

BURMA HUMAN RIGHTS YEARBOOK 2007
CHAPTER 5

**FORCED LABOUR AND
FORCED CONSCRIPTION**

“No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.”

- Article 4, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

5.1 Introduction

Forced labour and forced conscription remains a pervasive problem in Burma. Unpaid civilian and prison labour is still being widely used by the SPDC in military operations, construction of infrastructure and military facilities or cultivation of subsistence and cash crops. In recent years the SPDC has also used forced labour in its so-called “development projects”, such as the construction of gas pipelines and hydroelectric dams carried out in collaboration with multinational corporations. Those unable or unwilling to comply with demands for forced labour are fined or must send replacements. The primary victims of forced labour are (innocent) villagers in rural areas and increasingly also prisoners from the Burma penal system. In theory, the law provides for the punishment of people who impose forced labour on others, but in practice SPDC military use of forced labour remained a widespread and serious problem throughout 2007.¹

The SPDC’s expansion of troop deployment has been a major factor for the continued use of forced labour in 2007. The ongoing military offensives against ethnic minorities and ethnic resistance groups have increased the militarization of many areas. The widespread practice of forced labour was reported throughout the year especially in Karen, Rakhine, Mon and Kachin states as well as Bago Division. In eastern Karen State and neighbouring districts, SPDC military operations against the Karen National Union (KNU) saw a further increase in 2007. The SPDC military offensive which was launched in 2005 is still ongoing and has contributed to an increase in the use of Karen civilians as forced labour. There were also reports of an increase of the use of land mines by both the armed wing of the Karen National Union and the SPDC army, which further exacerbated the dangerous situation of forced labourers in these areas, especially those portering for the army and those used as human shields.²

The “*development agenda*” of the SPDC regime has increased military control over civilian lives. In Karen State, for example, the SPDC implemented diverse infrastructure and regimentation projects that restrict travel and trade and facilitate increased extortion of funds, food and labour from the civilian population. This exacerbates poverty, malnutrition and the overall humanitarian crisis.³ Continual demands for forced labour place a huge strain on villagers’ daily lives and livelihoods. Forced labour often means that villagers are unable to work on their own agricultural plots for days or even weeks on end. Thus, in rural areas where most people depend on agriculture to survive, regular forced labour has been a primary factor leading to increased food insecurity.⁴

The establishment of internationally sponsored projects such as hydro electric dam sites, gas and oil pipelines and the construction of new roads, ports and railroads are concomitant with an increase in SPDC military presence around these areas. Throughout 2007, the SPDC junta conducted negotiations with a number of neighbouring countries and multinational corporations concerning future development and energy projects in the region, and several new projects began during the year. It has been well reported in the past that these development projects usually mean an increase in militarization in surrounding areas, and an increase in the prevalence of human rights abuses, particularly forced labour and portering.

When the peaceful demonstrations led by Buddhist monks were brutally crushed by the military in September 2007, internationally sponsored projects did not withdraw despite the international outrage. Instructive of the “business as usual” approach was Indian Oil Minister Murli Deora’s visit to Burma’s country’s capital Rangoon, where he signed oil and gas exploration contracts between India’s state-controlled ONGC Videsh Ltd and the SPDC during the crackdown.⁵ Thailand’s largest oil and gas conglomerate PTT PUBLIC CO. LTD. also continued procuring natural gas from Burma⁶ and in late October, France’s foreign

minister said that the people of Burma would suffer if French oil group Total would withdraw from the country.⁷ Numerous reports collected by HRDU however have documented an increase in human rights abuses such as forced labour, as a result of these joint ventures.

Forced military conscriptions continued to increase alongside the high rate of desertions throughout 2007, as the army is facing an acute shortage of trained soldiers. Recruitment of children into the government armed forces continued as a result of this and children as young as 10 were recruited into the army. Human Rights Watch estimated that there may be more than 70,000 child soldiers in the SPDC Army.⁸ Furthermore, there has been an increase of prisoners being used as porters for the military. They are often subjected to torture and other forms of ill-treatment. A number of prisoner porters attempting to escape were reportedly killed.⁹ In Toungoo District, for example, 95 of the over 600 prisoner porters were killed or died as a consequence of the hard labour.¹⁰

In recent years the ILO and other international agencies have reported changes in the SPDC's approach to conscripting forced labour. The ILO has reported that military units no longer tend to issue written orders to village heads to provide forced labour but instead give verbal instructions. The ILO also reported that in some cases the SPDC has substituted demands for forced labour with demands for forced contributions of materials, provisions, or money.¹¹ Moreover, there continued to be issued numerous reports of villagers being forcibly conscripted into the military or forced to form local militia groups. Some of these groups were used during the crackdown on the peaceful demonstrators.

In 2007 the ILO continued to express grave concern at the SPDC's lack of progress on the issue of forced labour. In February, Nyunt Maung Shein, SPDC ambassador and permanent representative to the ILO, signed a '*Supplemental Understanding*' with the ILO, according to which the regime agreed not to retaliate against complainants of forced labour.¹² The ILO agreement allows in theory for citizens to freely submit complaints to the ILO office in Rangoon without fear of retaliatory legal action.¹³ Shortly after the implementation of the agreement, its shortcomings, however, became clear: the ILO remained unable to guarantee the safety of complainants; it maintained no offices outside of Rangoon and ILO Officials remained highly restricted in their travels to rural areas. The requirement that the cases be initially vetted by the ILO and then handed over to the SPDC where it is then investigated "*by the most competent civilian or military authority concerned as appropriate*"¹⁴ is restrictive and has been subject to criticism. An ILO Committee report presented to the International Labour Conference in June echoed ICRC findings that forced labour is still widely used in Burma. Shortly after the ILO Committee issued its findings, U Kra Aung, a 40-year-old carpenter from Thaungtalann village, died while performing forced labour at an SPDC Army camp in Paletwa Township, Chin State.¹⁵ By the end of the year, in response to specific requests by the ILO, the SPDC authorities had released two people imprisoned in connection with the legal filing of reports of forced labour and dropped prosecutions of others.¹⁶

Forced Portering

Reports of civilians and prisoners being forced to carry goods and supplies for the SPDC army continued throughout 2007. Forced portering has dramatically increased since the rapid expansion of the *Tatmadaw*, following the 1988 pro-democracy uprisings. It has occurred since then on a regular basis throughout the country, especially in counter-insurgency areas.¹⁷ Forced portering is very dangerous, as victims are often overloaded and are required to march long distances without rest. Moreover, porters are particularly vulnerable as they are often used as ‘human shields’, forced to walk at the front of military patrols to protect the soldiers from landmines. When porters slow down or collapse, they are often beaten, killed, or simply left by the side of the road to die. The baskets that the porters are forced to carry can contain anything from food and clothing to mortar shells and ammunition, with an average load weighing between 16 and 33 kg. Moreover, porters are seldom supplied with food and have to carry their own rations in addition to their heavy loads.¹⁸

The use of forced porters has changed to some extent over the past three years. Whereas previously civilian porters were forced to work by a battalion for several weeks on end, it is now more likely that a column of soldiers will pass through a village and demand “*emergency porters*” to carry goods to the next village where they will be released if other porters can be secured.¹⁹ SPDC soldiers typically show up in a given village and demand porters to carry rations and ammunition. Alternatively, they send order documents to the village head, who must then take responsibility to arrange the stated number of labourers.²⁰ As a consequence of abuse, harassment and lack of compensation, many villagers, especially those who are weak or sick, choose to hire others to porter in their place. It has been reported that villagers may, for example, provide the stand-in porters with one big tin (12.5 kg) of rice. However, as many villagers have no surplus of rice or money, they are left with no choice than to porter themselves.²¹

When portering military supplies, villagers are required to leave their homes for days or even weeks on end. For example, in May 2007 villagers in Toungoo District reported being forced to work for ten-day stretches before they were allowed to return to their homes and families. Forced portering takes villagers away from their fields and livelihoods and therefore directly affects whole families and communities. Furthermore, porters are frequently used as human minesweepers and must walk ahead of military patrols so that they, and not the soldiers, will detonate any landmines in the way.²² As a result many porters are heavily injured upon their return; or in the worst cases never return home.

Military camps are usually supplied with monthly or bi-monthly rations. These are often brought by truck to a central point from where villagers are recruited to transport the rations to the individual camps. There have been reports of hundreds of civilians being used for these operations. For example, on 4 and 9 April 2007, SPDC Army LIB #599 in Nyaunglebin district forced 250 villagers from Ko Nee and Ta Kaw Pwa (Tak-gon) village tracts to carry food for the Kaw La Wah Lu army camp. The SPDC battalion required 250 villagers to report to LIB #599 battalion headquarters each day, and threatened to capture villagers if less than the required number of villagers showed up.²³

There have also been reports that armed opposition groups such as the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) are using porters. However, in contrast to the SPDC’s brutal treatment of porters, reports suggest that KNLA porters are at least provided with a minimum of food and medical treatment. In addition there are no reports of them being tortured, mistreated or used as human minesweepers.²⁴

Forced Labour

“The villagers who are building the road are girls, boys, men and women. The oldest villagers who are building the road are more than 50 years old and the youngest are 14 years old. My 14-year-old daughter has gone to build the road now as well. The villagers have to carry stones, lay mud to fill the holes and level the road with mattocks.”

- Villager, Bilin Township, January 2007²⁵

Forced labour continues to be among the most pervasive of human rights abuses in Burma. Despite numerous reports by human rights groups, the SPDC continues to deny the existence of forced labour and attempts to present itself as cooperating with the ILO to eradicate such abuses.²⁶ In fact, the SPDC's army, *the Tatmadaw*, routinely forces civilians to work on state infrastructure projects, such as the building of roads, bridges, military bases or even towns, and 2007 was no exception. Throughout the year SPDC authorities continued to use forced labour countrywide to maintain existing civil infrastructures, including transportation and irrigation facilities.²⁷ On 7 May, for example, approximately 1,000 villagers from more than six villages in Toungoo district were forced to clear a new road between the SPDC army camp at Toe Daw and the camp at Yin O Sein. The new road was built right across villagers' rice fields, destroying about 500 acres of crops.²⁸



Villagers performing forced labour constructing the Daw Na Mountain motor road. Scenes such as this are common throughout Burma. [Photo: FTUB]

One particularly brutal form of forced labour is the SPDC's use of villagers as human shields to protect bulldozers engaged in road construction. It has been reported that civilians are forced to sit atop the chassis or walk in front, behind and alongside the vehicle. SPDC forces thus hope to decrease the likelihood of ambushes by liberation armies. Those marching ahead of the vehicle serve as minesweepers, a practice that has long been used to protect SPDC troop patrols and has recently also become an increasingly common tactic employed to safeguard the military's road building equipment.²⁹

The military will typically demand labour from local villages, with the threat of fines if households are unable to supply the required amount of people. The demand for labour is made easier by the existence of registration documents with details of the exact number of inhabitants, property and livestock within a village. Inhabitants have no choice but to apply for national identity cards and register their details or risk fines or arrest.³⁰ The military is furthermore increasingly relying on SPDC-appointed village chairpersons as intermediaries through whom to disseminate demands for forced labour. In some SPDC-controlled areas of Toungoo for example, villagers have reported that the fine for not meeting the stated quota

was 2,500 kyat per person. As is the case with portering, those few who can afford it can choose to hire a stand-in to work on their behalf.³¹

Projects vary in length and intensity, but they always mean that people are taken away from their land and livelihoods without any remuneration in return. The SPDC typically demands that forced labourers serve from early morning until evening.³² Compliance with forced labour places civilians in dangerous situations, as they must travel away from their villages and communities, frequently under the supervision of low level officers and soldiers. Military personnel operate under blanket impunity, knowing that they will not be held accountable for any mistreatment of civilians. Furthermore, the low level officers and soldiers in charge of forced labour projects are under pressure to meet demands, quotas and schedules ordered by their superiors. Threats, harassment, beatings and even killings are not uncommon, and women further risk rape and other sexual abuses.³³ (For more information, see Chapter 3: Extra-judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions). Forced labour often means that villagers are unable to work on their own agricultural work for days or even weeks on end. Regular forced labour in Thaton District, for example, has been a primary factor leading to increased food insecurity.³⁴

Villagers are often ordered to work on large-scale plantations and military-owned paddy fields. In Karen State, for example, such plantations include vast forests of rubber, sugar cane, fruit, or cashew trees.³⁵ Furthermore, villagers are often also required to provide the building materials, money and information alongside the actual project. Materials, such as thatch shingles, bricks or bamboo poles all require labour-intensive preparation. Bricks must be formed from clay and baked, and thatch must be collected from the forest and woven into two meter long shingles.³⁶ This situation is not solely prevalent in areas under direct or partial SPDC control. Villagers living in ceasefire areas controlled by SPDC-allied military groups, such as the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) are subject to similar demands for forced labour.³⁷

As well as forced labour being widespread inside the country, Burma is a source country for women, children, and men trafficked for the purposes of forced labour and commercial sexual exploitation. Burmese women and children are trafficked to Thailand, Bangladesh, The People's Republic of China, Malaysia, and South Korea for sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, and other forms of forced labour.³⁸ (For more information, see Chapter 8: The Situation of Migrant Workers).



Karen villagers performing forced labour for the SPDC providing roofing thatch. [Photo: FBR]

Forced Convict Labour

Human rights organisations have reported the continuous use of forced prison labour in Burma during 2007. It is estimated that as many as 20 percent of prisoners sentenced to 'prison with hard labour' die as a consequence of the conditions of their detention. At least 91 labour camps operate across the country and the thousands of prisoners in these camps are used to build highways, dams, irrigation canals, and to work on special agricultural projects. Prisoners are reportedly being forced to work from 6 am to 6 pm, without rest and the sick and weak are not exempted from work.³⁹ Inmates that cannot afford bribes are condemned to the harshest labour.⁴⁰

Prisoners sent to labour camps are not always informed at their trial that they will be required to perform hard labour as part of their sentence. KHRG has reported that thousands of prisoners have been brought from prisons around Burma to carry supplies and act as minesweepers as part of the large scale offensive in the northern Karen areas since late 2005.⁴¹ In Papun district, FBR News reported that of 1,700 prisoners that had been forced to porter loads, 265 had died. (For more information, see Chapter 3: Extra-judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions). Among the porters in Papun District alone, there were over 20 child porters under the age of 16.⁴² In Toungoo District, 95 of the over 600 prisoner porters were killed or died as a consequence of the hard labour.⁴³



Convict porter carrying water at an SPDC army camp in Karen State. [Photo: FBR]

The living conditions and general treatment of forced prison labourers are widely reported to be far worse than for civilian forced labourers. The work is more dangerous, they have to work even longer hours and health provisions are non-existent. The prisoners are viewed as expendable labour and there are countless reports of their torture, beatings and killings.⁴⁴ (For more information, see Chapter 3: Extra-judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions). It is common for convict porters to carry loads of between 33 and 44 kg, considerably heavier than their civilian counterparts. As a consequence of overwork and poor living conditions, prison labourers frequently fall ill, suffer injury or die. Neither illness nor injuries are treated by the army medics, who state explicitly that medical care and medicine is only available for soldiers.⁴⁵ Moreover, the International Committee of the Red Cross has not been allowed to visit prisons and labour camps in Burma since 2005, and conditions for prisoners are reportedly worsening.⁴⁶

A constant supply of prison labour is assured by the continuing arbitrary arrests, as well as the imposition of lengthy sentences for minor misdemeanours. Those arrested are frequently denied legal process and are often told they will be released on payment of a bribe. If unable to bribe the police or the judiciary they are automatically sent to prison,

whether there is evidence against them or not. Escaped porters have reported that police officers had demanded between 10,000 and 500,000 kyat for their release.⁴⁷

Forced Military Conscription

“The high ranking officers realized that recruitment by recruiting offices alone was insufficient, so they issued orders that recruitment should also be done as part of each battalion’s operations. We had a quota system: we recruit for our battalion and also for other units like the Regional Command. Our battalion was ordered to recruit 12 people every four months. We couldn’t meet this quota, so at every meeting they scolded the battalion officers. To solve the problem, battalion officers pressured their junior officers to recruit.... We set a rule that soldiers who wanted their 30 days’ annual leave must guarantee that they will return with at least one recruit. Any soldier who wanted a discharge after 10 years of service had to get four new recruits for the battalion before we would approve his discharge. That’s why there is a problem of child soldiers”.

- A former battalion commander⁴⁸

Following the suppression in 1988 of the nationwide pro-democracy demonstrations, the ruling military council initiated a dramatic effort to modernize and expand the armed forces. To tighten its control over the population, the SPDC army instituted a dramatic expansion of armed forces personnel throughout the country. Infantry and light infantry battalions tripled in number from 168 to 504. In 1988 the Tatmadaw comprised fewer than 200,000 soldiers, while today’s 504 infantry battalions require over 410,000 soldiers. In reality, however, the SPDC Army has been challenged to meet the rising demands for new staff. At the second tri-annual meeting in 2005, Lt-Gen Thein Sein admitted that 220 of the battalions had only between 200 and 300 soldiers instead of the required 400-500, while the remaining 284 battalions had less than 200 men each.⁴⁹ Service in the armed forces is (for many) a dangerous and gruelling experience and soldiers are often subjected to mistreatment by superior officers. Former Tatmadaw soldiers told Human Rights Watch that many infantry battalions were extremely “top-heavy,” with more officers and non-commissioned officers than privates, and some reported that there were sometimes 20 to 50 amputees held in their battalion to keep up the numbers. They also stated that discharges were only rarely granted even after 10 or 20 years of service unless the applicant would bring in three to five new recruits to replace himself.⁵⁰ Military salaries have been adjusted three times since 1988 but double-digit inflation has increasingly eroded the purchasing power of army salaries.⁵¹ One major reason of the dwindling numbers of soldiers however is the high rate of desertions.⁵²

According to SPDC military meeting minutes, there were about 9,000 desertions during 2006, whereas the army was only able to recruit 6,000. This trend continued in 2007 and the army is thus facing an acute shortage of trained soldiers. In Arakan State for example, the rate of army desertions is still on the increase although the SPDC has raised the monthly salaries of soldiers. According to an SPDC report, 110 private soldiers from ten army battalions under Regional Military Control Command based in Sittwe, deserted just within the month of December 2006.⁵³ Hundreds of soldiers who participated in the Armed Forces Day parade in Naypyidaw in April 2007 had also deserted. Of 300 men from Monghpyak-based MOC #18 in eastern Shan State, who were sent to the new capital for the occasion, only some 140 returned to their command post.⁵⁴

In response to the increased rate of desertions, Adjutant General Thein Sein has called for the army to recruit 7,000 soldiers per month, four times the (actual) monthly recruitment rate reported for mid-2005 and double the rate reported for mid-2006.⁵⁵ Moreover, an SPDC army officer said (during an interview) that regiments were expected to actively recruit in

appointed areas and were fined when they failed to meet quotas: "*Regional and provision commanders sometimes take recruitment into their own hands and conscript local young men into their battalions. Rural towns and villages are targeted rather than Rangoon*".⁵⁶ Between December 2006 and January 2007, DKBA forces in Thaton District began implementing orders from their authorities at Myaing Gyi Ngu to expand the number of soldiers in their ranks. KHRG field researchers reported that villages with more than 200 households were ordered to gather six men each to be soldiers. Smaller villages with 60 households or less were ordered to collect two to three men each. Village heads were fined 600,000 kyat for each soldier short of the quota.⁵⁷

As well as ordering civilians to join the military, SPDC officials continued to order villagers to set up militia groups to help protect the state's interests, and in particular, to assist the SPDC forces in controlling dissidents and dealing with external security threats.⁵⁸ Commonly, civilians are first forcibly recruited into one of the SPDC's numerous GONGOs, and then later required, as members of these GONGOS, to attend military trainings and serve in militias. Members of GONGOs are also utilized in the recruitment of non-members into such militias.⁵⁹ Regional SPDC officials direct these groups to carry out sentry duty at the village, monitor for and report on the approach of 'enemies' such as armed opposition groups, cross-border medical teams, or human rights researchers. These paramilitary groups must furthermore be available for military support service should the need arise. Villages are ordered to support the members of the various militias with funds and food and occasionally to construct barracks to house group members.⁶⁰ In February, for example, military authorities in Arakan State set up people's militias in an attempt to overcome low recruitment levels. The SPDC Army planned to form a 1,000 member strong militia by recruiting 30 villagers in all village tracts in Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships.

The forced recruitment process has taken various forms, including random signature campaigns, poster campaigns, bribes and kidnappings. For example, from the beginning of February, the SPDC Army in Arakan State had been conducting a new recruitment drive for the armed forces with the help of a poster campaign in all townships.⁶¹ These posters depict colourful pictures of soldiers holding weapons along with text in Burmese reading "*You are wanted to serve for the Burmese army*".⁶² Previously, the SPDC army had forcibly recruited Arakanese youth with a quota system which was abandoned following international pressure. In addition to the poster campaign, the SPDC army tried to lure Arakanese youth with bonus money and 'donations' if they joined up.⁶³ In August, the SPDC military in Kachin State also launched fresh recruitment drives in a number of townships, forcing civilians to sign up at random. People had reportedly been told that they would be exempt from the military service if they could pay the military the money required to hire mercenaries to substitute them. However, they were warned that anyone seen outside after 8 pm would be considered "fair game" by military officials. Locals from Inn Gon, Madane Gon and Ten Mile in Moe Nyin Township reported that since the authorities ordered military leaders to find new recruits, a number of people had been snatched off the street.⁶⁴

Burma continues to have one of the highest numbers of child soldiers in the world.⁶⁵ The official age of enlistment in the army is 18 years and the SPDC army has denied allegations that it forcibly conscripts and recruits children. According to Lt. Gen. Thein Sein, Chairman of the Committee for Prevention against Recruitment of Minors: "*No forced recruitment is carried out and all the soldiers have joined the army of their own accord*".⁶⁶ On 22 August, he told the committee that minors themselves were to blame for the problem because they lied about their true age or did not inform their parents that they had enlisted in the armed forces. Chairman Thein Sein further claimed that when parents came to military camps to take back their underage sons, the children often were returned after the cases were investigated. In a tacit admission that there remained underage soldiers in the armed forces, Thein Sein stated that soldiers with stunted growth were not sent to forward areas but were

instead given light work duties at military bases, and that illiterate youth were sent to army schools to be educated.⁶⁷

However, human rights groups continue to charge the military regime with recruiting large numbers of children into its army, sending boys as young as 12 to fight against ethnic minority rebels.⁶⁸ Human Rights Watch estimated that there may be more than 70,000 child soldiers in the SPDC Army. The children are often kidnapped on their way home from school, without their parents' knowledge. They are then brutalised and physically abused during their induction and basic training before being shipped off to fight in the country's ethnic states. HRW states: "*Child soldiers are sometimes forced to participate in human rights abuses, such as burning villages and using civilians for forced labour. Those who attempt to escape or desert are beaten, forcibly re-recruited or imprisoned.*"⁶⁹ Non-state armed groups also recruit child soldiers, and some impose quotas on villages or households requiring them to supply a certain number of recruits, but the numbers are far smaller and some groups have taken steps to tackle child recruitment⁷⁰.



These two photos, taken in sequence, show SPDC army soldiers from LID #88 based at the Naw Soe military camp in Toungoo District Karen State, using convict porters to retrieve supplies and rations from Kaw Thay Der village on 14 February 2007. [Photo: FBR]

5.2 ILO Activities in Burma

Burma became a State Party to the 1930 Forced Labour Convention in March 1955. From the 1960s the International Labour Organisation (ILO) began pressing Burmese authorities, then the Burmese Socialist Program Party (BSPP), for legislative reform and to meet its international obligations. At the time, the BSPP not only refused to rescind these laws, but even strengthened their wording to allow the military greater liberty in the recruitment of forced labour. Since the early 1990s, the increased documentation and advocacy on human rights abuses in Burma led to greater international awareness as well as calls for an end to this form of abuse. In 1996, a letter was submitted to the 83rd Session of the International Labour Conference outlining a complaint “*against the SPDC of Burma for non-observance and the Forced Labour Convention.*”⁷¹ This letter initiated a more involved engagement and in March 1997, a Commission of Inquiry to investigate claims of forced labour was established by the ILO Governing Body. In July 1998, the ILO reported that forced labour was practiced in Burma in “*a widespread and systematic manner*”,⁷² and since then the ILO has attempted to engage with the Burmese regime to bring about an end to this practice.

In response to ILO pressure, in May 1999 the SPDC issued Order 1/99, which banned most forms of forced labour. In the following year, two subsequent decrees were issued which broadened the scope to include penalties for anyone requisitioning forced labour, including members of the armed forces, police and public servants⁷³. In addition, the ILO opened a regional office in Rangoon and a Liaison Officer to Burma was appointed in March 2002. Recognising the limits of giving tangible protection to appellants, the ILO pushed for the establishment of a complaint mechanism. This first mechanism implemented was however short-lived, and after the internal SPDC purge in October 2004 the military blocked all subsequent civil cases and retaliated against complainants.⁷⁴

In April 2005 the relationship between the SPDC and the ILO became further strained following the SPDC’s announcement that “false” allegations of forced labour were detrimental to the dignity of the State and, as such, legal action would be taken against the complainants. This led to the conviction of Su Su Nway on 13 October 2005, who was counter-sued after she had successfully secured the prosecution of local officials in Htan Minaing and Mya Sinnai villages in Rangoon Division for perpetrating forced labour. She was sentenced to 18 months in prison.⁷⁵

At the meeting of its Governing Body in November 2005, the ILO expressed grave concern at the deteriorating situation in Burma and was also severely critical of the regime’s attempts to pressurise and intimidate the ILO by using state sponsored organisations to hold protest rallies against their involvement in Burma.⁷⁶ As the SPDC continuously backtracked on its earlier agreements, the ILO reiterated in November 2006 that it “*deplored the fact that forced labour continued to be widespread, particularly by the army*”⁷⁷ and suggested that it would seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice on the subject of Burma’s continued non-compliance with the 1930 Forced Labour Convention.

With this, the ILO managed to pressure the SPDC to back down on many earlier points of contention, and in 2007, the ILO and the SPDC reached an agreement on a mechanism to tackle forced labour.⁷⁸ On 26 February, Nyunt Maung Shein, permanent representative to the ILO and SPDC ambassador, signed a ‘*Supplemental Understanding*’ with the ILO according to which the regime agreed not to retaliate against complainants of forced labour. Initially the deal, on a trial run for a period of 12 months, was lauded as a “*historic Deal*”⁷⁹ and Richard Horsey the Liaison Officer described it as a “*very positive development.*”⁸⁰ This ILO agreement allows in theory for citizens to freely submit complaints to the ILO office in Rangoon without fear of retaliatory legal action.⁸¹ The ILO office will then make a confidential preliminary assessment as to whether a case involves forced labour, and the

Liaison Officer will then make an order that the cases be investigated by the SPDC authorities.⁸² The ILO Governing Body's decision also included more freedom for the Liaison Officer to travel around the country,⁸³ and the provision of more staff members to assist him at the office.⁸⁴

Shortly after the implementation of this agreement, its shortcomings became clear. The ILO remained unable to guarantee the safety of complainants, it maintains no offices outside of Rangoon, and ILO Officials are still highly restricted in their travels to rural areas. The requirement that the cases be initially vetted by the ILO and then handed over to the SPDC where it is then investigated by "*by the most competent civilian or military authority concerned as appropriate*"⁸⁵ is restrictive and has received a number of complaints. On 21 May it was reported that a facilitator for a complaint by a victim of forced labour in Pegu Division was harassed by local authorities. The facilitator, a 51-year-old villager of Nyaung Wine village, had helped a family whose son had been missing for more than one year after he was forced to serve as a porter for the army. After helping the family lodge a complaint, the facilitator was threatened by township level authorities led by the head of the general administrative department and the local police chief.⁸⁶ On 12 June, a junta "workers' representative" was expelled from the ILO Workers Group on the ground that the Burmese delegate did not represent workers in Burma.⁸⁷ The ILO stated that Khin Maung Oo, who was sent by the Burmese regime to Geneva as the representative of 'workers of Burma', was found to be a supervisor in the Burma Mayson Industrial Co. Ltd of Hlaing Tharyar Industrial zone in Rangoon and not from a democratically elected workers body.⁸⁸

An ILO Committee report presented to the International Labour Conference in June echoed ICRC findings that forced labour is still widely used in Burma. Shortly after the ILO Committee issued its findings, U Kra Aung, a 40-year-old carpenter from Thauungtalann village, died while performing forced labour at an SPDC Army camp in Paletwa Township, Chin State.⁸⁹

Throughout 2007 there were several cases of persons being harassed, arrested and even sentenced after making complaints about forced labour. On 31 June, a group of 20 villagers from Pwint Phyu Township in Magwe division filed a forced labour complaint with the ILO claiming that local authorities had forced them to work on a five acre castor crop owned by the SPDC military.⁹⁰ After sending the letters, the villagers were questioned five times by local officials. However, officials at Pwint Phyu Township Peace and Development Council denied the claims.⁹¹ Moreover, on 18 July, Thein Shwe Maung, a man from Kanaung Village, Rambree Township, Arakan State, was arrested by local police forces after he had led a group of villagers in complaining to the ILO regarding the authorities' use of local villagers as forced labour.⁹² He was released on bail on 10 August on the order of the Rambree court.⁹³ His case however was not completely dropped, and his movements were restricted for further 12 months.⁹⁴ On 27 July, it was reported that SPDC military authorities in Rambree Township had summoned 25 villagers from Kanaung Village to the township administration office. The 25 villagers were summoned as their names matched those on the letter to the ILO testifying to the use of forced labour in the area. The authorities tried to pressure them into signing a statement saying that they were not involved in filing the complaint and that the claims made to the ILO were untrue.⁹⁵ Furthermore, in September, six Burmese labour activists were convicted of crimes against the state and subsequently sentenced to lengthy prison terms. The accusations against four of the labour activists stem from their intent to hold a meeting to discuss labour issues at the American Centre in Rangoon following May Day celebrations.⁹⁶

5.3 Forced Labour Resulting from International Joint Ventures

Throughout 2007 the Burmese junta conducted negotiations with a number of neighbouring countries and multinational corporations concerning future development and energy projects in the region. Several new projects began during the year, primarily hydroelectric dam projects and gas pipelines, as well as rail, road and port projects. Development projects in Burma are as a rule accompanied by an increase in militarization in surrounding areas, which again usually means higher levels of human rights abuses, particularly forced labour and portering. International joint ventures and the significant human rights abuses that follow have been extensively reported and include the use of troops and landmines to secure large development projects. Considering this, the following projects give reason for great concern regarding potential use of forced labour and other forms of human rights violations.

Hydropower in Burma

According to official statistics, hydroelectric power accounts for approximately 30-35 percent of the generated capacity of electric power. A recent article in the industry magazine *Hydropower and Dams* listed 29 projects that are currently under implementation and planning in Burma (excluding any projects planned in Kachin State).⁹⁷ “*The ever expanding list together with the recent announcements indicates a veritable frenzy on the part of the regime to realize its hydropower potential and the foreign dollars it can generate. An official from the Ministry of Electric Power told a local newspaper that the government intends to shift the country’s reliance on gas to hydropower, making it the sole source of electricity by 2030*”.⁹⁸ In 2007 the main projects launched were on the Irrawaddy river, the Salween river and the Shweli river. Most of the dam projects are carried out in cooperation with Chinese (or Thai) companies.

The negative consequences of large dams on fisheries, flood plain farming and river bank cultivation have been well-documented. Similarly, the displacement of large populations living on and near dammed rivers have led to severe problems linked to destroyed livelihoods, such as unemployment, as well as exacerbating social and health problems like the spread of drug abuse and HIV/AIDS. There is no doubt that the series of proposed dams will have a similar impact on the millions that rely on the (Irrawaddy and Salween) rivers. The SPDC does not allow for any community participation regarding the dams, and while the communities affected will bear the negative impacts they are denied access to the benefits.⁹⁹

Irrawaddy Dams

The Irrawaddy is Burma’s largest river, and the main commercial waterway. It runs through the whole country, starting in Kachin State and finally emptying into the Indian Ocean. As part of a larger SPDC government plan of exporting hydroelectric power to neighbouring countries, the SPDC have a series of dams planned for the Irrawaddy, primarily in cooperation with Chinese companies. In late 2006 the state-owned China Power Investment Corporation (CPI) and Burma’s Ministry of Electric Power No 1, signed an agreement to implement seven hydropower projects on the Irrawaddy River.¹⁰⁰ In May 2007, the Irrawaddy Myitsone dam, a 152 meter high hydropower dam, was launched. The dam is located on a stretch of the Irrawaddy River in Kachin State, which borders China in northern Burma. The Irrawaddy Myitsone dam is the first in a series of seven large Chinese dams to be built along this waterway. The SPDC has allowed Chinese companies to build this dam and transmit the energy back to China. The dam will generate an estimated 3,600 MW of electricity and the power will be worth an estimated US\$500 million per year.¹⁰¹ Locals in the

area strongly oppose the construction of the hydroelectric power plant at Myitsone for several reasons: as well as well-founded fears that the project will cause flooding, displacement and an increase in human rights abuses, the dam is being built on a site of invaluable natural heritage to Kachin State.¹⁰² The Kachin Development Networking Group (KDNG), a network of Kachin civil society groups, warned against the consequences of the dam in a detailed report published in 2007.¹⁰³

The KDNG has estimated that 47 villages will be inundated and approximately 100,000 people will be displaced by the Myitsone dam. Moreover, it will have a major impact on the existing problems of unemployment, HIV/Aids and drug abuse.¹⁰⁴ Roads that link major towns in the remote state will be drowned and the floods will thus have an impact on trade, transportation and communication. The dam will furthermore have a negative impact on fisheries, river bank cultivation and flood plain farming. The healthcare system, which is already ranked one of the worst in the world, will be further burdened by an increase in Malaria and the release of toxic methyl mercury from the dam's reservoir.¹⁰⁵ Another real threat is the prospect of dam break as Northern Burma is earthquake prone and the Irrawaddy Myitsone site is less than 100km from the major Sagaing fault line. Dam breakage or unnatural flood surges would be disastrous for the capital of Kachin State, Myitkyina, 40 km downstream. Recent dam breaks in nearby rivers in 2006 destroyed houses and bridges, as well as the power stations and dam structures beyond repair.

Salween Dams

The Salween river is one of Asia's main waterways. The governments of the Salween countries, Burma, China and Thailand, have been pushing for the damming of the river. Plans include the exploitation of hydropower potential and diversion of water from Burma to Thailand. In 2005 the SPDC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) to build a series of hydroelectric dams along the Salween River. As Thailand has exhausted almost all of its domestic hydroelectric capability and is hugely dependent on foreign oil, the country is eager to secure energy deals with its neighbouring countries. In fact, estimates show that Thailand will receive as much as 85-90 percent of the energy produced by the Burmese Salween dams.¹⁰⁶ Of the five proposed dam sites the two that have the most developed plans are the Hat Gyi Dam in Karen State and the Tasang Dam in Shan State.¹⁰⁷ In addition, the Upper Thanlwin Dam is being developed in cooperation with Chinese companies. The dams will have a major impact on the local people who will suffer displacement and dispossessions.¹⁰⁸

It is believed that if the proposed dam projects along Burma's Salween River are to go ahead, over half a million people living at the mouth of the river will lose their major source of drinking water, agricultural productivity and fish stocks. A report, *"In the Balance"*, released by MYPO, states that *"if the water flow in the Salween changes even slightly and the water becomes too salty, it will disrupt a delicate natural ecosystem of water, plants, and fish that Mon people have depended on for generations"*.¹⁰⁹ The report also states that crop yields will decrease as annual sediment are trapped upstream and fertile farm fields laid to waste and that the flow of the water will become unpredictable causing accidents as the dams lie on active earthquake fault lines.¹¹⁰

Along with land confiscation and forced labour, increased militarisation has created human rights abuses. In areas of Toungoo and Papun Districts where hydroelectric projects are planned the SPDC has perpetrated attacks on villages, destroyed homes, forced relocation, deployed landmines in civilian areas and has at times applied a shoot-on-sight policy.⁵⁴ Continued development of the Salween dams is certain to lead to the forced displacement of thousands more villagers as they escape not only inundation by the reservoirs, but forced labour, rape and other abuses by SPDC forces sent to 'secure' the dams.¹¹¹

As well as drawing criticism from human rights groups, the plan to dam the Salween river has been strongly criticised by environmental groups who claim that doing so would degrade one of the region's most biologically diverse areas, one that has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.¹¹²

Hat Gyi Dam

The Hat Gyi dam in Karen State is the project to be completed first and construction started in early 2007. The construction of the hydropower dam is scheduled to run for five to six years.¹¹³ In December 2005 the SPDC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) for joint investment and implementation of the Hat Gyi dam construction, stating that the construction would commence in late 2007.¹¹⁴ In June 2006, China's largest hydropower company, state owned Sino-Hydro, announced an MoU with EGAT to jointly finance and construct the Hat Gyi dam along with the Burmese junta. Following this, Thailand's quota in the investment will be 50%, China's 40% and Burma's 10%.¹¹⁵

The dam will be located 33 km downstream from the Salween-Moei River confluence near the DKBA headquarters in Myaingyingu. The area has been largely depopulated as a result of forced relocations.¹¹⁶

In 2007 the number of military government troops safeguarding the site increased. In July ethnic rebel groups reported that the number of SPDC troops would increase by 800 at the Hat Gyi dam construction site and along the main route to the dam. It was reported that SPDC LIB #549, led by Hlaing Kyi, had replaced the LIB 548 in the vicinity of the dam. They are responsible for the security of the construction site, alongside battalion 555 of the DKBA.¹¹⁷

On 4 September 2007, a Thai engineer employed by the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) was killed in a grenade attack by an unidentified group on a construction site at the controversial Hat Gyi dam. The state-run newspaper, *The New Light of Burma*, claimed the Karen National Union fired heavy artillery shells into the camp near Hlaingbwe Township, located about 180 kilometres (110 miles) east of Yangon. The KNU denied the accusation.¹¹⁸

Local Karen groups, environmentalists and human rights organizations heavily oppose the project, and argue that building dams under the current military junta will effect the survival of more than 10 million people from 13 ethnic groups who depend on the Salween river for survival.¹¹⁹

Ta Sang Dam

The 7,110-megawatt Ta Sang dam in eastern Shan State is set to be the largest of the Salween dams, and with a height of 228 meters it would also be the highest in Asia. In April 2006 the Burmese junta signed a US\$ 6 billion agreement with Thailand's MDX Group to build the Ta Sang.¹²⁰ In March 2007, the construction of the dam began. Over 400 villagers were forced by the SPDC military to attend the official celebration ceremony to launch the construction of the Ta Sang dam.¹²¹

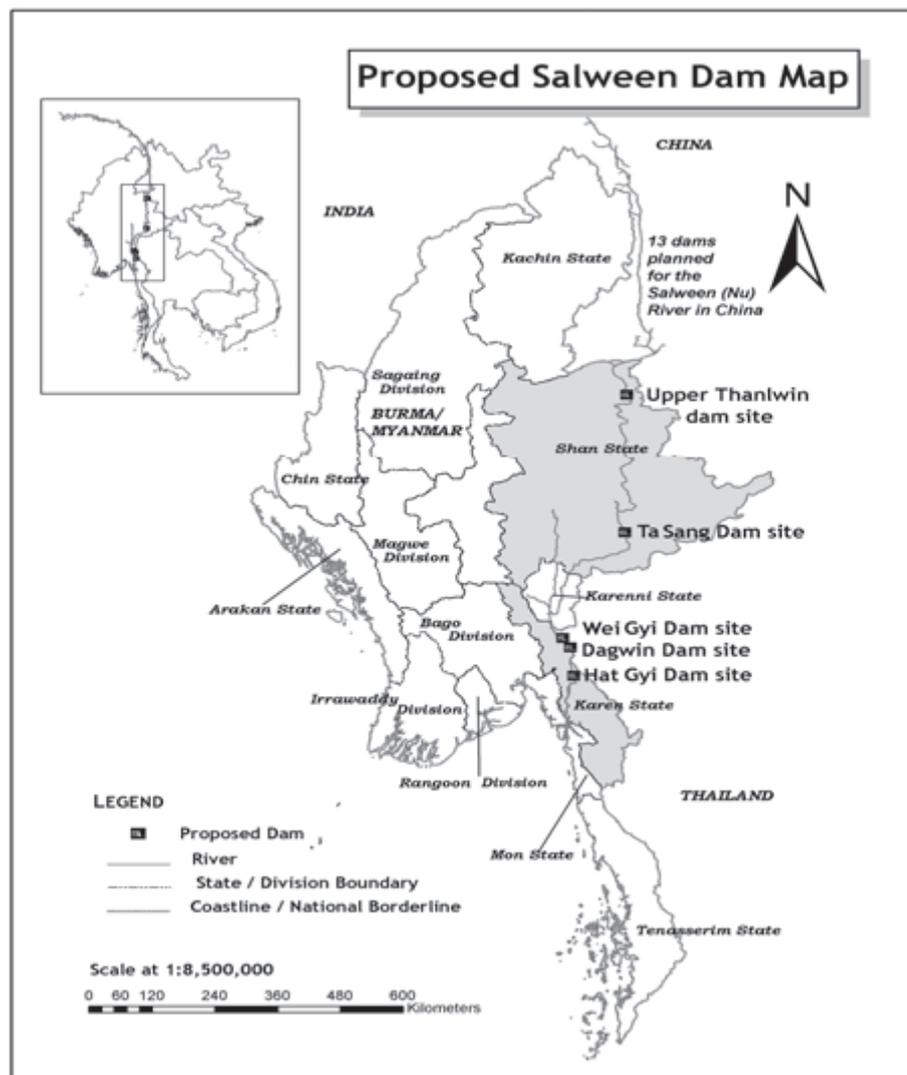
The dam is expected to flood an area of 700 square kilometres, which will have negative consequences on the environment as well as leading to displacement of a large population.

Sapawa, a Shan environmental group, has estimated that over 60,000 villagers near the proposed Ta Sang dam site have already been forcibly evicted from their homes.¹²²

Approximately 35,000 people have been displaced from areas surrounding the proposed Tasang dam site and the livelihoods of those remaining continues to be undermined by forced labour for the construction of roads. They furthermore suffer of the high rates of deforestation caused by large scale logging.¹²³

Upper Thanlwin Site

In April 2007, two Chinese companies, Farsighted Investment Group and Gold Water Resources announced plans to finance the upper Thanlwin Dam in northeastern Burma.¹²⁴ The project has generated widespread criticism from environmental and human rights groups who claim that the dams will force thousands from their homes, depriving people of their livelihoods and that forced labour will be used on the construction sites. However, so far little information has come out about the plans for constructing the dam.



A map showing the locations of the proposed Salween Dams. [Map: Salween Watch]

Shweli River

*“The river is like our factory because she produces fertile soil each year. Every villager plants gardens on the river bank and these are necessary for our family income. If we can sell these crops it supports our children’s school fees”.*¹²⁵

In addition to dam projects on the Irrawaddy and Salween rivers, the Shweli river is the site of three proposed dams; Shweli 1, 2 and 3. The Shweli runs from China into Shan State, and is a main tributary of the Irrawaddy, which it merges into north of Mandalay.¹²⁶ According to a project document, the aim of Shweli 1 dam project is to construct a dam across the Shweli and divert the water along a conduit tunnel through the hills to feed a power station. In April 2007 General Than Shwe visited the site when the project was 51 percent complete. The area is mostly inhabited by the Palaung ethnic group, whose livelihoods traditionally depend on growing tea in the fertile lands near the river. In a report released in December 2007, the Palaung Youth Network Group (PYNG) document how the local residents near the dam site have had their land destroyed and or confiscated for the clearing and construction of not only the dam site and the roads leading to it, but also for the military battalions that have moved into the area.¹²⁷

*“In the seven years since the arrival of the soldiers to Man Tat and the beginning of the project (Shweli 1), the people of Man Tat haven’t had any means to protect their own property or participate in decision making in what is happening in their village and to their surroundings. The military soldiers control the village and take what they want without agreement. Farms, forests products and domestic livestock have been seized by the military. Now there is no easy access to forest produce as before and people are jobless. Formerly villagers sold their extra farm produce to the towns and now they have to buy rice at a high price”.*¹²⁸

The villagers have been forced to work on the dam site and roads leading to it, in most cases without receiving payment. In February for example 100 villagers from two villages alone were forced to pave the road for five days by the order of the regional military commander. The forced labourers did not receive any money for their work.¹²⁹ Moreover, although workers were forced to work on road construction, they were denied jobs at the project construction site which were reserved for Chinese workers.¹³⁰

*“They treated us like slaves; we had to do what they ordered. Some people hadn’t even finished their breakfast but had to go. We worried for our family members’ evening meal, as we have to fend for our living from hand to mouth. If we were helping fellow villagers build something, we could ask for some rice for our family. But this work was for the military; our wives back home had to borrow rice from other people for cooking. The village headman could only breathe easily when the villagers complied with the orders, otherwise he would be punched and beaten”.*¹³¹

According to an article in the state run *Light of Myanmar* in April 2007, “arrangements are being made to implement the Shweli 2 and Shweli 3 hydropower projects”.¹³² However, little information has so far come out about these projects. (For more information on displacement caused by hydroelectric dam projects: see Chapter 16: Internal Displacement and Forced Relocation)

Burma's Oil and Gas Sector

Burma has an abundance of natural gas resources especially in offshore areas. Burma's energy sector provides the country with the largest recipient of foreign direct investment. According to newly-released government statistics, foreign investment in Burma's oil and gas sector accounts for more than 60 percent with a record high of more than US\$ 470 million in the fiscal year 2006-07.¹³³

During 2007, companies from Australia, Malaysia, Singapore, China, South Korea, Russia and Thailand secured new licenses to explore for hydrocarbons off the coast of Burma.¹³⁴ In March, Thailand's PTT Exploration and Production Co Ltd announced two successful natural gas exploration wells off the Burmese coast, about 300 km south of Rangoon. The PTTEP stated the two wells in the M9 concession in the Gulf of Martaban each has natural gas flows of up to 15 million standard cubic feet of gas per day.¹³⁵ In August, new large gas deposits in three offshore natural gas fields in the Bay of Bengal near the border with Bangladesh were discovered.¹³⁶

The role of petroleum companies which invest in and indirectly support Burma's military regime came under renewed spotlight as the world watched the pro-democracy protests and repression unfold on the country's streets (For more information, see Chapter 11: "The Saffron Revolution" – The 2007 pro-democracy movement). The companies' response to the crisis varied - *"from apparent anguish to complete indifference or total silence"* - according to the policy of the governments of the countries where the oil companies are based.¹³⁷ The apparent anguish was however short-lived. Total, for example, justified its continued involvement with the regime by declaring that a withdrawal meant *"others would take our place and could treat local staff not as well as we do"*.¹³⁸

Shwe Gas Development

The largest gas project currently being developed in Burma is the Shwe project, in the Bay of Bengal, off the coast of Arakan State. In August 2000, the Burma Oil and Gas Enterprise (MOGE) signed a deal with the South Korean multinational Daewoo International to explore and develop natural gas fields in the Bay of Bengal. In 2004 they announced the discovery of a large off-shore gas field containing several blocks of gas. The largest block, the A-1, is estimated to contain upwards of 3 trillion cubic feet of gas. The subsequent development project was named "Shwe" which means gold in Burmese.¹³⁹ The estimated market value of the A-1 block alone is US\$80 billion. The Shwe Gas Consortium was set up to oversee the development of the project. Consortium members include Daewoo International with a 60 percent share, the Korean Gas Corporation with 10 percent, India's Oil and Natural Gas Corporation with 10 percent and the Gas Authority of India (GAIL) with a 20 percent share.

The gas field is thought to have a lifetime of around 20 years and it has been estimated that the project will increase the junta's income by 150 percent, bringing in between US\$580 and US\$824 million each year, or up to US\$17 billion over the life of the project.¹⁴⁰ The Shwe Gas Movement, a coalition of grassroots NGOs, is calling on the Consortium members to cease cooperation with the Burmese regime as the gas revenues from the project will only strengthen the junta's oppressive control of the country and allow for further development of the military. *"The hopes of many people in Burma for democratic change will be dealt a serious blow by the Shwe gas project if it goes ahead,"* said Wong Aung, coordinator of the Shwe Gas Movement in Thailand.¹⁴¹

The Gas from the A-1 field was initially earmarked for Indian consumption which would mean building a pipeline overland through Arakan and Chin States, then through Bangladesh to India. However during bilateral negotiations between India and Bangladesh, the latter imposed conditions on any pipeline agreement including access for commodities and energy from Bangladesh to Nepal and Bhutan through Indian territory. India could not agree to the conditions so the project stalled. In late 2005, the Burmese junta and the Consortium unexpectedly signed a MoU with PetroChina, a private oil and gas company from Beijing, to supply gas from the A-1 field, including an overland pipeline to China.

In 2007, Burma picked PetroChina to sell gas to China, shattering India's hope of bringing the gas to India.¹⁴² Despite India's efforts at pampering the ruling junta with increased military aid, Yangon chose Beijing over New Delhi for selling the gas to come out of the two undersea fields. In return, China will pay Rangoon an annual transit fee of US\$150 million for 30 years for the pipeline's 990-km stretch in Burma.¹⁴³ One analyst calculated that the total rent over 30 years to the SPDC from China for building oil and gas pipelines would amount to US\$9 billion – or \$300 million annually.¹⁴⁴

South Korea's Daewoo industrial conglomerate has objected to Burma's decision to sell 200 billion cubic meters of gas from two Shwe blocks in the Arakan offshore gas fields to China at US\$4 per million British thermal units (mBtu). Daewoo, the main shareholder of the Shwe gas fields, contends the price of gas should be at least US\$4.41 per mBtu.¹⁴⁵

Human rights campaigners sharply criticized the light sentences handed out in a South Korean court to former Daewoo International executives and other employees convicted of involvement in an illegal weapons factory project in Burma. The project involved shipping parts and equipment to Burma in 2002 to build a weapons factory in Pyay—in violation of South Korean law. Former Daewoo International President Lee Tae-yong was fined about US\$50,000 and a former managing director of the company was given a one-year suspended prison sentence. The other convicted ex-Daewoo employees received shorter sentences. In all, 14 people stood trial.¹⁴⁶

Human Rights Watch claimed that the proposed pipeline construction from gas fields off the coast of Burma is expected to exacerbate serious human rights abuses in Burma. The proposed construction of overland pipelines to transport the gas will involve the use of forced labour, and result in illegal land confiscation, forced displacement, and unnecessary use of force against villagers.¹⁴⁷

Road, Rail and Port Projects

The SPDC is a partner in 'The Asian Highway', a project which aims to connect 32 countries throughout Asia and has been organised in partnership with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). On 10 May 2007 it was reported that a ground survey was underway to continue building another section of the Asian highway in Burma to stretch from Thingan Nyinaung to Kawkareik in south-eastern Karen State. A prior section which extends from Myawaddy to Thingan Nyinaung was completed with the assistance of Thailand in 2006. The Asian Highway Burma section stretches from Myawaddy-Thingan Nyinaung-Kawkareik-Mawlamyine with a total length of about 1,400 km. The 40 km Thingan Nyinaung-Kawkareik section will be built by Thailand through the low-lying areas of the Dawna mountain range following the 18 km section of Myawaddy-Thingan Nyinaung. The Burma section of the Highway is based on the existing roads that are upgraded from single lanes to two or four lanes and they are expected to be durable to withstand 60 tons of load.¹⁴⁸



Proposed Asian Highway Routes in Burma. [Map: KHRG]

On 22 March 2007, Indian Railways proposed links to Burma. Under the agreement, India is expected to provide the missing rail link to Burma and China. Of the 215 kilometre proposed link between India and Burma, about 100 kilometres have already been sanctioned. Initially, the rail links will only be used for freight transportation, but at a later stage passenger movement may be started.¹⁴⁹ While the total proposed investment is yet to be worked out, India and Burma have agreed on a rail link between Jiribam and Tamu. The cost of the proposed linkage would be around Rs 2,741 crore. This includes the cost of linking Imphal in Manipur to Tupul, a distance of 97 kilometres.¹⁵⁰

On July 27 2007, an agreement for the construction of a friendship road that connects Bangladesh and Burma was signed. Initiative for the construction of a road between Bangladesh and Burma was taken in 2003, and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed to this effect during the visit of Burmese Prime Minister to Dhaka in 2004. The construction of a 153 kilometres long cross-border highway is expected to boost border trade between the two countries.¹⁵¹ During the first phase, 43 kilometres of the road will be constructed, with 23 kilometres from Ramu to Gundom in Bangladesh and 20 kilometres from Taungbro to Bawli Bazar bordering Maungdaw Township in Burma. Bangladesh has agreed to bear the cost of construction, expected to be about US\$ 25 million in the first phase. The remaining 110 kilometres of highway will be constructed at a cost of US\$ 116 million in the second phase.¹⁵² At a meeting, the Western Command Commander told the border township administrators to evacuate all the villages which are near the road, especially in Boli Bazar (Kyein Chaung) where more than 1,000 families are living. The Commander also mentioned that the village tracks of Meetike and Taungpru are to be evacuated.¹⁵³

In August, Chinese Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi met with Bangladesh Foreign Advisor Iftekhar Chowdhury in Manila where he reiterated Beijing's support for Dhaka's proposed trilateral road link project, to connect Bangladesh, Burma, and China.¹⁵⁴

In November it was reported that the Rangoon-based Yuzana Company, was granted a contract by the SPDC military junta to rebuild the Burma section of the World War II Indo-Burma-China Road called the Ledo Road in Northern Burma,. The Yuzana Company, chaired by U Htay Myint, was granted over 200,000 acres including areas in the world's largest tiger reserve and land belonging to native people in Hukawng Valley. The reconstruction of over 50 mile stretch from Myitkyina to Kambaiti, another part of the Indo-Burma-Sino Road in Burma, was completed on 26 April 2007. It was rebuilt by the Chinese government. The Ledo Road is 1,079 miles long and stretches from Ledo village in Assam State in India to Kunming in Yunnan Province in China. The Ledo Road, also called the Stilwell Road, was constructed between 1942 and 1945. The double-track and all-weather Stilwell Road construction was estimated to cost 137 million US dollars.¹⁵⁵

India has also started rebuilding a stretch of the historic road linking its remote northeast to southwest China amid hopes the route could be reopened to boost trade. The 1,726-km (1,079-mile) Stilwell Road (also called The Ledo Road) connects India's north-eastern state of Assam to Kunming, the capital of southwest China's Yunnan Province, after cutting through Burma. The Stilwell Road on the Indian side is 61 kilometres (28 miles) long. The major stretch of 1,033 kilometres (646 miles) lies within Burma, while 632 kilometres (395 miles) of the road are in China.¹⁵⁶

In June, it was confirmed that a port capable of handling the largest cargo ships will be built on the Burmese island of Rambree specifically to service China's shipping needs. The port at Kyauk Phyu will be connected to the new 1,950 km highway to be built through Burma directly to Kunming, the capital of China's Yunnan Province.¹⁵⁷



Route of the planned trilateral road project. [Map: *Narinjara News*]

Meanwhile, India increased its offer to develop a port at Sittwe, after Burma expressed reservations over New Delhi's earlier proposal. The revised offer overcomes Burma's sensitivities on developing the seaport, which could serve as an alternative gateway to India's north-eastern states. The new package calls for the immediate transfer of the port to Burma after it is made suitable for larger vessels. Earlier, India wanted to operate the port for an extended period. The US\$120 million project would upgrade the port and a linked waterway into upper Burma. From there, a roadway would be used to transport cargo to the Mizoram border.¹⁵⁸

5.4 Forced Portering – Partial list of incidents for 2007

Arakan State

From 29 January until 4 February 2007, Major Kyaw San, deputy commander of LIB #233 ordered village headmen of three villages to supply 12 villagers each for portering. The villagers were told to bring their own food for 7 days. Each villager had to carry military supplies and haversacks of about 20 Kg and had to march along soldiers for 7 days. They also had to construct makeshift huts for the commander and soldiers and had to cook food for soldiers on the trip. Although the commander told them that porter fees would be given, no one received any money for their labour.¹⁵⁹

On 29 March 2007, it was reported that during an SPDC army operation civilians from several villages including Letpanwa, Tookpi, Sitaung, and Pyin Zaw were used as military porters by army personnel. At least five army battalions were participating in the operation: IB #20, IB #34, LIB #289, LIB #354, and LIB #376.¹⁶⁰

Chin State

During the last week of January 2007, 18 porters were summoned by the SPDC army to carry rations from Sawti village to Zuamang village. Most of the porters were women.¹⁶¹

On 8 February 2007, it was reported that soldiers of LIB #50, positioned at Rezua town in southern Chin state were using more women as porters than at the beginning of the year.¹⁶²

Matupi Township:

On 14 January 2007, the 2nd Lieutenant of LIB #140, stationed in Satu village in Matupi Township summoned villagers as porters. The porters were forced to carry armaments to Lailente village, 20 miles away from Satu village.¹⁶³

Paletwa Township

From 26 January until 28 January 2007, Captain Kyaw Tun commander of IB #55 temporarily based at Myeit Wa ordered Kyaw Maung, Chairman of Pakar-wa village tract, to provide porters to carry military supplies for his troops. Chairman Kyaw Maung sent a letter to the respective village headmen of Sadin-wa, Ngwe-let-wa, Pa-kar-wa and Phway Lite-wa to supply civilian porters. One person from each household in the villages listed below had to report to the army base in Myeit Was. Villagers were made to carry food, supplies and ammunition weighing about 20 Kilograms. The following villages were affected:

1. Sadin-wa, 20 households;
2. Ngwe Let-wa, 40 households;
3. Pa-kar-wa, 25 households; and
4. Phway Lite-wa, 50 households.¹⁶⁴

From 6 February until 10 February 2007, about 40 villagers from Xxxxxx village were forced to carry packs weighing about 20kg each for five days. The orders were given by Captain Myint Lwin of IB #289 based at Paletwa Myothit. The porters were not given wages for their labour. One of the villagers, U Tun Oo was shot and killed when he tried to escape.¹⁶⁵

Thangtlang Township

On 8 October 2007, 14 soldiers led by Major Myo Zaw Tant forced 11 villagers from Sabawngte village to carry army backpacks, rations and bullets.¹⁶⁶

On 19 November 2007, troops of LIB #266 stationed in Lunglei village patrolling the border used villagers not only as guides but also as porters for army rucksacks full of ammunition and food.¹⁶⁷

Kachin State

In February 2007, the SPDC junta used civilian porters to carry hardware materials to a new bridge construction. All the civilian porters were from Machyang Baw Township and had to carry cement for Ri Dam Bridge construction in Khawng Lang Hpu. By the order of Putao-based Military Command Commander Khai Soe, at least one person from each family of Machyang Baw, N'Pu Baw, N'Wai Baw, Htang Ga, Ah Lang Ga, Nam Hkam and Tarang Dam villages were forced to work. Without any wages and rations from the authorities, the villagers had to deliver cement from Machyang Baw to Khawng Lang Hpu (42 miles) on foot.¹⁶⁸

Karen State

Dooplaya District

On 14 January 2007, Major Min Htut of LIB #36 ordered the village headman of Ah Nan Kwin village to send 10 villagers to his army unit in Ah Nan Kwin. The village headman sent 10 villagers on the same day. On the following day Major Min Htu made them carry military supplies from Ah Na Kwin village to Ye Ta Khun village, about 23 kilometres away. Each villager had to carry a 35 Kilogram load.¹⁶⁹

Between 5 and 26 May 2007, by the order of Lt. Col Soe Mann, one person from every household of 12 villages was forced to carry military supplies from Thit Thae Htu to an army base in Ah-lae village. The following villages were ordered to provide labour:

1. Thar-lae;
2. Kar-htar;
3. Thit Kar-htar;
4. Thit-maw Ku;
5. Waw Kyaw;
6. Htee Ka-maw;
7. Wah Mee Ka-lar;
8. Mae-la Arh;
9. Mae-la Arh Sie;
10. Sie Phoe Khee;
11. Mae Kae; and
12. Nae Phoe Khee.¹⁷⁰

Nyaunglebin District

On 1 March 2007, SPDC army commander Tin Soe forced 40 Maladaw villagers to carry loads from Maladaw village to the new SPDC army camp at Saw Tay Der. Villagers were forced to carry loads everyday to support the construction of this new camp. Supplies carried included engines, chain-saws and other tools, as well as food. The construction of the road was largely being carried out by troops from LIB #377, while LIB #376 was in charge of security for the road construction and LIB #375 was in charge of acquiring forced labour to support the construction project.¹⁷¹

On 1 March 2007, Sergeant Kyaw Nyut Oo, from SPDCs army camp at Maladaw, forced 30 Maladaw villagers to carry loads from Maladaw village to Saw Tay Der, where they have set up a new camp after they attacked the village on 16 February.¹⁷²

On 2 March 2007, SPDC troops based in Tha-bye-nyunt camp commanded 82 bullock carts of the villagers and forced them to carry army rations from Tha-bye-nyunt to Mar-la-daw military camp.¹⁷³

On 6 March 2007, five bull carts from Mar La Daw village were forced to carry fuel to Hsaw Tay Der military camp by SPDC troops from Mar La Daw.¹⁷⁴



SPDC army soldiers in Karen State employing forced labour by forcing villagers to carry their supplies. [Photo: FBR]

During the first week of March 2007, 90 villagers from Mar La Daw and 50 villagers from Ko Ni village were forced by commander Tin Soe to carry an electric generator and sawmill to Hsaw Tay Der military camp.¹⁷⁵ Starting from 7 March 2007, tactical commander Tin Soe of SPDC MOC #9 forced about 50 Mar-lar-daw villagers daily to carry military rations and items, from Mar-lar-daw to Saw-thay-doe camp. On 8 March 2007, operation commander Tin Soe of MOC #9 forced between 40 to 50 Mar-la-taw villagers to carry electrical generators, saw mills, and army rations from Mar-la-daw to Saw-thay-doe.¹⁷⁶

On 10 March 2007, Bo Thet Khaing of IB #394, under the SPDC Northern Command, forced villagers of Ma-u-bin, Ma-wi and Pa-deh-gaw villagers to clear a 4-acre area of football ground, situated between Mya-tha-ya Kon-gwin and Toh-day-poe. He also extorted 1,000 Kyat per household from villagers for buying tools to use in clearing the ground.¹⁷⁷

On 14 March 2007, 50 villagers from Mar La Daw were forced by SPDC troops to carry rice and cooking oil from Mar La Daw to Hsaw Tay Der.¹⁷⁸

On 18 March 2007, troops from SPDC LIB #357, 376 and 377, under MOC #7 forced villagers from Saw-thay-doe, Kheh-poe-doe, Theh-baw-doe and Kyauk-pyar villages, in Theh-baw-doe village tract to work on the construction of a motor road. Furthermore, at least 50 Mar-la-taw villagers were forced to carry food supplies and engine oil for the motor road construction.¹⁷⁹

On 23 March 2007, SPDC MOC #9, based in Mone Township, forced 25 Maw-keh-tha-berko villagers to carry army rations to Saw-tay-doe on a daily basis.¹⁸⁰

On 26 March 2007, Ma-lar-daw villagers were forced to carry army rations to Saw-thay-doe camp.¹⁸¹

On 26 March 2007, troops from LIB #357, 376 and 377 under the command of MOC #7 forced 50 villagers from Ma-lar-daw village to carry army supplies from Mone town to Zor-tae-dha village.¹⁸²

On 4 and 9 April 2007, troops of SPDC LIB #599 forced 250 villagers from Ko Nee and Ta Kaw Pwa (Tak-gon) village tracts to carry food for the Kaw La Wah Lu army camp. Each day 250 villagers were required to report to LIB #599 battalion headquarters. The SPDC troops threatened to capture villagers if at least 250 villagers did not come to carry loads.¹⁸³

On 9 April 2007, troops from LIB #599 based at Mone Township forced 250 villagers of Ko Ne and Ta Khaw Bwar villages to carry army rations from their village to Gaw Law Wah Lu mountain.¹⁸⁴

On 10 April 2007, LIB #599 officer Bo Tin Aung forced Kwee De Kaw villagers to carry army rations to Kwee-de-ko army camp.¹⁸⁵

On 10 April 2007, LIB #599 forced villagers from Ta Kaw Pwa village-tract to provide 25 bullock carts to carry their loads from battalion head-quarters to Kwee De kaw camp. The villagers were also required to bring 150 bamboo pieces and other wood to build the camp.¹⁸⁶

On 11 April 2007, SPDC LIB #599 with 35 soldiers forced villagers to carry food for LIB #375 of MOC #9 at Kwee De Kaw camp. One of these villagers stepped on a landmine that had been placed by the SPDC army near their camp. Five villagers were injured in the explosion. LIB #599 is under the command of Major Tin Bo Aung, Captain Aung Ko Oo, Myint Tun, and Lieutenant Myint San Oo.¹⁸⁷

On 16 April 2007, the SPDC troops from LIB #599 summoned 25 bullock carts and their owners from Ta Khaw Bwar villagers and forced them to transport to bamboo to LIB #599. Each bullock cart had to be loaded with 150 bamboo poles to the camp of LIB #599. After delivery of bamboo they were made to transport army supplies to Kwee De Kho camp.¹⁸⁸

On 19 April 2007, SPDC IB #599 troops commanded 25 carts from Leh-chaung and Takawt-bwa villagers and forced them to carry army rations to Kwee De Kaw military camp. Moreover, IB #599 troops forced the villagers to cut 150 bamboo poles for them.¹⁸⁹

On 19 April 2007, troops from LIB #599 based at Mone Township forced villagers from Kwee De Kho to carry army rations from Ko Ne to Kwee De Kho army camp. Army officers were Lieutenant Tin Aung, company commander Aung Ko Oo and Mya Tun, Company second in command Mya San Oo.¹⁹⁰

Also on 19 April 2007, troops from SPDC LIB #270, under LID #44, and LIB #29, under LID #11, seized 44 villagers from Lay-kaw-ti village tract, including 3 women for portage, and 140 villagers from Mae-waing-Mae-thu village tract and used them as forced labourers.¹⁹¹

On 20 April 2007, troops from LIB #590, 599 and IB #20 demanded 150 bull carts from villagers to send food supplies from Kyauk Pya to Htee Ler Baw Hta. Major Myo Win Aung from MOC/ OCH #9 instructed villagers of 7 villages that they had to transport 3,000 baskets of rice and other food such as bean, salt, canned food, and cooking oil from Ta Kaw to Play Hsar Loe camp. The following villages were affected by this order:

1. Yo Loe;
2. Ka Mu Loe;
3. Lay Gaw Loe;
4. Lay Pau Pa;
5. Plaw Baw Der;
6. Play Hsar Loe; and
7. Yaw Loe.¹⁹²

On 4 May 2007, 60 SPDC troops from Tha Pye Nyunt ordered 80 villagers to carry food supplies to Hsaw Tay Der.¹⁹³

On 14 May 2007, it was reported that SPDC troops forced 250 villagers from Ko Nee and Ta Kaw Pwa (Tak-gon) village tracts to carry food for the Kaw La Wah Lu army camp. Each day 250 villagers were required to report to LIB #599 battalion headquarters.¹⁹⁴

Papun District

On 20 January 2007, SPDC military ordered villagers to carry their supplies for 10 days. The following villages were forced to provide labour:

1. Dain Law Por;
2. Htee Ber Kah Hta;
3. Noh Law Soon;
4. Haw Hta;
5. Kas Sit;
6. Nat Koo Nar;
7. T'Dwee Koh; and
8. Poh Baw Koh.¹⁹⁵

Also on 20 January 2007, DKBA commander Hla Maung ordered 7 villages to provide labour to carry their supplies. Each person had to work for 10 days carrying supplies. The following villages were affected:

1. Tei Mwee Du;
2. Win Shat;
3. Day Law Soon;
4. Koo Sit village;
5. Nat Koo Nar;
6. T'Dwee Koh ; and
7. Poh Baw Koh.¹⁹⁶

On 7 March 2007, DKBA's Hla Maung, ordered one person from each of 7 villages to serve as porters for the military. The following villages were affected:

1. Kler-wah;
2. Wa-mee-day;
3. Klaw-hta;
4. To-lwee-kyo;
5. Day-baw-kaw;
6. To-thaypu; and
7. The-gaw-kyo.¹⁹⁷

On 8 March 2007, DKBA ordered 8 persons from Hto Po Par Der to carry food supplies from Papun to Kaw Pu.¹⁹⁸

On 11 March 2007, SPDC LIB #270, under LID #44, and LIB #216 and 219, under LID #11, forced 100 villagers of Lay-kaw-ti village tract and 15 villagers of Kay-ko village tract to carry military rations from Ku-thu-ta to Kay-ko.¹⁹⁹

On 16 March 2007, U Than Sein (44) of Kaung-mon village stepped on a landmine while carrying army ration to Koe-theh-lu camp. He lost his left foot in the explosion.²⁰⁰

On 17 March 2007, troops from SPDC LID #44 and LID #44's subordinate units, LIB #207, 219 and 216, based in Dweh-lo Township, seized 200 villagers of Maewine village and forced them to carry army rations. Furthermore, 41 villagers of Mae-thu village tract and 28 villagers of Lay-kaw-ti village tract were forced to carry army rations.²⁰¹ Troops from (the same) SPDC LID #44, based in Dweh-lo Township, seized 7 villagers for portering in De-po-doe and Poe-mu-doe village.²⁰²

On 18 March 2007, combined troops from LIB #207, under SPDC LID #44, and LIB #219, under SPDC LID #22, seized 189 villagers, including 9 women, from Mae-wine, Mae-thu and Lay-kaw-ti village tracts and forced them to carry army rations and other items.²⁰³

On 18 March 2007, SPDC troops from LIB #207 under LID #44, and LIB #219 under LID #11 forced 80 Mae-thu villagers and 44 Lay-kor-ti villagers (including 6 women), to carry army rations and other items.²⁰⁴

On 20 March 2007, SPDC troops forced 150 villagers of Lay-kor-ti, Mae-way and Mae-thu to carry military rations.²⁰⁵

From the third week of March 2007, SPDC LIB #207, from LID #44 and LIB #216, 229 from LID #11, forced villagers to carry military food supplies from Ku Thu Hta to Kay Ko. Labour was ordered from the following villages:

1. Doh Kho Wah, 30 persons;
2. Hsaw Pwi Hta, 40 persons;
3. Hgaw Kwee, 30 persons;
4. Pway Bwa, 40 persons;
5. Kay Ko, 50 persons;
6. Mae Cho village tract, 100 persons.²⁰⁶

Toungoo District

On 1 January 2007, Div. #66 commander Maung Maung Aye forced 10 villagers from Bawgali Gyi (Kler La) to act as human shields for the SPDC army bulldozer clearing the road between Maw Pah Der and Kaw Soe Kho.²⁰⁷

On 2 January 2007, the MOC #16 officer based in the Play Hsa Lo area forced 7 people from Ye Lo village and five people from Plaw Baw Der to go to Bon Ma Tee and act as human shields for the bulldozer operating along the Bawgali Gyi-busakee road.²⁰⁸

On 3 January 2007, people from 5 villages were forced to carry supplies for the SPDC army. These villages were:

1. Ku Thay Der;
2. Kaw Law Kar;
3. Sa Bar Law Kee;
4. Htee Ta Pu; and

5. Thu Ger Der.²⁰⁹

On 11 January 2007, troops from SPDC LIB #108, led by battalion commander Kyaw Oo, under Tac 661, LID #66, forced 47 persons from 3 villages to carry army rations from Than-daung town to Day-lor Bridge camp. The affected villages were:

1. Ler-hgee-doe (15 persons);
2. Sbar-law-khee (12 persons); and
3. Ka-zer-bu (20 persons).²¹⁰

On 6 February 2007, troops of SPDC MOC #5 headquarters based in Baw-ga-lee-gyi, forced 20 persons from Deh-doh village to carry military supplies from Baw-ga-lee-gyi to Maw-ko-deh military camp.²¹¹

On 17 February 2007, SPDC troops forced 300 villagers to carry military supplies to Tha-aye-hta military camp.²¹²

On 18 February 2007, SPDC troops from MOC #5 headquarters, based in K'ler-la camp, forced villagers in the K'ler-la area to carry military supplies and clear landmines from K'ler-la to Tha-aye-hta.²¹³

On 28 February 2007, LIB #375, under MOC #9, forced the villages of Paw Pe Der, Aung Chan Tha and Myaung Oo to provide 12 bullock carts as well as villagers to move supplies for them.²¹⁴

On 1 March 2007, troops of SPDC LIB #373, led by Column Commander Aung Myo Thein, under MOC #5 Headquarters, based at Thu-kheh-doe, forced 9 Htee-ta-pu villagers and 10 Thu-kheh-doe villagers to carry army rations from Ku-thay-doe to Thu-kheh-doe village.²¹⁵

On 3 March 2007, troops of SPDC LIB # 373 based at Thu-kheh-doe led by Column Commander Aung Myo Thein, under MOC #5 Headquarters, based at Thu-kheh-doe, forced 7 Htee-ta-pu villagers and 9 Thu-kheh-doe villagers to carry army rations from Khu-thay-doe to Thu-kheh-doe.²¹⁶

Also on 3 March 2007, the strategic commanders of SPDC MOC #5 headquarter based at Kheh-weh village in Than-daung Township, forced 15 Ler-khee-ko villagers to carry army rations from Than-daung to Kheh-weh.²¹⁷

Between 3 and 17 March 2007, 439 persons from 11 villages east of Thandaung town were forced to carry military supplies by MOC #5 to Ku Thay Der/Ker Der Kar and Maw Ko Der military camps. The villages were:

1. Ker Der Kar;
2. Ku Thay Der;
3. Kaw Law Kar;
4. Sa Bar Law Khi;
5. Ler Gi Kho Der;
6. Ler Gi Kho Der Kho;
7. Ka Thaw Bwe;
8. Kar Weh;
9. Htee Pu Khi Der;
10. Htee Pu Khi Der Kho; and
11. K'sheh Khi.²¹⁸

On 8 March 2007, operation commander Tin Soe of SPDC MOC #9 forced 40 to 50 Mar-la-taw villagers to carry electrical generators, saw mills, and army rations from Mar-la-taw to Saw-thay-doe.²¹⁹

On 10 March 2007, troops of SPDC IB #566 based at Kher-doe, forced 50 villagers from Thaug-yee-ka-chaung village to carry rice and army rations from Than-daung-gyi to Kher-weh army camp.²²⁰

On 12 March 2007, SPDC soldiers from LIB #373 of MOC #5 TOC #1, based at Ker Weh, ordered 175 villagers from 7 villages to porter military rations from Ker Weh to Khoo Thay Der army camp. The villages that had to provide porters were:

1. Khoo Thay Der (30 persons);
2. Kaw Law Gkah (20 persons);
3. S'Ba Law Kee (30 persons);
4. Ler Ghee Koh Der Gkay (15 persons);
5. Ler Ghee Koh Der Ko (30 persons);
6. Gk'Thaw Bpweh (20 persons); and
7. Ker Weh (30 persons).²²¹

From 13 until 27 March 2007, Commander Kaung Myat of MOC #5 forced three truck owners from Baw-ga-leak-gyi (Kler La) to transport army supplies to Bu-hsa-kee army camp. The three truck owners had to transport army supplies for 14 days. Neither fuel nor money was given to the owners of the trucks.²²²

On 14 March 2007, Battalion Commander Htun Kyaing of SPDC LIB #539 forced 9 persons of the following 4 villages to carry army rations from Thay-pler-doe to Play-hsa-lo camp:

1. Play-hsa-lo;
2. Yeh-lo;
3. Pah-pha;
4. Plaw-baw-doe; and
5. Yu-lo.²²³

On 14 March 2007, MOC #9, TOC #2, LIB #539 Battalion Commander Htun Thein Gyi based at Play Hsa Loh army camp forced 9 villagers from 5 villages to travel to Pler Day to collect rations and other military supplies, and then return with these loads to Play Hsa Loh army camp. The affected villagers were:

1. Play Hsa Loh;
2. Yuh Loh;
3. Bpaw Pa;
4. Bplaw Blaw Der; and
5. Ghu Loh.²²⁴

On 14 March 2007, Commander Kaung Mya dispatched a convoy of military rations to Naw Soh army camp. For this purpose, he employed 14 army trucks and commanded a further 3 trucks from local villagers. The three civilian trucks were forced to travel at the head of the convoy to shield the SPDC army trucks from potential ambush and trigger any landmines. While transporting these supplies, one of the SPDC trucks overturned near Kaw Thay Der village, killing one soldier and wounding one convict porter.²²⁵

Also on 14 March 2007, LIB #364 commander Myo Htun based at Maw Koh Der forced 40 villagers from Pa Gkaw Der village to take military rations from Kler La to Maw Koh Der army camp.²²⁶

On 16 March 2007, Bo Hla Htay of SPDC LIB #544 forced 84 villagers from 3 villages to carry army rations from Kher-weh to Ku-thay-doe military camp. The villages were:

1. Khu-thay-doe (25 persons);
2. Sba-law-khee (32 persons);
3. Kaw-law-gar (27 persons).²²⁷

On 17 March 2007, Bo Hla Htay of SPDC IB #544 forced 10 Ler-khee-kho-doe-kho villagers to carry army rations from Kher-weh camp to Ku-thay-doe camp.²²⁸

On 26 March 2007, SPDC LIB #374 and LIB #377, based in Tan-da-bin Township, forced villagers with bullock carts in Za-yat-kyi area to transport army rations to an army camp in Tha-byay Nyunt, and drive behind the bulldozers.²²⁹

Also on 26 March 2007, Commander Than Htay from LIB #544, under the command of MOC #5, forced 60 villagers from 4 villages to carry army supplies from Pawe Doka to Ku-thay-der village about 12 miles away. The villages were:

1. Khaw-law-ka;
2. Baw-kee;
3. Ku-thay-der; and
4. Pawe Doka.²³⁰

From 31 March until 31 April 2007, MOC #5 commander Khaung Mya forced eight Kaw Thay Der villagers to move SPDC army rations and supplies with their own cars, everyday without rest.²³¹

On 5 April 2007, LIB #346, under MOC #5, based in Tan-da-bin town, forced villagers to build a motorcycle road from Wa-tho-ko to Ler-ko village. Households which could not send a person had to pay 1,000 Kyat a day.²³²

On 11 April 2007, LIB #375 forced 70 villagers to carry rations to Ba Ya Nay Thi camp and then return to Play Hsa Lo army camp. The villagers were from Play Hsa Lo, Yaw Lo, Paung Plaw Baw Der, and Paung Pai villages. LIB 375 is from TOC 2, under MOC 9; its Battalion Commander is Tun Aung Sar, Second Battalion Commander is Tun Tun Win and Company Commander is Soe Myiet Naing.²³³

On 16 April 2007, LIB #375 Battalion Commander, Htun Aung Kyaw, and Company Commander, Soe Myint Naing, forced 100 villagers from Play Hsa Loh village to carry army rations to the military base at Tha Kaung, and then carry supplies back to Play Hsa Loh army camp.²³⁴

On 16 April 2007, by the order of Battalion Commander Tun Aung Zaw and company commander Soe Myint Naing of LIB #75 under the command of Military Command MOC #9, 100 villagers of Plae-hsa-lo village had to carry army supplies from Ta-khaw-dohbaw village to an army base in Play-hsa-lo which was about two-hour walk.²³⁵

On 17 April 2007, SPDC Tac-2 commander, Tin Soe under MOC #9, forced 20 Play-hsa-lo villagers to carry military rations.²³⁶

On 18 April 2007, SPDC Tac-2 commander, Tin Soe under MOC-9, forced 35 villagers to carry military rations from Tharc-kaw to Play-hsa-lo.²³⁷

Also on 18 April 2007, troops from SPDC LIB #566 under MOC #5, forced villagers from 3 villages to carry 200 sacks of rice from Keh-wah to Keh-doe-ka camp. The following villages were affected:

1. Keh-wah (100 sacks);
2. Ler-khe-kho (50 sacks); and
3. Ler-khekho-ka-ko (50 sacks)²³⁸

On 1 May 2007, troops from LIB #373, led by Bo Yeh Thu, forced 20 persons from Pa-hi-kee village, Than-daung-gyi Township, to carry army rations, including rice, from Keh-doe-ka village to Htee-bu-kee village.²³⁹

On 2 May 2007, Tac-2 commander, Tin Soe, of SPDC MOC #9, forced villagers of Play-hsa-lo, Tan-da-bin Township, to cut 350 bamboo poles for him. The villagers had to cut the bamboo in the forest and then carry them to the army camp which was about 6 miles (10 kilometres) away.²⁴⁰

On 3 May 2007, Bo Yeh Aung of SPDC LIB #373, under MOC #5, forced 20 Ka-shee-khee villagers to carry military rations from Keh-doekar to Htee-pu-khee camp. Bo Yeh Aung also forced a villager from each of the Upper and Lower Htee-pu-khee villages, to serve as a runner and sentinel at the military camp.²⁴¹

On 4 May 2007, 60 SPDC troops from Tha byay-nyunt camp in Mone Township came into Ma-la-daw village and seized 80 villagers and forced them to carry army rations to Hsaw-day-doe Camp.²⁴²

On 5 May 2007, LIB #375 under MOC #9 from Play Hsar Loe ordered 20 villagers from Play Hsar Loe to carry food supplies from Pau Pa to Play Hsar Loe camp.²⁴³

On 7 May 2007, SPDC LIB 375 troops, based at Play-hsa-lo camp, forced the villagers of Play-hsa-lo, a village of 60 households, to cut 55 bamboo poles and demanded a piece of thatch roofing from each household.²⁴⁴

On 15 May 2007, SPDC army MOC #5 commander Khaung Mya, ordered people from the following villages to carry SPDC Army rations from Bawgali Gyi to their camp at Maung Koe Der.

1. Kaw Thay Der
2. Kaw Soe Ko
3. Bawgali Gyi
4. Ler Gaw
5. Maung Pah Der.²⁴⁵

Also on 15 May 2007, people from the following villages were forced to carry rations from Maung Pai Der to Koe Wa Der camps.

1. Pai Kaw Der
2. Ku Plaw Der
3. Maung Koe Der
4. Der Doh
5. Ba Hai Der
6. Naw Tay Der
7. Ger Mu Der.²⁴⁶

On 16 May 2007, more than 2,000 people from the same villages were forced to carry rations from Bawgali Gyi to the camps at Ber Ka Lay Ko and Wah Soe.²⁴⁷

On 17 May 2007, troops from SPDC MOC #5 had established a new camp to which they had ordered more than 2,000 civilians to porter rations. The villages and towns from which they demanded porters included:

1. Kler La
2. Maw Pa Der
3. Khoo Bplay Der
4. Kheh Bplaw Der
5. Khaw Gkoh Der
6. Gh'Muh Der
7. Der Doh
8. Gklay Soh Kee
9. Gkaw Thay Der

10. Gkaw Soh Koh
11. Wa Soh Koh
12. Ler Koh.²⁴⁸

Mon State

On 19 July 2007, a hired porter, Ko San Win (37), was severely beaten by an army officer while carrying supplies for IB #18.²⁴⁹

Sagaing Division

From 27 December 2006 for a period of 12 days, troops from LIB #229 commanded by Lieutenant Col. Thet Yun Oo came to Chamsar village and seized 1458 persons from 15 villages as military porters. The following villages were affected:

1. Chuyo (300 persons);
2. Chomkor (100 persons);
3. Longpa (70 persons);
4. Chamsa (70 persons);
5. Shayep (84 persons);
6. Golang (84 persons);
7. Logkai (61 persons);
8. Hakon (63 persons);
9. Rukho (78 persons);
10. Tingpa (47 persons);
11. Chanlam (91 persons);
12. Longket (170 persons);
13. Nahen (150 persons);
14. Yangno (34 persons); and
15. Lngoi (56 persons)²⁵⁰

Shan State

Kae-See Township

Since early 2005, people of Paang Kaad village in Wan Khem village tract, Kae-See Township, have been forced by the SPDC troops LIB #131 to serve as unpaid porters during their patrols in the area. The SPDC troops frequently demanded 3 villagers from the village headman to go with them on each of their frequent patrols during which they forced the villagers to serve as guides and porters, sometimes for many days and nights.²⁵¹

Lai-Kha Township

Sometime during the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007, 5 villagers of Zizawya Khe village in Naa Poi village tract, Lai-Kha township, were arrested and beaten, one of them killed and two of them forced to serve as porters, by the SPDC troops from LIB #247 based in Nam-Zarng. The 5 villagers were:

1. Naang Zing Wa (f), aged 36;
2. Zaai Zit-Ta (m), aged 43;
3. Zaai Kalaa (m), aged 39;
4. Zaai Su (m), aged 45; and
5. Zaai Zaw Phae (m), aged 37.²⁵²

Murng- Kerng Township

Since mid 2006, people in Murng Khun village tract in Murng-Kerng township have been forced to serve as guides and porters by the SPDC troops from Kae-See-based LIB # 131 and Murng-Kerng-based LIB # 514.²⁵³

5.5 Forced Labour – Partial list of incidents for 2007

Arakan State

Buthidaung Township

In November 2007, the NaSaKa, Burma's Western border security force was coercing villagers to work for state-owned brick fields in Buthidaung Township. On 5 November, the commander of Phone Nyo Hlake village NaSaKa camp, ordered each family to provide 5 poles (three inches in diameter and eight feet in length) for NaSaKa's kiln for baking bricks. If a villager failed to supply such posts in time he was fined Kyat 500 per post, totalling a fine of Kyat 2,500 for 5 poles per family.²⁵⁴

Kyauk Taw Township

On 24 July 2007, Kyauk Taw based army authorities forced villagers to cultivate seized farm land. The Kyauk Taw based MOC #9 had earlier seized 282 acres of farm land from villagers near the cantonment. The junta ordered all military units to follow the modern system of paddy cultivation and produce 100 Tins (1 Tin =32 Kg) of paddy from one acre. The army did not provide any infrastructural support to the villagers to fulfil the SPDC's order to produce this amount. The villages which the army cantonment ordered to carry out the project were:

1. Mahamatmuni;
2. Tharakthapran;
3. Kyaukway Taungnyo; and
4. Kyawsuma.²⁵⁵

Maungdaw Township

On 12 February 2007, it was reported that Sarapa accompanied by police were forcing villagers to build modern villages for new settlers. Since 1 February, Sarapa had forced people from 11 nearby villages to contribute their labour. About 550 villagers had been engaged in forced labour. Every day the villagers had to provide 50 villagers from each village to cut the hillside to build model villages. Sarapa provided 500 kyat a day per head as wages to avoid complaints, although, the daily labour rate is 1,000 to 1,500 kyat per day in the open market.²⁵⁶

On 26 March 2007, around 300 carpenters were forced by NaSaKa authorities to construct 120 houses in a model village located in the north of Maungdaw Township for new settlers from Burma proper.²⁵⁷

On 24 May 2007, villagers residing in Inn Din village tract were ordered to purchase and plant physic nut and rubber seedlings at plantation sites by the Commander of NaSaKa area #8 Major Zaw Zaw.²⁵⁸

In November 2007, it was reported that a road in Maungdaw Township had been constructed using forced labour. The NaSaKa officer of area #4 ordered villagers from nearby villages to work in the road construction. Non compliance meant a fine of 5,000 kyat. Each family had to provide one member at the construction site every day starting on 1 October.²⁵⁹

On 11 December 2007, the Maungdaw Township agriculture manager ordered farmers of Maungdaw Township to grow sunflowers and extra crops in their farmlands.²⁶⁰

On 27 December 2007, the Maungdaw Township Peace and Development Council (TPDC) Chairman ordered villagers in Maungdaw town and in wards to provide logs for baking bricks. The authorities ordered each household to provide a log measuring 7 ft long and 10 inches in diameter. The families which could not provide the log, had to pay 800 kyat per household. Logs were collected from the following villages:

1. Shwe Zarr;
2. Myoma Ka Nyin Tan (Shikdar Para);
3. Myo Thu Gyi (Khainda Par);
4. Pan Daw Pyin (Nal Boniya);
5. Nyaung Chaung (Khadir Bill);
6. Maung Ni Para; and
7. Hlet Tha Ywa (Naitor Dil)²⁶¹

On 29 December 2007, local authorities forced villagers in Maungdaw Township to work on constructing a model village seven miles outside downtown Maungdaw. The Maungdaw district authority was constructing a model village near Du Shara Gon Village, between Maungdaw and Ale Than Kyaw motor road. The village was constructed for new settlers from Burma proper. The authorities ordered the village chairman to send 15 people daily from each village tract in downtown Maungdaw to work on the construction site.²⁶²

Mrauk U Township

On 16 January 2007, it was reported that due to a shortage of funding at the Mrauk U municipal office, the authorities were unable to hire sweepers to clean the streets, and had subsequently ordered the townspeople to undertake sweeping the roads on a daily basis.²⁶³

Chin State

Cikha Township

On 29 January 2007, persons from 16 villages were forced to repair a road connecting Cikha and Tonzang town. The order to call for road repair came directly from SPDC Tactical 1 Commander Colonel Tin Hla based in Hakha. From each of the 16 villages one person from each family was forced to work on the road with their own food and tools. It was reported that several underage girls and boys were among the forced labourers. The following villages had to provide labour for the road construction:

1. Khuavum
2. Tuivelzaang
3. Tualkhaing
4. Haicin
5. Sekpi
6. Selbung
7. Tuimai
8. Lingthu
9. Vaivet
10. Tuimang
11. Mauvom
12. Kansau
13. Khuadam

14. Suangzaang
15. Khenman village.²⁶⁴

Falam Township

On 5 February 2007, captain Win Zaw and his troops from LIB #268 based in Falam town, summoned several villagers from the Indo-Burma border area to serve as guides and ensure the security of tactical commander Colonel Tin Hla and his column.²⁶⁵

On 30 July 2007, employees of the SPDC civilian administration were forced to replant over 7,000 acres with *Jatropha* trees destroyed in a forest fire in 2005. The order to involve SPDC employees from various departments came from the Township Peace and Development Council (TPDC) authorities.²⁶⁶

On 16 October 2007, it was reported that the army authorities of the LIB #268 stationed in northern Chin state were forcibly engaging locals in timber logging for the army fund. Captain Aung Min, Camp Commander of LIB #268 outpost stationed in Falam Township had forced villagers to log timber in the forests surrounding Ram Hlo village in Falam for the army welfare fund since the first week of June. The military junta had in May 2007 officially prohibited logging in the forests of Chin state to prevent ecological damage.²⁶⁷

Haka Township

On 24 January 2007, residents of about 12 villages in Hakha Township were forced by local authorities to help build a road connecting the township with Marndaw.²⁶⁸

On 22 May 2007, it was reported that residents from Hakha and Marndaw townships continued to be forced to work on a road being built between the areas. Moreover, several residents were ordered to contribute large amounts of money to fund the construction, which has already taken three years.²⁶⁹

On 11 December 2007, it was reported that government officials in Hakha Township were collecting money from local residents to fund a highway project and forced those who could not pay to work on the highway. According to residents, Village and Ward Peace and Development Council officers in Hakha Township were demanding the money or labour. Residents had been ordered to pay between 5,000 and 10,000, kyat depending on their means, and those who were unable to pay were forced to contribute their labour. Those who contributed labour were given no assistance with travel or expenses. Most villagers had to travel on foot for two days to get to the highway construction site where they were forced to work for 7 days at a time. The authorities did not provide any food, transportation, accommodation or health insurance for the workers, who carried their own food and camping materials with them to the site.²⁷⁰

Matupi Township

On 11 January 2007, Colonel San Aung, Commander of tactical #2, forced 140 civilians from 7 villages to work without pay on a road construction between Matupi town and Lailenpi military camp (which is 70 miles long). Colonel San Aung instructed the 7 village headmen to contribute 20 persons per village. The villages were the following:

1. Tangku;
2. Rengkheng;
3. Amlai;
4. Pakheng;
5. Sumseng (A);
6. Sumseng (B); and
7. Tinnam.²⁷¹

On 28 January 2007, Colonel Win Hlaing of LIB #50, based at Kanhkaw, Magwe Division, positioned in Lailenpi Village, Matupi Town, forcibly conscripted 25 labourers to construct an army camp. Starting on 28 January, they were told to complete the construction of a large male boarding house within two days. Major Ye Myint had reportedly stated that if the camp was not completed in two days, the villagers would be forced to continue the construction until completion. The villagers were forced to work from 7:00 am in the morning to 6:00 pm in the evening without breaks for rest. During the construction process, Major Ye Myint ordered five people from Mala Village to cut 100 pieces of bamboo and 50 pieces of wood in a day. They were ordered to cut and carry bamboo and wood to a forest two miles away from the village. In addition, the villagers had to arrange for themselves all the necessary tools for the construction project as well as their own food rations. According to the local village chairman, they never received any compensation for their labour.²⁷²

On 9 February 2007, Major Zaw Myint Htat, 2nd battalion commander LIB #50 (based in Gangh-Gaw town), stationed at Dar-Lin village, ordered villagers in the region to fence the army camp's barricade by carrying their own rations. The Pintia village chairman Pu Pai Hmo was ordered to assign the villagers, who were forced to work without payment for 4 days from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm without rest. The villagers were:

1. U Ngun Thot;
2. U Khain Be;
3. U Ta Lay Che;
4. Myo Naw Khain; and
5. Mg Nyo Mo.²⁷³

During the second week of January 2007, Lieutenant Colonel San Aung, Commander of tactical command 2 stationed at Matupi Town, ordered villagers to construct a Buddhist monastery. The monastery was to be built on a hill-track situated to the west-south side of Matupi Town. In January, Lt. Col. San Aung ordered the surrounding 7 villages to each send 2 people in order to construct the monastery with their own supplies and labour. The villages were:

1. Valangte;
2. Valangpi;
3. Koe-La;
4. Vapung;
5. Leisin;
6. Thi Boei; and
7. Vangkai.²⁷⁴

On 17 April 2007, it was reported that since March civilians had been forced by the authorities to transport planks for the construction of an army camp, a pagoda and a monastery.²⁷⁵

Paletwa Township

From 1 until 31 January 2007, by order of Captain Aung Thein Win of IB #55 one person from each household of the villages in xxxxxxxx village tract were forced to labour to make a football ground in Chin Let Wa village. The villagers had to dig earth and carry soil for 29 days, working each day from 7 am to 4 pm.²⁷⁶

From 18 January until 1 February 2007, a Commander of the army troops of LIB #289, based at xxxxx village ordered villagers of every household from this village to work for his camp. The villagers had to build barracks for the soldiers, make fences for the army camp and dig trenches. They were forced to work for 15 days, and received no remuneration for their labour.²⁷⁷

On 21 February 2007, Company Commander Ye Kyaw Soe, from LIB #50 Gan-Kaw based battalion, presently posted at Sabawngte army camp, forced civilians from 3 villages to repair the road between Sumsem and Lailenpi. Starting from 28 December 2006, villagers were ordered to finish the job within 10 days. The number of villagers who were engaged in the road repair were:

1. Hlungmang (15 persons);
2. Sabawngpi (25 persons); and
3. Sabawngte (25 persons).²⁷⁸

On 26 February 2007, it was reported that Company Commander from LIB #55, posted in Shinletwah village, forced 100 villagers, from 10 villages under his military control, to cut bamboo and wood and build a fence for the camp. They were forced to work from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm, and had to bring their own foods and equipment.²⁷⁹

On 11 May 2007, it was reported that 4 persons had been forced to guard the military camp of LIB #34 based in Mait Wa village. They had to guard the camp every night, and those who were unable to perform this duty had to pay Kyat 80,000 or 50 tins of rice a year.²⁸⁰

On 14 July 2007, it was reported that since June 2007 SPDC army had been forcing villagers into construction work and compelled them to provide the army with tins of rice and chickens. Persons from 8 villages were forced to provide labour for the construction of army posts and barracks in Pathiantlang village. Captain Win Tin Nyeing from LIB #233 issued the order for the construction. The affected villages were:

1. Ma O;
2. Saiha;
3. Shwelaipi;
4. Pathiantlang;
5. Paite;
6. Sia O;
7. Hemapi; and
8. Hemate²⁸¹

Thangtlang Township

On 15 February 2007, several villagers were forced to work on the widening of the Thangtlang –Farkawn Road that links Burma to the northeastern part of India. Villages in Vang Zang track were ordered to provide persons to work on the widening of the border road that is 30 miles long. Laito, Chairman of Township Peace and Development Council (TPDC), from Thangtlang Township, had ordered 5 villages in his township to provide labour for the road construction. The villagers were told to extend the nine feet wide Thangtlang – Rih Road to 12 feet. The construction work was concluded by 27 March. The villages were:

1. Tlanglo;
2. Tlangpi;
3. Farrawn;
4. Vang Zang; and
5. Sopum.²⁸²

On 2 March 2007, a member of the Thangtlang Township Solidarity and Development Team responsible for the Hydro-Electric Power Plant planning in Northern Chin State ordered Mualkai villagers to provide their labour. For the construction of the Hydro-Electric Power Plant, the Mualkai villagers were ordered to carry a five-megawatt electric motor and construct a tank for storing water. The villagers were forced to work from December 2006 to 10 February 2007. The Mualkai power plant project reportedly spent 25 lakhs, which is three times more than the amount authorized by the State Solidarity and Peace Team.²⁸³

On 8 May 2007, Lai To, Chairman of the Township Peace and Development Council, Thangtlang, ordered each family of 85 villages to provide kyat 1,000 for construction of the Mantaw-Hakha road. Those unable to contribute money had to work on the construction site instead.²⁸⁴

On 7 April 2007, villagers from Hnaring Village in Thangtlang Township, were forced to begin the construction of a road. The construction of the road started on 8 March and a group of 200 villagers worked alternately for one week.²⁸⁵

Kachin State

Bhamo Township

On 23 August 2007, it was reported that villagers since June had been forced to work in paddy fields confiscated by a battalion of the SPDC army. The paddy fields were confiscated by the LIB #438, led by military police Captain Zaw Min Lay, as the farmers were unable to meet the battalion's demand of 15 sacks of rice per acre every year. Every day, between 7 am and 12 pm five villagers from 4 villages were forced to work in the army-owned paddy fields between Daw Hpum Yang town and Myothit village. The villages were:

1. Numlang;
2. Hkatawng;
3. Pa;
4. Dali; and
5. Tawpe.²⁸⁶

Myitkyina Township

On 19 March 2007, passenger line cars were forced to transport Lt-Gen Ye Myint of the Ministry of Defence along with his companions to areas around Myitkyina. The cars were ordered without payment, and the cars had to be on standby ready to transport Lt-Gen Ye Myint and his companions to the places they wished to visit from 6:00 am to 6:00 pm that day.²⁸⁷

On 24 August 2007, it was reported that residents were forced to guard their villages and quarters at night on the orders of SPDC army Commander Maj-Gen Ohn Myint. Every night 30 to 40 residents were ordered to sleep on guard duty in the Administrative Offices (Ya-Ya-Ka) of the ruling junta. According to local residents, they were being forced to guard government infrastructure such as schools, the Myitkyina University, colleges and Quarters and Villages Administrative Offices at night.²⁸⁸

On 23 October 2007, local residents were forced to beautify Myitkyina at their own cost. Residents of Myitkyina, the capital of Kachin State, were forced to clean their house compounds and paint fences, all at their own cost in just one day. A local resident reported: "We have to clear the bushes around our house. To paint the fences we have to buy calcium hydroxide, one small packet of which costs 3,000 kyat. For those of us who have big fences, one small packet is not enough. We have to buy it ourselves."²⁸⁹

Karen State

Dooplaya District

On 11 May 2007, SPDC army division 22 came to Waw Loo (Win Lon) village with LIB #210, #2 columns to build a camp using forced labour.²⁹⁰

Nyaunglebin District

From 2 February until 6 April 2007, Major Khin Soe of the SPDC troops of TOC #2, and Battalion Commander Tin Po Aung of LIB #599, forced around 2,500 villagers to build a road between Tai Tu village and Thae Goan. The villagers were from 850 households of 22 villages in 4 village tracts in Kyauk Kyi Township. The villagers, including women and children aged between 10 and 12, had to work on the road for more than 60 days. They had to clear the land, dig soil, carry and pile it up to make higher ground for the road. The villagers also had to use their bullock carts to carry sand from a place which is about 5 kilometre from the road construction site. They had to supply their own food and bring their own implements. No one received payment for their labour. The 22 villages affected were from the following village tracts:

1. Pa-ta-lar;
2. Noh Gaw;
3. Aye Net; and
4. Thoo Ka Bee.²⁹¹

In the last week of February 2007, by the order of Battalion Commander Tin Po Aung Light of LIB #599 under the command of MOC #2, Southern Operation Command, villagers from Pa Ta Lar village had to supply 750 bamboo and 1,500 wooden poles to the army unit which was based nearby their village.²⁹²

Again, in the last week of March 2007, about 100 villagers from Pa Ta Lar village were forced to supply sand to the LIB #599 military camp. The villagers had to collect sand from a place about 20 kilometres from the camp. The sand was to be used for the building of bunkers. The villagers worked from 6 am to 3 pm. In addition, the battalion commander ordered the villagers supply 300 pieces of leaf roofs. Each household in the village was also forced to supply a bundle of firewood (of about 16 Kilograms) to the camp every month. No one was given any payment.²⁹³

On 3 April 2007, SPDC LIB #590 based in Mone Township forced villagers of Weh-gyi and Lu-art to build a military camp in Weh-gyi.²⁹⁴

On 7 May 2007, approximately 1,000 villagers from more than 6 villages were forced to clear a new road between the SPDC military camp at Toe Daw and the camp at Yin O Sein. This new road was built right across villagers' rice fields, destroying about 500 acres of crops. In addition, villagers of Myaung Oo, Aung Chan Tha and Paw Pi Der were forced to pay 30,000 Kyat to LIB #590 every month. LIB #599 and LIB #590 were posted at these two camps and were overseeing the construction of this road. The three villages were:

1. Myaung Oo;
2. Aung Chan Tha;
3. Paw Pi Der;
4. Myaw Oo;
5. Mee Te Taw;
6. Tee To Lo; and
7. Kyauk Tan.²⁹⁵

Pa'an District

In January 2007, DKBA Brigade #333 officer Kyaw Min told Gk'Ma Moh villagers that the monk U Thuzana, head of the DKBA and based at Myaing Gyi Ngu in Pa'an District, had sent 4,000 bricks to Htee Lay Kaw village for the construction of a new pagoda at Gkyah Htee Yoh Koh Poh. This pagoda was to be constructed upon the summit of the Htee Lay Koh village mountain in Bilin Township. Along with the construction of the pagoda itself, the DKBA also organised the construction of a road which ran from a pagoda at Meh Say to the Htee Lay Kaw pagoda. Construction of the pagoda and road began in January 2007. DKBA Brigade #333 soldiers gave village heads written orders in which DKBA Brigade #333 ordered them to provide villagers for labour, and threatened to 'take action' if the villagers failed to comply. As part of the construction work, the villagers were forced to carry lime, water, sand, bricks and cement from the base of the mountain to the summit. The forced labourers reported that it was extremely difficult to climb up the side of the mountain as it was a very steep slope and they feared slipping and falling down along the way. Moreover, those who worked on the road construction had to bring their own tools and were told to clear every last tree stump in the construction area.²⁹⁶

Papun District

On 21 January 2007, DKBA troops forced 307 persons from Meh-k'law village to construct a motor road from Ku-sit to P'yeh-lo.²⁹⁷

On 5 February 2007, troops from SPDC LIB #219 under LID #11, based in Maeh-lay area Wa-thoe-ko camp, forced residents of 9 villages to cut bamboo and pleat roofing thatch. The villages were:

1. Hto-kaw-sor-kee;
2. Kaw-war;
3. Mae-kaw-law;
4. Leh-wa-ko;
5. To-meh-kee;
6. Klo-kee;
7. Wa-tho-lo;
8. Mae-way-thaw-doe; and
9. Upper Maeway.²⁹⁸

On 3 April 2007, SPDC IB #282 troops came to A-lar-sa-kan village, situated on the Ye-Tavoy motor road, and demanded one person from each household for use as forced labour. A-lar-sa-kan village has about 100 households. Each person had to labour for 3 days and those unable to work had to hire a labourer for kyat 3,000. Moreover, the villagers were forced to grow castor trees, and had to provide two persons each day to work on the castor plantation. A committee was formed to organize for the castor plantation, to which each household had to contribute kyat 3,000.²⁹⁹

On 28 October 2007, SPDC IB #216 Commander Kyaw Kyaw Aung, of Military Operations Command MOC #11, ordered each of the 400 households in Meh village to cut two bamboo poles. Villagers were then required to deliver the 800 bamboo poles to Kyaw Kyaw Aung for the repair of his army camp.³⁰⁰

On 9 November 2007, SPDC Battalion Commander Aung Htun Lin of LIB #434 ordered one villager from every household in Htee Ber Ka Hta and Gklaw Loh Gkloh Hta villages to cut down bamboo poles and deliver them to drop off points at all bridges between Way Hsah and Papun town. At each of these locations villagers had to weave split bamboo to construct walls along the sides of the bridges.³⁰¹

On 11 November 2007, Battalion Commander Aung Htun Lin ordered 12 villages to provide one person from each household to cut back the forest growth from the side of the vehicle road all the way from Way Hsah village to Gkoo Hsay village. The villages were:

1. Htee Ber Ka Hta;
2. Gklaw Loh Gkloh Hta;
3. Way Moh;
4. Way Hsah;
5. T'Gkoh The;
6. Kler Koh;
7. Gkyaw Klee Loh;
8. Bpoh Baw Koh;
9. T'Dwee Koh;
10. Nah Gkoo Nah;
11. Gkoo Hsay; and
12. Noh Law Hsoo.

As of 12 November 2007, residents of Way Moh, Way Hsah, T'Gkoh Teh, Gklaw Loh Gkloh Hta, Noh Law Hsoo and Htee Ber Ka Hta villages had already complied with the forced labour demand, however the remaining villages had yet to carry out the order. The forced labourers were ordered to cut back the forest growth to a depth of 5 arm spans (9.1 m/52.5 ft) along a three furlong (603 m/660 yards) length of the road, although in some areas the required length was two furlongs (402 m/440 yards).³⁰²



Women and children performing forced labour cutting back forest growth alongside a vehicle road in the Gkoo Hsay area of Karen State on 12 November 2007 as ordered by SPDC army LIB #434 Battalion Commander Aung Htun Lin. [Photo: KHRG]

Thaton District

On 10 January 2007, it was reported that troops from SPDC IB #96, based in Kyaikto Township, had forced 3 villages to provide 10 persons each day to carry sand and rock for Shwe-t'kaw-oh-chaung Bridge construction. In addition, each village had to provide more than 3 tons of timber and send it to Nat-sin. The affected villages were:

1. Hsaw-thu-khee;
2. Htee-wa-klu-khee; and
3. Maw-paw-lo.³⁰³

On 14 January 2007, DKBA troops led by Saw Lay Htoo forced 50 Lay-kay villagers to build the road to Mying-gyi-ngu abbot's pagoda.³⁰⁴

On 22 January 2007, the DKBA #333 Battalion Commander, Maung Kyin, forced 25 Hteesie-baw villagers, 40 Shwe-oak and Kaw-heh villagers to construct a pagoda.³⁰⁵

On 10 February 2007, DKBA troops led by Than Tun Oo ordered a person from each household in Shwe-oak village and Taw-heh village tract to carry sand for building a pagoda.³⁰⁶

On 12 March 2007, Bo Htoo Lu from DKBA Ka-saw-wa Column, forced Htot-klaw-khee villagers to pleat 1,600 pieces of roofing thatch to be used for the DKBA Paw-htee-ku camp.³⁰⁷

On 20 March 2007, SPDC LIB #9 Headquarters, under SPDC LID #44, based at Pa-wah, forced each of the villages of Htee-nya-per, Ma-eisa, Klaw-yan and Mi-chaung-aing villages to pleat 500 pieces of roofing thatch.³⁰⁸

On 5 April 2007, a patrol of soldiers from Company #4, SPDC IB #3, under company commander Lan Htun arrived at Dta Gkaw Poh village ward. Lan Htun ordered the residents of 16 different villages in the ward to construct a vehicle road from Dta Gkaw Poh village to Meh Bpoo village. The villagers were expected to labour for two days, and required to provide their own tools as well as food.³⁰⁹

On 13 April 2007, Commander Hla Shwe Thaung from LIB #9 demanded 400 bamboos from Pa Ya Yaw village to be sent to Lay Kay camp.³¹⁰

In April 2007, troops from SPDC LIB #2 under the command of Zaw Min Htun arrived at Htee Hsee Baw village and set themselves up at the local Buddhist monastery for three nights. While staying there, Zaw Min Htun ordered one villager to accompany his patrol as a guide.³¹¹

On 15 May 2007, LIB #102, under the command of Min Zaw Oo and camp commander Hain Zaw Oo, ordered 400 thatch shingles and 300 bamboo poles from T--- village. Some of these were used to rebuild the camp and the rest sold off for profit. Camp commander Hain Zaw Oo further ordered the villagers to cut down a stand of the trees in a nearby wood which they then sold off in town.³¹²

On 4 June 2007, battalion commander Min Naing Oo, of LIB #9, LID #44, with a camp at Yoh Gkalah monastery, ordered Htee Pa Doh Hta village to provide 5 persons to cut down trees from the monastery grounds. The monks were intending to use these trees for the construction of a new building for the monastery and requested that the trees should not be cut down. However, Min Naing Oo ignored this and continued with the work. He also demanded 300 bamboo poles and 200 thatch shingles from each of the following villages:

1. Eastern Htee Pa Doh Hta;
2. Western Yoh Gkalah;
3. Eastern Yoh Gkalah;
4. Kaw Poh Koh;
5. Lay Kaw Htee;
6. Htee Pa Doh Kee;
7. Htaw Gklaw Hta;
8. Noh Ber Baw;
9. Wa Kheh Hta;
10. Htaw Gklaw Kee;
11. Nya Poh Kee;
12. Dta Uh Kee; and
13. Dta Uh Nee.³¹³

Toungoo District

In January 2007, LID #66 commander Maung Maung Aye ordered villages to provide a quota of workers for forced labour along sections of the Kler La – Mawchi road. Maung Maung Aye forced the villagers to do this work twice in December 2006 and once again in January 2007. After having cleared the specified areas, he forced these villagers to twice porter army loads further down the road. The village names, number of villagers forced to labour and the area of the road on which they had to work:

1. Maw Pah Der (20 villagers, Ser Lu Chaw area, 3rd mile);
2. Gkaw Soh Koh (30 villagers, Ser Lu Chaw area, 3rd mile)
3. Der Doh (20 villagers, Ser Lu Chaw area, 3rd mile)
4. Kler La (30 villagers, Ser Lu Chaw to P'Na Koh Soh, 6th mile)
5. Der Doh (20 villagers, Ser Lu Chaw to P'Na Koh Soh, 6th mile)
6. Gkaw Thay Der (35 villagers, P'Na Koh Soh to Aung Myin camp, 8th mile)
7. Gk'Lay Soh Kee (25 villagers, P'Na Koh Soh to Aung Myin camp, 8th mile)
8. Ghah Muh Der (10 villagers, P'Na Koh Soh to Aung Myin camp, 8th mile)
9. Bpeh Gkaw Der (30 villagers, Th'Aye Hta village area, 12th mile)
10. Maw Gkoh Der (15 villagers, Th'Aye Hta village area, 12th mile)
11. Ler Koh (14 villagers, Th'Aye Hta village area, 12th mile)
12. Koo Bpler Der (15 villagers, Th'Aye Hta village area, 12th mile)
13. Wah Thoh Der (20 villagers, Th'Aye Hta village area, 12th mile)³¹⁴

On 1 January 2007, the Commander of LID #66 ordered 10 people from Kler Lar (Bawgali Gyi) village to guard a bulldozer at Maw Pah Der and Kaw Soe Kho. Moreover, on 2 January MOC #16 ordered seven people from Yer Loe and five people from Plaw Baw Der to go to Bon Ma Tee and follow the bulldozer for security.³¹⁵

On 3 January 2007, troops of LIB #1 column, under SPDC TAC #661, set up camp in upper Kaw-law-ka village and forced 200 villagers from 5 villages on the west side of Thauk-ye-kat stream, to carry military supplies from Ku-thay-doe to Kaw-law-ka military camp. The following villagers had to provide labour:

1. Ku-thay-doe;
2. Kaw-lawka;
3. Sa-ba-law-kee;
4. Thu-hge-doe; and
5. Htee-ta-pu.³¹⁶

On 5 January 2007, SPDC troops forced villagers to clear landmines between Thapan-chaung and Htee-lo with their bullock carts. At about 1 pm, one of the carts was blown up by a landmine and 2 persons on the cart were killed.³¹⁷

On 10 January 2007, troops from SPDC IB #75, under TAC Command 2 of MOC Headquarters 16, arrived with bulldozers at Htee-lo and Tha-pan-chaung areas, and forced the villagers from Play-hsa-lo, Yeh-lo, Plaw-baw-doe and Ta-par-khee to work on road construction.³¹⁸

On 16 January 2007, Bo Aung Kyaw Oo of SPDC LIB #108, under TAC #661 LID #66, in Than-daung Township, forced Ler-kho villagers to split 3,000 bamboos for fencing the army camp.³¹⁹

On 5 March 2007, MOC #5 Commander Kaung Mya ordered local villagers in the Kler La area to cut down and deliver large bamboo poles six cubits (2.74 m/9 ft) in length. He also ordered each household to pay kyat 1000 for the construction of a football ground. On 12 March, Commander Kaung Mya again ordered villagers in the Kler La area to provide large bamboo poles. This time he demanded a total of 2,000 poles to fence in his army camp.³²⁰

On 17 March 2007, troops from LIB #54 under the command of MOC #5 based at Maw-koeder village forced villagers from Der-doh village to supply 500 bamboo sticks in order to fence off the army camp.³²¹

Also on 17 March 2007, troops from MOC #5, LIB #364 based in Maw Koh Der forced villagers to cut down and deliver 300 bamboo poles and ordered them to use these to construct a fence around his army camp.³²²

On 2 April 2007, SPDC army MOC #5 Commander Khaung Mya based in Bawgali Gyi (Kler La) forced the Bawgali Gyi villagers to cut 400 pieces of bamboo for use at the army camp.³²³

On 5 April 2007, LIB #346, under MOC #5, based in Tan-da-bin Town, forced villagers to build a motorcycle road from Wa-tho-ko to Ler-ko village. Households which were not able to send a person to labour had to pay kyat 1,000 a day.³²⁴

On 7 May 2007, LIB #346 troops ordered Play Hsar Loe villagers to cut 550 bamboos, and demanded 5 pieces of roofing leaf per house from 60 houses.³²⁵

On 12 July 2007, SPDC army battalions under the second command's headquarters had reportedly forced villagers to build more than five new military camps in Toungoo District.³²⁶ Between 23 and 31 July 2007, MOC #9 LIB #375 and LIB #539 stayed in Play Hsar Loe and forced the villagers to cut down hundreds of bamboo poles. The villagers had to comply as they were unable to flee due to flooding in the area.³²⁷

From 14 until the 20 November 2007, troops of LIB #73, commanded by Aung Kah, forced 54 villagers to work on a new SPDC army camp in Ta Pah Kee area. Villagers from the following villages were forced to work:

1. Shar Shee Bo;
2. Shee Pyu Gone;
3. Toun Boo; and
4. Ye Shar.³²⁸

Karenni State

Dimawhso Township

On 27 July 2007, about 80 villagers from 3 villages were forced to reconstruct an SPDC army camp in Daw Ta Ma Gyi village. The orders relating to the forced labour were issued by Thet Pai, Second Commander of the LIB #509. The villagers forced to work were from the following villages:

1. Daw Ta Ma Gyi;
2. Daw Nyaw Khu; and
3. Daw Saw Phya villages.³²⁹

Maw Chi Township

On 9 June 2007, it was reported that since 20 May, Karenni people had been forced by the KSO to build an army camp in Ba Ba Gyi hill located between Maw Chi and Lokhar village. The KSO was led by Tel Nel, a former Battalion Commander of the Karenni Progressive Party (KNPP).³³⁰

Mon State

Kyaikto Township

On 10 January 2007, it was reported that troops of SPDC IB #96 based in Kyaikto Township forced villagers from 3 villages to carry materials for a bridge. Each day 10 villagers were forced to carry sand and rock for the Shwe-t'kaw-oh-chaw bridge construction. The following villages had to provide labour:

1. Chaw-thu-khee;
2. Htee-wa-klu-khee; and
3. Maw-paw-lo.³³¹

On 28 May 2007, it was reported that villagers were forced to guard the gas pipeline running along villages in Mon State. One person from each household of 4 villages had to undertake patrol duty every month from evening to midnight. The villages were:

1. Kalort-tort;
2. Kawn-ka-bue;
3. Doe-mar; and
4. Set-thawe.³³²

Bilin Township

On 19 January 2007, locals were forced to work in Kyauk Taw road renovation by the order of the Military Strategy Chief Major General Yar Pyae from the Military Tactics Control Commission #9 based in Kyauk Taw. Soldiers from the LIB #374, 375, 376 under the above Commission forced 300 villagers a day to work on the road construction. They had to bring their own food and work until 5 o'clock each day. The groups alternated, working one week each.³³³

Khaw Zar Sub Township

From the first week of January 2007 until May 2007, local residents were forced by the SPDC army to provide timber/wood for a local military's brick kiln, operated by Major Kyaw Ze Ya from IB #31.³³⁴

From the end of January until April 2007, residents of Khaw Zar Sub Township were forced to work as unpaid labourers on bridge constructions along the Ye-Tavoy highway. Troops from IB #31, based near Khaw Zar Sub Town, forced villagers in Ye Township to work on the construction. With the cooperation of the local township administrative authorities, the commander of the local IB coordinated two groups of unpaid villager labourers and demanded each group be made up of 15 people, and had to include some local carpenters from villages in the Khaw Zar Sub Township.³³⁵

On 12 January 2007, the SPDC military battalion based in Khaw Zar Sub Township forced villagers to uproot bushes and roots of trees. The IB #31, under the command of MOC #19, ordered 18 village headmen to find villagers to clear bushes, roots and bamboos and then burn them. The battalion officers initially said they would pay the villagers, but went back on their promise.³³⁶

On 25 January 2007, LIB #31 under the command of MOC #9 ordered farmers to provide farming equipment to cultivate fields for the army. All the labourers were forced to work in the fields for the battalion from 7 am to 11 am and from 1 pm to 5 pm each day.³³⁷

On 13 February 2007, it was reported that local SPDC army officers continued to force people in Yin-ye and Toe Thet Ywar Thit villages to build bridges and roads for which they had to pay for themselves. About 140 villagers, including 80 from Yin-ye and 60 from Toe Thet Ywar Thit village had been forced to build a bridge in northern and southern Toe Thet Ywar Thit village since February 2. They also collected sand, stones or rock, and concrete for the bridge. According to a Yin-ye villager, the local administration collected about kyat 15,000 from each house in Toe Thet Ywar Thit, and between kyat 2,000-8,000 per house in Yin-ye village. Toe Thet Ywar Thit has over 200 households and Yin-ye about 400. The villager reported that those who were unable to provide labour for construction of the bridge, had to pay for cement for the bridge.³³⁸

On 13 February 2007, local army officers of LIB #31 forced 140 local Mon villagers from Ye Township to build two bridges for the development project in the area. Civilians from two villages, Yin-ye and Toe Thet Ywar Thit, in Khaw Zar Sub Township were forced to construct two bridges in southern and northern Toe Thet Ywar Thit village. The construction started on 2 February 2007.³³⁹

On 30 June 2007, according to Yin-ye villagers, about 140 people, including 80 from Yin-ye and 60 from Toe Tat Ywa Thit village, were forced to build a bridge in northern and southern Toe Tat Ywa Thit village which is located on the new 35 mile long Ye-Danikyar highway, which connects Ye Town and a village called Danikyar, on the border of Mon State and Tenasserim Division.³⁴⁰

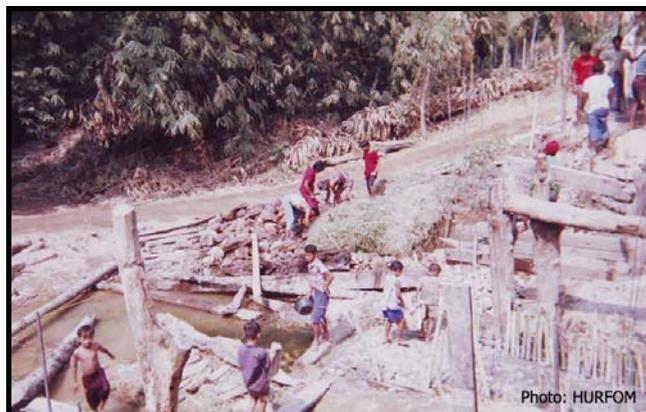


Mon women performing forced village sentry duties guarding the entrance of the village under orders of the local SPDC army camp. [Photo: HURFOM]

On 5 March 2007, residents of Khaw Zar Sub Township, were forced by the SPDC Army to provide timber for a local military brick factory. Since the Commander of IB #31 directed local residents to arrange for timber for the brick factory at the end of 2006, the factory had produced 10,000 bricks. In March, the deputy commander, Major Kyaw Zay Ya ordered 4 villages in the area to collect the same amount of wood for his personal brick factory in Yin-ye village. The villages have a total of 1,000 households. The villages are:

1. Yin-ye;
2. Singu;
3. Toe Thet Ywa Thit; and
4. Tae Khun (Sai Khun).³⁴¹

On 4 April 2007, IB #31 based in Khaw-za sub town forced local villagers to cut wood for army brick factories which are part of the army's business ventures. Most military officers forced local people to patrol the village, the motor road, railway tracks, and the gas pipeline. But they did not pay the villagers who worked on these sites. They also fined villagers who were absent from the workforce.³⁴²



Mon villagers doing forced labour constructing a bridge in Ye Township, Mon State.
[Photo: HURFOM]

On 11 April 2007, villagers were ordered to cut and dispatch timber for the second time for an army brick kiln, by a commander of the SPDC Army. Moreover, 4 families had to collect a four feet square piece of wood and pile it beside the main road for easy carriage to the factories. This has been going on since the first week of last month. About 15 villagers were being forced to work every alternate day in the brick kilns.³⁴³

In the first week of April 2007, Commander of IB #61 based at Ye Town ordered villagers of Kawt Hlaing (about 800 households) to repair a road between Kawt Hlaing village and Han Gan village. The chairman told the villagers that a fine of kyat 5,000 (US\$ 5) would be imposed on those persons who failed to work.³⁴⁴

Also, during first week of April 2007, commander of IB #31, ordered villagers from Chaung-wa village (40 households) to take sentry duty. Both men and women had to take the duty. Men were assigned for night and women were assigned for day time duty.³⁴⁵ Commander of IB #31 also ordered villagers from Khaw Zar to work for the construction of a bridge on a road between Khaw Zar and Kwan Hler village.³⁴⁶ Moreover, the Commander of IB #31, ordered village Chairman Nai Ah Soon, to provide villagers to construct housing for the staff of the Sub-Township Hospital. A total of about 50 villagers, including 10 persons from ward #4, had to work for the construction. A fine of kyat 5,000 would be imposed on any person who failed to fulfil to work. The villagers had to carry brick and sand, make a fence for the hospital compound and clear undergrowth.³⁴⁷ The Commander of IB #31, also ordered the Chairman of Mee Htaw Lar Gyi village, ordered the owners of motorbikes in the village to transport soldiers to undertake delivery services for the army. Each motorbike owner had to take turns every 5 days, and both the motorbike and its owner had to be on standby at the Chairman's residence from 6am to 6pm on each day of the duty.³⁴⁸

In the last week of April 2007, the Commander of IB #31, through Maung Tin Nyunt chairman of Mann Gyi village, ordered villagers of Mann Gyi village (170 household) to clear both side of the road and as well to repair the road itself.³⁴⁹ Moreover, the Commander of IB #31, ordered Mann Gyi village chairman Maung Tin Nyunt to force villagers to take sentry duty, in order to protect the battalion against possible attack from a group of Mon insurgents.

A group of 12 persons a day had to take turns in carrying out the duty. There were four gates in Mann Gyi village and 3 people were assigned to each gate.³⁵⁰

Also in the last week of April 2007, the Commander of IB #61 based at Ye Town, ordered Kawt Hlaing village Chairman Nai Pan Nyunt, to provide villagers of Kawt Hlaing (about 800 households) to repair a road between Kawt Hlaing village and Han Gan village. The chairman told the villagers that a fine of kyat 5,000 (US\$ 5) would be imposed on persons who failed to work.³⁵¹

On 7 May 2007, about 25 people had to take turns to work on the road repairing. They were ordered to work from 9 am to 5 pm, with a break between 11 am and 1 pm. However, they had to bring their own food and their own equipment. No one was given any food or wages for their work.³⁵²

On 7 May 2007, Commander of IB #61, ordered Chairman of Khaw Zar village Nai Pan Nyunt, to demand villagers from Khaw Zar village to contribute labour for repairing a motor road. Each household in the village had to pay kyat 3,000 (about US\$ 3) for rent of a truck needed to transport soil from Ka Laut. The villagers were also told that a fine of kyat 5,000 (US\$ 5) would be imposed on persons who failed to fulfil work as ordered.³⁵³

On 4 June 2007, IB #31 stationed in Khaw-zar town forced over 600 villagers to repair a road and also other areas to welcome Lt. Gen Maung Bo. The villagers were forced to work for the army from May 23 to 25 and from May 30 to until June 2.³⁵⁴

Moulmein Township

On 5 July 2007, it was reported that the Southeast Military Command head Major General Thet Naing Win had ordered Moulmein University students to cultivate physic nuts³⁵⁵.

Mudon Township

On 19 May 2007, it was reported that the Mudon Township Peace and Development Council had forced about 40 people to beautify a physic nut plant nursery all along the road and clean bushes along the highway belonging to the SPDC in Mudon, because a senior SPDC army officer was going to pass along the road.³⁵⁶



A group of villagers from Yin Ye village forced to repair roads in Khaw Zar Sub-Township, Mon State. [Source: HURFOM]

Ye Township

On 15 January 2007, Col Kyaw Zay Ya of IB #31 had forced villagers to make bricks to be sold in Southern Ye Township. Starting in December 2006, IB #31 under MOC #19, each day forced 4 villages to make bricks.³⁵⁷

On 7 February 2007, residents of southern Ye Township were forced to work both night day on the orders of the battalion stationed in the area. They worked in brick kilns by day and were forced to do sentry duty at night.³⁵⁸

Shan State

Kae See Township

At the end of 2006 and early 2007, SPDC troops of LIB #131 forced villagers of Paang Kaad village, in Wan Khem village tract, to rebuild dilapidated army housing and dig new trenches in and around the military camp. The trenches were required to be 4-elbow-lengths deep and 2-elbow-lengths wide. In addition to providing free labour for the construction work, the 30-40 households of Paang Kaad also had to provide building materials, which included 3 hardwood pillars per household.³⁵⁹

Kengtung Township

Since around January 2007, people in Kaad Pha village tract had been forced by the SPDC authorities to grow dry season rice for the military. People were also forced to provide sacks of sand and build a dam to divert water.³⁶⁰

Kunhing Township

From June to November 2007, farmers in Kun-Hing Township were forced by SPDC military authorities of LIB #524 to cultivate a different strain of rice than those grown traditionally, and to buy the seeds from the authorities. At least around 50 plots of rice paddies were to convert to the new strain of rice, know as 'Shwe Pyi Aye'. These plots belonged to the farmers of Wan Paang and Nam Khaam villages, based along the road between Kun-Hing and Kaali village tract in Kung-Hing Township. Moreover, the farmers were forced to buy the rice seeds from the authorities at the price of kyat 20,000 per basket.³⁶¹

Laikha Township

In late 2006 and early 2007, villagers in Naa Poi village tract in Lai-Kha Township were forced by SPDC troops IB #287 to construct a new military camp, as well as prepare land for cultivation of coffee and other crops. Furthermore, at least 2 villagers were required to be on standby at the camp every day, ready to serve immediately when they were needed as guides or porters, or to run errands.³⁶²

From April to September 2007, SPDC troops of IB #64 and a Shan ceasefire group forced villagers of at least 9-10 villages in Lai-Kha Township were to build a new road. The projected road started from the east of Lai-Kha town up to a point further to the east in Kun-Hing Township where it met a road that joined Kun-Hing and Kae-See townships, covering a

total distance of about 30 miles. The following are some of the villages that were forced to build the road:

1. Nawng Wo;
2. Wan Paang;
3. Nam Hoo Nur;
4. Maak Laang;
5. Zalaai Khum;
6. Naa Loi;
7. Paang Saang; and
8. Maak Kawk.³⁶³

For several months since March 2007, SPDC troops of IB #64 and a Shan ceasefire group forced villagers in Naa Poi village tract in Lai-Kha Township to provide free labour building a new military base. Villagers of at least 5 villages were required to regularly work at a place called Nam Hoo Phya Tham in Naa Poi village tract in Lai-Kha Township. Although the authorities said they were building a new town, local villagers believed it was a military base because they were also forced to build trenches, barracks and offices. At least 5 villagers from each village had to work for 3 days at a time, providing their own food and tools and even mini-tractors. The said 5 villages were:

1. Mai Hai (40 households);
2. Kung Sim (30 households);
3. Haang Lin (27 households);
4. Maak Laang Neo (10 households);
5. Nawng Wo (50 households).³⁶⁴

Since June 2007 until at least December 2007, SPDC troops of LIB #516 have been forcing villagers in Naa Poi and Wan Saang village tract to serve as their vigilantes and guides, and threatening to relocate those who failed to provide free labour.³⁶⁵

Murng-Nai Township

In early June 2007, military authorities of IB #248 issued an order requiring villagers of Naa Khaan village tract to grow sesame and corn among physic nut plants in physic nut plantations along the road leading to the frontier between Murng-Nai and Nam-Zarng townships. The road goes through Naa Khaan village tract, spanning a length of not less than 7-8 miles up to the frontier of Nam-Zarng Township.³⁶⁶

Since June 2007 up to at least December, SPDC troops of IB #248 forced villagers in Naa Khaan village tract in Murng-Nai Township to grow sesame and corn for the military.³⁶⁷

Murng-Pan Township

From May until at least December 2007, farmers at Tong Teb Village in Wo Laai village tract, Murng-Pan Township, had been forced by SPDC troops of LIB #332 to cultivate rice for them. The villagers did not get paid for their labour, and were required to provide their own food and fuel for their tractors while working for the military.³⁶⁸

Murng-Sart Township

In March 2007, it was reported that at least since late November 2006 people in Murng-Sart Township had been forced by the SPDC authorities to work in expanding an airfield, fixing a football field and expanding physic nut plantations.³⁶⁹

Murug-Ton Township

For at least the last two years, members of UWSA, a ceasefire group, have been using villagers as forced labour at their rubber plantation in Me Ken village tract in Murug-Ton Township.³⁷⁰

In May 2007, it was reported that villagers were forced to build a water pipeline to divert water to a military camp in Mungton.³⁷¹

Also, in May 2007, SPDC troops of IB #65 ordered people with houses on main roads in Wan Mai Huay Saai village tract in Murug-Ton Township to build new houses. Those who could not build their houses according to the required standard were forced to move away from the main roads.³⁷²

From mid November 2006 up to February 2007, SPDC troops of IB #65 and LIB #524 forced people from at least 6 villages to split rocks and pave the road between Naa Kawng Mu and Pung Pa Khem villages. In addition to not being paid for their time and labour, the villagers had to provide their own food and use their own tools while working on the road. The forced labourers had to work on a rotation basis to fill up the required quotas of workers each day. Each of the following villages was required to provide a certain number of forced labourers every day:

1. Naa Kawng Mu (30 persons);
2. Huay Aw (30 persons);
3. Pung Pa Khem (40 persons);
4. Ton Pherng (10 persons);
5. Pung Aan (10 persons);
6. Ta Kwaang (10 labourers).³⁷³

In December 2007, it was reported that SPDC troops from LIB #360 had forced villagers of Pung Pa Khem and Son Kuay villages in Pung Pa Khem village tract to keep watch and patrol their villages, often for several days at a time.³⁷⁴

Muse Township

On 17 August 2007, it was reported that SPDC authorities had forced residents into night sentry duty on the plea that rebels were in operation. Each night, 4 residents from each village of Muse town and surrounding villages were doing sentry duty on rotation in their respective areas or wards. The order came from Muse Township Peace and Development Council Chairman, U Nyunt Han, during a meeting with village and ward chairmen on 10 August, following information that a rebel group of the Shan State Army was operating in the towns.³⁷⁵

Nam-Zarng Township

From about March until May 2007, villagers of several villages in Ton Hung Haai Laai village tract were forced by SPDC troops of LIB #543 and a Shan ceasefire group to build a road. The following villages were affected:

1. Ton Hung Haai Laai (50 houses);
2. Maak Laang (40 houses);
3. Wan Mai (23 houses);
4. Kung Yom (30 houses);
5. Maak Khi Nu (18 houses).³⁷⁶

Irrawaddy Division

On 19 February 2007, residents of Ein Meh Township, Irrawaddy Division, were forced by local authorities to build a road between Phyin Thalet village in Mayanpin and Shan Su village. According to the residents, they were not only being forced to build roads but were also conscripted for work on canal development projects.³⁷⁷

Mandalay Division

In December 2007, it was reported that Chairman U Myo Thand had ordered farmers in his territory to grow rice paddy in fields which are only suitable for growing cotton, corn and beans. He said those who disobeyed the orders would be arrested and imprisoned. The farmers followed his orders to grow paddy rice, but the crop failed because the land was unsuitable.³⁷⁸

On 25 December 2007, it was reported that a large number of construction workers in the new capital Naypyidaw, had not received wages from their employers for months. Construction workers were supposed to be paid at least the minimum wage of kyat 1,500 a day to work 10 hours a day with no overtime. An estimated 80,000 workers are involved in construction projects in the city.³⁷⁹

Pegu Division

On 6 December 2007, local authorities ordered farmers in Waw and Nyaunglebin townships, Pegu Division, to grow sunflowers, in the belief that the flowers symbolize long life for the regime. The farmers were instructed to buy one pyi (2 kg) of sunflower seeds at a cost of kyat 1,500 (US\$ 1.10). The authorities made no commitment to buy seed from the resulting sunflower crop, and no reason was given for the order.³⁸⁰

Sagaing Division

From 24 February until 2 March 2007, by the order Chairman of Homalin Township Soe Win, through Moug Khan village chairman Thar Aye, ordered villagers from each household of 4 villages in Moug Khan village tract, Homalin Township, Sagaing Division, to work for the construction of Htaman-thi hydro power plant project. A total of 473 persons from these villages had to work for the construction of housing in Htaman-thi power plant project. The villages were:

1. Ohn Bin Kwin;
2. Htwet Wa;
3. Mhan Maw;
4. Chaung Sone.³⁸¹

Tenasserim Division

From 5 January until 10 May 2007, troops from IB #25 based at Tavoy, which was providing security for a dam project near Dah Thway Kyaut village, ordered residents of 5 villages to work for them. Starting from 5 January, a group of 11 villagers a day had to chop down trees and bamboo, clear the land to construct tents and construct tents for the troops from IB #25. The villagers had to supply their food and bring their own tools and implements. The villages were:

1. Dah Thway Kyaut (30 households);
2. Seit Chaung (40 households);
3. Nyaung Chaung (30 households);
4. Nyar phyar Chaung (100 households); and
5. Oo-yin Gyi (40 households)³⁸²

From 20 April until the 30 April 2007, Chairman of Gant-gaw Taung village Peace and Development Council (PDC), Tin Myint, ordered villagers to work for fire prevention on the SPDC rubber plantation near their village. A group of 50 villagers a day were ordered to clear undergrowth in an adjacent area of the rubber plantation, as well as extinguish fires, and make firebreak for the plantation. The villagers had to work for 11 days, 8am to 5 pm a day.³⁸³

Yebyu Township

On 8 April 2007, preparing for the repair of Ye-Tavoy railway tracks, the SPDC army IB #282, based at Nat-kyi-zin village of Yepyu Township, forced Nat-kyi-zin villagers to find timber and cut out one wooden tie (sleeper) and dig 100 cubit feet of gravels, per household. Those who could not provide the items had to pay 500 Kyat for a tie and 2,500 Kyat for 100 cubit feet of gravels.³⁸⁴

From the first week of June 2006 until the end of 2007, LIB #409 led by Lt. Col. Aung Naing Myint, ordered Mon and Karen residents from every village between Alesakan and Mayan-chaung villages in Yebyu Township, to provide security along the Ye-Tavoy motor road. Village headmen from 5 villages were ordered to send 8 villagers per day to guard the highway. The village headmen demanded that the villagers take knives, sticks and weapons from their homes in order to protect themselves while they were on duty. The following villages were affected:

1. Alesakan;
2. Kyauk-ka-din;
3. Kywe-ta-lin;
4. Yapu; and
5. Mayan-chaung.³⁸⁵

5.6 Forced Prison Labour – Partial list of incidents for 2007

Arakan State

On 27 April 2007, prisoners from Buthidaung prison were forced to provide cheap labour at several private work sites in the township. The prisoners had to work daily at several work sites outside of the prison, in places such as brick-fields, shrimp farms, rubber plantations, and seasonal crop farms. The authorities forced the prisoners to work two shifts a day. The first shift ran from 8:00 to 11:30 am, and the second shift ran from 2:00 to 5:30 pm.³⁸⁶

On 15 June 2007, it was reported that since the last week of May about 200 prisoners from Sittwe prison had been forced by prison authorities to work on the reconstruction of shrimp farms on the island of Ngamanray Kyunt in Maybon Township.³⁸⁷

On 26 July 2007, it was reported that prisoners in Sittwe Jail had been forced by the SPDC army to perform hard labour since July 22. The army forced 80 prisoners to work daily on the repair of the Kyauktaw-Mrauk U road. They had to lay earth and pave stones on the road. The prisoners lived in a shed which had been built by the army near MOC #9 headquarters.³⁸⁸

In August 2007, more than 88 prisoners released from Layant Taung Prison Labour Camp of Maruk-U were forced to work on the Sittwe-Rangoon highway. The released prisoners completed their jail terms in July but the camp authorities did not release them. Instead they were forced to work on the Sittwe-Rangoon highway in plain clothes.³⁸⁹

On 20 December 2007, it was reported that prisoners from different jails in Arakan State were used as workforce on the Sittwe-Rangoon highway in Myebon Township. Fifty of the prisoners from Sittwe jail were brought out to work on 15 December, while 50 others from Kyaukpru jail were brought out on 16 December, and a further 50 from Buthidaung jail brought out to work on 17 December. All the prisoners were under the control of the Western Command, and were kept in a temporary camp made by prisoners at pillar No. 52 and 53 of the Sittwe-Rangoon highway. The prisoners were also forced to work in brick kilns, and collected wood for the brick field as well as digging rock and earth for the road. It was reported that upon completion of these tasks, the prisoners would be made to work on bridges leading to the road.³⁹⁰

Mon State

On 21 January 2007, it was reported that 100 prison labourers were forced to produce stones with the help of machines to repair the Delular road in Nawtayar. 4605 feet tarred road was already paved in recent work. They produced 12 kyins (a pile of stones measuring 10 foot square by 1 foot high) a day from 13 December 2006 to 2 March 2007 in order to repair the road and pave it with stones. According to Lieutenant Nay Linn from the LIB #399, the road was paved with 155 feet of stones a day from 3 March to 1 April.³⁹¹

On 23 January 2007, 576 prisoners were forced to work for Wallay-Kyaikson road construction together with IB #22 during an operational take over.³⁹²

Bilin Township

On 1 January 2007, 200 prison labourers were carried through Maw Lamyaing and Kyar Inn Seik Kyee by trucks. They were distributed to front line regiments and troops and forced to carry loads. It was reported that they were also forced to clear bamboos, and walk in front of the army in the mine areas.³⁹³

On 16 January 2007, when IB #24 took over the duty for occupation of camps and region in Kyal Pyaung Kone, 5 prison porters accompanied the column (2) of the IB. The prison porters had to renovate the camps, fetch water and cook rice for the soldiers as a routine. The porters were reportedly also subject to verbal abuse in the form of daily scolding by the army officers.³⁹⁴

Magwe Division

On 4 April 2007, it was reported that inmates of Thayat prison were forced by prison officials to work in local factories for meagre salaries. Inmates were forced to work at a soy bean juice factory in the Thayat area. While the prisoners were supposed to receive half of the money they earned, they were only receiving 20 percent with the other 80 percent going to prison officials. The prisoners were also reportedly forced to work as wood cutters for 1,000 kyat a day, however, sources close to the prison said officials were only declaring 500 kyat of their wages.³⁹⁵

Mandalay Division

On 30 January 2007, prisoners from Myinchan prison were being contracted as cheap labour for local businesses by prison authorities. Prisoners who had served most of their prison terms were forced to work outside the prison in chains and without pay. Prison staff confirmed they had received orders from the military to use inmates as a means of creating income.³⁹⁶

Pegu Division

From 21 January until 9 April 2007, after serving one year in Tharyarwaddy prison about 100 prisoners were taken to the war zone in Kyaut Kyi Township in Pegu Division. One of the prisoners, who managed to escape on the 9 April, reported that he had been forced to carry ammunition and food supplies for company (4) of IB (416) for about 70 days. Moreover, he reported to frequently have been beaten by the soldiers as he could walk at the same pace as them.³⁹⁷

5.7 Forced Conscription and Forced Military Training – Partial list of incidents for 2007

Arakan State

On 14 February 2007, it was reported that since 5 February the SPDC army had been forming people's militias along the border area in western Burma. These efforts reportedly carried out in order to defend against foreign invaders and to attack insurgents if they intrude into Burmese territory. An SPDC army team led by Lt. Colonel Maung Maung Lwin formed people's militias in all village tracts in Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships. The army team had reportedly formed militia units of 30 villagers in each village tract.³⁹⁸

Maungdaw Township

On 30 August 2007, it was reported that the army had formed a people's militia in Maungdaw, where 11 people had been recruited from each ward.³⁹⁹

In October 2007, it was reported that the SPDC military authority in Arakan State had conducted workshops for training youth as fire brigade personnel in Taungbro Sub-town, Maungdaw Township. According to a village elder, most youth had not been interested in the training, and only went as the authorities had forced them to attend.⁴⁰⁰

Chin State

On 22 March 2007, more than 35 students were picked up and forced to join the army by the Commander of Tactical #2, Colonel San Aung. The students included over 20 who had just finished their examinations, as well as 15 students from Tui Moe boarding school.⁴⁰¹

On 17 May 2007, several villages in Matupi were ordered to provide a member of each family to undergo militia training. Attendance at the training session was made mandatory by Colonel San Aung, Commander of Tactical #2 stationed in Matupi. The villages who received the order, included:

1. Lui Vang;
2. An Thaw;
3. Lei Sin;
4. Dai Hnan; and
5. La Lui.⁴⁰²

Kachin State

Hopin Township

On 3 August 2007, it was reported that three SPDC battalions based near Hopin Township had apprehended youths on the streets late at night and forcibly conscripted them for military service. The forced recruitment was reportedly part of a joint operation of Hopin based IB # 40 led by Maj. Tin Maung Maung (temporary), the LIB #388 led by Lt-Col. Tin Win Aung, the LIB # 389 led by Lt-Col. Khin Maung Lwin, and Col Khin Maung Cho, a tactical commander based in Hpakant. Local authorities had reportedly been informed of the army's recruitment activities, which targeted youths, orphans and drug users who were out on the streets after 10 pm. Residents in the area said the army had also forcibly conscripted new recruits on

trains running through Mohnyin, Hopin and Mogaung in Kachin State. According to a local resident the military ask for identity cards and if the person does not have it with them, they are arrested and told they have a choice between joining the military or going to prison. It was reported that an unspecified number of young people in Zetkone Quarter had been forcibly recruited before dawn on 29 July with the help of the local militia. The army continued their conscription throughout August with the goal of recruiting at least 100 youths from Hopin Township.⁴⁰³

Mohnyin Township

On 1 August 2007, over 10 quarters of Mohnyin Town such as Aungthapye, Ashaysu, Narka, Myotma, Thasy, Natkyigon, Namisu, Ohnkyin, and Sekgon were ordered to recruit 4 people each to join the army. In addition, the Mohnyin Township Peace and Development Council ordered youths for recruitment from every house in nearby villages. According to locals, youths aged 18-25 who were found on the roads at night were detained and forced to join in army. For instance, it was reported that one named youth, Poe Khwa had been detained on the return way from the farm. According to a local resident, TPDC, VPDC and SPDC troops had been forcibly recruiting new soldiers in Namma, Hobin and Enntawkyi areas, Mohnyin Division, since the middle of July.⁴⁰⁴

Myitkyina Township

On 24 August 2007, it was reported that residents were being forced to guard their villages and quarters at night, on the orders of SPDC Army Commander Maj-Gen Ohn Myint.⁴⁰⁵

On 28 August 2007, a mass recruitment of firefighters was reported. A week earlier, the SPDC Kachin State Commander Maj-Gen Ohn Myint, had given the Myitkyina Township Administrative Office (Ma-Ya-Ka) the task of recruiting locals to the firefighter reserves. According to residents of Tatkone, Jan Mai Kawng, Du Mare and Shatapru Quarters, there were over 500 families in those quarters, and the Ma-Ya-Ka had ordered 2 persons from every 10 houses in each quarter to join as firefighters.⁴⁰⁶

Putao Township

On 6 August 2007, it was reported that nearly 600 people from Kachin tribes had been recruited over the past month. On the orders of the army, Rawang and Lisu youths had been recruited by Rakhwi Hpung, a local Rawang leader who was a former central committee member and representative of Putao under BSPP. The Hkawng Lang Hpu based Rawang armed group and the RRF led by Tangu Dang also had a hand in the recruitment. Moreover, in early August, hundreds of military recruits were reportedly sent from Putao airport to Naypyidaw in military aircrafts. The recruits were from Jinghpaw, Rawang and Lisu tribes from Putao District. They were reportedly sent together with 200 troops of the local pro-junta Rawang militia group called Ta-Sa-Pha (Rebellion Resistance Force, RRF) led by a businessman Ahdang (Tangu Dang).⁴⁰⁷

On 18 September 2007, a secret meeting on recruitment for the militia was held between members of the SPDC village administration (Ya-Ya-Ka) and SPDC army officials in the village's Baptist Church. According to village headmen, over 150 villagers were ordered to attend militia training. The militia training started on 20 September, however only 90 villagers attended this training. The village headmen then and SPDC soldiers started forcibly recruiting villagers through a house to house inspection. According to residents of Putao District, two villagers from Machyangbaw Town were recruited by No. 137 Infantry

Battalion of the local Burma military base in Machyangbaw. They were reportedly sent to Naypyidaw in a military aircraft. The two forcibly recruited villagers were Tsap La Raw (21) of Nambuyang village and Nanghkre Zin (39) of Machyangbaw town. Furthermore, in fear of being recruited, 122 high school students went into hiding in the forests and paddy farms.⁴⁰⁸

Waingmaw Township

On 16 August 2007, it was reported that the army had entered a fresh recruitment drive around the gold mining fields along upper N'mai River (Maykha) in eastern Kachin State, over the last month.⁴⁰⁹



Convict porters guarded by SPDC army troops on 17 April 2007. [Photo: FBR]

Karen State

Thaton District

On 10 January 2007, DKBA troops led by Than Ma Na based in Pan-an township, Ta-way village tract, forced the village heads of 8 villages to recruit new soldiers for the SPDC. If the village head could not recruit, they had to pay kyat 550,000 as this was the gun purchasing price for each new recruit. The following villages had to provide recruits:

1. K'ru-she (10 persons);
2. Pwa-gaw (10 persons);
3. No-aw-la (10 persons);
4. Doh-law-plaw (10 persons);
5. Ha-ta-yeh (2 persons);
6. Hta-thu-khee (2 persons);
7. Kyaw-kay-khee (2 persons); and
8. Po (5 persons).⁴¹⁰

Mon State

From November 2006 until January 2007, following the SPDC's militarization policy the local army battalion had ordered every village headman in Mon State to send villagers for militia (*Pyithusit*) training. Most villages had to send 35 persons, however larger villages like Khawza sub-town were ordered to send 40 persons. Many villagers were forced to abandon their work at farms or plantations to attend this training. The training was conducted by the local military based in their areas. Civilians in southern Ye Township were forced to participate in the training. To avoid joining the People's Militia Force (Pyithusit) in southern Ye Township, residents had to bribe the IB #31 with kyat 400,000 per family.⁴¹¹

Pegu Division

On 24 December 2007, it was reported that government troops had forced villagers in Pegu Division to sign up new recruits to the army or pay money to the military to hire mercenaries. Local troops from government brigade #66 in Nattalin, Zeegone, and Kyopin Kout townships were demanding that local villagers contribute one recruit from each village group or 1500 kyat per household to hire mercenaries. According to a villager from Chaung Gwa village in Nattalin Township, his village group, consisting of four villages, had to pay 900,000 kyat to the military to hire a mercenary.⁴¹²

Shan State

On 24 December 2007, it was reported that government troops had forced villagers in northern Shan State to sign up new recruits to the army or pay money to the military to hire mercenaries. Locals in Sibaw and Kyauk Mae townships in northern Shan state had made complaints about local military troops forcing locals to join the army. According to a villager from Kyauk Mae, the military demanded a recruit from each household that had a male family member, or pay kyat 100,000 to the military.⁴¹³

Mong Ping Village

On 29 August 2007, five Kachin teenaged schoolboys were forcibly recruited to join the military. According to villagers the recruitment drive was conducted by a local SPDC military post controlled by No. 322 Light Infantry Battalion (Kha Ma Ya) based in Laukkaing under the Northeast Military Command (Ya Ma Kha) with the help of Mong Baw militia leader Du Doi. The recruited boys were:

1. Mangshang La Awng, (16);
2. Hpauje Ma Yaw (14);
3. Lamu La Doi (15);
4. Mwihipu Ma Naw (15); and
5. Ma La (15).⁴¹⁴

Rangoon Division

On 14 December 2007, it was reported that the SPDC junta was providing riot control training to state-backed organisations. Members of the Ward Peace and Development Councils (WPDC), the USDA and Swan Arr Shin were instructed to attend the training. Firemen, municipal employees and members of the newly formed state-backed youth organization were also told to take part. According to a member of Swan Arr Shin, they were instructed by military personnel in how to systematically crack down on crowds, and shown how to beat crowds in the event of mass protests. The forced trainees were not paid to attend instruction sessions, which were held daily from 2 pm. until 4 pm over a period of two months, and were to resume in 2008.⁴¹⁵

On 21 December 2007, it was reported that police forces in Rangoon and Pakokku were undergoing anti-riot and crowd control training to crack down on future uprisings. The riot police battalion from Syriam were given anti-riot training in the football field near Rangoon Eastern University Thihadipa stadium located in Tarwa, in the Rangoon suburbs. Pegu Division Zigone based LID #66 conscripted the new recruits through the local Ward and Village Peace and Development Committees. The LID #66 ordered the local authorities to conscript a new recruit per village tract.⁴¹⁶

Dagon Township

On 16 October 2007, it was reported that high school students had been forcibly recruited into USDA. Dr Aung Ko Ko, headmaster of High school (1) Dagon Township, requested students' photos from class teachers without giving any reason. The pictures were put on USDA cards for the students.⁴¹⁷

Okkalapa Township

On 23 April 2007, a young boy aged between 14 and 15 was forcibly recruited into the SPDC military after leaving his home to visit his aunt. The boy was captured off the street by a soldier from the IB # 435.⁴¹⁸

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