the Burmese language, we will start to call ourselves "Ta'ang" as per our own language.

We also changed the structure of our organization during our second Congress, from a Coordinator system to a Secretary system. The congress elected 7 Executive Committee Members to lead the second term of the TSYO by secret ballot. The Secretary system was implemented.



The Second Congress of TSYO

- The Ta'ang people have their own language and literature, a distinctive traditional culture, their own territory, and a self-sufficient economy.
- When people think about tea in Burma, one community springs to mind: the Ta'ang. Tea is the backbone of the economy and is famous throughout the region as the product of the Ta'ang people.



Map Area

Burma

Map of the Palaung Area



## [BACKGROUND OF THE TA'ANG PEOPLE]

- The Ta'ang (Palaung) people are one of the indigenous nationalities within the multi-national Union of Burma, descended from Mon-Khmer.

## [TSYO ACTIVITIES]

### **Capacity-Building Program**

TSYO provides different kinds of training to Ta'ang youth on human rights, democracy, the rule of law, transitional justice, civil society, community organizing, federalism, and the constitution. The trainings have been provided to the Ta'ang people in the Ta'ang region and on the China-Burma border to increase knowledge of human rights and political consciousness in the communities. By improving the capacity



Basic Human Right and Polticial Training

of the members, we can strengthen future TSYO activities, and the Ta'ang youth can participate more in building a democratic society in Burma through cooperating with other alliance groups.

On the Thai-Burma border, TSYO conducts similar education programs, but additionally we teach information technology, media studies, human rights and politics, basic field medicine, English, and other capacity-building training initiatives. Our goals are for our members to complete the program with improved abilities, knowledge and experience to be able to work more effectively for our organization. In addition, to promote TSYO member's English skills, we receive an English teacher from Burma Volunteer Program (BVP) to conduct regular English classes in our office.

### **Health Assistance Program**

Some members attend health assistance training at the Mae Tao clinic in Mae Sot. Our medics return to the Taang area after they complete the training to assist Ta'ang people by setting up long-term health initiatives. We try to assist our people with

health care and access to medicine in the Ta'ang area. TSYO is working together with the Palaung Women Organization (PWO) to set up mobile clinics and backpack medics in the Ta'ang region to fight and document the health issues.



Health Assistance Training

## Education Project

Since August 2006, TSYO has been collecting facts about the problems of the education system within the Ta'ang area and in Burma. We continue to collect information, and plan to release the report in September 2009.

## Environment Program

We conduct trainings and workshops on protecting the environment. We work to raise awareness of how dams impact the local communities, and we collect updated information about where the Chinese companies and the military regime will build more dams on the Shweli River in northern Shan State. We released a report on the Shweli Dam 1, “Under the Boot” in December 2007. TSYO campaigned against the dam construction, and will continue to fight against future dam projects.



Dam Impact Training