# HUMAN RIGHTS YEARBOOK 2001-2002



# BURMA

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# 2001-02

**Violations against the dignity, livelihood and fundamental rights of people in Burma perpetrated by the military dictatorship of Rangoon**

This book is dedicated to the countless citizens of Burma
who have sacrificed their homes, their freedom, and their lives to lifting
the veil of terror that shrouds the truth in Burma today.

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**Views expressed in this book are not necessarily those of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma**

# Preface

By

# H.E. Dr. Sein Win

## Prime Minister
## National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma

## Drawing Attention to a Lesser Known Problem

Gross human rights violations in Burma are well known globally. What is not known in greater detail, however, is the far reaching impact the Burmese military regime's appalling policies have on many young people in the country. It wasn't long ago when university students had no schools to attend because schools, considered hotbeds of student activism, were kept closed for many years. Despite high-sounding statements by the generals today about how education and human resources are important for the future of the nation, they showed no qualms in closing down schools. Today, major institutes of higher learning, particularly in Rangoon, have been divided into many smaller and isolated campuses in order to prevent student activism.

The generals' concern for their own survival far outweighs the interests of the people or the nation. That has been the reason why the military regime spends almost half of its national budget on unnecessary grandiose projects like a nuclear reactor and on military hardware, including purchases of warplanes, at the expense of the socioeconomic needs of the people.

Children have become the main victims of the generals' neglect of the country's social sector. The UNICEF's annual report, which lists Burma 190th overall in health system of 191 countries surveyed, says that of the 1.3 million children born ever year, 92,500 infants will die before they reach their first birthday and 138,000 more will expire before they are five. The situation is worse for children from ethnic groups who have little or no access to health care and immunization. Latest surveys say there are an estimated 14,000 children with HIV and another 43,000 are AIDS orphans in Burma. Today, according to Coalition to Stop the User of Child Soldiers, there are an estimated 50,000 child soldiers in Burma.

Hence, the Human Rights Yearbook this year, in addition to documenting the usual human rights abuses, has been dedicated to children of Burma with the hope that their plight will draw the attention of the world to the other problems that a country faces under a regime that is more interested in self-preservation than in the betterment of its people.

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# Acknowledgements

To the people whose stories fill these pages, I salute and honour you and my pledge to you, your families and to the families of people who have died as a result of human rights violations, is to continue to work to bring an end to your pain and suffering, by working to usher in a system of government that will accord maximum protection and promotion of human rights and provide a mechanism for complaints so that justice will be done.

I wish to express my heartfelt thanks to the members of the Norwegian Burma Committee for their unwavering support in making this Report possible. In addition, I would like to thank all the ethnic organizations and the many individuals who supported this project. Sincere thanks also to all those people who helped prepare this book for publication and many individuals whose names cannot be mentioned but whose contribution cannot go unnoticed. The very existence of the Human Rights Documentation Unit (HRDU) would not have been possible without the assistance of these friends of Burma. The emergence of the HRDU has given me a wonderfully satisfying opportunity to work closely with organizations that are noble and just and have demonstrated profound compassion for the people of Burma.

I wish to put on record my deepest gratitude to the KHRG, KIC, HUFOM, SHRF, SHAN, CHRO, KNAHR, BWU, MICB, CIDKP, AAPP, BLSO, THRF, TIR, FTUB and the YOMA-3 for their enthusiastic assistance and cooperation for the publication of this book. I also would like to express my gratitude to the NCGUB and its associated bodies which generously assisted the publication of this book.

Dr Sein Win, Prime Minister NCGUB's Council of Ministers for his unwavering support of for both the principles that caused the NCGUB to establish the HRDU and its ongoing work. The Prime Minister recognizes that any form of government, even a democratic one, must have an institution to monitor, report and educate about human rights and also to provide a mechanism for complaint when human rights violations occur.

Dr Mike Hayes for his proof reading contribution.

To Sai Soe Kyi, Kyaw Swar, Tom Somchai, Anji Hamilton and Chris Sivret staff of the HRDU my sincere thanks for the work and effort that you put into the HRDU with each playing a complementary role that supports the efforts of the HRDU so that this publication can ensue.

**Thein Oo**

Minister for Human Rights Affairs (NCGUB) and
Coordinator
Human Rights Documentation Unit

# CO-ORDINATOR'S COMMENTARY

The emergence of a people's parliament is of paramount importance for Burma, as is a constitutional settlement, as the only hope to resolve the political, social, economic and human rights violation problems that are currently plaguing the country. It has been over fourteen years since Burma has had a constitutionally convened legitimate government and parliament.

The people of Burma, exercising their human right as articulated in Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) to choose their political and parliamentary representatives in the 1990 general multi-party democratic election, overwhelmingly chose the members of the National League for Democracy (NLD) to lead them in government. The NLD won over 80 percent of the seats, which is 392 of the 485 seats contested.

The military authorities, in addition, have not only denied Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political leaders and elected people's representatives freedom of assembly, freedom of organization and movement, they have used pressure and threat to coerce people into attending lawless orchestrated "public rallies" where, in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Articles 19 and 20, the people are made to shout and call for the dissolution of the election-winning NLD party, and further to make petitions and declarations of withdrawal of support for the people's representatives.

Over twelve years has passed, yet the parliamentary representatives whom the people have chosen have been prevented from convening parliament. SPDC tactics to prevent this range from — intimidation, pressure, forced resignation, illegal arrest and imprisonment — all directed against the people's representatives and sometimes their families.

The State Law and Order Restoration Council recast as the State Peace and Development Council has undertaken such actions, only plausibly aimed to deny the citizens of Burma the right to run their own political lives through the representatives they have freely chosen, thus, blatantly contravening and disdaining the UDHR.

Furthermore, human rights abuses of all kinds including forced labour, forced relocation of people from their ancestral lands, persecution and torture etc, are taking place at an alarming rate in the SPDC ruled Burma, a country where rule of law is marked by its total absence. The SPDC shamelessly flouts human rights instruments and norms.

The human rights abuses or more correctly the people's stories of suffering and survival in this book are a presage of the worsening human rights violations that beset Burma, despite widespread international condemnation. Burma needs sympathy and action from the human rights-respecting and democracy-cherishing people of the international community, and also from the international organizations both governmental and non-

governmental, to bring an immediate cessation to the evil perpetrated by the SPDC. This, in fact, is the reason why human rights abuses in Burma are documented and The Human Rights Yearbook compiled.

**THE REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

The report as it names suggests is the compilation of human rights violations that were committed primarily in 2001. However as the 2001 Yearbook is published later in 2002 and as a number of significant events have taken place, such as an announcement of'talks', Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's release, the publication of the License To Rape Report and the HRDU's preparation of the Impact of Armed Conflict on the Children of Burma Report, mention of these are also included in the Yearbook.

**(Women) LICENSE TO RAPE**

"While the troops from LIB 225 searched the villagers' belongings and questioned them, Captain Myint Lwin picked out 3 women from among the villagers, took them to a separate place and interrogated them. One of the troops said to the truck drivers, "We received an order from our superior to keep the 3 women here until we learn more about them, and they may be released by then," and ordered them and the other villagers to go on their way. A captain brought them into his bedroom one at a time and raped them. After he had raped all 3 women, he let his close subordinates rape the women. Later all the 21 soldiers manning the checkpoint raped the women (case 157)." [see report details below (pp 20-21)]

The Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF) and the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) recently released a report called License to Rape that has attracted ongoing international attention and condemnation and caused the SPDC some major embarrassment. The report covers rapes committed from 1996 until 2001 by SPDC soldiers against ethnic nationalities women in Shan State. It details 173 incidents, involving 623 girls and women, the youngest victim being 5 years, involving 52 battalions, with 83% of accused being of Officer rank, with 63% being gang-rapes and 25% resulted in the murder of the woman. The report is available on the following website http://www.shanland.org/shrf/License_to_Rape/license_to_rape.htm

The SPDC's response to this damning report has been to denounce it as the work of 'terrorists' trying to disturb the peace of the ethnic nationalities. The matter is still subject to widespread criticism and the allegations are yet to be independently investigated according to law. Burma's domestic law allows for such an investigation to take place, but the SPDC is now so compromised by their hysterical response and their sham investigations, that nothing short of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of Human Rights in Myanmar Professor Paulo Pinheiro, conducting an investigation will satisfy the women and girls who are the victims of such terrible crimes.

The HRDU has drawn this matter to the attention of the professor Pinheiro and also the Special Rapporteur on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences Ms Radhika Coomaraswamy requesting that they treat this as an urgent action. We further expect that the UN in its General Assembly will turn its attention to this report.

**(Children) THE IMPACT OF ARMED CONFLICT ON THE CHILDREN OF BURMA**

"Burma is believed to be one of the world's largest users of child soldiers with up to 50,000 children serving in both government armed forces and armed opposition groups."

"Child labour has become increasingly prevalent and visible. Approximately one quarter of children in the age group 10-14 is engaged in paid work and there is a growing number of street children in concentrated urban areas."

"Children are also forced to serve as porters in combat areas, and frequently suffer beatings, rape and other mistreatment. Porters are used as human minesweepers and human shields during military operations and children are no exception." [for quotes see report details cited below p 4]

The 2001 Yearbook contains its regular contribution on Children, but wish to draw your attention to the report of the above name, with excerpts highlighted. The full report is available from the HRDU office on hrdu@ksc.th.com. The information that HRDU had collected on children for the 2001 Yearbook was used to compile and jointly submit a thematic report by the Burma UN Service Office-New York and the HRDU to The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The HRDU intends to submit more regular thematic reports to highlight areas of concern that demand immediate action.

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| AASYC | All Arakanese Students and Youth Congress |
| AAPP | Association for Assistance of Political Prisoners |
| ABSDF: | All Burma Students' Democratic Front |
| ABSDF/WB: | All Burma Students' Democratic Front - Western Burma |
| ABFSU: | All Burma Federation of Students Union |
| ABFSU/FA: | All Burma Federation of Students Union (Foreign Affairs) |
| ABSL: | All Burma Students' League |
| ABYMU: | All Burma Young Monks Union |
| ALTSEAN: | Alternative Asean Network on Burma |
| aka: | also known as |
| ALP: | Arakan Liberation Party |
| approx: | approximately |
| ASC: | Arakanese Students' Congress |
| BAD: | Border Area Development Program |
| B.E.: | Burmese Era |
| Brig : | Brigadier |
| BI: | Burma Issues |
| BIG: | Burma Information Group |
| BPP: | Border Patrol Police (Thailand) |
| BRC: | Burmese Relief Center |
| BSPP: | Burma Socialist Program Party |
| Capt: | Captain |
| CEC: | Central Executive Committee |
| CHRO: | Chin Human Rights Organization |
| CNF: | Chin National Front |
| Comdr: | Commander |
| Col: | Colonel |
| Cpl: | Corporal |
| CPPSM: | Campaign for the Publicity of the People's Struggle in Monland |
| CRPP: | The Committee Representing the People's Parliament |
| DDSI: | Directorate of Defense Services Intelligence |
| DKBA: | Democratic Kayin (Karen) Buddhist Army |
| DKBO: | Democratic Kayin Buddhist Organization |
| DPA: | Democratic Patriotic Army |
| DPNS: | Democratic Party for New Society |
| DVB: | Democratic Voice of Burma |
| ENSCC: | Ethnic Nationalities Solidarity & Co-operation Committee |
| FEC: | Foreign Exchange Certificate (See "Measurements") |
| ft: | feet |
| FTUB: | Federation of Trade Unions, Burma |
| Gen: | General |
| HRDU: | Human Rights Documentation Unit |

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| HRV: | Human Rights Violations |
| HURFOM: | Human Rights Foundation of Monland |
| IA: | Images Asia |
| IB: | Infantry Battalion |
| IDC: | Immigration Detention Center (Thailand) |
| IDP: | Internally Displaced Persons |
| ILO: | International Labor Organization |
| Ind: | Independent |
| Lt: | Lieutenant |
| kg: | Kilogram |
| km: | Kilometer |
| KHRG: | Karen Human Rights Group |
| KIA: | Kachin Independence Army |
| KIC: | Karen Information Center |
| KIO: | Kachin Independence Organization |
| KNAHR: | Karenni News Agency for Human Rights |
| KNDA: | Karenni National Democratic Army |
| KNLA: | Karen National Liberation Army |
| KNPLF: | Karenni Nationality Peoples' Liberation Front |
| KNPP: | Karenni National Progressive Party |
| KNU: | Karen National Union |
| LDC: | Least Developed Country |
| LIB: | Light Infantry Battalion |
| LID: | Light Infantry Division |
| MAMD: | Mon Army, Mergui District |
| Maj: | Major |
| Ma Wa Ta: | Township-level SLORC authorities |
| MI: | Military Inteligance |
| MIS: | Military Intelligence Services (aka DDSI) |
| MIS: | Mon Information Service |
| m: | meter |
| mm: | millimeter |
| MNRC: | Mon National Relief Committee |
| MOGE: | Myanmar Oil & Gas Enterprise |
| MOI: | Ministry of Interior (Thailand) |
| MPs: | Members of Parliament |
| MSC: | Military Strategic Command |
| MTA: | Mong Tai Army |
| n.a.: | not available |
| Na Wa Ta: | State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) |
| NBC: | Norwegian Burma Council |
| NCGUB: | National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma |

| | |
|---|---|
| NCO: | Non-commissioned officer |
| NGO: | Non-governmental organization |
| NLD: | National League for Democracy |
| NLD (LA): | National League for Democracy (Liberated Area) |
| NLM: | The New Light of Myanmar (SPDC-controlled newspaper) |
| NMSP: | New Mon State Party |
| PDC: | Peace and Development Council |
| PSB: | Press Scrutiny Broad |
| RFA: | Radio Free Asia |
| SAIN: | Southeast Asia Information Network |
| Sd.: | Signed with signature |
| Sgt: | Sergeant |
| SHRF: | Shan Human Rights Foundation |
| S.H.A.N.: | Shan Herald Agency for News |
| SLORC: | State Law and Order Restoration Council |
| SPDC: | State Peace and Development Council |
| sq: | square |
| SSA: | Shan State Army |
| SSIA: | Shan State Independence Army |
| SUA: | Shan United Army |
| SURA: | Shan United Revolutionary Army |
| SWAN: | Shan Women's Action Network |
| TOC: | Tactical Operations Command |
| THRF: | Tavoyan Human Rights Foundation |
| UN: | United Nations |
| UNA: | United Nationalities Association |
| UNDP: | United Nations Development Program |
| USDA: | Union Solidarity and Development Association |
| UNESCO: | United Nations Educational, Social, and Cultural Organization |

**TERMS**

| | |
|---|---|
| baht: | monetary unit of Thailand (see "Measurements"). |
| Bo: | military commander. |
| Daw: | an honorific used to address an adult female |
| furlong: | (see "Measurements") |
| Kawthoolei: | Karen name for the Karen nation. |
| Khun: | polite form of address in the Thai language |
| Ko: | Burmese form of address to a young male |
| kyat: | monetary unit in Burma |
| longyi: | Burmese word for sarong |
| Ma: | Burmese form of address to a young female |
| Mahn: | Burmese form of address to a Karen male |
| Maung: | Burmese form of address to a young male |

| | |
|---|---|
| Mehm/Min: | form of address to a young Mon male |
| Mi: | form of address to a Mon female |
| Nai: | Burmese form of address to an adult Mon male |
| Naw: | Burmese form of address to a Karen female |
| plah: | Karen measurement of distance, from elbow to fingertip (1 plah is under 2 feet) |
| pya: | 100 pyas = 1 kyats |
| pyi: | eight-condensed-milk tin |
| Sai: | Burmese form of address to a young Shan male |
| Sangha: | Buddhist order of monks |
| Sao: | male of Shan royal descent |
| Saw: | form of address to a Karen male |
| Sayadaw: | presiding monk of a Buddhist monastery |
| Shwedagon: | The Great Pagoda in Rangoon |
| Tatmadaw: | Burmese Army |
| Thakin: | master; lord (used to address the British colonial rulers; later politicized by the Burmese independence movement in the 1930s) |
| tickle: | (see "Measurements") |
| tin: | (see "Measurements") |
| tract (village): | area consisting of 4-6 villages |
| U: | an honorific used to address an adult male in Burma |
| viss: | (see "Measurements") |

**MEASUREMENTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| acre: | 1 acre = 4,840 sq. yards = 0.407 hectare |
| | 2.471 acres = 11,960 sq. yards = 1 hectare |
| | 640 acres = 1 sq. mile = 2.590 sq. kilometers |
| baht: | 1 baht = 100 satang |
| | 38 baht = US$ 1 (April, 2000) |
| | FEC: 1 FEC = US$1 = kyat 6.5 (official) |
| | 1 FEC = Kyats 750 (unofficial) |
| furlong: | 1 furlong = 220 yards (1/8) mile = 201 meters |
| lakh: | 1 lakh = 100,000 |
| tin: | 1 tin = 16 pyi |
| | 1 pyi (rice/condensed milk) = approx. 250 ml |
| viss: | 1 viss = 3.6 lbs = 1.633 kg |
| | 622.22 viss = 1 long ton (2,240 lbs) = 1.016 metric tons |

***NOTE ABOUT SPELLINGS:***

Since there are no standardized transcriptions in the Roman alphabet for Burmese, Mon, and other ethnic languages, words are spelled variously, according to different spelling conventions or by how they sound (the spelling of Halockhani refugee camp is a classic example of this, by Westerners as well as Thais and locals). In addition, spellings have further been confused by the ruling junta's official Burmanization of well-known English terminology (e.g. Myanmar for Burma).

In order to avoid confusion and politicization, this report will restrict its use of language to the established and more widely-accepted anglicized spellings, since this report to written in English.

A list of alternative spellings from various sources are provided as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Ayeyarwady: | Irrawaddy |
| Bagan: | Pagan |
| Bago: | Pegu |
| Bamar: | Burman |
| Dawei: | Tavoy |
| Hinthada: | Henzada |
| Hpa-an: | Pa-an |
| Kayah: | Karenni |
| Kayin: | Karen |
| Kyaing Don: | Kengtung |
| Magway: | Magwe |
| Mawlamyine: | Moulmein |
| Muang Tai: | Mong Tai |
| Myeit: | Mergui |
| Myanmar: | Burma |
| Pathein: | Bassein |
| Pyay: | Prome |
| Sittoung: | Sittaung |
| Sittwe, Sittway: | Akyab |
| Tanintharyi: | Tenasserim |
| Thandwai: | Sandoway |
| Thanlwin: | Salween River |
| Taungyin: | Moei River |
| Toungoo: | Taungoo |
| Yangon: | Rangoon |

# BURMA AT A GLANCE: FACTS AND FIGURES

| | |
|---|---|
| Country name: | Union of Burma (1948), Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma (1974), Union of Myanmar (1989) |
| Government: | State Peace and Development Council |
| System of Government: | Military Dictatorship |
| Area: | 261,228 sq miles or 677,000 sq kilometres |
| Coastline: | 1,760 miles |
| Population: | 50 million (app) |
| Population growth rate: | 1.84% |
| Refugees from Burma: | approximately 300,000 in Thailand, 12,000 in China and India, 20,000 in Bangladesh |
| Internally displaced people: | approximately two million people |
| Birth rate: | 28.48 births/1,000 population |
| Death rate: | 12.39 deaths/1,000 population |
| Life expectancy: | 60 years (app with gender differential) |

No. of T.V's per 1,000 people: 7

No. of doctors per 10,000 people: 2.96

| | |
|---|---|
| Languages: | Arakanese, Burmese, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, Shan, Wa, English and more than 100 minority dialects |
| Religions: | Buddhist (89.3%), Animist (0.2%), Christian (5.6%), Muslim (3.8%), Hindu (0.5%) |
| Burmese Border Refugees: (December 2001) | Karenni camps- 20,091<br>Karen camps - 125,118<br>Mon-Resettlement Sites- 138,117<br>Maneeloy Student Centre- 1,767 |
| Inflation CPI: | 11.5% |
| GDP spending: | 3. 1 % on military (non-SPDC figures: over 50%) 2.2% education, 0.8% health. |
| LDC status: | since 1987 |
| Natural resources: | tin, plutonium, zinc, copper, cobalt, gold, rubies, jade, teak (80% of world's reserves), fish (704 metric ton/year), gas, oil, rice, sesame, groundnuts |
| Agriculture: | 68% of workforce employed in agriculture; 15% of arable land; less than 50% of potentially productive land under cultivation |
| Opium production: | 1,300 tons (1988), 2,800 tons (1997), 1,800 tons (1998) (70% of US market) |
| Administrative areas: | Seven States (Arakan, Chin, Mon, Kachin, Karen, Kayah, Shan), Seven Divisions (Irrawaddy, Magwe, Mandalay, Pegu, Rangoon, Sagaing, Tenasserim) |
| Last election: | May 27, 1990. NLD won 392 of the 485 seats contested |

[There is a caveat on the facts and figures as accurate data is not readily available, even in official publications. Most of the facts and figures contained herein are drawn from SPDC's sources including their publication Myanmar Facts and Figures 2002, published by the Ministry of Information Union of Myanmar 2002]

# MAP OF BURMA


China
Bhutan
India
Bang.
China
Laos
Thailand
Kachin State
Sagaing Division
Chin State
Shan State
Rakhine State
Magwe Division
Mandalay Division
Kayah State
Pegu Division
Rangoon Division
Yangon (Rangoon)
Irrawaddy Division
Mon State
Karan State
Tenasserim Division
Bay of Bengal
Andaman Sea
Gulf of Thailand
Laungion Bok Islands
Mergui Archipelago
Preparis Island (Burma)
Coco Island (Burma)
Cheduba Island
Ramree Island
Mouths of the Irrawaddy
Myitkyina
Putao
Lashio
Namhkam
Baoshan
Chuxiong
Simao
Phongsali
Louang Namtha
Chiang Rai
Chiang Mai
Nan
Lampang
Phitsanulok
Nakhon Sawan
Loei
Bangkok
Chon Buri
Phetchaburi
Chumphon
Ranong
Nam Tok
Tavoy
Mergui
Kawthuang
Myanmar
(Burma)
National Capital
Division or State Capital
City
Primary Road
Railroad
Division or State Boundary
International Border
0 50 100 150 200 km
0 50 100 150 mi
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# Historical Background

## Constitutional period (1947-62)

On January 4, 1948, Burma gained its independence from the British who, in the nineteenth century, had fought three wars against the Burman Empire and finally conquered it in 1886. On the eve of the Second World War, the Japanese secretly promised to help Burma recover its freedom by training 30 Burmese youths led by Aung San who then formed the nucleus of a national army. During the war, the Japanese drove the British out of Burma and governed the country directly under military rule until August 1, 1943, when it was granted independence under its protection.

The Burmese army, on March 27, 1945, revolted against the Japanese and joined the Allies. Also during the war period, the leaders of the new Burmese army, together with an underground civilian group, formed a broad anti-Japanese coalition, "the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League" (AFPFL). The AFPFL and the army were led by General Aung San. On July 19, 1947, General Aung San and some of his colleagues were assassinated while the constituent assembly that was writing a new constitution was in recess. U Nu, a civilian, and close colleague of Aung San, was able to lead Burma to gain its independence on January 4, 1948. A parliamentary federal union system was introduced as the basis of the system of government.

Independence did not bring peace and progress to Burma. Within three months of independence, the Communists revolted, taking two army battalions with them. In January 1949, following growing hostility between the Karens and Burmans, the Karens also revolted. Several other ethnic and political groups also took up arms against the state. The multiple insurgencies nearly caused the Union of Burma to collapse. Prime Minister U Nu managed to keep his government in power. His government gradually recovered control of the people and territories, though it was unable to effect peace.

During this tumultuous period democracy took root and began to grow. However in 1958 unity among the leaders of the ruling AFPFL dissolved. Prime Minister U Nu proposed that the parliament decide which group should govern the country. U Nu won by such a small margin that within a few months he resigned and recommended that General Ne Win the head of the army replace him and conduct new elections.

General Ne Win's caretaker government, comprising senior military officers, was short-lived, lasting only 16 months. When the promised elections were held, an U Nu-led faction won. After he resumed leadership U Nu called a meeting for February 1962 where he planned to discuss with all ethnic leaders a way to find

a solution to their grievances through peaceful and frank discussions. However before U Nu could announce his own recommendations for peace the military led by General Ne Win seized power on March 2, 1962. General Ne Win established a Revolutionary Council comprised of 17 senior officers, effectively ending the constitutional period.

## Military rule (1962-74)

The Revolutionary Council established a military dictatorship replacing the parliamentary federal system enshrined in the constitution. In July 1962 the Revolutionary Council created its own party, the "Burma Socialist Program Party" (BSPP) after having failed to win the backing of the established political parties. The Revolutionary Council published its first ideological statement entitled, "The Burmese Way to Socialism" at the end of April 1962. A year later it moved to a policy of rapid nationalization and assumed direct control of the economy. In 1971 the BSPP transformed itself into a civilian government, though it retained the same military rulers many of whom had retired from the armed forces. In 1974 a new constitution was adopted with additional centralized powers and further entrenched BSPP's position as the only legal political party in the country.

## Military rule (1974-1988)

The second constitution of independent Burma differed markedly from its predecessor. The highest level of government was the *Pyithu Hluttaw* or People's Assembly, a single chamber legislature. Under the new laws U Ne Win as he was then called was selected as President of the country and head of the BSPP. During this period of military rule the government faced popular unrest with workers staging violent strikes in 1974 and 1975. Students also protested throughout this period with the most serious protest in 1974. It resulted from a struggle between the students and the government over the proper burial of the remains of U Thant, the third Secretary General of the United Nations. Civil wars continued with the military launching regular campaigns against the forces of the ethnic nationalities and the Burma Communist Party (BCP). Freedom of association, press, and assembly were severely repressed under the one-party government. In 1981 Ne Win abdicated the presidency but continued to head the BSPP.

In 1987 Ne Win suddenly began criticizing government reporting and management and called for economic reforms. A few weeks later, the government without warning, demonetized three currency bank-notes and offered no reimbursement. Nearly 70 percent of the currency in circulation became worthless.

In March 1988 students and local people were involved in a fracas at a tea shop and a major brawl ensued. The intervention of riot police led to the death of a student from the Rangoon Institute of Technology (RIT). RIT students began protesting daily. The protest spread to other universities. After twelve days of

violent clashes with police that caused many deaths, the government closed the universities and promised to investigate the student deaths. When the students returned to the universities in June they demanded an account of the still-missing students and called for the arrest of those responsible for student deaths and injuries. Again the police and military responded to the student protests with force, killing at least 20 students and arresting hundreds of others. And once again the universities were closed. The wave of social unrest spread. The resistance movement became stronger as the people called for political change. The military declared martial law.

On July 23, 1988, the BSPP appointed reviled General Sein Lwin as the new party head and later president. A general strike took place on August 8, 1988 and in response to it the police and army attacked the demonstrators, killing an unknown number estimated to be thousands.

On August 12, 1988, General Sein Lwin resigned and was replaced by a civilian lawyer Dr. Maung Maung. During this period the jails were opened and thousands of criminals released causing fear as crime rose. Rumors were also spread by government agents that the water supply was poisoned and that other heinous acts were being committed.

Peaceful student-led demonstrations were snuffed out on September 18, 1988, as the military staged a bloody coup and established a new dictatorship under martial law, called the "State Law and Order Restoration Council" (SLORC). It brutally put down the popular movement resulting in thousands of deaths and arrests. Many students left the cities and their homes and fled to border areas. The SLORC suspended the 1974 constitution.

## SLORC's military rule (1988-1997)

On September 23, 1988, having established himself as Burma's leader General Saw Maung head of the SLORC assured the public that the sole aim of his military intervention was to restore law and order, improve the economic condition of the people, and organize multiparty elections as soon as possible. He insisted that it was not his intention to "cling to State power for long."

Within months parties began to register with the advent of a new election law. The National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of the national hero General Aung San quickly emerged as the leading opposition party. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi traveled widely and attracted large crowds, despite the SLORC decrees that public gatherings be limited to four persons. As she gained an ever wider following the military tried to discredit her for not having "pure" motives, being the wife of a foreigner, by implication

therefore a traitor. SLORC announced that she was being manipulated by Communists in her party and that she considered herself above the law when she called meetings in violation of the SLORC decree against public gatherings. Indeed, in July 1989, SLORC placed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest and disqualified her from participating in the elections. In spite of these tactics the NLD achieved a stunning victory in the elections held on May 27, 1990, winning 392 of the 485 seats contested. The SLORC backed National Unity Party (NUP) won 10 seats.

Having been rejected at the elections SLORC began systematically to eliminate its opposition. It refused to allow the Pyithu Hluttaw (People's Assembly) to convene, claiming that the actual purpose of the election had been to form a constituent assembly. On July 27, 1990, SLORC promulgated Declaration 1/90 confirming this and it also said among other things that "[the SLORC] is not an organization that observes any constitution; it is an organization that is governing the nation under Martial Law." Following this announcement SLORC began to arrest and intimidate NLD members as well as members of other political parties.

Meanwhile SLORC continued waging war against the ethnic nationalities. Having won Thailand's support by granting timber and fishing concessions in the border area and the along the Tenasserim coast, SLORC was able to mount a major campaign against the Karens and Mons with new weapons purchased from Singapore, China, and Pakistan. The SLORC even crossed the river frontier and launched attacks from Thai territory. During the offensive, the army forced innocent villagers to serve as porters in the war zones and killed many who collapsed from exhaustion or injury.

In 1989 the army achieved an unplanned victory of sorts in the north, along the Burma-China border. A minority group turned against the Burma Communist Party (BCP), driving its leaders across the border and declaring themselves free and independent of their former BCP leaders. The SLORC quickly entered into agreements with the leaders of the minority BCP cadres in Kokang and the Wa State, promising to allow their former enemies to keep their weapons, retain power in their traditional areas, and pursue local trade (mostly in opium) in exchange for ending their wars against the SLORC and even fighting on SLORC's side against other ethnic nationalities.

As time progressed the SLORC persistently refused to allow the newly elected NLD-led parliament to assemble. Some elected MPs fled to liberated areas on the Thai-Burma border. In December 1990, the Parliament members met and elected the "National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma" (NCGUB) with the support of all major ethnic groups struggling to assert themselves within Burma.

On April 24, 1992, two years after the elections, SLORC issued Order No. 11/92 titled the "Convening of a National Convention." It indicated that a national convention would be convened "in order to lay down basic principles to draft a firm constitution." In January 1993, the convention finally assembled with 702 delegates of whom only 106 were elected representatives. The remaining delegates were either hand-picked by the SLORC to "represent" workers, peasants, intellectuals, national races, and service personnel, or were "specially invited persons." The SLORC stated that the convention would only be drawing up the "principles" of a new constitution and the final draft would still be written as promised, by the elected representatives. Moreover, SLORC stated, the principles discussed by the delegates had to conform to the "objectives" of the convention as defined by the SLORC, which included the "participation of the *Tatmadaw* (armed forces) in the national political leadership role of the State in the future." Despite repeated calls in UN resolutions for the SLORC to give a timetable for the convention there is no sign that the convention has been able to achieve a constitutional settlement or is near any conclusion.

On July 10, 1995, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released from almost six years house arrest. Although her release initially raised hopes for an improvement in the human rights situation in Burma, nothing changed. Indeed, the pace of political arrests and persecution accelerated dramatically after November 1995 when the NLD withdrew from the SLORC-controlled national convention due to its undemocratic processes. SLORC responded to the NLD withdrawal by expelling the NLD permanently from the convention. A call from the NLD to begin a dialogue with the SLORC in order to start a process of national reconciliation was refused by the SLORC.

Political turmoil in Burma has increased significantly since the NLD announced that it would hold a meeting in late May 1996 to commemorate the sixth anniversary of its 1990 election victory. The SLORC reacted by arresting hundreds of NLD MPs and other supporters in an effort to prevent the meeting. In addition on June 7, 1996, SLORC issued Order No. 5/96 containing sweeping provisions that allows for up to 20 years imprisonment for anyone who expresses political views and notably discusses constitution processes; despite everyone being reminded in the SPDC daily newspapers that it is their duty to be involved in such processes.

On November 9, 1996, a group of about 200 young men attacked Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's motorcade with iron bars and sticks. The men were thought to be members of the "Union Solidarity Development Association" (USDA), a SLORC sponsored organisation. In December 1996, more than 2,000 people including hundreds of students involved in peaceful student demonstrations were arrested for calling for human rights reforms. Public gatherings on weekends in front of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's home have been banned since the end of 1996. Daw

Aung San Suu Kyi was repeatedly refused permission to leave her compound and effectively confined to her house for long periods.

Since 1989 the SLORC has sought a military cease-fire with some of the ethnic forces, bringing a kind of peace to the areas under their control. In December 1994, a renewed offensive against the Karen National Union (KNU) was launched following a split within the KNU and the formation of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), which was supported by the SLORC. In February 1995, the KNU retreated from its headquarters in Manerplaw. Since then the offensive has taken a new turn as DKBA and SLORC troops launched the first of several raids into refugee camps in Thailand. DKBA and SLORC troops have had easy access to refugees in Thailand. The raids which were intended to terrify the refugees into returning to Burma have continued. The KNU has made several offers to the SLORC to engage in ceasefire talks. However, while there have been meetings between the two sides there is no sign of any progress.

In the Karenni State the Karenni Nationalities Progressive Party (KNPP) signed a ceasefire agreement at a ceremony in Loikaw in March 1995. In June of that year the KNPP issued a statement claiming that the SLORC had broken the terms of the agreement. Intermittent fighting continues between the SLORC troops and the KNPP in Karenni State. SLORC undertook massive relocation operations in Karenni State, Shan State, and Tenasserim division during 1995 and 1996, causing a mass influx of refugees into Thailand.

In mid-February 1997, SLORC launched two new major offensives against the KNU. SLORC's 1997 offensive against the KNU resulted in more than 7,000 new refugees entering Thailand.

## SPDC's military rule (1997-Present)

On November 15, 1997, the SLORC was renamed the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). Although the three most senior members of the regime retained their posts in the SPDC, 14 former members – all senior military officers – were replaced and a four - member SPDC advisory group was established. In late November three members of this advisory group were placed under house arrest. The three were former Tourism Minister Lieutenant-General Kyaw Ba; the former Commerce Minister Lieutenant-General Tun Kyi; the former Agriculture Minister Lieutenant-General Myint Aung. A number of their aides and staff at other ministries were also placed under investigation. Following the detention, the advisory group was dissolved on December 10, 1997, less than one month after its formation. Officials said the members of the advisory group no longer held their military posts. The changes did not stop there. On December 20, there was an unexpected reshuffle within the second tier of the military regime's cabinet. Another eight posts in the cabinet were reshuffled and one new member was added.

The impetus behind these cosmetic changes to improve the regime's image has been

prompted by the military regime's desire to quell international criticism.

On December 12, 1997, five members of the NLD Central Executive Committee met the SLORC Minister for Home Affairs, Colonel Tin Hlaing, at the invitation of the regime. The delegation did not include Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, or the NLD chairman U Aung Shwe. Colonel Tin Hlaing asked the NLD to stop issuing statements and to discontinue party organizational activities, such as efforts by Aung San Suu Kyi to attend party meetings in order to reorganize the youth wing of the party. Later, the official press of the regime reported that, unless these demands were met, moves towards a dialogue would slow even further. In a statement issued after the meeting, the NLD said that, as a legal political party, it was entitled to continue with such activities. Since that time however both the SPDC and the NLD have ceased to forcefully attack each other, although the attacks from the NLD were directed at a policy and operational level, whilst the SPDC's were personal and vitriolic. The diatribe against Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was quite obscene in written, spoken and visual forms.

The Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP) was formed on the September 16th 1998 in response to the military regime's failure to cede power thus enabling the elected representatives to form a parliament and the NLD to form government. Two hundred and fifty-one elected MPs (52% of MPs elected in 1990) gave their authority to the ten founding members to form the CRPP. This was based on the principle articulated in the 1974 Pyithu Hluttaw Law that requires State Authorities to convene parliament if 34% or more of the members of parliament so desire. The CRPP's objective was to convene the Parliament until all MPs elected were able to do so. The CRPP's first act was to issue a proclamation that repealed all SLORC & SPDC orders, decrees, notifications, rules and laws. The SPDC declared the CRPP to be illegal.

However, despite serious restrictions and the almost immediate gaoling of the Chairman Dr Saw Mra Aung, the CRPP survived and on Monday September 16th 2002 held a ceremony at NLD headquarters to celebrate its fourth anniversary. CRPP Secretary U Aye Thar Aung, who was released from gaol on the August 16th 2002, attended the ceremony. On the April 24th 2000 he had been arrested and in June 2002 being denied a right to a defence lawyer was sentenced to 21 years gaol for "violating" some spurious laws. His only offence like that of many before and after him is that he exercised his political rights.

Dr Michael Aris's untimely death in 1999 was made even more tragic by the SPDC's most callous refusal to allow Dr Aris to visit Burma to in his words grant him his dying wish to see his wife Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi one last time. The SPDC's announcement that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was free to leave Burma to visit Dr Aris in England, was equally as callous, as it was self evident that the SPDC would not allow her back into Burma. It was therefore a

non-option and very cruel. It was reported that in Dr Aris's final days telephone conversations between he and his wife were brutally truncated.

In September 2000, there was a major crackdown by the SPDC on the NLD leaders, which saw Chairman U Aung Shwe, Vice-Chairman U Tin Oo detained and General Secretary Daw Aung San Suu Kyi placed under house arrest. This appeared to be the catalyst for the beginning of 'talks' which were announced as having commenced in October 2000. On the January 9th 2001 the UN Secretary-General's Spokesman announced that there had been talks going on between the SPDC and the NLD since October 2000. The substance of these talks has never been publicly affirmed and the people of Burma are yet to be officially notified. That same month saw the vitriolic attacks by the SPDC on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi stopped.

By 2002 they were all released, talks had been announced, the UN Special Envoy Razali Ismail and the UN Special Rapporteur Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro had undertaken repeated visits to Burma, the NLD has opened some more of its offices, some political prisoners have been released, attacks on each other have basically stopped, and as recent as the 11th September 2002 the NLD's Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the SPDC's Major General Kyaw Win, along with the diplomatic community attended a 9/11 commemoration ceremony in Rangoon's Trader's Hotel.

The flip side of the above is that the fundamental conditions in the country remain unchanged as do in their words the NLD's policies. The SPDC still detains a significant number of political prisoners including key politicians U Win Tin, U Win Htein, and Min Ko Naing. Human rights violations continue unabated, despite the human rights training being conducted by Australian legal academics and funded mainly by the Australian Government and the establishment of a National Human Rights Committee chaired by Home Minister U Tin Hlaing, with Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt as the Patron. The practice of forced labour continues, severe civil and political restrictions remain, the UNLD a key ethnic based alliance of political parties along with nine others remain banned, there is no freedom of speech and press, students are still being arrested, political prisoners still die in prison, there has been no progress towards dialogue, despite the readiness of the NLD and the ethnic nationalities people through their respective organizations the UNLD, the newly formed United Nationalities Association (UNA) (inside organisations) and the Ethnic Nationalities Solidarity Co-operation Committee (ENSCC) a peak outside organization formed for the purpose of preparedness for dialogue. The economy continues to slide further into an abyss, and the rule of law eludes all.

This a sketch of today's Burma, a country went poverty stricken in all ways, by rigid ideological and inept governance and a military model bent on control and not development, imposed on a nation of people. Things must improve we tell ourselves, as strong as the military may be, the state is weak and this fact will force change. It is beyond the military alone to bring the changes required to allow the people of Burma to develop their potential in all areas of life.

## Facts on Human Rights Violations in Burma in 2001

# 1. Forced Labor

*... the impunity with which government officials, in particular the military, treat the civilian population as an unlimited pool of unpaid forced labourers and servants at their disposal is part of a political system built on the use of force and intimidation to deny the people of Myanmar democracy and the rule of law. (Concluding Observation of the ILO's Commission of Inquiry, 2001)*

The SPDC in 2001 continues using forced labor in Burma; particularly forced portering for military operations; forced labor for military bases and income generating projects for the military and building and maintenance of roads. Despite ongoing talks between Aung San Suu Kyi and SPDC, little has changed for Burma's ethnic minority groups, particularly the Karen, Karenni and Shan, living in rural areas where forced labor is regularly conscripted for portering, infrastructure projects and military support activities. Although the issue of forced labor in Burma has received much recent attention internationally, there has been little corresponding action by SPDC to eradicate its use.

Two trends in 2001 were the increase in the use of prison labor for portering during military operations and an increase in the collection of porter fees. Porter fees take on two forms; in one, each household in a village is required to pay a certain amount each month in order to compensate the conscripted porters. In the other, villagers are forced to pay a fee so that they are not conscripted as porters. Porter fees are a burden on villagers that should not be underestimated as its affects their livelihood in almost the same way that portering does. Villagers who cannot afford to take time away from their livelihood to porter also cannot afford to pay money to avoid portering. Both the increase in the use of prisoner portering and porter fees can be attributed to SPDC's desire to improve its image in the international community. The use of prisoner porters lessens the number of civilian porters that need to be conscripted and when porters are paid with funds forcibly collected from villagers the Burmese military can say the porters are paid labor.

## ILO Visit to Burma

From September 17 to October 6, 2001, a High Level Team (HLT) from the ILO spent 3 weeks in Burma to assess the implementation and impact of measures to eliminate forced labor announced by SPDC. The Burmese military junta promised to eliminate forced labor after the ILO, in an unprecedented move in November 2000, urged its 175 member governments to impose sanctions and review their dealings with Myanmar to ensure they are not abetting forced labor. The ILO has been examining forced labor in Burma since 1998.

The HLT issued a report on their findings in November which "concluded that there were 'obvious although uneven effort at disseminating the Orders…at all levels of the

military hierarchy' (Order No. 1/99 of 14 May 1999 and the Supplementing Order 1/99 of 27 October 2000 concerning forced labor and compliance with ILO Convention 1930 (No. 29))... The report confirmed that there was 'a strong correlation between the presence of military camps and the practice of forced labor, whether or not these troops engaged in military activities', and that all too often such labor was 'accompanied by acts of cruelty'. The situation appeared to be particularly serious in southern Shan State and the eastern parts of Kayin State near the Thai border. The report also noted that the Muslim population in northern Arakan (Rakhine) State is 'disproportionately affected by forced labour; it reflects an element of discrimination against this population, which also takes the form, inter alia, of restrictions on movement'."

"On November 15, 2001, the ILO Governing Body adopted conclusions after examination of the report of the High-Level Team. The Body recognized the efforts made by the authorities to disseminate the Orders among the population, although it considered these efforts should be strengthened and extended to include all the media and the use of the appropriate languages (the orders have not been translated into other major ethnic languages). It expressed profound concern regarding the very limited impact of this new legislation to date and, in particular, the persistent impunity with regard to criminal prosecution of persons who have committed violations, despite the provisions of this legislation. The Body stated that urgent efforts should be undertaken by the SPDC to rectify this situation and provide more convincing evidence of their willingness to achieve this by the next session of the Governing Body to be held in March 2002. The conclusions supported the recommendations of the High Level team that an ombudsman should be appointed (who has national and international credibility) to whom complaints regarding forced labor could be submitted and who would be able to conduct direct investigations along with a form of permanent presence of the ILO in Burma" (Source: UN Burma Service Office, Briefing Paper on the Human Rights Situation in Burma 2002 for the 58th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights resolution on 'the human rights situation in Myanmar')

In preparation for the ILO fact finding mission to Burma, villagers in several townships in Shan state were instructed by military authorities to tell the ILO investigators expected to tour Shan State that forced labor had ended. In one example, on July 28, Lt. Col Myint Maung, Commander of LIB 515 (Lai-kha) told people living in Mong Kern, 108 miles northeast of Taunggyi, to give "proper" answers to the foreign fact-finding team when they arrived and "tell them all labor given is voluntary and out of your love for the army." He reportedly gave the same message to the people of Lai-kha the previous day and similar incidents were reported in Mong-Hsat and Mong-Ton. In some areas, such as Mong-Kerng, it was reported that forced labor had noticably lessened but there had been a corresponding increase in money requisitioned for renting workers, mules, vehicles etc. to replace the forced laborers. Therefore, the people still faced the same hardship as they earn meager wages through their own labor.

However, as late as July, mass forced labor was being used on infrastructure maintenance projects for the military. In one case, on June 20, 2001, Lt. Col. Khin Maung Soe, sent an order to all the village and tract headmen forcing the people of Lai-Kha township to clear the roadside leading out of Lai-Kha town for a distance of 30 k.m. The villagers were also required to cut bamboo, make new fences for the 4 military battalion bases in the township and repair all the barracks for the soldiers. In addition they had to clear all the drainage channels in the bases, trenches and bunkers around the base and clear all the bushes and grass outside the fences as wide as 5 arm-spans from the fences. All of the work had to be completed within 30 days or the village tract headman would be fined 50,000 kyat, each village headman 15,000 kyat and each family 1,000 kyat. In order to finish on time, most villager, young and old, male and female, went to work on the forced labor sites, ignoring their own livelihood. The villagers were still seen working on the military bases in Lai-Kha township in late July 2001. (Sources: SHRF Monthly Report, August 2001; S.H.A.N. News, August 6, 2001)

In addition, On September 30, 2001, the Chairman of the Nam-Kham Township Peace and Development Council called a meeting of all the community and village/tract leaders and told them as follows:

1. In 2-3 days time, the visiting ILO inquiry team will arrive in Mu-Se and Nam-Kham townships;

2. Our government has provided the ILO team with a helicopter;

3. Because they do not trust us, they have brought their own interpreters;

4. When they arrive, they may go along the main roads and streets, and even into the houses, and ask whoever they want to ask about what they want to know.

Therefore, what you must do is to follow them in your respective villages and quarters and see (a) who they meet; (b) what they ask; and (c) what is the answer, and must later report it back to us (SPDC authorities);

5. The time of the ILO team arrival in each village or quarter and their departure time must be reported immediately to the SPDC authorities;

6. The people in the whole township must be notified beforehand to say there is no forced labour when asked by the ILO team;

On how to notify the people, some village and community leaders asked whether they should use loud speakers and walk along the streets in their respective areas to make sure everyone heard it. But they were not allowed to do so. Instead, they were ordered to go from house to house and personally tell the people and see to it that they understood and followed the instructions, and make sure no house was left untold. (Source: SHRF)

On October 2, Mizzima News reported that as the three-week long visit of the ILO team was coming to its end, forced portering and forced labor for road construction was still rife in the Naga Hills in Sagaing Division. "According to the local people of Layshi township in the Naga Hills, the Burmese authorities continue to use forced labor for the construction and maintenance of the sixty mile-long Htamanthi-Layshi motor road. In the last week of August, the Township Peace and Development Council (TPDC) instructed the village authorities to complete the task of road repair and construction by the end of November this year. Naga villagers told Mizzima News that road works are currently under way between Yan Nwe Village and Kyoe Tadar (the Suspension Bridge) near Layshi town involving villagers being forced to "voluntarily" contribute their labor. Moreover, the villagers are made to work at farms of army units in upper Sagaing Division and pay regular tax for army rations. The villagers are also being used as porters by army units moving from one base to another and in patrolling. Army units recruit up to 50 villagers to carry their loads during patrolling or transfer. Seven Burmese army battalions are stationed in the Naga Hills with each battalion being stationed in an area for the duration of two to four months. (Source: Mizzima News)

## Forced Portering

SPDC often uses civilian forced labor to move its supplies, such as rations and munitions. The best known form is "operation portering", which occurs where SPDC mounts a major military operation. These operations involve up to 2,000 troops at a time, and on average two to five porters are required for each soldier in order to carry the required ammunition, rations, heavy weaponry and other supplies. To conscript the required number of civilians, SPDC troops, police and local authorities are assigned a quota of how many porters they have to round up.

Once at the frontline, operation porters are assigned to units and given a load to carry over the mountains. The soldiers generally carry nothing except their personal weapon and a small personal kitbag, while each porter is forced to carry 30 to 50 kilogram loads in woven bamboo baskets which rip the flesh off their shoulders and backs. They generally have no change of clothes and are given little or no food, often just one or two handfuls of rice per day and do not have access to adequate supplies of water. They are not paid in any way. They are often sent in front of the column as human minesweepers and used as human shields. Those who are wounded or fall sick are generally not treated but simply left behind as medicine is reserved for the soldiers. While carrying loads, if porters are slow they are usually kicked, prodded with bayonets or beaten to keep them moving, and if they collapse and cannot continue they are left behind, often after being beaten unconscious. Soldiers often open fire on any porters trying to escape, and if captured they are tortured or executed in front of the others as an example. They are usually kept as porters for the duration of the operation, which can be three months or longer. Many escaped operation porters testify that by the time they escaped, half of the original porters had died. Even if the operation ends, they are just told they are free to go and given no assistance to get home, even if it is halfway across the country.

In addition to portering for military operations, villagers are often conscripted to porter supplies between military camps. Portering assignments to carry supplies between military camps usually last a few days to a week and villagers have to take their own food. Portering takes villagers away from their work and families and there is always the risk of being beaten or killed, so people try to pay instead of going if they can. Doing work for the military not only prevents people from being able to work for their livelihood but it also puts them in harm's way. The villagers doing forced labor are routinely beaten if they haven't finished their work, have been taking a short rest or simply don't do a "good enough" job. If villagers are found hiding in the jungle, they're often forced to work and porter for the military as well, and people caught in this manner are treated particularly brutally. Porters, drawn both from the relocation sites and the jungle, are expendable to the military.

A partial list of porters tortured and killed is included under the Partial List of Incidents section of this chapter.

## Forced Labor for military bases

In areas under SPDC control, even in places where there no resistance threat, the local people are regularly summoned to do one or more days of forced labor at military camps. Whenever a new battalion moves into an area the nearby villages are forced to provide most of the building materials for the camps. At least one person per household is required to perform forced labor building the barracks and bunkers, digging trenches and erecting fences. They also have to act as messengers, build and maintain the camp buildings and surrounding fences and defenses, clear the ground around the camps and do other work for the troops. People are forced to go on a rotating basis for *'gkin' ['patrol']*, which means standing sentry and delivering order documents, messages or packages to villages and between military camps. Demands for these kinds of labor, as well as demands for porters and various fees, are often dictated at regular meetings called by the battalion officers that must be attended by village heads and sometimes heads of households.

Village heads are sometimes ordered to provide comprehensive and detailed registration lists of everyone and everything in their villages. These lists are then used to assess paddy quotas, quotas for forced labor, fees and extortion money, demands for carts, vehicles and other equipment, and to closely monitor the movement of villagers and the arrival of anyone new in the village. People found to be unregistered can be arrested, accused of being 'insurgents', and detained and/or tortured. The registration lists are also a tool for intimidation, making the villagers believe that the SPDC knows everything about them and making them afraid to do anything out of the ordinary.

Each village has to send several people on rotating shifts of three to five days to each military camp in their area for miscellaneous forced labor, which is sometimes referred to as 'patrol'. This labor routinely includes clearing scrub and grass in and

around the camp, maintaining barracks, digging and maintaining trenches and bunkers, building fences and man-traps, cutting firewood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning, and delivering messages to other military camps and order letters to local villages.

In areas where there is any possible of conflict, villagers must undertake sentry duty at military camps; often most or all the soldiers sleep, leaving only unarmed villagers as sentries with orders to wake them up if anything happens. Villagers must also clear roadsides of scrubs and trees for anywhere from 5 to 100 meters on each side of military supply roads in order to decrease the chance of ambushes. They also have to do unarmed sentry duty, outside military camps and along vehicle roads which are used by the military. If anyone is seen on the road, they are supposed to send a signal up the line by beating on bamboo sticks. Villagers in northern Mone Township, Karen State report that they now have to do nightly sentry duty along the roads from Kyauk Kyi to Mone and northward to Toungoo. Three villagers have to man each sentry post, which are closely spaced along the road, for rotating 24-hour shifts, and are supposed to report any strangers on the road to the local military. It costs 150 kyat to avoid one 24-hour shift, and villagers are also punished if they are not seen at their post during the shift.

## Partial List of Incidents of Forced Labor in 2001

## Karenni State

*Translation of SPDC township authorities' order*

Date: September 14, 2001

To: Chairperson
Village Peace and Development Council
Kwakee village

Subject: Taungoo-Mawchi road

1. Villages in Kwakee village tract must undertake to clear Taungoo-Mawchi road between Holo Stream(14 miles) and Beemoko (27 miles), and must finish it before villagers harvest their crops. For clearing this road, authorities will pay Kyat 8,000 for one mile and 2 sacks of rice.

2. At this road clearing project, you are informed that four villages in Kwakee village tract namely Buko, Sholo, Katholee and Kosakee must allocate a stretch of road to clear.

Come and meet at Mawchi on 18/9/2001

Copy to: 1. Chairperson, District Peace and Development Council, Bawlake District
2. Village leader
3. Chairperson, Bwado, Pasaung Township

Office file: Chairperson, Township Peace and Development Council
Township Peace and Development Council, Pasaung Town

**[Note: Villagers never receive the payments mentioned in SPDC orders]**

*Source: KNAHR September 2001*

On September 14, 2001, the Pasaung Township authorities issued an order to villagers from Buko, Kwakee, Sholo, Bwadoh and Kosakee villages in Lopwakoe District to come and clear the old Mawchi-Taungoo road. According to the order,

villagers from those mentioned villages must finish clearing the road before they can harvest their crops. (Source: KNAHR)

On September 13, 2001, villagers living in Pasaung, Kwet Thit, Kemapyu and Namkin were ordered by the Burmese commander Maj. Aung Aung from IB No. 135, to provide them with 1250 wood posts, 3200 bamboo poles and 60 bamboo sheets for a new military base in Pasaung. In addition, villagers were ordered to bake 25,000 bricks by the troops for the new base building. (Source: KNAHR)

On August 29, 2001, the commander of SPDC LIB No. 428, based in Pruso, ordered the villages of Weithutaw, Beeso, Lyadu, Hteeduku and Hteeduleh to supply them with 10 poles of bamboo each. All village chiefs were ordered to show up at the military base along with the demanded bamboo within five days. (Source: KNAHR)

August 20, 2001. A new military base is being established in Kone Suu village, Loikaw Township to house the troops from IB No. 72. On August 20, the Burmese Major Thura Ne Win Myint from IB No. 72 ordered all villagers living in Kone Suu village tract to supply them with building materials and to work on this new base. Loilin Lay villagers were ordered to distribute wood in 5 trucks (10 wheels drive), Daw Tanaw villagers were ordered to provide 200 hardwood posts and Kone Suu villagers were ordered to supply 300 poles of bamboo. In addition, one person of each household in these villages was ordered to work on the base until finished. They were also asked to do more work on digging trenches around the new base during the base establishment period. (Source: KNAHR)

As of August 2001, people living in Mawchi, Pasaung cities and Lopwakoe district are now being ordered to come out and work on an old road re-pairing project which is linking Mawchi and Taungoo. People were ordered to clean the roadside from Mawchi to the border with Karen State. There are two reasons that the Burmese regime wish to repair this old road; the first is to re-open the Mawchi Wolfram Mine and the second is to transport logs from the areas down to Rangoon and furthermore to transport military supplies for its troops in the region. There are four battalions of Burmese troops currently deployed along the road for security reasons and local militias were ordered to take security duties along with them. The regime is planning to finish this road-repairing project by the end of 2001. (Source: KNAHR)

On August 20, 2001 the Burmese troops from LIB No. 424 ordered villagers to clean the roadside 50-feet distance either side. On that day, Kawtuday villager named Saw Tay Ne Htoo, aged 19, (Saw Tay Ne Htoo and Naw Ne She's son) stepped on a landmine between Six and Eight miles while he cleaned the road. He was brought to Mawchi hospital, but because of insufficient medical supplies his family transferred him without permission to Loikaw Central Hospital for medical care from the Mawchi hospital authorities. (Source: KNAHR)

On August 10, 2001 all villages located in Lawpita area were ordered to send 20 people from each village in order to work on a Banana Plantation Project owned by USDA by the commander of LIB No. 530. Villagers were ordered to clean the meadow of the plantation field whilst being guarded by troops. (Source: KNAHR)

During the 1st and 2nd weeds of August 2001, officers from the LIB 72 and LB 426 forced villagers from Mahtaw Khu, Lawdalay, Lay Einsu, Sorikyai and Kanni villages, Karenni State to clear land along the 3 mile long water intake pipe of the Baluchaung Dam. The land had to be cleared a furlong on each side. The villagers had to bring their own food and utensils to be used in the clearing. The clearing was done in the areas where land mines had been laid in 1990 for security. The places where the mines were shown with poles with flags. (Source: Federation of Trade Unions Burma: Documented by Karenni Evergreen Environmental Group)

In July 2001, Poe Reh, commander of Burmese militia, based at Hteepoklo, Deemaw Soe Township, ordered each village of Kaylya, Daw Takle and Hteebyanye to supply them with 150 bamboo poles for their barracks by July 6. All villagers from the above-mentioned villages were ordered to show up without fail to the militia base on July 6, 2001. (Source: KNAHR)

June 27, 200, Currently there are only 10 families remaining in Pakyeh village, Loikaw Township after the Burmese troops repeatedly came in and butchered domestic animals owned by villagers without payment, as well as forcing villagers to serve as military porters. A Company of Burmese troops from LIB No. 250 came in and encamped at Pakyeh Pagoda Hill on June 26. They then ordered villagers to fetch water for their daily use every day. On June 27, they arrested 10 villagers in order to serve as military porters from Elephant Camp to Naung Lon Lake. Arrested villagers were forced to carry military rations and ammunitions. (Source: KNAHR)

On January 13, 2001, 3 villagers were killed and 8 others were wounded when a landmine exploded while they were doing forced labor. SPDC troops from LIB No. 427, 428 and 531 ordered villagers of Maw Thi Tho village, Pruso township, Karenni, to clean Maw Thi Tho military installation. During the cleaning the bomb went off and killed Gyaw Wah Nee, Baw Ei, and Taw Ei from Maw Thi Tho village and wounded Taw Ei, Juliyo, Mya So, Mo Ei Mya, Pha Nel, Do Ei and Law Ei, including two women. After the explosion, the villagers were forced to repair the damage to the camp building by each person from one family bringing bamboo and posts. (Source: KNAHR)

## Mon State

On July 7, 2001, army Tactical Commander No .1 of SPDC Tactical Control Command No. 19, based in Ye Township of Mon State, held a meeting with local civilians in eastern part of Ye township and ordered them to build a Strategic Command office building for them, said a Mon development worker in the area. On that day, army operation strategy commander, Col. Than Toe and Col. Myo Win from

battalion LIB No. 591 and Col. Soe Naing from battalion No.583 under command of SPDC brigade. No. 19 gathered the village headmen and villagers in Ye river (Ye-chaung pyar) area and held a meeting in the Kyanug-ywa village PDC office. The plan connected with SPDCs deployment of 2 new military battalions in recent months. In the meeting, SPDC brigade No.19 army strategy commander instructed and villagers to construct three Strategic Command office buildings for them in Kyaung-ywa village. In their order for construction, they ordered the villagers to take responsibility for work-duties depending on the population of the village. 18 small villages in this area have to build one office building as a group according the development worker. On July 10, 2001 Kyaung-ywa village headman collected money from villagers and started construction. For construction supplies and hiring carpenters, the villagers have to use their own money. In this case, to avoid the army's requisition of compulsory labor from the villagers, army commanders transferred all duties to the concerned village headmen in the area. (Source: Independent Mon News Agency)

During June 2001, junta military authorities forced porters to use (Yaba) drug tablets in order to carry their heavy loads in the front lines of Karen State of Burma, according to 3 porters who escaped on June, 25, 2001.

The military authorities were from Infantry Battalion (IB) No.88 under Light Infantry Division (LID) 77, IB No.8 under (LID) 44 and IB No. 203 under (LID) 22. The military authorities were led by Major Soe Win of IB No.8; who recruited the porters from the following porter-recruiting camps in Mon State of Burma. The porter-recruiting camps are:-

1. Mok Palin porter-recruiting camp,
2. Taung Zun porter-recruiting camp,
3. Yan Nyein porter-recruiting camp,
4. Zin Gyaik porter-recruiting camp and
5. Tha Ton Won Saung porter-recruiting camp. (Source: MICB)

On March 8, 2001, Mudon Township Trucks Administration Department ordered 21 trucks and their owners or drivers from Kamawet village of Mudon Township, to carry 450 Kyins of stones from streams or digging sites to the construction sites. The measurement of one kyin of stones is 100 cubic feet. To complete carrying the total 450 kyins of stones, each truck had to carry for about 7-9 days. If one truck failed to go and work, the owner of that truck had to pay 20, 000 Kyat as fine to the authorities. (Source: HURFOM)

During January and February, 2001, LIB No. 343, which is based in Ye Township and patrolled the southern part of the township area. Conscripted 30 villager porters every day from a Mon village called "Khaw-zar". The battalion takes porters along with them to carry ammunitions and food supplies while they are launching military patrol in the area to halt the entry of an armed Mon splinter group into the

area. Khaw-zar village has about 700 households and the headmen have to provide porters on a rotating and daily basis. Khaw-zar village is a big Mon village near the border of Mon State and Tenasserim Division. One Mon splinter group also launched their military activities in this area after crossing from Yebyu Township of Tenasserim Division. Sometimes, fighting between SPDC and Mon troops also happened in this area and the villagers are also suspected as rebel-supporters. Just recently, in October 2000, to halt the rebels from entering Khaw-zar village, a SPDC battalion, IB No. 61 forced the villagers to fence their villages roundly and have only three small entrances. The villagers or farms who need to go to their farms or plantations daily have to get a permission letter every day from the army commander and they are not allowed to stay at their work-places at night time. When they have no military patrol, they used these villagers to work in their military camp just outside of village, to build military barracks, to build trenches and bunkers, to cook and carry water and other chores. At night time, the soldiers also use villagers to guard their own village and to inform soldiers if the rebel troops are approaching the village. Although SPDC's Ministry of Interior ordered all military battalions to not use forced labor in their battalion and military patrol or offensives, some battalions, like LIB No. 343 still does not listen and continuously use forced labor in their responsible area. (Source: HURFOM)

## Arakan State

In the months after anti-Muslim rioting broke out in Sittwe, Arakan State in February 2001, approximately 3,000 students, teachers and monks were taken into custody in Sittwe. They were taken by Military Intelligence, Police and Paramilitary forces and held without trial. Students as young as ten and eleven were interrogated. Two thirds of those arrested were released after paying bribes to officials. The rest went missing or were sent to the Thai border for portering and forced labor. Some parents who traced their children to the Thai border followed them there and bribed law enforcement authorities to release their children. In one case A Ko Ko Naing (not his real name), aged 16, of Moouleik quarter, Sittwe, was taken to Tacheleik of Shan State along with 47 of his fellow students. He was forced to porter by the military in areas where there were operations going on. His father paid a bribe to Military Intelligence 10 of Sittwe and went to Shan State to bring back his son. Most parents of missing children have been afraid to ask the authorities the whereabouts of their children. (Source: Narinjara News, 'Arakanese Students Missing Since The Race Riot', September 28, 2001)

Since the first week of December 2001, military officers forced about 100 civilians to work as free laborers in Arakan State, according to 3 migrant workers who recently reached Mae Sot, a Thai border town opposite Burma, speaking on condition of anonymity. The military officers led by Capt. Aung Gyi of company (4), Light Infantry Battalion N. 542, ordered seven village headmen in Rambre township, Kyauk Pyu district, to recruit about 100 civilians, four days in a week, as volunteer-laborers to work on Road construction around Man Aung Island Myo, Sandoway district, Arakan State. Families that are unable to do the forced labor have to pay 300 kyat to the authorities. The seven villages are:

1. Kyauk Se village (about 100 houses), Village SPDC Chiarman, U Soe Khin,
2. Kong Boung village (about 150 houses), Village SPDC Chairman, U Shwe Ohn,
3. Aung Hla Byin village (about 70 houses), Village SPDC Chairman, U Sein Hla Pyu,
4. Thayet Cho village (about 120 houses), village SPDC Chairman,U Aung Chan Nyo,
5. Kyauk Tway village (about 60 houses), village SPDC Chairman, U Pyu Tin Aung,
6. Gat Pyin village (about 50 houses), village SPDC Chairman, U Ba Thein,
7. Zee Daw village (about 75 houses), village SPDC chairman,U San Tha Aung.

(Source: MICB)

## Mandalay Division

Since October 2001, SPDC administrative officers have been extorting money from the villagers in Thazi township, Mandalay Division, according to three traders on the Thai Burma border, speaking on condition of anonymity. The SPDC Village tract (3) administrative committee and Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) officers of Thazi township led by village Chairman U Ba ordered all the villagers to clean the village without payment every Saturday evening. Any villager unable to participate in the cleaning, has to pay 200 kyat to the Chairman. (Source: MICB)

## Magwe Division

Beginning in June 2001, farmers from Kangaw township, Magwe division of Western Burma have been forced to work on a farm owned by the Burmese military North Western command. According to U Ba Thein (name changed), a 50 year old farmer from Hantha-wadi village of Kangaw township, it had been 3 months since all the villagers from Kangaw township were ordered to work on the North Western command military-owned farm. The forced labour began in June and was still going on at the time CHRO interviewed U Ba Thein on August 18, 2001. U Ba Thein was forced to work at one of the forced labour camps called "Kyu-kya" under the command of Major Thein Aung of LIB 309, Katha battalion. There are several forced labour camps in Kangaw township and Colonel Hla Ngwe, tactical commander of North Western Command is the supervisor of all the labour camps in Magwe division. While this is occurring, the SPDC orders the village headmen to submit monthly reports to the township Peace and Development office saying that there is no forced labor or forced portering in their village. (Source: CHRO)

## Chin State

In the first week of June 2001, Lieutenant Kyaw Kyaw Naing of LIB 274 from Sabawngte army camp ordered village headmen from Lungcawipi, Hlungmang,and Darling to attend a meeting on June 9 at Sabawngte army camp. He warned them that any one who failed to attend the meeting would face severe punishment. In the

meeting, Lt. Kyaw Kyaw Naing issued an order for the villagers. This included 5 orders that the villagers must obey without fail. These orders were: they must contribute their labour to rebuild the fence of Sabawngte army camp; Villagers are prohibited from carrying their guns outside of the village, and those caught with their guns outside of the village will be shot; the villagers must record all visitors from other villages; the villagers must obtain permission from the headman when they want to travel; and any guest who does not have a permit from the headman shall report to the army camp. Lt. Kyaw Kyaw Naing warned the headman that if any village failed to comply with these orders, the village would be burnt by the army. According to order number one, the villagers from Lungcawipi, Hlungmang, and Darling were forced to begin work from June 11, 2001. Villagers were forced to work from dawn to dark. Even though the month of June marks the beginning of monsoon and is the busiest time for villagers to work on their farms, they have to abandon their farm work and repair the fence of the army camp. The villagers have to bring their own food and tools to work at the army camp. (Source: CHRO)

### Sagaing Division

SPDC in Kalay Township, Sagaing Division have ordered all village headmen to report that there is no forced portering and forced labor in their respective areas. According to "U Phu Kya," a 45 year old Burmese village council member from Ywasi-Ywatha village tract in Sagaing Division, beginning in June 2001 the township Peace and Development Council ordered all the village headmen to write monthly reports stating that there is no portering or forced labor in their villages, despite the existence of the practice of forced labor on a large scale throughout the region. Again on August 8, 2001, all the village council members in Kalay Township were summoned to the township Peace and Development Council office and forced to sign statements that there was no portering or forced labor in their villages. (Source: CHRO)

## Karen State

### Forced Portering

#### Toungoo District

August 18, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 37 based in Klaw-mee-der, led by captain Tin Ko Oo, demanded 72,000 Kyat as porter fees and 19,200 Kyat as runner fees for August in Klaw-mee-der area, Tantabin Township. The villagers and village heads appealed to Tin Ko Oo as they had difficulty to find the money. But he did not accept their request and threatened the villagers by pointing his gun at them. In addition, the officer told the village heads to report if they had unusual information. At present, the SPDC troops in Toun-goo District restricted the villagers' activities, and demanded porters, cash and various kinds of food from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

Beginning July 2001, Bo Htun Nay Win from SPDC IB- 73 demanded 10 Klaw-

mee-doe villagers, Tantabin Township, as porters daily. Moreover he also demanded 52,500 Kyat per week as porter fees at the rate of 7,500 Kyat per day from that village. He also demanded 2 chickens per week per village from nearby 6 villages and 3,000 Kyat as runner fees at the rate of 500 Kyats per week per village from those 6 villages. Bo Htun Nay Win and his troops of SPDC IB-73 base at Klaw-mee-doe took merchandise from the shops of that village on credit and the village head man had to pay their debts every day. Bo Htun Nay Win was squeezing money from Klaw-mee-doe villagers in various ways and as a result villagers were faced with a difficult situation. (Source: KIC)

June 26, 2001, Bo Hun Naming Win and Bo Hla Kyow Oo of SPDC IB-73 based at Plaw-mee-doe camp summoned villages heads in Plaw-mee-doe area, Tantabin Township and demanded them to either supply the army 6 porters or 108,000 kyats per village every month. Moreover they also demanded 2 persons from Plaw-mee-doe to serve as runners and give information everyday or to pay 4,200 kyats as runner fees every month. On that day Bo Hun Naming Win of IB-73 also demanded 10 villagers from Hu-mu-doe, 10 villagers from Ler-Kla- doe and 10 villagers from Plaw-mee-doe to serve as porters. (Source: KIC)

From June 15, 2001 to June 20, 2001, officers from SPDC commander 3, operation commander Khin Yi from Eastern command head quarters battalion commander of IB 124, battalion command of IB 20 and Brigadier general Win Myint from Ba Yint Naung garrion town collected 70 people from each ward and for a total of 500 persons from Than-daung town, Than-daung Township to carry food supplies to Day-lor army base. Until these days, the army is still seizing people in Than-daung to carry supplies for the army. Moreover, the army did not allow villagers going outside their village in villages located between Day-lor to Than-daung. (Source: KIC)

Starting from the beginning of May up to now (May 18), a column from SPDC IB 75 under LID 66, based in Glaw-mee-doe village, Tantabin Township demanded 12 villagers from the villages as porters regularly. If the villagers failed, a villager had to pay 700 kyat as a fine. If a month had 30 days, the villages in Glaw-mee-doe area had to pay 252,000 kyat, but if a month had 31 days, the villagers had to pay 336,000 Kyat, in porter fees. The SPDC IB 75 troops forced men, women and children from Glaw-mee-doe villages to carry their food and military supplies constantly. At present, SPDC troops from battalions, columns and guerrilla units of Operation Command No. 3, under Southern Command, have been operating in Glaw-mee-doe area, planting landmines, demanding porters, runners and food from the villages. The SPDC troops from battalions, columns and guerrilla units of Western Command in Than-daung Township, demanded cash from the villages in their operational area. In addition, the troops place all kinds of restrictions on the villagers in Ba-yin-naung-tat-myo and demand food and various kinds of items from the villagers in that area. (Source: KIC)

May 1, 2001, a column from SPDC IB 75, which was operating in Hu-mu-der village, demanded 200 villagers from Klaw-mee-der, Hu-mu-der and Ler-klah-der villages, Tantabin Township. The troops forced these villagers to carry military supplies from Pet-let-wah to Klaw-mee-der village for two days at a time. In addition, the troops seized all the villagers including men, women and children for using them as porters. Also, troops from the so-called SPDC guerrilla unit demanded voluntarily work and porter fees. These troops harassed the villages around that area constantly. (Source: KIC)

April 13, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 75, based in Glaw-mee-doe village, demanded 15 villagers from Ket-doe village, 15 from Ler-kla-doe village, 15 from Hu-mu-doe village and 30 from Glaw-mee-doe village, Tantabin Township to serve as porters. On 14-4-2001, the troops forced them to carry food supplies to Nar-lay-ta.(Source: KIC, KORD)

In March, the SPDC troops in Ta-ta-bin and Than-daung Townships, had been demanding cash and villagers to serve as porters from the villages, in the townships, everyday. (Source: KIC)

February 15, 2001, The SPDC Southern Army Command demanded villagers and trucks from Baw-gali, Kaw-thay-doe (Tatanbin Township), Than-daung and new Than-daung (Than-daung Township) to carry enough rations for one year for the army. (Source: KIC)

February 8, 2001, Column 1 and 2 of SPDC LIB 48 under the control of battalion commander Khin Maung Sint forced 15 villagers of Baw-gali and Kaw-thay-doe villages, Tantabin Township to carry military supplies to Bu-hsa-khee. (Source: KIC)
January 30, 2001, Troops from SPDC again seized another 70 villagers from Pet-kaw-doe, Deh-doh and Maw-ko-doe, Tantabin Township to carry military rations from Baw-ka-li to Tha-aye-ta. (Source: KIC)

January 28, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 344, led by column commander Zaw Htun seized 70 villagers from Pet-kaw-doe, Deh-doe and Maw-ko-doe villages, Tantabin Township and forced them to carry military rations from Baw-ka-li to Tha-aye-ta. (Source: KIC)

On January 27, 2001, SPDC troops from IB 30 and 73 arrested 13 villagers and sent them to their front line base camp at Bu Has Khee to serve as porters. The arrested villagers were 2 from Kler Lar village, 2 from Kaw Thay Der village and 9 from Klae Soe Khee villager. (Source: KORD)

January 22, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB - 344 led by column (2) commander Zaw Tun seized 30 Per-kaw-doe villages and 7 Maw-ko-doe and Der-doh villages, Tantabin Township and used them as porters to carry supplies from Baw-ga-li to Tha-aye-tha. (Source: KIC)

January 1, 2001, The so-called SPDC guerrilla unit based at Play-hsa-lo village, Tantabin Township, led by Min Zaw and Tun Nay Win, demanded from Play-hsa-lo, Yeh-lo and nearby villages, villagers for carrying supplies from Play-hsa-lo to Tha-byay-nyunt village. Moreover, these troops also demanded at least 25 villagers to go with the military columns, per week to the front line. (Source: KIC)

**Nyaung-lin-bin District**

July 29, 2001, about 50 soldiers from SPDC LIB 440 forced Saw Shwe Htoo from Mar-lar-daw villager, Kyauk Kyi Township to show them the way to Ta-ler-der. On July 30, 2001, again the troops forced villager Pah Teh and Saw Nya Tan Pa to show the way to Ta-ler-der and on 30-7-2001, these troops demanded the villagers to find out the places of Karen resistance fighters. (Source: KIC)

April 19, 2001, one bullock cart with food supplies arrived in Ma-la-daw village, Kyauk Kyi Township. As a result, the troops immediately forced 35 villagers to carry the food supplies to Saw-tay-doe and up to Ta-ler-day. (Source: KIC)

April 13, 2001, troops from an SPDC unit, forced U Nay Win to carry 30 baskets of rice, with his bullock cart, to Ma-lar-daw, Kyauk Kyi Township. In Mar-lar-daw, the troops forced 30 villagers to carry the rice to Maw-doe place. (Source: KIC)

April 1, 2001, The 50-man strong SPDC IB 73, demanded 5 bullock carts and 50 villagers from Ma-lar-daw village, Kyauk Kyi Township to carry military supplies to Saw-tay-doe village. (Source: KIC)

March 20, 2001, A unit from SPDC IB 26 took 24 women villagers to Saw-tay-doe, Kyauk Kyi Township to carry supplies along with a military column. (Source: KIC)

**Thaton District**

On October 7, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 8, led by Column 1 Commander, Ko Ko Aung came to Ta-rweh-kee village, Thaton District, Karen State for a military operation. While camping in the village, the troops demanded 2 villagers to serve as porters and while camping outside the village, they demanded 5 villagers to serve as porters, everyday. The troops paid the village porters 50 Kyat, per day, for their service. (Source: KIC)

On October 5, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 101, led by second lieutenant Thant Tit with DKBA troops came to Pwa-hgaw village, Thaton District, Karen State and demanded 4 villagers to serve as porters, and a basket of rice, a Viss of chicken and a bottle of liquor. (Source: KIC)

On August 26, 2001, SPDC troops from IB 6 and LIB 106 led by commander Soe Tun forced more than 200 villagers from 10 villages in Thaton District to carry 1,150 sacks of rice from Mae Pu Hta to their military outpost in Mae Pray Hkee. The villages affected were: 100 villagers from Ta Eu Hki; 50 villagers from Nya Po

Hki; 80 villagers from Ka Paw Hke; 50 villagers from Klaw Hta; Toe Tae Hke and Kwee Lay Pya. An unknown number of villagers from Siko, Nya Su Hta and Mae Pyu Hkib had to carry 150 sacks of rice. (Source: CIDKP)

August 25, 2001, troops from SPDC stole a goat from villager Saw Sa Nyo. The troops demanded rice as well as porters from Ta-u-kee village, Bilin Township. The troops said that if the villagers failed to meet their demand they would have to pay 10 Viss of pork or 5,000 Kyat. (Source: KIC)

On August 24, 2001, a company from SPDC IB Battalion 6 led by Company Commander Aung Kyaw Soe forced 50 villagers from Nya Po Hki and 80 villagers from Maw Hki to serve as porters. (Source: CIDKP)

August 21, 2001, The company 4 commander, Aung Kyaw Soe, from IB 6 of SPDC Tactical Command 772 forced 50 Nya-po-kee villagers and 80 Pauk-kee villagers, Bilin Township to carry rice from Mae-pu-ta to Mae-pree-kee. At present, SPDC troops did not allow the villages to go for work at 6:00 o'clock in the morning. The village have to return to the villages by 6:00 0' clock in the evening. (Source: KIC)

August 21, 2001, (Bilin Township) Company Commander Aung Kyaw Zaw and LIB 106 Battalion commander, Soe Htun, forced: (1) 100 villagers of Ta-u-kee village to carry 350 bags of rice, (2) 50 villagers of Nya-po-kee village to carry 150 bags of rice, (3) 80 villagers of Pauk-kee village to carry 200 bags of rice, (4) 50 villagers of Ee-sue-kee to carry 150 bags of rice, (5) villagers of Kee-ko/Nya-shu-kee/Mae-pree villages to carry 150 bags of rice, (6) 50 Klaw-ta/Toe-theh-kee/Kweeh-lay-pyan villagers to carry 150 bags of rice to Division 772 camp. If the villagers failed, they had to pay cash 5,000 Kyat or 10 viss of pork as a fine. The troops had already 3,000 bags of rice hauled from Mae-pu-ta to Division 772 camp. In this rainy season, SPDC troops forced the villagers to haul rations three times more than in previous years. (Source: KIC)

August 21, 2001, operation commander of SPDC Division 772, ordered IB 6 battalion commander Ko Ko Naing to force 100 Ta-u-kee villagers and 50 Pauk-kee villagers, Bilin Township to serve as porters for carrying rice to Mae-pu-ta. (Source: KIC)

July 24, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 106 of Division 77 came to Ka-wah-ta village, Bilin Township and looted: (1) a machete and a cat from Naw Ber Pa, (2) 3 Pyi of rice from Maung Shwe Hla, (3) a chicken from Naw Lee, (4) 4 chickens from Naw Pu Pet, (5) a dog and a Viss of sesame paste from Pah Mae Moe, (6) a chicken from Naw Shwe, (7) a chicken and a Pyi of rice from Naw Moe Lo, (8) a chicken from Ma Wah Moe and 7 chickens and a female pig from other villagers. In addition, the troops took 8 villagers with them as porters and guides, and as they got lost on the way, the troops slapped the faces 3-4 times of Ka-wah-ta villagers Saw Pah Mae and Saw Maung Than, accusing them of showing the wrong way. (Source: KIC)

April 16, 2001, The DKBA troops, led by Moe Jo, came to Kwee-lay village, Bilin Township and demanded a pig from Naw Ma Bo and a pig from Naw Pet. In addition, they seized 9 villagers for use as porters. (Source: KIC)

April 2, 2001, Troops from No. 1 column of LIB 107, under SPDC LID 77, led by second lieutenant Soe Htun and company commander Soe Min, came to Kwee-lay and Klaw-ta villages, Bilin Township and seized women villagers of Kwee-lay and Klaw-ta, for portage. (Source: KIC)

**Pa-pun District**

On September 24, 2001, Captain Thein Htun, from SPDC LIB 548 based at Pa-ya-ngote-toe camp of Kya-inn township, summoned nearby villages namely Kayan-taung, Hsin-bote-inn, Ka-sa, Kyone-sein, Hsin-kaung, Hsi-zone and Ta-yoke-maw. He instructed them to send, without fail, one villager from each village to serve as porter, for one month at the camp, and to replace monthly the old ones with new ones. (Source: KIC)

From September 22 to 26, 2001, the SPDC, No. 2 Operation Group of the Western Command forced villagers to construct a military camp at Anam-gwin village, in Win-yay township. Villagers who were forced to work were: (1) Saw Maung Lay 48, (2) Saw Pah Loe 39, (3) Maw Ta Kha 35, (4) Saw Ta Lay Kho 40, (5) Pah Lu Tu 30, (6) Pah Thu Kha 30, (7) Naw Pa Dah Pa 48, (8) Saw Hay Ta 22, (9) Saw Say Lay 50, (10)Maung Kyi Htwe 20, (11) Saw Po Twe 40, (12)Saw Ohn Pe 30, (13) Maung Win Tin 30, (14) Saw Hsar Da 29, (15) Saw Bo Gay 24, (16) Saw Aye Kywe 23, (17)Saw Ki 23, (18) Saw Day Naw 24, (19) Saw Hai Gay 30, (20) Pah Kya Li 23, (21) Toe Kyay Li 45, (22) Saw Pyaw Yi 30, (23) Saw Paw Bo 18, (24) Saw Pah Dah 18, (25) Saw Hnget 42, from Kaka-tit village. They were forced to cut and carry wood and Bamboo. The troops also forced (1) Sein Aung Hti (2) Kyaw Parch (3) Kyaw Than Maung (4) Saw Ka Kyi (5) Maung Khaing (6) Maung Htun Aye (7) Kyaw Hsar Nu (8) Kyaw Klu Tel (9) Maung Hla Soe (10) Saw Ah Noo (11) Maung Yi Lwin (12) Saw Hsar Kya Nge (13) Maung Tha Ga Nu (14) Saw Paw Gaw (15) Toe Kaw Ku (16) Htaw Noe Kleh (17) Koo Loo Po (18) Pah Ti Toe (19) Saw dTee Peh (20) U Thaung (21) Pah Meh Tha (22) Kya Maung (23) Shwe Lay Kyai (24) Kyaw Dah Lay (25) Saw Nga Say (26) Saw Pah Pote (27) Maung Tha Khin (28) Saw Meh Lah (29) Ta Pay Lay (30) Maung Thauk Kya (31) Kyaw Theik Pan (32) Ta Kay Htee (33) Kyaw Hla Aye (34) Lay Kyaing (35)Kaw Lar Hai (36) Ta Kay Htee (37) Kyaw Klay (38) Ba Kyaing (39) Pa Ei Tee (40) Meh Pay (41) Maung Pu Hla (42) Saw Say Set (43) Kyaw Thee Hai (44) KNoe Kha (45) U Nyein (46) Pah Lay (47) Kyaw Leh Mee (48) Shwe Htun (49) Kyaw Kaw Kay Po (50) Kyaw Lah Khee (51) Maung Thein (52) Nga Ha (53) Po Ya Ni (54) Saw Pah Htee (55) Neh Htee Daw (56) Mee Ta (57) Kyaw Lo Tha (58) Day Tu (59) Kyaw Ka Ba (60) Chai Neh (61) Pah Li Lah (62) Pa Soe (63) Kyaw Po Tha Kwa (64) Po Poe Loe (65) Kyaw Htun Hlaing (66) Kyaw Tee Ti (67) Saw Ta Poe (68) Kyaw Bay (69) Lay Shwe (70) Maung Kyah (71) Aye Kyay Pee (72)

Kyaw Bah (73) Na Dee (74) Maung Si Way (75) Pah Mu Tu (76) Maung Khan and (77) Kaw Ler, and 17 bullock carts from Yet-paw village to cut and carry 1,600 bamboo poles and 80 wood poles. (Source: KIC)

From September 16 to 20, 2001, About 150 troops from SPDC IB 231 led by Column Commander Than Zaw Oo forced villagers to serve as porters to carry military supplies at the frontline for the column. Each had to carry a weight of 30 Viss, without receiving food. The victims were: (1) Saw Moo Kri 37, (2) Saw Eh Htoo 38, (3) Saw Pwe Paw 32, (4) Saw Hsa Mu Wah 18, (5) Saw Htun Kway Htee Kla 35, (6) Saw Maung Lin Aung 20, (7) Saw Je 22, from Pu Yae village, Kaw Ka Reik township, and (8) Saw Ta Kay 35, (9) Saw Maung Neh Kay 28, (10) Saw Dah Wah 49, (11) Saw Ta Loe 32, (12) Saw Maung Win 36, (13) Saw Maung Lin Tin 36, (14) Saw Wah Yu 28, (15) Saw Ah Su 25, and (16) Saw Ngwe 23, from Win-lon village, Kya-inn township. (Source: KIC)

July 27, 2001, Pway Pwa villagers who fled to Pwa-weh-hta were forcibly driven back to their own village. Due to forced labour by SPDC, Pway-pwa villagers namely (1) Saw Maung Tin (2) Saw Htun Tin (3) Saw Tha Hser (4) Saw Pah Ter and (5) Swa Kya Mu had not finished sowing paddy to their paddy fields. (Source: KIC)

June 27, 2001, Battalion commander Sein Maung and battalion second in command Thein Htay of SPDC LIB -119 under control of LID-33 came into Kay Kor and Pway Pwa area and demanded villages from Ma-lay-ler, Win-maung and Mae-chone villagers to carry food supplies to Mae-waing army camp. In order to avoid being attacked, the army put a villager in between every troop to go along with the column. Due to forcing villagers to work, Pway-bwa village which was a small village could no longer tolerate forced labour and later shifted to Pwa-wai-hta. However, the battalion command of LIB-119 felt dissatisfied with those villagers and made contact with SPDC LID- 77 to drive them back to their own village. (Source: KIC)

June 19, 2001, Acting Battalion commander Aung Min Lwin of SPDC LIB-111 ordered 2 Mae waing villagers, Papun Township to come and wait at their military camp every day. The army used them to carry the luggage and to go in front as guides. He ordered the villagers that if any of his troops being killed or wounded by the enemy's gun or landmines, the villages had to compensate 100,000 Kyats and the villages also had to exchange new porters every five day and provide his troops 30 viss of pork every month.(Source: KIC)

May 2, 2001, Major Khin Maung from SPDC LIB 110 summoned Maw-thay-tha villagers to carry food supplies. (Source: KIC)

April 1, 2001, (Papun Township) Troops from SPDC IB 36 led by Bo Zaw Htoo seized 6 villagers from Kyo-kho-doe village, 5 from Hee-po-doe village and 3 at Saw-bwe-doe village as porters and forced them to carry supplies from Kaw-pu to Nah-oh-lor camp. (Source: KIC)

On March 13, 2001, troops from LIB 340, column commander Myint Way Aung, entered Ter Gaw Soe and looted villagers belongings. They also took 2 bullock carts and forced the owners to go to Papun and transport military rations to the front line. (Source: KORD)

February 16, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 370, based at Mae-waing, demanded 66 Mae-waing villagers to carry food supplies from Mae-waing to Maw-thay-tha. (Source: KIC)

On January 1, 2001, IB-36 officer Zaw Htun and his troops seized 6 villagers from Kyokhoder, 5 from Hepoeder and 3 from Hsawbweder and forced them to carry supplies from Kawpu to Nahulu. (Source: KORD)

**Doo-pla-ya District**

July 30, 2001, Troops from so-called SPDC Peace Unit (anti-insurgent unit), led by Saw Thu Mu Heh, ordered Noh-dar-shu and Kyaw-kay-ko villagers to carry 20 tons of granite stone from Plaw-ker-ko to Ka-lay-kee villages, without any payment. (Source: KIC)

July 15, 2001, Combined troops from SPDC LIB 545 and LIB 546, led by Column 2 commander Soe Tin, came to Oo-kyu-khee village, Kya-inn township and forced villagers: (1) Saw Toe Po, M-43, (2) Saw Toe Po Soe, M-30 and (3) Saw Bleh Dah, M-29 to carry supplies from Oo-kyu-khee village to army camp in Ka-li village. (Source: KIC)

July 10, 2001, Camp commander Khin Maung Gyi from SPDC LIB 545, seized Noh-taw-pla villagers: (1) Saw Paw Way, M-19, (2)Saw Hsa Htoo, M-23, (3) Saw Htoo Ker, M-22, (4) Saw Ni Ni, M-49, (5) Saw Pi Aye, M-32, (6) Saw Lu Thaw, M-36, (7) Saw Peh, M-33, (8) Saw Ka Plu, M-39, (9) Saw Toh Pa Wee, M-40, as porters for 4 days. The army forced them to carry arms and ammunition from Ka-li-khee camp to Htee Po Thein village, Win Yae Township. (Source: KIC)

July 9, 2001, Combined troops from SPDC IB 545 and 546, led by Column commander Soe Tin, forced Noh-taw-pla villagers: (1)Saw Po Kyay, M-29, (2)Saw Lu, M-39, (3)Saw Htoo Law, M-25, and (4)Saw Ka Day, M-33 to carry food supplies from Ka-li-khee army camp to Pa-ya village, Win Yae Township. (Source: KIC)

July 9, 2001, Troops from SPDC IB 34 under the SPDC Western Command, led by battalion commander Lt. col. Kyaw Win, came to Tu-ler village of Win-yin Township and seized and took with him Tu-ler villagers for portage. The villagers were; (1) Saw Win Lay (M, 30), (2) Saw Aung Bweh (M, 50), (3) Saw Pway Tha (M, 40), (4) Saw Ta Set (M, 22), (5) Saw shwe Han (M, 45), (6) Saw Ben Kyaw (M, 42), (7) Saw Tahm Lee (M, 47), (8) Saw Thet Win (M, 16), (9) Saw Kyaw Kweh Kweh (M, 36), (10) Saw Thein Chit (M, 22) and (11) Saw Than Pyu (M, 38). (Source: KIC)

July 4, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 546, led by battalion commander Soe Tin, forced Nga-pyaw-daw villager Saw Naing Kyi to carry food supplies to the top of Ka-lay-kee mountain, Win Yae Township. (Source: KIC)

July 3, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 545, based in Ka-lay-kee village, Win Yae Township and led by officer Win Htun, demanded 2 bullock carts and 5 villagers and forced them to carry military supplies. The road, damaged by rain, caused much difficulty to the villagers. (Source: KIC)

July 1, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 344, led by battalion commander Myint Thein, came to Ah-pyaw village and seized and took with them villagers for portage. They had not released them at the time of this report. The villagers were: (1) Saw Kay Po (M, 37), (2) Saw Mya Win (M, 30), (3) Saw Than Kyaw (M, 28), (4) Saw Pa Hay (M, 32), (5) U Lu Tin (M, 55), (6) U Maung Thein (M, 54), (7) U Aung (M, 38), (8) Ta Pway (M, 25), (9) Saw Pah Pa (M, 45), (10) Than Kyaw Lin (M, 18), (11) Tin San (M, 30) and (12) Auw Kaw (M, 42). (Source: KIC)

June 29, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 548, led by battalion Tin Maung Oo, demanded 5 bullock carts from villagers to carry military supplies to Kya-in. The villagers were not free and failed to go so the troops arrested the village head of Kya-in and forced the bullock carts and the village head to reach Ta-ku-kee within that night. (Source: KIC)

June 27, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB- 548, led by Battalion commander Tin Maung Oo, ordered 5 bullock carts from Kya-inn village headman to carry food supplies, but as the villages failed to comply, the troops came and arrested the headman and forced him to transport supplies with one bullock cart, within the night. (Source: KIC)

June 27, 2001, troops from SPDC 548, led by battalion commander Tin Maung Oo, forced 3 Ta-ku-kee villagers, Kya In Township Saw Toe Ku, Saw Klo Mee and Saw Tha Yo Htoo, and 3 bullock carts to carry military supplies to Ka-lay-kee.(Source: KIC)

May 30, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 106, led by Major Than Win came to Ma-u village, Dooplaya District, Karen State and demanded belongings from the villagers. They also forced 4 villagers to serve as porters. (Source: KIC)

July 30, 2001, Troops from so-called SPDC Peace Unit (anti-insurgent unit), led by Saw Thu Mu Heh, ordered Noh-dar-shu and Kyaw-kay-ko villagers to carry 20 tons of granite stone from Plaw-ker-ko to Ka-lay-kee villages, without any payment. (Source: KIC)

July 15, 2001, combined troops from SPDC LIB 545 and LIB 546, led by Column 2 commander Soe Tin, came to Oo-kyu-khee village, Kya-inn township and forced villagers: (1) Saw Toe Po, M-43, (2) Saw Toe Po Soe, M-30 and (3) Saw Bleh Dah, M-29 to carry supplies from Oo-kyu-khee village to army camp in Ka-li village. (Source: KIC)

July 10, 2001, camp commander Khin Maung Gyi from SPDC LIB 545, seized Noh-taw-pla villagers: (1) Saw Paw Way, M-19, (2)Saw Hsa Htoo, M-23, (3) Saw Htoo Ker, M-22, (4) Saw Ni Ni, M-49, (5) Saw Pi Aye, M-32, (6) Saw Lu Thaw, M-36, (7) Saw Peh, M-33, (8) Saw Ka Plu, M-39, (9) Saw Toh Pa Wee, M-40, as porters for 4 days. The army forced them to carry arms and ammunition from Ka-li-khee camp to Htee Po Thein village, Win Yae Township. (Source: KIC)

July 9, 2001, combined troops from SPDC IB 545 and 546, led by Column commander Soe Tin, forced Noh-taw-pla villagers: (1)Saw Po Kyay, M-29, (2)Saw Lu, M-39, (3)Saw Htoo Law, M-25, and (4)Saw Ka Day, M-33 to carry food supplies from Ka-li-khee army camp to Pa-ya village, Win Yae Township. (Source: KIC)

July 9, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 34 under the SPDC Western Command, led by battalion commander Lt. col. Kyaw Win, came to Tu-ler village of Win-yin Township and seized and took with him Tu-ler villagers for portage. The villagers were; (1) Saw Win Lay (M, 30), (2) Saw Aung Bweh (M, 50), (3) Saw Pway Tha (M, 40), (4) Saw Ta Set (M, 22), (5) Saw shwe Han (M, 45), (6) Saw Ben Kyaw (M, 42), (7) Saw Tahm Lee (M, 47), (8) Saw Thet Win (M, 16), (9) Saw Kyaw Kweh Kweh (M, 36), (10) Saw Thein Chit (M, 22) and (11) Saw Than Pyu (M, 38). (Source: KIC)

July 4, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 546, led by battalion commander Soe Tin, forced Nga-pyaw-daw villager Saw Naing Kyi to carry food supplies to the top of Ka-lay-kee mountain, Win Yae Township. (Source: KIC)

July 3, 2001: troops from SPDC LIB 545, based in Ka-lay-kee village, Win Yae Township and led by officer Win Htun, demanded 2 bullock carts and 5 villagers and forced them to carry military supplies. The road, damaged by rain, caused much difficulty to the villagers. (Source: KIC)

July 1, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 344, led by battalion commander Myint Thein, came to Ah-pyaw village and seized and took with them villagers for portage. The villagers were, (1) Saw Kay Po (M, 37), (2) Saw Mya Win (M, 30), (3) Saw Than Kyaw (M, 28), (4) Saw Pa Hay (M, 32), (5) U Lu Tin (M, 55), (6) U Maung Thein (M, 54), (7) U Aung (M, 38), (8) Ta Pway (M, 25), (9) Saw Pah Pa (M, 45), (10) Than Kyaw Lin (M, 18), (11) Tin San (M, 30) and (12) Auw Kaw (M, 42). (Source: KIC)

June 29, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 548, led by battalion Tin Maung Oo, demanded 5 bullock carts from villagers to carry military supplies to Kya-in. The villagers were not free and failed to go so the troops arrested the village head of Kya-in and forced the bullock carts and the village head to reach Ta-ku-kee within that night. (Source: KIC)

June 27, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB- 548, led by Battalion commander Tin

Maung Oo, ordered 5 bullock carts from Kya-inn village headman to carry food supplies, but as the villages failed to comply, the troops came and arrested the headman and forced him to transport supplies with one bullock cart, within the night. (Source: KIC)

June 27, 2001, troops from SPDC 548, led by battalion commander Tin Maung Oo, forced 3 Ta-ku-kee villagers, Kya In Township Saw Toe Ku, Saw Klo Mee and Saw Tha Yo Htoo, and 3 bullock carts to carry military supplies to Ka-lay-kee. (Source: KIC)

May 28, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 106, led by Major Than Win, seized 6 Ma-u-bin villagers as porters to carry supplies to Taung-ga-lay village. (Source: KIC)

May 24, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 106, led by column commander Major Than Win, came into Ma-oo village and extorted, (1) 3 chickens from Daw Ma Htwe, F-63, (2) one chicken from U Pein Lar, M-30, (3) 4 chickens from U The Na Koo, M-32, (4) 5 chickens from U Kwa Toe, M-63, (5) one duck from U Ali, M-38, (6) 6 tins of sardines from Naw Ku Yah, M-30, (7) one Viss of onion, 20 Kyat worth of cooking oil from Ma Khaing and (8) 2 sardines, half a viss of chili, 10 Kyat worth of cooking oil, 20 cheroots, 2 and a half baskets of rice, 2 Viss of chicken and 2 packets of London cigarettes from the shop of Naw Beh Kyeh. On that day, these troops also forced two villagers to serve as porters. (Source: KIC)

May 22, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 548, column 2, led by Major Naing Lwin, came into Ko-du-kweh village and extorted from villagers, (1) Maung Hla, M-35, 2 chickens, (2) Maung Kyaw Lin, M-42, 2 chickens, (3) Naw Ku Paw, 6 chicken eggs. In addition, they forced Saw Kyaw Naung, M-35, to serve as a porter. (Source: KIC)

April 27, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 62, led by column commander, Major Thu-ra Myint Thu, seized 7 chickens from Daw Ma Chaw of Htee-pa-taw village, Win-yin Township. On the same day, the troops demanded 16 villagers from Lake-po and Nah-kyi villages to serve as porters. (Source: KIC)

April 3, 2001, No. 2 column commander, Kyaw Soe Tint, of SPDC LIB 546, demanded bullock carts from villages in Kya-in-Seik-kyi and Kyon-doe Townships. The villages, having to provide the carts, were: (1) Dah-lee village, 5 bullock carts; (2) Shwe-doe village, 2 bullock carts; (3) Bee-sa-ka village, 5 bullock carts; (4) Win-ka village, 13 bullock carts; (5) Htee-po-tha village, 2 bullock carts; (6) Tha-min-doot village, 11 bullock carts; (7) Ler-thay village, 3 bullock carts; (8) Htee-klee village, 2 bullock carts; (9) Aung-chan-tha village, 2 bullock carts and (10) Paw-wah-klo village, 2 bullock carts. He demanded altogether 65 bullock carts and forced them to carry heavy loads of ammunitions and rations, from Kya-in-seik-kyi to Kyaik-don Town. Reports said that SPDC LIB 546, demanded about 200 bullock carts, but the villagers could not provide them, because the cattle and bullock carts were still being employed for work in the fields. In fact, no one wanted to go, as the

troops used bullock carts for hauling heavy loads and mistreated the men as well as the animals by beating, swearing and starving. However, the villagers were forced to provide hauling service 4 or 5 days or even a week, at a time. (Source: KIC)

March 14, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 549, came to Pa-deh-prot village and seized Saw Pah Kwa, M, 25, Saw Pa Si, son of Saw Pa Nga, and Naw Hsa Klo, a nursing mother and daughter of Saw Lah Bweh, together with her infant child, for carrying supplies as porters. (Source: KIC)

March 13, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 545, came to Kyaung-gon village and demanded from the village headman 5 baskets of rice and 10 villagers to serve as porters. (Source: KIC)

February 1, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 704, led by Major Kyaw Zwa Thein demanded 15 carts from Kyune-kone, 10 carts from Noe-ta-su, 5 carts from Kyaw-kay-ko villages to carry military rations from Kya-in to Htee-po-tha village, Kya-in Seik Kyi Township in one day. (Source: KIC)

**Mergui-Tavoy District**

July 17, 2001, Troops from SPDC IB 280, led by Kyin Maung Aye, demanded 5 villagers from Peh-cha village as porters. They said that if the village failed to provide porters, each family had to pay 200 Kyat. On the same day, the troops demanded 10 villagers from Pa-saw-u village as porters. (Source: KIC)

July 5, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 376, led by battalion commander Win Oo Myint, seized the students from Kler-pu village and forced them to carry food supplies to Kaw-tee-lo village, for the whole day without any food. (Source: KIC)

**Pa-an District**

On June, 20, 2001, Junta authorities ordered four groups of villages in Karen State to provide them with porters or money, according to two villagers who came to Thai-Burma border.

Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No.547, LIB No. 548 and LIB No.549 led by Strategy commander Major Than Zaw Htoo and Democratic Buddhist Karen (DKBA) Capt. Moon Daing have been recruiting porters from 4 groups of villages since early this year. Each family, which was unable to provide porter, has to give the authorities Ks.2000 each time. Each village has to provide the authorities with 10 to 15 porters a day. The porters have to work 5 days each time.

The 4 groups of villages are from Pa-an and Kawkareik townships and the groups are as follows:-

1. Kaw Kalaung group consists of 15 villages or (over 1000 houses).
2. Naung Ta Bay group consists of 14 villages or (about 1200 houses).
3. Naw Ka Dae group consists of 9 villages or (about 1100 houses).
4. Mya Pa Daing group consists of 11 villages or (about 1200 houses). (MICB)

**Porters Injured/Wounded**

March 12, 2001, The SPDC troops forced Ler-ker-doe-ka villagers to carry supplies and go with them to the front line. In a fire fight, villagers - (1) Saw Maung Win, M, 50, son of Saw Haw Thata, (2) Saw Koe Lo Di, M, 24, son of Saw Pa Eh, (3) Saw Eh Win, M, 50, son of Saw Raw Ba, (4) Saw Nee Plo, M, 50, son of Saw Tha Doo, (5) Saw Aw Htoo Say, M, 28, son of Saw Shee Peh, (6) Saw Du Ner, M, 35, son of Saw Kwee Yai, (7) Saw Ka Tha, M, 25, son of Saw Shay and (8) Saw Kyaw Doe, M, 35, son of Saw Ta Moo, all from Ler-ker-doe-kah village, were wounded. Of them, Saw Maung Win and Saw Du Ner were seriously wounded. In addition, Tha-bar-ber villagers, Saw Baw Gay, M, 13, son of Saw Maung Day, and Saw Klo Htoo, M, 35, son of Saw Peh were also wounded. (Source: KIC)

**Porters Injuries Due to Landmines**

August 11, 2001, U Aung Pu 48, son of U Nyunt of In-kying section of Za-yat-kyi-myo, who was serving as a porter for SPDC IB-26, stepped on a landmine planted by SPDC IB 26 troops in Bu-hsa-kee area, Tantabin Township and lost both legs. (Source: KIC)

**Porter Deaths Due to Landmines**

August 16, 2001, At 11:35 AM, troops from Column 1 of SPDC IB 26 forced Baw-ga-li villagers to carry rations to Klet-mu. Baw-ka-li villager Saw Klo Htoo (aka) Saw Po Oo (32), son of U Ko Yan, stepped on a landmine planted by SPDC troops at Klet-mu, Tantabin Township and died. (Source: KIC)

On 25 July, 2001, 4 Muslim porters were killed in a mine-explosion at the front line in Karen State opposite Mae Sot, Thailand, according to an eye-witness who requested anonymity.

The eye-witness, a porter who escaped, said that the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) officers arrested the 4 Muslim civilians at Kala Or check point and demanded Kyats 100,000 from each.

As the Muslims could not afford to pay the money, they were sent as porters to the front line where they were killed in mine explosion. The SPDC officers included police, immigration and army officers, according to the witness. Kala Or check-point is between Moulmein and Davoy.

The 4 Muslims were Ahamad (25 years old), Thein Htoo (20 years old), U Ye Din (31 years old) and Hla Shwe (22 years old) from Maung Ngan Yat Kwet, Moulmein Myo, Mon State. (Source: MICB)

**Porters Killed by SPDC Troops**

August 20, 2001, Troops from SPDC battalion 280 forced Noh-pah-doh villager, Saw Hsar Eh Kler, to serve as a guide. On August 25, 2001, the troops killed him because they came under attack in Mergui-Tavoy District. (Source: KIC)

On July, 19, 2001, junta military personnel shot two Muslim porters dead in the front lines of Karen State with a false allegation that they were trying to flee at night, according to three porters who escaped.

The escaped porters said that on July, 15, 2001, about 180 prisoners from porter recruiting camps of Hlaing Bwe, Karen State, were transferred as porters through Light Infantry Battalion No. 205 to the front lines along the Downa mountain ranges. Fifty porters among them including some Muslims were transferred to Hill No. 401, controlled by Capt. Tun Soe. There, fighting took place between junta military and Karen National Union (KNU) and some of the porters started to flee. The junta's soldiers were very angry and shot two Muslim porters dead. The two victims were San Lin (26 years old) and Hamid (32 years old), both from Moulmein. (MICB)

## Forced Labor for Motor Roads and Bridge Construction (Infrastructure Projects)

### Toungoo District

July 26, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 73, based in Klaw-mee-doe village, Tantabin Township demanded 30 villagers of Klaw-mee-doe village and forced them to construct bridges on Yaw-lo-klo river. (Source: KIC)

March 10, 2001, SPDC IB 26 troops, based at Tha-bya-nyunt camp, Tantabin Township summoned Play-hsa-lo village head-man, San Tin, and sent him to a place where SPDC IB 20 troops were constructing a motor road, near Ma-lar-daw village. In addition, IB 26 demanded 3 Play-has-lo villagers, at a time, to work as forced laborers, in rotation, on the road construction. (Source: KIC, KORD)

December 30, 2000, Troops from SPDC LIB 344, based at Baw-ga-li village, Tantabin Township forced 60 villagers of Ber-gor-doe to carry supplies every day to Tha-aye-ta place near Maw-chi motor road. (Source: KIC)

### Nyaung-lin-bin District

March 6, 2001, Troops from SPDC IB 26 ordered villages namely, You-lor, Kamu-lor and Ma-la-daw in Tan-tabin township to provide 3 villagers per village to clear the way for construction of a motor road. (Source: KIC)

On February 4, 2001, 200 combined troops from SPDC IB 26,39 & 35 arrived at Kyouk Kyi Pok with 2 D-7 bulldozers for road construction and one truck for transporting fuel for the 2 bulldozers during the construction work. Again, on February 7, 2001 the troops arrived at Ter Kwe Lay Kho and gave instructions to the Ma La Daw villagers to clear the car road. One person from each family had to come and work every day starting on February 9. Construction on this road has been going on since 1998. The road is planned to go to Bu Has Khee in Toungoo District. The starting point of this car road is in Mon township, Nyaunglebin district.

During the construction period SPDC patrolled the area constantly and villagers in the neighboring areas had to abandon their villages, homes, food and property and hide in the jungle as they thought it wasn't secure to stay in their villages. Those villagers were from (11) villages of Saw Tay Der, Kyouk Pya, Kheh Po Der, Yaw Khee, Ka Waw Kho, Thet Baw Der, K'pa Hta, Saw Kher Khee, Nya Mu Khee, They Khay Lu and Nwah Hta. The construction up to Kheh-Po-Der has been finished. (Source: KORD)

February 1, 2001, Troops from SPDC IB 26 forced 46 villagers from Maw-ket-tha-per-ko, Kyauk Kyi Township to clear road from Ma-la-daw to Way-ta. (Source: KIC)

**Thaton District**

On October 3, 2001, a high ranking SPDC police officer, ordered villagers from Toe-taw, Thu-ee, Mae-leh-hta and Mae-leh-khee villages, Thaton District, Karen State to clear both sides of the motor road along the Sal-ween river bank. They had to bring their own food supplies. (Source: KIC)

April 12, 2001, The SPDC is digging an irrigation canal from Du-won/Bu-lo-klo to Kyet-kaw, Thaton Township. Many farmers lost their rice fields because the canal cut through them. The SPDC troops forced the villagers of Du-won, Pa-dah-Oo and Kyet-kaw village tracts to work on the digging. Each family had to provide a worker for the project. The villagers had to bring their own food with them. A family, which could not provide a worker, had to pay a fine of 500 Kyat per day. (Source: KIC)

February 1, 2001, No. 2 column commander, Win Lin Aung from SPDC LIB 8, forced the villagers to construct Ta-ro-ta-plo motor road, Pa-an Township with rocks, forcing 28 villages to woke on this project with their own foods. The villages were: (1) Ta-ro-ta-plo, (2) Noe-pleeh, (3) Kra-ta, (4) Saw-ta-lu, (5) Wa-ta-yet, (6) Naw-pa-doh, (7) Htee-kaw-wah, (8) Noe-rah, (9) Wa-mee-pwah, (10) Preh-kaw, (11) Kler-doe, (12) Ler-ka-ter, (13) Ta-ree-kyet, (14) Noe-po-moe, (15) Noe-Ma-kweeh, (16) Toe-taung, (17) Tho-ane, (18) Mae-leh-ta, (19) Mae-leh-kee, (20) Noe-kweeh, (21) Ta-kaw-bo, (22) Ko-dah-kyi, (23) Weh-pya-ta, (24) Law-pu, (25) Plaw-po-toe, (26) Mae-si-ta, (27) Baw-tha-pru and (28) Htee-po-neh. (Source: KIC)

**Doo-pla-ya District**

In July, battalion commander Kyaw Win from SPDC IB 384, forced nearby villages, namely Tu-lay-gon, Ta-kat-chaung, Wet-chee-gon, Ah-leh-ywa, Ga-mai-leh and Nat-chaung villages, Kyaw-in Seik-kyi Township to construct a motor road, with rock foundation, between Wah-boh-gon and Kya-inn-seik-kyi. The villagers were to bring their own food supplies with them. The villagers had to finish the construction, within July.

July 27, 2001, troops from so-called SPDC Peace Unit (anti-insurgent unit), led by Saw Thu Mu Heh, forced Da-ley villagers to clear brushes on the sides of the motor road between Da-ley and Mae-tha-raw. A person from each family had to go for the work. (Source: KIC)

**Mergui-Tavoy Division**

July 9, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 376, led by Win Oo Myint, forced the villagers of Myit-ta, Hsar-mu-taw and Hsi-ku villages, Tavoy Township to repair bridges in Myit-ta area. (Source: KIC)

June 23, 2001, At 11:00 hours, 100 soldiers from SPDC Operational Command Headquarter 9, forced Htoo-leh villagers to construct roads, bridges and make a list of farms and orchards, which had no owners. (Source: KIC)

## Forced Labor for Army Camps and Security Duties

**Toungoo District**

Beginning in May and as of July 15, 2001, SPDC troops were forcing villages who stay near the Law-pi-ta electric supply line between Yo-doh and Toungoo, Toungoo District, Karen State, to keep watch over the electric supply post every day. Any village who failed to watch had to pay 300 kyat per household to the SPDC troops based in that area. (Source: KIC)

April 15, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 538, led by company 3 commander, Kyaw Kyaw came to Htee-pu-kee-der-ka village, Than daung Tonwship and forced 15 villagers to work for Ka-thwee-dee military camp on 16-4-2001. The troops demanded 2 villagers from Htee-pu-kee-der-ka and forced them to work together with Htee-pu-kee-der-ko villagers, for Ka-thwee-dee military camp. (Source: KIC)

March 13, 2001, Columns from SPDC IB 124, LIB 394 and SPDC Southern Command operation commander, Zaw Htun, came to LIB 538 camp, under the command of Soe Myint Thain, based in Ka-thwee-di village, Than Daung township and summoned Ka-thweeh-di, Tha-ba-ber and Ler-ker-doe-kah villagers, Thaung-daung Township. Zaw Htun told them to provide 20 villagers per village, for work. The villagers were to bring machetes and axes with them to build 5 houses and 3 tiers of fences for military camp. The work was to be finished in 3 days. The villagers had to bring their own food and provide 2 runners in addition. (Source: KIC)

January 6, 2001, The so-called SPDC guerrilla unit based at Play-hsa-lor village, Tantabin Township ordered 20 villagers each from Plaw-baw-doe, Ta-pah-khee and Yaw-lor villages to come and bring with them their own food for 3 days and to work at the army camp at Play-hsa-lor village. On January 1, 2001 those troops ordered every household in Play-hsa-lor village to cut bamboo for constructing huts, fence and buildings for the army camp. (Source: KIC)

**Nyaung-lin-bin District**

May 13, 2001, a column from SPDC IB 73 came into Ma-lar-daw village, Kyauk Kyi Township called a meeting of all the villagers and appointed a new village headman. On 15-5-2001, these troops forced Ma-lar-daw villagers to clear the

village school yard, where later their battalion headquarters would be shifted to. (Source: KIC)

April 9, 2001, No.1 column commander, Than Myint, No. 2 column commander, Ko Ko Oo and intelligence officer, Khin Zaw, of SPDC IB 73, based in Saw-tay-doe, demanded 70 villagers and 4,000 roofing thatches from Kyauk-kyi-bauk village, Kyauk Kyi Township. (Source: KIC)

April 4, 2001, troops from IB 26, demanded one villager, per house, and forced them to take security duties. At the same time, they forced 4 bullock carts to take them to Tha-bye-nyunt village, Kyauk Kyi Township. (Source: KIC)

**Thaton District**

As of October 11, 2001, DKBA troops in Tha-ton District demanded one person per family, from Toe-teh-kee and Taw-klaw-kee villages, Thaton District, Karen State to construct a military camp. The camp was still under construction up to the time of this report, and the troops continued demanding villagers regularly. (Source: KIC)

On October 9, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 7, led by Bo Maung Aung, ordered villagers from Ta-paw, Pa-wo, Noh-law-plaw, Noh-aw-lar, Ha-ta-laik and Ka-meh villages, Thaton District, Karen State to provide daily a person from each household to go and construct the army camp at Ta-paw, Tha-ton township. Those villagers were required to bring their own food. The troops threatened to punish those who failed to go. (Source: KIC)

June 16, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 106, led by No.2 Column commander came to Htaw-klaw-hta village, Bilin Township and demanded from villagers (1) 5 chickens, 4 ducks from Naw Mee Na, (2) 3 chickens from Naw Li, (3) 2 chickens from Naw Ma Pu, (4) 2 chickens from Naw Nai and (5) 2 chickens. On that day, Kyaw Min from DKBA forced villagers (1) Htaw- kla-hta village, 8 persons, (2) Lay-kaw-hti village, 8 persons, (3) Htee-pa-doh-khee village, 8 persons, (4) Kaw-po village, 8 persons, (5) East Yo-kla village, 8 persons, and (6) East Htee-pa-doh village, 8 persons to cut Pyin-ka-doe wood for him with their own food supplies. (Source: KIC)

February 20, 2001, Company Commander Soe Aung from SPDC LIB 8 demanded Shwe-yaung-pya villagers, Thaton Township to pay porter fees of 100 Kyat per household monthly. Sargent Major Tin Soe of SPDC IB (8) demanded Kya-ta-raw villagers to send one villager and 20 bundles of fire wood to the army camp everyday. (Source: KIC)

**Pa-pun District**

July 30, 2001, Troops from SPDC IB 63, led by battalion second in command Thein Htun, extorted 3 chickens from Htee-po-hta village, Pa-pun Township and also demanded 5 villagers for work and one villager to serve as a runner. (Source: KIC)

From July 28, 2001, to August 1, 2001: Troops from SPDC IB 63 summoned villagers from nearby villages to come to their army camp to serve as runners every day. (Source: KIC)

June 29, 2001, Troops from SPDC IB-63 ordered 2 villagers from each village of Mae-nyu-hta, Mae-ku-hta, Mae-ku-khee, To-mu and Htee-doh-hta, Pa-pun Township to come and work at their army camp every day. As a result villagers had no more time to do their own work. (Source: KIC)

June 28, 200,1 Battalion commander Aung Min Lwin of SPDC LIB-111 ordered villagers in Mae Waing area, Pa-pun Township to cut 600 poles of bamboo and 60 poles of wood at the girth of 18 inches to construct their army camp. Moreover the army also order that each day a Mae-waing village must come to stay at their army camp for security purpose. (Source: KIC)

May 1, 2001, Major Khin Maung from SPDC LIB 110, forced 30 Mae-waing villagers, Pa-pun Township to clear weed around a shop, located in the army compound.(Source: KIC)

April 30, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 308, forced 15 villagers from each village of Toe-moo-kee, Htee-doh-ta, Mae-ku-kee and Mae-ku-ta villages, Pa-pun Township to bring with them hoes and spades to work for Mae-kyi-ta military camp. (Source: KIC)

February 18, 2001, A special unit of SPDC troops demanded 60 Mae-waing villagers, Pa-pun Township to cut bamboo and set up a fence for their camp. (Source: KIC)

February 12, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 370, based at Mae-waing demanded 30 women from Mae-waing village, Pa-pun Township to winnow and clean the rice. (Source: KIC)

**Doo-pla-ya District**

July 20, 2001, Battalion sargeant major, Than Htun, of SPDC IB 283 forced 30 villagers of Da-li village to plant rice in the army rice fields. The villagers had to bring their own food with them. (Source: KIC)From July 27, 2001 to August 3, 2001, in accordance with that order, the troops forced villagers from the nearby villages to work for them. The villagers thus forced had to take their own food to work. The villages affected were; (1) Loat-sha, (2) Yet-paw, (3) Da-aye, (4) Htee-toe-kaw, (5) Pah-yah, (6) Win-taw, (7) Nan-kwee, (8) Htee-law-zaw, (9) Win-ka-na, (10) Than-ba-ya, (11) Ko-won, (12) Taung-zun and (13) Kyauk-bi-lu villages. (Source: KIC)

July 11, 2000, A group of about 20 troops from SPDC IB 106, led by major Aung Thu, came to Lane-maw-jan village of Win-yin Township and instructed the village

heads of (1) Ka-neh-ka-maw, (2) Tha-ka-det, (3) Aung-tha-bye, (4) Aung-tha-ya, (5) Ma-yan-gon and (6) San-pya villages to build a military camp, between Tha-ka-det and Tha-ya-gon villages, and beginning from 12-7-2001, the villages of Ka-neh-ka-maw, Tha-ka-det and Tha-ya-gon were to provide 3 villagers, per village per day, to build the camp. An order was issued saying that each household of Aung-tha-bye village had to supply 25 timber bars for fencing of the camp, and Ka-neh-ka-maw and Tha-ka-det villages had to provide 3 roofing iron sheets or 4,800 Kyat, per household. Aung-tha-bye and Ye-la-mine villages each had to provide 3 villagers per day to construct the military camp, between Aung-tha-bye and Lane-maw-jan villages, beginning from 12-7-2001 and Ye-la-mine village was to take responsibility for the supply of timber, necessary. (Source: KIC)

July 8, 2001, Troops from SPDC Western Command, led by No. 2 operational commander, Kyaw Htoo Lwin, came to A-nan-kwin village of Kya-in township. The troops demanded timber planks and bamboo from the villagers to build a base camp and forced the villagers to work for them constantly. The operational commander Kyaw Htoo Lwin issued an order to battalions 34, 344 and 232, under his command, to demand timber planks and bamboo from the nearby villages to repair their base camps. (Source: KIC)

January 20, 2001, Zaw Min, Sein Kyaw Soe and Aung Soe Moe from SPDC LIB 703 summoned village leaders of Htee-po-tha in Kya-in Township and demanded 250 pieces of thatch and 100 numbers of 12 cubit long wooden poles. On January 24, 2001, the same troops forced villagers of Htee-po-tha to cut and clear a motor road linking Htee-po-tha and Deh-pa-taw for military trucks transportation. (Source: KIC)

January 27, 2001, Troops from SPDC IB 32 led by artillery battalion commander Ohn Kyaing combined with troops led by operation commander Hla Toe forced the villagers of Ta-ku-kee, Ta-ka-kee, Kaw-taw-klo and Kya-in, Kya-in Township to bake bricks. They forced each village to bring 20 cart loads of fire wood to the artillery unit camp in Kya-in Town. Moreover they also forced villagers to work voluntarily once in every five days. (Source: KIC)

January 31, 2001, Maj. Kyaw Swa Min from SPDC LIB 704, forced the villagers of Ta-ku-kee and Ka-lay-kee, Kya-in Township to split bamboo on the top of Ka-lay-kee mountain and bring with them their own food and work whole day. (Source: KIC)

**Pa-an District**

January 24, 2001, Battalion commander Sein Tha Win and battalion second in command Win Tin from SPDC IB-81 under LID 22 who took responsibility in Mae-taw-day and Ka-ma- kho areas ordered 5 villagers each from Ta-ri-po-kwee, Mae-ta-moo, Kyaw-talay-kho, Ka-mah-hta and Htee-tha-blu-hta villages, Hlaing-bwe Township to come and stay with them by turn every three days. (Source: KIC)

## Forced Labor for Mine Clearance

**Toungoo District**

May 17, 2001, troops of SPDC IB 53 seized Kaw-thay-doe villagers, Tantabin Township and made them to march in front of them as mine detectors on the way to Bu-sa-khee. The Burmese troops also forced the villagers to carry food supplies. (Source: KIC)

April 10, 2001, SPDC IB 48 and IB 59 forced 10 villagers from Kler Lar and 8 from Kaw Thay Der to serve as porters and mine sweepers. The villagers were asked to carry military supplies and clear landmines along the car road of Kaw Thay Der, Bu Hsa Khee. (Source: KORD)

April 4, 2001, SPDC troops from military strategic No. 3 from the Southern Division Command forced 8 villagers from Kaw Thay Der and 2 from Klae Soe Khee to serve as porters and mine sweepers on their way to Bu Hsa Khee village. (Source: KORD)

The SPDC Southern Command Commander, General Tin Aye, ordered IB 73 battalion commander, Min Oo, to give responsibility to 20 Gor-thay-doe villagers, Tantabin Township to clear landmines and the road, daily, beginning from December up to this day (Jan 20, 2001). (Source: KIC)

## Other

**Thaton District**

On October 10, 2001, Pah Ni Tho from DKBA came to Kweeh-lay village and started to make block and cut-off operation in Pauk-kee, Ta-u-kee, Nya-po-kee, Noh-po-kee and Yo-kla area, Thaton District, Karen State. The villagers in that area escaped from their villages and hid in the jungle. It was learned that the order of block and cut-off operation programme came from the army general head quarters of SPDC in order to make impossible for ILO to investigate on forced labour issues. (Source: KIC)

**Toungoo District**

February 11, 2001, troops from SPDC Burma Engineer Battalion 911 Unit 3 forcibly took two trucks and 15 villagers from Kaw-thay-doe village, Tantabin Township to repair a broken bulldozer. (Source: KIC)

**Nyaung-lin-bin District, Karen State**

April 18, 2001, Troops from SPDC IB 73, led by Column No. 1 commander, Than Myint, with 45 soldiers, came to Ma-lar-daw village, Kyauk-Kyi Township and ordered the villagers to repair Pyi-daw-tha school and clinic. (Source: KIC)

**Mergui-Tavoy Division**

July 11, 2001, At 6:00 AM, troops from SPDC LIB 376 and LIB 379, led by officer Hla Win and officer Thein Win, forced the villagers of Taung-thon-lon and May-ta villages, Tavoy Township to find Karen resistance fighters. (Source: KIC)

July 5, 2001, Troops from No. 12 unit of SPDC LIB 113 forced the village tracts in Mergui/Tavoy district to construct a total of 24 buildings each measuring 100 feet by 80 feet and estimated to be worth 400,000 Kyat. Each village tract had to construct a building. (Source: KIC) Source: KNAHR September 2001

## Shan State

**7 Villagers Killed for Complaing About Forced Labor**

On July 14, 2001, 7 villagers who had lodged a complaint with SPDC military authorities about increasing use of forced labour by SPDC troops were killed by SPDC troops from Kun-Hing-based IB246 and their bodies dumped into Nam Taeng river in Kaeng Tawng area, Murng-Nai township. On July 11, 2001, the 7 villagers went to the visiting Commander of the SPDC Eastern Military Commander, Maj. General Maung Bo, from Taunggyi and filed a complaint about the continued use of forced labor by SPDC troops in the area.

The villagers said to Maung Bo, "We have been told by Gen. Khin Nyunt on May 29, 2001 that starting from then the Burmese army would not use forced labour of the people; would not take chicken, pigs and other things from the people for free; and would not torture and kill the people any more. However, after Gen. Khin Nyunt left, the use of forced labour by the local military authorities has increased, requiring us to work for the military almost all the time. We have to provide free labour for the military in building military facilities, cultivating crops, sawing wood, repairing and building roads etc., leaving virtually no time for us to cultivate our subsistence crops. Many people have to start their rice cultivation late into the season, which will surely result in poor yields".

Maung Bo told the villagers he would report it to his superiors and give them good news in one week. A few days after Maung Bo left and while the villagers were waiting for the expected 'good news' from him, they were arrested for interrogation by a patrol of 20-25 SPDC troops from Co. No.3 of Kun-Hing-based IB246, that was temporarily stationed in Kaeng Tawng under the command of Capt. Mya Aung.

About 10 days after Maung Bo had left Murng-Nai township for Taunggyi, villagers from Ho Kun village, Kun Long tract, who had gone fishing found the dead bodies of the said 7 villagers stranded at 'Taad Pha Pha' waterfall, about 2 miles east of Ho Kun village.

**The 7 victims were**

1. Zaai Ti-Ya (m), aged 30,of Nam Tum Tai village, Nawng Hee tract, Murng-Nai township

2. Lung Haeng Wi (m), aged 40, of Nawng Tao village, Kun Long tract, Murng-Nai township

3. Zaai Aw Lam (m), aged 28, of Pa Saa village, Nawng Hee tract, Murng-Nai township

4. Zaai In-Ta (m), aged 24, of Nawng Ook village, Ton Hoong tract, Murng-Nai township

5. Zaai Ta Lam (m), aged 21, of Nawng Ook village, Ton Hoong tract, Murng-Nai township

6. Zaai Khan-Ti (m), aged 36, of Kun Hoong village, Nam-Zarng town, Nam-Zarng township

7. Zaai Saw-Ya (m), aged 31, of Kun Keng village, Nam-Zarng town, Nam-Zarng township

**Mass Forced Labor on New Railroad Projects in Central and Southern Shan State**

Since after October 22, 2001, when Gen. Maung Aye, Deputy Chairman of SPDC, and his 20-member entourage came to Nam-Zarng by helicopters from Rangoon and presided over the opening ceremony of a new railroad project in the area, SPDC troops have started using unpaid mass forced labor of the people in Nam-Zarng township. In late October, not less than 240 local people, including men and women from 18 to 55 years of age, were forced by SPDC troops of IB 66 to clear the path for the railroad in Nam-Zarng township. The railroad will run from Nam-Zarng town to Saai Khaao village in Saai Khaao tract in Kun-Hing township. The estimated time frame for the completion of the railroad is 2-1/2 years, during which time unpaid mass forced labor will certainly be used in several stages of the construction project.

Another railroad project has also been underway since early November. This railroad will run from Murng-Nai to Mawk-Mai township. Construction of the new rail lines will eventually link the existing lines which were built some years ago using forced labor of the people.

The SPDC commander of IB 66 on November 5, 2001, issued an order requiring village and tract headmen in Nam-Zarng township to provide 400 unpaid forced laborers. In regard to the use of forced laborers, it is said that the 3-4 SPDC military battalions in the area have already divided duties in handling them.

In a meeting jointly held by military battalions in the area, at the base of Nam-Zarng-based IB 66, it was estimated that about 24,000 forced laborers would be needed to complete the railroad projects, and duties were divided among 3 battalions:

1. Nam-Zarng-based IB 66 would be responsible for conscription of forced laborers
2. IB 66 from the 55th Division would be responsible for controlling the forced laborers
3. IB 247 would be responsible for overseeing the forced laborers while working at the work sites (Source: SHRF, S.H.A.N)

On November 18, 2001, the 226 forced laborers from Nam-Zarng and Murng-Nai townships, including men and women who had been working since early November 2001 were replaced by a new shift of forced laborers from Nam-Zarng and Murng-Nai townships. The new shift, consisting of 240 forced laborers, 130 conscripted from Nam-Zarng and 110 from Murng-Nai townships including men and women aged ranging from 17 to 55, started working on November 19, 2001, when the old batch of forced laborers were released. Sometime in November 2001, the commander of IB66 sent directives to Si-Seng, Mawk-Mai, Larng-Khur and Murng-Pan townships demanding 100 forced laborers from each township, thus requiring military authorities in those townships to force village and village tract leaders to provide a number of villagers from their respective areas to fill up the demanded quotas. The villagers were required to bring their own tools such as knives, hoes and rakes etc. to work with and provide their own food for 17-18 days during which they would have to stay and work at the construction sites. New shifts of forced laborers would be needed after every 17-18 days to replace the old ones. On November 22, 2001, the first batch of 400 villagers, over 1/3 of whom were women, from the said 4 townships had been sent to work on the railroad between Sai Khaao and Kung Mark Laang villages. (Source: SHRF)

**Forced Labor for Road Construction**

Since early July 2001, hundreds of local people have been forced to work without pay in a road-building project by the SPDC military authorities in Murng-Pan township. On July 4, 2001, Commander Win Zaw Oo of SPDC's LIB332 issued an order to all the village tract leaders in Murng-Pan township to provide 30 workers from each village tract in a new road-building project. The new motor-road would start from the centre of Mai Niu village in Nam Terng tract, Murng-Pan township, and go through Wan Kung, Long Kaeng and Naa Ing village, pass by Ho Lin village on the north and up to Mai Nyawng Khong Khaang village and then to LIB520 base at Nam Hoo village, and continue down to the main road at Wan Tham village between Murng-Pan and Ta Sang bridge on the Nam Khong (Salween river). The new road would be approximately 9 miles long. About 100-120 people at a time have to work in building the said road for a period of 5 days during which they receive nothing and have to provide their own food. About 80-90 ethnic-Burman workers, probably paid, are also seen working at the road-building site, with 12-15 SPDC troops under a Sergeant from LIB520 overseeing all the workers.

One of the Sergeants, U Aung Hpyu, overseeing the workers was said to have told

the local people who were being forced to provide free labour that they could work slowly if they liked and take rest every hour or whenever they got tired, but they should not sneak away.

One of the ethnic-Burman workers was also said to have told some of the unpaid local forced labourers in a friendly conversation during a break that he thought the local people were being forced to come and work not because the SPDC troops wanted to finish the road quickly, but just to keep them from being able to work properly for themselves, and thus preventing them from becoming rich or economically strong. (Source: SHRF)

**Forced Labor for Army Camps, Incoming Generating Projects for the Military and Security Duties**

Since late 2001, SPDC troops from IB 246 have been forcing all the people in Ka Li village tract in Kun-Hing township, including all the displaced people in the relocation sites, to guard day and night the main road between Ka Li village and Kun-Hing town. Sometime in late 2001, the commander of Kun-Hing-based IB246, Lt. Col. San Hlaing, issued an order forcing the people in Ka Li tract to build 14 guardhouses along the main road between Ka Li and Kun-Hing. Each guardhouse was to be built on hardwood stilts with a bamboo floor as high as about 1-1/2 yards, and to be about 3 yards square in width. All the guardhouses were to be completely built within 3 days, after which each guardhouse was to be manned by 4 people, 24 hours a day. SPDC troops from Co.3 of LIB 524, under the command of Capt. Myint Aung, stationed at Ka Li village, were responsible to oversee the road-guarding activities. There were about 40 of them taking turns and making rounds every day to make sure that all the guardhouses were manned all the time and exactly 4 persons at each one. Capt. Myint Aung was said to have warned the headman of Ka Li village tract that he would be punished if there were less than 4 persons at each guardhouse at any given time, and a fine of 100,000 Kyat of money would be charged for every missing person. The reason for guarding the road was not disclosed to the people. According to the local people, many thought that since it coincided with rice harvesting time the SPDC troops were deliberately forcing them to do such a thing so that they would not be able to get their rice on time. However, according to recently arrived refugees, the road-guarding forced labor is still going on continuously up to the present (February 2002). (Source: SHRF)

During November and December 2001, people in Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township, mostly women, were forced by SPDC military authorities to collect leaves and make roofing sheets for the several military bases and camps in the area. Every day at least 5 people from each village of the village tracts, such as Kun Mong, Kun Naa, Paang Kyawng, Kung Lom and Ho Ha, had to prepare their own food early in the morning to take with them as they needed to go into the forests around 6:00 a.m. to collect leaves and bring them to the military bases and camps in their respective village tracts. Once at the military camps, the villagers had to

work weaving leaves into roofing sheets until 5 o'clock in the evening. There were about 30 people working each day at each camp. If the demanded quotas of workers were not met, the responsible village headmen would face punishment. The SPDC troops claimed that they paid for the forced labor, but the fee was so small that it was almost next to nothing, considering the time and effort exerted each day. The SPDC troops offered 100 Kyat for 100 sheets of leaf-roofing. But each person could only make around 20 sheets per day, only the most skilled could finish up to 30 sheets. That meant 3-4 persons together could get only 100 Kyat per day for working more than 10 hours, from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (Source: SHRF)

On November 16, 2001, the commander of IB 65 of the SPDC issued an order to the people of Murng-Ton township forcing them to make 600 sacks of charcoal for the SPDC soldiers in the area, to be finished before December 1, 2001.

Each of the following village tracts was ordered to produce equal amount of charcoal as follows:

1. Nawng Paa Yaen tract - 100 sacks
2. Wan Naa "100"
3. Mae Ken "100"
4. Murng Haang "100"
5. Huay Aw "100"
6. Pung Pa Khem "100"

The charcoal was to be produced from only 2 specified kinds of hardwood while all other different kinds of wood were strictly prohibited. Anyone found using wood other than the specified kinds would be severely punished, said the order. Furthermore, the village and village tract leaders were told to tell all the villagers to say that they willingly provided the Burmese military with charcoal free of charge to help them because the soldiers were so busy protecting the country that they had no time to do it themselves. When asked by either foreigners or anyone in the country, no one was to say that they were ordered by the Burmese soldiers to provide them with free charcoal. (Source: SHRF)

Since late October 2001, the commander of Co.2 of SPDC's LIB 515, Capt. Htun Khin Oo, forced people in Lai-Kha township to reap and thresh rice crops at a military farm and ordered them to grow garlic, onions and peanuts for the military. The people were to provide their own seeds to grow those crops on the following acreage of land

1. Garlic, 5 acres
2. Onion, 5 acres
3. Peanut, 80 acres

In addition, the people had to build fences around those farms to protect them from animals, which took some time to build and to cut and transport bamboo and wood for the fences. Around 70-80 people each day were required to work at those farms until they were finished. Since it coincided with their own rice harvest time, it was very difficult for the people to find time to work for themselves and a lot of rice had been lost due to belated harvest. (Source: SHRF)

On October 15, 2001, SPDC military authorities in the Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township issued an order requiring all the 4 village tracts in Kaeng Tawng area to grow cold season crops for the military. The crops were Japanese sesame, peanut and potato. The seeds were provided by the military and the people were to cultivate them and produce not less than the amount demanded by the military or they would have to buy them from somewhere else to fill the quota.The following is the list showing the village tracts and the amount of seeds they were required to cultivate:

1. Ton Hoong tract was required to cultivate 30 tins of Japanese sesame, 20 tins of peanut and 500 viss of potato

2. Kun Mong tract was required to cultivate 30 tins of Japanese sesame, 25 tins of peanut and 500 viss of potato

3. Kun Long and Nawng Hee tracts were required to cultivate 50 tins of Japanese sesame, 35 tins of peanut and 700 viss of potato

(Note: 1 tin = 20 litres, 1 viss = 1.6 kg)

The seeds were given to each village and tract headman to start cultivating from the end of October 2001 onwards. Each kind of crop was to yield 10 to 20 fold as shown in the following list.

(1). 1 tin of Japanese sesame was to yield 10 tins

(2). 1 tin of peanut was to yield 20 tins

(3). 1 viss of potato was to yield 10 viss

Similar incidents are said to have been taking place in several other townships such as Murng-Ton, Murng-Sart, Larng-Khur, Murng-Nai and Murng Pan. People in these townships are being required to cultivate the above mentioned crops for every military battalion based in their townships. Each battalion must have each kind of crop cultivated on at least about 20 acres of land, and must have all 3 kinds of the said crops. Most of the work needed to cultivate the crops would undoubtedly be done with the unpaid forced labour of the people. (Source: SHRF)

From September 26-29, 2001, villagers of Pha Sawng village and Yaang Khai village in Murng Luay tract, Murng-Yarng township, were forced by SPDC troops from IB228 to work without pay at a military camp every day from 7:00 a.m. until

6:00 p.m. Sixteen villagers from Pha Sawng village and 21 from Yaang Khai village had to clear the military camp compound of grass and bushes, fix fences around the camp and clear bushes outside around the camp all day long for 4 days. The villagers not only received nothing for their labour, but also had to use their own tools and provide their own food during the 4-day forced labor service. (Source: SHRF)

From July to September 2001, villagers of Wan Pawm Tin Thaat in Paang Hung tract, Kaeng-Tung township, were forced by SPDC troops of IB245 to work in their camp expanding project IB245 confiscated land close to the camp, expanded it, and forced the villagers to work for 3 months without pay. Each day, 10 villagers had to work clearing the area, building fences, digging trenches and building barracks. Village leaders complained about this to the SPDC authorities in Kaeng-Tung, but nothing happened. (Source: SHRF)

In August 2001, people in Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township were being forced to work en masse for the military. In addition to hand-sawing lumber for the military on a regular basis, the people have to clear the sides of all the roads leading out of the area to Kho Lam in Nam-Zarng township, to Wan Lao in Kun-Hing township and to Murng-Nai town itself, up to the points where people from the other townships are supposed to take on the work. At the same time, they have to cut wood and bamboo and build new military camps as well as repair the barracks and replace fences, and clear 5-6 arm-spans of ground outside the fences around the military camps. There are now 8 military camps in Kaeng Tawng area, new and old. Some have been built, some are under construction and some are still at the planning stage. The following are the locations of the military camps:

1. One at Ton Hung village relocation site, a long-established one
2. One at Ta Kun village in Ton Hung village tract
3. One at Ta Waeng village in Ton Hung village tract
4. One at Wan Turm village in Kun Mong village tract
5. One at Kun Mong village in Kun Mong village tract
6. One at Waeng Kao village in Nawng Hee village tract
7. One at Pa Sa village in Nawng Hee village tract
8. One at Muay Taw Phak Lid village in Nawng Hee village tract

Each military camp has its own fences, trenches, bunkers and barracks which are usually 15-16 small houses for the soldiers. All have been built, are being built and will be built by unpaid forced labour of the local people. (Source: SHRF)

Since July 15, 2001, SPDC troops from IB246, LIB324, IB48 and LIB526, who were newly stationed and building new military bases in Kaeng Tawng area in

Murng-Nai township, have confiscated hundreds of acres of deserted rice fields, whose former owners had been forced to move away some years ago, and forced the local people to provide free labour to cultivate them for the military. At least 650 acres of rice fields around populated areas, not including those in remote areas, were confiscated and the whole lot of mini-tractors in the Kaeng Tawng area, about 75 in all, were forced to plough the fields. During the ploughing period, the farmers with mini-tractors had to work 10 days for the military and 5 days for themselves in rotation until it was finished. Unpaid forced labour of the local people has been used in all the work needed to cultivate the confiscated rice fields, including ploughing, building and repairing embankments, sowing and planting. Most likely, forced labour would still be used at harvest time. (Source: SHRF)

In mid-June 2001, SPDC troops of Ta Lur-based LIB316 confiscated a hill of woodland, called Kawng Maak Khaam, from the villagers of Murng Laen in Ta-Khi-Laek township. They then forced the local people to build a new military camp for new recruits to be conscripted in the near future. Since June 13, people in the village tracts of Ta Lur, Murng Laen, Nam Kherm, Pa Leo and Kaeng Laab have been forced to provide unpaid forced labour every day in building the new military camp. The villagers have to take turns providing forced labour in order to be able to tend their rice fields. From 5 up to 12 houses from each village, in proportion to its size, have to go at one time. Some farmers hire others to go on their behalf so that they can have more time to tend their rice fields. The villagers have to cut trees and clear the ground at the top of the hill, and dig the ground to level it. They have to build fences, dig trenches and build barracks, and they also have to build a road leading from the main road up to the hill top. (Source: SHRF)

Since March 10, 2001, SPDC troops of LIB334 have been forcing villagers in Sop Luay tract, Murng-Yawng township, to keep guard day and night along the roads and Mekhong river banks in the area. The SPDC authorities said they had seen SSA-E (Shan State Army - East) troops' presence and movement in the Murng Yawng Noi area, on the bank of the Mekhong on the Lao side of the border. Since then, many villagers in Sop Luay tract have had to build small guardhouses, 1-2 furlongs apart, with a wooden gong to beat if they detect any movement of the Shan soldiers. The village guards must report to Mung-Yawng town every day, leaving them little time to do their own work. (Source: SHRF)

Since March 1, 2001, SPDC troops of LIB 359 have been forcing the people in Murng Phong A and B tracts, Ta-Khi Laek Township to stand guard 24 hours per day. They were ordereed to take up security duties at all the village entrances, along the Murng Phong-Ta-Chi-Laek road and along the banks of the Mekhong and Nam Hok rivers in anticipation of an attack by SSA-E. The villagers also had to build thatched tents 2 furlongs apart along the road and river banks to keep watch all the time. It was also reported that other village tracts in the township, such as Murng Laen, Pa Leo and Kaeng Laab also had to do the same. (Source: SHRF)

On February 3, 2001, SPDC troops from IB226 shot dead a man from Nawng Saa village, at Yaang Ka stream near his village in Yaang Ka tract, Kaeng-Tung township. He was catching fish with six other villagers when they were surrounded by SPDC soldiers from Co. No.2 of IB226. As they were being surrounded, Zaai Wong, aged 19, who was a distance away from the other fishermen, saw the troops and tried to escape. The SPDC troops fired at Zaai Wong and killed him. The troops then took the remaining five men to Yaang Ka village to join a bigger military column and 20 other civilian porters taken from other villages. The civilian porters set out on February 4, 2001, carrying military rations and clothes, towards the mountain ranges populated mostly by the Lahu people. They went through village after village, stopping only for lunch and at night, where the villagers were forced to provide food and keep watch. After 10 days they returned to Yaang Ka and were released. They were: (Source: SHRF)

1. Zaai Oon (m), aged 21, from Sop Yoi village
2. Zaai Lao (m), aged 25, Sop Yoi village
3. Zaai Kawng (m), aged 20, Nawng Saa village
4. Zaai Poi (m), aged 20, Nawng Saa village
5. Zaai Leng (m), aged 19, Nawng Saa village
6.Zaai Wong(m), aged 19, Nawng Saa village

In late February and early March 2001, SPDC troops from Co. No.3 of Murng-Khark-based LIB328, stationed at a hilltop stronghold in Murng-Yarng township, forced several villages in the area to bring hundreds of bamboo and thousands of thatch-sheets to build houses for them. On February 26, troops,led by Lt. Htay Naing, came to Kho Sung, Wan Zaang and Pa Hai villages in Murng Luay tract, Murng-Yarng, and ordered the village headmen to provide bamboo to build the military camp. Together the 3 villages were ordered to bring 360 pieces of bamboo to the hilltop camp by March 2. On March 1, the same troops went to Ter Laad, Huay Khaa and Wan Lio villages in Murng Yarng tract, Murng-Yarng township, and ordered the village headmen to provide 3,500 sheets of weaved thatch for roofing at the military camp by March 6. Village headmen and leaders pleaded with the SPDC township authorities to help persuade the soldiers to reduce the amount to 600 thatch-sheets, but the township authorities dismissed them saying, “Don’t you understand. You are able to live peacefully only because of the Burmese army. Stop complaining and give them what they want, and when they want”. On March 3, the same troops summoned the village headmen of Pa Nung, Pa Mai and Waeng Laek villages, situated close to the foot of the hilltop camp, and ordered them to bring their villagers to build houses for the soldiers in the camp, starting from March 12. (Source: SHRF)

From February 16 to 18, 2001 SPDC troops from Murng-Khark-based LIB327, who

had been deployed for security purposes along the Mekong river in Pa Leo and Kaeng Laab areas, forced the local people to build strongholds and dig trenches for them. People from surrounding villages such as Nam Kai, Ho Kawng, Pa Leo and Kaeng Lab had to provide their own food, tools and building material. They were forced to work from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. for 3 days while SPDC troops sat and watched. On February 21, 2001, SPDC troops from Murng-Phyak-based IB221 forced the villagers of Huay Lin Lam, Phak Hi, Pa Khaa and Wan Tong to dig trenches at their stronghold on the hill called Loi Yon in Murng-Phong tract. More than 200 villagers were seen working at the site. They were also required to feed the troops on a daily basis. The villages had to rotate in providing food and forced labour for the SPDC troops and, in addition, they were also forced to dig trenches for the families of the SPDC police force in the area in case fighting broke out. (Source: SHRF)

Since early 2001, SPDC military authorities in Larng-Khur have confiscated thousands of acres of cultivated lands including plantations of sugarcane, tobacco, betel leaves and betel nuts, bamboo and other hardwoods to be used for building military bases and other military facilities. In April 2001, SPDC military authorities in Larng-Khur confiscated over 1,200 acres of sugarcane plantations and about 15 acres of bamboo and betel nut plantations east of the Nam Taeng river in the area of Wan Haad village tract. The SPDC troops cleared all the sugarcane to use the land as a military training ground. They also forced the local people to clear trees from the surrounding higher ground and build a military camp with several barracks for the soldiers and new recruits. At the same time, several acres of tobacco plantations in Kho Ta village tract were confiscated from the local people to set up a base for a Light Infantry Battalion. Several acres of tobacco plantations in Pung Thun village tract were also confiscated to make a base for an artillery unit.In this way, many sugarcane and tobacco farmers in Larng-Khur township have lost their lands, and thus their livelihood. (Source: SHRF)

**Forced Portering**

On December 28, 2001, a column of about 60 SPDC troops from Murng-Paeng-based LIB 528 rounded up 13 villagers from the following 3 villages in Yang Kham village tract, Murng-Paeng township, to use as porters in a military operation — 5 porters from Kung Khaa village, 3 from Wan Naa and 5 from Wan Sen.Many villagers from other villages and village tracts were also seized for porters by the same column so that there were over 40-50 civilian porters in all. The civilian porters were forced to carry military rations and ammunition starting from Tong Ta village in Murng-Paeng township down to Murng Tum village tract area in Murng-Sart township where there was fighting between SPDC troops from LIB3 31 and SSA-S (Shan State Army - South) troops. (Source: SHRF)

On December 1, 2001, 28 villagers from 4-5 villages in Nam Naang village tract, Murng-Phyak township, were forcibly taken by SPDC troops from LIB 330 to be

used as unpaid porters in a military operation. A column of about 60-80 SPDC troops from Murng-Phyak-based LIB 330 came to Nam Naang village tract and seized villagers they could find in Wan Kaw, Pa Yaao, Ja Nu, Yaang Mon and Kaad Naang villages. About 28 villagers were seized and immediately forced to carry military rations and ammunition from Naa Naang village market place and head toward Murng Tum village tract in Murng-Sart township where there was news of armed clashes between SPDC troops and Shan soldiers. The villagers were seized unprepared at different places while doing various things so that many did not have proper clothing for the harsh job. Some did not have shoes or warm clothes. Even though it was cold season, the troops did not allow them to get their clothes, saying that they were on a very urgent mission. (Source: SHRF)

On August 10, 2001, 16 Akha villagers from Paang Khun village in Pa Hok tract, Murng-Yawng township were forced by a combined force of SPDC police and people's militia to carry confiscated consumer goods to the police station in Murng-Yawn town, about 10 miles away. The goods had been confiscated from traders who had bought them in Thailand. The villagers had to work all day, returning 2-3 times to transport everything but received nothing for their forced labor. Armed police and militia walked in front and rear of the villagers as guards while they were transporting the goods, as if they were prisoners. (Source: SHRF)

In mid-June 2001, SPDC troops from LIB514, led by Capt. Thein Maung, forcibly conscripted 250 civilian porters, including 108 women and children, with some as young as 8, from a relocation site in the outskirts of Murng-Kerng town. They were conscripted on the orders of battalion commander, Lt. Col. Hla Myint, on June 13, after an armed clash between SPDC troops and Shan resistance soldiers in Murng-Kerng township. The SPDC troops took all the adult men, and they took women and children from houses where men were not available. Many were aged between 8 to 16, and were forced to carry ammunition, rice and other food stuff and military things. Some children were forced to carry 6 cans of condensed milk each, some carried rice and others carried 10 rounds of m79 mortar shells each, and were kicked and beaten when they could not go fast enough. The porters were forced to serve the military without pay for 16 days, during which all the women porters above 15 years of age were said to have been raped by the SPDC soldiers. They were released on June 28 but, 5 days later, the same SPDC troops ordered the village headmen in the area to provide 10-15 civilian porters from each village, either men or women. The 150 porters were displaced persons who had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Murng-Kerng town 4-5 years ago by the SLORC troops. (Source: SHRF)

In April 2001, two civilian porters were severely injured in an accident while being forced to serve as porters for SPDC troops LIB526, led by Capt. Sein Htun, at Amutae village in Amutae tract, Murng-Sart township. Zaai In Ai, 36, and Zaai Yi Nung, 34, from Paang Mu village in Murng Kok tract, were seized by SPDC troops, when they were returning from the Nam Naang village market.They were tied together and forced to carry heavy loads of military things. After 3 days, they

stopped at Amutae village for a rest, where they were ordered to go up into a house built on high stilts. However, as they were tied together and carrying heavy loads, Zaa In Ai slipped at the top of the steps and they fell to the ground together. Zaai In Ai broke his left leg in the fall and Zaai Yi Nung suffered from a severely sprained waist and broken ribs, both suffered bruises and cuts and could not walk. The SPDC troops ordered the villagers of Amutae village to make makeshift stretchers and carry Zaai In Ai and Zaai Yi Nung back to their village. No compensation was offered. (Source: SHRF)

Since March 2001, SPDC troops of Co. No.4 of LIB524, led by Capt. Aung Nyunt, have been patrolling the Kaeng Tawng area, in Murng-Nai township, and forcing the local villagers to serve as guides. Two guides must be on duty and replaced every 5 days by another two new guides. The troops patrol and search deserted villages and when the guides are unsure of the way or accidentally take a wrong route, the troops beat and kick them, some have lost consciousness during these beatings. The torture had made it very difficult for the village headmen to assign villagers to serve as guides so villagers agreed to collect money among themselves and hire someone to go on their behalf. A guide's fee is 10,000 Kyat, and the guide in turn has to give the troops 5,000 Kyat to prevent them from beating him. That means, every 5 days, the villagers have to collect 20,000 Kyat to hire 2 guides and the guides have to give 10,000 Kyat to the SPDC soldiers. (Source: SHRF)

Since February 5, 2001, SPDC military authorities have been forcibly conscripting many people and civilian vehicles in Ta-Khi-Laek township for military service. In the military operations by SPDC troops against the Shan resistance in Ta-Khi-Laek and Murng-Sart townships, SPDC military authorities of LIB331 and IB259 have taken 600 people to serve as unpaid porters. The SPDC troops also issued an order requiring civilians and vehicles to be on standby for military use; 24 vehicles at a time have to be on standby for 24 hours. Many trucks and cars that ran between Ta-Khi-Laek and Kaeng-Tung, and Ta-Khi-Laek and Tawng-Gi have been prevented from leaving the township without compensation. The owners have to provide fuel and oil, and the drivers have to provide their own food. Car owners have to hire other vehicles to do their work, at the rate of 1,500-2,000 Baht per day for a 4-wheeled mini-truck and 2,500-3,000 Baht per day for a 6-wheeler. Zaai Lee, Zaai Non and Lung Pan, who were late to their driver standby post, were beaten 3 times each with sticks by the SPDC troops from LIB331. (Source: SHRF)

On February 19, 2001, 3 Lahu villagers of Kawng Sur Nur village in Murng Khawn tract, Kaeng-Tung township, were seized by SPDC troops from IB226, led by Capt. Kyi Win, and forced to serve as guides. Ja-U, 29, Ja-Phya, 20, and Ja-Wa, 30, were forced to guide the SPDC troops to Murng Pack tract for the day and were unable to return until the next day. They had no money and had to beg for food when they arrived in Murng Pack tract and also for the journey home. (Source: SHRF)

In January 2001, SPDC troops from Lai-Kha-based LIB515, led by Capt. Htay Win, severely beat two civilian porters, and extorted money from eight other civilian porters for their release, after forcing them to serve as porters for more than 20 days, in Lai-Kha township. On December 27, 2000, SPDC soldiers of Co.4 from LIB515 forcibly conscripted 10 civilian porters at Maak Mong Lao village in Ho Nawng tract, Nam-Zarng township. The porters were forced to carry heavy loads of ammunition, food and other things for the troops without adequate rest and food. Lung Mu, 57 and Wan-Na, 17, had become so weak from lack of adequate food and rest that they could no longer carry their loads. The troops kicked and beat them with rifle butts so harshly that Lung Mu broke his right thigh and Wan-Na broke his left arm. The 2 porters were then left to their fate in the jungle between Ton Hung and Maak Laang villages in Naa Mang tract, Lai-Kha township. Their relatives later found them and brought them back to their village. On January 17, 2001, Capt. Htay Win sent a message to the headman of Ho Nawng tract that the porters taken from his village tract were so unwilling to work for the Burmese army that they deserved punishments, and extorted a fine of 5,000 Kyat for the release of each of them. The 10 villagers taken as porters were: (Source: SHRF)

1. Lung Awng (m), aged 51
2. Zaai Aen (m), aged 37
3. Zaai Pawng (m), aged 30
4. Lung Mu (m), aged 57
5. Zaai La (m), aged 25
6. Zaai Leng (m), aged 19
7. Kham Awng (m), aged 43
8. Wan-Na (m), aged 17
9. Zaw-Ti-Ka (m), aged 20
10. Wa-Ya-Ma (m), aged 25

**Porters Killed by SPDC Troops**

In mid December 2001, a porter who was taken in Murng-Kerng township was too exhausted to continue carrying his load and was burned to death by SPDC troops from IB243 and LIB505, in the mountains between Murng-Kerng and Lawk-Zawk townships. On December 12, 2001, a column of about 90 combined SPDC troops from Nam-Lan-based IB243 and LIB505 in Si-Paw township, led by Capt. Zaw Min and Capt. Kyi Too respectively, conscripted 5 civilian porters from Lin Lan village in Ham Ngaai village tract, Murng-Kerng township, saying that they were on an urgent mission to Lawk-Zawk and needed porters. The 5 porters taken were, Zaai Aw, 35, Zaai Ti, 37, Pi Tun, 43, Aw-Zin-Na, 40, Zaai Loo, 27. The porters were forced to carry heavy loads and walk with the military column towards Lawk-Zawk township. When they reached Paang Wo mountain range between Lawk-Zawk and Murng-Kerng, the porters were forced to climb with their heavy loads. Zaai Aw, who was carrying about 1-1/2 baskets of rice, fell down from exhaustion when they

reached half way up the mountain slope, lying prone on the ground and was unable to get up. SPDC troops walking behind him barked out orders forcing him to get up, but he could not. Some pulled him up by his hands, but he fell down again as soon as they released him. The SPDC troops then became angry and kicked and trampled Zaai Aw's waist and neck with their boots until he became virtually unconscious and, saying that he wanted to die, made a pile of dry twigs and leaves over his body, and set fire to it. He was then burned to death. After witnessing the scene, the other 4 porters eventually were released after they reached Lawk-Zawk. (Source: SHRF)

On August 7, 2000, SPDC troops forcibly conscripted the following 10 civilian porters while they were working at a farm at the Kun-Hing town relocation site:

1. Lung Saw (m), aged 51, originally from Waeng Kum village, Naa Poi tract
2. Na-Ling (m), aged 50, originally from Huay Poo, Saai Murng tract
3. Saw-Zing (m), aged 36, originally from Mai Maw Lao village, Saai Khaao tract
4. Lung Moo (m), aged 53, originally from Kung Laang village, Loi Khio tract
5. Wi-Ya (m), aged 55, originally from Paang Hok village, Wan Phui tract
6. Zaai Win (m), aged 21, originally from Naa Khaa village, Naa Teng tract
7. Naang Lu (f), aged 36, originally from Naa Keng village, Loi Keng tract
8. Naang Paang (f), aged 33, originally from Naa Yaang village, Saai Khaao tract
9. Naang Nyunt (f), aged 28, originally from Nam Hoo village, Saai Khaao tract
10. Naang Ung (f), aged 25, originally from Naa Waai village, Wan Lao tract

10 porters were forced to carry military things as troops patrolled deserted villages in relocation areas, camping wherever they were when night fell, sometimes stopping for 2-3 days at a place. According to the porters themselves, they did not have to carry very heavy loads, but the women were raped almost every night by one soldier or another. After 1 month and 5 days, a porter named Zaai Win tried to escape but was recaptured by the troops. He was beaten and tortured, and a bamboo stick was rolled on his shins, in front of the other porters. After 3 days, the wounds in his shins were full of pus and the troops beat him to death. The other porters were forced to go on until September 20, when they reached Kun-Hing town and the troops released them. These civilians had been forced to serve as unpaid military porters for a straight period of three and a half months, during which time the women were also forced to serve as sex slaves. (Source: SHRF)

On March 29, 2001, a 45-year-old unpaid forced civilian porter was beaten to death by SPDC troops from IB246, led by Capt. Myint Lwin, in Kaeng Lom area, Kun-Hing township. He had become too weak from illness to carry his load. (Source: SHRF)

In mid-February 2001, a civilian porter was shot dead by SPDC troops from Murng-Phyak-based LIB330, led by Maj. San Win, near Kawng Mon village in Murng-Lung tract, Murng-Sart township. On February 10, 2001, SPDC troops from

LIB330 rounded up 16 civilian porters, 6 from Wan Kaad, 3 from Wan Tong Long, and 7 from Wan Yaang villages in Murng Hai tract, Murng-Phyak township. They were seized while working on their vegetable gardens, some on their farms and some on the streets.

They were then taken to Murng-Phyak and detained until the next evening when they were forced to carry military things towards Murng Kok & Murng Lung tract in Murng-Sart township with the same military column. They reached Murng Lung and camped at the village temple where the troops ordered them to serve them food. They stayed at Murng Lung for 2 nights, during which the porters had to provide them with free meals and also keep guard as an outer fence while the troops slept in the temple compound. The porters were not allowed to leave the temple and were tied, in groups of four, at night. On February 13, 2001, while marching from Murng Lung towards Ho Murng, two of the porters tried to escape as they reached Kawng Mon village along the way. The troops shot at them and killed one, but the other porter escaped into the nearby forest. Afterwards, the remaining porters were tied by their hands in fours as they carried the heavy loads, making it very difficult for them to walk on. Whenever one fell down, the others would fall as well, and the troops would scold, beat and kick them. The 14 porters were released on February 16, 2001, when they reached Murng-Sart township and they had to find their own way home. Zaai In Phya, 29, from Wan Tong Long village was killed in the failed escape attempt and left behind a wife and 3 young children. (Source: SHRF)

In mid February, 2001, an elderly civilian porter was kicked and beaten to death and his body thrown down a mountain slope by SPDC troops from IB49, led by Capt. Aung Kyaw Htoo, in the Loi Larng area, Murng-Ton township. On February 13, 2001, SPDC troops of Co.4 from IB49, forcibly conscripted 36 civilian porters, aged from 18 to 57, in Murng-Sart township and took them to the Loi Larng area using forcibly conscripted civilian trucks. The porters were then forced to carry heavy loads of ammunition through valleys and mountains to several military outposts. After a few days, one of the porters, Lung Aw-Zae-Ya, 56, became so weak and sick that he could no longer carry his load up the mountain and collapsed. Some of the troops kicked and beat him and forced him to go on. But when he could not stand up, the troops continued to kick and beat him to death and threw his body down the mountain about 3 miles from Loi Larng village. (Source: SHRF)

**Porters Injured**

On September 8, 2001, SPDC troops from LIB 471 conscripted 17 civilian porters from Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township, saying that they would pay 500 Kyat per person per day for their porter service. The porters were forced to carry heavy loads and walk through jungles day and night with very little rest and food. After some days, while they were walking across a field, one of the porters, Zaai Lu (m), aged 25, became so exhausted that he collapsed and could not get up right away. The SPDC soldiers then beat Zaai Lu and one of them struck him on the head

with his rifle butt. Zaai Lu lost consciousness from the beating and when he recovered his senses, there was blood all over his clothes, and the soldiers forced him to wash his clothes and walk on. When they reached a place called Huay Lur, after patrolling for 8 days, Zaai Lu was exhausted again and one of the SPDC troops slit the left side of his neck with a knife, but fortunately not deep enough to reach his throat, and said, "I can kill you if I like. The death of one Shan is not as regrettable as the loss of one milk can of ours". The SPDC troops decided to stop for the night at that place and Zaai Lu managed to escape during the night, gaining courage from the thought that he would surely die sooner or later if he stayed on. (Source: SHRF)

## Tenasserim Division

### Forced Labor for Military Camps

Reported on May 18, 2001. Sin They Village, Ye Phyu Township, Tenasserim Division. Approximately 300 households. Sin They village is located near Dauk Lauk and Pa Dauk Gone villages where LIB 406 and 407 are located. The military authorities ask the local authorities to give forced labor for their agriculture projects (gardens). The village authorities in Sin They village order 100 villagers every 10 days to work in the rubber and cashew gardens. These gardens are located in Sin They and Ka Lone Htar villages. The villager have to cut bushes and weed the gardens. If they are absent, they have to pay 500 kyat. Moreover, the soldiers from LIB 406 have a charcoal business so they need firewood to make the charcoal and the soldiers order the Sin They village authorities to manage for their needs so in the village every house is responsible to gather and send firewood to LIB 406. They have to get an amount of firewood the equivalent of 6 feet high and 6 feet wide. If someone is absent from this duty, they have to pay 1500 kyat for a replacement. (Source: ABSDF)

On May 16, 2001, LIB 376 based in Mitta Village, east of Tavoy township, Tavoy District, Tenasserim Division, informed the VPDC to build a security gate every mile between Mitta and Taung Done Lone village and 4 villagers to stay at each security gate (2 in the afternoon and 2 in the evening). They wanted it build within one week. The villagers had to be from Mitta and Taung Lone Done villages. The reason for building the security gates was that KNLA soldiers from Battalion 10 were moving in that area and attacking SPDC troops.

Starting May 16, 2001 and lasted until May 22, 2001. Taung Lone Done VPDC ordered one person from each house to clean the road between Taung Lone Done and Mitta. This meant clearing the bushes along the sides of the road so that no one could hide. If someone was absent, they had to pay 500 kyat a day for a replacement.

Starting May 23, 2001 and as of June 3, Taung Lone Done VPDC ordered 16 people a day (8 in the afternoon, 8 in the evening) to stand guard with homemade guns at the 4 security gates their village was responsible for. And they had to hit an

iron bar every hour to tell the time. Moreover, they were ordered to inform the VPDC when there was something unusual. They were threatened that if they didn't follow orders they would be punished. If someone couldn't stand guard at the gate, they had to pay 1000 kyat for a replacement.

This village has 600 houses. 12 villagers have to go the military camp every week for portering. The call it standby portering. Every house in the village has to pay 400 kyat every 10 days to pay the porters with. Each porter recieves 10,000 kyat. Moreover, the villagers have to pay 500 kyat monthly for the Village Development fund, a fund to pay for serving visiting township authorities and for the village militia fund. If the villagers cannot pay, they have to serve as standby porters. (Source: ABSDF)

May 15, 2001, Soun Sin Village, Thayet Chawn township, Tenasserim Division. Approximately 300 households.

LIBs 403, 404, 405 own vegetable gardens around this village where they grow rubber and cashew. During the 2001 rainy season, 30 villagers from Soun Sin village were ordered to work everyday tending the gardens and cutting bushes. This requirement started in early May. If the villagers are absent, they have pay 500 kyat a day to pay for a replacement.

In addition, during the six months prior to May 2001, every house in Soun Sin was ordered to pay 500 kyat a month in porter fees by the local authorities. They were told that this order came from the township authorities. In May, the local authorities began to order five villagers a month to serve as porters. Whenever they ask for 5 people, they ask for 800 kyat from each house to pay the porters with. According to a rule made by the military authorities, each porter receives 40,000 kyat for portering and the local authorities are responsible for paying the porters. If a villager cannot pay the 800 kyat, the village authorities take them to the military camp and the military authorities force them to be unpaid porters. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on April 18, 2001. Lei-pyin-gyi village Tha-yet-chaung township. Approximately 120 households. The SPDC authority in village level group from Lei-pyi-gyi village tract continues to force one person from each household to contribute labor to repair and reconstruct the Myeik-Tavoy car road which runs between Palaung village and Tha-yet-chaung township. The laborers have to work everyday except for one week a month when they can relax. The forced laborers have to bring with them a packet of rice, mattock, knife, crowbar and other materials they need. Moreover, the authorities are also making the residents (laborers) search for precious stones, dig holes, cut and clear the forest along both sides of the road. Anyone who fails to go for forced labor will be fined 500 Kyat per day, which will be used to hire a substitute. The Myeik-Tavoy car road reconstruction work was begun at the beginning of February 2001. Since then the authorities have continued to force the residents of Lei-pyin-gyi village, in Tha-yet-chaung township to contribute labor.

The VPDC chairman is U Saw Dee Law, age 45. Although he is a Christian he does not have time to go to church on Sunday but instead he has to oversee the Christian residents of the village as they labor at the worksite in order to ensure that they finish the work quickly. The SPDC authority in village level group collects two porters each month for military operations, and also collects 1200 Kyat per household to pay the porters salary. At Lei-pyin-gyi village the compensation for one military operations porter was fixed at 40000 Kyat. If anyone is unable to pay the porter fees or to serve as a porter, The SPDC authority in village level will give them one month to do it. If, at the end of the month they still haven't paid the fee or gone for portering the SPDC will punish them by forcing them to go as military operation porters without compensation**.** Therefore the residents dare not refuse the SPDC authority in village level orders and they have to serve the porters as well as during the fixed duration. (Source: ABSDF)

On March 29, 2001. Zar-di village, Ye-pyu township. Approximately 450 households. At Zar-di village, one of the current platoons from IB 282 remains in the camp and is active in Zar-di village. The VPDC in Zar-di collects 5 standby porters everyday and sends them to IB 282, from the Zar-di village military camp. The SPDC troops continue to make the standby porters find wood, carry water, split wood, cook and do other general tasks. If anyone fails to go, they will be fined 500 Kyat, which will be used to hire a substitute. As Zar-di village is one of 13 villages in the TOTAL company Region Development Project, the residents are not forced by the SPDC authority in township level to serve as military operations porters. Despite this, Zar-di village chairman U Kan Tha continues to collect porter fees from the residents; 500 Kyat per household each month. In addition the residents who are living in Zar-di village every month have to pay 100 Kyat per household to the VPDC for an anti-insurgent group fund – a part of the village development fund. (Source: ABSDF)

Since March 2001 in Kawthaung and Bokepyin Townships, Tennaserim Division, the authorities have been ordering the villagers to work building the No. 20 Operation Control Unit Camp (OCUC). Between 10 and 20 people from each village are forced to work twice a month. In addition, bullock carts and log cutting machines are taken from the villager for use on this project. OCUC has ten battalions and the villagers have to give various types of forced labor, including collecting 1,000 – 3,000 bamboo pieces, to these battalions. Almost all the machines and villagers have been used for forced labor. While working on these projects the villagers have to provide their own food and do not get any payment. The authorities are planning a building project for the No. 19 OCUC to be completed before the end of 2001. For these reasons, between March and August 2001, between 2,000 and 5,000 local villagers have moved to other townships or Thailand. (Source: THRF)

Since 1992, the villagers of Thayetchaung Township, Tenasserim Divison have had

to continuously give forced labor for LIB 403, 404 & 405, who own their own business in the area, including a 400 acre rubber field located between Sone Sin Phyar and Thae Chaung Gyi villagers.

The villages affected are: Sone Sin, Sone Sin Phyar, Thae Chaung Gyi, Thae Chaung Ka Lay, Ah Lae Suu, Byat Weat Thar, Taung Pyauk, Ye Pu, Ye Byat, Mae Kae, Kyauk Ai, Win Ka Hpaw, Kyawe Chan, Chaung Wa Pyin, Thayet Pin Ai, Ye Cho Chaung, Gone Nyin Seit, Se Taw, Se Dead, Pyin Phyu Thar, Chauk Chaung, Pyin Phyu Gyi. LIB 403 camp has a brick factory. The military officials occupied 10 acres from the farm land of U Thar Thar, Thingkyune village. Ten villagers have to work in the factory everyday. Moreover, the villagers have to cut trees for the firewood and sell the bricks. LIB 404 has a 100-acre paddy field in the Innbyar village. The local villagers are responsible to work in the military business. Moreover, they have to bring the product to the camp. LIB 405 has a logging business. Two to five people from each local village have to work in there. They have to cut the trees down, send them to the sawmill, work in the sawmill and sell the product. (Source: THRF)

In March 2001, villagers from Kyaung, Kann Nee and Kind Taw, Ye Township, Tennaserim Division, were forced to work on construciton of the LIB 583 and 591 camps. About 160 soldiers from LIB 62 and 343 guarded the projects. The local military authorities confiscated 400 acres of gardens and vegetable fields owned by local people. In addition to forced labor, the villagers had to lend bullock carts and saws to the military without payment. The authorities also send letters to the surrounding villages for 1,000 to 3,000 leaves to be collected for the roofs of the new camps.

The local villager reported the forced labor incident to the New Mon State Pary (NMSP) which has a cease-fire agreement with SPDC. NMSP complained to SPDC when the project was 70% finished. The authorities agreed to make a contract with businessmen close to the junta to finish the project, however it did not happen and the villagers had to finish the constrution without any payment. (Source: THRF)

**Forced Labor for Infrastructure Projects**

On August 19, 2001, SPDC troops from LIB 376 conscripted 80 villagers from Myitta village, 35 miles east of Tavoy Town, Tenasserim Division, and forced them to clear the car road between Myitta and Kwee Waw Wa. The villagers were ordered to finish within 3 days. They had to repair eroded and damaged parts of the road and clear fallen trees over a distance of 15 miles. This road is a major transport route for the SPDC to their front line outposts along the Thai border on the Tennaserim riverside. (Source: TIR)

On, August 16, 2001, an SPDC officer summoned the village headman from Taket village and told him that his villagers should be prepared to reconstruct a car road between 6 mile village and Taket Hsweh Plaw, Tennaserim Township, Mergui District, Tenasserim Division in the coming dry season (October). The road will be 3 miles long and 40 feet wide. (Source: TIR)

Reported on June 28, 2001. The W/V PDC (Ward/ Village Peace and Development Council) from Lawthine village, Kyaukgadin village and Alesakhan village, which are located along the Ye-Tavoy road, Tenasserim Division were ordered to dig a 2 foot wide and 1 foot deep irrigation canal on both sides of the road from No.77 to No. 81 milestones, by TPDC (Township Peace and Development Council) from Yepyu township. On May 26, 2001, U San Myint, an civil engineer from Township People Construction Department, and the members of W/V PDC from the villages mentioned above, had discussed the digging plan in Alesakhan village of Yepyu Township. This year, like last year (2000), the authorities of Yepyu Township ordered the villagers from along the Ye-Tavoy road to expand the road and dig irrigation canals along the roadsides saying they would pay wages. But , after finishing the task, the authorities not only didn't pay the wages but also blamed that the villagers for creating damage because of careless work. (The villagers said that) this year also, the wages would not be paid like last year and all the wages would just cover the traveling cost of W/V PDC, the catering costs of the authorities, and miscellaneous cost of the members. For the villagers in the region, they will still surely be ordered to keep going as rotation servants without pay. If the villagers fail to do forced labor year, they have to pay 500 kyat for a substitute. The task will start in the beginning of July. People in region were ordered to expand the road and dig irrigation canals in Yepyu Township by TPDC since 1999 without pay. About 6 years ago, after cease fire deals had been made between NMSP (New Mon State Party) and SPDC, Raapu village, Kywaidalin village, Ahteraapu village, Lawthine village, Kyaukgadin village and Alesakan village which are located on the Ye-Tavoy road in Northern Yepyu Township became the permanent legal residence for NMSP Tavoy District Battalion. The people in the region have to work without pay not only for SPDC's development project but also for NMSP Tavoy District Battalion. (Source: ABSDF)

From February to June 2001, 1000 villagers in Thayet Chaung Township forced to work building a road between Ye Byat and Taung Pyork villages to Bann Chuang area. The road was approximately 50 kilometers. Some family members had no males and girls as young as 12 years old and women as old as over 70 were forced to work on the project. The number of children and elderly working on the project was about 70. Some 30 people died while working on the project and over 200 got ill, mostly young girls and elderly women. Villages affected: 27 villages from Pyin Phyu Gyi village group, San Sin village group, Winn Waa village group. The villagers had a similary experience in 1999 and 2000. 37 people died and 150 got injured and ill while working on road-building projects. The causes of death were starvation, malaria, exhaustion and accidents. (Source: THRF)

On January 16, 2001, soldiers from No. 58 navy came, based in Zar Deck Gyi Island, let by Lt. Col Tin Win, seized a boat from U Maung Nee of Mine Thway village, Kawthaung Township, Tenasserim Divison. The soldiers seized the cargo from the boat (1500 viss of fish and 1900 viss of prawns [total 1.9 mil Ks]) as well

building a high schoool on Zar Deck Gyi Island. On January 27 and Feb 10, 2001, their relatives requested to meet with them, but were refused by the authorities.

**The detainees who were forced to work are as follows.**

1- Win, 15 years old, female, Mine Thway village
2- Tin Aye, 19, female, Mine Thway village
3- Myint Kyu, 52, female, Mine Thway village
4- Hla May, 55, female, Shaw Taw Maw village
5- Aung Aung, 27, male, Shaw Taw Maw village
6- Thein Myint, 32, male, Shaw Taw Maw village
7- Maung Nge, 44, male, Shaw Taw Maw village
8- Chit Tin, 50, male, Shaw Taw Maw village
9- Bo Maung, 58, male, Shaw Taw Maw village (Source: THRF)

**Forced Portering**

On August 17, 2001, SPDC Operation Command HQ No. 13 forced 141 prisoners, 50 male villagers and 30 female villagers from Naw Teh, a forced relocation site on the Tenasserim Riverside in the east of Palaw township, Mergui District, to carry 400 sacks of military rice from Si Prot (Sein Byaut) to Way Hton Ray (Aung Than Wa Ra). The porters had to walk through 20 miles of jungle. On August 18, 140 prisoners and 50 Pyicha villagers were forced to carry the rest of the military supplies. (Source: TIR)

Reported on July 24, 2001, W/V PDC from Kyaungwapyin village, Tayetkhaung Township, Tenasserim Division (which includes 400 houses) collected 150 voluntary servants (porters) each month, to carry military rations to LIB(285) at Pulauk village of Pulaw Township. The W/V PDC forced each porter to pay 500 Kyat as the travelling fee from Kyaungwapyin village to Pulauk village. The porters also had to bring their own food for the (7) days of the journey. The SPDC forced each porter to carry 8 pji of rice, 5 cans of condensed milk, 1 viss of sugar, 5 cans of meat can and a viss of other dried food. When traveling during the rainy season, the porters had to use plastic sheet to prevent the food getting wet. Subordinate troops of Sa Ka Kha (9) from Aung Thawarya village, did not accept any food which had gotten wet and fined the person who carried the food the entire cost of the food. Those who could not pay the fine were not allowed to return home and were forced to stay and serve as military operation porters. Therefore, the porters have to take 3000-5000 kyat with them for extra money. (Source: ABSDF)

Since the beginning of June 2001, LIB 376 ordered people in the Myitha village, Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division, region to build guard posts between Myitha and Thaung Tone Lone village and ordered men to take rotating guard duties. In the middle of July 2001, the authorities of LIB 376 stopped that labor requirement. However, the people in the region were still used as porters. Five to 10 persons were

regularly collected as porters, and those who could not be porters had to hire a substitute for 1,000 Kyat per day. Those who could not pay were arrested, beaten, tortured and sent to the frontline camp. Even though villagers over 55 were not required to be porters, they were still rotationally forced to fetch water for use by SPDC soliders, including bath water. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on May 31, 2001. Kha Maung Taung village, Long Lon Township, Tenasserim Division. 120 households. The chairperson of the VPDC, Thein Aung, 50, collects two porters every month. Every house has to pay 1000 kyat a month for porter fees. One porter receives 40,000 kyat. If someone refuses to pay the 1000 kyat he or she cannot stay in the village anymore. Therefore, if they want to stay in their house they have to find any way to earn money. Those who are asked to be porters dare not refuse. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on May 27, 2001. Kanet Thiri village (aka. Nat Sape village), Thayet Chaung Township, Tavoy District, Tennasserim Division. 1200 households. In December 2000, the VPDC stopped collecting porters. In April 2001 the VPDC collected 720 villagers to work for 7 days as porters. This village has 24 quarters. 30 villagers were collected from each quarter. These porters were sent to Pu Lauk village, Pu Law Township, Tenasserim Division to carry food supplies. The VPDC paid 500 kyat per porter for the bus fare to Pu Lauk village. The porters received and unknown amount of money. The porters had to bring their own food, even though they were carrying food supplies for the soldiers. When anything disappeared or was lost, the porters had to pay for the lost goods. If the porters could not pay, they were not allowed to return home and had to continue portering. The porters had to walk for 3 days to Aung Tha Wah village. During the 3 day trip there were no soldiers (security) to protect the food from being looted. Each porter, male and female, had to carry 8 bowls of rice, 5 tins of condensed milk, 1 viss of sugar and 5 tins of meat and 1 viss of dried meat. The VPDC chairman, Win Shein, collected 2,000 kyat from each house in Kanet Thiri village to pay the porters. The porters got 15,000 kyat each. If the villagers didn't pay they are ordered to be unpaid porters. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on May 21, 2001. Taung Min Pyaung village, Loung Lon Township, Tennasserim Divison. 370 households. Previously, the authorities in this village collected 4 porters every month. They collected 700 kyat from each house to pay the porters. In February 2001, about 200 porters from Loung Lon Township ran away during a military operation in Loung Lon Township and went back home. For their punishment, authorities doubled the numbers of porters they took from Loung Lon Township. Between March and May 2001, the Taung Min Pyaung village authorities (VPDC) collected 8 porters monthly and 1500 kyat from each house for those porters. The porters were paid 40,000 kyat. If a porter doesn't show up, they have to give 40,000 kyat as punishment. If a villager doesn't pay the 1500 kyat, the authorities give them one month to pay double the amount. If they still do not pay, then they can be taken as a porter. The money is collected by Win Aung,

Chairperson of the VPDC in Taung Min Pyaung village. He also collects 200 kyat a month for township authorities (visiting) and village development. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on May 18, 2001. Sin They Village, Ye Phyu Township, Tenasserim Division. Approximately 300 households. Sin They village is located near Dauk Lauk and Pa Dauk Gone villages where LIB 406 and 407 are located. Sin They village authorities are responsible for collecting 4 villagers every month for use as porters. The villagers are sent to the police station in Ye Phyu Township. The authorities have to collect money for the 4 porters so every house has to pay 1200 kyat each month. One porter gets 40,000 kyat. The village authorities give the money to the porters. If they do not have enough porters and villagers cannot pay the porter fees, they are forced to be unpaid porters. In Sin They village the villagers have to pay 100 kyat every month to the village authorities for a fund so that they can buy food and snacks for when the township authorities visit. Another 100 kyat is collected every month for the soldiers when they come to visit. Another 100 kyat is collected every month for the village development fund. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on May 17, 2001. Tavoy Township, Tavoy District, Tenasserim Division. The houses in this township have to pay 700 kyat a month in porter fees to the local authorities. This money is used to pay voluntary porters. The porters are taken to the LIB 25 camp in Tavoy Township. Every porter is paid 40,000 kyat. Sometimes, the military leaders ask for more porters, so the local authorities need more money and collect more from the people in the township (between 1000 and 1500 kyat from each house). If the people do not pay the authorities inform the police station and the police force them to be unpaid porters. Some people work voluntarily as porters because the economic situation in the four townships of Tavoy District is very difficult and there is high unemployment. They use the money they earn portering to support their families. However, many people do not want to be porters as it is very dangerous and they search for any way to pay the porter fees. One effect of the difficult economic situation has been rising incidents of theft. In Tavoy township, every village has firemen who are responsible for the security of their quarter in the village and have to stand guard every night. One fireman and 5 civilians from each quarter in the township has to participate in these duties. If someone does not want to go, they have to pay 300 kyat to pay for a replacement. In addition, every month the authorities ask every house to donate 100 kyat for a security fund. Also in Tavoy township, the people receive irregular electric service (they get one day of electricity every four days) but have to pay 500-1000 kyat monthly despite the fact that they often have to rely on candles and lamps. (Source: ABSDF)

May 14, 2001, Shan Ma Twin Village, Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division. Approximately 250 households. The VPDC demand 8 porters a month from this village to go to the LIB 380 camp, near Mitta village. The VPDC collect 1200 kyat from each house in the village every month to pay the porters with. The porters are each paid 20,000 kyat by the VPDC. The Chairperson of the VPDC, Ohn Linn, has said that if the villagers refuse to pay, he will inform the police and have that person arrested. (Source: ABSDF)

In May 2001, soldiers from LIB 403, led by Major Than Tun, forced some 250 villagers to carry foodstuffs and rations for 18 to 20 days. The journey started from Pae village, Thayetchaung Township, Tennaserim Division. They have to carry their own food and about 25 kilos of foodstuff and rations. It was a difficult journey, they have to pass many streams and mountains, and some got ill and ran out of food. They were beaten when they could not carry the things for whatever reason. They did not get any medical treatment. The end of the journey was military camps in the Aung Thawara area, Tenasserim Township, Tenasserim Division. Some 70 villagers died on the way. In June, about 18 people were able to reach their home villages. The villages affected were: Winn Waa, Minn Dap, Thein Gone, Wel Yit, Ka Myiang, Nga Ye, Kyawe Min Gone, Kyauk Khamauk, Thit Khaung Dwin, Kanet Thiri. (Source: THRF).

May 13, 2001, Pyi Char village, Palaw Township, Tennasserim Division. Approximately 300 households. The local authorities have been asking the villagers to supply 46 people a month to porter food supplies. The porters have to walk 5 days round trip from their village to the LIB 280 camp in Nann Thi Lar Mine, east of Palaw Township. This camp takes food supplies from many villages in the surrounding areas and the soldiers also ask the villagers to carry the food supplies to one of their camps based in Naw Tel village. If a porter does not show up for portering duties they have to pay 15,000 kyat in porter fees. In addition, if some food is lost or disappears, the porters are not allowed to go back to their villages and are ordered to continue as porters for military operations. Pyi Char is a Karen village. Usually soldiers from LIB 280 visit it 3 times a month. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on April 25, 2001. Ra-Pu village – Ye township. During the beginning of April 2001 a guerrilla force under sub-company (3) of KNU battalion (10) continued to campaign near the Ra-Pu village area. The KNU guerrilla force has been stopping and searching people who are traveling to the Tavoy area. The SPDC tactical command (1) under military operation command (8) encamped at Ra-Pu village has been fighting the guerrilla forces and also has been forcing at least 15 persons from Ra-Pu village to take turns each day as stand-by porters, even though there are only 300 households to provide assistance. If anyone fails to take a turn as a standby porter they must pay 1000 Kyat to hire a substitute porter. The SPDC tactical command (1) located in Ra-Pu village is forcing the village residents to dig a fox-hole, which is 4.6 feet deep and 4.6 feet wide, around the village, claiming that it is necessary for village security. The digging began in March 2001 and was finished in mid-April. During this period the SPDC tactical command (1) from Ra-Pu village forced one person from each family in the village to contribute their labor to construct the canal. In addition, beginning in mid-April 2001, they ordered village residents to surround the Ra-Pu village area with bamboo fences. If anybody fails to take a turn providing labor, they will be fined 500 Kyat each day to hire a substitute. On April 3, 2001 at 12:00 am, the guerrilla force under sub-company (3) of KNU battalion (10) ambushed the SPDC LIB 410 under tactical

command near Ra-Pu village. The battle lasted about 10 minutes and one SPDC soldier was killed. Following this occurrence, the tactical command (1) fined the residents of Ra-Pu village 1000 Kyat per household, stating that they lost one soldier because the residents of Ra-Pu village failed to give them information about the KNU attack. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on April 19, 2001. Ta-nyi-chaung village, Tha-yet-chaung township. About 250 households. The VPDC from Ta-nyi-chaung village continues to collect one porter per household every three months, including women, to send to the SPDC troops at the frontline. Only women who are over four months pregnant are exempt from going as porters. Anyone who can not go as a porter, must pay the SPDC authority at the village level 8,000 Kyat to hire a substitute for a week. The VPDC from Ta-nyin-chaung village collects 4 people each month for military operation porters, and collects 1000 Kyat per porter from each household for compensation for the porters. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on April 12, 2001. Thin-ka-done village, Tavoy township. Approximately 30 households. Thin-ka-done village is situated in the eastern part of Tavoy town and on Mit-ta car road. It is a small village of about 30 houses. The Thin-ka-done VPDC chairman, U Win Naing, each month forces the residents to take turns serving as porters for military operations. At the same time, U Win Naing also collects 1500 Kyat from each household, saying that the money is to pay the salary for the porters. At Thin-ka-done village U Win Naing has fixed the salary at 40,000 Kyat for each porter. When it is a resident's turn to go as a military operation porter they have to go as well as paying the porter fees. Thin-ka-done village is in an LIB 402 activity area, and there is always an active military unit in the village. The SPDC claims that their presence is necessary for bridge security. (Source: ABSDF)

On April 2, 2001. Hein-sei village, Ye-pyu township. Approximately 70 households. The VPDC from Hein-sei village collects a minimum of 2 porters each month. They also collect 1500 Kyat per household to pay the porters with. The compensation paid to porters in Ye-pyu township, including Hein-sei village, is fixed at 40,000 Kyat, therefore when the VPDC collects porter fees in the village they adjust the amount each household has to pay depending on the number of households in the village. The porters' fee must be fully paid by the local residents, and the residents who fail to pay the porter fees or go as porters, will be reported by the VPDC to the Ye-pyu town police station, and they will be arrested and punished by the police. Although the SPDC troops and SPDC police do not have a camp at Hein-sei village, the active military unit from LIB 407 battalion often enters the village. Every time the SPDC troops enter Hein-sei village, the SPDC authority in village level collects 200-300 Kyat per household for an entertainment fund. The residents of Hein-sei village earn their living by cutting down the bamboo and other wood in the Hein-sei-chaung-pya area and selling it. Every month the residents have to go to the Hein-sei-chaung-pya area to cut down as much bamboo as SPDC LIB 406 and LIB 407 battalions need. Then they have to carry it to Hein-sei village, which is situated near the Ye-Tavoy car road. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on March 26, 2001.Nat-gyi-shin village, Ye-pyu township. Approximately 450 households. In Nat-gyi-shin village, SPDC IB 282 column (2), with about 100 troops led by second battalion commander U Tint Naing Oo, remains encamped at the column office in Nat-gyi-shin village. They are active in both the Sein Bone and Pauk-pin-kwin villages. Everyday SPDC IB 282 column (2) office collects 4 standby porters from Nat-gyi-shin village for their column office. They force the porters to pick up rubbish, do general cleaning, find wood, split wood, carry water, cook and do other chores. If anybody fails to go as a standby porter they will be fined 500 Kyat to hire a substitute to go on their behalf. The IB 282 column (2) office demands 10 porters each week. If anybody fails to go they are fined 3500 Kyat per week to hire a substitute. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on March 21, 2001. Kyauk-ka-nya village, Ye-pyu township. Approximately 200 households. In January 2001, Kyauk-ka-nua VPDC chairman U Than Sein, reported to Ye-pyu police station that U Su Hne, age 40, son of U Chit Sein, had failed to pay porter fees and fees for the village funds and he was saying negative things about the VPDC. So the police from Ye-pyu town came and arrested him. After his arrest he was put in Ta-voy prison for three months by the authorities, who said that U Su Hne had interrupted their business. U Su Hne then had to serve as a prisoner porter for the coastal region command frontline. The VPDC in Kyauk-ka-nya village forces the residents to pay porter fees and the people who refuse to pay are reported to the Ye-pyu police station, and like U Su Hne they are arrested and punished. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on March 20, 2001. Nyin-Htway village – Ye-pyu township. Approximately 500 households. U Maung Thee (VPDC chairman in Nyin-Htway village) forces five people from Nyin-Htway village to serve as porters each month. He also collects 700 Kyat per household for each porter, saying that it would be given to the porters as compensation. In Nyin-Htway village the compensation for one porter was fixed at 40,000 Kyat. Although the VPDC continues to participate in rounding up porters, this is done completely under the directive of the SPDC authority at the township level. People who cannot pay the porter fees or fail to go when it is their turn to serve as porters, are reported to the Ye-pyu town police station by VPDC chairman U Maung Thee, and continue to be subjected to arrest and violent punishment. The SPDC authority at the township level collects porters from the surrounding villages once a month. In addition, they often collect emergency porters during the month. During last February 2001, 18 people were taken as emergency porters from Nyin-Htway village. The VPDC from Nyin-Htway village also collects an emergency porter carrying fee from the residents. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on March 18, 2001. At the beginning of March 2001, the Nat Seik village level SPDC authorities divided the village into three parts. Each day they forced at least 500 villagers from each part to take turns working to build embankments to

protect the fields beside the Tavoy river from rainy season flooding. Anybody who failed to do this was fined 500 Kyat, to hire substitutes to work on their behalf. For the three months prior to this, the authorities in Nat Seik village had not collected forced porters to carry the rations for SPDC. However, at the beginning of March, once again began to collect forced laborers for building the embankments. The SPDC authorities at the village level are also collect various fees from the villagers including: 100 Kyat per household for fire rescue, 50 Kyat to support mothers and children in the military camp, 100 Kyat for village development, 100 Kyat for guest entertainment. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on March 18, 2001. Ka-net Thiri (Nat Seik) village, Thayetchaung township, Tavoy district. Approximately 1500 households. VPDC Chairman U Win Shein each month forces a minimum of 10 people to serve as porters for military operations and collects 800 Kyat from each household to give the porters for their transportation costs**.** In Nat Seik village the VPDC fixed the compensation for one porter at 40,000 Kyat. The SPDC authority at the village level collects all of the fees and does not allow people to hire substitute porters. The SPDC authority at the village level asks the police in Nat Seik village to help them arrest people who refuse to serve as porters or who cannot afford to pay the porter fees. Those who cannot afford to pay the fees are forced to serve as porters. If someone does not show up for portering duty then they are arrested by the police and as punishment forced to serve as porters without compensation. (Source: ABSDF)

On March 9, 2001, soldiers from LIB 103, led by Lt. Col Aye Kyaing, arrested 80 male and female villagers in Tennaserim Township, Tennaserim Division for use as forced porters. The villagers were between the ages of 12 and 60s. They had to carry foodstuffs, rations and arms for three days to Kyauk Lone Gyi camp. Along the way about 20 villagers got ill but were not given any medical treatment and no payment. A 12 year-old boy, Htway Hla broke his right hand. Gyi Tin, 62, of Thin Baw Nan village died while carrying his load. The porters were taken from the following villages: Thin Baw Nan, Ye Pu, Kaw Ma Pyin, Mine Seip, San Pyi. (Source: THRF)

Reported on March 8, 2001. The tactical command (1) under military operation command (8) remains encamped at Kant Kaw Taung village, in Ye Pyu township. On March 7, 2001 SPDC LIB 408, LIB 409 and LIB 410 under the tactical command (1), arrived at the Ra-Pu village situated north of Ye Pyu township, and set up a temporary tactical command frontline office in Ra-Pu village. When the military operation command (8) under tactical command (1) arrived at Ra-Pu village they also forced 200 people from every village except Kan-Pauk, to accompany them as porters for the military troops. The villagers that they collected were not those whose turn it was to serving as porters once a month, but these were people forced to serve as emergency porters by the SPDC and the SPDC's police from the villages in Ye-Pyu township. According to this information the reason for the collection of the addition porters was that the tactical command requested that the military operation command send 300 more porters who were needed by LIB 408, LIB 409, LIB 410. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on March 1, 2001. Thirty-mile village – Ye Pyu township. Approximately 100 households. The SPDC village leve1 authorities in Thirty-mile village, collect two villagers each month to serve as porters. They also collect 1000 Kyat per household to pay the transportation costs for the porters. The VPDC raised the amount of compensation paid to the porters to 40000 Kyat. Therefore to hire a substitute porter the VPDC forcibly collects 40,000 Kyat from the village for each substitute porter needed. The VPDC continues to collect porter fees as well as transportation fees in Ye Pyu township. Since the beginning of 2001, the SPDC from Ye Pyu township has also collected fees to hire medics to accompany and look after the military operation porters and to pay for medicine for them. They order the VPDC from Ye Pyu township to collect 500 Kyat per household each month from every village under their control and transfer the cash to The SPDC authorities at the township level. This information comes from a porter who returned from the frontline. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on February 8, 2001. Pa-Ka-Ri village – Tavoy township. Approximately 300 households. The military unit from IB 25, which is located in a camp in Pa-Ka-Ri village, each day collects two villagers to serve as stand-by porters. The two stand-by porters are each forced to carry 2 bundles of wood which are 2 feet long and 2 feet wide, to Pa-Ka-Ri, SPDC camp. In addition, at the SPDC camp the porters are made to work all day cooking, carrying water and cleaning the camp environment for the SPDC. Anybody who fails to serve their porter duty will be fined 500 Kyat to hire a substitute. The VPDC from Pa-Ka-Ri village regularly collects 5 five people to serve as porters for a week to 10 days. Each time they collect porters they also collect 700 Kyat from each household for porter fees. The VPDC in Pa-Ka-Ri village collects porters and porter fees three times each month. Moreover, they also collect fees from each household for funds for entertainment expenses, the village development fund and other general funds. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on February 6, 2001. Zin-ba village – Ye-pyu township. Approximately 100 households. During the past three years, the VPDC from Zin-ba village had stopped collecting village residents each month to serve as porters for military operations or as forced laborers in the logging business of LIB (410). Currently, the LIB (410) (rear) camp (camp that supports the front-line camp) working with logging business interests, is cutting and sawing wood in the eastern region of Zin-ba forest, and splitting the profits from the sale of the wood with logging companies. The rear LIB (410) authorities have once again begun collecting residents from Zin-ba village and forcing them to cart the wood they have cut from the jungle to the cart road and through to the LIB (410) rear camp**.** Other types of forced labor involving residents from Zin-ba village is also continuing. The Back-line LIB (410) authorities regularly use the VPDC to force five people from Zin-ba village to accompany each cart for three days at a time, as well as force them to take turns providing labor for their logging business. (Source: ABSDF)

Reported on April 29, 2001. Maung-mei-shaung village, Tavoy township. 1500 households. Since in February 2000, the SPDC authority from Tavoy district, ordered people from the four townships in the district to stop using the word "porter" and instead refer to them as "public service personnel." Anyone found still using the name "porter" would be effectively punished.

On February 1, 2001 the tactical command (1), under the SPDC coastal region command, summoned as many public service personnel (porters) as they needed from the four townships in Tavoy district, to send rations to the frontline military forces. They collected at least 400 persons from each of the four townships. In addition, the SPDC village level authority in Maung-mei-shaung village collected 25 Maung-mei-shaung villagers to serve as porters and also collected 3000 Kyat per household, saying that this money would be given to the porters as salary. They will give 30,000 Kyat to each public service personnel (porter). However, if the SPDC authorities at the village level are unable to collect 30,000 Kyat, the public service personnel (porter) would still have to provide their labor and would be given only 10,000 Kyat and told that they were being punished by the VPDC. Moreover, when people from other villages come and ask to hire public service personnel (porters), the VPDC from Maung-mei-shaung village will give them the villagers who are being punished as porters. They also seized some of the porters' salaries for their own use, and thus only give each porter 10,000 Kyat.

The VPDC from Maung-mei-shaung village continues to collect at least 5 porters each month for military operations. Every time they collect porters for military operations, they also collect 1500 Kyat per household for each porter, saying that they will give this to the porter as compensation. The fixed rate is that one public service personnel (porter) must be paid 40,000 Kyat as compensation. The money given to the porters as compensation was all given to the SPDC authorities by the village residents. However, people who could not afford to pay the porters fee continue to be forced to serve as military operation porters. If people from other villages come to hire military operation porters they give the porters to these people and they keep 20,000 Kyat out of the 40,000 Kyat compensation, giving only 20,000 Kyat to each porter.

The village level SPDC authority from Maung-mei-shaung village each month demands the following funds from each household:

Fund for authorities entertainment (100) Kyat
Fund for village development (100) Kyat
Fund for militias and fire rescuers (100) Kyat
Fund for soldiers on the frontline (100) Kyat
General Fund (100) Kyat and other things.

Thus the total monthly fees collected from the residents from Maung-mei-shaung village by the VPDC is 500 Kyat.

On April 27, 2001 Maung-mei-shaung village resident, U Thee Shwe, age 50, reported that on February 1, 2001 he had gone to transport rations because he needed money due to the poor economic situation in Burma**,** but he was paid only a 30,000 Kyat. He further reported that public service personnel (porters) from the other villages including his village of Maung-mei-shaung, had to take turns transporting rations. The porters were collected and organized at SPDC IB (25) Camp and on 2-2-2001 a total of 1600 public service personnel (porters) from the four townships in Tavoy district were sent to IB (25), leaving for Mit-ta village by car as arranged by IB (25), from Tavoy district. The tactical command (3), under military operation command, then separated the porters transporting rations from Mit-ta village, sending 800 porters to Htee-hta village, and 400 porters to Mye-kan-baw village. U Thee Shwe was part of the ration transportation group that included Mye-kan-baw village porters. On 3-2-2001 the porters were forced to walk from Mye-kan-baw village to Kin-mwun-chan military camp. They started the journey on 4-2-2001 until 6-2-2001 and had to carry heavy loads of rice and other materials (about 20 viss of weight per porter) through to the Thu-kha borderline and Nga-yant-ni-chaung-pya border camp. On 7-2-2001 U Thee Shwe was released and returned to Maung-mei-shaung village. During the journey, on 5-2-2001, one of the porters, a 45 year old woman from Ba-wa-kone village, stepped on a landmine near the old Thu-kha gate and was seriously wounded. The SPDC troops made the porters take her to Tavoy hospital.

According to U Thee Shwe who was interviewed again on 11-2-2001**,** when the people from Kyauk-si village, Laung-lone township, came to Maung-mei-shaung village to hire porters, he went as a porter a second time, again being compensated 30,000 Kyat, because he needed the money for farming. During the second week, U Thee Shwe went to Htee-hta village and through to Mei-ta-mi camp transporting SPDC rations for four days on behalf of Laung-lone township. In addition, the military operation command (9) from Htee-hta village continues to send porters from Laung-lone township to Maw-hta village and makes them transport rations through to Ka-ma-pu-law border camp in exactly two days. U Thee Shwe reported that on 20-2-2001, 157 porters from Tha-yet-chaung village and 272 porters from Laung-lone township (a total of 429 persons) were among his rations transportation porter group, most of them were unhealthy because they didn't have enough to eat and the rations which they brought with them had already run out. The porters who transported the SPDC rations, were not allowed to eat any of the food themselves, and instead had to bring their own rations. If they were found to have taken the SPDC rations, they were made to repay the value of what they had eaten. The porters then decided that they would try to escape from the SPDC troops**.** They ran away and on 25-2-2001 they arrived at Thei-chaung village, Tha-yet-chaung township. The next day they arrived back at Maung-mei-shaung village. (Source: ABSDF)

In 2001, the boatmen in the following villages in Kyungsu, Bokepyin and

Kawthaung Townships, Tennaserim Divison have been forced to use their boats to transportation during military operations and trips. The soldiers can confiscate boats at any time. Villages in Kyungsu tsp: Ka Mar Ai, Lae Air The Dan, Sa Khan Thit, Paeto Ngin, Ma Shwe Ou, Lae Thit, Ye Kan Or, Chaung Gyi Waa Villages in Boakpyin township: Kan Maw, Kyain Mae Taung, Kyainni Taung, Ye Kan Taung, Sa Tain, Ma Tay Kann Taw, Ye Aye Kyant Chaung, Shwe Girl Nyo Villages and Islands Kawthaung tsp: Kara Thuri, Aung Bar, Warr Kyung, Tha Htay Island, Hsa Lone Island, Zar Det Gyi Island, Nyang Weet Island. (Source: THRF)

In January 2001, Tavoy district, Tenasserim Division, SPDC Battalions 403, 404 and 405, from Kawy Aey, demanded 2-10 villagers from each village in the area. If the villagers couldn't go they had to pay between 27,000 and 50,000 kyat. If the villager couldn't pay the money their citizenship card was confiscated and only returned if they could pay 10,000 – 20,000 kyat. The porters were sent to Ta Nin Tha Ye province in Karen State, a front-line area. On January 26-27, 250 porters were sent to Tavoy City, a quieter area. When men weren't available for portering, women were used. For this reason, between 5,000 and 7,000 villagers crossed to Thailand for asylum at Kah Thew/Yenaw/PeSie/NatAeyTaw between January 26 and February 26. (Source: TWU 2001)

**Prison Labor**

After the military coup in 1988, the number of prisoners increased by a large margin. Before 1988, there were approximately 40,000 prisoners in Burmese prisons. After 1988, the number rose to about 60,000 with an additional 20,000 in labor camps. Of the entire prison population, over 1,600 are political prisoners. There are 36 prisons in Burma and over 20 of them detain political prisoners. Numerous violations of human dignity and brutal harassment occur in all prisons. However, the worst situation for prisoners is in labor camps and as porters for military operations. Prisoners are increasingly being used as porters by the military rather than civilian villagers. In order to comply with Regional military commanders request for porters, the Department of Prisons has formed prisoner service units. Inside sources report that longer prison sentences are being given for minor crimes as the demand for prison labor increases.

"Prison labor camps continue to operate with little outside scrutiny in Sagaing, Rangoon, Irrawaddy and Tenasserim Divisions and in Mon, Karen and Kachin States…the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited three labor camps in Tamu district near the Indian border in September 2001. The ICRC suggested 120 prisoners return to prison due to their age or health condition. The death rate of prisoners in these camps is between 24-30% per year due to inadequate food, unsafe drinking water, malaria, ill-treatment and insufficient medical care." (Source: UNBSO)

Convicts are regularly used for unpaid labor as porters, on major infrastructure projects and at rock quarries. They are generally treated much more brutally than

civilians and are routinely used in very dangerous or inhuman work, such as blowing up rock faces, digging at cliff-sites, plowing fields in the place of animals and carrying loads far to heavy in the front lines. Prison labor has also been used on numerous infrastructure and tourism projects.

**Prison Labor Camps**

According to AAPP, there are over 21 labor camps, such as: Kabaw valley (Western Burma), Taungzun/ Motplin Quarry (Mon state), Tuntay camp (near Rangoon), and Bokpyin camp (Tenasserim Division).

**Prison Labor Camps in Arakan State**

The SPDC has established several labor camps in Arakan State, where the convicts or prisoners are subjected to heavy and exhaustive work. The following are among them:

1) Leyant Tanug prison labor camp, situated on the Lemro riverbank in Mrauk U township.
2) Kyigan Bin (Kawarbil) prison labor camp, 5 miles north of Maungdaw town.
3) Thabra prison labor camp, in Pauktaw township.
4) Taung Gri prison labor camp, in Buthidaung township.
5) Nantat Island prison labor camp, in south Pauktaw township.
6) Ann prison labor camp situated between Ann and Roma Mountain Pass in Ann township.
7) Sinedin prison labor camp, about 10 miles southeast of Buthidaung town.
8) Zaghine prison labor camp, in Rathedaung township. (Source: ARNO 2000)

**Prison Labor Camps in Central Burma**

There were some work camps in central Burma, which demanded prisoners to work there. Those camps were under the prison department.

1. Taw Pone Gyi work camp. Railroad construction site between Gan Gaw-Pahukku. At Taw Pone Gyi camp, prisoners had to dig and crush stones. Escaped prison laborers interviewed by FTUB reported that if 200 prisoners were sent there, only 50 would be returned and the rest would die there because of hard work.

2. Five Pagodas stone crushing work camp: Near Thar Se, prisoners had to crush stones for Thar Se-Taunggyi road.

3. Kabaw valley development work camp: Rice plantation camp in Sagaing Division. Also there was a rail road construction, Kale-Gan Gaw-Pahukku. Rice plantation duty was very hard because, prisoners had to prepare rice fields with hoes, (without using machines or bullocks). A prisoner from Pahukku who was once there explained that Kabaw work camp was the worst and in 1997, 100 prisoners from Pahukku were sent there and only 8 prisoners arrived alive. He said he was alive because he grew and sold flowers for prison officers. Prisoners who work at rice fields died within a 6 month period. (Source: FTUB 2000)

**Prison Labor Camps in Mon State**

***MICB reported the following about prison labor camps in Mon State in 2001.***

Mupalin Quarry Camp is located in Kyat Tho township, Mon State. It is 20 miles from Kyat Tho and 12 miles from Stuittoung bridge. This camp produces stones for road building.

The prisoners at this camp have to do different types of work from 6 am to 12 am in the morning and to 5/ 6pm in the evening. There are two main working places and two types of work. The 'hard' work is done in the quarry and consists of digging and pounding large stones into small stones which can be used in road building. The 'soft' work is done in the camp and includes farming, carpentry, cooking and cleaning. If a prisoner doesn't want to do hard work, he has to pay an initial bribe of Kyat 40,000 to the camp's superintendent. Then he needs to pay an addition Kyat 10,000 to him every year after that. If a prisoner can't afford to pay the bribe for soft work he is assigned to do hard work and still has to pay an initial Kyat 20,000 and then Kyat 5,000 to the superintendent every year. The prisoners call the hard work place (the quarry) the 'front line' and the soft work place the 'supporting line.'

There are many deaths among the prisoners in the front line (the quarry). Every year approximately 150 convicted laborers die in Mupalin Camp.

Each prisoner in Mupalin Camp has been assigned a registration number followed by either the letter /E or /c. /c is given to the convict laborers who are newly arrived at the camp and /E was assigned previously to prisoners who arrived earlier (e.g. 3440/c would indicate a newcomer and 3441/E a prisoner who had been at the camp for a longer time).

The camp is shaped like a cauldron with mountains surrounding it. U Thein Htun is the camp superintendent but the convict laborers call him 'King of Death.'

At the Mupalin camp there are 80 warders and 2,000 convict laborers. The camp is organized like an army, and the convict laborers are divided into 9 companies.

From a one-mile wide rocky mountain, road stones can be produced for 10 to 12 years. After dynamiting the mountain, the convicted laborers break up the rocks using 18, 16, or

14 lb. hammers to make large size stones and 1 or 2lb hammers to make smaller stones.

The Mupalin camp can produce 800 stone *quarry* per day. (A quarry is equal to 100 cubic feet of stone).

The convicted laborers have to make different size stones including those that are 9 inches wide and 18 inches tall, 9 in x 12 in, 6 in x 9 in, 2 in x 4 in, 1 in x 2 in, and so on.

They also have to produce very small ones that are 1 in x 1 in**.** They are only able to produce 6 *quarries* of these small stones per day. The big trucks carry the stones to local construction sites. About 100 convicted laborers are needed to load and unload the stones.

In Mupalin camp, there are 5 permanent convicted laborer cooks and some other newcomers who also do the cooking. Every prisoner wants to do the job of cooking because it is much better than the other types of work. The prisoners who do the cooking use water tanks that have been cut in half to cook 50 Kg of rice.

Everyday there are about 20 prisoners who need to rest because they are ill and unfit to do hard work. Those suffering from diarrhea, dysentery and other illnesses are issued medical certificates, which allow them to rest. Some prisoners are also wounded while detonating the rocks in the quarry. Those wounded prisoners are made to do the cooking. According to the *Burma Jail Manual* published by the SPDC, the prisoners are supposed to receive a rice ration of 0.48 Viss per meal. But in reality they only receive 0.23 Viss, due to the corruption of the warders, who steal the rest of the rice. 0.23 Viss is equal to only one plate of rice. This ration is inadequate for the prisoners, so they are also forced to eat various tree leaves and any thing else that is available, even if they are not sure whether or not it is harmful. This is one reason that they suffer from cholera frequently.

The wounded prisoners do not receive proper medical treatment, and there are at least 4 to 6 prisoners who have lost their legs because of this. In Mupalin camp, there is only one medic and 2 prisoners who assist him. Therefore proper medical treatment is impossible. If a prisoner dies, the camp officials do not give him a traditional religious burial, and they don't inform his family. The camp officials do not remove the shackles from the dead prisoners in the normal way, but instead they cut off their leg to remove the shackles.

When the relatives and families of prisoners come to see them, they normally give them some cash. But the camp officials deduct 6/10ths of what is given. For example, if a prisoner receives Kyat 10,000, he will only gets Kyat 4,000. Furthermore, often when the warders want to buy alcohol they force the prisoners to give them money. If a prisoner cannot give them what they want, the warders send him to do hard work. Some prisoners are beaten severely until they die because they cannot do hard work.

**No. (6) New Life Camp, near Kyaik Ma Yaw Township, and Mawlamyaing Township,**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Superintendent | : | U Tin Maung Myint |
| Chief Jailor (two stars) | : | U Wan Chai |
| Local Security Police | : | 7 persons |
| Warders | : | 10 persons |
| Lieutenant Corporal | : | San Oo (prison staff) |
| Prisoner in charge of one Hall | : | Zin Maung Maung (prisoner) |
| Sergeant from No (3) Company | : | Kappali |

There are two nearby satellite labor camps that are under the direct supervision of officials at No (6), New Life Camp. These are Phayar Ngoke To camp and New Life (6) Sakhangyi. There are 250 prisoners at Phayar Ngoke To camp and 450 prisones at New Life (6) Sakhangyi Camp. The prisoners are divided into two companies at Phayar Ngoke To and three companies in Sakahngyi. There are 1,200 acres of cultivated area at the main No(6) New Life Camp.

**Interview with a former (juvenile) prisoner from No (6) New Life Camp**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Source | : | Federation of Trade Unions Burma |
| Name | : | Aung Aung |
| Age | : | 16 yr. (at the time of incident) |
| Prison Registration. No. | : | 1616 |
| Court where sentenced | : | Mawlamyaing District Court |
| Home Address | : | Zayyar Thiri (11) St., Mawlamyaing Tsp. |
| Convictions | : | 1) Quarreling with neighborhood PDC official; under Act 5/1, made to report daily to police station for 1 year |
| | : | 2) Sentenced to 6 months imprisonment for failing to report to the police station |

After his court hearing, on November 25, 2001 Aung Aung was transferred to Mawlamyaing Prison. One month later, on December 18, 2001, he was sent to the No (6) New Life Camp.

Upon arriving at the camp he had to give a Kyat 2,000 bribe to the camp officials so that they would treat him well and so that he would not be assigned hard work. He had to pay a further bribe of Kyat 1,500 whenever his family came to see him.

Aung Aung reported the following information about conditions at the camp:

The camp officials used convicted laborers to manually operate a heavy machine which removes the skin off the rice seeds and instead of using cows they use prisoners pull the ploughs. There were 320 convicted laborers, of these there were three companies (Company 1, 2 and 3) with 70 laborers in each who worked in the rice fields. Some of the other convicted laborers grew vegetables for camp officials and their families. Other prisoners worked in the houses of camp officials. Most prisoners preferred to work in the houses of camp officials, because the work was much lighter than other kinds of work, but to be assigned to this type of work they had to pay a bribe.

Whenever the relatives of a convicted prisoner came to visit them, they had to give between 100 and 200 Kyats as a 'donation' to the prison, even though they had already been forced to pay Kyat 200 to get permission for the visit. Actually, the kept the money. Usually a prisoner who receives a visit from his family considers it a lucky thing. However in this camp it was not lucky, because after the visit, the prisoner had to pay his company commander Kyat 2,000, Kyat 1,000 to his group leader (also a prisoner) and Kyat 200.00 to the prisoner in charge of his block.

If the prisoner couldn't pay, they would beat him and assign him very hard work. Sometimes, the officials beat the prisoners until they became unconscious or even until they died. A prisoner named Kyaw Myint Oo (aka Moe Gyi) from Aukkyint Quarter, Mawlamyaing was one of these prisoners who was killed by beating. The average death toll among the prisoners is 3 persons per month.

The prisoners in this camp were fed only a cup of rice and bean-curry, which was like water. So the prisoners were forced to scavenge for other kinds of vegetation, chopped crabs, chopped fishes and even water snakes. Due to their poor diet some prisoners suffered from cholera.

At the camp there was only one medic with one assistant. Whenever the workers had an illness or injury they were only given *Burmeton*, a type of cold medicine. When the prisoners got sick they were fed only a cup of boiled rice in water. The sick prisoners were made work cleaning three buildings and shoveling human excrement from the latrines. Some of the ill prisoners couldn't tolerate this work and so they fought with the other prisoners, and in some cases even killed each other, in order to get an extra sentence and be transferred to prison from the camp.

The camp is shaped like a square. There are three buildings that are 100 ft long and 20 ft high. There are about 80 to 100 prisoners in each building.

Aung Aung reports that there was religious oppression carried out by camp officials. In the camp there were about 25 Muslim prisoners. The camp officials treated them more brutally than the other prisoners. At some point all of them were severely tortured and as a result of the torture, 2 of them died.

The camp officials did not allow these Muslim prisoners that were killed to be given a traditional religious burial. Instead they just buried them in the same hole.

**Names of prisoners who died while at No (6) New Life Camp (according to Aung Aung)**

| Sr. | Name | Place of Residence | Length of Sentence |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1) | Maung Zaw | Bago | 7 yrs. |
| 2) | Kyway Gyi | Pa An | 10 yrs. |
| 3) | Ar Baw | | |
| 4) | Du Duu | | |
| 5) | Maung Oo | | |
| 6) | Khar Lit | | 1 yr. |
| 7) | Aye Saung | Mudon | 3 yr. |
| 8) | Tin Mya | | 10 yr. |
| 9) | Win Oo | Pa An | 10 yr. |
| 10) | Myo Zaw Win | | |
| 11) | Moe Kyaw | Pa An | 10 yr. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12) | Abdul Samat | Ah Paung | 2 yr. |
| 13) | Ali | Rangonn | 24 yr. |
| 14) | Saw Aung | | |
| 15) | Sonny Mudon | | 3 yr. |
| 16) | Buto | | |
| 17) | Chit Soe | | |
| 18) | Kyaw Win | | |
| 19) | Win Aye | | 4 yr. |
| 20) | Maung Win | | |
| 21) | Maung Maung | | |
| 22) | Chit Win | Pa An | 5 yr. |
| 23) | Thawdar | | |
| 24) | Win Myint | | |
| 25) | Kyaw Thu | Hlaing Bwe | |
| 26) | Hussein | Kawkkareik | |
| 27) | Soe Wai | | |
| 28) | Han Thein | | |
| 29) | Myint Nyunt | | |
| 30) | Kaung Htut | | 7 yr. |
| 31) | Than Tun | | |

**Yinn Nyein Prison Labor Camp**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Location | : | 17 miles from Tha Hton Township, Mon State |
| Superintendent | : | U Ne Win |
| Warders | : | 60 persons |
| Prisoners | : | 800 persons |
| Type of work | : | Removing (blasting) rocks from the quarry |

There are two satellite camps under the direct supervision of the main Yin Nyein camp, Mar Ka The camp, and Yin Nyein camp

From these camps, 300 *quarries* of rock can be produced everyday. These rocks are transported to the towns of Bago, Taung Ngu, Kyauk Da Gar, Pha Yar Gyi, and so on.

**Zin Kyaik Prison Labor Camp**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Location | : | Ah Paung Township, Mon State |
| Superintendent | : | U Tin Aye |
| Warders | : | 80 psns. |
| Prisoners | : | 1,100 psns. |
| Type of work | : | Removing (blasting) rocks from the quarry |

There are three satellite camps under the supervision of the main Zin Kyaik camp, they are: Phat Lat Mine, Wet Kyii Mine, and Ye Da Gon Mine.

**Interview with a run-away prisoner from Zin Kyaik Prison Labor Camp**

Name : Aung Myint

Age : 33 yrs.

Home Address : Yebaw Zay (3) St., Pa An Township, Mon State

Aung Myint reported that on 22 December, 1993, at about 10:30pm, police officers from Myoma Police Station of Pa An Township, and other officials from the neighborhood Peace and Development Council came and searched his house for evidence of drug trafficking. Despite finding no evidence of any sort, the official took him to Myoma police station. Once there, the police tortured him and forced him to confess to being involved in drug trafficking activities. Finally, on January 21st , 1994, the police took him to the District Court. On April 7th, 1994, the court sentenced him to 20 years imprisonment under the 19/21 act. The name of the district judge was U Kyaw Naing and the prosecuting lawyer was U Soe Thaung. Aung Myint paid the lawyer a Kyat 8,000 bribe and paid another Kyat 8,000 bribe to local judicial officer U Kyaw Naing and his staff.

On April 8th, 1994, Aung Myint was sent to Mawlamyaing Prison. His prison registration no was 3302/c. At that time the prison superintendent was U Win Naing, and two other head prison officials were U Khin Zaw and U Myint Swe. Because of Aung Myint's long sentence, they put him in a confinement cell. On 18 October 1994, the prison officials sent him to Zin Kyaik Prison Labor Camp, where he served 6 years of his sentence. On July 3rd, 2001 he and another fellow prisoner run away from the camp.

Zin Kyaik is located near Ye Da Gon mine, three miles from Wet Kyii township, and two miles from Phat Lat township.

The workday at the camp goes from 6:30am to 12:00 noon, and from 1:00pm until night. There is no fixed end to the workday, and sometime the prisoners have to work until 7:00pm.

In January 1995 Aung Myint reported that, there was an accident at the labor camp. The stone mine collapsed and 60 laborers died. Another 15 prisoners were injured and some lost body parts.

The daily food ration for the prisoners is very little. The prisoners are given only a bowl of rice for each meal, along with watery bean curry and fish paste**.** The food they are given is inadequate for a normal person, let alone for the prisoners who have to do hard physical labor.

The healthcare situation in the camps was also terrible. The camp officials only supplied cheap medicines from China to the prisoners who suffered illnesses such as diarrhea, etc. Prisoners who were weak and ill were not given a medical pass to

rest. If someone was seriously ill, the officials transferred him first to the Ah Paung Township Hospital, if the Ah Paung Hospital was unable to treat the prisoner, then they transferred him again to Mawlamyaing Township Hospital. No prisoner ever taken to these hospitals ever returned to the camps, and the prisoners assumed that they had died.

**Taung Son Prison Labor Camp**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Location | : | Beelin Township, beside the Rangoon-Moke Ta Ma highway road |
| Superintendent | : | U Khin Kyaw |
| Warders | : | 60 persons |
| Prisoners | : | 1,100 persons |
| Type of work | : | Removing (blasting) rocks from the quarry |

The approximate area of the camp is 3 sq miles. It is surrounded by the Beelin mountain range.

Every year, the death toll is 100 to 150 prisoners.

At this camp there is no proper bathing system, instead the officials spray up to 100 prisoners at a time with water from a fire hose. Many prisoners suffer from diarrhea and other illnesses. There are frequent accidents where the prisoners lose their legs. The camp produces 500 quarries of stone per day.

**Yay-Dawei railway line construction camp**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Location | : | Yay Township, Mon state |
| Superintendent | : | U Hla Tun |
| Warders | : | 15 psns. |
| Prisoners | : | 300 psns. |

Only prisoners with short-terms (between 6 months and 1 year) are sent to this camp. The work in this camp is very light, and there is no hard work. The prisoners have to pay the camp officials Kyat 4,000 per month as a bribe to stay in the camp. If they pay additional bribes some of the prisoners are allowed to leave the camp for a short time to go and meet their family, or their families are able to come and visit them in the camp.

**Yay Zin stone mine Prison Labor Camp, Pyin Ma Nar Township, Mandalay Division**

There are 400 male and 700 female prisoners at this camp. The female prisoners break up "Chi Myhin" stones (the smallest size stones) with small hammers (weighing 1 to 2 lbs.). This type of stone is the most expensive and one quarry is worth about Kyat 5,000. The camp's daily production capacity is 16 quarries of Chi Myhin stones and 200 quarries of other stones of various sizes. The exact death toll

from this camp is unknown. The stones are sold to governmental departments (Ministry of Construction, Ministry of Irrigation, etc).

**Kyuak Ta Lone Prison Labor Camp**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Location | : | Mu Don Township, Mon State |
| Prisoners | : | 200 persons. |
| Type of work | : | Producing stones |

The stones produced from this camp are used in road construction projects in Mu Don Township, Mawlamyaing Township and Than Phyu Za Yat Township. The convict laborers are usually prisoners from Mawlamyaing prison who are near the end of their prison terms. This camp is called 'money camp' because the prisoners are well treated if they can pay bribes to the prison officials. The prisoners in this camp are not shackled.

**Kyaik Pa Lan Prison Labor Camp**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Location | : | Kyaik Ma Yaw Township, Mon State |
| Superintendent | : | U Myint Oo |
| Warders | : | 80 psns. |
| Prisoners | : | 250 psns. |
| Type of work | : | Cultivating rice throughout the year |

There are about 350 acres of paddy field in this camp. The rice from this camp is sold, and the money goes to the officials at Zin Kyaik Prison Camp, for this reason it is known as a 'fund-raising' camp. All of the prisoners here are near the end of their prison terms, and have been sent from Zin Kyaik Prison Camp.

**The Airfield Prison Labor Camp of Southern Command Headquarter**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Location | : | Near Taung Ngoo Township, Bago division |
| Person-in-charge | : | U Kyaw Min |
| Warders | : | 18 psns. |
| Prisoners | : | 300 psns. |

Prisoners who are able to pay bribes are sent to work here. The prisoners are not shackled and they work for the construction contractors of Taung Ngoo Airport. The labor charges paid by contractors are sent every three months to the Director General of Prisons Department, Ministry of Home Affairs.

There was an incident reported at this camp, where some female relatives of the prisoners who had come to visit were raped by the wardens.

**Tuang Ngoo Four Miles Prison Labor Camp**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Superintendent | : | U Nyunt Thein |
| Warders | : | 40 persons |
| Type of work | : | Producing stones |

This camp is a light work camp. In addition to breaking up stones**,** the prisoners also have to do hillside cultivation and other farming work.

Some of the other Prison Labor Camps are Kawt Thaung (7) mile stone camp in Tanintharyi Division and Kawt Thaung cooking oil cultivation camp.

**'Won Saung' or Military Porter Recruitment Camps**

Formerly, prisoners were taken out of prison and handed directly to the Army units, but since 1996 the SLORC/SPDC has created the 'Won Saung' to formalize and institutionalize this process. Sometimes translated into English as 'porter battalions' or 'service camps', 'Won Saung' actually translates more closely as 'carrying service'. The Won Saung come under the Prison Authority and function as holding centers for the convicts before they are taken to porter at the frontline by the Army. The prisoners are drawn from various prisons around Burma, and according to their testimonies it appears that there are quotas which each prison must provide to the Won Saung camps on a regular basis. To fill these quotas the prison authorities lie to the prisoners, telling them that their sentences will be reduced or that they will be released after a short shift of portering, and if this is not enough they even send elderly and disabled prisoners, those under treatment in the prison hospital, and those whose sentences are about to end. The convicts are usually given loads much heavier than what civilian porters are forced to carry; sometimes the loads are so heavy that they cannot get to their feet without help from the soldiers. While portering for the Army, the porters are constantly subjected to verbal and physical abuse from the soldiers when they have difficulty carrying their loads. Porters who fall out of line from exhaustion are beaten and kicked until they rejoin the column. When porters just cannot continue, they are left behind and sometimes kicked down the mountainside to an almost certain death. The straps from the baskets cut into the porters' shoulders and backs and result in painful wounds.

Despite their requests for medicine, the porters are never given any, even when they have seen the medics treating the soldiers. Food generally consists of a starvation diet of rice and fish paste, while the soldiers eat dried shrimp, chicken and vegetables. The food and belongings which soldiers loot from villages are thrown on top of the porters' loads, as are the soldiers' personal packs and boots. In many cases civilian porters are taken along with the convict porters. The porters are forced to walk between the soldiers, partly to prevent them running away and partly in the hope that resistance groups won't ambush the column if they see civilians. Contrary to claims made internationally by the SPDC, the use of convict porters on operations and at the frontline camps in no way lessens the forced labor burden of the villagers.

Rather than being seen as an alternative to civilian forced labor, the use of convicts for portering and other forced labor in Burma should be seen for what it is: an additional, unnecessary, and particularly brutal form of human rights abuse. (Source: KHRG)

The three won saung camps known to the AAPP are located in the southeastern military regional command: in Hpa- an, capital of the Karen State; Myaine Ka lay township, Karen State; and Loikaw, capital of Karenni State.

**Porter Deaths in Prison and Porter-Recruiting Camps**

The junta authorities forced Muslims to do so heavy work that the following Muslims were killed in prisons and porter-recruiting camps during the months of March, 2001 to 31, July, 2001, according to five prisoner-turned porters who escaped. The porters requested their anonymity.

The porters further said that the poor porters, who could not give bribe money, did not get proper medical treatments and have to do very heavy work in prisons and porter-recruiting camps as well.

| No. | Name | Age | Birth place | Prison/ porter-recruiting camps |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | U Kasem | 30 | Ka Tha | Mandalay prison |
| 2. | U Tin Myint | 26 | Pyinmana | Mandalay prison |
| 3. | U Maung Than | 36 | Mudon | Kyaikmaraw Ba Wa Thit camp(6) |
| 4. | U Ba Dee | 29 | Than Pyu Zayet | Do |
| 5. | U Aung Kyaw Win | 28 | Pa-an | Do |
| 6. | U Hussain | 25 | Pa-an | Do |
| 7. | U Ye Win | 32 | Pa pun | Do |
| 8. | U Aziz | 42 | Rangoon | ThinZayet Rock-breaking camp |
| 9. | U Salim | 29 | Rangoon | Do |
| 10. | U Seraj Ahamad | 43 | Buthidaung, Arakan | Do |
| 11. | U Norzir | 34 | Insein, Rangoon | Do |
| 12. | U Yu soof | 35 | Moulmeim | Do |
| 13. | U Chit Win | 19 | Taungoo(6) Block | Taungoo 4-mile Rock-breaking camp |
| 14. | U Myo Myint Naing | 21 | Near Universal Bank, Magwe | Do |
| 15. | U Maung Soe | 27 | Pya pon, | Do |
| 16. | U Ali | 24 | Apoung Myo | Zin Gyaik Rock-breaking camp |
| 17. | U Akbar | 56 | Pa-an | Do |
| 18. | U Du Du | 41 | Pa-an (near market) | Do |

(Source: MICB)

According to another report from an escaped porter, on June, 26, 2001, three porters died of starvation and lack of medicines in Myaing Galay porter recruting camp, Pa-an township of Karen State. The porter said that there are four huge halls in the camp where about 800 to 1300 porters are being kept. These porters have to do hard labour and are being given very limited rice and poor curries. When the porters get ill, they do not get proper medical treatments. The escaped porter said that at least 15 to 20 porters die in the camp every month due to the starvation and lack of medical treatments. The three porters who died on June 26th were Ko Tin Hla (23 years old) from Rangoon, Ko Ye Tun (27 years old), from Rangoon and Ko Than Myint (25 years old) from Moulmein. (Source: MICB)

**Porter shortage affects junta troops search for Mon splinter group**

Reported on November 25, 2001. 32 prisoners died and another 127 ran away from the 500 prisoner laborers recruited to work at the construction site of the new headquarters for Military Operations Management Command [MOMC] No 19 in Mon State's Ye Township. The 500 prisoners were recruited from Moulmein prison in October. They were not only used as laborers at the construction site but also as porters for the front-line military columns. It is believed that the many deaths and desertions of prisoner laborers and porters could seriously affect the MOMC-19's search for the NMSP splinter group. Thus, the MOMC-19 has requested the Mon State Prisons Department for an emergency supply of another 500 prisoner porters to be recruited immediately in order to continue with the military operation. (Source: DVB)

**ICRC suggests some prisoners not suitable for hard labor**

Reported on November 2, 2001. Some prisoners are to be sent back to their original prisons from the number one "New Life Project" hard labor camp near the Indo-Burma border as suggested by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Local Burmese doctors will give the prisoners from Thanan, Myothit, Bandula and Razagyo number two camps a medical check up before ICRC's visit to these camps. Those who are not in suitable health will be sent back to their original prisons for food, rest and medical treatment, as mentioned in an order released by Directorate of Prison Affairs under Ministry of Home Affairs on October 25. Prisoners who are in good health from Kalay prison will replace the returned prisoners. ICRC visited the "New Life Projects" in Kabal valley near Indo-Burma border from September 1 to September 19 and suggested more than 130 prisoners in these camps were not suitable for hard labor. The ICRC delegation visited Oak-pho, Sayasan and Razagyo number one camps in the same new life project. More than 120 prisoners from these three camps were sent back to their original prisons and about 200 prisoners from Monywa prison were replaced in the camps, NMG reported in a previous article. Although ICRC visited and made suggestions for a better situation in hard labor camps, five prisoners from Razagyo number one camp ran away on October 25, while they were doing their work under tight security. The security guards rearrested and beat them. All five prisoners as well as another 6 who

allegedly discussed escape were put in shackles and halters. ICRC made two visits during September to hard labor camps and made suggestions on the situation of the camps. ICRC found that the food given to prisoners was not good enough in both quality and quantity, drinking water was not safe, prisoners did not get enough rest, including those suffering from illnesses, the health care system was improper and prisoners were frequently beaten. Altogether eight "New Life Projects" were opened all over Burma under the instructions of Senior General Than Shwe in 1994. The Burmese regime is using the labor to implement its long-term agricultural projects. The mortality rate in these hard labor camps ranges from 24 to 30 percent because of continuous hard labor, malaria and insufficient food. (Source: Network Media Group)

**More Prisoners Being Used as Porters**

Prisoners from various prisons were sent to a logistics battalion in Pa-an to be deployed in Karen State open season offensive. On November 13, 125 prisoners from Akyab jail and 350 prisoners from Insein, Henzada, and Prome jails were sent to No.1 Logistics Battalion in Pa-an, Karen State. Prisoners, instead of ordinary civilians, are being used since the International Labour Organization issued a report condemning the practice of forced labor in Burma. In another news report, the Police Director-General's Office has issued an emergency directive to township police stations. The directive states that all burglars, robbers, thieves, fraudsters, gamblers, human traffickers, etc. detained at the police stations should be charged, sent to court, and sentenced immediately. Then they should be sent to the logistics battalion and attached to the forward areas as logistics support personnel [porters]. (Source: DVB)

## Prisoner Porter from Dooplaya District

**February 22, 2001**

**Documented by Trade Union Rights / Human Rights, FTU-B**

Name: xxxx 35 years, Burmese, Buddhist, Single, Odd jobs, Thaketa, Rangoon.

In 1998, I fought with a friend while drinking and his hand was paralysed. I was charged with Article 326 and in October 1998 I was sentenced to 5 years imprisonment in Insein Prison. It was not my first time in prison. Previously I was jailed 4 different times - mostly as a thief. I spent over 10 years in prisons and work camps.

In May 1999, I was sent to Taung Sun Stone Crushing Work Camp. My legs were chained for six months. There were over one thousand prisoners there and I was with Company 5. That company had around 70 prisoners and about 10 prisoners who bribed wardens made bamboo baskets, boil water and perform other light duties. Twenty prisoners crushed big stones with hammers and forty prisoners carried stones (various sizes).

The work started at 7:00 a.m. and stopped at 5:00 p.m. There was a one hour break at noon. We had to work 6 full days a week and on Sundays we had to work until 3:00 p.m. Our company's duty was to crush and carry 2,500 cu-ft of stones a day.

The food provided to us was not good. When the ICRC team inspected the work camp in January 2001 better food was provided.

The ICRC team (five persons including a woman) inspected the Taung Sun camp. The lady introduced herself as Ma Cho (a Burmese name) and she spoke Burmese fluently. They interviewed me and I thought because of that, I was sent to the frontline. I told them that the vegetable garden was just prepared and vegetable plants were brought early in the morning (the day the ICRC inspected) and stuck in the ground. We talked privately, however, because there were many informers among the prisoners.

When the ICRC team returned, the wardens announced that each company had to finish 4,000 cu-ft of stones a day because of the preparation costs (2 million Kyats) for the ICRC. New barracks and buildings, new plates, safety belts and ropes for drill operators (prisoners) were prepared and brought before the inspection. More new prisoners arrived at the end of January. The prison authorities agreed to untie the chains from prisoners due to the discussions with the ICRC, but the new prisoners, who arrived after the ICRC team, were chained.

Around ten to twelve prisoners died annually, mostly from malnutrition and sickness. In August 1999, two prisoners, drill operators from our company, Ko San Win and *Thea Ho Sea* (nickname) fell from a hill and died. At that time, raindrops were falling and I do not know if it was because of electrical shock or they slipped from a cliff. No safety belts were provided for mine explosive operators and drill operators. There was a clinic and the medic was greedy. He did not treat the prisoners' wounds properly unless he received money for medicine and for himself.

On February 2, 2001, the work camp authorities selected 25 prisoners who were sent to the Service Camp No. 2. by trucks. Four days later, soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion 355 arrived and took 125 prisoners from Taung Sun and 100 prisoners from Insein. We were sent to Thingan Nyinaung and stayed at LIB 355 headquarters. Then, LIB 356 took 100 prisoners from Insein.

Then we went with LIB 355 soldiers to the southern part of Myawaddy. Upon reaching Myawaddy, which I had never been to, I raised my head to look at the town. A soldier immediately punched my face and two teeth fell out.

The LIB 355 managed the prisoners to carry supplies and ammunition for the journey. The whole battalion and prisoners traveled for a day. During that day, many prisoners were exhausted and some were severely beaten. I met two prisoners lying along a path. On the next day, fifteen soldiers and four prisoners, including me, were

divided from the whole column as a patrol team. I had to carry seven RPG shells, a small amount of rice and some condensed milk tins. We traveled for about a week and passed some villages but I don't remember their names. On some nights, the whole battalion stayed together and I met some of my comrades. From our group, two of the prisoners had managed to escape already.

One day, our team went to Yin Gwe Taung No. 2 hill to bring rice supplies. On the way to the hill, I carried materials that had belonged to a major who was shot dead by his soldier from LIB 356 or LIB 284 (I can't remember which). I also saw a soldier handcuffed and tied with ropes in Yin Gwe Taung camp. In the afternoon, I was ordered to give him some food. He was still handcuffed with his arms behind his back so I spoon-fed him. He was about 18 years old and asked me about court and prisons and I told him my experiences dealing with judges. He said that the major was a drunkard and he was beaten several times and at last he shot him dead. At night, a group of wounded soldiers from LIB 356 arrived. According to the prisoners with them, Karen guerrillas ambushed them and 5 soldiers, including an officer, were killed and 5 wounded. One prisoner also died and one was wounded.

The next day, our 15 soldiers' team was ordered to send the wounded. Three light farm vehicles carried the wounded and the rest of the soldiers and I walked around the vehicles. I was with a RPG man and I carried a basket of RPG shells. In late afternoon, we reached a big base and waited for the column of Division 66. At about 22:00 hours, hundreds of soldiers from Division 66 reached the base and the camp was crowded. I decided it was a great chance to escape. I went to a stream nearby and slept there.

The next morning, I heard soldiers call my name and I moved further. Later, I found a path and followed it. On the way, I met some people and they showed the direction to escape. I had two condensed milk tins I had stolen from soldiers and when I reached a village, I sold them and bought cheroots. Meals were provided by the villagers. I continued to walk and then I saw a couple, the husband was sick and the wife helping him to continue to walk. I told them to stop a moment and massaged the husband. I also gave them some medicine I had stolen from soldiers. They brought me a package of noodles. I realized that people from that area were friendly and helpful. In the afternoon, I reached a village and villagers told me to wait for 2 hours. Then, some KNU officials arrived and took me to their base. They asked questions and then guaranteed me to return home.

## Prison Labor Interviews 1

**February 12, 2001**

**Interviewed by: MICB/DVB**

**Name: Maung Soe Naing**

**Prison Labor Camp: Ba-wa-thit (New Life Camp)**

Q: What is your name?

A: My name is Maung Soe Naing.

Q: When you stayed in prison and the labor camp, how were you and the other prisoners fed?

A: First there was a lot of rubbish in the rice they gave us and in the curry (soup) as well. Our teeth were almost broken because of this.

Q: Did you have enough to eat?

A: No, we didn't.

Q: How much food did you get?

A: We got just one mug full of food, (the green mug used in the army). Is this enough for one who has to do hard labor? Because they were being starved, there was much anger among the prisoners causing some physical fights.

Q: What about the conditions at the labor camp?

A: At the camp, people were forced to haul big logs, which is work that should be done by bulls. Do you think that the prisoners are able to do this work while they are all suffering from malnutrition? I don't think so. Yet they (the camp authorities) force them to do this work without providing them with enough food. They are tormenting people, and this causes deaths! These people no longer wanted to be alive. And there were also some people who hung themselves, losing their will to struggle.

Q: When you were at that '*ba-wa-thit'* (New Life Camp), how many people died in a month?

A: At least 20 or more died, I guess.

Q: Did you witness the deaths?

A: Yes, I did, I also had to bury the bodies.

Q: Did you also have to pull the 'plough'?

A: Of course, I had to, and I was also shot by a slingshot, and beaten many times with a bamboo rod.

Q: Would you tell me how you had to pull the plough? For example, was it pulled by one or two cows or only by men, how was it done?

A: The plough was pulled by five men. First, ropes were tied on the plough, then two men pulled on one side, the next two on the opposite side and one at the front; five total. The person in charge stood on top of the plough. To carry out this work, to keep the plough moving requires a lot of energy. How can this be done in two feet of mud and sludge by the people who were given no nourishing food? When they could not pull any more, the guards, who were prisoners favored by the authorities, began beating people, and shouting, "beat him!" "Pull it!" "Pull it!" And at last when they were unable to pull any more, they lay there rolling and suffering in the mud! There were many episodes like this.

Q: What are the main causes of the death, for example, do people die most

frequently because of starvation or illness or of something else? Or were they killed?

A: Most people die from a combination of starvation and ill treatment. There are many who died this way.

Q: What do you mean by 'ill treatment' ?

A: Ill treatment means forcing someone to do work, without thinking about what it means for the prisoner They expect you to do the work perfectly, whether you understand it or not. For example they may order someone to put plants in the ground, and an unskilled person may then put the plants in the wrong way. When they see this, the prison authorities will pull out the plants at once and beat him with bamboo rods. How can one endure such conditions? Finally a prisoner cannot bear the starvation any more and loses his will to live. For me also, I had committed no crime and was unfairly sentenced to prison in the first place.

Q: Is there anyone you know among the prisoners who died because of these conditions?

A: Five of my friends died.

Q: Can you recite their names, and addresses?

A: Oh! Yes. There was one of my dearest friends. His name was Maung Tun. The others were Win Naing, Myint Tun, Soe Paing (He was a Muslim) and Win Oo.

Q: Where did they die?

A: Four of my friends died at *'ba-wa-thit'* (New Life Camp). All who died were Muslims. Among them, Soe Paing isn't included in the list. I heard that he is still alive.

Q: So, just four died? Where did Maung Tun live?

A: In Zeyathiri, Maulamine.'

Q: And what about Win Oo?

A: He also lived in Zeyathiri.

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## Prison Labor Interview 2

**February 30, 2002**

**Interviewed by: MICB/DVB**

**Name: Aung Aung**

**Prison Labor Camp:**

Q: What is your name?

A: Aung Aung.

Q: Please describe how you fled from the labor camp?

A: We gathered a company of eight and discussed making an escape hole behind

the latrine. One person was left behind but seven of us got outside and escaped. And I came here (to Thailand), because I could not stay openly in Burma.

Q: Why did you flee from the camp?

A: We had to stay under very restricted conditions. The rations were very poor. And we were treated very cruelly.

Q: Please tell me what kind of work you had to do?

A: They forced us to do the kinds of work that should only be done by bulls. We were forced to pull logs, whether we knew how to or not. The guards beat the prisoners who didn't know how to do it. Many people died of being beaten.

Q: How many prisoners died this way each month?

A: Between four to ten prisoners died each month.

Q: If you paid a bribe would the soldier allow you to leave the camp?

A: When we reached the prison, we were told that in order not to be sent to the labor camps, we had to give a 10,000 Kyats bribe for each year of our sentence. I myself was sentenced for a year and six months, and so had to pay 15,000 Kyats. My family lived far from Mawlamyaing and they were poor. So I could not afford to pay the bribe that they asked for, and I was sent to the labor camp. At the labor camp, my mother came to see me. She had carried just a little money with her. She had to pay 200 kyats on arrival for the visit. After the visit was over, she had to put some more money into the 'donation box' once more. Because my mother had to travel a long way to come and visit me, she arrived at the camp late in the day. She was not allowed to visit me that day, but had to stay overnight. To stay overnight she had to give money to the squadron leader, the company commander, and the section commander. I knew that if she could not pay them, they would beat me and would order me to do the work of two or three men. Moreover they would take away my food, clothes, even my blanket.

Q: How old were you when you was sentenced?

A: Sixteen.

Q: How many young people like you were there in the prison?

A: While I was at the labor camp, there were four or five young people like me. There were more at the prison.

Q: Do you remember who died? Their names and addresses?

A: There was one of my friends, Kyaw Myint Oo (aka Mauk Di) He lived in Mawlamyaing. Another was a man named Musar, from Kyait-ma-yaw. He was sentenced to five years for trying to cross the Thai/Burma border without permission. He also could not endure the suffering any more, and died.

Q: What about meals?

A: The ration was just a cup of rice and some bean soup.

Q: Was it enough for you?

A: No.

Q: How did you survive on these rations?

A: We scavenged for various vegetables, and looking for raw meat such as fish, crab etc for our survival. If we caught cholera, the prison authorities would give us some medicine like *Burmeton*, one or two tablets. That's all. And they would say, "you liar!" "You just don't want to work." Then for lunch they would provide the sick people with a cup of boiled rice, and in the evening, they would only give them a half-cup of rice for dinner, saying that we got less food because we were liars. We didn't go to work because we were ill, but they assumed that we were total liars.

Q: What was your Prison Registration Number?

A: 1616/C

Q: Have you ever been to school?

A: No. I have done no schoolwork at all.

Q: Where do you live in Burma?

A: At Moulamine, Zay-ya-thiri street.

Q: What is your parents' profession?

A: My mother is a vendor, selling dried fish. My father sold ice when he was alive. After his death, I helped my mother at the bazaar.

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## Prison Labor Interview 3

**February 11, 2002**

**Interviewed by: MICB/DVB**

**Name: Nyi Zaw**

Q: How did you arrive in Thailand?

A: I fled.

Q: From where did you flee?

A: I fled from 'Ye-Tavoy' labor camp.

Q: Would you explain why and how you came to be at that camp?

A: I was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment, and was sent to the labor camp.

Q: What crime were you charged with?

A: I was imprisoned for murder.

Q: Please tell me about the jails you were in before being sent to the camp and how you ended up at the camp?

A: I was sent from 'Tanphyu-zayat' police station to 'Moulamine' prison where I was sentenced to 10 years and sent to the labor camp. I fled from the camp and arrived in this country (Thailand).

Q: Where did you live before you were imprisoned?

A: At 'Tha-thon town.

Q: Are you married?

A: Yes I was, but my wife and I got divorced.

Q: When? Prior to your imprisonment or after?

A: During my sentence.

Q: Did she remarry?

A: I don't know.

Q: How many children do you have? What are the names?

A: I have two. Maung Myo and Maung Tu.

Q: How old are they?

A: They are, I think, five and six years old now.

Q: What is your prison registration number?

A: I have forgotten it.

Q: How long were you in Mawlamyaing prison?

A: It was a long time. Nearly two years, I think.

Q: Please tell me the typical daily conditions you encountered at the 'Ye-Tavoy" camp that you have recently fled.

A: The daily conditions were very hard. We had to go to the work site in the morning and do the work that they forced us to do. The meals were inadequate, the work very hard, and there were not enough chances to bathe. We were tired all day, and then we had to sleep on a cold floor at night. Also we had to carry out sentry duty and so didn't get enough sleep. We were always hungry. In these conditions we were sure to die soon. This is why I had to run away.

Q: Were there any companions with you when you fled?

A: It was not easy to openly discuss plans to flee. If my partner was not trustworthy and informed the authorities, I would be killed. So I decided to flee on my own, believing that it was very likely that I would be caught and killed. I was willing to risk being caught and beaten to death, since if I stayed in the camp I might die from the hard labor.

Q: What year did you flee?

A: I fled in August or September 2001.

Q: How long did it take, from the time you first fled the labor camp, until you arrived in Thailand and were free?

A: It took a long time. Traveling through the jungle, I had to ask the Karen villagers I met along the way for help by telling them what had happened to me. I stayed there for six months and helped them with their farming. They gave me food and some clothes, as they were grateful to me for helping with their work. And because I could not go back to my home, they gave me a small amount of cash and sent me to Thailand through a path in the jungle. It is due to their assistance that I arrived here safely.

Q: How many prisoners did you witness being beaten to death when you were at the labor camp?

A: When I was there, I personally witnessed only one prisoner being beaten to death but, judging from the reports of other prisoners, many people were killed in this way.

Q: What was the age of the person you saw who was beaten to death?

A: He was just a young man, I heard he was imprisoned for deserting from the army.

Q: What was his name?

A: I don't remember. There were so many people and I didn't dare be inquisitive.

Q: Did you know the person who beat him, was it the jailor or the superintendent? What was his rank?

A: I don't know. When he was being beaten I had to stay in another place, because I was one of the new prisoners, so I could not see what happened. But from where I was I could hear the beating and the prisoner crying. There were other prisoners outside who were functioning as sentries and some of them saw what happened. I was so tired that I could not fall asleep, and so I heard the noise. In the morning I heard that the guy had died.

Q: Was there anyone who died of other causes like sickness or something else?

A: There was one. He was so pitiful; he was about to be released. His name was Ko Tin Myint and he was very simple (naive). I remembered he had been sent to prison for gambling in the 3-odds lottery. At that time, he was only 15 days away from being released. His family had just visited him. He became sick from gastritis and died just five days after his family's visit.

Q: Where did he live?

A: I don't know exactly. Maybe he was from Moulmaline Township.

Q: At the camp, what was the routine you had to carry out?

A: We had to get up at five o'clock in the morning and say our prayers. And we had to sit down as assume a squatting position with hand clasped behind the head till six o'clock. At six they unlocked the wards. We had breakfast (boiled rice) and immediately after that we set out in groups to go to the labor site. Those who were sent to the 'Ye-Tavoy' railroad site at the mountain valley had to work very hard, carrying big stones on their shoulders whether they were strong or not. Even worse, the wardens were continually beating them from behind. I could not endure these conditions any more and I thinking of my survival, I fled.

Q: How long did you stay at the camp?

A: About three or four months.

Q: How many people fled from the camp during that interval?

A: Oh! So many. I estimate that it would be nearly 20.

Q: You got up at six and went to the work sites from the camp, how far was it?

A: Too far. It was about five miles.

Q: How did you go?

A: By foot, and sometime we rode if we were lucky and there was a truck.

Q: In a month how many times did you go by foot and how many times by truck?

A: In a month, we would go by lorry 20 times and the rest of the time we would have to go on foot. But we always had to come back on foot.

Q: At the work site, when did you have a break in the morning?

A: The break was at 12 and we had our meal. Then we worked from one o'clock until five.

Q: When did you arrive back at your ward in the camp?

A: When we arrived back, it was about six-thirty or seven and we were not allowed to have a shower because it was already dark. We took our plates and got a meal from the cookhouse, then we took our rations into our ward and had dinner. After dinner it was time for some of us to sleep, some, though, had to take sentry duty.

Q: What about the rice ration? Was it enough?

A: It was not enough.

Q: What were the amount and the condition of the rice, and the curry?

A: It was a cup full of rice. The curry was usually boiled vegetables and water.

Q: How many times in a week did you have a meal with meat in it?

A: Meat, there was um…none. Rarely we got a little bit of dried-fish.

Q: In a month, how many times did you get dried-fish or meat?

A: To answer this, I never saw anything like meat, I recall only dried-fish.

Q: Can you explain the 'sentry duty' that you mentioned above?

A: That is the duty assigned to some prisoners to guard the other prisoners sleeping in the same ward, to prevent them from escaping. These guards had to shout aloud frequently one after the other whenever the sentry on guard outside ordered them to report.

Q: There is a regulation to give payment to the laborers, whether they are civilians, prisoners, or government servants. Did you get any payment when you were there?

A: We never got any payment.

Q: Did you ever hear that you were supposed to be given it?

A: No. I never heard that.

Q: Was there any reliable medical service?

A: There was a prisoner who acted as an army nurse, and took care of some minor illness such as headaches and stomachaches. If the prisoner had something like a high fever, then he would surely die.

Q: Didn't they give you any treatment?

A: That was just a notional treatment.

Q: Was there any prison doctor at the camp?

A: If there was, he was never seen.
Q: …Any officer or other personnel covering health problems?
A: One of the prisoners was chosen to do it.
Q: What was his name?
A: I did not know because he stayed inside- unlike us. We were outside all day.
Q: Was he a doctor or a male nurse?
A: I did not know. It heard that he also was a prisoner.
Q: How was the stone you had to carry shattered, by dynamite?
A: I did not know. When we were there we saw only piles of stone.
Q: Were there prisoners only or were there also civilians that labored at the site?
A: No civilians. Just prisoners.
Q: Was there any other machinery like cranes or heavy rollers?
A: There were none. We had to do everything without machines. To carry the stones to a far place, we had to carry and pile up them on an unused railway wagon and then we had to move it to the designated site by pulling and pushing. Sometimes the wagon fell down because of too much weight and we had to dive down away in order not to be injured.
Q: Was there any one who died in such accident?
A: I saw it once. The man did not die but was very seriously hurt. Because there were no brakes, going down hill**,** the bamboo rod made to support the wagon was wrecked and the wagon fell down and crashed. The stones scattered out and we had to dive to the ground to get away. One man was unlucky and was injured.
Q: Was there any opportunity to pay a bribe to get out of going to the labor camp when you were in Moulamine prison?
A: If you did not want to be sent to the camp, you had to give 10 thousand or 20 thousand Kyats.
Q: It was said that the bribe was 50 thousands for 5 years' sentenced person and 15 thousands for the one of one and a half years. Is it true?
A: Without doubt, it must be paid to get out of going, but I did not know the exact amount because I had no money and was occupied with my own assignment.
Q: In case some one wanted to be sent to the camp, how much did he have to pay?
A: He had to paid 20 thousand kyat and then he was able to live freely at the camp, as he could afford money.
Q: To which jailer was it paid?
A: I did not know exactly who was paid. There were many jailers.
Q: Who is the superintendent of the prison?
A: I'm not sure with his name, maybe U Win Maung.
Q: Do you remember any other names of the jailers?
A: U Soe Lwin, he was then our ward in charge. U Win Naing Oo, U Win Naing.

Q: At the camp, how much money was paid if one did not want to work?

A: Maybe a lot. The longer one was sentenced, the more one had to pay. Someone who had three or four months until being released had to pay ten or 20 thousand. I remembered a fat warden; his name was Sa-ya (Master) Zaw Win. He was very bad. To have a family visit, one had to bribe him with a bottle of alcohol and if not, he didn't allow it. I saw families waiting outside the camp eagerly to meet with their family members. If the family had paid the bribe, the warden fetched the prisoner at once and let them meet outside the gate, even for a whole night sometimes.

Q: Who is the most senior officer at the camp?

A: The superintendent. I don't remember his name. We didn't deal with him much. I heard he was identified as 'captain'. I did not know his name. He never came to us, and therefore we only knew familiar officers (jailers).

Q: What are their names?

A: There was a jailer named Aung Kyi Myint. He was a nice man.

Q: How many jailers were there?

A: Two, another one was very bad. The name was Khin Maung Myint.

Q: How was he bad?

A: He was good with those who bribed him and not good with others. I don't know how to explain but I really knew that he was bad. The nice jailer was not like him; whenever he passed by us, he looked around and if he found someone smoking a tiny bit of cigar he gave him some money to buy a new one. And also said "take care of your health." He consoled us. There were clashes among them.

Q: What about the bad person 'Khin Maung Myint'. How much would he earn by bribing from the prisoners?

A: If one family visit rated ten thousands Kyats, then he would earn a total of 100 thousand kyat. In each operation of the camp, some prisoners were the superintendent's men and some the jailers' men. But the nice jailer was unlike them. Whenever we were in need, he gave us our money back. He also gave us cigarettes. He came to us check how we were having our meals. If he found someone ill, he ordered the nurse (prisoner) to treat them.

Q: At 'Ye-Tavoy' camp, the superintendent chose some prisoners to do some job, it was said. What did they have to do?

A: They had to work at private factories like carpentry.

Q: Who took the wages for that labor?

A: The superintendent took it because it was his own scheme. He already had links with those factory owners. The prisoners who were about to be released- with only four or five months ahead them- were told that their attempts at fleeing would effect them with an extra imprisonment. Another reason [for them not to flee] was that work was easier than in the camp and they got sufficient food.

Q: How many prisoners were affected?

A: About 30.

***# Photos***




*Only a week after the photos above (in the last week of April 2001), yet another group of villagers from the same village heads off for forced labour at the SPDC's yyyy Army camp. This time they have been ordered to go to cut bamboo and build fences, but they are also taking along a few more shingles of thatch they have been ordered to bring. Note the young girls and boys among the group; many parents have no option but to send their children so that the adults can continue working to produce food for the family. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*




A-16


A-22


A-23

*Photos #A21, A22, A23: On the morning of February 25th 2001 the people of seven villages in xxxx township (Thaton District) received orders from Bo aaaa, a camp commander for Column x of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx, to cut 1,000 bamboo posts per village and deliver them to yyyy Army camp within 3 days. He threatened that any village which failed to comply would be shelled with mortars. In Photo #A21, the people of one of the villages gather and check their machetes before going for the labour. Photos #A22 and A23 were taken after some of them had returned and were setting out to deliver the bamboo to the camp. When they arrived at the camp they were ordered to do forced labour erecting fences and buildings using the bamboo they had brought. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*



*Photo #A24: In April 2001, villagers in xxxx village (southwestern Dweh Loh township, Papun District) carry bamboo to the riverbank, where they will tie it into rafts and float it to the camp of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx (part of Division #33). On April 27th the Battalion ordered the village to cut and deliver 1,500 pieces of bamboo by the following day, the 28th. Despite the near-impossibility of cutting and delivering so much bamboo in such a short time, the villagers must drop everything they are doing and try to comply or their village may be forced to relocate and destroyed for being 'uncooperative'. At the same time they face regular demands for thatch and various forms of forced labour and extortion; even after delivering this bamboo, they will be forced to go to the camp to build things with it, while the officers may sell some of it for their own profit. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photos #A26, A27: Villagers in xxxx village (southwestern Dweh Loh township, Papun District) bring shingles of thatch they have made to the riverbank and stack them on a bamboo raft for delivery to the camp of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx in late April 2001. Battalions regularly send out orders to every village in the area to supply several hundred shingles of thatch at a time, an indirect form of forced labour making villagers gather leaves and bamboo, split the bamboo into frames and ties, then tie the leaves onto the frames and deliver the shingles to the camp. They receive no payment whatsoever for this work. Villagers are then called for forced labour roofing the Battalion buildings with the thatch, though some is also sold by the officers for their own profit. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*



A-26



A-27







***Photos #A29, A30, A31, A32: Forced labour logging in southern Papun District, April 2001. Villages in the area are regularly ordered to provide several tons at a time of raw or milled teak and ironwood logs to SPDC Army camps, which are then sold for the profit of the officers, or occasionally used for building. In <u>Photos #A29</u> and <u>A30</u> villagers from xxxx and yyyy villages lever a large teak tree they have cut onto a bullock cart for transport to a sawmill owned by a villager or trader, where the logs are squared at the expense of the owner (<u>Photo #A31</u>). After they. [Photos: KHRG researcher]***

***are squared, the villagers load them onto an SPDC Army truck (<u>Photos #A32 and A33</u>) by night for transport to the Army camp the following morning. The people of these villages say that because they live around the zzzz forest they are constantly forced to do logging for both the SPDC and the DKBA. [Photos: KHRG researcher]***



**A-31**



**A-32**






*Photos #A38, A39, A40, A41: Villagers in xxxx township, Thaton District, move logs and saw them into planks in May 2001. They were ordered to provide the planks to the local SPDC authorities, and were paid nothing. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*



A-40



A-41


A-42

*Photos #A42, A43: Each villager carries their one or two planks, as ordered by the SPDC, to the forced labour site where they are to build a large primary school in xxxx village, xxxx Township, Thaton District. Photo #43 shows the building work half-completed in May 2001. While the villagers are forced to build these schools and provide the materials, they are also forced to pay extortion money in the name of the school project, most of which goes into the pockets of the SPDC authorities. Once the school is finished, they are forced to pay for the teachers and teaching materials and pay fees to send their children to the school, where Karen language is forbidden and a strictly SPDC-controlled curriculum must be taught. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*






*Photo #A45: Villagers in Bilin township (Thaton District) do forced labour on March 25th 2001 hauling logs to yyyy camp of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx, Column x. In this case, the owners of 3 bullock carts were ordered to do forced labour hauling logs. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photos #A48, A49: People in xxxx village, southwestern Dweh Loh township, Papun District, leave their fenced-in village on March 27th 2001 to go for forced labour. They have been ordered to carry rations from the roadhead to outlying Army camps of SPDC Light Infantry Division #33, a type of forced labour which most villages must do at least once or twice a month. The order usually specifies either that one person from every house must come, or everyone above age 12; hence the large numbers of women and adolescents. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*






*Photo #A65: Three men in Bilin township (Thaton District) just after returning from forced labour they were ordered to do carrying rations for SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx on April 12th 2001. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*

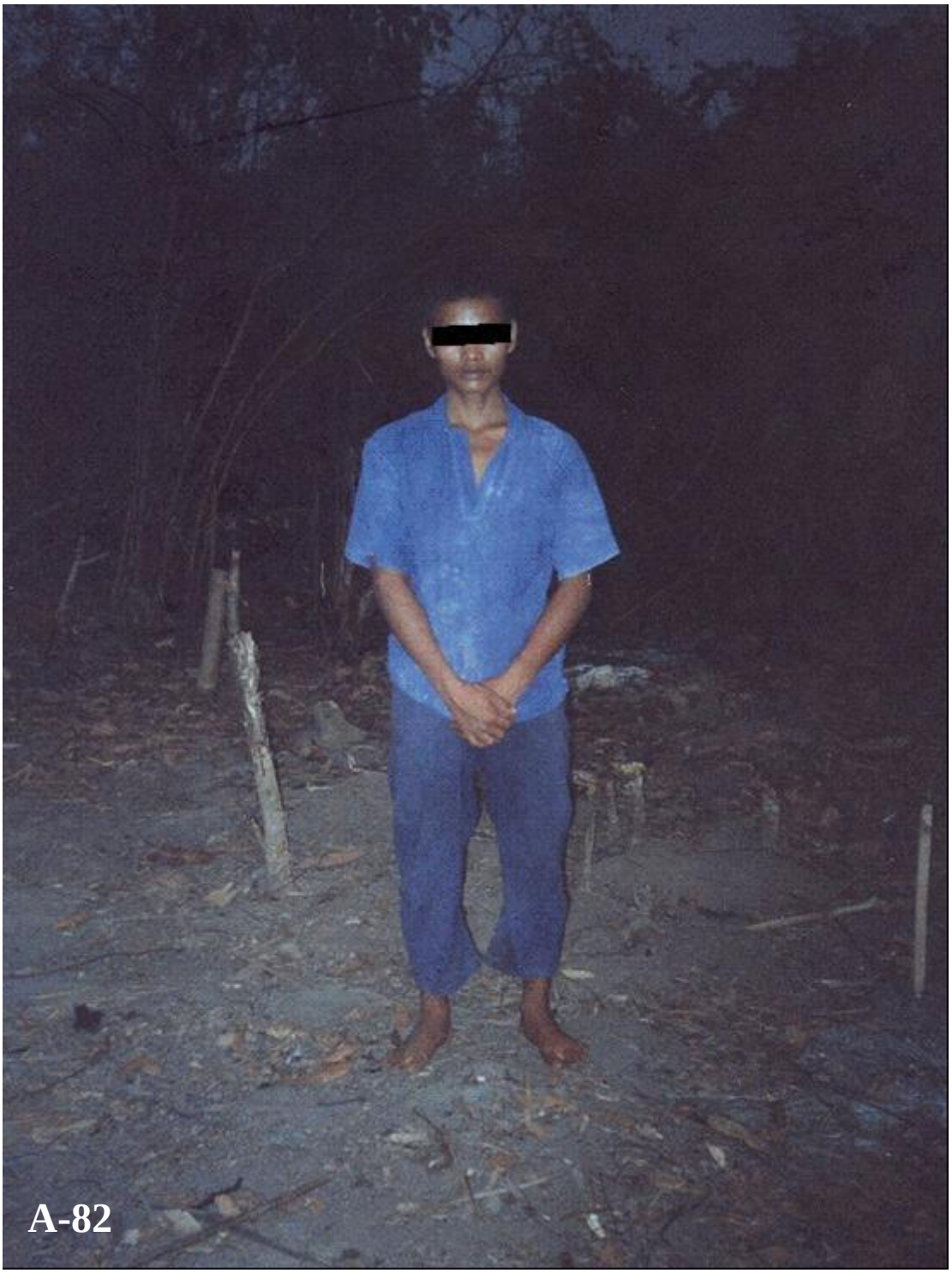



*Photo #A68: Saw P— from xxxx village in Papun District. He was forced to go as a porter for LIB #356 and IB #231, and says that when he couldn't carry the soldiers beat him, kicked his back and punched his face. He couldn't bear it any longer so he fled alone at night. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photos #A80, A81, A82: Some of a group of 8 prison convicts aged 18-52 who escaped in March 2001 while doing forced portering for SPDC troops in Papun District, still wearing their coarse cloth prison uniforms. These convicts were taken from Bassein and Pyi prisons to do forced labour in combat situations; they say that their groups consisted of 75 prisoners from Bassein prison and 70 from Pyi prison. More and more convicts are being forced to the frontlines as porters for SPDC units; some are promised reductions in their sentences, but these promises are not kept and they are usually kept until they die or escape. Convict porters are treated particularly brutally and the death rate is very high. There are reports that police in Burma are arresting many innocent people on nebulous charges such as 'hiding in the dark' simply so they can be sent to the frontlines for forced labour. For more information see "Convict Porters" (KHRG #2000-06, 20/12/2000). [Photos: KHRG researcher]*

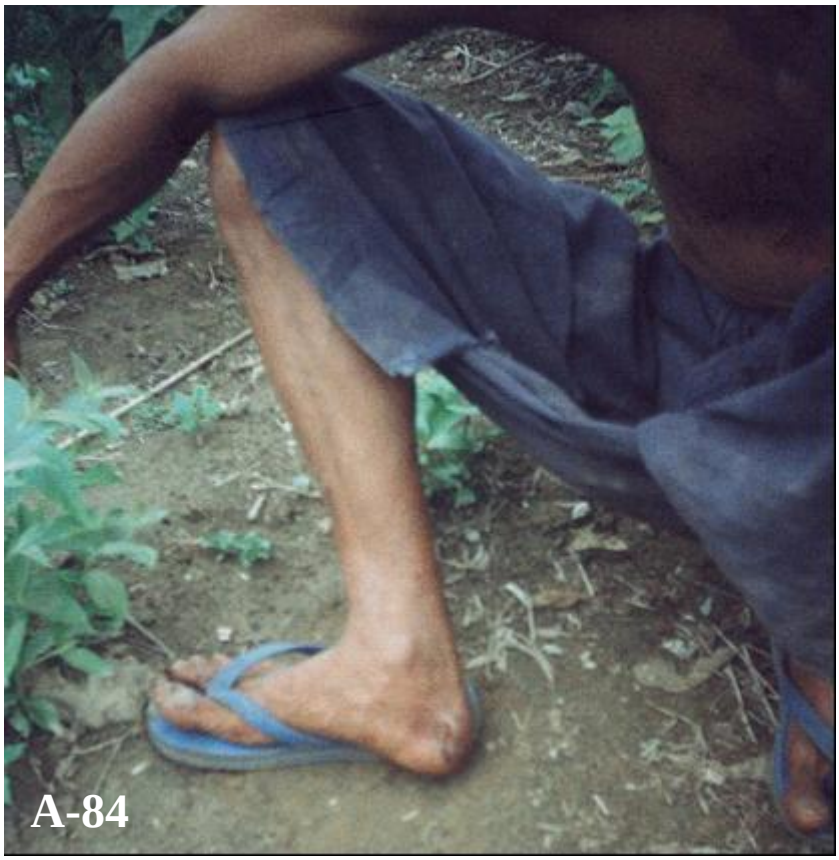





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*Photos #A83, A84, A85: The escaped convict porters in Photos #A80, A81 and A82 show some of the wounds they got from carrying heavy loads on the neck (Photo #A83), shoulders (Photo #A84) and feet (Photo #A85). [Photos: KHRG researcher]*




A-85




*Photo #A86: Four prison convicts aged (left to right) 22, 38, 31, and 39, who escaped while being used as combat porters in Papun District in March 2001, most of them still wearing prison clothing. These four prisoners were taken from Pyi Taung, Hintha Da, and Bassein prisons. The SPDC has been making extensive use of convicts as porters, and they are treated brutally. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*

# 2. Extra-judicial Killing, Summary or Arbitrary Execution

## 2.1 Background

During 2001, there continued to be reports of arbitrary and summery executions, rape, torture and physical assualt committed against civilians by SPDC troops and their allies The military officers and rank and file soldiers of the SPDC army battalions, leaders and members of the SPDC endorsed people's militias ("pyi thu sit"), and other SPDC officials including MI, and Police were the perpetrators of these crimes. These acts of violence were largely committed against ethnic minority members living in armed conflict areas. Executions were largely committed against people suspected of being members or sympathizers of armed ethnic opposition groups and villagers enduring forced labor and portering duties. Summary killings also took place in the course of capturing villagers for the purpose of forced labor and portering. Women are commonly killed by soldiers after being raped for fear of leaving evidence of their crimes. Troops regularly commit these crimes with impunity, and in many cases complaints made by the victim or victim's families are met with indifference, reprisals or threats of reprisals.

Many arbitrary executions are carried out in line with SPDC's "Four-Cuts" policy, which is practiced in the areas of armed ethnic conflict against the ethnic minority villagers. According to this policy, the SPDC army has aimed to cut support to the opposition through mass relocations of villagers to areas under army control. Through detaining, torturing and executing villagers and village elders and leaders considered to have any contact with the opposition. Villagers found outside of SPDC controlled areas, including villagers in hiding from the army, and villagers outside of forced relocation sites are often assumed to be rebels or rebel supporters. Indeed, accusing a villager of being a rebel soldier, a relative of a rebel soldier, or helping rebel soldiers in any way is an accusation punishable by death. Villagers in resistance areas fear traveling outside their village, especially to tend their hill fields in the jungle, because they risk discovery by SPDC troops on patrol and the inevitable accusation of rebel activity. Villagers seen outside of SPDC controlled areas or villages are often shot on sight by patrolling troops without any kind of warning. As most accusations of rebel association are unfounded, this system can be used to execute almost anyone; for example, woman found in a village without their husbands are often accused of being 'married to a rebel soldier'. Villagers can also be executed for simply carrying food in areas outside SPDC control, as the army assumes that the food is to supply rebel troops.

According to Karen Human Rights Group, "villagers shot by the soldiers are sometimes able to escape after being shot, only to die later from loss of blood. The soldiers often don't bother to take the time to see what happened to the person they

shot at. Other wounded villagers have fallen where they were hit, but rather than capturing them the soldiers have finished them off by shooting them at close range or stabbing them with their bayonets. The dead are often searched and robbed of whatever valuables they have on them. Sometimes the soldiers have mutilated the corpses. A villager from Kyauk Kyi township who was shot dead in January 2000 was later found with his liver and intestines cut out and his penis and testicles cut off. Even if the villagers are able to escape with their wounds there is little or no medicine to treat them and recovery is slow. Many die later from complications due to inadequate treatment, lack of proper medicines, infection or the need to continue fleeing, even if their original wound was relatively minor...

The soldiers shoot at men, women and children even when it is obvious that it is women and children that they are shooting at. It is difficult to see very far in the forest so most shooting incidents occur at close range where it should be obvious that the targets are women and children. In the open fields it should also be obvious to the soldiers who their targets are.....Villagers often express their bewilderment as to why the soldiers are shooting at them when they are unarmed civilians and have done nothing to the soldiers or to Burman villagers. Most villagers believe it is a part of a plan to exterminate the Karen people.

Hillside rice fields are open patches in the forest and are clearly visible from one or two hills away. At weeding time (August) and harvest time (October-December), more SPDC patrols are sent out to look for groups of villagers working in these fields and open fire on them. Working in family groups, they make an easy target even from a distance. Troops also watch for smoke from the burning off of hillfields in March-April, and smoke from cookfires at the villagers' hiding places. Some displaced villagers have resorted to harvesting only by night with KNLA troops posted for security. When the SPDC soldiers are too far away to use their small arms they have used mortars to shell the villagers. If they see cooking smoke in the distance they fire a mortar shell at it. Even when they cannot find any villagers, they sometimes 'walk' their mortar shells up the valley of a stream (meaning to shell the whole streambed, aiming progressively further away) on the assumption that villagers may be hiding there. This method of attacking the villagers is more to harass them, but it does kill and it certainly can't be claimed that the soldiers were trying to capture anyone.

The soldiers usually don't call out to the villagers before they open fire. If the soldiers call out to the villagers it is usually only a split second before pulling their triggers, and the villagers are given no time to respond. Attacks on villages and IDP hiding places are carried out as military operations, sometimes including supporting mortar fire. The soldiers sometimes arrive quietly and silently observe the villagers before attacking them, giving them ample time to see that it is unarmed villagers theyare about to attack. Other times outright ambushes are laid to trap and kill the villagers. In most cases the soldiers come so close to the villagers that there can be no doubt that the people being shot at are unarmed civilians,

including women, children and the elderly. Villagers automatically run whenever they see the soldiers or hear gunfire because they know that to remain would probably mean being shot, or at best being detained and tortured or taken as a porter." (Source: KHRG, Flight, Hunger and Survival: Repression and Displacement in the Villages of Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, October 2001)

## 2.2 Extra-judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions – partial list of incidents 2001

*(see the chapters on forced labor, women, children and torture for further incidents)*

### Karen State

On July 3, 2001 troops from SPDC LIB 101 led by commander Zaw Naing Oo and DKBA troops led by Pah Ni Tho arrrived in To-tet-kee area where villagers were hiding. The troops discovered villager, Pah Ket Shee, in his rice field and opened fire, killing him on the spot. After killing him the troops burned down huts in the area and confiscated the property abandoned by the villagers. (Source: CIDKP)

On April 10, 2001, troops from Infantry Battalion 285 led by Major Ba Thet arrived in Me Ke Hkee village and shot to death a villager name Saw Po Pre, 50. The troops has burnt down his house completely including 60 baskets of paddy and all his belongings. (Source: KNU)

On March 27, 2001, a group of SPDC's troops known as 'guerrilla troops' entered to Pa-ta-la village, Karen State and executed Maung Yee Peh, male, 46, without any reason. (Source: CIDKP)

#### Nyaung-lin-bin District

On December 23, 2001 troops from SPDC LIB 350 arrested and killed Kaw-tha-say villager, Saw Ler Kyay, without reason in Nyaung-lin-bin District, Karen State. (Source: KIC)

On November 17, 2001, at 1:30 pm, combined troops of SPDC LID 44 and DKBA troops came to Kwee-lah village, Nyaung-lin-bin District, Karen State and shot at villagers while they were in their paddy field, killing villager Saw Ba Blu. After killing Saw Ba Blu, the troops looted all of his possessions. (Source: KIC)

On November 12, 2001 at 2:00 pm, combined troops of SPDC IB 73, led by San Myint, and a guerrilla unit, came to Saw-kai-khee village, Kwee-dee-kaw village tract, Mone Township, Nyaung-lin-bin District, Karen State and seized villagers and students in classes, without reason, killing villager Saw Pah Ka. Villagers arrested were Saw Ah Ray Lo Ni, Naw No Ywa, Naw Thaw Htoo Paw Naw Moo Mo and her daughter Naw Thaw Gay Set Lar. Students arrested were Naw Eh Hser Paw,

Saw Law Ba Htoo, Saw Myo Say, Saw Ka Paw Wah, Saw Ka Lu Taw, Naw Chit Play, Naw Shai Baw Paw, Naw Htee Ta Paw and Naw Hser Nay Kaw Paw. The army later released Saw Ah Ray Lo Ni and took the rest to Mone Town, on November 21, 2001. (Source: KIC)

On October 23, 2001, troops from a unit of SPDC shot and killed Ler-kla villager Saw Di Shee without any reason in Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State. (Source: KIC)

On September 29, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 440 led by major Myat Swe combined with troops from the so-called SPDC guerrilla unit led by Kyaw Kyaw came to Thet-baw-doe village, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State and shot and killed villager Saw Bi Klo without reason. (Source: KIC)

On September 26, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 440 came to Thet-baw-doe village, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State, and killed villager, Saw Be Ko, without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On August 22, 2001, the combined troops of SPDC LIB- 503 /17/301 entered Saw Tay Der village tract area, near Mon township. On August 23 they found and shot and dead Saw Tay Der villagers (1) Saw Heh Lay, age 51, Saw Eh Blu alias Ah Li Sha, age 29, Naw Ma Gret, age 61. (Source: KORD)

On May 29, 2001, the SPDC guerilla troop led by Thin Lwin entered Weh Gyi village, near Mon township and shot and killed a villager namely Saw Paw Rah age (28) at the same time destroyed 4 water pump engines of Byet Kyeh villager. The troop also seized and beaten up 4 villagers of Haw Kho Gaw village. They were;- Saw Htee Mya, Saw Hto Be Bay, Saw Moe Kyaw and Saw Kwe Lay Lo. Mover over the troop extorted kyats 60,000 from those villagers by accusing them of communicating with Nga Pway (Karen Resistance Group) (Source: KORD)

On May 16, 2001, SPDC troops, from LIB-120 entered in to the paddy farms of the villagers in the No-2 zone area in Shwe Kyin township and shot at villagers working in the farms. One villager, Saw Kyaw Khin, 30, son of Saw Kyaw Mya died on the spot. After shooting at the villagers there, their troop took and ate 2 tins of white rice, took 6 cooking pots, clothing including blankets and poured out 5 baskets of paddy and finally burnt out all paddy huts of the villagers. (Source: KORD)

On May 4th 2001, Battalion #19 killed a villager in his house at Paw Dee Der village, Bwah Der village tract, Bu Tho township. His name was Saw Pa Dway, 38 years old, and he was mentally handicapped. His mother and father are dead and he was staying with his siblings. His siblings told him to flee and stay outside the village when the Burmese came, but he didn't listen. He stayed in the house. The people fled for two days and he didn't get any rice to eat. He didn't die from hunger though. The Burmese shot him dead. They shot him five or six times. The next morning the people buried him. (Source: field report from KHRG field

researcher (Field Report #21, 5/01)

On March 27, 2001, the SPDC so-called guerrilla troops killed Pa-ta-la villager, Maung Yee Peh (M, 46), without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On March 9, 2001, Mae-yai-khee villager Saw Po Dah was shot to death, with out reason, by SPDC troops. (Source: KIC)

On February 8, 2001, Camp Commander Zaw Win Htay of SPDC LIB 349, beat to death Chone-in villager Maung Moe, without any reason. (Source: KIC)

**Doo-pla-ya District**

On December 24, 2001, DKBA troops from brigade 999 seized Pah Naw Htay (m), age 35 from Htee-moo-hta village, Kaw-ka-reik Township, Dooplaya District, Karen State and took him to DKBA Kok-ko camp and killed him without reason. (Source: KIC)

On October 29, 2001, at 9:14 hours, troops from a KNLA battalion clashed with troops from a column of SPDC LIB 283 in Kyauk-kwa village, Dooplaya District, Karen State (a village close to the Thai-Burma border) in Kaw-ka-reik Township. During the clash the SPDC troops shot and wounded village head Saw Maung Pya (M, 48) and villager Saw Thaung Nyin Paw (M, 28) of that village. After the clash the SPDC troops gathered the villagers at the village monastery. While they were gathering the villagers, at 0930 hours, the troops shot to death the wounded village head Saw Kyaw Aye and villager Saw Thaung Nyin Paw in the house of Saw Kyaw Aye, (M, 60). Those troops also searched and arrested Saw Maung Kyi (M, 50) who was hiding and tortured him. After that, those troops looted 5,000 Thai Baht, some Burmese currency, utensils, clothing and rice from the house of Saw Kyaw Aye. Those troops went to search in the houses of Kyauk-kwa villagers and looted all household materials they want making the total worth about 40,000 Baht. Due to the shooting to death, looting and torturing, the villagers no longer dare to live in the village and they fled away and hid in the jungle. (Source: KIC)

On October 12, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 548 led by column 2 commander, Marjor Nay Myo came to Kweeh-kler village of Kaw-ka-riek Township, Dooplaya District, Karen State and killed Saw Pah Ta Ler (M, 23), son of Saw Lu Pu without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On October 10, 2001, at 10:15, troops from SPDC LIB 548 column 1 led by commander Nai Lwin came to Tha-min-lit village, Kya-in Township, Dooplaya District, Karen State and shot and killed without reason, Saw Mu Tu M, 26, son of Saw Tin Htun and looted all household items found in his house a some from other villagers. (Source: KIC)

In the month of April 2001, a group of Burma Army's troop from Light Infantry Battalion 548 and 549 led by Company Commander Aung Khain Soe has arrived to an internally displaced people hiding site between Wah Blaw Lu and Ta Kaw Htee,

in Kya Aye Township, Doo Pla Ya District and open fire on the hiding villagers. Two villagers were killed and another two escaped wounded. (Source: Mergui-Tavoy District Information Department)

On March 5, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 549, shot to death a farmer at his hut, near Ta-aye-shay village, Noh-po-klo area, and looted from him various items worth about 20,000 Kyat. (Source: KIC)

**Pa-pun District**

On December 2, 2001 SPDC troops seized Saw Thein Shwe of Keh-leh-doe village, Lu-thaw township, Papun District, Karen State took him to Maw-poo and extorted from him 20,000 Kyat and 200 Baht. These troops also looted a bag of clothing from Keh-leh-doe villager Saw Shwe Kyai Doo. On same day at 08:30 am, these troops shot and killed Htaw-thu-doe villager, Saw Nay Gay Htoo (m) age 20, and looted from him 130,000 Kyat. They also looted food and household items from other villagers. (Source: KIC)

On November 20, 2001, combined troops of SPDC LIB 17 and 503 shot and killed without reason, Saw Thein Swe (m), age 50, Saw Ba Htoo (m), age 40, and Saw Pa Hla Yweh (m), age 50 from Ma-mee-pu village, Lu-thaw Township, Papun District, Karen State. These troops also looted some of their possessions. (Source: KIC)

On November 10, 2001, at 16:30 hours, troops from SPDC No. 503 battalion, column 1 shot and killed Baw-lay-doe villager Saw Hai Ha (M, 65), without reason in Papun District, Karen State. (Source: KIC)

On July 25, 2001, a group of SPDC troops came to Htee-pway-kee village and killed villager Naw Yeh (F, 32) and arrested Saw Maung Deh (M, 34) and took him with them. (Source: KIC)

On July 25, 2001, a group of SPDC troops came to Htee-pway-kee village, Papun District, Karen State and killed villager Naw Yeh (f), age 32, and arrested and abducted Saw Maung Deh (m), age 34. (Source: KIC)

On May 15, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 247, under LID 77, led by battalion commander Win Myint came into Deh-hta village in Lay-kor-hti area, Papun District, Karen State and shot to death Pah Kyi Noe, M-27, son of Saw Maung Nyien, without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On May 4, 2001, at 1020 hours, troops from SPDC LIB 19, came to Paw-dee-doe village, Papun District, Karen State and shot to death the village head Saw Pah Dee, M, 35, without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On April 27, 2001, Second lieutenant Htoo Loo from DKBA Ka-hsaw-wah battalion came to Ka-thay-kee village, Papun District, Karen State and shot to death villager, Saw Eh Paw, M, 40. (Source: KIC)

On April 11, 2001, at 1530 hours, combined troops from SPDC IB 36, led by battalion commander Tin Lin, and DKBA Ka Hsaw Wah battalion, led by Bo Ba Yo, Pah Si and Kyaw Khaing, came to Mae-nyu-ta village. On 12-4-2001, the troops left Mae-nyu-ta and, on their way, looted 2 baskets of rice, 12 chickens, 2 pigs and 30 baskets of paddy from Bo-ler-der villagers, Papun District, Karen State. Moreover, they burnt down a barn, a hut and a house of villager Saw Law Bo. In their indiscriminate shooting at Bo-ler-der villagers they killed Saw Bay Clay (M, 19) and wounded Saw Pah Di (M, 50) and his child. (Source: KIC)

March 16, 2001, the SPDC LIB 76, battalion commander Min Kyi Oo and his soldiers shot and killed villagers who came back from a festival between Ma Lay Ler and Kwee Ta Ma, Papun District. Two villagers died and one was wounded as a result. They were (1). Maw Soe Myint, age (20) the Ka Neh Khaw Hla villagers (2) Saw Eh Ka, age (25) the Ka Neh Khaw Hta villager and (3) Saw Maw Hla, age (26), the Lay Khee villager. (Source: KORD/KIC)

On January 9, 2001, troops from SPDC IB-340 entered in to Kayhta village, Papun District, Karen State and shot and killed Saw T'pay, age 50. Then they forcefully took 10 tins of white rice, 5 boxes with different kind of things inside and 20 visses of chicken and seized 5 villagers and forced them to go along with them and carry things for their troops. (Source: KORD)

**Thaton District**

On December 23, 2001, soldiers from SPDC IB-6 came to Paw-gi-khee village, Bilin Township, Thaton District, Karen State and shot to death Mae-naw-theh village secretary without reason. These troops then entered the house of Tee Hsa Doo and looted money and household items, and destroyed all the paddy they found. They then seized and tortured Saw Aung Htun (m),age 30, son of Tee Hsa Doo and took from him a wristwatch and a pair of shoes. (Source: KIC)

On December 11, 2001, soldiers from SPDC LIB-313, under LID-77, shot and killed Khaw-po-peh villager Ma Yu Pi (f), age 19, daughter of Maung Nyo and Moo Mu, without reason in Thaton District, Karen State. (Source: KIC)

On August 3, 2001 at 3:00pm in the evening a group of SPDC troop IB-124 based in (Ba Yint Naung Ta Myo) Ba Yint Noung Military town led by the battalion commander Thu Ra Saw Mya Thoung found and raped a young woman Naw Moo Kler, 20 years old. The troop found and raped her at the place between Than Doung Gyi and Kyauk Kone, section (5), Than Daung Township and after they finished the troop killed her. Naw Moo Kler was a teacher, living in Than Doung town, section (2) and her father's name is Saw Khin Maung. The troop also took 1 golden necklace, 1 golden ring and 1 watch that would cost 100,000 kyats from her. (Source: KORD, KIC)

On July 14, 2001, the SPDC, LIB-30, column led by Cap- Thain Htun shot and killed 2 Wa Tho Kho villagers beside Kaw Thay Der village called Tha Ker Hta,

Than Daung Township. The 2 villagers who were shot dead were (1) Saw Ah Po Lo, 33 years, son of Saw Ho Ra and Naw Lah Yu. (Source: KORD)

On May 13, 2001, the SPDC division (77) LIB-106 led by the second battalion commander Soe Lu La entered Htaw Klaw Khee village and shot and killed a villager namely Tee Oo Tin, age-60. On 14/5/2001, at 8:00pm, the same troop of SPDC division (77) LIB-106, led by the battalion commander Chong Toe and second commander Soe Lu La entered Htee Pa Doh Hta village and arrested 2 villagers namely Saw Pah Kyah, age-28 and his wife Ma Mya Aye, age-26. The troop tied them up, took them back to their base camp at Yo Klah and violently tortured them and set them free. (Source: KORD, KIC)

**Pa-an District**

On December 19, 2001 combined troops from DKBA brigade 999 led by battalion commander Bo Ga Don and SPDC IB-35 (a total of about 120 troops), came to Thay-po-kyu place, Thay-doh-kwee village in the Mae-pa-leh area, Pa-an District, Karen State and shot and killed Pa-klo villager Saw Pah Bi (m) age 41, son of Saw Kyaw Yin, and Toe-kor-ko villager Saw Keh Keh (m) age 17 , son of Saw Pa Gay, after accusing them of being KNU spies. (Source: KIC).

On September 11, 2001, at 15:20, troops from SPDC LIB 10 burnt down 2 houses in Htee-mo-kee village, Pa-an District, Karen State without any reason. On the same day, troops from SPDC IB 108 killed a villager from Hgaw-tho-kee and one villager was tortured. (Source: KIC)

On September 10, 2001, at 2: 45 pm the combined troops of SPDC and DKBA IB-11, led by the commander Htun Myint came down and shot at the boats of villagers in the area of Taw U Hta village in (Ta Nay Chah ) Na Boo township so that one villager died, one wounded and the troop also took one Honda boat engine. People shot by the troop were (1) Maung Ma Pu (2) Saw De (3) Saw La Eh. They are the Nya Mu Klo villagers and among them one villager was captured by the troops. (Source: KORD)

On May 23, 2001, in the morning about 7 am, the DKBA -999, special battalion, led by Pah Mee Tout shot and killed a woman villager Mu Ga Ma La O, La Ni village, Lu Pleh township, Pa-an district near the sugarcane plantation. (Source: KORD)

On May 21, 2001, at 2:35 PM, some DKBA troops, led by Tha Khi came into Htee-law-theh-hta village and shot to death villagers Po Yoe (alias) Way Nay and Saw Kya Aye, M-30, without any reason. (Source: KIC)

**Toun-goo District**

On July 14, 2001, Sergeant Tin Htun from column 2 of SPDC IB 30, led by company commander Thein Htun, killed 2 Wah-tho-ko villagers at Tha-hger-ta near Gaw-thay-der village without reason. The victims were: (1) Saw Ah Po Lo

(M, 33), son of Saw Tha Kyaw and Naw Ma Ngae and (2) Saw Htoo Maung (M, 25), son of Saw Ho Ka Ra and Naw Hla Yu. At the present, SPDC troops restricted the villagers in various ways, in addition to demanding food and forced labor to work for the military. (Source: KIC)

On June 8, 2001, at 9:00 a.m., a column from SPDC IB 75, came into Kho-lu village, Toungoo District, Karen State and shot to death Naw Pler, daughter of village head, Saw Meh Nay Kya, at Kwe-hta in Kho-lu area. These troops constantly demanded from Klaw-mee-doe, Hu-mu-doe and Ler-kla-doe villages money, meat and various items and also porters and runners to carry supplies. (Source: KIC)

On May 20, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 75, came into Wah-lor-klo village, Toungoo District, Karen State and shot to death villager, Saw Poo Lu, and looted from him 88,000 Kyat, 4 gold necklaces each weighing16-gm, 4 gold rings and 4 pairs of earrings. (Source: KIC)

In the second week of January 2001, a group of SPDC's soldiers led by Lt.Col. San Myint from Infantry Battalion 73 shot dead a 40-year-old woman in Hsaw Wah Der village, Taungoo district, in Karen state. Naw Boe was collecting vegetables in the forest when a group of SPDC soldiers appeared and immediately opened fire on her. She was hit by the bullets and died on the spot. The SPDC troops defined that area as a free fire zone after forcibly relocating the villagers away from there. The soldiers shoot anyone on sight without any questions in this area and conduct regular patrols to search for villagers who are not going to forced relocation sites and are hiding behind in their villages. This is a systematic practice by the SPDC troops to eliminate the ethnic resistance groups by deliberately targeting the civilian population. Villagers who do not go to the SPDC's designated relocation sites, the SPDC consider as resistance supporters. There are 25 SPDC battalions active in the area around Hsaw Wah Der village, Kaw Thay Der area, in Taungoo District. Most of the local villagers here are farmers. (Source: CIDKP)

**Mergui/Tavoy District**

On December 18, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 561, led by Bo Thant Zin, shot and killed two Ta-po-hta villagers: (1) Khar Maung Di 14, son of Saw Na Ha and Naw Lah Lah, and (2) Saw Baw Htoo, 16, son of Saw Meh Doe and Naw Dee Aye, without reason, while they were grazing their buffaloes in Mergui/Tavoy District. (Source: KIC)

On December 2, 2001 SPDC number 13 Special Commando Unit, Local Military Operation Command 13, led by Lieutenant Colonel Lwin Maung Soe, came to Peh-htaw-khee area in Ler-mu-lah Township, Mergui/Tavoy District and seized andexecuted Toe-kha-khee villager, Saw Aye Kyai (m) age 35, on the spot, without reason. (Source: KIC)

On November 22, 2001, at 7:00 pm, troops from SPDC IB 262, led by battalion commander Tin Htoo, arrested Ta-ket village cattle traders, Maung Ka Nai, Sin



The old woman, Naw Boe was just collecting vegetable but soldiers from IB (73) shot killed her as soon as they saw her. That practice (to kill local villagers) including women, children was the usual practice by the SPDC troops.

Myaing and Than Jaung at Lay-ka-bla in Mergui/Tavoy District. After looting two gold necklaces worth 50,000 Kyat each from Maung Ka Nai and Than Jaung, they shot and killed Maung Ka Nai. Sin Myaing attempted to run away and the soldiers shot at him, wounding him in the arm pit and then seized him and sent him to the hospital at Tenessarim. On November 25, at 4:00 pm, the troops sent Than Jaung to Tenasserim jail. (Source: KIC)

On November 16, 2001 troops from SPDC IB 25, led by Bo Khin Maung, shot and killed Kleh-kee villager, Saw Ser Gay and Ker-gaw villager, Saw Po Twe, of Taung-thone-lone militia unit, after accusing them of not being interested in the SPDC soldier's work. On November 18, Bo Win Htein from SPDC IB 26 came to Ker-gaw and Kleh-kee villages, Mergui-Tavoy district, Karen State and paid 40,000 Kyat as compensation for the killings to the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On October 5, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 54, led by company commander Aung Myo Oo, came to Myitta village, Mergui-Tavoy District and arrested village head Maung Mya Shwe. On October 7, 2001, these troops arrested Si-koo villager Saw Htwe Nge, M-36, son of Saw Beh Yo and executed him after accusing him of having no travel pass with him. (Source: KIC)

On September 5, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 280 accused Naw Ka See (F-30), daughter of Saw Kler, of having sold merchandise to armed resistance groups. They then shot her to death in Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State. (Source: KIC)

On June 15, 2001, 50 soldiers from column 2 of SPDC IB 17 led by captain Kyin Zwa came to Pa-wah-plaw-pah-taw and Htee-hsee-baw villages and arrested 3 villagers. The troops executed a villager by stabbing him with a knife and burnt down 7 houses. In addition, the troops took away a video deck with Toshiba TV, 21 inches from a villager and 4 buffaloes from Saw San Win. The troops burnt down and destroyed household items estimated to be worth: (1) 45,000 Kyat of Saw Aye Han, (2) 40,000 Kyat of Saw Bluh Htay and (3) 44,000 Kyat of Saw Lah Beh. (Source: KIC)

On April 16, 2001, troops from Infantry Battalion 280 led by Khin Maung Aye arrived to a villagers hiding site Ka Hkee in the east of Palaw township, Mergui district, Karen State, and shot to death a villager name Saw Paw Bwe, 40, and burnt him with his house. (Source: KNU)

On April 4, 2001 soldiers from SPDC Infantry Battalion 280 and Light Infantry Battalion 378 shot and wounded a villager, Sa Pe, 48, when they were patrolling

around deserted Pecha (Pyicha) village in Palaw township, Mergui district, Karen State. Sa Pe was wounded and captured by the troops and later he was beaten to death by the same troops. (Source: KNU)

On March 24, 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 377, shooting on sight at villagers, who were hiding in Htee-ler-chaung-pyah, wounded 2 villagers Maung Ba Pu (M, 20), son of U Nyan Sein and Naw Moo Set (F, 17), daughter of Saw Hser. They took the 10 villagers they managed to seize with them. On the same day, the No. 2 column SPDC troops saw and shot up a group of villagers hiding in Htee-ler-chaung-pya and Taung-ta-lon-kyaw gully, without reason. As a result, Naw Ka Thet (F, 7) was killed and Shwe San (M, 29), son of Saw Paw Kyaw, was wounded. The troops took away with them 8 villagers, including children, whom they managed to seize. (Source: KIC)

**Karenni State**

On July 13, 2001 Byar Reh, 40, a villager of Hteepoklo, Deemaw Soe Township, was shot dead while returning from his paddy field at 10 p.m. by village militia led by Poe Reh. The Hteepoklo base of the village militia did not give any reason for the killing. (Source: KNAHR)

**Tenasserim Division**

On August 2, 2001 five soldiers stole from two merchants at the Ei Thi mountain, Thayetchaung township, Tenasserim Division. Daw Ma Ma, 34, was killed while her husband U Aung Myint Sein ran away. The soldiers looted some pieces of gold, 175,000 kyat and 6,200 bhat. The couple were from Chaung Wa Pyin village. The

soldiers were from LIB 282 led by Lt Col Maung Maung. (Source: THRF)

On January 22, 2001 troops from Burma Army's Light Infantry Battalion 402 led by Kyaw Kyaw entered to Wah Shu Ko (Seikphyone) village, in Tavoy Township, Tavoy District and shot dead a villager: Saw Dah Sein, 27 yr. son of Saw Shwe Tin. (Source: KNU)

**Shan State**

On November 2, 2001, a group of 10 wood cutters were fired upon by SPDC troops from LIB360, of the villagers 8 died and 2 managed to escape to a wood sawing site near Nam Haang river, 3-1/2 km east of Naa Kawng Mu village in Murng Haang tract, Murng-Ton township. These wood cutters, 7 ethnic Karen and 3 Lahu, had obtained written permission from the township forest department and had been cutting and sawing some kinds of hardwood, excluding teak, and selling them to the Wa group in the area and some well-to-do locals for some time. On the day of the incident, while the wood cutters were sawing wood on the bank of Nam Haang river, 3-1/2 km east of Naa Kawng Mu, a patrol of about 20 SPDC troops from LIB360 led by Lt. Thein Win opened fire at them without asking any questions or giving any warning, killing 8 of them. Among the dead were 6 Karen and 2 Lahu while 1 Karen and 1 Lahu escaped. According to the wood cutters, they had cut only some kinds of hardwood other than teak, and there was not even a single piece of teak among the lumber they had sawed. (Source: SHRF)

On October 30, 2001, SPDC troops from LIB314 shot dead a man on the road between Wan Sa and Wan Zawn village in Yaang Kaeng village tract, Kaeng-Tung township. The victim, Naan Sai, aged 36, was from Nawng Ten village and on the day of the incident had gone to have a drink with his friend at Wan Sa village. On his return in the evening, not long after he left Wan Sa, he ran into a patrol of 7 SPDC troops on the road between Wan Sa and Wan Zawn. Naan Sai was said to have once been conscripted as a porter by the Burmese troops for 3-4 months during which he nearly died and since then he was always frightened by the sight of the Burmese soldiers. When the SPDC soldiers reached Wan Sa village, they told the villagers that they had shot dead a cow thief who tried to run away as he saw them on the road between Wan Sa and Wan Zawn villages, and told them to go and see if he was their fellow villager. As it was getting dark, the villagers then made torches and went along the road until they reached the site, only to find that the man shot dead was not a cow thief but Naan Sai from Nawng Ten village who had been drinking at their village during the day. They then sent a man to Nawng Ten to tell Naan Sai's family and relatives about his fate.Naan Sai's remains were then brought back to Nawng Ten and his relatives conducted a funeral according to their traditions. After the funeral, Naan Sai's family and relatives, with the help of their village headman, filed a complaint with the village tract leader.The village tract leader, however, did not dare to take the case to the township authorities and said, "I don't see any good in complaining to anyone. No one could do anything to these Burmese soldiers. It could only bring reprisal and more harm to us. It is more

advisable to keep quiet". Naan Sai's family and relatives did not know what to do and quietly returned to their village. (Source: SHRF)

On October 23, 2001, 3 SPDC troops from Ta Lur-based LIB 316 shot dead a villager from Naa Hai Long village in Ta Lur tract, Ta-Khi-Laek Township, who refused to let them use his motorcycle, near the Nam Laen River on the way between Ta Lur and Naa Hai Long villages. On the day of the incident, the victim, Zaai Yi (m), aged 36, was riding a motorcycle from Ta Lur to his village when on the way he was stopped by 3 SPDC soldiers from Co. No.1 of LIB 316. The soldiers told Zaai Yi to lend them his motorcycle for 2 days for free. Zaai Yi repeatedly refused to comply with their demand and after a while the soldiers became angry and shot him dead on the spot. After killing Zaai Yi, the SPDC troops did not take his motorcycle but hurriedly left the scene. Some farmers were working close by in their roadside farms when the event took place, and they went and related the incident to Zaai Yi's relatives, who retrieved his body and conducted a funeral in accordance with their local traditions. Village leaders and Zaai Yi's relatives later went and filed a complaint with the commander of LIB 316. The commander, however, not only refused to believe them, but also accused them of lying and scolded them, and even threatened to fine and punish them. (Source: SHRF)

On October 18, 2001 SPDC armed forces shot and killed two deserters from the artillery battalion based in Loikaw Township. Four soldiers, including a lance corporal on night security duty at the battalion, were given seven days fatigue duty for sleeping while on duty. As they did not like the way they were treated, the four soldiers deserted with their weapons. Members of LIB [Light Infantry Battalion] No 430 split into smaller groups and searched for the deserters. They caught up with two of them and shot them while the other two managed to escape. Those killed were L-Cpl Aye Ko and Pte Pyi Sone. (Source: DVB)

On August 21, 2001, 2 Shan villagers from Huay Sa village in Murng Hai tract, Ta-Khi-Laek township, who were fishing along Nam Hok stream, were shot dead by 12 SPDC troops from Ta Lur-based LIB 316. The victims, Ai In Pan, (m), age 26 and Ai Sao, (m), age 19, were using small homemade explosives to catch fish when the SPDC troops suddenly appeared and shot them without asking any questions or giving any warning. After hearing the shots and witnessing the incident, villagers fishing nearby ran and hid in the forest. After SPDC troops left the scene the villagers came out of hiding and saw the victims lying on the bank of the stream. The soldiers had taken their wristwatches and all of the fish they had caught. The villagers returned to Huay Sa village and reported the incident to the village leaders and the relatives of the two victims who then retrieved the bodies and conducted a funeral. (Source: SHRF)

On the morning of July 7, 2001, SPDC troops from LIB 512 and LIB 515 shot dead 17 people, including members of a Shan cease fire group, civilian drivers and workers, some of which were ethnic-Burmans from central Burma. The incident

took place in Nawng Leng village, 8 miles north of Pang Long town, Loi-Lem township. (Source: SHRF)

**The following is a partial list of the victims:**

1.Zaai Taa Nge (m), aged 39, a Shan truck driver from Pang Long town

2.Yang Phu (m), aged 42, an ethnic-Chinese trader from Pang Long

3.Ai Lao (m), aged 28, a Shan truck driver from Pang Ood village in Pang Long area

4.Zaai Zaam Ae (m), aged 33, a Shan villager from Loi Khu village, Pang Long area

5.U Win Myint (m), aged 34, an ethnic-Burman day-labourer from Tha Zi township, central Burma

6.U Win Tin (m), aged 36, younger brother of U Win Myint (above), also a day-labourer

7.Myo Min Naing (m), aged 24, an ethnic-Burman day-Labourer from Tha Zi, central Burma

8. Ko Htay Nwe (m), aged 32, an ethnic-Burman day-labourer from Lawk-Zawk township

9. Zaai Long (m), aged 25, a Shan villager of Nawng Leng village, Pang Long area

10. Zaai Phong (m), aged 20, a Shan from quarter-1 of Pang Long

On May 4, 2001, 5 displaced Shan farmers who were building a dam on Nam Khaam stream for diverting water to a field to grow rice were forced to stand in a row and then shot dead by SPDC troops from IB246 in Ka Li village tract, Kun-Hing township. There were 15 farmers working on the dam but 10 were away collecting wood and bamboo when the SPDC came and inspected the site. When the troops saw about 15 rice packets and only 5 farmers around, they started to ask questions and accused the farmers of being rebels or providing rice for the Shan rebels. The troops then forced the farmers to stand in a row on the bank of the stream and interrogated them, and eventually shot all of them dead. The farmers were among the displaced villagers who had been forcibly relocated to Ka Li village relocation site from the surrounding villages in Kun-Hing Township in 1997. (Source: SHRF)

**The 5 displaced farmers shot dead were:**

1. Lung Thawn (m), aged 50, originally from Kaeng Lom village, Kaeng Lom tract, Kun-Hing

2. Zaai Pan-Ta (m), aged 45, originally from Kaeng Lom village, Kaeng Lom tract, Kun-Hing

3. Zaai Ka-Wi (m), aged 44, originally from Kaeng Lom village, Kaeng Lom tract, Kun-Hing

4. Zaai Khat (m), aged 40, originally from Kaeng Lom village, Kaeng Lom tract, Kun-Hing

5. Zaai Mon (m), aged 34, originally from Kaeng Lom village, Kaeng Lom tract, Kun-Hing

In mid-April 2001, a man from Wan Laao village in Murng Kok tract, Murng-Sart Township, was shot dead by a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB527 without any apparent reason. Zaai Wun, 25, and Zaai Kam, 23, had gone hunting and were returning home, each carrying a musket, when they noticed SPDC troops and they both ran towards their village. Without warning, the troops shot at them, killing Zaai Wun instantly, while Zaai Kam ran and escaped into the village. After the shooting, the SPDC troops came into the village and told the village headman that they had shot a Shan rebel dead at the head of the village and another one had escaped into the village, and ordered the villagers to catch him immediately. However, the villagers discovered they were not rebels and complained to the troops. They simply told the villagers to take care of the dead if that was the case, and left. (Source: SHRF)

On April 11, 2001, four vegetable farmers were arrested and beaten to death by SPDC troops, led by Lt. Than Myint, from Co. No.3 of IB55 between Maak Laang and Phuay Hai villages, about 1-2 miles north of Lai-Kha town. The victims, one male, Lung Mae-Tha, 49, and three females, Naang Mya, 22, Naang Zing, 23, Naang Phon, 19, were internally displaced farmers. After trying to survive by working as day-labourers for some years, these displaced farmers had been trying to earn a decent living by growing vegetables at a remote place about 2 miles north of the town. They had been carrying their vegetables to the Lai-Kha town market, early in the morning, when they were stopped by 7 SPDC troops. Some farmers in nearby farms saw this and, fearing they would also be arrested if they were seen by the SPDC soldiers, ran away. The 4 farmers were beaten and shot to death. Their bodies were later found by their relatives who brought the case to the village and community leaders. The complaint was lodged with the military authorities in the area, but they were told it could not have been anyone wearing military uniforms, and that unless the villagers could catch them while they were doing the killing there was no way to be sure who the culprits really were. The farmers were forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Lai-Kha town from their original village, Ter Leng, in Ter Leng tract, in 1996-97 by the then SLORC troops. (Source: SHRF)

On March 2, 2001, 3 Akha villagers were shot, two fatally, by 11 SPDC troops from LIB 331, led by Corporal Ong Htun in Pa Laan Noi village, Loi Taw Kham tract, Tachilaek Township. The three had been riding a motorcycle when they were stopped and shot at for no apparent reason. The relatives of the woman wounded in

the attack requested permission to bring her to the hospital in Mae Sai, the Thai border town opposite Tachilaek, but they were refused. The victims were: (Source: SHRF)

1. Mi Zu (f) suffered from a broken left arm

2. Mi Zu's husband killed instantly

3. Aa Zur (m), aged 22, son of the above couple, killed instantly

On February 3, 2001, SPDC troops from IB226 shot dead a man from Nawng Saa village, at Yaang Ka stream near his village in Yaang Ka tract, Kaeng-Tung Township. He was catching fish with six other villagers when they were surrounded by SPDC soldiers from Co. No.2 of IB226. As they were being surrounded, Zaai Wong, aged 19, who was a distance away from the other fishermen, saw the troops and tried to escape. The SPDC troops fired at Zaai Wong and killed him. The troops then took the remaining five men to Yaang Ka village to join a bigger military column and 20 other civilian porters taken from other villages. The civilian porters set out on February 4, 2001, carrying military rations and clothes, towards the mountain ranges populated mostly by the Lahu people. They went through village after village, stopping only for lunch and at night, where the villagers were forced to provide food and keep watch. After 10 days they returned to Yaang Ka and were released. (Source: SHRF)

1. Zaai Oon (m), aged 21, from Sop Yoi village

2. Zaai Lao (m), aged 25, Sop Yoi village

3. Zaai Kawng (m), aged 20, Nawng Saa village

4. Zaai Poi (m), aged 20, Nawng Saa village

5. Zaai Leng (m), aged 19, Nawng Saa village

6. Zaai Wong (m), aged 19, Nawng Saa village

On February 8, 2001, 3 elderly male villagers were shot dead by SPDC troops from LIB15 of 99th Division, led by commander Set Wei, at Naa Loi near Khur Weet village in Waang Murng tract, Murng-Kerng Township. Lung Kham Hurng Paang, 66, Lung Su Kam, 60, and Lung Zaang Za-Ling, 60, were accused of supporting the Shan resistance. (Source: SHRF)

On January 2, 2001, 6 displaced farmers were shot dead by SPDC troops from IB66, led by Sgt. Zaw Myint, near Loi La village in Loi La tract, Nam-Zarng Township. They had been building a small earthen dam on a stream to divert water to their rice fields about 2-1/2 miles south of Loi La village. Khat-Ti-Ya managed to escape and staggered back to Loi La village to relate his plight but died about 3 hours later. Many villagers heard the shooting and knew who the troops were. They said Khat-Ti-Ya thought that he and the others were shot because they had refused

to grow opium-poppies offered by the SPDC troops and had instead grown rice. The farmers were originally from Wan Nawng, Loi Khaang and Loi La villages, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Nam-Zarng town by SLORC/SPDC troops a few years ago. (Source: SHRF)

They were:

1. Zaw Mint (m), aged 24, originally from Wan Nawng village, Wan Nawng Kung Mong tract

2. Khur Seng (m), aged 27, originally from Wan Nawng village, Wan Nawng Kung Mong tract

3. Kaa-Wi (m), aged 39, originally from Loi Khaang village, Loi La tract4. Maa-Laa (m), aged 48, originally from Loi Khaang village, Loi La tract

5. Zaai Nyunt (m), aged 22, originally from Loi La village, Loi La tract

6. Khat-Ti-Ya (m), aged 32, originally from Loi La village, Loi La tract

## # Photos




*Photos #E1, E2: Naw H—, age 9, from xxxx village, yyyy township, Papun District. On April 13th 2001, an SPDC column from Light Infantry Battalion #xxx on the move encountered KNLA forces and fought a skirmish over an hour's walk away from her village. After the fighting, the SPDC column headed on towards Papun but as they passed xxxx village they 'punished' the village for the fighting by firing several rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) among the houses without warning. Naw H— and her mother were wounded by shrapnel from the RPG shell that landed on their house. In the photos she shows scars of some of the wounds she received. See also Photo #E3 below. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*


# E-2




*Photo #E3: One of the rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) shells which SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx fired without warning at xxxx village on April 13th 2001 (see Photos #E1 and E2 above). This particular shell failed to explode on impact. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #E4: Saw P—, 48, a Karen Buddhist hill field farmer from xxxx village (yyy township, Papun District). On May 17th 2001 a column from SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx (under Light Infantry Division #77) came to the area of their village, saw his son Pa Kyi Noh gathering durian fruit in the family's durian orchard at yyyy, and commanding officer Bo aaaa fired four M79 grenades at him from quite close range. He fell and died under the durian tree. The troops left his body there, and when they entered the village they told the village head they had killed someone. When the villagers went to look later, they saw that Pa Kyi Noh had been wounded in the forehead, wrist, right arm, thigh, and the muscle of his left calf had been blown away; his skull had been blown open. Pa Kyi Noh was 24 years old and had been married for one year, with no children yet. He was a villager with no political connections. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #E5: The body of Pu T—, a 60 year old Karen Buddhist villager from xxxx village in yyyy township, Thaton District. On May 14th 2001 a combined column of SPDC Light Infantry Battalions #xxx and #xxx (under Division 77) entered one end of his village at 5 p.m. and fired off their guns twice. Then they arrived near Pu T—'s house. His wife (Pi T—, 60) heard a shot from outside, then a groan and her husband's voice saying "I cannot, I cannot". She asked permission from the soldiers to go to him but they refused and said "It doesn't concern you". Other villagers ran over and told her that the soldiers had shot her husband, so she ran to him and saw his body covered in blood. She asked him what he had done, and he told her "I cannot, I did nothing wrong". The soldiers would not look at her and walked away, then their commander admitted to her that his men had made a mistake and their medic attached an intravenous drip to Pu T—'s arm; they had shot him through the belly, with an exit wound in his buttock. He died shortly thereafter, and the SPDC commander gave her 3 sacks of rice and 10,000 Kyat as compensation. This photo was taken 3 days later when the villagers were burying him. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photos # E6, E7, E8: Saw P—, age 21, a Karen farmer from W— village in eastern Toungoo District. On July 13th 2001 he was hiking to Kler Lah village to try to buy some rice. As he was walking on the path between Klay Soe Kee and Kler Lah, fighting broke out along the same path between KNLA soldiers and an SPDC patrol from Infantry Battalion #30. The SPDC troops began firing mortar shells along the path, and one of the shells landed near Saw P—. He was hit by shrapnel in his hip, his right calf and his back. These photos were taken four days later, when he received treatment from a KNLA medic. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*









*Photos #E9, E10: Ma P— from xxxx village in yyyy township (Thaton district). One morning at the end of March 2001, Column 2 of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx came into her village and started shooting without warning, wounding her and one of the village children. In Photo #E10 she shows the small wound she received. There were no resistance forces in the village; the troops simply shot up the village and then left to return to zzzz Army camp. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*


# E-10




*Photo #E11, E12 : Saw L—, 45, from xxxx village (yyyy township, Papun District). In February 2001 he was heading home from his ricefield when he met a column of 50 soldiers from SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx (under Light Infantry Division #77) commanded by Major aaaa. The Major ordered him to go with the column as a porter, and he tried to refuse but they forced him to shoulder a load of almost 40 kilograms (88 pounds) and go with them. On the morning of February 23rd they encountered KNLA soldiers near zzzz village and there was a battle. During the fighting Saw L— tried to flee, but the SPDC soldiers saw him and shot him in the thigh, so he fell and was recaptured. After the battle they punished the zzzz villagers by opening fire on the completely undefended village, killing a 28-year-old woman named Naw Bleh and wounding a woman named Ma T— (see photos below), then entered the village and looted the houses of rice, clothing, gold jewellery and other belongings after the villagers had fled. They left Saw L— behind with no treatment. Photo #E12 shows one of the wounds on his left thigh. See also Photos #E13 and E14 below, which document the results of the attack on the undefended village. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*






*Photos # E13, E14: Ma T—, 50, from zzzz village in yyyy township, Papun District. She was shot in the arm on February 23rd 2001 when SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx 'punished' her village for a battle which had occurred nearby by opening fire on the undefended village, then looting the houses (for details see description of Photos #E11 and E12 above). Another woman from the village, 28-year-old Naw Bleh, was killed. These photos were taken over a month later, but her wound had not completely healed. Whenever SPDC soldiers are attacked they routinely respond by 'punishing' the villages in the area in ways like this. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*






*Photos #E15, E16, E17 : The body of Saw aaaa, a Karen villager from xxxx village in Tenasserim Division. In mid-January 2001 he was outside his village looking for a stray calf when he encountered a column of soldiers from SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx. The soldiers forced him to walk in front of them, and when he was doing so a Lance Corporal fired two shots into his back and neck, killing him. The column later told the villagers that Saw aaaa was a rebel and had been carrying an AK47 assault rifle, but the villagers assert that he was a simple farmer with no connection to the opposition, and as shown in the photos he was wearing civilian clothing when killed. He leaves a widow and two small children. [Photos: Private independent source]*


# E-16


# E-17

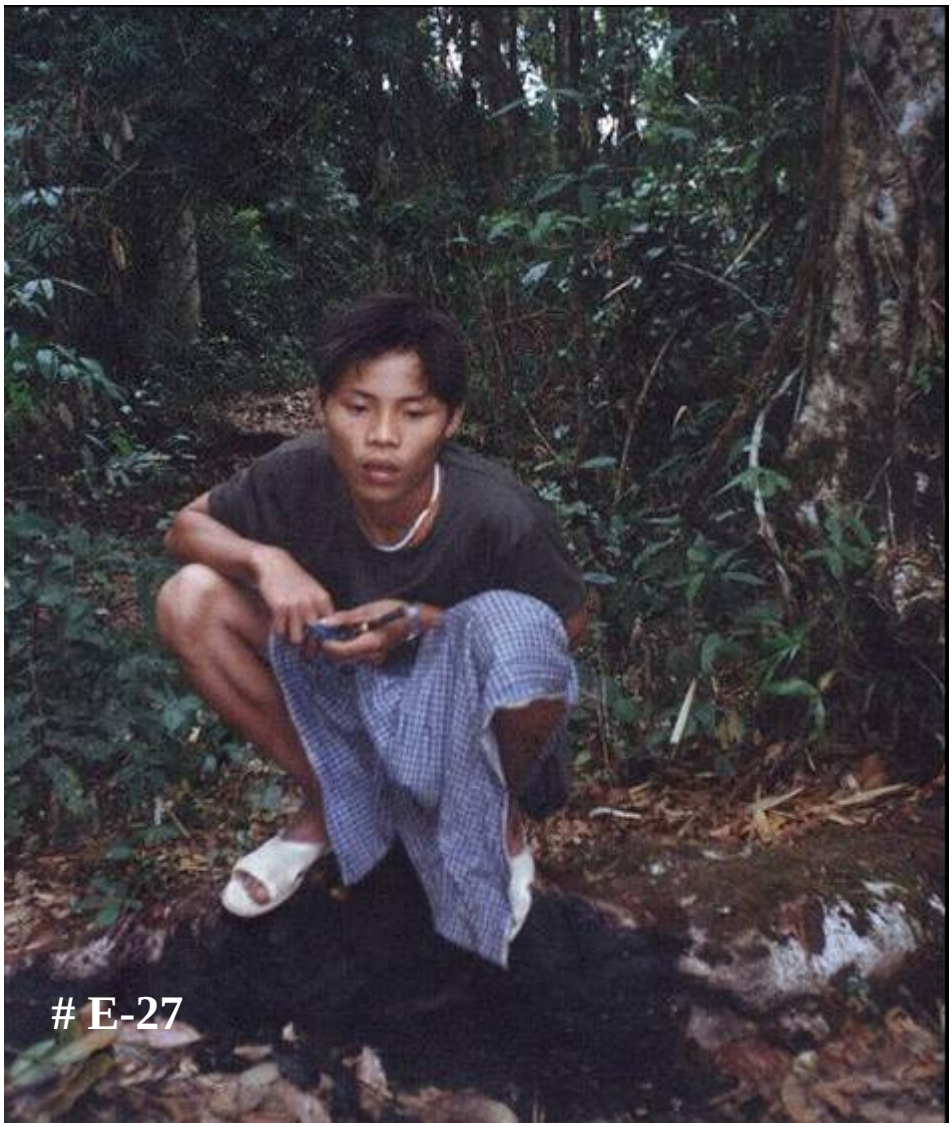
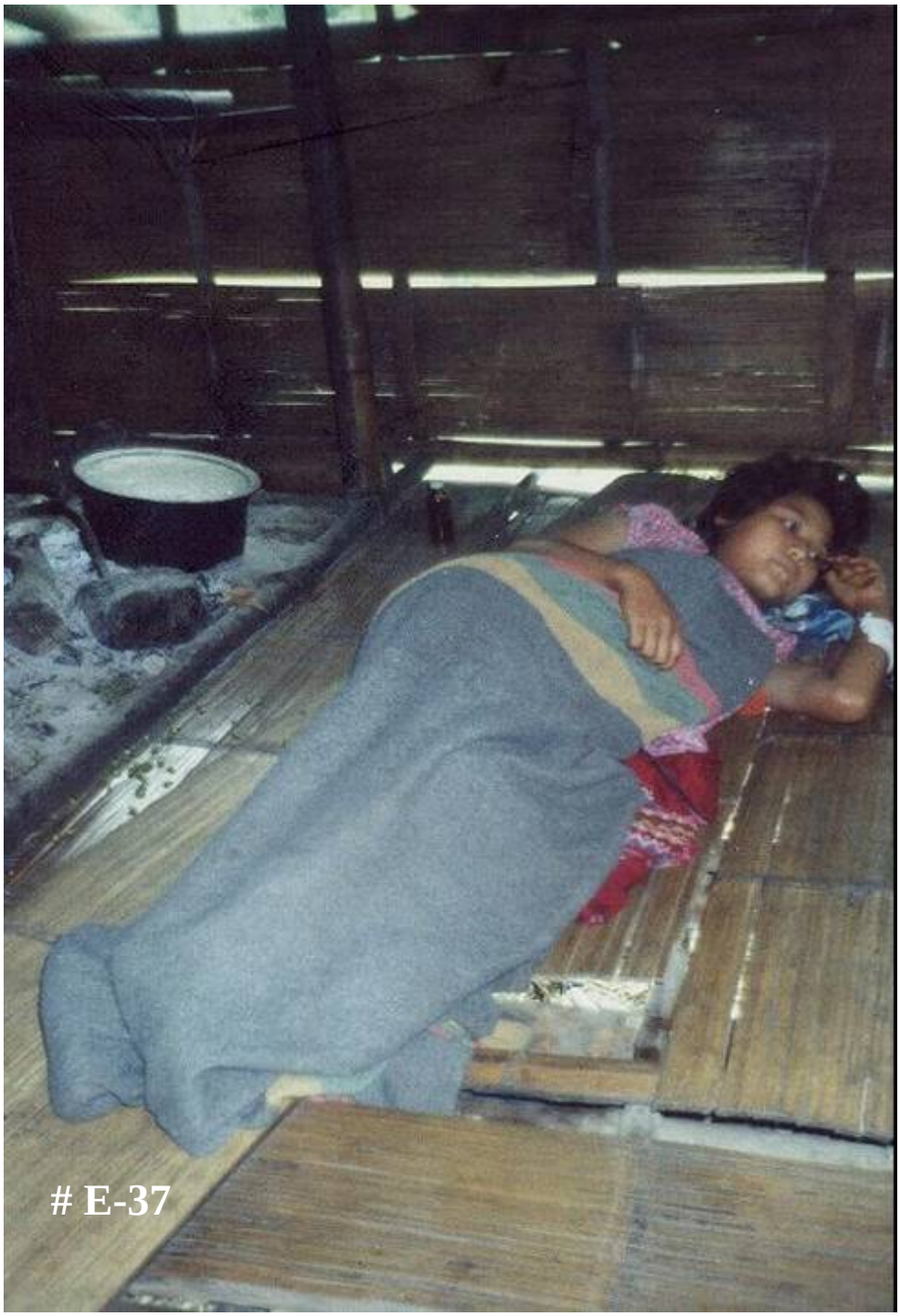



*Photo #E27 : Saw K—, 20, from xxxx village in Shwegyin township, Nyaunglebin District. He and his fellow villagers are living in hiding in the forest but on January 28th 2001, he and some friends returned to the village to round up their buffaloes. Near the village they stopped to cook, and Saw K— and one friend went ahead to see if the path was clear. SPDC troops from Light Infantry Battalion #369 saw them and immediately opened fire, grazing Saw K— behind the right ear and hitting his friend Saw W— in the thigh. They both managed to run a short distance to escape before they couldn't go on and the others had to carry them. Saw K— was taken to a KNLA medic who treated his wound and it healed. His friend Saw W— was taken to a KNU field hospital further away, and still could not walk 3 months later. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*


# E-37




*Photos #E37, E38, E39 : Naw D—, age 13, also from xxxx village, who was shot in the buttocks and wounded in the wrist and ankle by M79 grenade fragments as she tried to flee the hut (see description with Photos #E30-E36 above). She managed to run far enough to escape, but then had to be carried by other villagers. Photo #E38 shows her receiving basic treatment from other villagers; Photo #E39 shows Naw D— later, in early 2001. She never returned to her village after the shooting and had to heal her wounds in the forest with almost no access to medicines. She and the people of all 12 villages in the immediate area are in hiding in the forest in various locations. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*









*Photo # E54, E55: Saw P—, 34, a farmer from xxxx village, Shwegyin township, Nyaunglebin District. In mid-2000 he was detained by an SPDC patrol of Infantry Battalion #96, and when he ran to escape they fired on him and he was hit in the upper arm, though he still managed to escape. He had no access to medicines so the wound became infected, and when Photo #E54 was taken in March 2001 it still had not healed. Photo #E55 was taken after he had reached a refugee camp in Thailand in June, when he had finally received proper treatment and the wound had closed. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*

# 3. Arbitrary Detention and Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

**No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.**

- Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

## 3.1 Background

In Burma the SPDC maintains an extensive network of MIS, police and government officials ready to detain anyone suspected of holding or expressing anti-government opinions. The military in Burma has established and enforced laws curtailing civil and political freedoms and utilized laws that allow it to crush any political opposition. The SPDC's laws and regulations criminalize freedom of thought, the dissemination of information and the right of association and assembly. The most commonly employed laws banning the demonstration of civil and political rights have been the 1923 Government's Official Secrets Act, the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act, the 1957 Unlawful Associations Act, the 1962 Printers' and Publishers' Registration Law, the 1975 State Protection Law, and Law No. 5/96. These laws and orders have restricted the civil and political rights of Burmese citizens for years; now, with technological advances available across the globe, new laws have been enacted in order to provide the SPDC authorities additional legal bases to curtail freedom of expression and the exchange of information. For more information on these laws, please refer to the chapters on the freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly and association.Throughout the year, SPDC personnel also continued to arbitrarily detain persons across Burma for illegal association with groups seen as anti-government. In areas of ethnic insurgency these detentions were common and in most cases the people suspected of such illegal association were seized, detained and interrogated, and sometimes tortured and killed without warrant or evidence against them. There were also numerous cases reported in the year 2001 of individuals who disappeared following arrest and detention. Human Rights organizations, such as the Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), have argued that the current definition of 'political prisoner' used in the context of Burma is too narrow, and excludes the thousands of ethnic minority villagers who are routinely arrested, tortured and imprisoned under Articles 17/1 (contact with illegal organizations) and Article 17/2 (rising against the State). In a letter posted on their website, KHRG writes:

*"All over the country farmers, day labourers and others are imprisoned but… no one writes letters for their release, no one even acknowledges their existence. Yet they are treated far worse than the high profile political prisoners, in fact many of them are summarily executed without anyone ever having written a letter on their behalf. Is the Chin rice farmer hauled off to an SPDC Army camp on a*

*baseless suspicion of giving some rice to the Chin National Front, tied up, beaten, slashed with knives, held down while a gallon of water is poured in his nose, then locked into mediaeval leg stocks or a pit in the ground for weeks, not a political prisoner? Is a Karen woman whose husband flees to the forest to escape forced portering, who is then arrested, raped and detained at the Army camp until her 'rebel' husband comes in and gives himself up for execution, not a political prisoner? According to the SPDC they are not. The NLD and the international human rights organisations do not include them in their lists, and by repeatedly making their definitive statements that "there are 1,500 political prisoners in Burma" they systematically exclude these people."* (Source: KHRG: "Playing Games with Political Prisoners," October 21, 2001)

In addition to individuals arrested for political reasons, SPDC officials continued to arbitrarily arrest and detain people for "crimes" such as failure to pay army taxes or to sell the required crop quota to the government purchasing centers. Many farmers were arrested in the year 2001 under such circumstances. These farmers were detained, without trial, until the required quota was met. The SPDC also arrested Muslim minority people for various reasons. Many of the people who were reported to have been arbitrarily detained were released following payment of fines set by the official who arrested them. This portrays the extent to which corruption exists within Burma. Indeed, SPDC troops and officials often arrest people for no other reason than to extort money from them. Many Burmese citizens deported by Thai authorities in 2001 were arrested and forced to pay high fees for "illegally leaving the country," or else face imprisonment or forced labor.

Throughout 2001 the SPDC periodically released small groups of political prisoners. By the end of the year a total of 211 prisoners had been freed, the majority of whom were NLD members, including members of parliament-elect, who had been detained without charge or trial, some since July 1998. These releases were apparent goodwill gestures by the regime, which occurred in conjunction with their ongoing talks with Aung San Suu Kyi. The releases have also been linked to recent visits by Razali Ismail, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to Burma and Professor Paulo Pinheiro, the UN Special Rapporteur on Burma. Many of the people who were released had already finished their prison sentences, or else they had been held without being charged for months or even years. News about the releases of political prisoners, while widely reported in the international press, was largely ignored by the state-run media inside Burma.

Despite the releases, Amnesty International estimates that over 1,600 political prisoners remain in jail and the NCGUB puts the number as high as 3,000. In a speech before the UN General Assembly in November 2001, the Special Raporteur for Human Rights in Burma stated that these individuals had been detained "for having peacefully expressed their views, verbally, through participation in peaceful demonstrations, or activities in political parties, for having written about human rights or political issues in the country, or for possessing prohibited writings." Among those who remain incarcerated are 1988 student leader Min Ko Naing and

NLD political strategist U Win Tin. More than fifty current political prisoners have already completed their sentences but continue to be detained under article 10(a)of the penal code, which gives the SPDC broad discretion toextend their prison periods. Prisoners have received extended sentences for allegedly trying to send information to the UN about prison conditions and for attempting to circulate news and written materials inside prisons. The SPDC continues to officially deny that there are any political prisoners in Burma.

Those prisoners who have been released continue to have their freedom of expression and association restricted and many were made to sign pledges that they would not engage in politics. U Pa Pa Lay, and U Lu Zaw, two comedians who had been serving a sentence for their comic performance at an NLD meeting, were released in July 2001. According to reports, since their release they have been prohibited from performing.

Throughout 2001 the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma were allowed to visit prisons and political prisoners when they received permission from the SPDC. In the past two years ICRC has been able to visit every prison at least once. While ICRC access is a positive sign, there were mixed reports as to whether there has been any real improvement in prison conditions. Information gathered by AAPP from recently released prisoners indicates that the behavior of prison authorities and military intelligence towards both political and non-political prisoners remains brutal. At least 68 political prisoners have died of various diseases in Burma's prisons since 1988. Four political prisoners died during 2001; Mya Shwe, Maung Maung Aye, Sithu, and Khin Maung Myint. (Source: AAPP)

## 3.2 Denial of a fair and public trial

Although remnants of the British-era legal system are formally in place in Burma, the court system and its operation remain seriously flawed, particularly in the handling of political cases. In 1975 the State Protection Act was passed by the BSPP in order to protect the state from potentially destructive elements. Article 10(a) of this act allows for an individual to be detained for up to three years without a trial. This means that political prisoners in detainment are denied the rights given to sentenced prisoners and are therefore often subjected to extraordinarily repressive measures. For example, under article 10(a) a detainee can be denied visiting privileges and may be put into solitary confinement. If the military regime believes a prisoner to be a threat to the state, after that prisoner has served his/her sentence under article 10(a) he/she can be immediately re-detained.

Throughout 2001, the SPDC continued to rule by decree and was not bound by any constitutional provision providing for fair trials or any other rights. Not only have the people charged under the various law and military decrees been consistently denied fair trials and the due process of law, but also the judicial system itself has

been emasculated over the years. The SPDC appoints the Judges of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court selects judges for the lower courts, but requires the approval of SPDC authorities. The Supreme Court is further in charge ofsupervising the lower courts. The Judiciary Law does not contain any provisions on the security of tenure of judges and their protection from arbitrary removal, thus leaving such issues entirely in the hands of the SPDC and, what is worse, without any guarantees provided by law by which the SPDC is bound.

In addition to the SPDC's unrestricted power in the appointment of judges, the courts are powerless to protect the rights of victims of oppression. This is so because a great number of decrees have been promulgated by the SPDC for the purpose of repressing political activity and the freedoms of thought, expression, association and movement, among others. In addition, emergency laws are still resorted to. The courts have no jurisdiction to challenge or to discard this repressive legal arsenal.

Unprofessional behavior by some court officials, the use of overly broad laws - including the Emergency provisions Act of 1950, the Unlawful Associations Act, the Habitual Offenders Act, and the Law on Safeguarding the State from the danger of Destructionists - and the manipulation of the courts for political ends, continue to deprive citizens of the right to a fair trial and the rule of law.

Some basic due process rights, including the right to a public trial and to be represented by a defense attorney are generally respected, except in political cases that the authorities deem especially sensitive. Without the permission of the intelligence organs, judges cannot even let the family and counsel of the accused know what sentence has been passed. In many cases, the accused is kept in ignorance of the section of law under which he is charged. There have been reported instances where Military Intelligence has passed sentences orally at the time of arrest, before any trial had taken place. More often than not trials are held on camera. Defendants with political charges are given little chance to speak during the trial, let alone present a proper defense. Even where they manage to make a statement, the judges pay no heed to it. Prior to being charged, detainees rarely have access to legal counsel or their families and political detainees have no opportunity to obtain release on bail. In most political cases, trials are held in courtrooms on prison compounds and are not open to the public. In these instances, defense counsel appears to serve no purpose other than to provide moral support, since reliable reports indicate that verdicts are dictated by higher authorities.

Political detainees are held incommunicado for long periods. Even after being charged, detainees rarely have benefit of counsel. In one case, Comedian Par Par Lay, Lu Zaw and two other members of their performance group were arrested on January 10, 1996 after giving a performance at NLD headquarters. On the day of their trial in March 1996, they were sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment and no one, including their lawyers, was allowed in court. NLD leaders Kyi Maung, Tin

Oo, Aung San Suu Kyi and Win Htein were prevented from traveling to Mandalay to appear as witnesses for the defense.

## 3.4. Life of Prisoners

There are 36 prisons in Burma, and 20 of them detain political prisoners. All prisons have been places of numerous violations of human dignity and brutal harassment. Conditions of detention in prison remain deplorable, and fall far short of international standards such as the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners and the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons Under Any forms of Detention or Imprisonment. In fact, conditions of detention fall short of even established laws in Burma. Under the current conditions of the military junta, political prisoners have been denied the rights entitled to them which are outlined in the Union of Myanmar Prison Manual. Furthermore, these prisoners are often subjected to extra prohibitive and repressive measures not mentioned in the prison manual. For example, every prisoner has the right to parole. Chapter 11, article 59[5] of the Union of Myanmar Prison Manual states; *'A prisoner who has acted in accordance with prison regulation has the right to parole at least 60, 70 or 90 days a year.'*

In May 1999 the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) announced that it had begun to visit prisons in Burma. In March 2000 the ICRC also began visiting labor camps, where convicted criminals have been held in extremely poor conditions. In addition the ICRC has reported that they have been able to visit prisoners held in government guesthouses, where NLD members have been detained without charge or trial since the party's announcement in September 1998 that they would convene parliament unilaterally. Yet despite this international monitoring of conditions in Burmese prisons, maltreatment of prisoners continued to be reported in the year 2001. These abuses include torture, prolonged shackling, lack of proper medical care, and insufficient food. (For more information on torture of prisoners, see relevant chapter on torture)

Prisoners were also subjected to severe overcrowding, conditions that by themselves constitute cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment in other parts of the world. It is standard in prisons throughout Burma for 3 or 4 prisoners to be held in small cells measuring 8 by 12 feet (2.6 by 3 meters) for more than 20 hours a day. They are fed an inadequate diet of a thin bean soup or vegetables, sometimes supplemented with a small piece of fish only once a week. In Thayet prison, Magwe Division, where there are a total of 74 political prisoners, 3 persons are placed in each of the cells measuring 12' x 8' where they sleep, eat, and defecate. These conditions are inhuman, and are a danger to health of the prisoners, frequently causing sickness and sometimes death.

Medical treatment is rarely provided and then only when a prison's illness has reached a severe stage. The most common diseases among the prisoners are:

gastrointestinal diseases (amoebic dysentery, bacillary dysentery and diarrhea), jaundice (viral and amoebic hepatitis), AIDS and skin diseases. Conditions in prison allow for the easy transmission of these diseases due to poor sanitation, unclean and semi-cooked food, dirty kitchens, polluted surroundings, and lack of personal hygiene (particularly because of poor water supplies).

The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma stated on 9 November 2001 that: "most reports I have received indicate that prison conditions as a whole are still inadequate, but the prisons visited by my team looked clean and tidy." However as the authorities have prior notice before the visits of international inspection teams, they are able to prepare for these visits, and conditions do not always reflect the real state of the prisons. According to recently released political prisoners, food, health care, sanitation, and treatment have not measurably improved since the inspections began.(Source:AAPP)

Political prisoners who protest the abuse and ill treatment of the prison officials are frequently given both severe punishments and additional prison terms. Political prisoners are not allowed to communicate with one another. In addition, they are only allowed to meet with their families after they have been sentenced. Apart from the political prisoners who are put in the solitary confinement, an unknown number are forced to perform hard labor in their respective prisons on a daily basis.

While Burmese law states that prisoners should be allowed to have access to reading material, and should be allowed to receive and write letters, prisoners are largely denied these rights. In recent years restrictions on books have been slightly relaxed and since 1999, some prisons have allowed prisoners to read religious books. However authorities usually hold any books for 30 days prior to giving it to a prisoner in order to censor it. In addition, political prisoners are frequently prohibited from writing letters to their families. In many cases, prisoners caught with paper or pens are brutally beaten or put in solitary confinement for many days. Thus for most prisoners, the only times they have written contact with their families are on those occasions when the ICRC visits the prisons, and they can send and receive letters through them.

Prisoners are extremely dependent on their families to support them beyond the poor food and almost non-existent medical care they receive in prison. Some political prisoners have died from the lack of essential assistance such as medicine and nutritious food. The SPDC intentionally tries to break the spirit of political prisoners by sending them to remote prisons far away from their families. Meanwhile the MI and local authorities of the SPDC regularly intimidate and persecute the family members of political prisoners. Sometimes their belongings are confiscated, and in many cases family members of prisoners lose their jobs, so that in the end they find it very hard to provide regular support for their imprisoned family member.

Even after their release, political prisoners continue to be subjected to harassment anddiscrimination. MI agents often warn potential employers not to hire former political prisoners, making it difficult for them to earn a living. During politically sensitive periods, such as anniversary dates, former political prisoners are often detained and interrogated without reason. In addition to this type of harassment, students who are released from prison are not allowed to rejoin universities. Ex-prisoners are refused a passport when they want to go abroad for education or business. By severely limiting their educational and economic opportunities, the SPDC works to marginalize political prisoners from society.

## *Reports from Prisons in Burma*

### Pegu prison

In Pegu prison, located 80 km from Rangoon, prisoners have to work all day wrapping plastic labels around 'Gyo-thein' brand cheroots. They are each responsible for producing 3500 cheroots per day, with elderly people responsible for producing 2,500. When there is any mistake in the work, they are beaten by the prison authorities and made to sit in the hot sun. The only way that the prisoners can avoid this work is to bribe the authorities. Thus the prison authorities get money regularly from both prisoners and U Sint Han, the owner of the Gyo-thein cheroot factory. (Source: AAPP)

### Myingyan Prison

In July 2001, AAPP issued an open letter to the ICRC citing numerous reports as to the extremely poor quality of food provided to prisoners in Myingyan prison. The letter states that: "prisoner meals consist of the lowest possible quality rice served with dirty vegetables. The meals, in addition to being prepared with dirty, low-quality food, also often contains small stones, and sometimes nails. Worse, the prisoners do not even get enough of this food, unhealthy as it is. The prison authorities are in obvious non-compliance with the prison manual which clearly specifies that prisoners must be fed proper, clean, nutritious and adequate food in order to be in proper health." This prison is considered to be among the worst in Burma in terms of medical services and treatment of prisoners. A number of political prisoners have died as result of severe torture, insufficient food, and lack of medical treatment. Myingyan prison has a clinic, but there is no medicine. Families of ill prisoners must purchase medicine outside of the prison and deliver it to the clinic. Prisoners whose families lack financial resources to pay for medicine are unable to receive treatment. (Source: AAPP)

### Thayet prison

Thayet prison, located in the middle of Burma, has over one thousand prisoners, including over one hundred political prisoners. There is only one medical staff member in the prison, a nurse, Kyaw Myint. As with all medical staff in Burmese prisons, Kyaw Myint began his career as a warden responsible for prison security.

Positions in the prison clinic are highly coveted among wardens because the medical staff can sell materials (such as medicine) in the prison clinic and on the black marker, and extort money from the prisoners who want medical treatment. Kyaw Myint, like most other prison medical staff, attended only a short-term health-training course, after which he was considered competent to administer to the 1,000 prisoners in Thayet. According to the Burmese

prison manual, every prison must have at least one medical doctor. Thayet prison has had no doctor since 1993. In early February 2001, 54 prisoners, including four political prisoners, arrived at Thayet. Before they reached the prison, one of the criminal prisoners grabbed the gun of a security guard. When he realized that the gun had no bullets, he attempted to run away, and was shot on the spot by other guards. When the rest of the prisoners reached the prison gate, they were severely beaten. While it is common for newcomers to be beaten on their first day in prison, these individuals received a harsher beating because of this incident. (Source: AAPP)

**Strike in Insein prison**

In January 2001, some political prisoners planned to go on a hunger strike for prisoners' rights, such as access to books. However, before the hunger strike began the prison authorities found out about it. The prisoners involved were beaten and put in solitary confinement for three weeks. Later they were moved to other prisons. Four political prisoners Thaung Aye, Than Aung, Zaw Myo Tun and Saw Tin Oo were sent from Insein to Thayet prison where, as related above, they were severely beaten upon arrival. (Source: AAPP)

## 3. 5 Political Prisoners in Poor health

**Case of Dr. Min Soe Lin**

Dr Min So Lin, an NLD MP-elect, was first arrested in 1997 under article 5 (j) of the Emergency Provision Act. He was arrested for his role in organizing celebrations for 50th anniversary of Mon National Day, on 23 February 1997. He was released from detention after several weeks. In 1998 he was re-arrested and sentenced to seven years imprisonment for continuing his political activities. He is currently being held in Moulmein Prison in Mon State, where he is reportedly in urgent need of treatment for an eye condition. In August 2001 his family requested that the prison authorities provide him proper treatment for his eyes, but so far this request has been denied. (Source: AAPP)

**Case of Nay Lin Soe**

Nay Lin Soe is currently serving a second prison term for his political activities. He is being held in Kale Prison, in Sagaing Division. Nay Lin Soe is reportedly suffering from a severe eye ailment, and without treatment could soon lose his sight. (Source: AAPP)

**Case of Min Ko Naing**

The health condition of Burma's prominent student leader, Min Ko Naing is reportedly deteriorating day by day and it was confirmed in early 2001 that he is now suffering from paralysis. Min Ko Naing alias Paw U Tun, Chairman of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU), was arrested on 24 March 1989. He was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment (later commuted to 10 years under a general amnesty, but he has yet to be released) for his anti-government activities. He was initially detained in solitary confinement in Insein Prison in Rangoon but has been regularly moved from one prison to another. In June 2001 he was reportedly moved from Sittwe prison to Bu Thi Taung prison, also in Arakan state, and near the Bangladesh border. This new move will make it harder for international human rights organizations to monitor his condition.

According to Amnesty International, Min Ko Naing was reportedly severely tortured and ill treated during the early stages of his detention and his health has suffered as a consequence. In 1993, a United States Congressman visited him in Insein Prison and said that he was in poor health and appeared disoriented. In November 1994 the Special Rapporteur on Burma was also allowed to visit him briefly in Insein Prison, and described him as being nervous and thin. On October 25, 2001, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD), declared that the SPDC's detention of Min Ko Naing is contrary to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and they have directed the regime to take the necessary steps to remedy the situation. To date the regime has ignored the ruling. (Source: Mizzima)

**Case of U Win Tin**

In March 2001 U Win Tin spent his 71st birthday in Insein Prison, where he has been detained as a prisoner of conscience for almost 12 years. He is a prominent writer, journalist and a Central Executive Committee member of the NLD. U Win Tin was arrested on 4 July 1989 as part of a widespread crackdown by the SPDC on the political opposition groups. He received a sentence of 20 years imprisonment. Currently U Win Tin is the only remaining senior member of the NLD, among those arrested in June and July 1989 who has not yet been released.

During his imprisonment, U Win Tin has consistently suffered from poor health. Some of his pre-existing health conditions have been aggravated by the ill-treatment he has received and the poor living conditions in the prison. U Win Tin suffers from a heart condition and spondylitis (inflammation of the vertebrae), a painful condition which requires a special diet. In 1992 it was reported that he needed surgery, but that the SPDC had refused transfer him to a hospital. In 1994, a US Congressmen who was permitted to visit him in prison reported that he was in need of dental treatment and appeared to have problems with his vision. He was also wearing a neck brace that did not fit him properly and was causing him discomfort. During that time U Win Tin was being held in solitary confinement. In September 1997 he was admitted to Yangon General Hospital due to heart problems. On 10 October 1997 the authorities admitted that he had been taken to hospital in order to have additional

medical treatment. It is not known how long he remained in hospital, but he is believed to be currently back in Insein Prison. (Source: AI)

**Case of U Soe Thein**

U Soe Thein, a journalist and MP for the National League for Democracy was admitted, during the third week of September 2000, to the intensive care service of the general hospital of Rangoon. The authorities sent him to hospital only after he had had a heart attack in his cell. According to his family, he is close to death. The stomach disease from which he suffers is also worse. In July 1997, Soe Thein had his first heart attack. The authorities refused to treat him. Since May 1990, three journalists have died in detention. 55 year old Soe Thein has been detained in the Insein jail since May 1996. The authorities accused him of writing texts about "peaceful resistance" for the NLD. He was jailed under Article 10 of the State Protection Law, which allows for indefinite periods of detention without trial. Soe Thein was editor of the official State newspaper 'Botahtaung,' before being dismissed in 1988 because of his support for the democratic movement. He also published a magazine Ah-Twe-Ah-Myin (The Thought) until November 1990 when he was arrested for the first time. (Source: RSF)

**Case of U Tun Aung Kyaw**

In 1990, U Tun Aung Kyaw, (also known as Thakhin Mipwar), age 50 was arrested and sentenced to five years imprisonment including hard labor. During his imprisonment he suffered from tuberculosis, and had to spend much time in the jail hospital. He was released at the end of 1994.

After being released, he lacked sufficient money to receive the treatment needed for his illness. As a result his health steadily deteriorated. However he still continued to secretly be involved in political activities. In 1997 MI agents raided the hospital he was being treated at, and arrested him. U Tun Aung Kyaw was sentenced to seven years imprisonment including hard labor, under the 5/J law. Currently the jail hospital where he receives treatment lacks sufficient medicine, and medical specialists are rarely available. To receive needed medical treatment, U Tun Aung Kyaw needs to visit a specialist outside of the prison. However prison authorities have prohibited him from doing this, citing security concerns. (Source: AAPP)

**Case of U Ohn Kyaw**

U Ohn Kyaw, over 70 years old, from Shwe Taung Township, Pegu Division, is suffering from heart failure and hypertension, which has resulted in near paralysis. He is currently serving his sentence in a solitary confinement cell, and has not been admitted to the prison clinic. It is believed that he will die if he does not receive immediate treatment at a hospital outside of the prison. He was sentenced in 1998 to 7 years imprisonment under Section 5/J. He is currently in Myingyan prison. U Oh Kyaw is a retired township education administrator. Two of his sons are political activists working with DPNS. One is a Central Committee Member on the

Thai-Burma border, and the other is currently in prison inside Burma. U Ohn Kyaw is not an activist. At the time of his arrest he was running a book rental shop that was popular with young people. It is believed that he was arrested solely because of his sons' political activities. His family has been unable to provide him regularly with needed medicine, due to their financial situation and because the prison is located far away from their home. (Source: AAPP)

**Case of U Toe Poe**

U Toe Poe, age 62, joined the 1988 demonstration as the Patron of the Workers' Union of Industry Ministry # 1. When SLORC came to power he was forced to resign his position, and was later arrested. He is currently being held in Tharawaddy prison where he is reportedly in poor health. (Source: AAPP)

**Case of U Tin Aung**

U Tin Aung (aka Ko Nyo), age 60 was arrested in 1989 and sentenced to 20 years in prison for his political organizing activities during the 1988 uprising. Prior to this he had been arrested in 1965, and again in 1969. While his current prison sentence was finished in 1999, he continues to be held in Kale prison, Sagaing Division, where he is reportedly in poor health. (Source: AAPP)

**Prisoners in poor health in Thayet Prison, Magwe Division**

On 27 January 2001 The Assistance Association for Political Prisoners in Burma (AAPP) wrote a letter to ICRC expressing deep concern regarding the health of the following prisoners, and strongly urged the ICRC to intervene on their behalf. These prisoners are**:**

**Kyaw Khin**

Kyaw Khin an NLD mp-elect from Shan State, is currently suffering from a heart disease. He was arrested in June 1996 for recording and distributing video and audiotapes of foreign news reports and documentaries on Burma. Eight other people were also charged and sentenced for the same offence. U Kyaw Khin was charged under the 1985 video act and was sentenced to 3 years in prison, he was given an additional 7 years under the 1950 Emergency Provision Act, Article 5 (j).

**Thein Dan**

Thein Dan is a high-ranking member of the NLD who has been suffering from hypertension.

**Nyi Mway**

Nyi Mway, an activist from Insein Township, Rangoon, has been suffering from heart disease.

**Ko Ko Gyi**

Ko Ko Gyi is a student leader who has already completed his prison sentence. He

has been suffering from a heart condition.

**Myo Aung Htwe**

Myo Aung Htwe is a student activist from Thingangyan, Rangoon who has been suffering from a heart condition.

**Aung Than Nyunt**

Aung Than Nyunt is an NLD member from Chauk Township, Magwe Division, who has suffered a paralytic stroke.

**Saw Bin Sin**

Saw Bin Sin is a KNU member who has been in prison for two decades. He is currently very weak and facing health problems as a result of his advanced age. In 1980 Saw Bin Sin was given a death sentence by the SPDC after he was accused of contacting the KNU. His sentence was commuted to life in prison in 1989. He spent his sentence shacked inside a tiny cell in Insein prison, until he was moved to Thayet prison in 1991. He is reportedly suffering from lung cancer, and he receives no medical treatment from the prison authorities. His family cannot provide him with assistance as they are currently living in a refugee camp in Thailand.

**Tin Tun**

Tin Tun is an elderly prisoner suffering from muscle weakness.

AAPP has also expressed concern to ICRC about the following two prisoners, also in Thayet prison

**Hla Shwe**

Hla Shwe age 63, has been suffering from a heart condition and facing general health problems due to his age. He is only fed rice soup for his meals. The prison authorities ask about his medical condition but do not provide him with any medication or treatment. He has been imprisoned a number of times; for 2 years beginning in 1959; for 3 years beginning in 1969; and for 7 + years beginning in 1989. He has currently been in prison for the past 14 years, which has caused his health condition to deteriorate.

**Saa Than Myint (aka Sate Noh)**

was given a death sentence on July 12, 1985, for allegedly belonging to the KNU. His sentence was later commuted to life in prison. Soon after his imprisonment he contracted tuberculosis. He received medical treatment twice, in 1997 and 1998. In Thayet prison he received medical treatment for only six months.

# 3.6 Death in Custody

**Khin Maung Myint**

Khin Maung Myint, from Bogale, Irrawaddy Division, was arrested in 1991 for his involvement with the KNU. He was given a life sentence in Myingyan Prison under act 17/1 and 122. He died in 2001 from unknown causes.

**Maung Maung Aye**

Maung Maung Aye was arrested in 1999 because of his political involvement with the NLD. He was sentenced to 4 years in Bassein Prison under article 5(j). He died on 25 June 2001 of unknown causes.

**Khin Maung Myint (no relation to above mentioned prisoner)**

On July 26, 2001 Khin Maung Myint, who was in his thirties, died in prison of unknown causes. He had been serving an eight-year sentence in Kale prison in Sagaing Division. According to former prisoners, Kale prison is located in a malaria-infested area, where even prison staff frequently become seriously ill and actually rely on political prisoners' families for medicine. Khin Maung Myint was active as a former NLD youth leader and was the secretary of the NLD Latha Township branch in Rangoon. In 1997 he was arrested for trying to organize a meeting with Suu Kyi and other NLD youth members in Mayangone Township, also located in Rangoon. He was charged under 5(j) of the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act. (Source: Irrawaddy)

**Sithu**

On 11 July 2001**,** Sithu, a student activist also known as Ye Naing, died in Tharawaddy hospital in central Burma after serving over eleven years in prison. Sithu, was given a 12 year prison sentence in 1995. He was initially put in Insein Prison and later transferred to Tharawaddy Prison, 78 miles from Rangoon. His older brother, Khin Maung Zaw, was also incarcerated in another prison very far from Rangoon, and managing regular visits to both Sithu and his brother was difficult for their family members. In 1999, his brother was released after serving 10 years in prison.

Although Sithu's sentence was officially completed in March 1999, the authorities refused to release him. The SPDC Interior Minister and Chairperson of the Human Rights Committee, Col. Tin Hlaing stated that, "(Sithu is) still strong-minded and opposite political thinking (to the junta)." Tharawaddy prison is located in an area where malaria is endemic, and many prisoners contract the disease. In February 1999, Sithu was admitted to the prison hospital to be treated for malaria. Later he reportedly also contracted typhoid. As the health care system in prison was very poor and the closest hospital outside the prison was also ill equipped, Sithu had to buy the medicine he needed himself. He reportedly had a difficult time obtaining permission to buy medicine and contact his family. Despite several months of

treatment he continued to suffer from malaria fevers. On November 15, 2000 his condition deteriorated and he was again admitted to the prison hospital. After continual pleas, he was allowed to seek treatment at a hospital outside the prison, where a doctor diagnosed him with an "unknown fever."

On January 10, 2001, after one month in the hospital, he was sent back to prison. For six months following his return, Sithu was given medicine for tuberculosis by the prison doctor. Later, it was reported that he had contracted HIV.

During the rainy season, Sithu caught a cold and his health further deteriorated. When he contacted the prison doctor, he was given only aspirin. Four days later, his temperature had risen to 103ºF and he was having difficulty breathing. On June 27, his temperature rose to 107ºF and he was no longer able to eat. He became increasingly dehydrated and was in constant pain. At this time he was receiving some limited medical treatment, but was not given oxygen or an I.V. On July 6, the district doctor and a specialist examined him and prescribed a new course of treatment. The next day, he was moved to a cell in Tharawaddy district hospital. After five days, on July 11, Sithu passed away. After his death, his family and friends tried to put an obituary in the state-run newspaper, however MI agents had already warned the paper not to print the obituary. (Source: Irrawaddy)

## 3.7 Prolonged Detention

Since 1998, the authorities have also extended some prisoners' detentions under Article 10 (a) of the 1975 State Protection Act, which allows officials to detain a person for up to 3 years without trial for "security reasons." In prisons around Burma, the authorities have re-arrested and extended the detention of more than 45 political prisoners who did nothing to violate this article. When their prison terms were finished many of these prisoners were taken to the prison gates as if to be released, and then told that they were being detained again. They were temporally denied family visiting rights under the special law 10 (a) and many have suffered from mental illness after experiencing systematic psychological torture.

**10 political prisoners get additional sentences.**

On 20 November 2001, DVB reported that the Burmese government had extended the sentences of 10 political prisoners. Reports indicate that these political prisoners had a quarrel among themselves, which didn't disturb the security of the prison. While the incident occurred in Taungoo prison, the 10 prisoners, including Kyaw Mya, Than Naing, and Bo Bo Han, have currently been transferred to a prison in Mandalay. DVB quoted official sources in Rangoon, stating that their sentences had been extended by an additional seven years for violation of prison rules. No further details were given. (Source: DVB)

**List of Political Prisoners who have completed their sentences but remain**

**imprisoned-**

| **Name,** | **Prison** |
|---|---|
| 1- Aung May Thu, | Tharawaddy |
| 2- Aung Than, | Bassein |
| 3- Ba Htoo Maung, | Myingyan |
| 4- Bala Gyi, | Taungoo |
| 5- Bo Bo Han, | Taungoo |
| 6- Hla Nyein, | Myingyan |
| 7- Htay Kywe, | Tharawaddy |
| 8- Htay Lwin, | Myingyan |
| 9- Htay Thein, | Mandalay |
| 10- Htway Aung, | Insein |
| 11- Khin Maung Than, | Mandalay |
| 12- Khin Maung Ye (aka Tin Aye), | Mandalay |
| 13- Ko Hmaing(aka Myo Min Hlaing), | Myingyan |
| 14- Ko Ko Gyi, | Thayet |
| 15- Kyaw Lwin, | Myingyan |
| 16- Kyaw Mya, | Taungoo |
| 17- Min Ko Naing (aka Paw Oo Tun), | Sittwe |
| 18- Myat San, | Taungoo |
| 19- Naing Myint (aka Myint Soe), | Mandalay |
| 20- Soe Moe Hling (aka Mae Gyi), | Tharawaddy |
| 21- Soe Myint, | Mandalay |
| 22- Soe Win, | Myingyan |
| 23- Than Saw, | Myingyan |
| 24- Than Swe, | (NA) |
| 25- Thaung Hteik (aka Than Hteik), | Tharawaddy |
| 26- Thet Khaing (aka Ko Latt), | Insein |
| 27- Thet Tun (aka Tin Htut), | Myingyan |
| 28- Tin Aung, | Kale |
| 29- Tin Aye Kyu (aka Hmaing Lwin), | Mandalay |
| 30- Tin Htay (aka Phone Thar), | Mandalay |
| 31- Tin Myint, | Mandalay |
| 32- Tin Tun, | Insein |
| 33- Ye Nyunt, | Mandalay |
| 34- Zaw Aung, | Tharawaddy |
| 35- Zaw Khin, | Thayet |
| 36- Zaw Min, | Thayet |
| 37- Zaw Min, Dr, | Mandalay |
| 38- Zay Ya, | Tharawaddy |

## 3.8 Release of Political Prisoners

In early 2001, approximately 100 NLD members who had been detained for months in a military compound outside Rangoon, were released. They were arrested in Rangoon railway station in September 2000, after attempting to meet with Aung San Suu Kyi. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was at the railway station planing to travel to Mandalay, but was banned from doing so by military authorities.

Since the beginning of the talks in October 2000, 212 NLD members, including those mentioned above, have been released. Among them, were three NLD members who were reportedly released before their prison periods were finished. The members were:

(1) Dr. Aung Khin Sint, MP elect in Mingalar Taung Nyunt Township

(2) Khin Hla Htay, a NLD youth member, Irrawaddy Division and

(3) Cho Aung Than, Aung San Suu Kyi's cousin and assistant.

For more information about the release of comedians U Pa Pa Lay, and U Lu Zaw, magazine editor Soe Thein, and journalist Daw San San Nwe, please see chapter on Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and the Press.

## 3.9 Political Prisoners - A few Profiles

**Name: Ko Kyaw Tun Min**
**Alias: Aung Kyaw**
**Age: 20**
**Year/Major: Completed 10th Standard (1997)**
**Occupation: Student**
**Address: Thukha Block, Bago Division**
**Siblings: Eight**
**Law Violation: Emergency Act 5(j) and 17/1**
**Sentence: 25 Years in Prison, with Hard Labour**

Kyaw Tun Min was a 10th Standard student in 1996 and was actively involved in the December 1996 student demonstrations. In December, he also finished 10th Standard, passing his exams with two degrees - math and science. In 1998, after he had passed the entrance into the Defense Service Academy, he failed to report to class.

In the summer of 1999, leading up to the planned 9-9-99 demonstrations, Kyaw Tun Min was actively involved in organizing activities in Bago Township, including the 19 July Martyr's Day protests. After the 19 July demonstrations, and

the subsequent Military Intelligence crackdown, he went into hiding. On 4 August, he was arrested while in hiding, by Bago Military Intelligence #3, and accused of having connections to ABSDF. On 3 December 1999, the Military Government sentenced Kyaw Tun Min to 25 years in prison, with hard labour.

**Name: Win Win Htay (aka) Ma Po**

**Sex: female**

**Prison: Insein**

Win Win Htay worked in the NLD headquarters in the early 1990s when the military regime detained Aung San Suu Kyi and hundreds of NLD members. She is also a member of the NLD Rangoon Division Youth Wing. To support her family, she ran a betel nut shop near her apartment in Kyaukthada Township, downtown Rangoon, until Aung San Suu Kyi was released from arrest and the NLD became more active. In May 1996, the military authorities detained her and other over 400 NLD members who were planning an NLD congress. She was interrogated and detained in Insein prison for 2 months.

On October 28, 1997, she and other NLD members went to the Mayangone Township NLD office branch for a meeting of the local NLD youth wing. The authorities did not allow them to hold the meeting, and later that night, the military intelligence people arrested her and 7 other NLD members. The authorities accused them of disrupting the peace and stability of the country. They were sentenced to 7 years imprisonment each, under section 5/j (of the 1950 Emergency Provision Act) and they had been denied access to legal counsel.

**Name : Dr. Zaw Min**

**Sex : male**

**Prison: Mandalay**

Dr. Zaw Min, the son of Hla Shwe and Khin Htay, was born on February 2, 1960 in Meiktila, middle Burma. He graduated from Rangoon Institute of Medicine in the early 1980s. Zaw Min, a physician and short-story writer, was accused by the military regime of being one of the masterminds of the 1988 pro-democracy movement. He was arrested on July 1989 and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment with hard labor on November 13, 1989 by a military court. He was accused of trying to oppose state power, and was charged under section of 5/j and 17/1. Dr. Zaw Min was moved from Insein prison to Mandalay prison on July 6,1990. At the beginning of 1993, the regime reduced the sentences of all political prisoners to not more than ten years. Dr. Zaw Min benefited from this amnesty and his sentence was shortened to ten years, meaning that he was scheduled for release in 1997 or 1998. At the end of 1999 instead of being released, his sentence was lengthened under act 10/a, which allows for an individual to be detained for prison since 1989, was unable to recognize

relatives who visited him recent years. The authorities neglected his family's requests for treatment to address his deteriorating mental condition. (Source: AAPP)

## 3.10 Ethnic Minority Political Prisoners, Including MP-Elects

Currently there are many ethnic minority prisoners being held in Burmese prisons and detention centers because of their involvement in the democracy and human rights movements. Some members of ethnic minority groups took part in the 1990 general election sponsored by the military authorities. Eight years after the elections, when the military authorities still refused to accept the results, some of the ethnic political parties, together with National League for Democracy, founded the Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP). However, the authorities responded harshly, and gave long prison sentences to all of those who participated in non-violent political activities such as the CRPP. Aye Tha Aung, an Arakanese activist and secretary of CRPP, was given 21 years in prison for meeting with ethnic minority groups to discuss plans for the future and cooperation between these activists and military regime.

Some of the jailed ethnic minority activists are currently very old. Saw Mra Aung, 93, chairman of the Arakan League for Democracy (ALD) and Cin Shing Thang, 63, chairman of the Zomi National Congress (ZNC) were arrested in September 1998. ALD and ZNC are founding parties of the CRPP. Although the authorities said that these individuals were put in government guesthouses, they are in fact currently in the Ye Mon military camp, a place with very harsh living conditions, including poisonous reptiles and insects.

In February 2001 AAPP sent a statement to the International Committee of the Red Cross, requesting that they pay regular visits to the following ethnic minority prisoners to monitor their health status.

**Name: Aye Tha Aung**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Insein**

**Ethnicity: Arakanese**

Aye Tha Aung is currently serving a 21-year sentence for his activities in the democracy and human rights movement. He was born in Myaebon Township, Arakan State. He up to three years without a trial. According to his family, Zaw Min who has been in served as a Sergeant Major and worked in Ka-Pa-Sa, the Heavy (Military) Industry Corporation. He was dismissed and imprisoned in Mandalay jail due to his underground political activities and released under an amnesty in 1974. After the 1988 democracy uprising, he became a member of ALD

and United National League for Democracy (UNLD) Secretariats. After the military authorities refused to accept the 1990 election results, he became one of the secretaries in the CRPP. In CRPP, he represents the 4 ethnic political parties, Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD), Arakan League for Democracy (ALD), Mon National Democratic Front (MNDF), and Zomi National Congress (ZNC).

In 2000, he met with some other members of ethnic minority groups to organize a dialogue including activists and military authorities. He also wrote articles on ethnic minority issues in CRPP bulletins. After he was arrested on April 24, 2000, he was given three consecutive 7 year prison terms for violating publication and emergency laws. He had been denied any legal defence.

**Name: Cin Shing Thang**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Ye Mon military Camp**

**Ethnicity: Zomi (Chin)**

Fu Cin Shing Thang, age 63, has been detained since September 1998. He is a High Court Advocate and has a Bachelor of Arts (Law) degree and a Bachelor of Law degree from Rangoon University. Fu Cin Shing Thang was a member of the 'Group for Solidarity,' one of several groups formed in Burma who met to discuss the drafting of a new constitution. In 1972 he presented his recommendations to the military authorities' constitution drafting committee and was subsequently detained by the authorities for 2 years. He was elected from Tiddim Constituency (2) in the 1990 general elections that were sponsored by the military regime. He is currently the Chairman of the Zomi National Congress (ZNC). Although the authorities banned the party on March 11, 1992, the ZNC continued their activities in mid 1998. On June 6, 1998, Cin Shing Thang, together with 3 other ethnic leaders from powerful parties, requested that the military start a dialogue with democratic activists. Three months later, he was detained but authorities announced that he (and hundreds of activists, including MPs-elect) had been invited for a dialogue. Currently he is in the Ye Mon military camp, a place with poor living conditions, including poisonous reptiles and various sorts of insects. (Note: Fu is the equivalent of 'Mr'. in Chin.)

**Name: Do Htaung**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Kalay**

**Ethnicity: Chin**

Do Htaung, NLD MP-elect, is currently in detention in Kalay Prison. MI personnel arrested him at midnight on May 21, 1996 while he was preparing to attend the sixth anniversary of the founding of the NLD at Aung San Suu Kyi's residence. After he was released on May 27, 1996, he was arrested again by the MI and was tortured the

entire night. His sons, Dr Rodain and Dr Lawn Thaung fled from Burma after the MI attempted to arrest them as well. Some 19 other NLD members, including Ba Min, Tin Cho and Wing Naing were arrested and charged along with Do Htaung under Articles 5(j) of the 1950 Emergency Provision Act.

Do Htaung, 61, is the son of Hlanon and Htanman, and was born in Bo Kyone Village, Falam Township, Chin State. He passed Medic Training in 1962 with the highest marks in the country and from 1963-1989 he worked as a Medic in Tatalan, Kanpalat, Kale, Molite and Homalin Townships. In 1971, he was detained in Myingyan Prison for 2 years. He participated in the 1988 democracy uprising and became a local NLD leader. In the 1990 election, he was elected from Kale Constituency (1), Sagaing Division.

**Name: Duwa Zaw Aung**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Insein**

**Ethnicity: Kachin**

Duwa Zaw Aung, age 68, is currently serving a 7-year prison sentence for his activities in the NLD. He is the son of Duwa Jah and was born on September 20, 1933. From 1954-1957 he was the Chairman of the Kachin State Student Union. He was also the Bamaw District Chairman of the Committee for the Promotion of Kachin Culture from 1956-1957 and Chairman of the Kachin State Baptist Church from 1982-1987. He actively participated in the 1988 democracy uprising and became a local leader in the NLD. In the 1990 general election, he was elected as a representative from Waingmaw Constituency, Kachin State. He stayed secretly in Rangoon when the CRPP was founded in 1998. In August 1999, he was arrested by MI personnel. They sentenced him to 7 years imprisonment because he had written to religious leaders about the political deadlock between the military authorities and NLD.

**Name: Khun Myint Tun**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Mandalay**

**Ethnicity: Pa-O**

Khun Myint Tun was arrested by MI personnel in May of 1996 along with hundreds of NLD members. In mid 1996, he and 19 other people were accused of contacting Burmese activists in India. He was charged with disturbing the State peace and stability and was sentenced to seven years in jail. Later, the authorities found out that in April 1996 he had met with a journalist from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation at Aung San Suu Kyi's residence and that he had given the journalist a videocassette of Aung San Suu Kyi's weekly speeches. He, along with Kyaw Khin, (MP, Shan State), was then sentenced to an additional three years for breaching the *1985 Video Act*.

Khun Myint Tun was born in Theinseik Village, Thaton, Mon State on January 12, 1963, the son of U Hpon Khin and Daw Khin Aye. He graduated with a degree in Geology from Rangoon University in 1983. After he finished studying he started a business with his parents and also worked as an assistant teacher. He became a democracy and human rights activist after the 1988 uprising. He was occasionally detained by the authorities when he was working in NLD headquarters from 1993 to 1996. He was arrested in his village and detained in Moulmein and Insein prisons. He is now currently being held Mandalay prison.

**Name: Kyin Thein**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Taungoo**

**Ethnicity: Mon**

Kyin Thein, age 53, is currently in prison after being sentenced to 7-years under Article 5 (j) of the 1950 Emergency Provision Act. Prior to his arrest he was the Chairman of Kya-in-Seikkyi Township NLD and in charge of the Karen State Organizing Committee. He attended the military controlled National Convention and was a part of the NLD boycott in December 1995.

Kyin Thein led student demonstrations against the military government in 1975 at Moulmein College and was subsequently arrested, and from March to September 1976 was detained in Moulmein Prison as a political prisoner. He was born in Ye, Mon State. His father's name is Par O. Kyin Thein has a degree in Geography and worked as a Kya-in-Seikkyi Township Council member in 1985 and was a part time member of the township jury. He became a NLD member and in the 1990 general election he was elected in Kya-in-Seikkyi Constituency (2).

**Name: Nine Nine (also known as Saw Nine Nine)**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Insein**

**Ethnicity: Karen**

Nine Nine, NLD MP-elect is currently serving his 21-year sentence in Insein Prison. Nine Nine, the son of Saw Thein, was born on April 3, 1942 in Kyaik Hto. He has a Post-Graduate Diploma in Management and Administration from Rangoon University. He was a government Trade Corporation Manager from 1967-1983 and resigned from his job in 1983. He then worked as a consultant. After the 1988 uprising, he became the Chairman of Pazundaung Township NLD and elected from Pazundaung Constituency. As a result of his activities with the NLD, he was arrested on October 25, 1990 and sentenced to 10 years under Penal Code Article 122 (1). He was detained in Insein and Thayet prisons.

He rejoined the NLD movement as soon as he was released in 1999. He became a

leading member of the Supporting Committee to the NLD youth led by Aung San Suu Kyi. He was arrested on September 13, 2000 because of his work with this committee and also because of an article he published in the NLD bulletin. He was sentenced to 21-years imprisonment under the act of 5(j), 17(20) and 17(1).

**Name: Saw Mra Aung**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Ye Mon military Camp**

**Ethnicity: Arakanese**

Saw Mra Aung, 93, has been detained without charge by the Burmese junta since September 1998. He is the chairman of the Arakan League for Democracy (ALD), which was founded after the 1988 nationwide democracy uprising. ALD won 11 seats in the general election on May 27, 1990 in which Saw Mra Aung was also elected as a Member of Parliament from Mrauk-U Constituency (1), Arakan State. The military regime had no intention of transferring power to the elected representatives, and ALD was banned by the military controlled Election Commission on March 6, 1992. On June 9, 1998, the 4 elected ethnic leaders, including Saw Mra Aung, appealed to the regime to convene parliament based on the 1990 poll results. On June 23 the National League for Democracy (NLD), which won a landslide victory in the election, also called for the regime to convene the parliament within 60 days. As the regime neglected their demand, the NLD and 4 other ethnic minorities parties founded the Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP) on September 16, 1998.

On September 1998, the military authorities detained hundreds of activists and MPs including Saw Mra Aung. The junta said that the activists were invited to the government guesthouses for dialogue. In reality, they were put in a detention center in Ye Mon garrison town, outside the capital Rangoon. It was announced by the junta that it had arrested 200 MPs and 651 NLD members. (See the junta controlled paper *New Light of Myanmar* 23-11-98.) Later, they were forced to resign as MPs or from political activities. Every 1 or 2 months, the junta allowed some MPs, including Saw Mra Aung, to return home for a one night stay.

Saw Mra Aung was made the chairperson of the People's Parliament on September 17, 1999, when the first statement of the CRPP was issued. Because he was under detention at the time, he wasn't aware of his appointment as chairperson until a few weeks later when was allowed to visit his family. He informed the CRPP that he accepted this position heartily and he would serve this office until his death. Saw Mya Aung studied medicine in Burma until 1942, when the Japanese occupied Burma, and later continued his studies in Bombay, India where he received his medical degree in 1947. He served as a government worker for two years and then went to Britain for four years where he received further medical degrees.

From 1955-1963 he was the head of Mandalay Hospital and the head of the Medical Education Department of Mandalay Medical College. Saw Mra Aung retired from government service in 1978 and worked for two hospitals in Hong Kong from 1979-1982. He came back to Burma in 1982 and worked as a volunteer specialist at the Sanga (monk) Contribution Hospital and the Nun's Hospital in Rangoon until he was arrested.

Saw Mra Aung, the son of Saw Hla Aung and Than San, was born on April 23, 1908 in Mrauk-U, Arakan State.

**Name: Saw Oo Reh**

**Sex: Male**

**Prison: Loikaw**

**Ethnicity: Kayah**

Saw Oo Reh is currently imprisoned in Loikaw, Kayah State and is suffering from serious diabetes and kidney problems. He is 73-years old. He was hospitalized in July 1997 as a result of his health problems and although in shackles, was tied to his hospital bed. His son-in-law, Aung Myint, fled to Thailand in October 1997 after being forcibly recruited as a porter for the army and reported at that time that Saw Oo Reh's health was declining.

He was arrested in December 1996 and charged with financially supporting the outlawed Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) and writing a book entitled ' The Crisis of Kayah State and Causes of Civil War in Burma'. He was charged under the Association with Illegal Organizations Act and the 1962 Printing and Publishing Act, and sentenced to 17 years imprisonment. Prior to his arrest, on November 18, 1996, the Election Commission announced that he had resigned as an MP. It is understood that the military used intimidation to force him to resign. He joined the NLD after the August 1988 uprising and was a member of the Kayah State Organization Committee. In the 1990 general election, he was elected from the Phruso constituency. He was then a Central Committee member of the NLD and boycotted the military sponsored National Convention on December 28, 1995.

Saw Oo Reh was born on August 30, 1928 and is the son of U Toe Reh. He was educated up to Seventh Standard and during World War II he served as Sergeant with spider-badge paratroop unit 136. He was a candidate in the 1960 election, and was a representative of the Parliament from 1974-1978 for Phruso Township, Kayah State.

**Name: Toe Po**

**Sex: Male**

**Ethnicity: Tavoyan**

Toe Po, a NLD MP-elect, is serving a 7-year sentence for his activities in democracy

and human rights. During the 1988 democracy uprising he joined the demonstrations as a patron of the Workers' Union of Industry Ministry no-1. When the military came to power he was forced to resign from his position as Deputy Director of the Ministry. In 1964 he had joined the Army and retired as a Captain in 1981. He worked for the Ministry of Industry no.1 for 5 years in Tavoy and 2 years in Pegu. Toe Po, the son of U Pe Chit, was born on November 17, 1939 in Palaw, Tenasserim Division.

In the 1990 military sponsored general election, he was elected as a representative from Yebyu Constituency, Tenasserim Division. Although the military refused to accept the 1990 election results, he, like the majority of other MPs, carried on his democracy and human rights activities. He became a key member in NLD's Social Supporting Committee that has been working especially for the political prisoners. He was arrested in September 1998.

## 3.11 Partial List of Politicians, including NLD MP-elects and NLD members who remain incarcerated in 2001

After the 1990 elections, hundreds of Members of Parliament (MPs) were detained and imprisoned by the SPDC. There are currently 50 MPs in prison, military camps and under house arrest. (See list below). Some were released and then re-arrested and imprisoned, including: Dr. Aung Khin Sint, U Min Swe, Daw San San, U Soe Thein (aka Maung Wuntha). In some cases MPs were forcibly detained with the authorities claiming that they had only been 'invited' to stay at guesthouses for a dialogue.

In May 2001 Human Rights Watch published a list of eighty-five MPs who at that time were currently being held in prison or detention in Burma. Forty-five of these MPs had already been sentenced, the majority charged with attempting to "undermine state security" under article 5(J) of Burma's Emergency Provisions Act. Their sentences ranged from two years to thirty-seven, with most facing at least seven years in prison. Thirty-eight of the 45 charged are NLD members, three from the Mon National Democratic Front, and one each from the Arakan League for Democracy and the National Democratic Party for Human Rights. The MP sentenced most recently was Min Shwe, an NLD Irrawaddy Division MP, who was given three years in March 2001.

The remaining forty detained parliamentarians have not yet been tried or sentenced. Aside from one MP who belongs to the Party for National Democracy, the rest are members of the NLD. Most of those who continue to be held without charge were first detained in September 1998, while they were involved in efforts to form a parallel parliament, the Committee Representing People's Parliament (CRPP). (Source: HRW)

3 MPs-elect died in prison between 1990 and 1999 due to torture and ill treatment,

poor prison conditions and inadequate medical care. Some died soon after they were released, such as the architect U Kyaw Min. While a large number of MPs have been released since the beginning of the talks, there is continuing concern about the health of those that remain incarcerated in prisons, military camps, and so-called guesthouses. (Source: AAPP)

**NLD Leaders who remain in detention**

On September 21 2000, Aung San Suu Kyi, Tin Oo, 7 NLD central executive committee members and approximately 100 NLD supporters were arrested in Rangoon. The NLD leaders were arrested as they were attempting to board a train to Mandalay. Tin Oo and several other NLD members were taken into detention, while Aung San Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest. On the same day, NLD vice-president, Aung Shwe was also put under house arrest. After 3 months, Tin Oo was released from police detention but remained under house arrest. The seven members of the NLD CEC were released from house arrest in late 2000. On 27 August 2001, the SPDC lifted their restrictions on U Aung Shwe and U Tin Oo. This move was an apparent goodwill gesture by the SPDC, and occurred a day before United Nations envoy Razali Ismail was due to arrive in Rangoon.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi remained under house arrest throughout 2001. Her regular food purchases continued to be thoroughly checked by security personnel, and she was restricted from having visitors.

**MPs-elect in prisons**

1. Aung Khin Sint, Dr., Constituency - Mingala Taungnyunt (1), Sentence Duration-12 Years, Current Prison - Insein
2. Aung Kyin (U), Myaungmya (1), — Years, — Prison
3. Aung Myint (U), Letpadan (1), — Years, Insein Prison
4. Aye Kyu, Dr., Labutta (2), 2 Years, Myaungmya Prison
5. Aye Than(U), Paung-de (2), — Years, — Prison
6. Chit Htway (U), Myothit (2), — Years, — Prison
7. Doe Htaung (U), Kalay (1), — Years, Mandalay Prison
8. Duwa Zaw Aung, Waingmaw, 7 Years, Mandalay Prison
9. Hla Min (U), Kawthaung, 7 Years, Myingyan Prison
10. Hla Myint (U), Maubin (2), — Years, — Prison
11. Hlaing Aye (U), Pakokku, — Years, — Prison
12. Khin Maung Swe (U), Sanchaung, 7 Years, Myingyan Prison
13. Khin Maung Win (U), Oaktwin (2), 20 Years, Taungoo Prison
14. Khun Myint Tun (U), Thaton (1), 7 Years, Kalay Prison
15. Kyaw Khin (U), Taunggyi (1), 10 Years, Thayet Prison
16. Kyaw Min (U), Buthidaung (1), — Years, — Prison
17. Kyaw San (U), Taze (1), 7 Years, Insein Prison

18. Kyi Lwin (U), Ngape, — Years, — Prison
19. Kyi Myint (U), Latha, 20 Years, Myingyan Prison
20. Kyi Win (U), Labutta (1), 10 Years, — Prison
21. Kyi Win, Dr (aka Min Kyi Win, Mu Don) (2), — Years, Moulmein Prison
22. Kyin Thein (U), Kya-in-Seikkyi (2), — Years, Taungoo Prison
23. May Win Myint, Dr. (female), Mayangon (2), 7 Years, Insein Prison
24. Min Soe Lin, Dr., Ye (1), 7 Years, Moulmein Prison
25. Min Swe (U), Pyapon (2), 3 Years, — Prison
26. Myint Naing (U), Kanbalu (2), 25 Years, Thayet Prison
27. Myo Nyunt, Dr., Dedaye (1), 7 Years, Tharawaddy Prison
28. Naing Tun Thein (U), Thanbyuzayat (2), 7 Years, — Prison
29. Nine Nine (U), Pazundaung, 21 Years, Insein Prison
30. Nyunt Aye (U), Letpadan (2), — Years, — Prison
31. Nyunt Hlaing (U), Myede (1), 5 Years, Thayet Prison
32. Ohn Kyaing (U), Mandalay Southeast (2), 17 Years, Taungoo Prison
33. Ohn Maung (U) (aka Sai Ohn Maung, Yaunghwe) (2), 12 Years, — Prison
34. Ohn Maung (U), Nyaunglebin (1), 7 Years, Tharawaddy Prison
35. Ohn Naing (U), Paung-de (1), — Years, — Prison
36. San San (Daw) (female), Seikkan, 25 Years, Insein Prison
37. Saw Oo Reh (U), Hpruhso, 10 Years, Insein Prison
38. Sein Hla Oo (U), Insein (2), 7 Years, Myitkyina Prison
39. Soe Myint (U), Minbu (1), 7 Years, Bassein Prison
40. Soe Thein (U) (aka Maung Wuntha, Waw) (2), — Years, Insein Prison
41. Than Lwin (U), Madaya (2), 9 Years, Mandalay Prison
42. Than Nyein, Dr., Kyauktan (1), 7 Years, Insein Prison
43. Thaung Myint (U), Khin-U (2), — Years, — Prison
44. Thein Zan, Mye-de (2), — Years, — Prison
45. Tin Aung (U), Wakema (1), 4 Years, — Prison
46. Toe Po (U), Yebyu, 7 Years, Insein Prison
47. Tun Kyi (U), Mogaung, — Years, — Prison
48. Tun Win (U), Mindon, — Years, — Prison
49. Yaw Hsi, Puta-O, — Years, — Prison
50. Zaw Myint Maung Dr., Amarapura (1), 25+7+5 Years, Myitkyina Prison

**MPs-elect under detention in the so-called guesthouses**

(1) Aung Moe Nyo Dr., Pwintbyu (2) Constituency
(2) Aung Myint Thein (U), Natmauk (2)
(3) Aung Soe (U), Magwe (2)
(4) Aung Soe Myint (U), Taungoo (1)

(5) Aye (U), Gyobingauk (2)
(6) Ba Swe (U), Kawhmu
(7) Han Zaw (U), Sinbaungwe
(8) Hla Thein (U), Tamwe(1)
(9) Hlaing Aye, Pakokku (2)
(10) Kan Oo (U), Salin (2)
(11) Khin Kyaw Han (aka Kyaw Kyaw (U)), Yenanchaung (2)
(12) Khin Maung Win (U), Oaktwin (2)
(13) Kyaw Myint (U), Magwe (1)
(14) Kyaw Myint (U), Zalun 1
(15) Maung Aye (U), Tharawaddy (2)
(16) Myint Kyi (U), Katha
(17) Myint Thein (U), Chauk (1)
(18) Myint Thein (U), Kyaikmaraw (1)
(19) Myo Win, Dr., Kawa (1)
(20) Nyan Win (U), Paung (1)
(21) Pike Chon (U), Shwedaung (2)
(22) Saw Hlaing (U), Indaw
(23) Saw Mra Aung, Dr., Mrauk-U (1)
(24) Sein Win, Dr., Seikkyi Kanaungto
(25) Soe Maung (U), Phyu (2)
(26) Tar (U), Salin (1)
(27) Tha Saing (U), Twante (1)
(28) Thar Aung (U), Myothit (1)
(29) Thar Maung (U), Okpo (2)
(30) Thein Myint (U), Tamwe (2)
(31) Thein Nyunt (U), Thingangyun (1)
(32 ) Thein Oo, Oaktwin 1
(33) Tin Htut Oo (U), Lewe (1)
(34) Tin Shwe (U), Waw (1)
(35) Tun Kywe (U), Nyaunglebin (2)
(36) Tun Tun Hein (U), Nawngcho
(37) Win Myint (U), Danubyu (1)
(38) Win Myint Aung (U), Tebayin
(39) Win Naing, Dr., Tanyin (1)

**MP-elect in house arrest**

Aung Shwe, Mayangon (1) Constituency

**MPs-elect who have died in prison**

Tin Maung Win (U), Kayan (2) Constituency
Hla Than (U), Coco Island
Saw Win (U) (aka Kyaw Zaw Lin) (U), Htilin

# 3.12 Partial List of arrested activists and opposition forces in 2001

### Chin leader arrested

On 19 March 2001, Mr.Gin Kam Lian, Secretary General of the Zomi National Congress (ZNC) was arrested in Mawlamyine, Mon State by the SPDC. Mr. Gin Kam Lian is a prominent ethnic leader who has close ties to Aung San Suu Kyi. He was actively involved in the Committee for Representing People's Parliament (CRPP), which was formed in September 1998 by representatives from political parties that had won seats in the 1990 elections. The Zomi National Congress (ZNC) won two parliamentary seats in the elections but the regime outlawed the party in 1992. The SPDC has not made any announcement on the arrest of Mr. Gin Kam Lian, and it is currently not known where he is being held. In 1999 the junta arrested the president of ZNC, Mr. Cin Sian Thang. (Source: Mizzima)

### Female pastor sentenced to two years with hard labour

On 6 July 2001, a female pastor, Ms. Gracy, of Rinpi Baptist church from central Chinland was sentenced by a Chin State court to two years with hard labour in Haka, the capital of Chin State. Pastor Gracy was arrested by Burmese soldiers on February 13th, 2001, and was accused of supporting the Chin National Front. Since her arrest, she has been detained in Haka army camp, where prison conditions are extremely harsh and dangerous for female prisoners. Recent reports indicate that Pastor Gracy will soon be sent to Kalaywa hard labour camp in Sagaing division, where her brother Pu Hoi Mang is now serving a two year prison term with hard labour. In Chin State, the SPDC has publicly declared that Christian pastors are their number one enemy, accusing them of being pro-colonialist. (Source: CHRO)

### Mandalay monk arrested over critical sermon

7 August 2001, regional military intelligence personnel arrested a monk for delivering a speech criticizing the prevailing economic and political situations at an umbrella raising religious ceremony held at the Mahamyatmunni Payagyi Pagoda in Mandalay on 1 August. The monk, Ashin Pandita, climbed up the pagoda's scaffolding and delivered a sermon to the monks and guests attending the ceremony. The military intelligence personnel present immediately removed him from the ceremony, took off his monk's robes and detained him at No 10 Police Station. The authorities are planning to take action against the monk for inciting unrest. Although Ashin Pandita is believed to be a resident of a monastery near the Mandalay Technological University more details about him are not known. His

actions caused a commotion among the monks who attended the ceremony. (Source: DVB)

**Former professor arrested for one-man demonstration**

On 20 November 2001, Dr. Salai Tun Than, a former university rector, was arrested for staging a one-man protest against the SPDC. The 74-year-old retired rector stood in front of Rangoon City Hall and distributed copies of a petition letter he had written, demanding political reform. In his letter, he called on the ruling military regime to hold multiparty general elections within one year, and requested that the elections be supervised by officials from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the United Nations. He added that governing power should be transferred over to the winner as soon as the results are made known to the public. In his letter, he further urged military officials to kill him if they refused to meet his demands. "It is better to die than to live under the military regime," the letter said. He also appealed to all armed forces and police to join the people and urged the armed forces to stop killing people.

It is believed that Dr. Salai Tun Than wore an academic gown during the protest. Security officers arrested the professor after being alerted by local officials. After his arrest, Dr. Salai Tun Than was detained in Insein Prison where he was denied permission to meet relatives and friends. On February 8, 2002, he was sentenced by a special court held inside Insein prison, to seven years imprisonment under Article 5(J) of the 1950 State Emergency Act. Recent reports indicate that he is now permitted to receive visits from relatives. In February, he also met with the United Nations' Human Rights rapporteur for Burma, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro. Dr Salai Tun Than currently suffers from a serious eye condition that needs to be operated on within the next six months.

Dr. Salai Tun Than, a Christian and a member of the Chin ethnic group, earned a Ph.D. in Agronomy from the University of Wisconsin and had served as rector at the Yezin University of Agriculture in Pyinmana until 1990. (Source: Irrawaddy)

## 3.13 Arbitrary Seizure of Villagers

In January 2001 a resident of Myekanbaw village, Karen State who escaped to the border reported that whenever the SPDC needs funds they arrest people in the village for various reasons and release them after receiving money. Those who cannot pay are kept as porters until their relatives come and ransom them. (Source: KORD)

In January 2001, the VPDC chairman of Kyauk-ka-nya village, Tenasserim Division, U Than Sein, reported to Ye-pyu police station that U Su Hne, age 40, son of U Chit Sein, had failed to pay porter fees and fees for the village funds and that he was saying negative things about the VPDC. After this the police from Ye-pyu towncame and arrested him. After U Su Hne's arrest, he was put in Ta-voy prison for three months by the authorities, who reported that U Su Hne had interrupted

their business. U Su Hne then had to serve as a prisoner porter for the coastal region command frontline. The VPDC in Kyauk-ka-nya village forces the residents to pay porter fees and the people who refuse to pay are reported to the Ye-pyu police station, and like U Su Hne they are arrested and punished. (Source: THRF)

In January 2001, 3 villagers were accused of supporting the Shan resistance and arrested in Ham Ngaai tract, Murng-Kerng township, Shan State by the same SPDC troops (LIB 15 of 99th Division), led by commander Set Wei, known locally as "Lt. Betel Chewer,". One managed to escape during the arrest and his property was confiscated, and his house was also destroyed. The 3 victims were:

1. Lung Sing (m), aged 50, of Kung Nyawng village, Ham Ngaai tract (being detained in Murng-Kerng)

2. Saang Su (m), of Zaam Pawng village, Ham Ngaai tract (being detained in Murng-Kerng)

3. Khing Paang (m), of Nawng Ung village, Ham Ngaai tract (escaped)

Lung Sing and Saang Su are still being detained in jail in Murng-Kerng town at the time of this report. (Source: SHRF)

On 29 January, an LIB troop headed by Min Zaw entered the area of Play Hsa Lor, Toungoo district, Karen State, hid in the jungle and shot at villagers who passed by. Fortunately no one was injured at that time but a husband and wife from Play Hsa Lor village Saw Kyi Lin and Naw Kheh Pa, were captured. So far they have not been released. (Source: KORD)

On 10 March 2001, SPDC, IB 26, based in Tha Byage Nyunt, (Taw Ta Tu) Tantabin twonship, Toungoo District sent for the village head man of Play Hsa Lo village, Maw San Tin, and took him to labor at the car road construction side at Ma La Daw. At the time of this report he had yet to be released. The troops have also forced Play Hsa Lo village to send 3 persons regularly to labor at car road construction side. (Source: KIC)

On 10 March 2001, Narinjara News reported that a prominent Rakhine businessman from Sittwe, Rakhine State, had been arrested illegally and was being detained without trial in Sittwe State Prison. The businessman, Aung Saw Tha, age 48, from Mouleek Quarter of Sittwe, was arrested in February 2001, following race riots that occurred in the area between the Buddhists and the Muslims. Prior to his arrest, Aung Saw Tha ran a video show and video rental service in Sittwe. On the day he was arrested, there was a live broadcast of a football game that he was showing in his video store. According to inside sources, there was a bet of hundreds of thousands of kyat between the businessman and a personal assistant of Aung Htay, Head of the Western Command. When the personnal assistant (PA) lost the bet, he began a fight with Aung Saw Tha and his men. The PA instantly left the scene. Shortly afterwards he returned with six MI agents. They charged Aung

Saw Tha with the crime of showing foreign videocassettes, which is illegal in Sittwe, and arrested him with six other men who were in the video store. The MI agents confiscated all his personal property worth hundreds of thousands of kyat including his wife's gold jewelry. Since his imprisonment, Aung saw Tha's physical condition has seriously deteriorated following repeated physical torture in the prison cell, according to a political detainee in the same prison who recently crossed the border to Bangladesh. (Source: Narinjara News).

On 20 March, 3 village headmen were arrested and imprisoned in Hsipaw, Shan State, for their villages' failure to fill the rice procurement quota. The arrested headmen were: Zang Hsu from Zaykharn village; Ai Parn In from Nalaw village; and Ai P from Na-oong village. All were detained by the order of U Maung Sein, Customs Officer and U Ngwe Taik, Township Officer. According to local sources, their arrests had caused much outrage among the villagers. Rangoon's exorbitant rice quota, 8 baskets per acre at 300 kyats per basket, had led to protests by farmers in Hsihseng Township in southern Shan State on 15 January. (Source: SHAN)

In April 2001, a garlic farmer was locked up for 2 days and 2 nights by SPDC troops of LIB502, led by Capt. Win Kyi, for growing a test crop of 3 viss (1 viss = about 1.6 kilos) of garlic without informing the military authorities. In January 2001, the military authorities in Murng-Pan had issued an order requiring farmers who grew garlic to also grow 10 viss for the military for every viss they grew for themselves. Lung Kan-Ta-Maa of Naa Ing village, in Murng-Pan township, Shan State, grew the garlic to test the soil, thinking the SPDC troops would never see it. However, in April, the SPDC troops accidentally found the garlic farm and, although it was already harvested and deserted for some time, they arrested Lung Kan-Ta-Maa and extorted some of money from him. (Source: SHRF)

On 26 May, the SPDC LIB (111) entered Mae K'ti village in Shwe Kyin township, Karen State and captured 5 members of Pah T'kler's family. The troop also looted food from the the villagers and burnt down a village school. The troop continues to operate in the area and so far there is no information about Pah T'kler's family members. (Source:KORD)

On 28 May 2001, a pregnant Akha woman was arrested by SPDC troops from LIB 331 for buying consumer goods from Thailand, and locked up for 7 days at a police station in Ta-Khi-Laek town, Shan State. A-Pe, age 19, who was 6 months pregnant, would occasionally sneak across the Mae Sai river to buy food for her family as prices of consumer goods are very high in Ta-Khi-Laek town. Although there was no one at the point where she crossed the river on her way out, on her return she ran into LIB 331 troops on the bank of the river. The soldiers, stating that they were working under orders, arrested A-Pe and detained her in the police station for 7 days without trial or any kind of legal protection before releasing her. (Source: SHRF)

On 9 July, Soldiers from LIB 262 arrested 17 boat passengers near the area of

Bokepyin, Kyunsu, and Kawthaung Townships, Tenasserim Division. The passengers were detained for two days. The soldiers looted items from the passengers worth ten million kyats. The boat owners are U Mya Din and U Ka Shin from Yebyu village, Launglon Tsp, Tenasserim Division. Some Mon soldiers who have cease-fire agreements with the junta also participated in the arrest. They shot at the boat of U Than Tun (from Aungbarlay village) and one boat man was injured. Then U Lwin's boat, from Launglon township was stopped by soldiers from LIB 104, led by Maj Nay Myo. Five boat men were arrested and asked to join the military. Later they were sentenced to 16 years and 4 months each in Launglon court. (Source: THRF)

On 31 July 2001 the chief of Kone Suu villager, in Loikaw Township, Kayah State was arrested by SPDC regional command troops. Prior to this the Kone Suu villagers had been ordered by the Burmese commander Han Tin from LIB No. 250, to pay a tax of 30,000 kyat before celebrating their fire-works festival. Though the village gave the money to Major Han Tin, he kept the money for himself and didn't pass it on to the relevant regional commander. Thus the day after the festival the village chief was arrested by the regional command troops, and was accused of holding the festival without permission from the military authorities. (Source: KNAHR)

On 5 September, the authorities were checking IDs in Thin Gan Nyi Nong, Myawaddy township, Karen State. They stopped 200 Muslims and destroyed their IDs. Some people were freed after they paid a bribe. Others were sent to Pa'an Town and put in prison. This is a common occurrence. (Source: ABMU)

On 20 September troops from SPDC LIB 120, came to Mae-yai-khee and Paw-kyaw villages Shwe-gyin township, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State and seized 48 villagers from 7 families who were hiding in the jungle. Those troops camped at Thay-kyo and Doh-kho-wah to seize villagers hiding in the jungle. (Source: KIC)

On 28 September 2001 an Arakanese student who had recently fled to Bangladesh reported that approximately three thousand Rakhine students, teachers and monks have been detained in Sittwe, Rakhine State, since riots between Buddhists and Muslims broke out in February 2001. MI agents, police and other paramilitary forces arrested and detained without trial students as young as ten or eleven years old. According to the Arakanese student, about two thirds of those arrested were released after paying as much as fifteen thousand kyat in bribes. Those arrested who could not pay the bribe were sent to the Thai border for portering and forced labour. Some parents were able to track down their children who had been sent to the Thai border, and bribe the authorities there to release them. The student who reported the incident is 16 years old, and from Moouleik quarter of Sittwe. He was taken to Tacheleik in Shan State, along with 47 other students where the Burmese Military forced them to perform hard labour and used them as porters in combat

areas. His father bribed the Military Intelligence 10 stationed at Sittwe for permission to travel to Shan State to bring back his son. A large number of students and monks from Sittwe remain missing. Most of the parents of the missing children are afraid of asking SPDC officials about the whereabouts of their children. (Source: Narinjara News)

On 5 October 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 54, led by company commander Aung Myo Oo, came to Myitta village, Mergui-Tavoy District, Tenasserim Division and arrested village head Maung Mya Shwe. (Source: KIC)

On 15 December 2001, SPDC authorities in Chin division sentenced 5 Muslims to 5 year prison sentences, according to two traders speaking on conditions of anonymity. The Ta Mu township SPDC chairman Capt. Khin Maung Myint personally ordered the arrest and imprisonment of the Muslims because they crossed into a 'not permitted area'. The 5 Muslims are now in Mon Ywa prison. The 5 Muslims were originally from Arakan State where the junta restricts free movement of all Muslims even in areas where they are in the majority. (Source: MICB)

## 3.14 Reported incidents of Enforced Disappearances in 2001

On 25 April, a troop of SPDC IB (120) column No. (1) entered a place called Lay Hta in Thay Kho Pu, area Hsaw Hti (Shwe Kyin) township, Karen State, and shot at the huts of the villagers. When the other villagers fled trying to escape, one woman, Naw Ma Nyunt was lost from the group. After shooting at the villagers, the troop took everything they found in the huts and left the place. After they left, some villagers returned and searched for the dead body of Naw Ma Nyunt, as they thought she might have been killed, but they found nothing. Therefore the villagers think that she might have been captured by the soldiers. (KORD)

In late June 2001, the headman of Murng Haang village, Murng Haang tract, Murng-Ton township disappeared after being arrested by Capt. Han Sein, from IB65 of the SPDC, and taken to the military base. On June 17, troops from IB65 came to Murng Haang village on 4 conscripted civilian trucks and arrested Zaai Phaw-Ka, and took him to the military base. The troops accused him of assisting and providing rice for the Shan soldiers of SSA and interrogated, beat and tortured him. He explained that every time Shan soldiers asked him for rice he had reported it to the SPDC local military authorities, and that SPDC authorities said that it would be better for the villagers to give the rice because they could not offer protection for the villagers all the time. Therefore, the villagers gave some rice to the Shan soldiers. Zaai Phaw-Ka was released on June 21, after being interrogated, beaten and tortured. However, on June 26, he was arrested again by the same troops and no one has seen or heard of him since. On June 27, SPDC troops from IB225, led by Capt. Mya Maung, came to arrest the deputy headman of Huay Aw village, Zaai Taw-Ya, in Pung Pa Khem tract, Murng-Ton township. But Zaai Taw-Ya ran away and escaped. On June 27,

the same SPDC troops arrested the village tract headman of Pung Pa Khem tract, Pu Haeng Ting, and took him to the military base. He was released after a few hours of interrogation. Three days later, he was again summoned to IB65 base in Murng-Ton to meet with the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Myint Swe. It is not yet known when he will be released. (Source: SHRF)

On 10 September 2001, at 14:40 hours, combined troops from DKBA and SPDC LIB 11, led by Htun Mya came to Taw-u-hta, Pa-an District, Karen State and shot at villagers Maung Ma Pu, Saw Ti and Lah Eh Po and some boat owners. One villager was wounded and one villager is missing. The troops also looted a Honda machine from Nya-mu-klo villager. (Source: KIC)

On 15 September 2001, LIB 342, led by commander Ye Tun U, came to The Paw Late village in Tenasserim Division. They shot into the village mosque and ordered people to come outside. There were 50 people inside the mosque, who were traveling for religious reasons and had stopped at The Paw Late village. The soldiers took 5 of these people to their camp on the Thai-Burma border and nobody knows what happened to them after that. (Source: ABMU)

## 3.15 Arrest and Detention of Foreigners

**Fishermen from Bangladesh jailed in Burma**

As of the beginning of February 2001, there were approximately 200 Bangladeshi fishermen imprisoned in Sittwe and Maung Daw prisons of Arakan State. The Taknaf Fisherman Association, based on the Bangladesh/Burma border, reports that in the past two months alone over 100 Bangladeshi fishermen have been arrested while catching fish near Shin Ma Phyu Island and Sein Mar Tin Island in the Bay of Bengal, reportedly inside Bangladesh's water territory. The fishermen accuse the Burmese border security force, Na Sa Ka, of frequently crossing into Bangladesh water territory and arresting them in the Bay of Bengal. The imprisoned fishermen are reportedly not given enough food and medicine by the Burmese authorities, and an appeal has been made to the Bangladesh government to work for their release.(Source: Mizzima)

**Na Sa Ka kidnaps Bangladeshi villagers**

On 10 April 2001, 11 Bangladeshi villagers were kidnapped by Burmese border security personnel (Na Sa Ka) on Bangladesh-Burma border. On the night of April 10th , a group of Burmese Na Sa Ka crossed over to Bangladesh and kidnapped villagers from Bashabari, Dainet and Yezoo villages. The incident occurred in the wake of a joint attack by Arakan and Rohingya rebels on a Na Sa Ka camp in the area earlier this month. During the attack 6 Na Sa Ka personnel were reportedly killed and at least 14 others injured. The Na Sa Ka kidnapped the villagers in retaliation for the attack, and to use them as guides to attack the rebel camps in the border. (Source:Mizzima)

# 3.16 Personal Account

**Interview with Daw Nge Ma Ma Than**

*(Text of report by DVB on 28 July 2001)*

Daw Nge Ma Ma Than, an NLD leader and cousin of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, her husband U Myint Swe, and older brother, U Cho Aung Than, were all arrested in 1997. The three were sentenced to 10 years imprisonment each but Daw Nge Ma Ma Than and her husband U Myint Swe were released on July 26th 2001 by the SPDC under Section 401 of the Amnesty Law. DVB conducted an interview with Daw Nge Ma Ma Than.

[Khin Hnin Htet] Since you were released only on Thursday, can you tell us about your condition in jail especially your health condition?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] I have nothing much to say about the jail. They looked after me well because my health was not good. I am suffering from spondylitis in my neck and osteoarthritis in my feet so I was referred to an orthopedist.

[Khin Hnin Htet] What about your health condition now?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] I have thought of getting a checkup. I have not done that as yet but I plan to do a thorough checkup.

[Khin Hnin Htet] Can you tell us whether you were kept in solitary confinement and how long were you in jail?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] Yes, I was kept alone and I was incarcerated for over four years - a total of four years, one month, and 13 days.

[Khin Hnin Htet] Can you tell us about your daily life in prison?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] They gave me only one hour of walking time daily including morning and evening. That is the maximum sometimes it was less when officials came to visit the jail. I had to take a bath, walk, and wash clothes during that time. I was given sufficient amount of water though. I was allowed two big jars of water. Well, as for food I was given hospital diet. All those jailed under Section 5-J [of the Emergency Provisions Law] were given a hospital diet. I do not know about the others.

[Khin Hnin Htet] Is it true that you were allowed to leave the jail and attend certain occasions?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] Yes, they allowed me to go out. I was allowed to go out five times.Once when my older brother died. The next time was the merit making ceremony on the seventh day of his death, my father's ninth death anniversary merit making ceremony, my older brother's first death anniversary merit making ceremony, and the fifth was to arrange for my father's tomb.

[Khin Hnin Htet] Then, can I say that the conditions inside the jail have improved?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] I have never been jailed before so I do not know and then how can I know how they treat everybody. Isn't it? I cannot compare the treatment they gave me with the others.

[Khin Hnin Htet] There have been international criticisms that those currently released by the Burmese military junta should never have been arrested in the first place. Can you tell us how you were arrested and under which section you were charged?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] At first I did not think I was being arrested. I thought they came to search and confiscate the computers and stuff. I was arrested at my home. We were arrested at different places - Cho Aung Than at his home and U Myint Swe at his office. We were booked under Section 5-J and Section 17-1. We were sentenced to 10 years - seven years under Section 5-J and three years under Section 17-1.

[Khin Hnin Htet] Were you able to meet with your husband and brother inside the jail?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] We were unable to meet at first. My husband was transferred to a different jail. Then I was able to meet my older brother once a month only in 1999 that is after two years. Then when my husband was transferred back I met my husband and my brother alternately. We were allowed one meeting a month.

[Khin Hnin Htet] You were arrested together with your husband U Myint Swe and your brother U Cho Aung Than. Now only you and your husband were released. How do you feel about your brother?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] Frankly, I felt sad about my brother. I wanted him to be released too because the three of us were arrested together but only two were released. I am still expecting my brother [to be released].

[Khin Hnin Htet] Do you mean your brother's health is not good?

[Nge Ma Ma Than] It is not in that sense. He was doing his medical checkup and was arrested before he could take any treatment. He was hospitalized once in jail because his blood pressure dropped very low. I am worried now because he is all alone inside. I am not a healthy person and that is why I am very health conscience and careful about myself. But my brother is different he does not care about his health and that is what worries me the most. (Source: Democratic Voice of Burma, Oslo, in Burmese 1430gmt 28 Jul 01)

# # Photos







*Photos #F1, F2 : Internally displaced villagers on the run from L—, M— and M— areas (Dweh Loh township, Papun District) in late June 2001. At the time this photo was taken, SPDC troops had just arrived at xxxx village only 10 minutes' walk away, so they were fleeing up into the highest hills in fear. Night was about to fall, and being rainy season the conditions on the high mountains are extremely cold and wet, making survival extremely difficult. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*







*Photos #F3, F4 : Internally displaced villagers in Dweh Loh township, Papun District, on June 21st 2001. The night before they had to flee L—, N—, L— and P— villages because a column of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #111 arrived in the area; the villagers from L— escaped only 5 minutes before the arrival of the SPDC column. When this photo was taken, they were only 30 minutes' walk from the location of the SPDC column. It was the start of the rainy season, which is very cold and wet in the area and will make their lives extremely difficult. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*







*Photos #F9, F10, F11, F12: Karen villagers flee through the forests of Nyaunglebin District in May 2001. These people fled their homes in Du Pa Leh village up into the hills because SPDC troops had occupied their village. They then tried to go and stay back near their village, but had to flee again because an SPDC Army column came up to their hiding area, and had to keep fleeing from place to place through April and May. One to two weeks after most of these photos were taken, they headed into Papun District and decided to try to make it to Thailand. The bamboo stick being carried by the little girl in Photo #F9 is for keeping leeches off during the hike through the jungle; the small cloth on the end of it contains tobacco, which when wettened and rubbed on the ankles repels leeches. Even so, hundreds of leeches latch onto the legs of walkers within a few hours, especially in rainy season. See also photos below. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*


# F-11


# F-12



# F-14



# F-15

*Photos #F14, F15, F16, F17 : A group of displaced villagers from Du Pa Leh village in Nyaunglebin District set up temporary shelters to rest and hide in the forest in May 2001 (see also photos above). Shortly thereafter they had to flee SPDC troops again, and eventually decided to try to flee to Thailand. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*









*Photos #F24, F25 : Karen villagers move through Papun District in May 2001 on their way to the Thai border after fleeing their homes in Shwegyin township, Nyaunglebin District. Since the beginning of 2001, SPDC troops have established a heavy military presence in the hills of eastern Shwegyin township, causing villagers to flee eastward as their villages are burned and civilians are shot on sight or captured to be porters. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*

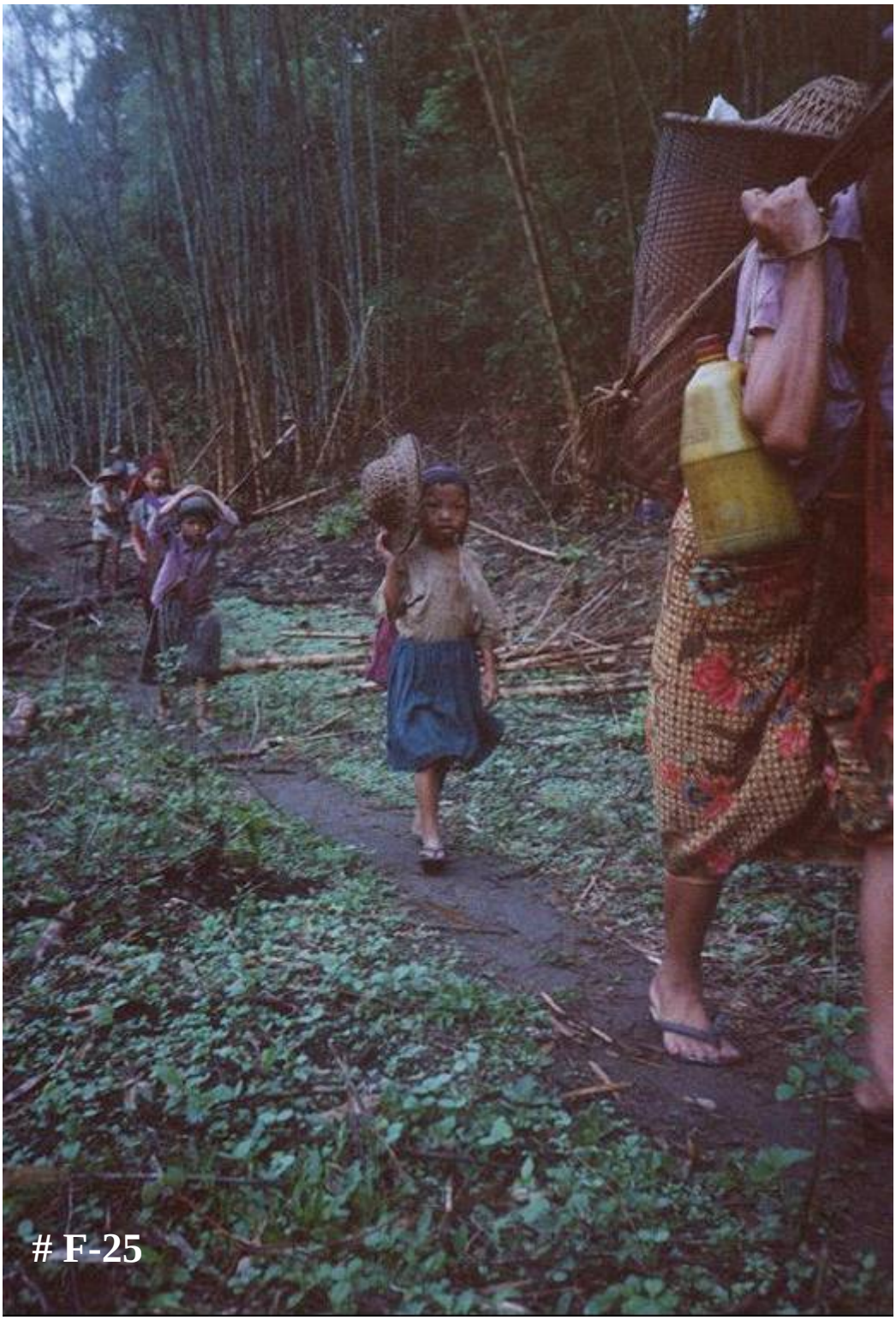

# F-25




*Photo #F26 : Naw T— and her family from Dweh Loh township, displaced and camping alongside the xxxx River in April 2001. They fled their village in February 2001 when it was entirely burned and destroyed by SPDC troops. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*



*Photos #F28, F29 : Displaced villagers from Nyaunglebin District flee through Papun District on their way to the Thai border in April 2001 after their villages were destroyed by SPDC troops. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*







*Photo #F30 : Internally displaced children from T— village in the forest in Papun District, April 2001. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*







*Photos #F33, F34 : Internally displaced Karen villagers cook and eat by night in the forests of central Nyaunglebin District, March 2001. This group is from T— village. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*







*Photos #F36, F37 : The hidden shelters of villagers from Tee Ler Pa and Thay Ko Hser Der villages in eastern Shwegyin township, Nyaunglebin District. They and about 2,000 others fled their homes and headed eastward into Papun District in January 2001 when SPDC troops came up into the hills and destroyed all the villages in their area. Villages have also been destroyed in the area where they are hiding, so they must always be ready to move. These pictures were taken in March 2001, but they are still in hiding in the same area. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #F42 : Internally displaced Karen villagers in the Ya Wah River area, Mergui-Tavoy District, Tenasserim Division, in March 2001. The SPDC has destroyed many of the hill villages in the area since 1997, while people in villages under SPDC control are constantly used for forced labour to support the Army's campaign to control the region. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #F46 : Internally displaced Karen villagers in Papun District weave thatch shingles to roof their shelters in the forest. They fled in March 2001 after SPDC troops destroyed their village. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*







*Photos #F48, F49, F51, F52 : Karen villagers from Maw Kee village in Shwegyin township, Nyaunglebin District, flee through Papun District in March 2001 in an attempt to get to a refugee camp in Thailand. They say that SPDC Light Infantry Division #77 troops came from Shwegyin to base themselves near their village in mid to late 2000 and began demanding forced labour, extortion and other things. When the villagers fled outside the village, LID 77 sent out patrols to hunt them*

*and shoot at them. They fled to another village, but the troops followed them there, shot at them and burned the village, so they fled back to their home area. Then the troops found them and shot at them again so they continued fleeing, and in October 2000 Saw K – (age 38, see Photos #F49, F48 and F52) stepped on a landmine near Thay Ko Pu village and lost his lower left leg. While he was recuperating and the villagers were staying in field huts where they didn't even dare light a cookfire for fear of detection, the 77 Division troops located them again and began shelling them so they fled up further into the hills. The troops found them again, shot 2 of them dead and wounded 7 others. When these photos were taken in March 2001 they had been on the run for about 6 months nonstop, and had decided they had no choice but to make for a refugee camp in Thailand; they had been joined by some villagers from Thay Ko Pu, Meh Yeh Kee, Tee Blah and Kaw Mu Der villages, also in Nyaunglebin District and facing a similar situation. They had nothing but the clothes on their backs and a very small quantity of rice. In Photo #F52, the group takes a rest to eat.[Photos: KHRG researcher]*









*Photos #57, F58 : Karen villagers from Bper Kee, K'Dee Mu Der and Htaw Ee Soe villages in Nyaunglebin District hiding in the forest in March 2001 after fleeing SPDC troops who came and occupied the area around their villages in late February 2001. Photo #F57 shows some of them pounding rice to remove the husks using an improvised bamboo levered pounder.*

*As Photo #F58 shows, even after seeing their homes burned and fleeing into the jungle, children still love to have fun. For some of them it is all a great adventure, until the food runs out and they come down with malaria and diarrhoea. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*






*Photos #F72, F75 : A group of Karen villagers from eastern Nyaunglebin District during the flight from their villages eastward into Papun District on January 30th 2001. SPDC columns had come up from the west to camp around their villages, looting and destroying their homes, destroying their crops and capturing any people they could find for forced labour or shooting them on sight. These people are now internally displaced in hiding in Papun District, where they must often flee continuing SPDC patrols; for more information see KHRG Information Update #2001-U3, 9/4/2001. [Photo: Free Burma Rangers researcher]*









*Photos # F76, F77: About 200 of the villagers mentioned above (Photos #F71 through F75) cross the Bilin River during their January 2001 flight from Nyaunglebin District into Papun District, where they are still displaced. They fled after SPDC columns came up from the west to camp around their villages, destroying houses, looting, destroying crops, and taking anyone they found with them for forced labour. [Photos: Free Burma Rangers researcher]*







*Photo #F104, F105 : Villagers from M—, W— and L— villages in western Papun District, living in hiding in the forest after SPDC columns destroyed their villages. In Photo #F104 the villagers are pounding paddy to dehusk it. The young woman in Photo #F105 is ill; malaria, diarrhoea, severe vitamin deficiencies, infections, and other problems are very common among the internally displaced, but they have no access to medicines and many die of treatable diseases. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*

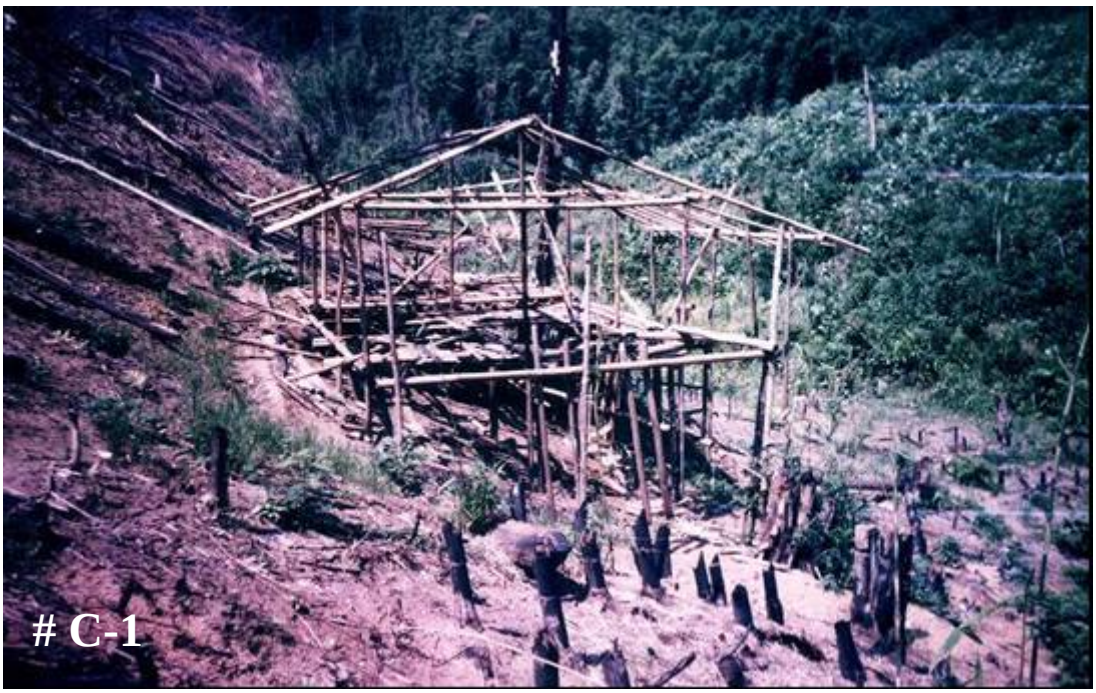



*Photo #106 : A Karen Buddhist monk in Papun District who now lives among the internally displaced in the forest. He told KHRG, "Back when I could stay in my village my villagers built me a monastery. But since 1997 the SPDC battalions have driven us up and down and burned our village. They drove some of the villagers to Meh Way and others to Pway Day, and some villagers fled to stay in the hills. Right now we who live in the jungle don't have hillfields anymore, because every time we try to work them two or three Battalions come and burn it. We can just get a little for each of us after they burn it. The troops search for our things, they saw all of the things which belonged to the monastery that my villagers had provided, and they took it all. All of the things they took would cost 200,000 Kyat. When they came they also shot at two of my villagers, Saw H— and H—'s father. They weren't hurt, but the soldiers took everything they had. The SPDC Battalions don't fight other armies anymore, they just attack the villagers. It's not easy for me to be a monk anymore. They shoot all the people that they see. Right now even though I'm a monk I have to work a hillfield, because the villagers can't feed me anymore. We have to work for ourselves. We don't have our monastery anymore. We have to live in the jungle, and if they see us they will shoot us. If they capture us they will torture us and then kill us." [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photos #F120, F121 : Karen villagers cross the Moei River from Pa'an District into Thailand in mid-January 2001, on their way to a refugee camp. They told KHRG they were fleeing forced labour portering, building Army camps and clearing landmines for SPDC Battalions which had just moved into their home area of Meh Kreh and Kwih Law Ploh in northeastern Pa'an District. To support the new Army camps, they had also been used as forced labour to build a new military supply road from Shan Ywathit to Kha Leh Dee, both clearing the road route and walking in front of a bulldozer to detonate any landmines. More information based on interviews with these refugees can be found in KHRG Information Update #2001-U1. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*




# C-1


# C-2

*Photo #C1, C2, C3 : Farmfield huts and crop fields burned by SPDC troops in Tenasserim Division as part of their campaign to consolidate control over the region, March 2001. Photo #C3 shows a group of villagers who have been displaced by the campaign standing in the ruins of their ricefield. Villagers normally burn off hillfields before planting, but if it is done too early a proper crop cannot be planted; SPDC troops have taken to doing this as one of the ways to wipe out the food supply of the internally displaced villagers. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*






*Photos #F154, F155 : Some of the 70 displaced Karen children trying to study in this makeshift jungle school after fleeing Nyaunglebin District into Papun District in late January 2001 with their parents because SPDC columns had come to destroy their crops and houses and hunt them for forced labour. They are still living in hiding there. [Photos: Free Burma Rangers researcher ]*






*Photo #F157 : Students of W— primary school in Toungoo District, July 2001. Though they've had to flee their village with their families and live in hiding scattered widely in the forest, they built the temporary schoolhouse in the background and continue to study while living in hiding; their two teachers can be partly seen behind the centre of the group. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*

# 3.17 Appendix 1

**List of Political Prisoners Released from 2000-2002**

**(Source: AAPP)**

| Name | Arrest Date | Released date | Sentence | Occupation | Prison | Source |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| San Htay (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 26 Sep 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Nyunt Kyi | 22 Sep 2000 | 26, Sep 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| James Mawsley | 31 Aug 1999 | Oct 2000 | 17 | | Kengtung | |
| Aye Lwin | 22 Sep 2000 | 5 Oct 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Maung Myint | 22 Sep 2000 | 5 Oct 2000 | BINA | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Kyee Myint | 22 Sep 2000 | 5 Oct 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Saw Than Htoo | 22 Sep 2000 | 5 Oct 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Than Win | 22 Sep 2000 | 5 Oct 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Thein Aung | 22 Sep 2000 | 5 Oct 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Toe Lwin | 22 Sep 2000 | 5 Oct 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Win Kyi (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 5 Oct 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Pan (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 17 Oct 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Thin Thin Moe (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 1 Nov 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Oo | 22 Sep 2000 | 20 Nov 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Tun Zaw Zaw | 22 Sep 2000 | 20 Nov 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Hla Pe | 22 Sep 2000 | 2 Dec 2000 | | NLD leader | House arrest | |
| Lun Tin | 22 Sep 2000 | 2 Dec 2000 | | NLD leader | House arrest | |
| Lwin | 22 Sep 2000 | 2 Dec 2000 | | NLD leader | House arrest | |
| Nyunt Wai | 22 Sep 2000 | 2 Dec 2000 | | NLD leader | House arrest | |
| Soe Myint | 22 Sep 2000 | 2 Dec 2000 | | NLD leader | House arrest | |
| Than Tun (CRPP Sec:) | 22 Sep 2000 | 2 Dec 2000 | | NLD leader | House arrest | |
| San San Aye (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 15 Dec 2000 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Aung Din | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Aung Htoo | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | | | BINA |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aung Nyein | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Aung Tun | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Aye Aye Soe (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Aye Than (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Aye Tun | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Chit Tin | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Chit Yin | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Cho Cho Lwin (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Hla San | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Hla Than | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Hla Tun | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Hlae Hlae (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Hlae Hlae Win (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Htay Htay (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Htay Zaw | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Htin Kyaw | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Khin Htway (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Lay (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Lay Swe (f) | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Maung Htway | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Ohuu (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Phyu (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Saw Hmu (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Khin Zaw | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Kyaw Swe | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Kyaw Yin | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Mar Mar Aye (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Mar Mar Swe (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marlar (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Mhan Tun Shwe | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Min Lwin | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Mya Nyunt | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myat Soe @ Shwe Gyo | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myint Aung | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myint Myint Sein (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myint Myint Soe (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myint Myint Thwin (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myo Aung, Dr | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myo Khin | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myo Nyunt | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Myo Thaw | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Nan Kyu Than Win (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Naw Ohn Hla (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Phyu Phyu Thin (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Phyu Phyu Tun (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| San San Myint (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| San Shwe | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Saw Lwin | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Soe Soe (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Swe Swe Win (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Than Htike Aung | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Than Than Aye (f) | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Than Than Oo (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Than Tint Aung | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Than Tun | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Thein Lwin | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Thein Swe | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Tin Aye (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Tin Than Aye (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Tin Than Oo (f) | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Tun Myint | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Uproung | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Ye Min | 20 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Zaw Min Kyaw | 22 Sep 2000 | 24 Jan 2001 | | NLD | military camp | BINA |
| Htike | 1995 | March 2001 | | | | |
| Maung Maung Oo | 1995 | March 2001 | | | Myinggyan | |
| Moe Myat Thu | 1995 | March 2001 | | | | |
| Tin Than Oo | 1995 | March 2001 | | | Myinggyan | |
| Aye Win | 1996 | 02-Jul-01 | 5 | NLD | Insein | |
| Soe Thein | May 1996 | 14 June 2001 | | MP | Insein | |
| Saw Mya Aung, Dr | Sep 1998 | 15 June 2001 | | ALD | military camp | |
| Aung Soe | January 1996 | July 2001 | 7 | NLD | | |
| Lu Zaw @ Po Aye | January 1996 | July 2001 | 7 yrs | Comedian | | |
| Maung Htway | January 1996 | July 2001 | 7 | NLD | | |
| Pa Pa Lay @ Tun Po | January 1996 | July 2001 | 7 | Comedian | | |
| Aung Mor Nyo, Dr | | 13 July 2001 | | MP | military camp | |
| Saw Hlaing | | 13 July 2001 | | MP | military camp | |
| Tin Htut Oo | | 13 July 2001 | | MP | military camp | |
| San San Nweh | | 18 July 2001 | | NLD & journalist | Insein | |
| Duwa Zaw Aung | 1998 | 13 Aug 2001 | | MP | | |
| San San (f) | 1997 | 13 Aug 2001 | | MP | Insien | |
| Aung Shwe | 22 Sep 2000 | 27 Aug 2001 | | NLD leader | House Arrest | |
| Tin Oo | 22 Sep 2000 | 27 Aug 2001 | | NLD leader | House Arrest | |
| Tha Htay | | 9-Nov-01 | | NLD | | AP |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kyaw Soe | | 9-Nov-01 | | NLD | | AP |
| Tin Wi | | 9-Nov-01 | | NLD | | AP |
| Khin Maung Oo | | 9-Nov-01 | | NLD | | AP |
| Than Lwin | | 13-Dec-01 | | NLD MP | | AFP |
| Than Htike | | 13-Dec-01 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Nyein Maung | | 13-Dec-01 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Myao Naing @ Mg Mg | | 13-Dec-01 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Yin Htway | | 12-Dec-01 | | Student | Tharawaddy | DVB |
| Thaung Aye | | 20-Dec-01 | | NLD | | Kyodo |
| Soe Myint | | 20-Dec-01 | | NLD | | Kyodo |
| Kyaw Hlaing | | 20-Dec-01 | | NLD | | Kyodo |
| Tin Win | | 20-Dec-01 | | NLD | | Kyodo |
| Khin Kyi Kyi (f) | | 28-Dec-01 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Tin Tin Aye (f) | | 28-Dec-01 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Khin Aye Cho (f) | | 28-Dec-01 | | NLD | | APP |
| Khin Soe Win (f) | | 28-Dec-01 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Cho Aung Than | | 9-Jan-02 | | NLD | | Reuters |
| Ohn Myint | | 31-Jan-02 | | NLD | | Xinhua |
| Ar-Kar | | 31-Jan-02 | | NLD | | Xinhua |
| Maung Seint | | 31-Jan-02 | | NLD | | Xinhua |
| Shwe Aye | | 31-Jan-02 | | NLD | | Xinhua |
| Tin Win | | 31-Jan-02 | | NLD | | Xinhua |
| Hla Tun Aung | | 13-Feb-02 | | NLD | | Kyodo |
| Kan Shein | | 13-Feb-02 | | NLD | | Kyodo |
| Htein Lin | | 13-Feb-02 | | NLD | | Kyodo |
| Myo Myint Nyein | | 13-Feb-02 | | NLD | | Kyodo |
| Kyi Pe Kyaw | | 13-Feb-02 | | ABSDF | | Kyodo |
| Cho (F) | | 19-Feb-02 | | NLD | | AP |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hla Kyaw | | 19-Feb-02 | | NLD | | AP |
| Maung Hla | | 19-Feb-02 | | NLD | | AP |
| Maung Than | | 19-Feb-02 | | NLD | | AP |
| Mya Aye | | 19-Feb-02 | | NLD | | AP |
| Khin Aye Aye Mar (F) | | 19-Feb-02 | | Unknown | | AP |
| Kyaw Aye | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Myo Myint | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Hla Sein | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Tin Kyi | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Thein Zaw | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Yin Htway | | 5-Mar-02 | | DPNS or ABSDF | | AFP |
| Thaung Htike | | 5-Mar-02 | | DPNS or ABFSU | | AFP |
| Tint Swe | | 5-Mar-02 | | CPB | | AFP |
| Zaw Aung | | 5-Mar-02 | | DPNS or ABFSU | | AFP |
| Kyaw Oo Nyo | | 5-Mar-02 | | CPB | | AFP |
| Tin Oo | | 7-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Pa Lay | | 7-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Maung Soe | | 7-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Maung Ponya | | 7-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Ohn Maung | | 7-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Nyan Win (MP) | | 21-Jun-01 | | NLD | | Reuters |
| Pike Chone (MP) | | 21-Jun-01 | | NLD | | Reuters |
| Win Naing (MP) | | 21-Jun-01 | | NLD | | Reuters |
| Aung Soe (MP) | | 21-Jun-01 | | NLD | | Reuters |
| Thein Lwin (MP) | | 21-Jun-01 | | NLD | | Reuters |
| Maung Aung (MP) | | 13-Jun-01 | | NLD | | ICRC |
| Ba Swe (MP) | | 13-Jun-01 | | NLD | | ICRC |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sein Kyi Han (MP) | | 13-Jun-01 | | NLD | | ICRC |
| Aung Soe (MP) | | 13-Jun-01 | | NLD | | ICRC |
| Htwe Myint (MP) | | 13-Jun-01 | | NLD | | ICRC |
| Myint Thein (MP) | | 13-Jun-01 | | NLD | | ICRC |
| Han Zaw (MP) | | 13-Jun-01 | | NLD | | ICRC |
| Kan Oo (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Kyaw Myint (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Aung Myint Thein (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Tha Aung (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Khin Kyaw Han (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Myint Kyi (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Win Myint Aung (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Tha Saing (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Tun Aye (MP) | | 28-Jun-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Thein Nyunt (MP) | | 6-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Myint Thein (MP) | | 6-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Hla Theinm (MP) | | 6-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Thein Myint (MP) | | 6-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Myo Win (MP) | | 6-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Thein Oo (MP) | | 6-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Win Myint (MP) | | 6-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Aung Moe Nyo, Dr (MP) | | 13-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Saw Hlaing (MP) | | 13-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Tin Htut Oo (MP) | | 13-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Aung Khin Sint, Dr (MP) | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Aye Kyu, Dr (MP) | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Kyi Win (MP) | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | | DVB |
| Nyunt Hlaing (MP) | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | Thayet | DVB |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aye Myint | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | Thayet | DVB |
| Aye Kyaw | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | Thayet | DVB |
| Tun Kyi | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | Thayet | DVB |
| Tin Win | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | Thayet | DVB |
| Than Tun | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | Thayet | DVB |
| Sein Than | | 18-Jul-01 | | NLD | Thayet | DVB |
| Chit Htwe (MP) | | 31-Jul-01 | | NLD | Thayet | DVB |
| Khin Maung Win (MP) | | 31-Jul-01 | | NLD | Taungoo | DVB |
| Aung Myint (MP) | | 31-Jul-01 | | NLD | Tharawaddy | DVB |
| Nyunt Aye | | 31-Jul-01 | | NLD | Tharawaddy | DVB |
| Kyi Min, Dr | 1991 | 18-Jul-01 | | | | DVB |
| Tint Wai | Sep-00 | | | | | |
| Hla Oo | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Tun Win | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Win Mya Mya | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Tin Myint | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Myint Soe | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Moe Kyaw Thu | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Soe Soe | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Ye Min Zaw | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Min Thein | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Aung Thu | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Soe Khaing Win | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Kyaw Kyaw Myint | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Zaw Zaw Aung | Sep-00 | 28/30 Mar 01 | | NLD | Camp in Mdy | AAPP |
| Saw Maung Thein | | 2001 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Kyaw Kyaw Win Khaing | | 2001 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Khin Maung Lwin | | 2001 | | NLD | | AAPP |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hla Thein | | 2001 | | Non-NLD | Thayet | AAPP |
| Ni Mway | | 2001 | | Non-NLD | Thayet | AAPP |
| Naing Lwin Cho | | 2001 | | Non-NLD | Thayet | AAPP |
| Thet Hlinn | | 2-Apr-01 | | Non-NLD | Tharawaddy | AAPP |
| Zaw Maung Maung Win | | 17-Jan-01 | | Non-NLD | Mandalay | AAPP |
| Thein Than Oo | | 2-Feb-01 | | Non-NLD | Mandalay | AAPP |
| Khin Maung Than | | 2-Feb-01 | | Non-NLD | Mandalay | AAPP |
| Zarny Aung | | 2-Feb-01 | | Non-NLD | Mandalay | AAPP |
| Aung Aung | | 2-Feb-01 | | Non-NLD | Mandalay | AAPP |
| Tin Htay | | 2-Feb-01 | | Non-NLD | Mandalay | AAPP |
| Tin Tun Hlaing | | 10-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| Khin Myint Aung | | 10-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| Ohn Than | | 10-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| Aung Khaing | | 10-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| San Win | | 28-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| Tun Tun Win | | 28-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| Win Aung | | 28-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| Khin Thein | | 28-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| Zaw Win | | 28-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Taungoo | AAPP |
| Hla Maung (Naw Shan) | | 29-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Tharawaddy | AAPP |
| Aung Myint (Sai Hlone) | | 29-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Tharawaddy | AAPP |
| Khin Maung Lay | | 29-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Tharawaddy | AAPP |
| San Lwin | | 29-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Tharawaddy | AAPP |
| Kyaw Swe | | 29-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Tharawaddy | AAPP |
| Ngwe Win | | 29-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Tharawaddy | AAPP |
| Kyine Hla | | 29-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Insein | AAPP |
| Khin Mar (F) | | 29-Mar-01 | | Non-NLD | Insein | AAPP |
| Aung Thein (Than Chaung) | | 22-Jan-01 | | Non-NLD | Myinggyan | AAPP |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nyi Nyi Min | | 1-Jan-01 | | Non-NLD | Thayet | AAPP |
| Thein Zaw | | 29-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Than Swe | | 29-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Tin Myaing | | 29-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Khin Mg Lin | | 29-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Win Ni Oo | | 29-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Thein Htay | | 29-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Aung Kyi Myint | | 29-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| unknown name (x 5) | | 7-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AAPP |
| Yin Htwe | | 5-Mar-02 | | Student | | AFP |
| Thaung Htike | | 5-Mar-02 | | Student | | AFP |
| Tint Swe | | 5-Mar-02 | | CPB | | AFP |
| Zaw Aung | | 5-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Kyaw Oo Nyo | | 5-Mar-02 | | CPB | | AFP |
| Kyaw Aye | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Myo Myint | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Hla Sein | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Tin Kyi | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Thein Zaw | | 1-Mar-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Hla Tun Aung | | 12-Feb-02 | | NLD | Myitkyina | AFP |
| Kan Shein | | 12-Feb-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Htein Lin | | 12-Feb-02 | | NLD | Myitkyina | AFP |
| Myo Mying Nyein | | 12-Feb-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Kyi Pe Kyaw | | 12-Feb-02 | | NLD | Myitkyina | AFP |
| Tin Tin Yee | | 20-Mar-02 | | NLD | Mergui | AAPP |
| Ba Htoo Maung | | | | Student | Myinggyan | AAPP |
| Maung Hmaing | | | | Student | Myinggyan | AAPP |
| Hla Nyine | | | | NLD | Myinggyan | AAPP |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sein Myint | | 9-Apr-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Tin Hlaing | | 9-Apr-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Khin Maung Oo | | 9-Apr-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Aye Win | | 9-Apr-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Khin Htar | | 9-Apr-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| unknown name (x5) | | 4-May-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Khin Maung Myint | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Sein Maung | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Tin Myint | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Chin Chein | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Htay Ngwe | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Kyaw Naing Tun | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Tint Lwin | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Myo Kyi | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Soe Myint | | 5-Jun-02 | | NLD | | |
| Aung San Suu Kyi | | 6-May-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| unknown name (x 9) | | after 6-May-2002 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Saw Oo Reh(MP) | | 21-Jun-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Htay Lwin | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Hla Hla Win | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Kyaw Kyaw | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Ba Soe | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Aung Kyaw Soe | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Yar Tin | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Min Aung | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Tin Win Yee | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| Soe Naing | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |
| That Zin | | 9-Jul-02 | | NLD | | AFP |

# 4. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment

*Myanmar has not ratified any international covenants that would offer protection against torture, nor has it domestic laws to do likewise. Ample evidence collected by independent agencies working from outside the country indicates that the use of torture in Myanmar is particularly prevalent in military intelligence detention centres and prisons, and in areas of the country subjected to counter-insurgency operations. In the later case, rape and other forms of sexual abuse have been employed systemically as an act of war against populations in remote regions. Regards the former, to date the military government has extended limited cooperation only to the International Committee of the Red Cross for occasional visits to prisons and detention centres. Sadly, the Government of Myanmar remains largely oblivious to international attempts at scrutiny and reform. (*Written statement submitted to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights 58th session by the Asian Legal Resource Centre).

## 4.1 Background

Torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in Burma has been used by the military government in Burma for more than 40 years and has been particularly documented since the 1988 pro-democracy uprising when the use of torture increased. Although articles 330 and 331 of the Burmese Penal Code (1957) prohibit torture and ill-treatment during interrogation it is personnel associated with the regime that are given the power to torture during interrogation with impunity.

According to the 2000 Amnesty International Report, *The Institution of Torture*, "Torture and ill-treatment have become institutionalized in Myanmar. They are practiced by the army as part of counter-insurgency activities; by prison guards; and by the police." Members of the army, MIS, police, USDA, and armed groups aligned with the SPDC such as the DKBA use torture to punish and degrade (break) those who have been detained on suspicion of anti-government activities, including political prisoners and villagers living in areas where there is ongoing armed conflict. Torture has the dual effect of both being a method used to obtain information on anti-government and rebel activities, as well as a way of putting terror in the hearts of the population to keep them from participating in anti-government activities.

Torture is used to extort money, also to give punishment for failure to obey orders, failure to pay fees and taxes or isresult of prejudice.

# 4.2 Torture During Detention

Political activists in opposition to the government often face torture while in detention. Torture is used to punish them and to compel them to cooperate with interrogators. Political prisoners face both physical and emotional torture, often during prolonged periods of detention after the initial arrest while they are isolated from public scrutiny. Many of these prisoners are forced to sign false confessions admitting to anti-SPDC activities or implicating colleagues or friends in such activities. Some are forced to sign documents stating that they have been well-treated during interrogation and in jail. Others say that they have been held incommunicado following torture to allow time for the physical signs of torture to heal before they are seen by anyone.

At least six departments of the SPDC's security forces have been implicated in torture and ill treatment by former detainees, including political prisoners. The six departments are as follows: (1) SPDC's army of Phythu Tatmadaw (People's Defense Forces); (2) The People's Police Forces; (3) the Directorate of Defense Services Intelligence (DDSI); (4) the Special Investigations Department (SID); (5) the Criminal Investigation Department (CID); and (6) the Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI). The activities of DDSI, SID, CID and BSI are coordinated by the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB), under the direct control of the SPDC. The DDSI is also commonly known as the MIS or Military Intelligence Service and is the agency most frequently identified as inflicting torture during interrogation, Since 1988, the units under its control (MI-1, MIS-1, MI-3, etc.) have nearly doubled from 14 in 1989 to 23 in 1991. Lt-Gen. Khin Nyunt, Secretary of the SPDC, is the head of the DDSI.

**Torture In Prison**

The MI personnel systematically and interrogate detainees in order to get information and false confessions. The abuse and torture include, among other things: electrocution, sleep denial, forcing people to stand or squat in uncomfortable positions, such as if one were sitting on a motorcycle, for long periods of time, rolling iron or wood rods along a person's shins, pouring water over a person's head covered in plastic, forcing them to kneel on sharp stones or pieces of glass, hanging them by the arms and feet and putting bullets or pencils between the fingers and then squeezing them together. In addition, some women also suffer from sexual abuse, such as having some or all of their clothes removed during interrogation. The MI personnel use both physical and psychological methods of torture. When the activists or suspected persons arrive at an interrogation center, the MI first breaks down their confidence and morale... They are kept in the interrogation center for one to three weeks during which there is non-stop interrogation by rotating teams of MI. Most are not allowed to sleep and usually not fed or given any water. When they are sent to prison, they are beaten at the prison gate by the prison staff. They can face punishment in prison if they

complain about the lack of water and poor quality of food, stage a hunger strike or are found holding small amounts of paper. Moreover, they are kept in iron shackles and kept in tiny cells for months and are not allowed to bathe, have family visits etc. The interim report to the Fifty-fifth Session of the General Assembly, the UN Special Rapporteur on Burma said: "Torture or other forms of inhuman treatment of political detainees are believed to be routine, especially during initial interrogation. Convicted prisoners are also reported to be subjected to torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment for breaches of prison regulations. " (Source: AAPPB, found at http://www.aappb.org/report3.html)

**Beatings**

SPDC uses many forms of beating to intimidate and torture prisoners and detainees. Soldiers use their fists, combat boots, rifle butts, leather-coated pipes, wooden sticks, sticks made from three interlaced pieces of cane, solid bamboo sticks about three feet in length, and hard plastic water pipes to beat their victims.

Beating are designed to physically harm and humiliate victims. The following are a few typical types of beatings: the prisoner is beaten while he/she stands and embraces a post and both hands are held firmly by another person; the prisoner is beaten while laying prone on the ground; the prisoner is beaten while being forced to stand with both legs chained; the prisoner is beaten while being forced to crawl along the ground; the prisoner is shackled, a long iron bar is placed in between their legs, and they are forced to crawl while being beaten; and prisoners are beaten while being forced to do continuous squat-jumps. Authorities do not hold back and they strike victims in the face, chest, abdomen, and back. They also jump on the backs of prisoners while they are being forced to crawl on the ground. Prisoners routinely receive serious injuries from beatings, including fractured skulls, broken bones, and paralysis.

**Solitary Confinement**

An iron rod, about 1 1/2 to 2 feet long is often placed horizontally between the shackled legs of prisoners in solitary confinement, forcing them to stand or lay with their legs astride. Prisoners are locked in tiny cells during their confinement. Normally, small chamber pots are placed in each cell. The pots are never emptied, so the smell becomes unbearable and the cell damp and wet. In the worst case of solitary confinement, prisoners are forced to stand with both arms tied above their head; they are forced to urinate and defecate while standing. Small daily food rations of soup made from rice are slid through the iron bars from outside of cell. No blankets or mats are provided; prisoners are forced to sleep on the concrete floor. Most days, prisoners are taken out of the cells, forced to stand in the standard position, with their legs splayed apart, and beaten. Solitary confinement usually lasts for at least one month and may continue to three months. In some cases, political prisoners are forced to remain in solitary confinement indefinitely.

## 4.3 Torture During Forced Portering and Forced Labor

Throughout 2001, civilians continued to be conscripted or arbitrarily seized as porters to carry heavy loads for SPDC army battalions. Porters are rarely given enough food, rest or medical attention for illness or injury. Porters that complain about exhaustion or ill-treatment, or who cannot keep up, are regularly verbally and physically abused. Porters who are too sick or exhausted to continue are sometimes beaten or shot and then left in the jungle for dead.

At forced labor sites across the country, such as for the construction of roads or army camps, villagers are routinely mistreated by SPDC personnel supervising them. In addition to long hours, not enough food or rest, those who are not thought to be working hard enough face physical abuse, such as beatings with a bamboo sticks or hands. Verbal abuse is a common complaint of those who have experienced forced labor. As a result of ILO pressure on Burma, the recent trend has been to increase the number of prisoner laborers and prisoner porters to take the place of civilian forced porters. See the chapter on forced labor for more information about forced portering and forced labor conditions.

## 4.4 Torture of Villagers in Areas of Ethnic Armed Conflict

*"They never caught us, but they saw us and fired guns at us one or two times. Whenever they saw the smoke from villagers' cookfires, they fired big weapons [mortars] many times to hurt the villagers. If they see you they shoot, they don't capture you. If they are close they shoot with small arms, and if it is farther they shoot at you with big weapons."* - "Saw Toh Wah" (M, 32), internally displaced villager from K— village, Lu Thaw township, Karen State (Interview #39, 1/00) (Source: KHRG, Flight, Hunger and Survival: Repression and Displacement in the Villages of Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, October 2001)

Torture, beatings and other forms of cruel and degrading treatment are commonplace in areas of ethnic armed insurgency. Villagers are routinely detained, interrogated, beaten and tortured arbitrarily on suspicion of contact with opposition groups. Torture and beating of villagers often goes hand in hand with other human rights abuses, such as extortion, looting and destruction of property. The fear of physical injury deprives villagers of their livelihood as they are kept from traveling in areas where SPDC soldiers are present. In conflict zones SPDC soldiers are confiscate farmland and put curfews and other restrictions on the movements of villagers. Villagers caught breaking curfew or traveling in areas they have been restricted from face, such as confiscated farmland, can be accused of helping rebel into paddy huts and villager's homes without first checking to see if they are groups

and tortured, beaten and/or killed. In addition, soldiers often arbitrarily shoot occupied, often resulting in injury and death. A partial list of these incidents can be found at the end of this chapter.

According to Karen Human Rights Group, "Occasionally the soldiers are able to capture villagers whom they have surprised or wounded and decide not to kill them. After being captured, these villagers are usually beaten and tied up, then taken back to a relocation site or Army camp. Nooses are sometimes placed around their necks which are then used by the soldiers to pull them along. Once they arrive at the relocation site or an Army camp the villagers are sometimes released after interrogation, but other times they are detained for a while longer and may be tortured. A villager from Dweh Loh township who was captured in 2000 related to KHRG how he was locked up in a pen for pigs, kicked, beaten, shot, and had water forced down his throat. He was kept like that for more than a month, and by the time he arrived home his wife was pale and had wasted away to skin and bone because she was unable to find enough food without her husband. Those who are told to remain in the relocation site may be provided with a one-time handout of rice and then left to fend for themselves. No other assistance is given, even though some of them have been captured only after being wounded and unable to escape. A 70 year old man from Dweh Loh township told KHRG how he had been shot in the arm and then captured with his children and grandchildren by the soldiers in early 2000. His bag was taken and money was stolen from him and his children and grandchildren. They were taken to a relocation site, where he was put in mediaeval-style leg stocks and left like that overnight despite his age and his wound. In another incident in 2000, the SPDC soldiers shot dead a villager and then took his three young children back to the relocation site. It is not known what happened to the children." (Source: KHRG, Flight, Hunger and Survival: Repression and Displacement in the Villages of Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, October 2001)

**Torture of Village Leaders by LIB No. 343 in Mon State**

According to the Human Rights Foundation of Monland, in March and April 2001, after a Mon splinter group activated around the southern part of Ye Township area, the Burmese local battalion, LIB No. 343 tortured some villagers on suspicion of being rebel-supporters, detained them and asked ransom for their release. Since March, Mon troops from a splinter group have launched more military activities in the southern part of Ye Township to collect funds from civilians. These Mon troops traveled near Mon villages and the Burmese troops from LIB No. 343 instructed the villagers to inform them about the activities of rebel troops to their nearest base. If the village headmen or villagers failed to inform on the rebels they would be punished. On April 13, a group of Mon splinter troops went into Kyoneka-nya village, in the southern part of Ye township, and the head of that village delayed in informing LIB No. 343 troops because the time was quite late. At 7:00 a.m., LIB No. 343 troops led by Cap. Lin Oo, went to the village and arrested two village

headmen, Nai Uu, Chairman of the village and Nai Thar Aye, section leader, for their delay in informing them about the activities of Mon troops. They then brought these two village headmen and detained them in their military outpost in Khaw-za village. The soldiers tortured them and accused them of being rebel-supporters. The soldiers believed the headmen refused to cooperate with them and tortured them to say that they would cooperate with the Burmese Army in the future. The soldiers threatened them that if they did not agree to cooperate with them, they would kill them. In the end, after the headmen promised that they would cooperate with Burmese Army, the commander, Cap. Lin Oo demanded 400,000 Kyat as fine or a ransom for their release. After the families and other villagers helped pay the ransom, the soldiers released them. A similar case also happened in March in the same village. In the second week of March 2001, LIB No. 343 troops also accused and arrested one village section leader, Nai San Kae of being a rebel supporter. They accused him of helping the splinter group collect funds in the surrounding areas. They brought him to Ye Town and detained him. In detention, when they interrogated him, they also beat him severely. After he promised he would cooperate with Burmese Army, they demanded 100,000 Kyat for ransom and then released him. In southern part of Ye township, because of LIB No. 343 troops' mistreatment against the villagers, many people in the area have also been displaced and moved to more safer area to avoid torture and other mistreatment. (Source: HURFOM, Mon Forum, May 2001 Issue)

## **Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment** – partial list of incidents 2001

On December 23, 2001, soldiers from SPDC IB-6 came to Paw-gi-khee village, Bilin Township, Karen State and shot to death Mae-naw-theh village secretary without reason. These troops then entered the house of Tee Hsa Doo and looted money and household items, and destroyed all the paddy they found. They then seized and tortured Saw Aung Htun (m),age 30, son of Tee Hsa Doo and took from him a wristwatch and a pair of shoes. (Source: KIC)

On December 5, 2001, 2 brothers from Nam Kun village in Kun Pu village tract, Murng-Nai township, were arrested by SPDC troops from LIB 530 and beaten and tortured in Saai Khaao village. Zaai Zaam La, aged 25 and Zaai Thun Kyaw, aged 21, were arrested by a passing SPDC military column of LIB530 outside their village and taken to Saai Khaao village in the same area. At Saai Khaao, the 2 men were accused of being Shan soldiers and tied up and tortured by the SPDC troops. Plastic bags were put over their heads and they were beaten and water was poured into their stomachs, and finally they were hung by their hands to a tree all night. The 2 men lived with their sister and parents at Nam Kun village and when their sister got the news of their arrest the next morning, she went to plead with the SPDC troops for their release, stating that they were not Shan soldiers but were just ordinary villagers who as young men helped look after their household work.

Soon after the two were released. (Source: SHRF)

On November 20, 2001, SPDC troops from LIB316 beat up a Lahu villager at Kaeng Laab village in Ta-Khi-Leak township, fracturing his skull and splitting his scalp so severely that it needed to be treated with 7 stitches. The victim, Ja Pur (not his real name), aged 29, was from Ja Po Kham village in Kaeng Laab tract, Ta-Khi-Laek township. He earned a living as one of the goods peddlers who bought consumer goods in Thailand and crossed over to Laos to sell them, and in the process happened to know quite a few people in Laos. Because of his acquaintanceship with people in Laos, Ja Pur was asked by SPDC troops from Co.2 of Ta-Lur-based LIB316, who were taking security in Kaeng Laab tract, to go over to Laos and collect debts from traders who had bought 700,000 Baht worth of metamphetamine tablets on credit from the traders under their protection. When Ja Pur, unable to get any of the money from the traders in Laos, returned empty handed, the SPDC troops were furious with him and kicked and beat him many times, causing a fracture to his skull and a large wound in his scalp. The troops did not assist him in getting medical treatment and Ja Pu had to spend $7,000 bhat for his treatment. (Source: SHRF)

On November 18, 2001, battalion commander Htun Myint of SPDC IB 92 arrested Kaw-law-ka villager Saw Ko Kler in Tha-daung Township, Toungoo District, Karen State and tortured him by wrapping his head in a plastic bag and pouring water on him. The village head requested him to free the villager, but the commander accused the villager of having connection with the rebels and tortured him further. For his release, the commander demanded 70,000 Kyat, said to be the price of an AK-47 rifle. On that day, SPDC IB 92 column command Win Tun came into Ku-thay-doe village and extorted 5 Viss of chicken and 5 tins of rice from the villagers. When the troops found a pair of dry cell batteries in the hand of villager Saw Nay Tha, they beat him up. (Source: KIC)

On November 17, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 502 came to Kwee-ta-ma area in Kyaukkyi Township, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State and shot at villagers while they were reaping their paddy. On 17-11-2001, these troops came to Htee-wah-day area and shot at villagers while they were in their paddy field hut and wounded villagers Saw Di Boe and Saw Denny Htoo. (Source: KIC)

On November 15, 2001, combined troops of SPDC LIB 434 and IB 19 came to Baw-lay-khee vilage, Dweh-lo Township, Papun District and looted 5 chickens from the villagers. On that day, these troops came to Baw-thay-hta village and shot at the villagers wounding one Saw Pah Beh Htoo. These troops also tortured villagers and looted materials. (Source: KIC)

On November 11, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 96, led by Bo Zaw Myint combined with troops from DKBA, led by Henry came to Oo-su-khee village, Thaton District, Karen State and burned down 40 baskets of paddy of Saw Pa Kaw Lar

and 30 baskets of paddy of Maung Taw. Moreover, these troops looted and ate a pig worth 8,000 Kyat and a goat worth 3,000 Kyat of the villagers. After that, they arrested, tied up and severely beat up villagers Maung Kyi, M-35, and Saw Pah Mu Wah, M-30 from that village. (Source: KIC)

On November 11, 2001, combined troops of SPDC LIB 17 and 503 shot and killed, without reason, Saw Thein Swe M-50, Saw Ba Htoo M-40 and Saw Pa Hla Yweh M-50 from Ma-mee-pu village, Lu-thaw Township, Papun District, Karen State. These troops also looted some of their possessions. (Source: KIC)

On November 4, 2001, 2 petty goods peddlers, father and son, were arrested, tortured and beaten until they lost consciousness several times by SPDC troops from LIB 360 in Murng-Ton township. Zaai Mawng and his son, aged 18, were from Murng-Ton town and had been peddling petty goods at gambling dens in Naa Kawng Mu village area for about 3 months when they were arrested by a patrol of 15-16 SPDC troops led by commander Aung Myint from Co.4 of LIB360.The SPDC troops said that Shan soldiers had killed innocent wood cutters and accused Zaai Mawng and his son of secretly providing rice for the Shan soldiers and guiding them in surveying the surrounding areas of the military base at Naa Kawng Mu village. They tortured them until they lost consciousness several times. According to the local villagers, the 2 peddlers had never left the gambling dens since their arrival at Naa Kawng Mu 3 months ago, and they had not even paid a visit to anyone in the village, let alone to other places as they had been accused of by the SPDC troops. (Source: SHRF)

On October 19, 2001, a unit of DKBA came to Toe-teh-khee village, Thaton District, Karen State, and shot at the house of villager Saw Pah Maung but the family could escape without any causality. (Source: KIC)

On October 18, 2001, at 6:00 troops from SPDC LIB 42, column 2 came to Htee-day-lay-kho village, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State and shot at 7 families of villagers. They were the families of (1) Naw Eh Bi, (2) Khin Maung Win, (3) Ma Hnin New, (4) Naw Plaw, (5) Saw Kah Gyi, (6) Naw Wah Htoo and (7) Naw Bi Kha. Moreover, the troops looted from villagers the total of 16 pots, 24 plates, 26 spoons, 23 blankets, 7 mosquito nets and 2 cassette players. (Source: KIC)

On October 15, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 558, led by Major Myo Thant, on their way from Ka-byaung to Wa-thoo-lor village, Mergui-Tavoy District found Wa-thoo-lor villager Saw Ta See, M-15, son of Tee Gaw Kay and Naw Pwa Mu Doh, while he was grazing his buffaloes. The troops demanded from him his machete and as he refused, they violently struck him on his head with a rifle butt, causing a 2-inch wound in his head. Saw Ta See reported to Major Myo Thant that his soldiers were trying to strike him with his machete but Major Myo Thant did not take any action against his men. Moreover, he told Saw Ta See that he already had killed more than a hundred persons without the knowledge of his senior

officers. (Source: KIC)

On October 13, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 7 led by battalion commander Maung Maung Aung and company intelligence officer Win Myint Htun came to Pwa-hgaw village, Thaton District, Karen State and demanded a tin of rice and 2 ducks from villagers. The troops demanded 2 villagers to serve as porters and one to serve as a guide. On the same day, the troops accused woman village head Naw Mee Saw and villagers, Naw Hla Thein, Naw Eh Htoo and Naw Khin Win of having contact with rebel groups and tied them up with rope for 20 minutes. (Source: KIC)

On October 11, 2001, troops from column 1 of SPDC IB 12 came from Yo-po-law military camp to Kay-mu-der village, Papun District, Karen State and shot at the villagers while they were in their field huts without any reason. One Kay-mu-der villager was wounded. On the same day, troops from SPDC Division 33 shelled heavy weapon bombs into Kay-mu-der area where Ko-hgay villager, Saw Klu Htoo (M, 20), son of Saw Maung Tha was wounded. (Source: KIC)

On October 9, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 351 led by battalion commander Than Aung came to Ler-kla, Saw-kha-doe and Htee-ler-baw-hta villages, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State and shot at villagers without reason. (Source: KIC)

On October 6, 2001, a villager, Saw Pah Kaw Dah M, 46, from Nya-po-khee village, Bi-lin township, Thaton District, Karen State stepped on a landmine planted near his village by DKBA Moe Jo group and died on the spot. (Source: KIC)

On October 4, 2001, troops from DKBA Pa Ni Tho unit, combined with troops from SPDC LIB 106, came into Khaw-po-pleh village, Thaton District, Karen State and extorted from the villagers a pig worth 13,000 Kyat, 5 baskets of rice and 3,500 Kyat. On 5-10-2001, these troops came to search the house of the Christian pastor of Khaw-po-pleh and looted 130,000 Kyat of donation money and all items found. In addition, they arrested villager Saw Bleh Say M, 26, son of Saw Maung Tin, without any reason. They shot at him wounding him seriously. On October 10, 2001, these troops burned down a villager's paddy field hut and one bullock cart. (Source: KIC)

On October 2, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 106 and DKBA arrested and tortured Lah-kyo-ko villagers in Thaton District, Karen State, without reason. The victims were: (1) Saw Pah Meh, (2) Kyaw Ta Kay, (3) Naw Dah, (4) Naw Tay, (5) Naw Tu, (6) Pah Bei Ko, (7) Pah Ohh Taw and (8) Pah Law Daw. Of the victims, the torture of Pah Law Daw and Pah Ohh were brutal. They were not released up to the time of this report. The troops also killed 2 pigs belonging to them, for their food. (Source: KIC)

On September 30, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 556, led by battalion commander Htun Than came to Ka-weh village, Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State and beat

up villagers: (1)Saw Bo (M-50), (2)Saw Poo (M-36), (3)Saw Po Nu (M-37), (4)Saw Leh Per (M-45), (5)Saw Per Ler (M-18), (6)Saw James (M-45), (7)Saw Hla Thein Gyi (M-45), (8)Saw Wah (M-20), (9)Saw Paw Koo (M-20). The army demanded from them one firearm. (Source: KIC)

On September 29, 2001, Hsar Lay Wah (aka) Pah Ko Bu from DKBA active in the area of Pauk-kee, Nya-po-kee and Ta-u-kee villages of Be-lin Township, Thaton District, Karen State. The troops summoned the village head Naw Yo (F, 38) to come to Paw-kee because the villagers could not give 20 villagers as porters according to the demand. The troops tortured her by putting plastic bag around her head. In addition, the troops said unless the village gave the demanded 20 villagers as porters she would not be released. (Source: KIC)

On September 26, 2001, sergeant major, Kyaw Win from company 3 of SPDC IB 26 came to Baw-plaw-ta of Be-lin Township, Thaton District, Karen State and demanded 2 Viss of chickens and did not allow the villagers to go outside the villages. Troops from SPDC LIB 106 led by Sein Htun based in Kweeh-lay-tha-waw-pya village captured some women and tortured them by putting plastic around their heads. The troops cut off the travelling and transporting routes of villagers in the area of Toe-the-kee, Taw-klaw-ta and Htee-pah-doh-ta villages. (Source: KIC)

On September 25, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 7 led by company commander Myint Htwee shot at Ler-ka-der villagers Pah Tet Nyet and Maung Nu at Poo Klay Pa's farm in Taton District, Karen State, without reason. Pah Tet Nyet's leg was broken while Maung Nu could escape from that incident. After that, the troops came to Ler-ka-der village and threatened the villagers that they would be shot if the information spread. (Source: KIC)

On September 23, 2001, battalion commander Win Bo Shein of SPDC IB 60 and his troops combined with troops from DKBA led by Maung Ni came into Ler-kla village, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State and shot and wounded villager Saw Moo Kyaw Hai, without reason. (Source: KIC)

On September 20, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 120 came to Pauk-pu place of Mae-yei-kee village tract, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State and shot up the place, wounding villager Saw Kyaw Win. (Source: KIC)

On September 19, 2001, the troops of SPDC LIB- 108 company commander Maj; Win Nyunt, strength 1 column and the DKBA-999 led by Moo Naw Dway with 1section combined together, entered in to Khaw Thoo Khee village in Hlaing Bwe township, Pa'an District and shot and wounded 2 villagers (1) Saw Shwe Kaw, 25 years old, son of Pah Ka Ser. He was seriously wounded in the leg and body. (2) Mu Nay Paw, 17 years old, an unmarried woman, daughter of Pah Pyu. After shooting them, the troops gave no medical treatment, instead they looted the villagers belongings. (Source: KORD)

On September 13, 2001, Hteepoklo village Secretary Pray Reh, aged 42, was arrested by Burmese troops of IB No. 102 led by Maj. Aung Win. He was accused of having helped rebel groups and badly tortured by the Burmese troops. (Source: KNAHR)

On September 10, 2001, at 14:40 hours, combined troops from DKBA and SPDC LIB 11, led by Htun Mya came to Taw-u-hta, Pa-an District, Karen State and shot at villagers Maung Ma Pu, Saw Ti aknd Lah Eh Po and some boat owners where one villager was wounded and one villager was missing. The troops also looted a Honda machine from Nya-mu-klo villager. (Source: KIC)

On September 7, 2001, Tin Win from DKBA fire both heavy and small weapons at Ma Mee's hill farm hut in Wah-ker-ta, Thaton District, Karen State and looted 3,000 Kyat and chickens from her. (Source: KIC)

On August 15, 2001, at night the SPSC guerilla forces that led by the officer Thain Lwin and officer Thain Nyet with the strength of 8 soldiers entered Myet Yeh village, near Mon township, Nyaung-lay-bin District and seized and tortured a villager Saw Doh Soe and forcibly asked 3000 kyats from him and then they again seized and tortured another two villagers, Kyaw Kyaw and Moe Kyaw and asked 7000 kyats from them. The same group, then went and entered Pa Reh Sei, seized 3 villages of family in their paddy hut, tortured them and asked 9000 kyats by forced. Again entered Done Do village paddy hut and tortured and asked 3000 kyats from them. (Source: KORD)

On August 5, 2001, the second battalion commander of IB 63 arrested Mae Khu Hta villagers Saw Myin Aye, 31 years old, laid on his hands, legs and throat and asked him to find him one Walkie- Talkie and one gun, saying that he came and watched their camp. Saw Myin Aye said he was a villager and was not able to find what they demanded. The troops then tortured him by kicking, beating him, including his head and at last the troops took him to Htee Doh Hta village, Papun District, Karen State and slept two nights there. (Source: KORD, KIC)

On July 21, 2001, at 5:30 PM, 30 soldiers from SPDC IB 17, led by column commander Major Kyaw Lwin, tried to drown in Pa-wa-chaung stream, Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State, a 65-year old Htee-ka-bu villager, but as the villager did not die and ran away, the troops forced the relatives to find him and subjected the villagers to beating interrogation. (Source: KIC)

On July 13, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 230, led by battalion commander Aung Myint Oo, came to Tha-waw-thaw village, Doo-pla-ya District, Karen State, tortured the villagers and looted cash and household items. (Source: KIC)

On the evening of July 11, 2001, Zaai Saam Lim, 39, from Pa Nim village in Phuay Hoong tract, Kaeng-Tung township, Shan State who was carrying firewood on an

ox-cart was stopped, beaten and robbed of his firewood by 3 SPDC troops from LIB314, at Phuay Hoong village, Kaeng-Tung township. The troops stopped Zaai Saam Lim and asked him where he got the firewood. When he said he got it from the forest opposite his village, the troops ordered him to go with them to their camp at Phuay Hoong village. When they reached the military camp at Phuay Hoong village, the SPDC troops took Zaai Saam Lim to the camp commander, a Captain, and reported that he had stolen wood from the forest that had been confiscated by the military. As he heard the report, the camp commander slapped Zaai Saam Lim 2 times, kicked him in the chest and said, "Do you want to die? How dare you steal wood in our garden!".After that, although Zaai Saam Lim explained that he had not stolen any wood from the said military garden, the commander forced Zaai Saam Lim to unload his cart of all the firewood and ordered him to go home with an empty cart. As Zaai Saam Lim left the military camp, the commander shouted after him, "Let it be the last time. Don't ever do it again. If you are caught again, we won't spare you". (Source: SHRF)

On July 10, 2001, several acres of land in Murng-Pan township, Shan State were confiscated by the SPDC authorities. The SPDC troops take whatever the like from the land while the local people were banned from using it. When they need wood or bamboo they must travel far away. Since there was a road-building project underway, some trees and a lot of bamboo had been cut to make way for the proposed road and were strewn along the sides of the road. On July 20, 2001, Zaai Ku Na Nyo, male, aged 30, from Murng-Pan town saw that a lot of bamboo on a piece of woodland which had been recently confiscated from his grandfather, Lung Saang Kham, aged 63, had been cut to make space for the road and was uselessly scattered all over the place. He then brought an ox-cart to the place and carried away as many pieces of bamboo as he could. As he was leaving, however, some SPDC troops from LIB 520 who were patrolling the area came and accused Zaai Ku Na Nyo of stealing bamboo and scolded, beat and kicked him many times, and finally forced him to unload his ox-cart and leave. That evening, a Sergeant named U Aung Hpyu, who had kicked and beaten Zaai Ku Na Nyo earlier, came to his house and extorted 500 Kyat of money from him. (Source: SHRF)

On July 4, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 546, led by battalion commander Soe Tin, came to Noe-law-plaw village, Doo-pla-ya District, Karen State and arrested Ka-lay-kee villager Saw Moo Baw, tied him up with rope and tortured him by stabbing his throat. (Source: KIC)

In late June 2001, the headman of Murng Haang village, Murng Haang tract, Murng-Ton township disappeared after being arrested by Capt. Han Sein, from IB65 of the SPDC, and taken to the military base.

On June 20, the village headman of Murng Tum tract, and his deputy were arrested and interrogated by SPDC troops trom Murng-Phyak-based LIB336, at Murng Tum village military camp in Murng-Sart township. The SPDC troops, temporarily

stationed at Murng Tum village, led by Capt. Saw Maung, arrested the village tract headman, Lung Kawn Zing, 51, and his Secretary, Zaai Nyunt, 45, and took them to the outpost military camp. The troops accused the 2 villagers of supporting and providing rice for the Shan soldiers of SSA and interrogated, beat and tortured them. The 2 villagers could not eat for several days after constant beatings to the face. (Source: SHRF)

On June 17, troops from IB65 came to Murng Haang village on 4 conscripted civilian trucks and arrested Zaai Phaw-Ka, and took him to the military base. The troops accused him of helping and providing rice for the Shan soldiers of SSA and interrogated, beat and tortured him. He explained that every time Shan soldiers asked him for rice he had reported it to the SPDC local military authorities, and that SPDC authorities said that it would be better for the villagers to give the rice because they could not offer protection for the villagers all the time. Therefore, the villagers had given some rice to the Shan soldiers. He was released on June 21, after being interrogated, beaten and tortured. However, on June 26, he was arrested again by the same troops and no one has seen or heard of him since. On June 27, SPDC troops from IB225, led by Capt. Mya Maung, came to arrest the deputy headman of Huay Aw village, Zaai Taw-Ya, in Pung Pa Khem tract, Murng-Ton township. But Zaai Taw-Ya ran away and escaped. On June 27, the same SPDC troops arrested the village tract headman of Pung Pa Khem tract, Pu Haeng Ting, and took him to the military base. He was released after a few hours of interrogation. Three days later, he was again summoned to IB65 base in Murng-Ton to meet with the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Myint Swe. His release is not yet known. (Source: SHRF)

On June 14, 2001, troops from column 2 of SPDC IB 14 came to Htee-hsi-baw, Plaw-pah-taw villages, Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State and shot at the villagers who were staying in the field huts. The villagers ran away and the troops seized villager Saw Ro Leh. The troops accused him of having contact with freedom fighters, stabbed him with a knife and threw him into the river. In addition, the troops entered the houses of Plaw-pah-taw village and took away a video deck with (Toshiba TV, 21 inches) from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

In June 2001, soldiers looted money and gold jewlery from the people form Saw Phyar, Taung Sinn and Kywe Chan villages, Launglon tsp, Tenasserim Division. The soldiers were led by Lt Col Kyi Myint. In Kywe Chan village, they beat three persons. They were Yuu (female 47), San Thein (63) and Maung Lwin (37) the chairman of the village Peace and Delopment Council. (Source: THRF)

Since May 2001, SPDC troops of LIB316 have been confiscating lands from people in Ta-Khi-Laek township, Shan State to build military camps and for other military use, without compensation. The land, mostly woodlands with trees and bamboo planted for building materials and firewood, is in the areas of Ta Lur, East Murng Laen, West Murng Lane, Nam Kherm, Pa Leo and Kaeng Laab village

tracts, where there are mostly flat and fertile land. The SPDC troops simply marked out or deployed a small group of troops on the piece of land they wanted and declared that it had been confiscated. The owners were not allowed to go into the marked or guarded lands. Original owners who tried to secretly cut wood or bamboo because they did not have other places to get them, were seized and forced to pay fines and sometimes beaten. (Source: SHRF)

In May 2001, two villagers returning home from the town market, after selling a pig, were stopped, tied, and robbed of their money by SPDC troops from LIB360 almost 3 miles from their village, Ka Leng, in Sen Mawng village tract, Murng-Paeng township, Shan State, Zaai Lu, 36, and Zaai Mu, 31, were returning to their village, after selling their pig for 9,300 Kyat and having bought some cooking oil and seasoning powder, when they ran into the troops. Without any warning or explanation, the troops seized the 2 villagers, tied their hands behind them and searched their bodies. The troops took away all the money they found and all the food stuffs. After that, the troops slapped, beat and kicked them and let them go, without untying them. They remained tied until they reached their village. (Source: SHRF)

On May 18, 2001, Kyu Ta, 36, a Lahu villager of Waeng Manaw in West Murng Laen tract, Shan State and his son Kya Ha, 18, were arrested by SPDC troops while cutting firewood in woodland that had been confiscated from them. The soldiers kicked and beat them several times and tied them up to a tree for 2 hours, only releasing them when their relatives payed a fine of 300 Baht. On May 26, 2001, 3 Lahu villagers from Musur Lam village in Nam Kherm village tract were arrested and beaten, and their firewood taken by SPDC troops from LIB316. Ja Mu, 31, Ja Wi, 29, and Ja Ma, 19, had collected the firewood 5-6 miles from their village as the areas close to the village had been confiscated.. The SPDC soldiers accused the villagers of stealing the wood from military woodland and ordered them to kneel down in a row and slapped, kicked and beat them, forcing them to confess to the crime. They then ordered them to leave their bundles of firewood and go home, warning them not to tell anyone about the incident or else they would come after them and take they lives. (Source: SHRF)

On May 14, 2001, at 8:00 PM, troops from SPDC LIB106, led by battalion commander Cho Htun and battalion second in command Soe Lu Latt, came into Htee-pa-doh-hta village, Thaton District, Karen State and seized villagers Saw Pah Kya, M-27, and his wife Ma Mya Aye, 26, and tied them up and took them to Yo-kla camp. They were released later after being tortured in various ways. (Source: KIC, KORD)

On May 12, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 106, under LID 77, led by battalion Second in Command, Aung Myint, came to Htaw-klaw-hta village, Papun District, Karen State and, seized and beat up Saw Kyaw Way M-18, without any reason. Moreover, these troops looted villagers belongings. (Source: KIC)

In early May 2001, the headman of Murng Haang village tract and his deputy, and the headman of Me Ken village tract and his deputy, in Murng-Ton township, Shan state were arrested, tortured and severely beaten unconscious by SPDC troops, in the IB65 base in Murng-Ton. A few days later, the 4 villagers disappeared and their fate is not known. On May 9, troops led by Capt. Han Sein, arrested Murng Haang headman, Zaai Nyaeng, and his deputy, and then arrested Me Ken headman, Zaai Thun Ne, and his deputy, Zaai Nan-Taw. The 4 villagers were taken to the base of IB65, commanded by Lt Col Myint Swe, and interrogated. They were tied up and beaten, and tortured with electric shocks during the interrogations, until they lost consciousness several times, they have not been seen since. It was later learned that the headman of Murng Haang tract and his deputy were arrested on a charge of providing intelligence about the location of a 105mm mortar of the SPDC troops to the Shan resistance. The 105mm mortar had been destroyed by an RPG attack by Shan resistance troops, in which 16 SPDC troops were also killed. The headman of Me Ken tract and his deputy were arrested under the accusation of providing intelligence for the Shan soldiers which had enabled them to choose and attack the particular vehicle which carried SPDC military commanders in an ambush on a military convoy, in which many SPDC officers were killed and the vehicle destroyed. (Source: SHRF)

On April 28, 2001, troops from battalion 119 of Tactical Command 332, under LID 33, led by battalion commander, Kin Maung, came to Mae-thu village tract, Papun District, Karen State and shot and wounded 4 villagers from Ger-gaw-lo and Ner-kee villages. They villagers were: (1) Saw Shwe Pay Heh M, 39; (2) Saw Pah Myaing, M, 31; (3) Saw Yin Moo, M, 25 and (4) Saw Pah Kwah. (Source: KIC)

On April 24, 2001, again, troops from LIB 29, led by battalion commander Aung Khaing shot and wounded Ka-wa-kee villager Saw Klo Wah, M, 45 in Papun District, Karen State. (Source: KIC)

On April 20, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 20, led by battalion commander Aung Khaing, came to Ya-ke-kee, Maw-ko, Na-ko-kee and Ka-wa-kee villages, Papun District, Karen State and demanded 195,427 Kyats, 79 baskets of rice, 478 chickens and 4 ploughs from the villagers. On the same day, the troops shot up the villagers. Three villagers of Ka-wa-kee and Ya-ke-kee were wounded. The victims were: (1)Saw Pah Pleeh, M, 48; (2) Saw Kyaw Min, M, 25 and (3) Saw Maung Thu, M, 35. (Source: KIC)

On April 14, 2001, combined troops from LIB 106 of SPDC LID 77 and DKBA Moe Jo, arrested Tha-wa-pya villager of Thaton District, Karen State, Saw Kyaw Shwe and Pah Klu, without any reason, and tortured them. They forced the two to show places of the resistance fighters. They killed and ate a pig of Saw Thu Htay, without payment. (Source: KIC)

On April 11, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 124, based at Ler-hgi-ko village,

Toungoo District, Karen State led by second lieutenant Mya Thaung, told villagers to get Saw Heh Breh, 40, for taking him to the front-line. When he came they brutally tortured him. This SPDC unit forced Maung-nweh-ji village tract and Kon-taing village tract, in West Day-lo, to buy a carton of A-A size dry cells for it, per month. If the village tracts failed, they had to pay 5,000 Kyat, per month.(Source: KIC, KORD)

In April 2001, a sick man traveling to Kaeng-Tung was beaten unconscious and detained by members of the SPDC police and No.22 Military Intelligence Service at the checkpoint at Mai Khai village in Murng-Paeng Township, Shan State. Zaai Tu, 24, was being driven to Kaeng-Tung for treatment after contracting Malaria while teaching Shan literature for the ceasefire group SSA-N (Shan State Army - North). He was so weak with the virus that he could not answer questions asked by the SPDC checkpoint authorities. He was dragged from the car, severely beaten and then detained on suspicion of being high on amphetamine. Zaai Tu was later bailed out by relatives and taken to Kaeng-Tung hospital for treatment. Although Zaai Tu's colleagues have urged leaders of SSA-N to file a complaint with the SPDC authorities in Murng-Paeng, no action has been taken. (Source: SHRF)

On March 30, 2001, troops from No. 2 column of SPDC LID 77, led by second battalion commander, Myo Htun, and company commander, Htun Aye, came to Da-mae-kee village, Thaton District, Karen State and demanded 15 baskets of rice from the villagers. In addition, they killed and ate all chickens and pigs found. They arrested and tortured, brutally, Da-mae-kee villager Saw Kyi, without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On March 14, 2001, the SPDC troops came to Kyauk-kon village, Doo-pla-ya District, Karen State and looted 3 bottles of cooking oil and a basket of rice from villager Maung Tha Heh and then tortured him. In addition, the troops threatened and looted the villagers belongings. (Source: KIC)

On March 5, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 549, shot and wounded a villager from Lay-taw-hta village, Dooplaya District, Karen State without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On March 4, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 432 rounded up villagers in Papun District, Karen State accusing them of being spies of KNU and beat up them severely. They were then released. These same troops arrested and tortured village headman, Saw Swai, without any reason and put him in a detention cell. (Source: KIC)

On March 1, 2001, troops from SPDC IB 34 led by battalion commander Yeh Naing came into Du-daw-kho village, Toungoo District, Karen State and started shooting at the villagers without reason and wounding villager Saw Ka Ta, M-35. (Source: KIC)

On January 3, 2001, SPDC troops from LIB328, led by Lt. Htein Lin, detained and tortured 13 villagers in Murng Nung tract, Murng-Khark township, before extorting their relatives and fellow villagers for their release. The villagers, 3 from Wan Laa village, 6 from Wan Tong village and 4 from Wan Kham Noi village, were accused of dealing in amphetamines. Lt. Htein Lin and 3 of his troops visited the parents and relatives of the detainees on January 5 and told them to bring 30,000 Kyat for each prisoner's release. The villagers could only gather 15,000 each, and this amount was accepted the following day. While in detention, Lung Laa, 51, was beaten with rifle butts and suffered from a severely sprained waist and could not stand up or walk for several days, and Zaai In Pan, 46, suffered a split scalp and fractured skull. (Source: SHRF)

## Torture Resulting in Death – Partial List of Incidents (also see chapter on arbitrary execution)

On December 12, 2001, the village headman of Wan Lao village in Kun-Hing township was tortured and killed by SPDC troops of IB 246. Wan Lao is the main village of Wan Lao village tract in Kun-Hing township and was forcibly relocated in 1996 along with other adjoining large village tracts such as Kaeng Lom, Kaeng Kham and Kaeng Tawng, although Kaeng Tawng was in Murng-Nai township. Since 1998 the people of Wan Lao village have been allowed to go back and tend their farms and fields, although people of other village tracts have not been able to. On the day of the incident, there was a short skirmish between SPDC troops and Shan resistance soldiers, at a place between Terng Phen (deserted) village and Kun-Hing town, 7-8 miles away from town. After the battle, the SPDC troops searched Wan Lao village, the only inhabited village in the surrounding areas, and found a letter from the Shan soldiers, asking for food from the villagers. They accused the villagers of supporting the Shan soldiers and arrested the village headman, Zaai Oong Nyunt, aged 35, son of the old Wan Lao village tract headman, and interrogated him about the Shan soldiers. The SPDC troops said the village headman had committed a very grave offence for not reporting the receipt of the Shan soldiers' letter and accused him of having provided rice and food for the Shan soldiers to fight the Burmese troops, and tortured him. They tied him up and beat him for some time and put him in an empty granary, and dropped drips of hot plastic from a burning plastic pipe over his body, asking questions about Shan soldiers during intervals, until he lost consciousness. When the headman regained consciousness, the troops put him in a gunny sack, closed and tied up the mouth of the sack and kicked him around, and finally kicked him down a mountain slope. The sack rolled down, and when it stopped, Zaai Oong Nyunt was dead. (Source: SHRF)

On November 16, 2001, an innocent head of a family, Zaai Saw, male, aged 40, was tortured and beaten to death while being shackled with a bamboo foot-lock by SPDC troops from IB246 at a military camp in Kaeng Tawng area, Murng-Nai

township. Zaai Saw, his wife and 3 children were originally from Kaeng Kham village, in Kaeng Lom tract in Kun-Hing township, that had been forcibly relocated to Kun Mong village in Kun Mong tract, Murng-Nai township, by Burmese troops in 1996. At Kun Mong village relocation site, Zaai Saw and his family managed to eke out a living by growing rice on a small plot of land some distance from the village. On November 15, 2001, Zaai Saw went to work at his rice farm and accidentally left his registration or identity card at the farm when he returned home. When a patrol of 20 SPDC troops from IB246 led by Lt. Than Oo came at night to check his house for overnight guests, Zaai Saw could not show them his ID card to prove that he was not a guest but the head of the house. Although Zaai Saw explained about it to the troops, they arrested him for not having an ID card and took him to a military outpost camp, put him in a bamboo foot-lock and tortured him all night. The next morning, many village elders and leaders went to the military camp and guaranteed Zaai Saw's innocence and appealed in vain for his release. Zaai Saw's wife and children later retrieved his ID card from their farm and showed it to the soldiers, but to no avail.Instead of releasing him, the troops kept torturing and beating Zaai Saw until he finally died with his feet still locked in the bamboo foot-lock. Only then, the troops said to the villagers, "If he really was from your village, take him back and bury him".According to the local villagers, since he was relocated to Kun Mong relocation site, Zaai Saw had never gone to any other township or even to places too far from his village area. He had never had any connections with any political and armed insurgent groups. He was just a simple farmer who loved his family and knew only his farm work. He left behind a wife and 3 children to fend for themselves: (Source: SHRF)

1. Naang Zing, aged 36, his wife
2. Zaai Kham Lu, aged 16, their son
3. Naang Seng, aged 13, their daughter
4. Zaai Wan, aged 9, their son

On October 13, 2001, combined troops of SPDC IB 96, anti-insurgent unit led by Maung Kyi Thwin, Saw Min Soe and Saw Pah gaw from DKBA, a total of 30 troops came to Pi-ti-khee village, Thaton District, Karen State. They seized and tortured Pi-tikhee village head Saw Mu Tu and villager Saw Po Toe accusing them of not sending information to them. They were tortured by beating and pouring water on them. Saw Mu Tu escapee but Saw Po Toe was tortured until death. (Source: KIC)

On September 24, 2001, 5 villagers in the Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township were beaten to death by SPDC troops from Kun-Hing based IB 246, at a place 2 miles west of Waeng Kao village in Nawng Hee tract, Murng-Nai township. On September 14, 2001, SPDC troops from Kun-Hing based IB 246, that were temporarily stationed in Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township under the command of Capt. Zaw Thein, arrested the following 5 villagers accusing them of

having connections with the Shan resistance soldiers in the area:

1. Zaai Aw (m), aged 36, Originally from Saai Khaao village in Kun-Hing township

2. Saw-Na (m), aged 35, Originally from Nam Pa Mon village that had been relocated to Kun Mong

3. Zan-Da Phit (m), aged 27, From Pa Sa village in Nawng Hee tract

4. Khur Haan (m), aged 26, from Kun Mong village

5. Aw-Li-Ya (m), aged 51, from Paang Khaw village in Ton Hung tract

These villagers were taken to a military camp and detained for several days during which they were interrogated, beaten and tortured so harshly that urine and excrement involuntarily came out, and they lost consciousness 3-4 times, but the SPDC troops could not get the answers they wanted. Finally, the troops accused them of helping the Shan soldiers by trading for them — using capital money from them and supporting them with the profits gained from it — and forced them to pay a fine of 50,000 Kyat each for their release. However, after the villagers had paid the fine and had gone home for only 4 days, they were arrested again by the same SPDC troops and beaten to death. Three days later, their bodies were found by some villagers who had gone to gather mushrooms at a place about 2 miles west of Waeng Kao in Nawng Hee tract, Murng-Nai township. (Source: SHRF)

On July 11, 2001, 5 rice farmers, 3 men and 2 women, were beaten to death by a patrol of SPDC troops from IB247, led by Capt. Mya Htoo, on a rice farm about 3 miles southwest of Wan Phui village in Kho Lam tract, Nam-Zarng township. The women were raped before they were killed. On July 7, troops from IB247 found several fresh footprints close by the rice farm and the SPDC troops suspected the farmers of helping and providing rice for the Shan soldiers. They found out that the farmers lived in Wan Phui village. The farmers had been cultivating rice at the farm on the days when they were free from their forced labour duty and were not there on the day the soldiers arrived. The commander of IB247 sent an order to the village headman of Wan Phui to bring the 5 farmers to the military camp at Kho Lam where they were interrogated and later released. However, when they returned to the farm on July 11, they were arrested by SPDC troops from IB247. The 3 men were tied up and interrogated, tortured and beaten to death. The 2 women were taken into the farm hut and gang-raped by the SPDC soldiers, and finally beaten to death in the hut. (Source: SHRF)

**They were the following 5 farmers:**

1. Lung Kan-Na (m), aged 51

2. Zaai Wi-La-Sa (m), aged 43

3. Naang Seng (f), aged 30

4. Naang Maai (f), aged 24
5. Zaai Kaw (m), aged 21

On May 19, 2001, SPDC troops from LIB524, led by Capt. Than Htun, tortured and killed the Saai Zan village tract secretary. The troops came to Laai Zan village in Saai Zan tract, Kun-Hing township, and arrested the village tract secretary, Zaai Zae-Ya, and a villager, Zaai Man. They then tied them up and took them to the military base in Kun-Hing town to interrogate them about the activities and whereabouts of the SSA-S (Shan State Army - South) in the area, while beating and torturing them with fire. Zaai Zae-Ya, was burnt and tortured to death during interrogation. The fate of the other villager, Zaai Man, is not yet known. (Source: SHRF)

On March 2, 2001, a group of 14 displaced villagers heading for Thailand were seized by SPDC troops from LIB225 and beaten, tortured, interrogated, and finally killed, at a place called Huay Pa Khi in Murng-Ton township, 7 miles from the Thai border, opposite Chaiprakan district of Chiangmai province. These villagers were from different townships in central Shan State who had come separately via Larng-Khur, Murng-Pan, Murng-Ton and met by chance in Murng-Ton town. After learning from one another that they were heading for Thailand, they decided to go together in a group. On the next day, 14 of them went by truck to Pung Pa Khem village and from there on foot to Nam Hoo Khun village, about 5 miles east of Pung Pa Khem and about 4 miles west of the Thai border, which was populated by Wa and Lahu peoples, and had a stronghold of Wa soldiers close by. As a rule, people going to Thailand usually hire local guides to take them from Nam Hoo Khun to the Thai border. These 14 villagers, however, did not hire any guide because one of them offered to lead the way, saying that he had been to this area a couple of times a few years ago and he knew the way well. Unfortunately, however, the self-made guide did not realize that the route through Huay Pa Khi which he had taken a few years ago had been closed by Wa troops under their Chinese boss, Wei Shaukang, for almost 2 years. Unaware of the current situation, the villager led his group along the Huay Pa Khi route until they were stopped, surrounded and arrested by a group of SPDC troops from IB225 led by Capt. Maung Thaung. They were interrogated, tortured and eventually beaten to death in a group by the troops. It was learned that the villagers had been accidentally heading towards one of the amphetamine factories in the area under the security of the SPDC troops and were arrested. While Wa troops actually guarded the factories, SPDC troops roamed the outer area. After some beating, torture and interrogation, the villagers were suspected of having found out the location of at least one of the amphetamine factories.Therefore, to shut their mouths, the SPDC troops simply killed all of them and ordered some workers from the amphetamine factory to bury them, at a place not very far from where they had killed them. (Source: SHRF)

**The victims were from the following townships:**

**Murng-Pan township**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Lung Pan-Ta | (m), | aged | 51 |
| 2. Pa Thun | (f), | " | 47 |
| 3. Zaai Pan-Ti | (m), | " | 22 |
| 4. Naang Kya | (f), | " | 20 |

3 villagers from Paang Khaa village, Khun Pu tract, Kun-Hing township

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Zaai Maat | (m), | aged | 29 |
| 2. Naang Poi | (f), | " | 24 |
| 3. Naang Wan | (f), | " | 16 |

4 villagers from Paang Yong village, Wan Lur tract, Lai-Kha township

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Pa Kam | (f), | aged | 46 |
| 2. Zaai Wun Kyaw | (m), | " | 28 |
| 3. Naang Maai | (f), | " | 19 |
| 4. Zaai Wan | (m), | " | 17 |

3 from Kun Kaao village, Kun Mong tract, Kaeng Tawng area, Murng-Nai township

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Zaai Naw | (m), | aged | 29 |
| 2. Zaai Ting | (m), | " | 25 |
| 3. Zaai Wi | (m), | " | 24 |

On January 24, 2001, 2 displaced villagers were beaten to death and a14-year-old girl was taken away and raped for 3 nights by SPDC troops from Kun-Hing-based IB246, led by Capt. Zaw Thein. Sa Ti Ya, 35, and his son, Zaai Khat, 16, and daughter, Naang Muay Khur (not her real name), 14, were gathering wild vegetables at a deserted farm northwest of their Ton Hoong village relocation site in Ton Hoong tract, Murng-Nai township when they were arrested by a patrol of 45-50 SPDC troops stationed at Ton Hoong relocation site. The father and son were interrogated, tortured and beaten to death with sticks. Capt. Zaw Thein then raped the daughter and took her along with the patrol for 3 nights before releasing her. Some time after she returned to the relocation site, Naang Muay Khur reported the incident to the village elders and community leaders, who found the bodies of the 2 dead victims and buried them properly.

**The 3 victims were:**

1. Sa Ti Ya, aged 35, the father, beaten to death

2. Zaai Khat, aged 16, son of Sa Ti Ya, beaten to death

3. Naang Muay Khur (not her real name), aged 14, daughter of Sa Ti Ya, raped and taken away for 3 nights (Source: SHRF)

On January 19, 2001, a Palaung villager was beaten to death, his wife raped, and their their belongings stolen from their house by SPDC troops from Nam-Zarng-based IB66, led by commander Tin Myint, at Ho Ha village in Kaeng Tawng area, Murng-Nai township. Troops from Co.2, IB66, came to Ho Ha village and searched all the houses. According to the local people, it was said that Paw Saang Kham Ai, 37, was killed by the SPDC troops because he could not pay the 500,000 Kyat 'tax' or protection fee demanded for growing opium, due to the failure of the crop on account of bad weather. Troops beat him to death in his house and then raped his wife, and took money, valuables, clothes, household utensils, chickens, pigs and cattle. (Source: SHRF)

On January 17, 2001, a villager was beaten to death and his daughter was raped and held for two days by SPDC troops from IB66, led by, about 1-1/2 miles from Ho Ha village in Nam-Zarng township. The victims, Lung Seng, 40, and his daughter, Naang Zaw (not her real name), 17, were going to cut firewood, carrying with them a saw, an axe and a knife, when they ran into the column of 70-80 SPDC troops. Lung Seng was interrogated and beaten to death, while Capt. Aung Kyaw raped Naang Zaw. The troops took her but she was released two days later. (Source: SHRF)

On January 3, 2001, 3 villagers were severely beaten by SPDC troops from IB221 on the road between Nam Laan and Murng Tin tracts in Murng-Phyak township. One of the villagers died later from injuries sustained in the beating. Zaai Laa Keo, 23, from Paang Kiu village and Zaai Saam Tin, 30, and Zaai Lin, 23, from Pa Khaa Mai village were walking together to buy pigs in Murng Tin village tract when they ran into the SPDC troops from Co. No.3 of Murng-Phyak-based IB221. The troops stopped the 3 villagers and forced them to squat in line and tied their hands behind their backs. Before asking any questions, the leader of the troops kicked the villagers. The others joined in and accused the villagers of spying for SSA-E and interrogated them. They kicked,beat, and struck the villagers with their rifle butts, asking for the whereabouts of the Shan soldiers. The villagers denied the accusations and said that they had not seen any Shan soldiers. Zaai Laa Keo, who had been hit in the chest with a rifle butt, began vomitting a lot of blood and, seeing that, the troops untied their hands and released them. The villagers returned to their villages, with Zaai Saam and Zaai Lin helping Zaai Laa Keo who could hardly walk. Zaai Laa Keo died 3 days later. (Source: SHRF)

**Personal Account: Torture in Military Intelligence Unit No. 19 and Myeik Prison**

I am xxxx from Ye-loun-sein village, Arakan State. In 1995, I moved to Ranong,

Thailand and settled there to earn my living because SPDC troops always tortured and punished the Arakanese people and discriminated against the ethnic groups. In 1996 I went to Kaw-thaung, Karen State, in order to transfer the money that I had saved during the year for my parents and my children. Unfortunately, as I was going to the bank to transfer the money, U Gyi Win (from Military Intelligence No. 19) arrested me and stole 30,000 kyat. I was taken to an underground room at Military Intelligence No. 19 and they tortured and interrogated me there. They interrogated me about affiliations with political groups. It's not fair. I didn't have any political documents and I don't know anything about politics. They did it because they hate Arakanese. The MI interrogation is very cruel. In MI there is a lot of torturing and it is very bad. They made us spread our legs six feet (with the length of a plastic pipe filled with concrete between our legs) and stand in a position like when you are driving a motorcyle for an hour and a half. They only gave us food when they wanted to and sometimes we only got a meal once a day. They interrogated me 6 times day and during interrogation they beat me up and burned me with cigarettes. The people responsible for the interrogations were Khin Lwin Oo (warrant officer), Gyi Win, and Kaw Naing (corporal). They are the ones who tortured me the most.

I was given a jail sentence of 4 years even though I hadn't committed a crime.

I had to falsely confess to them to escape from their torture, otherwise they would have continued to question me and not let me go. Then they sent me to Myeik prison. U Mya Win is a warden and U Thein Myint is a jailer in Myeik prison. The prisoners from Myeik prison were served only a milk bottle's portion of rice (3 bites) and one cup of soup made with really small fish (like baby fish with no meat and only bones) even though it wasn't enough. U Mya Win is corrupt and every day he took two bags of rice that were supposed to go to the prisoners. U Mya Win told the prisoners he was sorry for taking it but he had to because the generals above him wanted to play golf, eat at an expensive restaurant and give gifts to the singers at the restaurant and U Mya Win was responsible for paying for it. The prison workers are also corrupt. They get paid, but it is not enough so they also had to take rice. Even though U Mya Win and the prison workers were corrupt and taking things that were supposed to go to the prisoners, they still didn't treat the prisoners well. There was only six tins of beans for bean soup for over three thousand prisoners. When they serve it looks like slightly yellow water. As far as health care goes, they didn't care at all and only gave us Paracetemol and a medicine called Varmiton (a kind of sleeping pill). They only do something if a prisoner is near death. Then they send him to the hospital. Many of the prisoners who died were suffering from stomach diseases as they didn't have any fresh food. Being in Myeik prison is like being in hell, if you are there you will die from hunger and lack of fresh food. (Source: PDF, 2001)

# # Photos




*Photos #D3, D4, D5 : Villagers in yyyy township (Nyaunglebin District) who were beaten by SPDC troops in April 2001. On April 8th 2001, KNLA soldiers tried to stop two bullock carts near xxxx village in yyyy township, but when the carts wouldn't stop they burned one of them and took the two bullock teams and the other cart. SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx immediately went to seek out all the local village elders to punish them for failing to report the KNLA presence in the area. Saw G—, 35 (photos #D3 and D4), was at home in xxxx village when the SPDC troops arrived looking for the headman; they couldn't find him, so they grabbed Saw G— and demanded to know where he'd gone. They beat him on his back with a stick usually used to drive bullocks, then threw him on the ground, stomped on his back and kicked him in the face with Army boots. They then took him to the nearby Burman village and kept him tied up there overnight, during which he got a fever. When these photos were taken two days later he was still in pain. Saw M—, 55, was also in his village when they grabbed him and demanded that he give them a bullock cart. They beat him in the back and the left shin with a wooden stick (see Photo #D5) before releasing him. In the end they forced five village elders from four local villages to their camp, detained and beat all of them for not providing sufficient intelligence, locked them in leg stocks overnight, and demanded a bullock cart and two teams of bullocks as compensation. The village heads were only released when they gave these, worth an estimated total of 240,000 Kyat (60,000 for the cart and 180,000 for the two teams). [Photos: KHRG researcher]*



# D-4



# D-5




*Photo #D6 : Naw P—, age 20, from xxxx village in yyyy township, Papun District. On March 9th 2001, a patrol of 13 soldiers, led by a Captain, from SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx came to her village at night and ordered her, her father, and her 10-year-old sister out of the house, then pushed them to the outskirts of the village. Her father is deaf and couldn't walk well so they directed their interrogation at Naw P—, accusing her of giving rice to the KNLA. She doesn't speak Burmese well and said she knew nothing, and they hit her twice on the head with the barrel of an assault rifle. They also rounded up and interrogated 10 men for several hours before leaving, despite the fact that the village is supposedly in an SPDC-controlled 'white' area. Naw P— added that the troops always take their livestock without paying and forced the villagers to plant sugarcane at their camp last year. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #D9 : K—, 31, from xxxx village in yyyy township, Thaton District. In the middle of the water festival on April 14th 2001 a combined column of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx and DKBA #xxx Brigade came to his village, captured him and demanded to know the whereabouts of a KNLA soldier named Saw M—. He told them he didn't know, so they beat him over 10 times with the bamboo stick shown in the photo until it split. They continually poked him in the ribs with a gun barrel and beat him on the head, neck and body with a flashlight. DKBA Battalion Commander aaaa himself beat him and told him, "You're afraid of the rebel Saw M— but you're not afraid of me? I'll kill you and eat your gall bladder with alcohol!" , then fired a pistol between his legs. However, they released him because he didn't know anything. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #D10 : M—, a villager from xxxx village who is somewhat mentally unbalanced. He was caught and detained by SPDC troops, who then bound and tortured him because he couldn't answer their questions properly. After the torture he could no longer walk properly and had to be helped along when he fled in May 2001 along with the internally displaced from Nyaunglebin District. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #D12 : Maung B—, 23, from xxxx village in Papun District, shows one of the positions the SPDC soldiers tied him in while beating him; note the cloth they placed covering his head so that he couldn't see the blows coming. In May 2000, a unit led by Sergeant Major aaaa from Infantry Battalion #xx found him under his hut in his hill field and immediately tied him up, beat him repeatedly, accused him of being a KNLA soldier and demanded that he hand over a gun. SPDC units regularly try to get guns this way so they can report to their officers that they captured them from the enemy in combat. Maung B— told them he is a villager and has no gun, so they pulled him on a rope to yyyy village. Along the way they threw him in a pool of water and held him under. The next day they forced him to zzzz village, where they held him down and forced water down his throat, then tied him in the position shown and beat and punched him. Then they released him, but he and his wife and children no longer dare stay in the village, so they have fled into hiding in the jungle. Even before his capture, he says the troops regularly detained villagers and demanded guns, always forced him and the others in his village to go as porters, cut bamboo, fence the Army camp, and do other forced labour, and regularly stole their livestock. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photos #D16 : Saw K—, age 35, a single hill field farmer from xxxx village in Nyaunglebin District who was beaten by SPDC troops. His village is in an SPDC-controlled 'white area' so they have not been relocated but are constantly called for forced labour and must pay extortion and other demands. Saw K— is epileptic but is still ordered to do forced labour and portering, so he must regularly pay bribe money to the military to be exempted. The wound on his ankle occurred when he had a seizure in his house and went unconscious with his leg in the cooking fire. On March 13th 2001 he had just returned to his house in the village after gathering firewood when Column #1 of Light Infantry Battalion #xxx arrived in his village and called him down from his house. When he failed to come out because of his burned leg, they entered the house, punched him in the face and beat him several times on the back of his neck and head. He says he is not sure how much longer he can live in his village under these conditions. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #D18: Saw K—, 50, a villager from xxxx village in Papun District. On March 12th 2001 an SPDC Sergeant from a combined column of Battalions #xxx, xxx and xxx arrested him and interrogated him with torture. The troops covered his face, beat him in the face, put a gun barrel in his mouth and rattled it around in his mouth. They then put a bullet in water and forced him to drink the water (this is then supposed to compel him to be loyal to them or the bullet will come to kill him) before releasing him. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #D19: Saw M—, 20, a hill field farmer from xxxx village in Papun District. On March 16th 2001 he was walking on a path near his village when he met an SPDC column from Battalions #xxx, xxx and xxx. The troops immediately bound his hands and feet, slapped his face 4 times, pressed his face against the ground, then shook his head around by his hair several times. He was detained for 2 days for no valid reason, then forced to porter a soldier's backpack weighing approximately 16 kg (35 lb) before his release. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #D20: Saw T—, age 60, a village elder in Papun District who fled after his village was relocated and he was tortured. After his village was forcibly relocated last year, he says they were forced to build houses and fences for the soldiers and do other forced labour and were never allowed to go back to work their fields, so no one has any rice this year. Then he was detained for having an unregistered house guest. The troops robbed his belongings then tied his hands and legs, poked him with a knife, then tied a nylon bag over his head and left him overnight like that. The next day they put him in a small cage and interrogated him while kicking him and stepping on him. He couldn't speak Burmese to their satisfaction, so they kicked him until his face swelled up and he could no longer see. Then, with his hands still tied, he was forced to carry soldiers' backpacks to another village, where he was locked in leg stocks for the next 5 nights along with 3 others. He was finally released after 24 days in total. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #D25 : Saw T—, a 70-year-old man from xxxx village, Papun District. He was living in hiding in the forest in fear of SPDC troops when a large SPDC column came upon his family and opened fire, wounding him in the left arm. An officer then interrogated him while beating him with a bamboo pole, and force-marched Saw T— along with his 7 children and grandchildren to the Army camp at the relocation village of Meh Way, along the way forcing him to carry loads and occasionally beating him and interrogating him about other villagers in hiding. On arrival at Meh Way they locked him in leg stocks at the Army camp for a day while his family slept on the ground beside him. The next day they released him to stay in the relocation site but provided nothing, so Saw T— and his family fled back into the hills where they are now living in hiding again. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*

*Photos #D28, D29 : Two men in Mone township, Nyaunglebin District, show some of the scars from being tortured by SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #xxx in 1999. The first man, 25-year-old Saw H—, was arrested in mid-1999 after finishing a shift of forced labour as a sentry. All 4 men who had been responsible for the sentry duty were arrested, and the troops accused them of not doing their job because they hadn't seen and reported the troops' own arrival at the village, so they took the 4 men to their camp. Saw H— was punched and kicked, beaten with bamboo sticks and gun butts, kicked in the belly, poked in the chest with a knife (see marks in Photo #D28), and burned on the body, face and head with fire. Then the soldiers refused to*

*release the men until the villagers paid a large ransom. When the ransom was paid, all of them were severely beaten again (each was hit 100 times) before being released. M—, age 37 (Photo #D29), was arrested at the same time and suffered worse torture because he was accused of being related to a man suspected of having KNU contacts. The soldiers held his head underwater, hit him in the cheeks with bricks, slashed his legs, back and cheek with a knife and rubbed salt into the wounds on his back and legs, then they locked him in leg stocks for 4 days before he and the others were released. He says that he suffered badly from the wounds for 2 months afterwards. Though these photos were taken in April 2001, the scars are still visible. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*






# 5. Deprivation of Livelihood

*"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood, in circumstances beyond his control."*.

(Source: Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)

## 5.1 Background

The majority of people in Burma are engaged in a constant struggle to meet basic needs as they watch their living standards steadily deteriorate. Due to misguided economic policies, rampant corruption and cronyism, and a disproportionate amount of the budget spent on the army, Burma's economy has been in a state of decline since the 1962 military coup. At the time of independence Burma was known as 'the rice bowl of Asia,' but today one in three children is malnourished. On 21 March 2001 the SPDC UN representative, speaking about the national economy reported that: "A growth rate of over 10% has been registered in the current year 2000-2001." However outside analysis is much less optimistic about Burma's economic future. In a report released in April 2001, the Asia Development Bank (ABD) stated that economic growth in Burma had been lethargic, and was likely to remain so until key structural reforms were implemented. In November 2001 the ABD released another report expressing doubts as to the validity of economic data gathered by the regime, stating that official statistics are: "of variable quality and are sometimes incomplete."

Independent data confirms that agriculture accounts for 60% of Burma's GDP, employing 66% of the workforce and providing the country with 51% of its export earnings. At present, there is little potential for future growth in this sector under the current system of weak land rights, strict procurement policies and restrictions on exports. In many areas farmers are forced to sell a significant portion of their crop to the government at prices two or three times below market value. This effectively impoverishes farmers and dries up any tax revenue for the state. In 2001, government mismanagement of the economy was also responsible for the kyat losing 40% of its value. In November, rumors spread that the government was planning to withdraw large denomination notes, leading to panic selling of 100 and 500 kyat notes, which further accelerated the devaluation. This devaluation has exacerbated Burma's inflation problem to the point where basic staple foods such as eggs, vegetables and peanut oil have more than doubled in price in the period between September and November 2001. State-controlled media has run articles advising people to use less cooking oil and adopt austerity measures for 'health' reasons. In truth people's health is being threatened by lack of nutritious food, and

there are reports that some families have had to give up eating meat completely because they can no longer afford it. While the government has intervened to prevent increases in the price of rice, some reports from Arakan State indicate that despite this, rising rice prices may have led to several cases of starvation.

At the beginning of 2002 the Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC), submitted a report to the UN Commission on Human Rights stating the following:

"The right to food is a fundamental human right, guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [article 25(1)] and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (article 11). Notwithstanding, the right to food of people in the Union of Myanmar has been submerged by the military domination of that country. Substantial evidence suggests that the Government of Myanmar is systematically denying food to the civilian population through a range of practices implemented to ensure perpetuation of its undemocratic rule. The People's Tribunal has recommended to the Government of Myanmar that it "address widespread food scarcity throughout the country by giving highest priority to food security as a basic human right". Regrettably, the Government has demonstrated unwillingness to alter its policies and practices exacerbating conditions of food insecurity. While the Government continues to assert that food scarcity does not exist in Myanmar, the Asian Legal Resource Centre has received regular and reliable independent reports to indicate the contrary. The Asian Legal Resource Centre remains convinced that the Government's failure to fulfil its obligations constitutes a breach of international law. The Government of Myanmar must be held responsible for the pervasive food insecurity there....the Government of Myanmar continues to violate the right to food through denial of the right to work, pernicious taxation, confiscation of land and repeated demands for unpaid civilian labour. It prevents or inhibits people from working freely to achieve their food security. Farmers are not permitted to choose when, where and how to cultivate. In areas of armed conflict they are subject to unstable life-threatening conditions that prevent them from using their labour, land and natural resources to earn a living. In other parts of the country, farmers are the victims of policies that place their own well-being after the interests of the state. Regardless of economic circumstances, civilian communities are obliged to satisfy demands for goods and services from the military." (Source: 'Food Scarcity in Myanmar,' submitted by the Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC) to Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, January 2002)

## Situation of Farmers in Burma

An estimated 66% of Burma's workforce is employed in the agricultural sector and rice, being the nation's staple food, is an integral part of this sector. The SPDC, which has retained central planning and control of food production in the nation, has made various attempts to boost the production of rice and other agricultural products, yet the methods which they have used have had disastrous results for the people who do the farming in Burma.

## Right to own Land

Cultivators in Burma have effectively lost the right to own land, as under sections 9-12 of the Agricultural Lands Act 1953 the right to transfer, partition, or lease land can only occur with permission of the authorities. In the 1963 Tenancy Act, the State usurped the right of landowners to lease their land, and the 1963 'Protection of the right to cultivation' Act stipulated that land would be protected from confiscation, except in the case of a) *non-payment of dues owing to the State*, and b) *disputes arising from inheritance cases or actions taken by the State for security reasons*. The State was further granted authority to confiscate land through Notification No. 4/78, which was enacted on September 18, 1978. This notification states that failure to sow the allotted land with the earmark crop to obtain optimum results or failure to sell the full crop quota to the government at the stipulated price would result in confiscation of land. Currently village and township administrators have the power to confiscate land, and the cultivators are compelled to follow their dictates with no means of protest.

## Forced Sale of Crops to the Government

Farmers in Burma are required to sell a percentage of their crops to the government at discount prices. This regulation is, as a rule, enforced for rice crops, yet there are also instances where local officials demand farmers sell set portions of other harvests such as beans and fruit crops. This paddy procurement system is implemented by the Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trade (MAPT), a state agency which, along with other arms of the bureaucracy, inherited this mandate from its socialist predecessor. MAPT's national structure reaches down to the village, where it designates paddy land and collects a fixed quota based on land area. This quota rose steadily from 1988 until 1995, when it was fixed at 12 baskets per acre in high rice-producing areas such as Irrawaddy Division. This crop quota is essentially a crop tax, and is justified by the SPDC as a means of feeding the armed forces, supplying discounted rice to civil servants, and exporting rice and other crops in order to gain foreign currency. Yet in practice, the system has failed to improve economic conditions in Burma and has denied food to the very people who grow it.

An inherent flaw in this system is the government's quota calculation based on arable land area rather than amount of rice actually planted or harvested. Farmers who work poor land, or due to poor weather or other conditions produce an imperfect crop, are not exempt from the quota. Instead they must make up the difference by supplying paddy bought on the market. In these cases, the difference between the relatively high market price and the low government purchase rate results in a net loss for farmers.

Households that fail to fill the quota face a variety of consequences. For households unable to sell the earmarked quota to the government, the local authorities, with the

help of the armed forces and police, often forcefully confiscate the household's entire supply of paddy including that used for consumption and seed paddy. If even after such confiscation the quota is still not achieved, the defaulting cultivators are arrested and their rights to cultivate are taken away. While arrests and beatings have been reported, more common is the confiscation of paddy land, for redistribution to other farmers, whom the authorities feel are more capable of producing the required quota. Farmers have also been sent to labor camps to work off their debt. Local military authorities are also said to have ordered the rice mills to close, preventing the milling of harvested rice for consumption or trade until entire villages filled their quotas. Lastly, farmers have been threatened, berated and publicly abused by government rice procurers dissatisfied with their quota. In Mon State of Burma, as well as in other areas of Burma, the SPDC has implemented a new policy wherein farmers are forced to sign contracts agreeing to sell a certain portion of their crops upon harvest.

This inherently unjust crop quota system has left numerous farmers across Burma impoverished and/or landless. Corrupt officials often pay less than the set government purchase price, and occasionally the farmers receive nothing at all.

## Dry Season Paddy Crops

The SPDC has launched agricultural development schemes throughout the country, but especially in the Irrawaddy Delta area. The government's main agricultural program is the summer, or dry season, paddy program, in which the traditional single rice crop per year, sown in the rainy season and reaped in the cool season of October-December, is followed by another crop raised and reaped in the hot season. The summer paddy scheme has several elements: development of irrigation systems such as dams and canals, introduction of high yielding hot-season rice strains, and use of new fertilizers, pesticides, and machinery to cope with the technical complications of the new crop.

These tactics have created two new burdens for farmers. The first is the labor needed to build roads, small dams, and irrigation ditches. State-directed, uncompensated labor is common practice in Burma. Farmers who work on these development projects have less time to tend their crops or other subsistence activities. Secondly, the chemical ingredients of the summer rice program are not distributed free to poor farmers, but are sold to them. Farmers who do not buy the necessary materials cannot participate in the program; their unproductive land, officially designated for double cropping, is reassigned to a more able household. Insufficiency of water added to the fact that inclement weather and unsuitability of crops to be cultivated on certain types of land are proving to be real deterrents to the country's agricultural development. In some parts of Irrawaddy Division, farmers who could not meet the required quota had to pay the market price in cash for the shortfall to the authorities. In some places flood prevented cultivation. There were some areas where crops failed all the three times they were cultivated. These cultivators not only wasted their

efforts and suffered losses but also because of their inability to fulfill their quota were arrested by the hundreds.

In some localities the cultivators who could not sow the dry season crop had to make payment at the rate of *kyat* 300 per acre to Township and village authorities who lined their pockets with these fines. Those farmers who do not have ready cash had to pawn or sell their cattle, carts, houses, etc., to pay the fines.

## Situation of labor in Burma

A side from the agricultural sector, the majority of laborers in Burma are struggling for their livelihood under harsh conditions with inadequate pay and no process or system through which their grievances can be aired. Under the market economic system, which has been imposed during the period of SPDC governance, workers in foreign investment and joint venture projects and factories have had to suffer the following;

(a) According to job appointment rules, the employer has the right to dismiss any worker from employment without giving a month's advance notice, as outlined in existing labor laws. This grants excessive power for exploitation to the employer and prevents a stable workforce from forming at work sites.

(b) There is no process or system by which worker's grievances can be aired, no mechanisms for demanding labor rights, no trade unions permitted at workplaces and departments, no clear mechanisms for resolution of cases where a worker was forced to resign (or rather, workers are afraid to complain) and no step by step appeal programs (for negotiations, interventions and plenary discussion) therefore, workers suffer considerably.

(c) Foreign employers and investors have established factories in Burma as well as in other countries throughout Southeast Asia. In Burma however, workers receive salaries from foreign employers that are much lower than other countries' minimum wages. Private employers are in fact prohibited from raising salaries any higher than those of workers in nationalized factories. Thus, they cannot raise wages even if they wish to and so the workers are unable to attain a fair income.

(d) According to Burma's "Leave and Holiday Act", shift workers must work a maximum 48 hour week, and for offices and service industries 42 hours per week. However staff and workers in supermarkets and factories, which have appeared as a result of the developing market economy, have to work about 10 hours a day in defiance of labor protection laws. Working on Saturday and over time duties are also required, but there is no appropriate recompense, instead employees are sometimes paid a small amount of money or given some food. Social welfare laws are also ignored. As long as wage rates remain unadjusted to the current pace of inflation, workers continue to be denied a living wage. For example, the Labor Compensation Act excludes by definition workers earning over 400 *kyat* per

month, so employers can claim that their workers are not covered by the Compensation Act. Existing labor affairs laws are outdated and ineffectual, and minimum wage laws apply only to government employees and employees of a few traditional industries. The minimum monthly wage for salaried public employees is $2.00 (600 kyats) for what is, in effect, a 6-hour workday. Various subsidies and allowances supplement this sum. Neither the minimum wage nor the higher wages earned even by senior government officials provide workers and their families with a decent standard of living. Low and falling real wages in the public sector have fostered widespread corruption. In the private sector, urban laborers earn about $0.70 per day (200 kyat), while rural agricultural workers earn about half that. Some private sector workers earn substantially more; a skilled factory worker earns about $15 per day (4,500 kyat). Surplus labor conditions, a dismal economy, and lack of protection by the government continue to dictate substandard conditions for workers. The 1964 Law on Fundamental Workers Rights and the 1951 Factories Act regulate working conditions. There is a legally prescribed 5-day, 35-hour workweek for employees in the public sector and a 6-day, 44-hour workweek for private and state enterprise employees, with overtime paid for additional work. The law also allows for a 24-hour rest period per week, and workers have 21days of paid holidays per year. However, in practice such provisions benefit only a small portion of the country's labor force, since most of the labor force is engaged in rural agriculture. Numerous health and safety regulations exist, but in practice the Government has not made the necessary resources available to enforce the regulations. Although workers may in principle remove themselves from hazardous conditions, in practice many workers cannot expect to retain their jobs if they do so.

Wages in Burma are simply not high enough for most people to live on. Even the pay raise of civil servants in April 2000 was unable to insulate them from the effects of inflation. This has led to high levels of corruption and migration to other countries, as people in all fields of work, attempt to find outside sources of income and chances to leave their jobs for better pay elsewhere.

## Other factors contributing to the deprivation of livelihood

People in areas across Burma are subjected to numerous demands for their hard-earned currency and their hard-pressed time. As the government spends an estimated 50% of the national budget on building up of the armed forces, there is little money allotted for the needs of the nation. Indeed, even the armed forces are not adequately provided for. In 1998, the SPDC in Rangoon informed its field units that rations would be cut back significantly, and that they would, in essence, have to 'fend for themselves,' by producing their own food or obtaining it from villagers in their areas of operation. Since that order, thousands of acres of land have been confiscated from civilians, without compensation, for army food production or factories. The ousted farmers and local villagers are then frequently made to act as serfs on their former land, planting and harvesting crops for the army battalions who took the land from them.

The SPDC has prided itself on undertaking efforts to improve the nation, such as the building of roads, bridges, and railroads. Yet it has been at the expense of the people of Burma that these national infrastructure projects have been carried out. The projects, which often are for military benefit, are usually severely under funded, and the local people are required to pay for or get the supplies themselves, and then build the projects themselves, at their own time and expense, without pay.

At the township and village administrative levels, there also is a lack of government funding. Again local people are made to compensate for these deficiencies in the national budget. The people in areas of armed conflict suffer the above economic burdens, as well additional demands which are associated with the significant military presence the SPDC maintains in their regions. Villagers in areas of armed conflict are expected to fully support the army battalions located in their area. They are required to build the army barracks, supplying the materials themselves, and then send "servants" to work as slaves at these bases. They are also forced to give them food, and any other items that army personnel demand from them.

**1) Official and Unofficial Taxes and Levies:**

Through several officially sanctioned fees and taxes, as well as arbitrary demands for cash from corrupt officials and army personnel, the people of Burma are expected to pay for everything from road construction supplies to state sport ceremonies. The income of Burma's people is sapped by the these constant petty fees, and most households end up forced to pay several thousands of kyat per month in these types of levies. Many villagers are unable to pay and are often forced to flee their traditional homes to avoid punishment by the authorities. The most common types of taxes and levies are listed below:

**- Porter and Forced Labor Fees:** A common practice, especially in conflict areas, is for the villagers to pay a mandatory "porter fee" to the local army battalion. The funds collected from this fee are supposed to go towards hiring porters for army operations. Yet in most cases, these fees are kept by the battalion officers, who then proceed to demand that the villagers supply porters for the army, even after the fee has been paid. These fees are usually around 200-500 kyat per household, per month. In addition, villagers who are delinquent in providing their forced labor duty are made to pay fines of varying amounts to local government or army authorities.

**- Administration fees:** In several localities across Burma the local people are made to pay monthly fees for township or village level administration costs. These fees, and whether or not they are actually used for administrative purposes, vary from place to place.

**- Festival and Ceremony Fees:** Often the government does not provide enough money for their state-sanctioned festival and ceremonies, including religious and sport festivals, and even anti-NLD rallies. Where the government falls short, the people are expected to contribute. Government officials, including USDA members commonly send letters or go door to door demanding money for such occasions. In some instances, after the people have given their money, the said occasion never occurs at all.

**- Taxes for Development Projects:** As the social, education and health sectors of Burma are seriously neglected by the SPDC, and the thus suffer from an acute shortage of government funding, local people are often required to pay for the construction of educational and health-care structures, as well as for the running of numerous training programs. In addition, although the SPDC has taken credit for the various national infrastructure projects, it is the local people who most often foot the bill for such projects. Government funding for such development projects is often insufficient or swindled by corrupt officials and the villagers are ordered to provide the money or the supplies necessary for the projects.

**- Taxes and fees for local army units:** Civilians are regularly required to pay for the needs of local army units. In addition to demands for food and supplies, they must meet demands for other various expenses which come up, such as the need for army walkie-talkies. Villagers commonly cover the cost for the construction of army related buildings, or supply the necessary materials. In addition, villagers in conflict areas are often forced to pay for lost guns when soldiers desert the army, or pay for the upkeep of surrendered rebels.

**- Arbitrary Fees, Fines, and Taxes:** Army officers posted to remote conflict areas, as well as officials in central Burma all receive opportunities to extort money from local villagers with impunity. There are several army officers who have become rich as a result of the numerous schemes they come up with to acquire money. Therefore people are subjected to numerous 'unofficial' levies, fines and taxes. In some cases people are not even given an explanation as to what their money is going for, but are just told to hand over a certain amount. Officers and soldiers seeking money have been known to set up temporary roadblocks on highways or bridges to demand money from people passing through. Some of these arbitrary levies are associated with discrimination against religious or ethnic minorities, such as in the case of arbitrary taxes which exist only for Muslim Rohingya people in Arakan State. An example of this is the tree and roof taxes which the Rohingya must pay.

**2) Forced Labor**

The well-documented use of civilians as forced laborers has endowed Burma with a mass labor force with which to build up its army and national infrastructure (See chapter on forced labor). This labor is mandatory and unpaid and requires that villagers spend varying amounts of time away from their own work. In addition to

the economic strain that time away from work brings, the people are also required to provide their own food and equipment for the duration of the forced labor duty. The demand of forced labor is often the proverbial last straw on the camel's back for the already over-burdened people of Burma. Most refugees and migrant workers cite forced labor requirements as one of the major reasons for fleeing.

**3) Land Confiscation**

As mentioned above, the government of Burma has taken the opportunity to deprive citizens of their land whenever they deem it necessary for "security reasons" or for failure to provide necessary crop quotas. In addition to land confiscated to make way for army battalions, the state often takes over land that is intended for development projects. People are rarely compensated for land that has been confiscated. In cases where compensation is given, the amount is usually well below the actual value of the land. The deprival of land, which is the sole source of livelihood for many of Burma's people, is a major infringement upon their right to livelihood as well as their property rights.

**4) Destruction of property**

Loss of property is an obvious hindrance to the livelihood of an individual and their family, yet the SPDC continues to engage in activities that result in the uncompensated destruction of property such as homes and fields. In areas of ethnic conflict this practice is carried out under the "*four-cuts*" policy, in which the army seeks to destroy any means by which rebel armies can survive. In part of this policy, known as the "*scorched earth*" campaign, SPDC troops relocate villages in known rebel areas, then burn and destroy everything in the area. Burning of villages is common following relocation or in campaigns to "*search and destroy*" rebel activity. Property is also destroyed by the army in other areas of Burma if it stands in the way of planned army, or national infrastructure projects.

**5) Looting and expropriation of food and possessions**

The army in Burma, which sees itself as being the "father of the nation", has long expected the support of the country's civilians. The various incarnations of the military regime have attempted to instil a mentality in the people in which aiding the armed forces is seen as a national and patriotic duty. Yet this "duty" has become close to unbearable for Burma's people. In the years since 1998, when the SPDC cut rations for the armed forces, the villagers have faced an extra burden in providing for the soldiers. The army personnel have always been underpaid, especially the lower level soldiers and privates, and this had led to their frequent looting of villager property in the past. Now this looting and expropriation of food and possessions is condoned by the State. Army units on patrol who pass through villages simply take what they wish of the villagers' food and possessions, or else send letters demanding that the villagers bring it to them. Some officers even send "shopping lists" to the local village heads, requesting such things as soap, oil, chicken, rice, and cases of beer. The extorted items are rarely paid for.

Villagers are even sometimes forced to provide money, food, and other requirements for army personnel when they wish to make offerings at local Buddhist temples. The HRDU compiled documents of numerous cases of this army endorsed robbery for the year 2001, yet due to the quantity of data referring to all the villagers who lost their chickens, gold rings, rice and ducks, not all collected incidents are included in this yearbook.

**6) Restrictions on trade, travel, and cultivation**

The restrictions on trade, travel and cultivation that the SPDC army has introduced, especially in areas of armed conflict have made things even more difficult for individuals attempting to make a living and survive. Many people living in areas under SPDC control are restricted from leaving their villages and must pay for passes from authorities in order to gain permission to leave. These passes are often only good for short periods, sometimes only from dawn to dusk. For villagers attempting to work in locations far away, it is nearly impossible to do what is necessary to make a living and then get back on time. The SPDC also has enforced special restrictions at times in which people are banned from leaving their villages altogether. In these cases, harvests are often destroyed or lost along with other work opportunities.

Trade restrictions imposed by the authorities also result in economic hardship for the people of Burma. Another factor which restricts breadwinners in the country is the existence of landmines, which limits the areas in which labor-seekers are able to move.

# 5.2 Situation in Arakan State

***Unfair Levies and Taxes***

**Muslim Woman fails to obtain Justice from corrupt authorities**

On 5 November 2001, a retired Muslim woman teacher from the ethnic Kaman community lost her life's savings in a business partnership with Ko Pauk, another Kaman businessman. The Muslim woman, Daw Su Su Khaing, engaged in a legal joint venture partnership with the man, exporting bamboo and nipa palm to Bangladesh. When Ko Pauk misappropriated the women's money, fleeing into Bangladesh, Daw Su tried to go to the police and lodge a complaint against the man at Maungdaw, a town in western Arakan State. However, the Military Intelligence 18 stationed at Maungdaw, took a bribe of 500,000 kyat from the accused and secretly sent him to Yangon. With no other recourse to recovering her savings, Daw Su returned to her home in Kasey Quarter, Sittwe. (Source: Narinjara News)

**Military Intelligence extorts money from engine boats in Burma**

On 20 December 2001, the junta's Military Intelligence (MI) forced 20 engine boat-owners to each give 7, 000 kyat to the MI in Arakan State, according to three traders who requested anonymity. Sergeant Kyaw Tee of Man Aung Myo MI Branch (10) called all the boat-owners at Kha O Maw jetty, Man Aung and demanded the money, the traders said. The boat owners were afraid that if they failed to comply with the demand, the MI would frame them for crimes they did not commit and extort more money.

**The Boat-owners were:**

1. U Gna Pyu Gyi, Tan Hlwe village, Man aung,
2. U Sein Tha Aung, Tan Hlwe village, Man Aung,
3. U Kyaw Pyu, Tan Hlwe village, Man Aung,
4. U Aloon Shay, Nga Moon Daing village, Man Aung,
5. U Kyaw Zan Hla, Nga Moon Daing Village, Man Aung,
6. U San Hla Phaw, Nga Moon Daing Village, Man Aung,

(Source: MICB)

## *Military Monopoly on Trade and Agriculture*

**Rice mills forced to shut down in Ponnagyun**

On 9 October 2001, there were reports that privately owned rice mills had recently been forced to shut down because new rice mills had been opened by Military Intelligence agents in Ponnagyun township, in the northern part of Arakan State. The two new rice mills were established by a local MI agent and a police inspector in Yotoyoke, under Ponnagyun Township. The two law enforcement officers gave the local people a verbal order that any rice grown was not allowed to be taken outside the village for sale unless the villagers milled their rice in the rice mills owned by the two officials. Since the villagers have been forced to do this, five other rice mills in the area have had to shut down. Rice mill owners who have been forced out of business are: U Hla Phaw, Kyaw Zan Oo, Maung Mra Thein, U San Gyaw Pru and U Aung Phaw. The name of the police inspector is Maung Maung Soe [48], and the other rice mill is owned by the local MI authority. (Source: Narinjara News)

**Burmese Army monopoly in Arakan State makes life difficult Cox's Bazaar**

On 11 October 2001, a political leader who recently crossed into Bangladesh reported that the SPDC's monopoly on trade and commerce in Arakhan State, has made the life of the general population very difficult. At the beginning of the 2001 monsoon season, Burmese Army personnel throughout Arakan State started

collecting fruits, rattan, cane, wood, bamboo and other agricultural produce at prices fixed by the military personnel, which were far below the market value of these items. At Pohribraung in Ponnagyun Township, the army began a stockpile of Anyan-thee fruit, paying seven kyats for a hundred, and selling the same amount for one hundred and fifty to two hundred kyats in Rangoon. Beginning in 2001 the trade of black pepper, a product of Pohribraung and Yotoyoke, Ponnagyun, has also begun to be monopolized by the military. In Minbra Township, LIBs [light infantry battalion] 541 and 381, seized more than one thousand acres of rice paddy in 1998 and started a shrimp farm; in Pauktaw Township, LIB 344 confiscated Ngapri island in September 1998, rendering hundreds of villagers homeless; in Ponnagyun, LIB 555 seized the tributaries to the Yochaung river, for shrimp cultivation, closing down waterways to river traffic. This means that Arakhan villagers have now lost access to waterways which are an important means of transportation. The SPDC's commercial shrimp cultivation in Arakhan State has also threatened the delicate balance of the ecosystem. According to recent reports, the trade in shrimp, rice, peanuts, timber, motorboats, and small mills are currently all monopolized by the military. The money earned from these industries is used to support the families of the military, since the SPDC cannot pay the soldiers enough to live on. (Source: Narinjara News)

**Border trade suspended between Burma and Bangladesh**

On 26 October 2001, a local trader reported to Narinjara News that for the past two weeks the border between Maungdaw and Teknaf was formally closed. Currently, each day Burmese authorities allow only one boat carrying three persons to cross the Naf River. After crossing, the boat must come back to Burma within 24 hours. Previously a trader could use his passport to obtain permission to stay for at least one week in Bangladesh. Though there has been no announcement as to the cause of these restrictions, mounting tensions because of the war on Afghanistan, scarcity of rice, and fear of popular discontent within Arakhan State are all probable reasons the Burmese authorities have decided to suspend border trade with Bangladesh. Despite the restrictions, the illegal trade in rice, shrimp, pulses, salt and other agricultural produce from Arakan State still continues unabated under the noses of the military, paramilitary and police organizations. Local people have suffered hardship as the price of fuel, kerosene and gasoline, has sharply increased throughout the state following the official suspension of trade. In addition, many owners of small generators have increased the rate of their services. (Source: Narinjara News)

## 5.3 Situation in Chin State, Magwe and Sagaing Divisions

### *Unfair Levies and Taxes*

**SPDC monopolizes farm management**

Since 9 August 2001, the Development Council in Kangaw Township has forced farmers to buy paddy seeds, corn seeds and bio-fertilizer at high prices, claiming that the paddy seeds which they sell can produce 300 tins of rice per one acre area of land. These paddy seeds sold by the authorities cost 1,800 kyats per tin, the corn seeds cost 80 kyats for one pyi, and a bottle of bio-fertilizer costs 800 Kyats. However, according to U Tha Lu, a 50 year old Burmese farmer from Hanthawadi village of Magwe division, when the farmers actually grow the paddy seeds they bought from the SPDC, the seeds produce only 60 tins per acre. The authorities then purchase the rice from farmers, paying 350 kyats per tin. "It is totally unjust. When they sold the seeds to us, we paid 1,800 Kyats per tin and now they want to buy the rice back from us paying only 350 Kyats per tin" said U Tha Lu. The SPDC began this practice in 2000 and have continued to do it, even though they know it is damaging to the farmers. (Source: CHRO)

**SPDC troops abduct civilian vehicles at whim**

In their September/October 2001 newsletter, CHRO reported that according to Khuma, a driver from the "Zalat Phyu" truck association in Tahan, Sagaing Division, the Burmese troops constantly seize their vehicles whenever they want. The "Zalat Phyu" truck association was formed by truck owners, mostly Chins from Falam and Tedim of Chin State and Tahan of Sagaing Division. The association has about 30 trucks running each day. Since the Zalat Phyu trucks began running, the Burmese military have been using these vehicles without pay whenever they want. Most of the time, members of the truck association have to serve as porters for the SPDC LIB 266 based in Haka, the LIB 268 in Falam and the LIB 269 in Tedim. The association is forced to transport army rations, arms, ammunition and Burmese soldiers whenever they travel. The drivers have to carry their own food and the Burmese army does not give any payment to either the driver or the truck association. Khuma reports that he was forced to transport LIB 266 troops from Tio river, on the Indo-Burma border to Haka, the capital of Chin state. Khuma said that sometimes the Burmese troops abduct the truck to squeeze money from the association. When this happens, the truck is released only after the driver pays the army between 10,000 to 30,000 kyats. Furthermore, every vehicle coming from Kalay Myo has to transport one quintal of sand for the Buddhist pagoda being built at Lentlang, Falam township of Chin State. Also any vehicle passing through Manipur River has to donate 500 kyats at the immigration gate. (Source: CHRO)

## *Looting by the army*

**SPDC from Tidim seized goods from a Chin trader**

On 6 July, 2001 the SPDC authority in Tedim town, northern Chinland confiscated goods from a Chin trader and demanded 800,000 Kyats. Pa Thang, a 37 year old trader from Kalay township, Sagaing Division, reports that he was returning from the Indian border with his own car carrying goods including Digene, Betnovate and Calcium tablets to sell in Burma. The total cost of the goods was about 1.5 million Kyats. When he arrived to the town of Tidim, the township Peace and Development Council stopped the car and seized all the goods. When he wrote a petition to the authorities, they ordered him to pay 800,000 Kyats in order to get back his goods. He said that all the goods he carried were legal and it remains unknown why the authorities seized his goods. (Source: CHRO)

**SPDC Soldiers Looted 23,500 Kyats from Aru villagers**

On 19 July 2001, Lieutenant Kyaw Kyaw Naing of Burmese army LIB 274 and his troops looted 23,500 Kyats from 32 year-old Mr. Leitho (name changed) and his friends at Aru village, Matupi Township, in Southern Chinland. As there is not sufficient drinking water in Aru village, a number of villagers had decided to contribute money to buy water pipes to drain water from a nearby stream. The money they contributed was insufficient to buy the water pipe, so the villagers decided to buy cattle with the money and sell them in Mizoram State in India, hoping that they would be able to buy the water pipe with the proceeds. The villagers bought 4 mithuns (type of cow), and Mr. Leitho and his friends were asked to sell the cattle in Mizoram, which is a 5-day journey on foot from their village. On 17th July, Mr. Leitho and his friends were stopped on the way between Sabawngte and Sabawngpi Villagea by Lt. Kyaw Kyaw Naing and his troops, who demanded that the villagers pay 20,000 Kyats. Mr. Leitho and friends explained their situation to the Lieutenant, stating that they were not traders, and that the cattle represented the villagers' contributions for a buying water pipe for their village. Ignoring their explanation, Lt. Kyaw Kyaw Naing sent all the cattles to Sabawngte army camp. He threatened that if they refused to pay 20, 000 Kyats in ransom, he would arrest them and confiscate all the cattle. Intimidated, Mr. Leitho and his friends went back to Sabawngpi village. On 19th July, Mr. Leitho and the other villagers went back to Lt. Kyaw Kyaw Naing to pay the 20, 000 Kyats. Then, Lt. Kyaw Kyaw Naing demanded again that in addition to the 20, 000 kyats, the villagers give him a goat or 3, 500 Kyats to buy a goat. Lt. Kyaw Kyaw Naing said that he would seize all the cattle and arrest them all if they failed to meet his demands. Thus, Mr. Leitho and friends paid another 23, 500 Kyats to Lt. Kyaw Kyaw Naing on 19th July 2001. Mr. Leitho said that their hopes of solving the drinking water crisis in the village have been ruined. (Source:CHRO)

## 5.4 Situation in Karen State

**Situation in Thaton District**

On 29 January 2001, the SPDC LIB-3, Commander Than Aung forced villagers from T'rwaeh Khee to give one pig which cost approximately 4500 kyats. Troops with the same commander also stole chickens and ducks from the villagers. On 3/2/01, the SPDC LIB-1, devision-44, officer Myint Lwin forced 2 wood mill owners to give kyats 60,000 and 2 tins of white rice. ( Source: KIC)

On 7 June 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 106, under LID 77, led by Commander Soe Tun came to Htaw-klaw-hta village and extorted: one chicken from Naw Mya Doo, one Pyi of rice from Naw Khin and one chicken from Naw New. (Source: KIC)

On 9 June 2001, Yo-kla camp Commander Kyaw Thet Naing from SPDC LIB 106, came to Htaw-klaw-hta village and demanded: 3 chickens from Naw Pee Net, 3 chickens from Naw Bay, 2 chickens from Naw Ma Htoo, one chicken from Pah Than, 2 chickens from Naw Hsa Doo and 2 chickens from Ma Thay Thay. (Source: KIC)

On 12 June 2001, the SPDC demanded porter fees from 36 villages in Bar Aen Township, Karen State. The villages forced to pay included: Pa Ta Mya village, Kaw Yin village, Min Ka Yin village and Wha Po Taw village. Every village has about 300 houses, and the SPDC collected 1500 to 2500 from every 15 houses every month. The money went to the following SPDC army units:

(1) IB 203 unit 22

(2) IB 204 unit 22

(3) IB 205 unit 22

(4) IB 206 unit 22

(5) IB 118 unit 22 (Source: KORD)

On 10 July 2001 the SPDC troop from LIB-9, led by the battalion commander Myo Aung entered Ta Maw Daw village, forced the villagers to give them 100 wood posts which are 2 feet in girth and 30 feet in length. (Source: KIC)

On 7 September 2001, combined troops from a company of SPDC LIB 101 and DKBA Pah Ni Tho came from Baw-tho-ta to Baw-naw-po-kee area, Thaton Disrict, Karen State. The troops burnt down 7 huts in the hill farm in Baw-naw-po-kee area and looted all the household items that they wanted. In addition, the troops killed pigs and chickens for their own food. The owners of the burnt hill farm huts were: Saw Pah Ket, Saw Toe Kyayn, Pah Mu Sah, Bo Peh Kyay, Bo Thay Taw, Bo

Kaw Ket and Saw Toe Lah. (Source: KIC)

On 7 September 2001, Tin Win from DKBA fired both heavy and small weapons at Ma Mee's hill farm hut in Wah-ker-ta, Thaton District, Karen State and looted 3,000 Kyat and chickens from her. (Source: KIC)

On 9 September 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 106 came to Toe-teh-kee village, while troops from DKBA with 34 men came to Taw-klaw-kee village and DKBA troops led by Pah Ni Tho came to Baw-naw-kee village. These troops did not allow the villagers to carry with them any food while they were out in the fields tending their cattle (to prevent them from bringing food to insurgents). The troops threatened to kill the villagers if they saw villagers bringing food with them. The SPDC and DKBA troops constantly demand rice, sesame pastes and salt from the villagers in this area. In addition, the troops steal the villagers' chickens at night. (Source: KIC)

To

Date: March 3, 2000

Chairman

———————— Village

Subject: To complete the duty of giving rubber tax.

As the subject mentioned above, I inform you that soon after you received this letter, you needed to find the IB No. 32 military patrol forces and to give 104 pounds of rubber (or) 8, 064 Kyat (eight thousand, sixty-four Kyat ) that your village remained to pay off.

Signed –
(Maj. Ko Ko Aung)
IB No. 32

On 10 September 2001, Pah Ni Tho and Saw Kyin Aung from DKBA burnt down 5 hill farm huts together with some rice and paddy at Ka-wah-ta village, Thaton District, Karen State. The hut owners were; Pah Pyauk, Pah Maw Bi, Pah Kya, Saw Htun Tin and Naw Po Sway Let. (Source: KIC)

On 10 September 10 2001, Ko Ko Naing from SPDC LIB 313 and Ti Kyu from DKBA arrested Klaw-ta villager Saw Po Lah and forced him to show them the KNU's position. The villager could not show them these places and so he ran away. In retaliation, troops from SPDC LIB 101 and Pah Ni Tho went to Baw-naw-khee area, Thaton District, Karen State and destroyed hill farm huts and paddy. In addition, the troops fired heavy weapons at more distant hill farms. On the same day,

the troops seized 40 villagers from Htee-pah-doh-hta village and Yo-kla village and forced them to clear landmines. Five porters escaped from the troops when they arrived in Yo-kla village. (Source: KIC)

On 13 September 2001,troops from SPDC LIB 106, DKBA Pah Ni Tho and Sein Kaw came to Su-kee place, Thaton District, Karen State and burnt down three hill farm huts of villagers: (1) Ti Kyaw, (2) Saw Heh Htoo and (3) Saw Maung Hu. In addition, the troops set up camp in the farms and destroyed paddy in the fields completely. On the same day, the troops came to Su-kee village and burnt down 2 houses of villagers Saw Maung Nu and Saw Maung Hu. The troops looted all household items from villager Saw Maung Hu. (Source: KIC)

On 17 September, 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 313, Led by commander Ko Ko Naing came to Wah-tho-kla village, Thaton District, Karen State and looted medicines and other items from villager Naw Tu (F). (Source: KIC)

On 20 September 2001, troops from DKBA led by Maung Kyi Khaing came to Taw-klaw-kee village in Bilin township and looted merchandize from a shop worth 3,000 Kyat. (Source: KIC)

On 25 September 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 7, led by company commander Myint Htwe, shot at Ler-ka-der villagers Pah Tet Nyet and Maung Nu at Poo Klay Pa's farm in Thaton District, Karen State, without reason. Pah Tet Nyet's leg was broken while Maung Nu was able to escape. After this, these troops came to Ler-ka-der village and threatened the villagers that they themselves would be shot if the information about the shootings spread. (Source: KIC)

On 27 September 2001, U Aung Maung, a member of SPDC, who was the village head of Ka-daing-ti village, Bilin Township ordered Htaw-klaw-khee village, Thaton District, Karen State to pay 10,000 Kyat monthly as porter fees and also threatened that the villagers would be punished if the village failed to give this money. (Source: KIC)

On 28 September 2001, Moe Jo and Hsa Lay Wah from DKBA came to Nya-po-khee village, Bilin town-ship, Thaton District, Karen State and took away all items from the house of Pu Kyaw Kloo and Naw Kyaw Hsa and burned down the houses later. In addition, they planted land mines at the foot of coconut trees.(Source: KIC)

On 29 September 2001, DKBA troops led by Moe Jo, alias Pah Ni Tho, came to Paw-ta-plaw area, Bilin township, Thaton District, Karen State and burned down all paddy field huts they found. They also burned all paddy field huts found while passing from Paw-ta-plaw to Kyo-waing village. The troops also planted landmines on the paths going to villagers' paddy fields at La-kyo-kho mountain. (Source: KIC)

On 4 October 2001, troops from DKBA Pa Ni Tho unit, combined with troops from SPDC LIB 106, came into Khaw-po-pleh village, Thaton District, Karen State and extorted from the villagers a pig worth 13,000 Kyat, 5 baskets of rice and 3,500 Kyat. On 5 October 2001, these troops came to search the house of the Christian pastor of Khaw-po-pleh and looted 130,000 Kyat of donation money and all items found. In addition, they arrested villager Saw Bleh Say M, 26, son of Saw Maung Tin, without any reason. They shot at him wounding him seriously. On October 10, 2001, these troops burned down a villager's paddy field hut and one bullock cart. (Source: KIC)

On 5 October 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 101, led by second lieutenant Thant Tit with DKBA troops came to Pwa-hgaw village, Thaton District, Karen State and demanded 4 villagers to serve as porters, and a basket of rice, a Viss of chicken and a bottle of liquor. (Source: KIC)

On 6 October 2001, Thaw Mana and Maung Lone from DKBA burned down at Lay-taw-plot the villagers' paddy field huts. The huts were owned by Tee Kazer, Po Net, Nyunt Lwin and Win Kyi of Ta-thoo-khee village, and Tee Po Lat of Pwa-hgaw village in Bilin township, Thaton District, Karen State. (Source: KIC)

On 12 October 2001, column commander Maung Maung Aung from SPDC LIB 7, came to Kyaw-kay-khee village, Thaton District, Karen State and extorted 2 chickens, 3 bottles of liquor, one package of candles, half a Viss of sugar and 3 pots of fermented brew from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 19 October 2001, a unit of DKBA came to Toe-teh-khee village, Thaton District, Karen State, and shot at the house of villager Saw Pah Maung but the family was able to escape without any casualities. (Source: KIC)

**Situation in Nyaunglebin District**

In a field report on the Situation of the villagers in the Nyaunglebin District from 1/6/2000 to 31/5/2001, KORD reported the following:

"There are 3 townships in Nyaunglebin district: Kyauk Kyi, Mon and Shwe Kyin,and three regions: mountainous, the area between plain land and the mountains (called the sloping area) and plain land area. Villagers living in the mountainous region earn their living by cultivating paddy using slash and burn agriculture. A few of them also cultivate paddy using the wet farming system. The majority of villagers living in the plain land area and the sloping area earn their living by cultivating paddy using the wet farming system. Some have other sources of livlihood, such as small trading businesses, cutting bamboo and selling it, panning for gold powder, planting and growing betel leaf/ betel nut fruits, and growing other crops to sell such as sugar cane, tobacco, water melon and other vegetables. Due to constant SPDC activity in these areas since the middle of 2000, villagers have faced many

difficulties. Houses, villages, plantations of paddy and other crops have all been destroyed by SPDC action. Moreover, to avoid the SPDC troops villagers have had to constantly flee from place to place again and again throughout the year. There they live in constant worry and fear, facing shortages of food, medicine, schooling for their children, etc. Many villagers living in the mountainous regions have had to leave their own land and flee to refugee camps.

As for the villagers living in the plain land and the sloping land they have had to face killing, forced portering, extortion, relocation, and torture by SPDC troops. In addition they have to pay different kinds of taxes, contribute labor and give food to the military base in the front line area. From June 2000 to June 2001 local people report that 47,229,868 kyats were taken from the villagers by the SPDC. In addition, 121 rice barns, 879 baskets of paddy, and 2409 tins of rice were either eaten or destroyed by SPDC troops. Many domestic animals and other household goods were also taken.

**SPDC and DKBA troops in the area**

In order to wipe out KNU and KNLA resistance activities the SPDC sent many battalions under the control of division (66) to the area, including troops from Sa Ka Kah (3) military control center No. (3) and No. (10). As of June 2001 the SPDC has increased many battalions under the control of No. (44) division. These front line troops have largely ceased from burning and destroying villages, paddy plantations, paddy and rice, but they continue to confiscate food and any other belongings of the villagers. But instead of destroying paddy or villages the troops have used new tactics, such as setting up temporary camps near plantations or villages so that villagers are not able to continue staying close to their plantations and are not able to work in their fields. The troops usually choose to camp near the fields when it is time to clear the land, cut down the trees for new paddy plantations, cut and clear the weeds in the plantations, and at harvest time.

**The following are a list of SPDC troops and troop leaders active in the area:**

**(A) Shwe Kyin township area.**

- No. (33) division controls troop tactical strategy command No. (333), commander col: Tin Hla controls battalion LIB - 120 / 76/ 96.

LIB - 120, commander - Major Kyaw Than Htun.

IB - 76 battalion commander, Major Kyaw Win 4 columns are under the two battalions -

DKBA brigade No. (333), commander officer Pah Bi also controlls two battalions. Tha Ka Hsa Pa officer Pah Say Paw.

**(B) Mon township area**

IB - 7, column No.(1), column commander officer San Myint. No. (2) column, commander Main Oo.

IB - 26, column No. (1), commander Major Khin Maung Cho. Column No.(2), commander major Kyaw Zwa.

IB - 26, commander officer Htun Shwe (Saw Tay Der base camp).

IB - 39, column No. (1), commander major Aung Soe/ intelligent officer Kyaw Khaing.

IB -38, commander major Khin Htun.

LIB - 349/ 59/ 60 and guerilla troops, commander officer Tin Hla.

**(C). Kyauk-Kyi township area.**

Military control center - 10 and it under their control - tactical strategy command No.(3) and under them battalions - LIB -368/ 362.

LIB - 362 - battalion commander Col: Khin Maung, second commander lieutenant Col: Kyaw Main Oo, Column (1) commander lieutenant Col Khin Myint.

LIB - 368 - battalion commander lieutenant Col: Myo Hla, second battalion commander major Soe Than Aung, Column (1) commander lieutenant Col: HLaing Myo Aung, Column (2) commander major Kyaw Zan Oo, Company (1) commander captain Min Min Zaw, Company (2) commander lieutenant Col: Min Ko. (Source: KORD)

**List of Incidents in Nyaunglebin District**

On 10 February 2001, Maw Kheh Tha Per Kho village in Mon Township was asked to provide 50 visses of pork to the soldiers of IB-26 for curry. Again on 13 Feb,2001, IB-26, column No. 1 and 2 asked the Maw Kheh Thar Per Kho to provide15 visses of pork and 3 visses of chickens for their soldiers. (Source: KORD)

Since March 1 2001, SPDC troop LIB-13 under control of No. 33 military division has entered the Doo Pa Leh, Htee Blah and Hsaw Oh Hta village tracts in Shwe Kyin township and caused destruction. During their activity in the area they burnt down 7 barns with paddy inside, including: (1) Saw Pah Heh's, containing 130 baskets of paddy (2) Saw Maw Doo's, 70 baskets of paddy (3) Saw Hso Gay Heh's, 30 baskets (4) Naw Soe Yu's, 40 baskets (5) Saw Maw Per's, 10 baskets (6) Saw Day Bu's, 40 baskets (7) and Naw Eh Gay', was containing 50 baskets of paddy. Therefore a total of 370 baskets of paddy from 7 households were burnt down. The SPDC troop also took 50 tins of white rice that the villagers were hiding, and burned 11 new paddy fields. (Source: KORD)

On 7 March 2001, SPDC's troops which operating in Htee-blah and Doo Par Leh areas burnt down seven paddy barns of the villagers in Htee-blaha and Doo Par Leh village. The barn owners were; (1) Saw Pah Wah, a barn with 30 baskets of paddy, (2) Saw Maung Du, a barn with 70 baskets of paddy; (3) Saw Hso Heh, a barn with 30 baskets of paddy; (4) Naw Hsa Yu, a barn with 40 baskets of paddy, (5) Saw Day Bu, a barn with 40 baskets of paddy; (6) Naw Eh Hgay, a barn with 50 baskets of paddy, and (7) Saw Maung Thein, a barn with 10 baskets of paddy. (Source: CIDKP)

On 17 March 2001, SPDC troops burnt and destroyed 13 villagers' ricefields. The ricefields belong to a group of villagers who are hiding in the jungle in Kler Lwee Htoo District. They also looted the villagers' belongings, estimated to be worth 350,000 Kyat. (Source: CIDKP)

On 1st April 2001, SPDC's troops from IB 73, demanded 5 bullock carts and 50 villagers from Ma-lar-daw village to carry military supplies to Saw-tay-doe village. (Source: CIDKP)

On 10 April 2001, the SPDC IB- 96 company (2) second commander Win Myint Thein extorted K. 15,000 from the villagers from 3 villages of Blay Blaw Soe, Mae Pri Hta and Htee Pa Doh in Shwe Kyin township. (Source: KORD)

On 19 May 2001, the SPDC troop LIB-440 ordered 6 villages in Mee Taing Daw village group, Mon Township, to each provide K. 198,000 for lumber, 3000 thatches for roofing, 10 cubic foot of sand, 440 bamboos (big), 16 nos. of 10 square foot of wall of bamboo matting. Villagers were told to bring all those things at Ywa Kan Lan, where they would be used to construct the battalion head quarters. Officer in-charge for the construction was a division intelligence officer, G-1 Min Nyunt. Following this, the same battalion LIB-440, officer Mya Htway ordered villages in the T'kot Bwa village tract to provide the following: 667 bamboos (big), 50 nos of 10 square foot of wall of bamboo, 5000 thatches for roofing, 34 nos of logs of 10 foot length, 34 nos of logs of 14 foot, 34 nos of logs about 10 tans, 13 piles of 10 square foot of sand, 10 square of stone, 14167 bricks. (Source: KORD)

On 26 May 2001, LIB-11 entered Mae Ka Ti village, Shwe Kyin Township and destroyed a primary school building. On 9 June, this troop arrived in Blay Blaw Kyoe and began searching for villagers. Because of the continuing SPDC activity, the villagers had flee in order to avoid the SPDC's soldiers. Now there are 500 villagers from 90 families who are short of food. At the same time villagers from Lo Khee village tract are facing food shortages as well. (Source: KORD)

On 9 June 2001, some 20 troops of DKBA, led by Maung Ni, Eh Kaw Htoo and Bay Pauk came into Ta-na-khee area, Mon township and extorted 3 pots, 4 machetes and a basket of rice from a paddy field hut owned by villager Naw Ku Htoo Pa. (Source: KIC)

On 9 June 2001, SPDC troops came to Blay-blaw-daw village, Shwe-gyin township, Nyaunglebin District, Karen State and extorted from villagers (1) Ba Soe, 2 baskets of seed paddy, (2) Ba Aye, 2 baskets of seed paddy, (3) Maung Nu, 2 baskets of seed paddy and (4) Min Zaw, 1 basket of seed paddy. (Source: KIC)

On 22 June 2001, troops from SPDC IB 73 ordered Ma-lar-daw village, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State to take 30 sacks of rice from Ter-ler-day villagers which 15 of the rice sacks would be used as the food for the army and the remaining 15 sacks were ordered to the villagers to be sold away. (Source: KIC)

From July 6, 2001 and as of October 11, 2001, the time of this report, troops from SPDC LIB 440 monthly demanded 7,500 Kyat from each ward of Htee-toe-lo village, 198,500 Kyat from Pauk-pei-doe village, 100,000 Kyat from Aung-cha-thar village and 5,000 Kyat from Myo-neh-chaung-kyi village, Nyaunglebin District, Karen State, to construct a military camp. They also demanded 2,000 Kyat from Htee-toe-lo village, 10,200 Kyat from Myo-neh-chaung-kyi village and 850 Kyat from Kyauk-daung-mwe village as runner fees, each month, and 10,200 Kyat per month from Kyauk-daung-mwe village, to pay a salary of 600 Kyat to each member of the anti-insurgent unit. The troops instructed the villagers to hand in the money they demanded monthly to U Aung Pay. These same troops also ordered the villagers to give a bicycle, and 1,000 Kyats each month, to Me-daing-daw camp; 30,000 Kyat to SPDC troops based in Mone camp; 5,000 Kyat to the Mone police unit; 5,000 Kyat to Mone Forest Department; and 8,000 Kyat to department heads U Kyin Maung and U Kyi Khin, and military intelligence man, Zaw Min of Kyauk-kyi town. (Source: KIC)

On 23 September 2001, battalion commander Win Bo Shein of SPDC IB 60 and his troops combined with troops from DKBA led by Maung Ni came into Ler-kla village, Nyaunglebin District, Karen State and shot and wounded villager Saw Moo Kyaw Hai, without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 25 September 2001, at 0600 hours, troops from SPDC LIB 440 came to Eh-thet-soe place and shot at the area and then looted a gun (muzzle loader), a machete, 2 dinner plates and a male sarong from Ler-klah villager, Saw Maung Kyaw. (Source: KIC)

On 9 October 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 351 led by battalion commander Than Aung came to Ler-kla, Saw-kha-doe and Htee-ler-baw-hta villages, Nyaunglebin District, Karen State and shot at villagers without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 18 October 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 42, column 2 came to Htee-day-lay-kho village, Nyaunglebin District, Karen State and shot at 7 families in the village. These were the families of (1) Naw Eh Bi, (2) Khin Maung Win, (3) Ma Hnin New, (4) Naw Plaw, (5) Saw Kah Gyi, (6) Naw Wah Htoo and (7) Naw Bi Kha. Moreover, the troops looted from villagers a total of 16 pots, 24 plates, 26 spoons,

23 blankets, 7 mosquito nets and 2 cassette players. (Source: KIC)

**Situation in Papun district**

KORD reported on 25 June 2001, that the following troops were operating in Pa-pun District: The "Ya Ta Ka, Sa Ba Ha (1)" the south eastern command, military strategy center No (1) based in Pa-pun town and under its control (5) battalions-LIB, No 104 / 340 /434 and IB-19. There are also 3 other battalions directly controlled by the "South Eastern Command," these are LIB-38, and IB-27 / 63.

The name of the commander of No-(1) military strategy Center at that time was Khin Maung Hla and the names of the commanders of the above mentioned battalions at that time were as follow:

LIB -104, commander -Aung Htun.

LIB- 341, commander - Myint tin.

LIB - 349, commander -Myo Min.

LIB - 434, commander -unknown.

LIB - 19, commander -unknown.

LIB - 38, commander -Ba Lin .

LIB - 27 , commander -Aung Myint.

LIB - 63, commander -Thain Htun

**List of Incidents**

On 10 January 2001, SPDC troop LIB- 340, officer Aung Htun Win returned from the front line, entered Kyokhoder village and seized 2 tins of white rice, 2 chickens and one saw. He also took 2 villagers back up to Kawbu, who were later able to escape. (Source: KORD)

On 6 February 2001, six soldiers of SPDC, IB-81, based in Kyaw T'lay Kho entered the market place at Htee P'na Khee and arrested an Indian villager, Kan Keh and forced him to pay 38,000 kyats as a fine. More over they also took from him 2 watches, 1 torch lighter and some food. The same soldiers then demanded that a villager from Mae T'moo village pay 30,000 kyats as a tax for his 3 pairs of cattle. (Source: KORD)

On 6 February 2001, the SPDC, Division-22, LIB-210 led by the battalion commander Myo Min Htun, based in Poung Yay Bu, Sat Kon entered Kan Galay village and shot and ate up 4 goats and burnt down 4 houses of the Indian villagers and forced the owners to relocate to Poung Yay Bu village. (Source: KORD)

On 20 March 2001, troops from SPDC's LIB 20, led by battalion commander Aung Khaing, came to Ya-ke-kee, Maw-ko, Na-ko-kee and Ka-wa-kee villages and demanded 195,427 Kyats, 79 baskets of rice, 478 chickens and 4 ploughs from the villagers. On the same day, the troops fired on the villagers. Three villagers from Ka-wa-kee and Ya-ke-kee were wounded. They were Saw Pah Pleeh, male, 48 yrs., Saw Kyaw Min, male, 25 yrs. and Saw Maung Thu, male, 35 yrs. (Source: CIDKP)

On 22 March 2001, one column of the SPDC troop LIB (341) entered Bu Tho township area, Kaw Pu village tract, Kyaw Nyo Hla village, and destroyed houses in village by pulling them down. They also shot and ate up pigs, chickens, and ducks and burnt down 2 rice barns that contained 720 baskets of paddy rice. (Source:KORD)

On 24 March 2001, troops from LIB 29, led by battalion commander Aung Khaing shot and wounded a villager named Saw Klo Wah, male, 45 yrs., from Ka-wa-kee village (Source: CIDKP)

On 14 April 2001, SPDC troops under the command of Htain Lin, and under the control of (Na Ta Ka) South West Military Command, combined with the DKBA troop, led by officers Baya, Pah Hsi and Kyaw Khaing entered Mae Nyo Hta village in Mae Nyo Hta village tract of Bu-tho township, and shot and ate domestic animals such as pigs, chickens, and ducks and then slept in village. The next day these troops proceeded to Bo Ler village, shot dead a Bo Ler villager they found on the way, namely Saw Be Heh, age (50) and also shot at another villager, son of Saw Be Heh, age (19) who was wounded. Then they entered Bo Ler village, shot and ate up pigs and chickens belonging to the villagers. In addition, these troops took and ate all the white rice they found in houses and then destroyed all the remaining rice and paddy they could not carry with them, by pouring it down on the ground. On the same day these troops then proceeded to Khaw Klah village, where they proceeded to do the same thing, shooting and and eating up pigs and chickens. Moreover, the troop also destroyed white rice and paddy rice they found in houses by burning the rice together with the houses. They also burnt down paddy and rice barns they found in village. (Source: KORD)

On 17 April 2001, in the evening at about 6:30, an officer of the DKBA " Neh Lo" and some of his soldiers entered Htee Baw Kho village and shot at a house, wounding 7 villagers, they were (1) Mu Nya, age 70 (2) Mu Hor (pregnant), age 31 (3) Hsway Toe, age 17 (4) Mu Pwah (pregnant), age 24 (5) Mu Pwah, age 41 (6) Kyaw Htun, age 58 (7) Maw Thain Aung, age 26. Among them Mu Hor was in the worst condition. (Source: KORD)

On 7 June 2001, acting battalion commander Aung Min Lwin of SPDC LIB - 111 summoned the Mae-waing village head in Pa-pun District, Karen State, to collect 210 tins of rice from his villagers. But the villagers were short of rice and the amount of

rice demanded could not be collected. As a result the commanders fixed the price of the rice at 600 Kyats per tin, and collected money from the villagers instead of rice. The villagers were faced with a great problem and had to borrow money to give the army what they demanded. (Source: KIC)

On 16 June 2001, Bo Ba Yo from DKBA ordered each house in Mae-mwe-hta and Thwa-hta villages in Papun District, Karen State to provide him with 25 pieces of thatch while Kler-gi-kho and Tha-per-pah villagers had to provide him with 300 poles of giant bamboo and 200 posts of wooden poles. (Source: KIC)

On 17 June 2001 SPDC division 33, tactical strategy command (332), LIB (111) sent for the village head man of Mae Waingy and ordered him to collect 310 tins of rice from the Mae Waingy villagers. The village head man returned and instructed the villagers to gather the rice, but because they were facing shortages of food, the villagers could not fulfill the demand and the headman had to go back to inform the troops. Therefore instead of rice the battalion commander Aung Min Lwin re-instructed the villagers to provide money. Aung Min Lwin fixed the rate of payment at 600 kyats for 1 tin of rice. Most of villagers did not have enough money and had to borrow money to pay. (Source: KORD)

On August 1 2001, at about 4 am, SPDC troop IB (19) combined with 20 soldiers from the DKBA entered and fired at Kwee Tu villagers, as they ran to escape. After the villagers had run away, the troop looted all the money and belongings of the villagers, and destroyed houses and shops in the market place. (Source: KORD)

On 7 August 2001, about 6:00am, the SPDC local troop of IB (19) entered Toe Thay Der village and burnt down all the houses in the village. (Source: KORD)

On 18 August 2001, SPDC troop division 33 transported food rations from Belin to the front line camps in Mae Way (Mae Waing) area. While they were transporting their rations the soldiers did not allow the villagers from the surrounding villages to go to their paddy farms. Because they were unable to tend to their fields, many were destroyed by animals and overgrown with weeds. In addition the troop forced 30 villagers each day to carry the rice sacks up into the boats and down out of the boats. Most of the paddy farms in Wah Loh Klo and Hsaw Mi Hta villages were destroyed, including 13 paddy farms in Wah Loh Klo and 19 in Mae Way. (Source: KORD)

On 30 September 2001, Thein Zaw from SPDC IB 19 came to Saw-kee village, Papun District, Karen State and looted 3 baskets of rice, a pig, 4 machetes, an axe, 200 Baht, 500 Kyat, 3 Viss of cardamom seed, 3 bags, 3 chickens, a long knife and 300 tablets of medicine from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

## *Situation in Pa-an District*

### Forcible Buying of Paddy

Karen State has some high-yield paddy growing land in townships along main rivers such as Gaing River, Zami river and Attaran River. In Karen State, there are 7 townships in the 2 Districts of Papun and Pa-an, and all townships have paddy growing areas. In some townships, such as Kya-Inn-Seikyi, Myawaddy and Kawkreik townships have both lowland and highland paddy growing farms. Currently the SPDC has control of the lowland area and the Karen State PDC authorities have forced the lowland farmers in all township areas to sell their paddy to the government. In Karen State, the authorities planned to buy about 1.5 million baskets of paddy from farmers at price far below market rates. (Source: HURFOM)

In Kya-Inn-Seikyi Township of Karen State, the soil is not very fertile and the Township authorities have been asked to collect 10 baskets of paddy per acre at low price from farmers. In this township, the authorities force the farmers to sell about 150, 000 baskets of paddy total, and this includes 20, 000 baskets of paddy from each tract. Village tract headmen have to force farmers to sell their paddy in designated paddy buying centers. (Source: HURFOM)

### Fund Collection for SPDC Organizations

The SPDC has also organized a "Veteran *tatmadaw* Members Association", and has allowed this organization to collect funds as they liked. Thus the Veteran Tatmawdaw Members Association has authority to order Township and Village PDC authorities to collect funds on behalf of them. In February, 2001, members of this organization went to Kawkareik township, Karen State and ordered headmen from 8 villages to collect fund. They ordered headmen from Kanni village to collect 45, 000 Kyat, Karit village to collect 30, 000 Kyat, Thayettaw village to collect 45, 000 Kyat, Kaw-lyan village to collect 45, 000 Kyat, Kaw-go village to collect 45, 000 Kyat, Kaw-bein village to collect 45, 000 Kyat, Minywa village to collect 45, 000 Kyat and Kaw-pauk village to collect 45, 000 Kyat respectively. Civilians are forced to provide funds for army and veteran *tatmadaw* members, because the SPDC can not pay for their military commands, battalions' and organization's expenses. (Source:HURFOM)

From February to April 2001, Kya Inn Seikyi Township PDC authorities collected various funds from local civilians throughout the whole township area. Accoring to the orders from village and village tract leaders, these funds were used for their office expenses and other required expenses for celebrating important occasions. In February 2001, the Karen State PDC authorities requested that all townships provide funds to build a hospital in Pa-an city. The State PDC authorities sent an order to Kya-Inn Seikyi township, demanding 200,000 Kyat from the township and also demanding that the headmen in the town quarters and villages provide 2,000- 5,000

Kyat for each town quarter/village. The amount demanded varied, depending on the population in each town quarter or a village. The deadline for payment was February 28, and the authorities ordered the headmen not to fail to pay the set amount.

In March 2001, with a plan to hold "56th Anniversary of Armed Force (Tatmadaw) Day", the most important day for SPDC, the township PDC authorities also collected funds from the civilians by forcing them to buy lottery tickets, at 1,000 Kyat per sheet. The authorities receive about 1 million kyats total from the civilians through selling these tickets. In April, when the traditional New Year Celebration was held, the authorities collected money from the civilians to pay for a dancing group to travel from Rangoon to the township. An order was sent from theTownship authorities to all village headmen, demanding 2,000-5,000 Kyats from each town quarter or village. From this fund collection, the authorities received about 200,000 Kyat total. In March alone, the authorities requested funds twice for the Tatmadaw Day celebration and additional expenses for Songkaram festival. In order to be able to give the set amount on the required date, the headmen forced the civilians to give them money. Some corrupt headmen collected more funds than required. Because of this fund collection, some villages had to pay up to 50,000 kyat within a one-month period. ( Source: HURFOM)

On 20 February 2001, SPDC IB No. (8) company commander Soe Aung forced the villagers from Shwe Yaw Pya village tract to pay porter fees. Each family had to pay K. 100 every month. Sergeant major Tin Soe from IB troop 8 ordered the Kyat Thraw villagers to send 1 person to stay with them in their camp to cut fire wood for them. (Source: KIC)

On 7 April 2001, the DKBA brigade (999) headed by Pah Ber Khar and his followers entered Hlaing Bweh township area, forcing villagers from 3 villages of Mor Taw Kyoe village, Klaw Kyaw village and Paw Ta Ka Kyoe village in Naung Taing village tract to Pay K.1700 for a fine, accusing the villagers of communicating and supporting KNU. The amount breakdown follows. K. 7000 was for Maw Taw Kyoe, K.5000 for Klaw Kyaw village and K.5000 for Paw Ta Ka Kyoe.

On 8 April 2001 the same troop and commander of DKBA (999) Pah Ber Khar entered another area of Win Sein township, in Ka Dah village, giving the same accusation to the villagers that they have been communicating and supporting KNU and extorted K.30,000. He had also threatened the villagers that if they were not able to pay the money they would have to leave their village. (Source: KORD)

On 20 April 2001 DKBA brigade (999), battalion (1) officer Pah Chaw ordered villagers from the villages in Nweh Pa Nya and Htee Pah Reh village tracts in Hlaing Bweh township to give them K. 30,000. When the villagers refused to pay

the amount demanded, the commander Pah Chaw sent his body guard, an officer named Pah No and his soldiers to go to those villages and handle this case. When Pah No and his soldiers got there they ordered the villagers to pay double amount as a punishment. If they refused again to pay, the DKBA said they would burn down all villages mentioned below. Because of this, the villagers had to pay the following amounts:

Nweh Pa Nya villge tract .

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) P' Tu Klaw Plaw village | -K. 60,000 |
| (2) Plaw Nyar Thee village | -K. 60,000 |
| (3) Nya P'tay Khee villag | -K. 60,000 |
| (4) Pee Tu Hta village | -K. 60,000 |
| (5) Htee Mo Hta village | -K. 60,000 |
| (6) Kwee Baw village | -K. 60,000 |
| | **- K. 360,000** |

Htee Pah Reh village tract

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) Htee Pah Reh village | -K. 60,000 |
| (2) Khaw Thu Khee village | -K. 60,000 |
| (3) Htee Mo Kheee village | -K. 60,000 |
| (4) Wah Mi Kla village | -K. 60,000 |
| | **-K 240,000** |

Total (10 villages in 2 village tracts) = K. 600,000 (Source: KORD)

On 24 April 2001, officer Than Nyaing from LIB-106, under control of No-77 Division extorted money from the villagers from Htok Klaw Hta, Lay Kaw Hti, Htee Pha Doh Khee and Kot Poe Hta villages. They asked for K. 5000 and 1 duck from Htok Klaw Hta, K. 2500 and 1 chicken from Lay Kaw Hti, K. 5000 from Htee Pha Doh Khee and K. 5000 from Kot Poe Hta villages and said that these were for the porter fees. (Source: KIC)

On 25 April 2001, a column of the SPDC, division (66), LIB (6), led by battalion commander Aug Soe Win found a Si Pa Day Khee villager, named Saw De To Poe, between T' ri Poe Kwee and Si Pah Day Khee villages and looted all of his money , a total of K. 115,500. More over, the same troop took 2 cooking pots, 2 choppers, 2 blankets, 2 longyies, 2 shirts and 1 tin of rice from Naw Hser Poe of T'ri Poe Kwee village. (Source: KIC)

In May 2001, IB 231 soldiers from the Ywarthit Gone camp on hill number point 350 demanded that villagers from Ywarthit Gone, Angalone and Tatar Gu villages give them betel nut plants, coconut plants and durian plants. Each family from those villages had to give 10 plants. If a village failed to send the full quota of plants, the IB 321 soldiers arrested villagers when they went to Kawkareik and asked the village for a huge amount of ransom for its villagers' release. The camp has about 10-20 soldiers and they have demanded that villages nearby send one person a day to carry water for them and another person to serve as a messenger. The IB 231 has also announced that if the KNLA (Karen National Liberation Army) attacks the camp, several villages in the area will be burnt down. The IB 231 has been demanding each village under its control give 3-4 baskets of rice (a basket weighs 33 kgs) every month. Chicken, vegetables and other supplies were also demanded. (Source: FTUB)

On 2 July 2001, the SPDC troop from LIB-20 of division-77 entered Thu Ka Bee village and shot at the villagers there. After the villagers ran away the troop took 4 baskets of rice, 4 pots, 12 spoons, 3 choppers, 3 woman garments, 2 man garments of Naw Bah Ywa Moo, 5500 kyats, 2 long pants, 1 shirt, 2 chickens of Saw Bu Doh, 3 pots, 18 spoons, 2 choppers, 4 woman garments, 1 pair of woman earring, 4000 kyats, 5 baskets of rice, 3 ducks, 3 chickens, 14 plates of Naw Way Mo.

On 3 July 2001 the SPDC LIB-101 led by the battalion commander Zaw Naing Oo combined with the DKBA Pah Ni Tho arrived at the hut of a ToTe Khee villager, Pah Ket Shee and shot at him. After this the combined troop went to the hut of paddy field of a To Te Khee villager Pah Tu Lu, found and shot at the villagers while they were working in their fields. Some villagers were able to escape but some were captured. Then the troop burnt down the paddy hut. At the same time the troop entered the village and looted animals and household goods from the villagers. ( Source: KIC)

On 3 September 2001, about 35 DKBA troops led by Tin Koe and Pah Beh came to Mae-taw-kee village. They ordered every one to remain in the village and searched the houses. On the same day, the troops came to Noh-ber-baw village and demanded chickens from the villagers. In addition, the troops took with them 6 villagers from Noh-ber-baw, 6 villagers from Mae-taw-kee and 6 villagers from Taw-klaw-kee. (Source:KIC)

On 6 September 2001, troops from column 2 of SPDC LIB 106 came to Toe-the-kee village and shot at the villagers staying in the farm huts. The soldiers then looted 4 chickens and 2 Pyi of rice from villager Saw Pah Tu Lu. (Source: KIC)

From September 27, 2001 to October 1, 2001, a column from LIB 108, led by battalion commander Sein Htun Hla came to Be-ta-ka village, Pa-an District, Karen

State and demanded 37 chickens, 14 ducks, a goat, a dog, 4 baskets of rice, 4 Viss of fish paste, 10 Viss of beetle nuts and 12 coconuts from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

**Situation in Mergui-Tavoy District**

On 4 January 2001, a troop from Burma Army's Infantry Battalion 101, Column No.2 led by Column Commander Kyaw Thet Naing entered Taket village, in Tenasserim Township, Mergui District and shot a buffalo belonging to Saw Htun Pe for their meal. (Source: Unity )

On 5 January 2001 a group of Pye Thu Sit (people's militia group supported by SPDC) led by Ye Win entered Taket village, in Tenasserim township, Mergui District and confiscated some cattle from Saw Hto Gay. After confiscating the cattle the militia leader demanded 30,000 kyat as compensation from the Saw Hto Gay. (Source: Unity)

On January 8, 2001 a group of soldiers led by 2nd Lieutenant Nyi Nyi Soe from Burma Army's Light Infantry Battalion 402 who operated in Ka Mo Thwey area, in the east of Tavoy Town looted properties from villagers in Kler Pu (Nyaungdon). (Source: Unity)

On 8 January 2001, a combined column of IB 101 led by Aung Myint Oo and Kyaw Thet Naing burnt down 7 houses in Wah Thu Hta village, Taket village tract. (Source: Unity)

On 10 January 2001, an unidentified troop of Burmese soldiers entered Panamee (Duyinbinshaun) village, in Palaw township, Mergui district and slaughtered 5 buffaloes belong to Saw Aung Kyi. (Source: Unity)

On 18 January 2001 a troop of 12 men from Burma Army's Light Infantry Battalion 402, led by Company Commander Kyaw Sein Oo destroyed a villager's house in Sa Ta Lone village, Tavoy township, Tavoy District. (Source: Unity)

On July 15, 2001, a column of about 50 SPDC troops led by column commander Maj. Kyi Swun of Column 2, IB 17, under Costal Command, arrived at three Karen villages: 'Ba-wa-pu-law, Htee-si-baw and Pa-lok-pa-taw'. This SPDC army column split into three groups and entered the villages simultaneously, shooting at and then seizing all of the villagers they saw. After the villagers fled, the soldiers broke into the houses of the escaped residents and looted all their home utensils. They also took the residents' livestock, such as chickens, ducks, pigs, buffalo and cows for their food supplies. Then the SPDC army men burned down ten houses belonging to villagers whom they believed had links with KNU Battalion 11. Those residents who fled to safety when the SPDC entered the three villages, have to date been afraid to return. It has been reported that some of them have migrated to other villages in Tennimsarri townships where their relatives live, while others have escaped to the Thai Burmese border area. (Source: ABSDF)

On 2 September 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 556, came to Ka-wah village and demanded an ox worth 35,000 Kyat. (Source: KIC)

On 4 September 2001, Bo Khin Maung from SPDC IB 280, ordered villagers to dismantle all huts inside and outside the village, as the military intended to use the area for No.12 session of military training. If any huts were found still standing, the villagers were threatened that they would be put in jail for 2 years. To maintain the security of No.12 training session and IB 280, villagers from Pin-cha and Pa-saw-oo villagers were forced to serve as guards. (Source: KIC)

On 10 September 2001, Major Hla Htun from SPDC IB 280 and No.12 military training session demanded 10,000 seeds of betel nut worth 8,000 Kyat from villagers from Pa-saw-o village tract. (Source: KIC)

On 30 September 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 556, led by battalion commander Htun Than came to Ka-weh village, Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State and beat up villagers: (1) Saw Bo (M-50), (2) Saw Poo (M-36), (3) Saw Po Nu (M-37), (4) Saw Leh Per (M-45), (5) Saw Per Ler (M-18), (6) Saw James (M-45), (7) Saw Hla Thein Gyi (M-45), (8) Saw Wah (M-20), (9) Saw Paw Koo (M-20). The army then demanded that they hand over one firearm. (Source: KIC)

**Situation in Dooplaya District**

On 26 February 2001, at 1:00 pm, the SPDC LIB - 549, column No. (1), Col: Kyi Lay and his 50 soldiers entered and burnt down 3 paddy plantations of the Mae Ta Ler villagers, in Kya-Inn township. The destroyed fields belonged to Naw Yo age (48), Pah Lah Hser, age (30), and Pah Li Leh, age (30). The soldiers also burnt down one paddy hut with 6 baskets of paddy and 2 tins of white rice inside. (Source: KORD)

On 4 September 2001, at 6:30 am about 50 troops from SPDC IB 232, led by column commander Win Naing Oo, came into Tha-Byay-gon village, Win Yae township, Dooplaya District, Karen State and took ducks, sardines, ebilly, onions, cheroots, and 6,000 kyats from the villagers. In addition the troops also took two villagers, U Hla Myint, 45 and U Thaung Myint Po to serve as porters for 3 days. (Source: KIC)

On 15 September 2001, A unit of SPDC troops from LIB 549 Column (2) extorted 19,000 Kyat from Theh-Pya-Ehanny villager Saw Paw Htoo and 2 baskets of rice from other villagers in Kya-inn township, Dooplaya District, Karen State. In addition those troops also extorted 100,000 Kyat from a villager from Ye-Lai village, Win-Ye township, while he was returning from selling his cattle. (Source: KIC)

On 15 October 2001, a column of DKBA troops from battalion 999 and 907, under

the control of SPDC clashed with KNLA troops. After this the troops burned down 7 paddy field huts and shot and killed 18 cattle near Htee-moo-hta village in Kaw-ka-reik Township, Dooplaya District, Karen State. Moreover, they also seized 11 Noh-po villagers, 4 Mae-ka-neh villagers and 6 Htee-moo-hta villagers as porters. (Source: KIC)

# 5.5 Situation in Karenni State

### *Looting by the army*

On August 14 2001, a Company of Burmese troops from LIB No. 531 robbed a group of cattle traders led by Maung Shwe from Honpone village, southern Shan State, between Mawthido and Htukweiso villages. The Burmese troops seized all cattle, food and the total of 120,000 Kyat in cash from the traders. (Source: KNAHR)

**Unfair Levies and Taxes**

On 25 June 2001, the Burmese commander Maung Maung Htway of LIB No. 531, based at Loilin Lay village, Loikaw Township ordered villages in Loilin Lay and Hteesakah village tracts to provide them with 3 logs and one ready-made chair each. Maung Maung Htway said that he received an order from his higher-ranking commander ordering him to get these items from locals and send them to him in order to use at his office. (Source: KNAHR)

The Burmese troops of LIB No. 531 based at Loilin Lay, in cooperation with the KNPLF are currently re-establishing their military base after the recent attacks by Karenni guerrillas. As a result of this, the KNPLF commander (name unknown) demanded villages in Teelon, Hteesakah and Loilin Lay village tracts to supply them with 3 visses of 2" nail and 50 sheets of (108" long of 2" x 1") planks of wood without fail at the latest by July 10 2001. (Source: KNAHR)

In 23 August 2001, a new military base of the KNPLF (SPDC-backed cease-fire armed group) was established at Maw Thidoh village. At this base establishment, the KNPLF commander Seimonel ordered villages in Moe Soe village tract to supply building materials such as posts and bamboo which were needed for the base. Each household from villages in Daw Rawku village tract was also ordered by the same commander to provide 2 pieces (10-feet-long) of bamboo sheet. (Source: KNAHR)

On 13 September 2001, villagers living in Pasaung, Kwet Thit, Kemapyu and Namkin were ordered by the Burmese commander Maj. Aung Aung from IB No. 135, to provide them with 1250 wood post, 3200 bamboo poles and 60 bamboo sheets for a new military base in Pasaung. In addition, villagers were ordered to bake 25,000 bricks by the troops for the new base building. (Source: KNAHR)

# 5.6 Situation in Mon State

## *Land Confiscation*

**Land Confiscation in Ye Township for Army**

In the second week of April 2001 IB No. 61, which is currently based in Ye Township of Mon State, confiscated land owned by Mon villagers, in the eastern part of Ye township area, in order to build a new military base. Approximately 27 villagers from Kyaungywa and Ah-dein villages lost land worth about 81.6 million Kyat, about 153 acres of land, including land with fruit trees. The army from IB No. 61 under orders from the *Southeast Command* also confiscated plantation lands between two brooks in the eastern part of the township. None of the landowners were given any compensation, and villagers who lost both land and valuable trees have no way to protest. The area is close to an NMSP controlled area, as one of the SPDC's tactics is to move its troops and bases closer and closer to NMSP bases to discourage Mon troops from breaking the cease-fire agreement. As a rule, whenever the *Southeast Command* chooses a place to deploy a new military battalion, they never choose any site in the large area of uninhabited forestland in Mon State. Instead they choose land cultivated with rubber or fruit trees so that they can earn revenue from these crops. The Burmese Army since 1997 has instructed battalion commanders that it is their responsibility to seek funds for the own battalion and to support the soldiers. Because of this, whenever the army confiscates land, they chose valuable land with fruit and rubber trees in Mon State. (Source: HURFOM)

## *Forced Sale of Crops*

**Situation of Paddy Buying in Mon State**

On 30 April 2001 HURFOM reported that in Burma, state monopoly policy allows the government to buy agricultural crops, including paddy, beans, sesame and rubber at low prices from the farmers throughout the country, and then sell these crops at a high price to foreign countries. In this way, the regime gets the profit from the crops, not the farmers. Every year farmers are forced to sell one third to one half of their crops to regime's "Agricultural Products Trading Department" in their designated crop buying centers. The regime sets prices at 2 - 3 times less than the market price.

In Mon State, there are 10 townships total in two districts, Moulmein District and Thaton District, and most local inhabitants are paddy farmers. In Mon State alone, the SPDC authorities in Moulmein planned to buy about 3.5 millions baskets of paddy from the farmers in the 2000-2001 paddy buying season. This paddy season went from December 2000 until March 2001.

Traditionally, in farms in Mon State farmers use natural fertilizers, however because of increasing demands from the government for more crop production,

now they are also forced to buy factory made fertilizers. As one farmer explained:

*"The government does not give us enough fertilizer. They give only 2 sacks of fertilizers for my ten acres of lands. It is not enough. To have better crop production, we have to provide about 3 sacks of fertilizers for one acre of lands. And, we could get about 50 baskets per acre. So, besides a little fertilizer provided from the government, we had to buy a lot of fertilizers in markets. The prices of fertilizers are quite expensive. We have to provide three types of fertilizers in our farms, and they are at priced at about 2, 600 Kyat, 4, 000 Kyat and 2, 000 Kyat respectively."*

Currently farmers in Mon State, Karen State and Tenasserim Division have become heavily reliant on factory made fertilizers in order to produce enough crops to cover the amounts they're forced to sell to the paddy buying centers and for their own needs. As government policies cause economic conditions to deteriorate, many young people in lower Burma have migrated to Thailand looking for better jobs. Every year, many thousands of people migrate into Thailand and seek work. The result of this migration is that the farmers in lower Burma now face a labour shortage and labour cost have become higher and higher. Although the authorities receive reports about the hardships facing farmers, they continue to force them to sell the set amount of paddy and other crops. If the farmers can not afford to provide the required amount, they can be arrested and detained in police stations until they promise to sell the set amount of paddy. Sometimes, when family heads are detained in cells, the authorities force the remaining family members to sell the paddy before they will release the prisoner. (Source: HURFOM)

**Situation in Mudon Township**

Among the ten townships in Mon State, Mudon township has the largest paddy growing lands and most Mon ethnic farmers in this township are constantly forced to sell a set amount of paddy to the regime. There are a total of 88, 795 acres of land in Mudon township, about 30, 623 acres are used for 2- season paddy crops cultivation,which means paddy can be grown in rainy season and in dry season with water from a dam in the township. In this township, there are 4 town sections and 42 villages total. The township authorities have set up 12 paddy buying centers throughout the township area, each with a paddy buying committee. The managers of these committees are appointed by Township, village headmen and local militia leaders. The Agricultural Products Trade Department informs the paddy buying committee how many baskets of paddy from each village they need to buy. In Mudon township, because the lands have comparably good soil, the authorities are instructed to buy 15 baskets of paddy per acre from farmers. The authorities planned to buy about 1. 3 million baskets of paddy from this township area alone. Since December 2000, the authorities have attempted to buy paddy from all farmers in the township. Normally, after harvest, most farmers carry their

paddy crops home to their villages. However, in this (April 2001) paddy buying season, township PDC authorities instructed village leaders to force residents to sell a quota of paddy at the designated buying center before returning to their village. In February 2001 the authorities paid only 350 Kyat per basket of paddy, while the market price was about 850 Kyat per basket.

**Situation in Thanbyuzayat Township**

In Thanbyuzayat Township, there are 4 town quarters and 38 villages total in its administrative area. In this township, the Agricultural Products Trade Department, has also set up 6 paddy-buying centers and appointed a manager for each center. By coordinating with local village headmen and militia troops, the center managers force the farmers to sell the set amount of paddy to the designated paddy-center. In this township, the authorities planned to buy about 500,000 baskets of paddy.

**Situation in Chaungzon Township**

Chaungzon Township has good soil because it is situated on an island, west of Moulmein. In this township alone, the authorities tried to buy about 700, 000 baskets of paddy total. As in other areas, the township PDC authorities went to every village and instructed the village headmen to force the farmers to sell the set amount of paddy to designated paddy-buying centers. The last deadline of selling paddy was in January 2001. After this deadline, some farmers who had yet to sell their paddy to the government, were arrested and made to promise that they would sell their paddy to the authorities.

In this township, the authorities paid different prices for different types of paddy. In their paddy-buying center, their managers have bought *Nga-sein (local name)* paddy for 380 Kyat per basket, *Ae-ma-hta* paddy for 360 Kyat per basket, *Me-done* paddy for 350 Kyat per basket. However, the market prices for these sorts of paddy were between 800 and 900 Kyat per basket.

**Situation in Kyaikmayaw Township**

Kyaikmayaw Township, is situated far from the seacoast and has less paddy cultivation land than other townships in Mon State which are located on the ocean. Since December 2000, Township PDC authorities have attempted to buy about 348, 000 baskets of paddy in this township, by forcing farmers to sell their paddy at the designated paddy buying center. Initially, the authorities planned to buy the entire amount of paddy within December and January. However in the beginning of January 2001, the authorities could buy only 30% of their total requirement of paddy, leading them to try and force village headmen and farmers to sell paddy to designated paddy buying centers as quickly as possible. In addition, the authorities also forced teachers, police, and medical workers in villages to assist them in collecting paddy from farmers in villages. In an order to police stations and police officers dated on 15th January 2001, Township PDC General Secretary mentioned that “in 2000-2001 paddy buying season, although Kyaikmayaw planned to buy

about 348,000 baskets of paddy, but until January 13, we could receive 129, 482 baskets of paddy, and so it was about 37.26% of the total. Therefore, our Township was recognized *(by Mon State PDC)* as a least paddy buying township among 10 township and we would like to request your cooperation with managers in paddy buying centers, concerned village headmen to get full amount of paddy from farmers as we planned."

As is evident from this letter, Township PDC authorities also used the local police force to threaten farmers to sell their paddy . The authorities also wrote letters to civil servants in villages reminding them that it is their responsibility to encourage farmers to sell their paddy. Below is a translation of an order given to the civil servants of a village in Kyaikmayaw township.

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**Translation of order**

General Administration Department Kyaikmayaw Township - Kyaikmayaw Town

Letter No. 1/1 - 2/ Ye - 1

Date: January 9, 2001

To All government servants

——— Town Quarter/ Village Kyaikmayaw Township

Subject: To sell the set amount of paddy from Town Quarter/ Village

Reference: Letter from Mon State General Administration Department on December 27th December, Letter No. 5/2 - 4/ Ye 5.

1. As decided by Kyaikmayaw PDC, we planned to buy 348, 000 baskets of paddy from the whole township area, but we could buy only 105,137. 5 baskets until January 8, 2001, and so it was only 30.21% of the total required paddy.

2. From your village, although we planned to buy 8000 baskets of paddy, we received only 2059 baskets.

3. Therefore, to buy the remaining amount of paddy, you must meet with farmers and urge them to sell the set amount of paddy. You must put in your mind that paddy-buying activity is a very important work to implement. We also inform you to please come *(to Township office)* every Monday and report about your implementation and progress *(of paddy buying activity).*

Signed -

(on behalf of)

Township Chairman

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After sending this order, the authorities also instructed the concerned village headmen to send the remaining amount of paddy to the buying centers right away.

One Mon farmer reported that:

*"According to instruction by Township authorities to Than-ga-laung village in township dated on January 15, 2001, that village had to sell about 8000 baskets of the remaining paddy from their village within two weeks. In the instruction, it mentioned that the village must sell and the center must get 3200 baskets of paddy on January 15 (40% of the total), 4800 baskets on January 20 (60% of the total), 6800 baskets of paddy on January 25 (85% of the total) and 8000 baskets on January 30 (100% of the total). At the below of the order, the authorities also forced the village chairman and other members to sign for promise that they would try to implement according to instruction."*

In this way, the village authorities in Kyaikmayaw township have forced the farmers through their village headmen to sell their all paddy before the end of January. Farmers who could not afford to 'sell' the set amount of paddy to the authorities, also had to sell their land, cattle, and other belongings in order to buy enough paddy to meet the required quota.

**Situation in Paung Township**

In Paung Township of Mon State, the authorities planned to buy about 800, 000 baskets of paddy because this township has very large paddy farms and the land and soil quality are quite good. Thus, the authorities instructed the farmers in this township area to sell paddy at a rate of 16 baskets of paddy per acre to designated paddy buying centers. At the beginning of December 2000, when the authorities started buying paddy in this township, the paddy price in the area at market was very low and so the authorities also reduced their buying price at the paddy buying center. In the market, the paddy price was about 600 Kyat per basket in December 2000, whereas it had formerly been 800-1000 Kyat per basket. The authorities paid 250 Kyat per basket. Although the farmers were not satisfied with this price, nobody dared to complain. If the farmers in this township area refused to sell paddy to government designated paddy buying centers, they were prohibited from husking their paddy. Normally in Mon State, whenever farmers needed to husk paddy to get rice for their own food or to sell, they have to ask permission from the village headman. Without permission, paddy-husking mills do not dare husk paddy for any farmers because it is against the Township administration regulations. (Source: HURFOM)

## *Unfair Levies and Taxes*

**Kyaikmayaw Township**

From January to March, 2001, in the process of building a tarmac Kyakikmayaw - Kyunywa motor road, the authorities have conscripted forced labour and also

collected a large amount of money from civilians in Kyaikmayaw township. In February and March, the authorities instructed all town and village PDC leaders to collect about 5000 Kyat per household from the 4880 households, which are in both towns and villages, close to the motor road. The authorities also stated that all funds had to be collected by May 2001. (Source: HURFOM)

**Fund Collection for *Tatmadaw* Members**

In February 2001, some military battalions and members of the *Tatmadaw* (Burmese Army) Veterans Association have gotten funds by collecting money directly from civilians and also by collecting a betting tax from legal gambling in Mon State and Karen State. In the 1st and 2nd weeks of February, 2001, SPDC Navy battalion No. 37, which is based on an island in Chaung-zon township, ordered every village headman in the township to officially allow gambling. As there are currently about 30 gambling places in this area, the navy battalion is able to collect a betting tax of 2000 Kyat per day from each place, thus making a total of 60,000 Kyat per day. Actually, according to traditional and customary laws, gambling is illegal in Burma. However, the army and navy promote gambling in order to collect the betting tax from gamblers. (Source: HURFOM)

In February 2001, IB No. 24, which is based in Thaton township, Mon State, also ordered village headmen from 5 villages in Township including: Yinnyein-taung, Myout-kwin, Phu-ba, Ywa-tan-shay and Kyone-hor-kwin, to collect funds from farmers. The commander instructed the village headmen to collect 100 Kyat per acre of land from these villages. As there are about 17, 000 of paddy land in the area, the army received about 1.7 million Kyat for their battalion fund. (Source: HURFOM)

**Fund Collection for Development Projects**

The government claims to be improving Mon State, through various development projects, such as road construction, bridge construction, digging water canals and repairing roads. The reality however, is that the SPDC does not allocate any funds for most projects, but instead orders the township or village authorities to collect funds from local people and implement the projects in with their own labor. Currently there are two types of development projects in Mon State. The first are small scale projects such as building short roads, or a small bridge near a village, etc. The SPDC considers these 'self-help' programs and villagers are made to pay the full cost. The second type of project are infrastructure projects, such as building large bridges or constructing railways. For these types of projects, the SPDC has allocated some funds, but as these are usually inadequate, they also have to collect money from people throughout all of Mon State. The Mon State PDC has instructed all township authorities to implement self-help development programs, with at least two to three projects in each township. As a result of this order, most township authorities have planned to construct roads from town to village or from one village to another. There is no system or rules governing the collection of funds for these projects. (Source: HURFOM)

**Situation in Paung Township**

When township authorities planned to build a village library in Thabyu-chaung village, the village PDC collected 100 Kyat from each family every month. This fund collection has been occuring since October 2000, and has gone on for six months. The village has about 700 households and every month, the authorities get about 70,000 Kyat. (Source: HURFOM)

**Situation in Chaung-zon Township**

In the Balu Island where Chaung-zon township is located, there are many Mon villages and since 2000, the authorities have planned a project to build motor roads to connect them all. In order to implement this project, the Township PDC has continuously forced the village PDC authorities to collect funds from the local people. On February 10, 2001, a Township PDC authority, Lt. Col. Thaw Zin arrived in Mu-done village and met with the village chairman. Previously, he had instructed the village chairman to build a road from Mudone to Dawn-uu and so the commander asked the village chairman about the progress of the road construction. The chairman explained that it had been difficult to get funds from the villagers, so they could complete 5% of the total road construction. The commander was not satisfied with this report and replied that he did not want to hear about the village leader's difficulties, but wanted to see the road construction completed. He further stated that if the collected funds were not enough, the chairman himself would have to pay for all costs. Then, on the same day, the commander went to Bo-net village and also asked the about the progress of the road construction quota for their village. The village leaders in Bo-net also explained to him that because the village was poor it had been difficult to get the set amount of funds as quickly as they had expected, and that they had only been able to implement less than 10% of road construction. The Commanders was angered by this and told them if they could not collect the set amount of funds from the villagers, the village leaders needed to pay instead. (Source: HURFOM)

**Situation in Ye Township**

As there has been insurgent activity in many parts of Ye Township's rural areas, the SPDC has put much emphasis on development projects that increase communications, and transportation. The Mon State PDC has been ordered to implement projects that support better communications but they have not been given any funds to do so by the central government. Therefore, the town and village PDC authorities have to collect a large amount of money from local people to fund these projects. At the beginning of 2001, Ye Township authorities continued their plans to build a 6 mile tarmac motor road, from Ye town to Azin village, a fishing port in the township. The construction of this road was started in 2000 and the authorities planned to build only 3000 feet every year, collecting funds from residents in three village tracts, Azin, Duya and An-din, which are close to motor road. Last year, the authorities collected 300,000 Kyat from each tract and

in February 2001, they collected a further 500, 000 Kyat from the three village tracts. (Source: HURFOM)

# 5.7 Situation in Pegu Division

## *Forced Sale of Crops*

### Forced Selling of Beans and Paddy

Pegu Division stiuated in the northeastern part of Rangoon, is well know for its large paddy fields, and the area produces a lot of paddy and other crops. In Pegu Township, Thanat-pin Township and Wor Township, farmers are able to grow beans after the paddy harvest in November/December. Traditionally, the farmers in Pegu Division grow paddy at the beginning of rainy season in May/June like other farmers in many parts of lower Burma and then after the harvest, the farmers also grow different types of beans such as *Pae-lun, Pae-ti,* and *Mat-pae*, and harvest these two months later. Therefore, in Pegu Division the SPDC authorities have not only created paddy buying centers in every township to buy paddy from farmers, but they have also set up bean buying centers. When the authorities buy beans from the local farmers, the bean price is three times less than the market price, as is the price they pay for paddy bought from farmers. The authorities also bought nearly half of the bean crop from farmers. Normally, bean-growing farmers can produce about 5-6 baskets of beans from one acre of land, in Januray and February 2001 the authorities forced farmers to sell them 3 baskets of beans per acre in January and February, 2001. Designated bean buying centers were set up where the farmers had to sell their beans at 2200 Kyat per basket, while the market price was up to 4500-5000 Kyat per basket . The authorities order traders not buy any beans from farmers until the end of March. This is the deadline by which the famers have to sell the required amount of beans to the SPDC. If they have sold the required amount of beans, then the farmers are allowed to sell the remaining amount to private traders. Before this deadline, the authorities check every truck, along the Pegu-Rangoon motor road, and confiscate any beans they find. In December and January 2001, farmers in Pegu Division were forced to sell 12 baskets of paddy per acre to the paddy buying center. The authorities paid them only 300 Kyat per basket while the market price was about 650-700 Kyat per basket. (Source: HURFOM)

# 5.8 Situation in Shan State

## *Unfair Levies and Taxes*

### Forced Labor and Extortion in Murng

In late February and early March 2001, SPDC troops from Co. No.3 of Murng-Khark-based LIB328, stationed at a hilltop stronghold in Murng-Yarng township, forced several villages in the area to bring hundreds of bamboo and thousands of thatch-sheets to build houses for them. On February 26, troops, led by Lt. Htay

Naing, came to Kho Sung, Wan Zaang and Pa Hai villages in Murng Luay tract, Murng-Yarng, and ordered the village headmen to provide bamboo to build the military camp. Together the 3 villages were ordered to bring 360 pieces of bamboo to the hilltop camp by March 2. On March 1, the same troops went to Ter Laad, Huay Khaa and Wan Lio villages in Murng Yarng tract, Murng-Yarng township, and ordered the village headmen to provide 3,500 sheets of weaved thatch for roofing at the military camp by March 6. Village headmen and leaders pleaded with the SPDC township authorities to help persuade the soldiers to reduce the amount to 600 thatch-sheets, but the township authorities dismissed them saying, "Don't you understand. You are able to live peacefully only because of the Burmese army. Stop complaining and give them what they want, and when they want". On March 3, the same troops summoned the village headmen of Pa Nung, Pa Mai and Waeng Laek villages, situated close to the foot of the hilltop camp, and ordered them to bring their villagers to build houses for the soldiers in the camp, starting from March 12. (Source: SHRF)

**Extortion in Ta-khi-laek**

On 4 March 2001, SPDC authorities in Ta-Khi-Laek issued an order to all the village and tract leaders in the township to collect food and money from the villagers and to give it to the soldiers by the following day. Each house had to provide 150 Baht for porter-fees, 2 packs of noodles and 2 eggs and the leaders had to take them to the SPDC township office. There have been 4-5 similar cases in Ta-Khi-Laek township since February 17 and villagers have been asked for 300-600 Baht in some cases. (Source: SHRF)

**Conscription and Extortion in Ta-khi-Laek**

Since May 2001, SPDC authorities in Ta-Khi-Laek have issued an order to recruit 3 people in each village tract for forced labor. As the authorities do not accept non-Burmans, 100,000 Kyat for each required person must be paid instead. There are about 13-14 village tracts in Ta-Khi-Laek township which means a total of 2,200,000 Kyat had to be paid to the SPDC. (Source: SHRF)

**Forced Labor and Extortion in Mu-se**

Since June, SPDC military authorities in Mu-Se have forcibly conscripted civilian vehicles without pay. Whenever SPDC troops want to go somewhere or transport something in Mu-Se township, they almost always forcibly conscripted civilian mini-tractors, or sometimes civilian trucks, without any payment. On June 19, SPDC township police officers in Mu-Se exacted 11,000 pieces of bamboo from the villagers of Tong Khaan village. All the bamboo was transported free of charge by the villagers to the police station by the June 22 deadline.

1. Mini-tractors at Nawng Kham village have been conscripted 25 times

2. Mini-tractors at Ho Lawn village have been conscripted 37 times

3. Mini-tractors at Wan Hio village have been conscripted 45 times

4. Mini-tractors at a private drug rehabilitation centre have been conscripted 11 times

5. Lung Chit Nguay's truck has been conscripted 21 times (Source: SHRF)

**Local people afraid of General Khin Nyunt's visit**

On 26 June 2001, people in Namkham, 129 miles north of Lashio, in northern Shan State, were forced to give exorbitant 'donations' to the local authorities in preparation for the visit of Burma's No. 3 strongman, Gen. Khin Nyunt.Forced contributions were taken from shopkeepers at the following rates:

Those selling construction materials had to pay K 10,000 each;

Big shops had to pay K 8,000 each;

Small shops had to pay K 500 each

Shoe shops, had to pay K 3,000 each

The local authorities also requisitioned 300-pairs of Yinma brand white shoes for students who would participate in the reception with dances. "Even the students had to pay K 2,000 each," said one shopkeeper. "You can be sure some of the loot will be lining their pockets. Voluntary contributions, they say. I'd say it's daylight robbery." Namkham's market has more than 2,000 shops. Gen. Khin Nyunt was going there for the inauguration of the town's first computer complex. (Source: SHAN)

**Extortion in Ta-khi-Laek**

In early July 2001, SPDC authorities extorted money from the people in Ta-Khi-Laek township to buy goods from Thailand as presents to Gen. Maung Aye, the Vice Chairman of the SPDC, and his entourage, visiting Ta-Khi-Laek on an inspection tour. On July 8, after Gen. Maung Aye had completed his inspection, the local SPDC authorities presented him and his entourage with 2 truckloads of presents. The presents were not taken away immediately but were later sent after them, on July 12, in 2 civilian trucks forcibly conscripted by the police for free service. A few days before the visit of Gen. Maung Aye, SPDC authorities in Ta-Khi-Laek had issued an order to all the village and tract headmen and community leaders to collect the money. Each family was required to provide 300 Baht, which would have amounted to at least 300,000 Baht, in accordance with the estimated population of Ta-Khi-Laek. (Source: SHRF)

**Extortion and More Restrictions in Murng-ton**

Since early August 2001, SPDC troops from the battalions based in Murng-Ton, IB65, IB 225, IB 277 and LIB 519, have been searching houses at night and

extorting 500 kyat for each missing member of each household in Murng-Ton township. Groups of 20-30 SPDC troops from the said battalions searched the houses of the local people in their respective areas of control, at least once every 3 nights, starting from 10:00 p.m. until the early morning of the next day. Their stated reason for searching was to check if there were any unreported guests secretly staying overnight without permission from the authorities. However, if there were no guests, the troops checked the members of the households and fined 500 Kyat for each missing member. There is no apparent reason for extorting money for missing family members. (Source: SHRF)

**Tax on Livestock in Mongkerng township**

On 6 August 2001,Tiya, 36, a shan refugee who had recently arrived in Thailand from a village in Mongkerng township, 108 miles northeast of Taunggyi, reported that a meeting was held at the LIB 514 battalion post on 1 June. At this meeting Lt.-Col. Myint Maung, Commander, of LIB 515 from Laikha informed the village and tract headmen that in accordance with orders from his superiors, tax would be levied on the following domestic livestock:

K. 300 for each buffalo, per year

K. 200 for each cow, per year

K. 100 for each goat, per year

K. 50 for each pig, per month

The Commander also informed them that beginning in 2002, rice growers would be forced to sell 24 baskets of unhulled Khao-zao rice, per acre of land they owned, to the government at the rate of K. 300 per basket. As a result, hundreds had decided to leave their homeland and come to Thailand because, as Tiya said, “the market price of unhulled Khao-zao is K. 3,500-3,000 per lang and those of us who are poor will never be able to afford it.” N.B. 1 lang equals 4 baskets (Source: SHAN)

**Akha villagers forced to provide free chickens in Murng-khark**

On 16 August, 2001, the SPDC police force in Murng-Khark forced the Akha villagers of Wan Kui, Huay Tu and Paang Kaw villages in Nam Yaang Long tract, Murng-Kark township, to provide 37 viss of chickens for entertaining a senior police officer and his team from Kaeng-Tung who would be visiting Murng-Khark on an inspection tour. The villagers had to divide the responsibility in accordance with the sizes of their villages and find the needed amount of chickens and take them to the police station in Murng-Khark on the morning of August 17, 2001. Wan Kui village had to provide 7 viss of chicken; Huay Tu village 13 viss and Paang Kaw village 17 viss; altogether worth about 22,200 kyat, according to the local villagers. (Source: SHRF)

**Extortion as protection fees in Murng-Phyak**

On 9 September 2001, a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB333 extorted money for protection fees from the villagers of Nam Naang village in Nam Naang tract, Murng-Phyak township. On the day of the incident, a patrol of about 30 SPDC troops from LIB333 came to Nam Naang village, called up the village leaders and the commander of the troops said to them, "We heard that about 10 days ago Shan soldiers from SSA-E (Shan State Army - East) came to this village and you provided them with food and money. Was that true?".

Before anyone could respond to the accusation, he continued, "If that was true, you have given food and money even to the Shan soldiers, and as we are government soldiers who are protecting you we surely deserve more, so you should at least collect money and help us cover the costs of our patrols, if not also food".

When the village leaders explained that no Shan soldiers had ever come to their village and that they had never given anything to any Shan soldiers, the commander did not believe them but became angry and shouted at them, threatening to burn the market place if they did not comply with his demand. Nam Naang village is the main village in Nam Naang tract where a market is held every 5 days. The market place is big and crowded with open thatched buildings which could easily burn, and a fire could easily spread to the other 50-60 houses in the village. Sensing the danger that lay ahead, the villagers collected money among themselves, 300 Kyat from each house, as soon as possible and gave it to the SPDC troops, altogether giving a total of 16,000 Kyat. (Source:SHRF)

**Extortion as protection fees in Murng-ton**

On 10 September 2001, a company of SPDC troops from Murng-Phyak-based LIB360 extorted money as protection fees from the villagers of Mawk Zali village in Mae Ken tract, Murng-Ton township. On that day, about 50 SPDC troops of Co. No.2 from Murng-Phyak-based LIB360, led by commander Min Zaw, that were temporarily stationed at Naa Kawng Mu village in Murng-Ton township came to Mawk Zali village and asked the villagers if any Shan soldiers had come to the village. When the villagers said no, the troops camped in the village for the night. The next morning, the commander of the SPDC troops called up the village leader and said, "We are soldiers who have to come and protect you. You are able to live safely and peacefully only because we are going around all the time protecting you day and night, regardless of sun and rain. Therefore you people should understand our hardship in trying to protect you and should help us in return by providing us with 30,000 Kyat of money per month to buy food".

The villagers could not refuse and had to collect among the 25 houses in the village, from 700 to 1,500 Kyat per house in accordance with their economic status, and handed 28,500 Kyat to the SPDC commander. The commander then said that as long

as their duty was to be in the area, the villagers would have to provide the money once a month. (Source:SHRF)

**Villagers forced to provide money and chicken in Murng-ton**

On 4 October 2001, SPDC troops of LIB360 issued an order requiring the people in 3 village tracts — Pung Pa Khem, Murng Haang and Mae Ken village tracts — to provide money and chickens for a military farm, in Murng-Ton township. The commander of LIB 360 said in the order that he intended to buy chicken and let his soldiers breed and raise them so that they would not have to bother the people for chickens in the future, and he would like the people in the area help him with the money needed to do that. Each village tract was to hand in 20,000 Kyat of money not later than October 15th. Any village tract that did not pay in time or paid less than the amount demanded would have to pay a fine of 40,000 Kyat. The villagers managed to pay the demanded 60,000 Kyat before the deadline by collecting 50 to 350 Kyat from each house in their village tracts.

On October 17th, the commander of LIB360 again issued an order requiring the people of the same village tracts to provide 50 chickens each, not later than 25.10.01. Because many villagers did not have any chickens, they had to collect money and bought the needed chickens for the military. (Source: SHRF)

**Extortion because of crop failure in La-sio**

On 9 October 2001, SPDC troops from LIB322 extorted 20,000 kyat from several villages in Naa Naang and Nam Pawng village tracts in La-Sio township. On that day, a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB322 came to Naa Naang and Nam Pawng area and called a meeting of the village and village tract leaders in the area. The troops said that their maize growing project had yielded very poorly, causing the military to lose so heavily that they needed help from the people, and extorted 20,000 Kyat of money from each village in the area. (Source: SHRF)

**Farmers forced to buy their paddy back**

On 25 October 2001 villagers in a northern Shan State township were forced to purchase rice that they had been forced to sell earlier. Officials from Muse, opposite Ruili, Yunnan Province, told village headmen they were selling them back 300 baskets of paddy that was procured earlier on the order of the Northeast Regional Command in Lashio. The officials also threatened the headmen with imprisonment for non-compliance. “The joke was while they had paid us only K. 350 per basket during their forced purchase, we had to pay them K. 2,000 to get our rice back,” said the source. “The officials, as a result, cleared nearly K. 500,000 from us.”

**The following is the list of the villages forced to buy back rice:**

1. Manhai, 70 baskets

2. Nalong, 77 baskets

3. Tima, 52.5 baskets

4. Manzarng, 22 baskets

5. Jawngkoong, 35 baskets

6. Nawngwa Hsenghawm, 16 baskets

7. Nahok Nawngping, 16.5 basket

8. Koonghsa, 11 baskets (Source: SHAN)

**Extortion and forced Labor of Akha villagers in Murng-khark**

On 27 December 2001, SPDC troops of Murng-Khark-based IB227 forced the villagers of Aa Khur village in Murng Nung tract, Murng-Khark township, to provide 160 pieces of big bamboo for military use. Aa Khur is a small village of 21 houses and the villagers are mostly dry farm rice growers with very little income. No one has rice fields or bamboo groves. The villagers have to buy bamboo from other villages for building their own houses because there are no wild bamboo groves in the area. The village headman of Aa Khur went to explain their difficulties to the SPDC township authorities in Murng-Khark town. But the township authorities said they did not dare to talk to the troops about that and persuaded the villagers to go to tell the soldiers themselves. Having no choice, the villagers went to the base of IB227 and asked them to reduce the amount of bamboo to 30 pieces because they would have to be bought from other villages. The commander of the troops, however, not only refused to reduce the amount but set a 7-day deadline threatening to increase the amount up to 200 pieces if it was not met. The Aa Khur villagers had to buy 160 pieces of bamboo at 250 Kyat per piece and transported them to the military base within the given time. It cost 40,000 Kyat in all, transport excluded, which was about 2,000 Kyat per house. (Source: SHRF)

## *Land Confiscation*

**Land and property confiscation by SPDC-sponsored 'Wa' group in Murng-ton**

Wa troops of UWSA, which has a ceasefire deal with the SPDC, have been confiscating and occupying the lands and property of the local people in Murng-Ton township, since their deployment in the area in late 2000. Wa troops from Pang Sang, their head quarters in northeastern Shan State, have been moved down to the southern town of Murng-Ton and deployed at several places such as Mawkzali village in Mae Ken tract, Naa Kawngmu in Murng-Harng tract and Huay Aw, Ta Kaang, Son Kuay and Nam Yum villages in Pung Pa Khem tract, with about 35-50

troops at each place. The Wa troops have been roaming their respective areas and openly taking vegetables from the local farms, in front of the farm owners who are mostly Shan, without asking or paying for them. When some farmers who only have a small amount of vegetables for their own consumption asked the Wa soldiers to spare them their food, the Wa soldiers generally threatened them with their guns, saying, "Don't you see this?" In many places, Wa troops have occupied several houses while the owners were away and refused to let the owners enter their homes when they returned. Many farmers who had taken their families to work at their farms for a few days at a time, because they were too far to go on a daily basis, found their houses occupied by Wa troops when they returned. Some neighbours who tried to stop them by explaining that the owners were their relatives who would return in a few days were told by the Wa soldiers that they came on the orders of Gen. Khin Nyunt and that the villagers should go and tell him if they wanted them to leave. In several places, Wa soldiers have also confiscated acres of cultivated lands of the local people, including fruit orchards, coffee and sugarcane plantations and vegetable gardens. (Source: SHRF)

**The following lists the houses and lands lost in each village:**

**Huay Aw village, Huay Aw tract;**

1. Villagers lost 20 houses

2. Zaai Saw and Naang Laao lost 7 acres of banana orchard

3. Zaai A-Li-Ya and Naang Num los 5 acres of pineapple orchard

4. Lung Kham and Pa Ku lost 4 acres of banana orchard

5. Zaai Za-Ling and Naang Leng lost 4 acres of mango orchard

6. Lung Su-Nan-Ta and Pa Ting lost 5 acres of coffee plantation

**Son Kuay village, Pung Pa Khem tract:**

1. Villagers lost 3 houses

2. Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma lost 4-1/2 acres of sugarcane, mango and pineapple plantations

3. Zaai Thun Nae lost 3-1/2 acres of pineapple and banana orchard

4. Zaai Wi lost 3 acres of vegetable garden

**Naa Pa Kaao village, Mae Ken tract**:

1. Villagers lost 15 houses

2. Zaai Ka-Ling and Naang Kaeng lost 10 acres of banana and mango orchard

3. Lung Lu and Pa Hoi lost 5-1/2 acres of pineapple and banana orchard

4. Zaai Pan-Zit-Ta and Naang Khe lost 6-1/2 acres of banana, mango and tamarin orchard

5. Zaai Ma-La and Naang Seng lost 4 acres of vegetable garden

6. Zaai Lu and Naang Ing lost a cowshed big enough to house 60 cows

**Nam Hu village, Mae Ken tract:**

1. Villagers lost 3 houses

2. Lung Keng lost 5-1/2 acres of coffee plantation

3. Lung Phong and Pa Lu lost 3-1/2 acres of banana and sugarcane plantation

**Mawkzali village, Mae Ken tract:**

1. Villagers lost 2 houses

2. Zaai Wan-Na and Naang Khin lost 5-1/2 acres of banana orchard

3. Lung Kaw-Li and Pa Lu lost 8 acres of mango, banana and coffee plantation

**Land confiscation in Ta-khi-laek**

On 1 January 2001, SPDC troops of LIB316 brought in members of the Land Survey Department to mark a 3,000-acre plot of land, which they planned to confiscate later, from the fields, farms and gardens of the local people in Pa Leo (Kaeng Laab) tract, Ta-Khi-Laek township. It is believed the land will be sold to a Chinese company "Ho Pang", with no compensation given to the local farmers. According to recent reports, some members of 'Ho Pang' have seen the plot and will most likely buy it. Similar plots have been marked out in other village tracts, such as Nam Kherm and Murng Laen. (Source: SHRF)

**Land confiscation and forced labor in Larng-khur**

Since early 2001, SPDC military authorities in Larng-Khur have confiscated thousands of acres of cultivated lands including plantations of sugarcane, tobacco, betel leaves and betel nuts, bamboo and other hardwoods to be used for building military bases and other military facilities. In April 2001, SPDC military authorities in Larng-Khur confiscated over 1,200 acres of sugarcane plantations and about 15 acres of bamboo and betel nut plantations east of the Nam Taeng river in the area of Wan Haad village tract. The SPDC troops cleared all the sugarcane to use the land as a military training ground. They also forced the local people to clear trees from the surrounding higher ground and build a military camp with several barracks for the soldiers and new recruits. At the same time, several acres of tobacco plantations in

Kho Ta village tract were confiscated from the local people to set up a base for a Light Infantry Battalion. Several acres of tobacco plantations in Pung Thun village tract were also confiscated to make a base for an artillery unit.In this way, many sugarcane and tobacco farmers in Larng-Khur township have lost their lands, and thus their livelihood. (Source: SHRF)

**Land Confiscation, beating, and extortion in Ta-khi-laek**

Since May 2001, SPDC troops of LIB316 have been confiscating land from people in Ta-Khi-Laek township to build military camps and for other military use, without compensation. The land, mostly woodlands where trees and bamboo have been planted for use as building materials and firewood, is in the areas of Ta Lur, East Murng Laen, West Murng Lane, Nam Kherm, Pa Leo and Kaeng Laab village tracts. In these areas the land is fertile and mostly flat. The SPDC troops simply mark out the land they want, or else send a small group of soldiers to a piece of land, and declare that it has been confiscated. The land owners are then no longer allowed to go onto the marked or guarded land. Original owners who have tried to secretly cut wood or bamboo from their former land, have been seized and forced to pay fines and sometimes beaten by soldiers.

On 18 May 2001, Kyu Ta, 36, a Lahu villager of Waeng Manaw in West Murng Laen tract, and his son Kya Ha, 18, were arrested by SPDC troops while cutting firewood on land that had been confiscated from them. The soldiers kicked and beat them several times and tied them up to a tree for 2 hours, only releasing them when their relatives payed a fine of 300 Baht.

On 26 May 2001, 3 Lahu villagers from Musur Lam village in Nam Kherm village tract were arrested and beaten, and their firewood taken by SPDC troops from LIB 316. Ja Mu, 31, Ja Wi, 29, and Ja Ma, 19, had been collecting firewood 5-6 miles from their village, as the areas close to their village had been confiscated.. The SPDC soldiers accused the villagers of stealing the wood from military land and ordered them to kneel down in a row, then slapped, kicked and beat them, forcing them to confess to their 'crime.' The soldiers then ordered the villagers to leave their bundles of firewood and go home, warning them not to tell anyone about the incident or else they would come after them and kill them. (Source: SHRF)

**Land confiscation and beating in Kae-See**

On 7 June 2001, SPDC troops from IB283 confiscated 500 acres of rice fields belonging to villagers in several villages in Kae-See township and gave them to the area Lahu people's militia. The commander of Co. No.4 of IB 283, Capt. Thaung Nyunt, issued an order confiscating 500 acres of land from the following villages: Murng Sawng, Nawng Tao, Murng Lerm, Wan Tong, Murng Yaang, Ter Taad and Wan Zing. Some villagers who had all of their land confiscated tried to plead with the SPDC troops not to take their land and were scolded, slapped, kicked and

beaten. Some were slapped many times causing their faces to become swollen. (Source: SHRF)

**Land confiscation in Murng-nai**

In June of 2001, SPDC troops from Kun-Hing-based LIB 524, stationed in Kaeng Tawng of Murng-Nai township, under the command of Capt. Mya Htun, confiscated several acres of deserted rice fields from farmers who had been relocated. In the process, they also confiscated 40 acres of adjacent rice fields which were still being cultivated by farmers. The confiscation affected 7 farmers in the area, each of whom owned parts of the 40-acre rice fields. The farmers tried to explain and asked the SPDC troops to give back their land, but the troops threatened to shoot them if they complained again. (Source: SHRF)

**Land confiscation and beating in Mu-se**

In June 2001, SPDC township level officer, Tin Oo, in Paang Saai area in Mu-Se township confiscated several acres of rice fields from the local people and sold them to Chinese nationals. One of the local farmers, not knowing that his rice field had been taken away from him, was planting rice when he was shouted at and beaten by Tin Oo, who forced him to pull out all the rice seedlings he had planted. The following are the farmers who lost their rice fields to the SPDC official in this case:

1. Jawn Song (m), of Wan Zae village, lost a field large enough to plant 5 baskets of rice seeds

2. Ai Yong (m), of Wan Zae village, lost a field large enough to plant 5 baskets of rice seeds

3. Yi Thun (m), of Nam Hoo village, lost a field big enough to plant 1-1/2 baskets of rice seeds

4. A quarter of Wan Zae village, jointly lost a large piece of land enough to lant16 baskets of rice seeds. (Source: SHRF)

**Land confiscation and forced labor in Ta-khi-laek**

In mid-June 2001, SPDC troops of Ta Lur-based LIB316 confiscated a hill of woodland, called Kawng Maak Khaam, from the villagers of Murng Laen in Ta-Khi-Laek township. They then forced the local people to build a military camp for new recruits to be conscripted in the near future. Since June 13, people in the village tracts of Ta Lur, Murng Laen, Nam Kherm, Pa Leo and Kaeng Laab have been forced to provide unpaid forced labour every day to build the new military camp. The villagers have to take turns providing forced labour in order to be able to tend their rice fields. From 5 up to 12 houses from each village, in proportion to its size, have to go at one time. Some farmers hire others to go on their behalf so that they can have more time to tend their rice fields. The villagers have to cut trees and clear

the ground at the top of the hill, and dig the ground to level it. They have to build fences, dig trenches and build barracks, and they also have to build a road leading from the main road up to the hill top. (Source: SHRF)

### *Looting by Army*

**Confiscation of motorcycles in Lasio and Mu-se**

From February to April 2001, more than 300 motorcycles were seized by SPDC authorities in Lasio, working under instructions of the Commander of the Northeastern Military Command, Maj. Gen. Tin Aung Myint Oo. The motor cycles were taken from local people in Lasio township, ostensibly, because they did not have licenses. Many of the owners had previously tried several times to apply for licenses for their motorcycles, but the authorities concerned had simply ignored their applications. In April and May 2001, SPDC authorities in Mu-Se also confiscated 250 motorcycles from the local people in Mu-Se township for the same reason. The owners of the motorcycles also complained that they had applied for licenses but they had not been granted. (Source: SHRF)

**Confiscation of Thai goods from shops in Ta-khi-laek**

On 9 March 2001, SPDC authorities confiscated goods imported from Thailand from several shops in Ta-Khi-Laek township. The goods included; fuel, oil for motor vehicles, seasoning powder, ready-made dried noodles, drinks, and various kinds of cookies and candy. According to the local shopkeepers, the goods were not banned and were distributed among military and administrative personnel for their own consumption. A six-wheeler truckload of Thai goods was taken away from the shops, worth about 300,000 baht, reported a local shopkeeper. (Source: SHRF)

**Traders robbed of goods in Ta-khi-laek**

On 17 March 2001, the SPDC police stole more than 300,000 Baht of consumer goods from traders at the police checkpoint in Murng Phong tract, Ta-Khi-Laek township. Traders transporting goods to Ta-Khi-Laek town from the 'golden triangle' border-crossing were stopped by police, led by Lt. Sein Laing at Huay Lin Lam checkpoint. The police searched the traders and seized all consumer goods they were carrying, including cooking oil, canned milk, ready-made noodles and various other food stuffs. Although Thai authorities have banned trade at all border crossing points, they still allow some essential goods such as cooking oil, seasoning powder, seasoning liquid, salt, cookies and other food stuffs to pass through at the 'golden triangle' border crossing point. Two days after seizing the goods, the police asked the peoples' militia at Huay Lin Lam to sell the seized goods to shop owners in Ta-Khi-Laek town. (Source: SHRF)

**Beating and robbery in Murng-Paeng**

In May 2001, two villagers returning home from the town market, after selling a pig, were stopped, tied, and robbed of their money by SPDC troops from LIB360. the incident occured about 3 miles from their village,

Ka Leng, in Sen Mawng village tract, Murng-Paeng township. Zaai Lu, 36, and Zaai Mu, 31, were returning to their village, after selling their pig for 9,300 Kyat and having bought some cooking oil and seasoning powder, when they ran into the soldiers. Without any warning or explanation, the troops seized the 2 villagers, tied their hands behind them and searched their bodies. The troops took away all the money and foodstuffs they found, and then slapped, beat and kicked teh two villagers, and finally let them go without untying them. They remained tied until they reached their village. (Source: SHRF)

**Robbery in Larng-khur**

On 29 September 2001, SPDC troops from IB 99, led by Capt. Kyaw Lwin, robbed the people of Paang Wawng quarter in Larng-Khur town. 10 SPDC troops from Co. No.4 from IB99, all in camouflage, entered the house of Lung Kan-Tha & Pa Yaen and arrested them. The troops beat Lung Kan-Tha with a stick, and ordered them to bring out all the money and valuables they had in the house, threatening to kill them if they found that the villagers had left anything hidden in the house. Lung Kan-Tha and Pa Yaen lost 10,600 Kyats, 3-1/2 Bahts weight of gold ornaments, 2 tape recorders, 5 wristwatches, 1 camera and many clothes, altogether worth more than 300,000 Kyat. The troops then went to the house of Lung Yuay & Pa Nae in the same quarter of the town and robbed them of their possessions. Lung Yuay and Pa Nae lost 54,600 Kyat of money and 2 Bahts weight of gold ornaments. After that, they robbed Lung Pan-Ta and Pa Leng at their house, taking away 48,500 Kyat of money, 4 Bahts weight of gold ornaments, 1 tape recorder, 3 wristwatches, 6 Buddha statues and a lot of clothes. The troops told the people they were Tai Leng (or Red Shan) members of the SSA, but the victims recognized Capt Kyaw Lwin among them. (Source: SHRF)

**Villagers beaten and robbed of their fish in Murng-Yawng**

On 6 October 2001 7 villagers of Wan Kawng village in Murng-Yawng township were robbed of their fish and beaten by SPDC troops from LIB334. On that day, the 7 villagers had together caught about 26 viss (1 viss = 1.6 kg) of fish in the area of their village and were carrying it home when on the way they were stopped by a patrol of 12 SPDC troops from LIB334. The troops accused the villagers of having stolen the fish from other people's fish ponds in the area and took away the fish. When the villagers denied the accusation, explained that they had not stolen the fish and asked the soldiers to give them back, some of the troops became angry and beat the villagers with their rifle butts, badly injuring 3 of them. When they had beaten

the villagers, the troops gave back 1 viss of fish to each of them and ordered them to go home. In addition to injuries, the villagers lost 19 viss of fish, which could be sold at 1,200 Kyat per viss at the market, to the SPDC troops.

**The following 3 villagers were badly injured:**

1. Zaai Laa Keo (m), aged 21, suffered from a fractured skull

2. Zaai Long (m), aged 19, suffered from a badly sprained shoulder

3. Zaai Ping Long (m), aged 19, suffered from a badly sprained waist

(Source: SHRF)

## *Destruction of Property and livestock*

**Extortion, forced labor, and destruction of farmland in Nam-Zarng**

Since 25 July 2001, people in Ko Lam tract, Nam-Zarng township, have been forced by SPDC troops from IB 66 to dig a 11-1/2-mile-long irrigation ditch through a stretch of rice fields of the local farmers, destroying several acres in the process, to the new rice fields forcibly sold to some relocated farmers. About 50-60 people in Ko Lam tract are being conscripted as unpaid forced labourers each day to dig the said ditch, which is about 3-4 yards wide and about 2-3 yards deep, using their own tools and providing their own food. The intended purpose of the ditch is to divert water from Nam Mawng stream to feed some 60 acres of new rice fields beyond the existing rice fields and, instead of taking a roundabout route, the authorities ordered the ditch to be dug right across them. The new rice fields are situated south of Wan Phui village in Ko Lam tract. They were measured by the SPDC authorities in the area in May this year and sold to to displaced farmers, who had been relocated to the area and had no land to farm, at the price of 10,000 Kyat per acre. It was said that initially no farmers wanted to buy the new rice fields, which had been measured out of barren land, at such a high price. After almost a month with no buyers, the authorities declared they would collect 5,000 Kyat from each household as the fees for measuring the land. Not wanting to lose 5,000 Kyat for nothing, farmers who had some money and had no land bought the land, generally 2-3 acres for each household. (Source: SHRF)

## *Forced Sale of Crops*

**Unfair rice procurement in Mu-se**

On 6 September 2001, SPDC authorities from the Department of Agriculture, led by U Myint Than, in Mu-Se came to Paang Long, Kawngmu Loi and Kawngmu Tong villages in Mu-Se township and forced the villagers to sell 41 baskets of unhusked rice at the price of 360 Kyat per basket, while the actual market price in the area was 1,400 Kyat per basket. According to the local people, earlier this year SPDC authorities in northern Shan State issued an order requiring farmers to sell

their unhusked rice at the rate of 4 baskets per acre of cultivated land, at the price of 360 Kyat per basket, no matter what the current market price might be. This order has put many farmers in a very difficult situation in which they have not enough rice left even for their families' own consumption. One local farmer explained as follows:

*"On average, one acre of land in northern Shan State could produce, given the right weather conditions, around 30 baskets of rice. For an ordinary farmer to grow an acre of rice, the following expenses, measured in rice, are needed apart from his own labour:*

*(a) 5 baskets of rice for hiring workers to help in planting rice seedlings*

*(b) 5 baskets of rice for hiring buffalo*

*(c) 5 baskets of rice for buying fertilizers*

*(d) 5 baskets of rice for other expenses*

*Usually only about 5 baskets of unhusked rice per acre are left for the farmer at the end of the harvest, and if he/she has to sell another 4 baskets at a giveaway price, only 1 basket would be left for his own consumption, together with very little money from the selling of the 4 baskets. When something goes wrong and the farmer does not have enough rice to sell to the authorities, he would have to buy from others at the market price and resell at their designated price, which is usually many times lower".*(Source: SHRF)

**Increased rice procurement in Murng-Nai**

On 28 September 2001, SPDC military authorities in Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township issued an order to the village and village tract leaders in the area notifying them that the military would be procuring more rice from the people in the coming year, 2002. In the meeting held at the base of LIB324 at Ton Hung village relocation site, to which all the village and village tract leaders from the 4 village tracts in the area had been summoned, Tactical Command Commander Khin Maung Myint issued an order requiring the people in the area to sell 4,000 baskets of rice to the military in early 2002, a double-fold increase compared to the rate of 2,000 baskets per year over the last few years. Khin Maung Myint said that the rice was needed to feed the SPDC soldiers of several newly deployed battalions to protect the people in the area and on no account should it be less than the demanded amount. Although previously it was IB246 from Kun-Hing township that usually came and bought 2,000 baskets per year, it would now be only for the troops who had come to protect the people in Kaeng Tawng area.

The purchase would be done during the first 2 months of 2002 at the rate of 700 Kyat per basket, while the current market price in the area was between 2,000 and 2,200 Kyat per basket. (Source: SHRF)

**People forced to grow crops for the military in southern Shan state**

On 15 October 2001, SPDC military authorities in the Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township issued an order requiring all the 4 village tracts in Kaeng Tawng area to grow cold season crops for the military. The crops were Japanese sesame, peanut and potato. The seeds were provided by the military and the people were to cultivate them and produce the amount demanded by the military or they would have to buy crops from somewhere else to fill up the quota. The following list shows the village tracts and the amount of seeds they were required to cultivate:

1. Ton Hoong tract was required to cultivate 30 tins of Japanese sesame, 20 tins of peanut and 500 viss of potato

2. Kun Mong tract was required to cultivate 30 tins of Japanese sesame, 25 tins of peanut and 500 viss of potato

3. Kun Long and Nawng Hee tracts were required to cultivate 50 tins of Japanese sesame, 35 tins of peanut and 700 viss of potato

(Note: 1 tin = 20 litres, 1 viss = 1.6 kg)

The seeds were given to each village and tract headman to start cultivating from the end of October 2001 onwards. Each kind of crop was to yield 10 to 20 fold as shown in the following list.

(1). 1 tin of Japanese sesame was to yield 10 tins

(2). 1 tin of peanut was to yield 20 tins

(3). 1 viss of potato was to yield 10 viss

Similar incidents are said to have been taking place in several other townships such as Murng-Ton, Murng-Sart, Larng-Khur, Murng-Nai and Murng Pan. People in these townships are being required to cultivate the above mentioned crops for every military battalion based in their townships. Each battalion must have each kind of crop cultivated on at least about 20 acres of land, and must have all 3 kinds of the said crops. Most of the work needed to cultivate the crops would undoubtedly be done with the unpaid forced labour of the people. (Source: SHRF)

# 5.9 Situation in Tenasserim Division

### *Destruction of Property and livestock*

**Eight houses burnt down**

On 24 April 2001 a troop of Burmese soldiers arrived at Awpu Hkee in the east of Palaw township, Mergui district, Tenasserim Division. When they arrived at the village, the residents had already fled and were hiding, so the soldiers burnt down eight houses. The houses belonged to

1. Saw Pa Baw
2. Hton Aye
3. Saw Dah Kyi
4. Saw Aung Nya
5. Ka Hswe
6. Naw Hse Mu
7. Saw Pa Keh
8. Nyein Maung (130 baskets of paddy were also lost).

(Source: CIDKP)

**Looting by Army**

In June 2001, soldiers looted money and gold jewlery from people in Saw Phyar, Taung Sinn and Kywe Chan villages, Launglon tsp, Tenasserim Division. The soldiers were led by Lt Col Kyi Myint. In Kywe Chan village, the soldiers beat three persons: Yuu (female 47), San Thein (63) and Maung Lwin (37) the chairman of the village Peace and Development Council. (Source: THRF)

Since the beginning July 2001, conflicts between KNU and SPDC troops have taken place frequently near the villages in Myekanbaw village tract. The SPDC military has conducted house to house searches in these villages and looted the villagers' household belongings. Even poultry was taken for army rations. Instead of taking rotating porters, an action military of SPDC, collected porter fees whenever they arrived in any of the villages. (Source: ABSDF)

**Unfair Levies and Taxes**

On 22 April 2001 it was reported that the tactical command (3) under military operation command (9) from Mit-ta village, which has been located in the eastern part of Tavoy township since the beginning of April 2001, has begun to oppress

residents of the villages in Mye-kan-baw village tract including Pyin-tha-taw, Tha-pyu-chaung, Kye-tha-inn, Ka-mit, Nayung-done, Hninn-pa-yoke, Mye-kan-baw, Zee-pyu, etc. One of the ways they oppress the villagers is by refusing to allow them to transport rations from Taung-thone-lone village to the villages of Mye-kan-baw village tract without SPDC permission or without a recommendation letter from the tactical command (3). The SPDC has warned the residents that anyone who is found to be transporting rations without permission will be severely punished. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Maung-mei-shaung village - Tavoy township**

Maung-mei-shaung village has 1500 households. On 29 April 2001 it was reported that the village level SPDC authority each month demands the following funds from each household:

| | |
|---|---|
| Fund for authorities entertainment | (100) Kyat |
| Fund for village development | (100) Kyat |
| Fund for militias and fire rescuers | (100) Kyat |
| Fund for soldiers on the frontline | (100) Kyat |
| General Fund | (100) Kyat |

Thus the total monthly fees collected from the residents from Maung-mei-shaung village by the VPDC is 500 Kyat.

The VPDC from Maung-mei-shaung village also continues to collect at least 5 porters each month for military operations. Every time they collect porters for military operations, they also collect 1500 Kyat per household for each porter, saying that they will give this money to the porter as compensation. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Tavoy Township, Tavoy District, Tenasserim Division**

On 17 May 2001, it was reported that the houses in this township have to pay 700 kyat a month in porter fees to the local authorities. This money is used to pay voluntary porters. The porters are taken to the LIB 25 camp in Tavoy Township. Every porter is paid 40,000 kyat. Sometimes, the military leaders ask for more porters, so the local authorities need more money and collect more from the people in the township (between 1000 and 1500 kyat from each house). If the people do not pay the authorities inform the police station and the police force them to be unpaid porters. Some people work voluntarily as porters because the economic situation in the four townships of Tavoy District is very difficult and there is high unemployment. They use the money they earn portering to support their families.

However, many people do not want to be porters as it is very dangerous and they search for any way to pay the porter fees. One effect of the difficult economic situation has been rising incidents of theft. In Tavoy township, every village has firemen who are responsible for the security of their quarter in the village and have to stand guard every night. One fireman and 5 civilians from each quarter in the township has to participate in these duties. If someone does not want to go, they have to pay 300 kyat to pay for a replacement. In addition, every month the authorities ask every house to donate 100 kyat for a security fund. Also in Tavoy township, the people receive irregular electric service (they get one day of electricity every four days) but have to pay 500-1000 kyat monthly despite the fact that they often have to rely on candles and lamps. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Sin They Village, Ye Phyu Township, Tenasserim Division**

On 18 May 2001 it was reported that Sin They Village has approximately 300 households, and is located near Dauk Lauk and Pa Dauk Gone villages where LIB 406 and 407 are located. The military authorities ask the local authorities to give forced labor for their agriculture projects (gardens). In addition to numerous demands for forced labor, In Sin They village the villagers have to pay 100 kyat every month to the village authorities for a fund to buy food and snacks for when the township authorities visit. Another 100 kyat is collected every month for the soldiers when they come to visit, and a further100 kyat is collected every month for the village development fund. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Khaungwapyin village - Tayetkhaung Township**

On 24 July 2001 it was reported that owners of nipa-palm plantations in Khaungwapyin village, once a year, have to pay as taxes 2 pails of palm sugar for every 100 matured nipa-palms and 10 flaps of palm thatches, to the PDC of Tayet Khaung Township. Those who fail to pay were warned that their planting license would be seized and auctioned off.

Even though the W/V PDC of Khaungwapyin village did not collect villagers as military operation porters, they regularly collected money they said was for hiring porters from other villages. The W/V PDC collected 1000-1500 Kyat per month from each household and warned those who failed to pay that they would be taken as military operation porter. Other funds that the W/V PDC of Kyaungwapyin village collected were 100 Kyat per household for the village military fund, 100 Kyat per household for the village development project fund and 100 Kyat per household for a general reception fund. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Pa-karri village , Tavoy Township**

It was reported on 12 August 2001 that there is an SPDC army camp and a police station in Pa-karri village and that the Village PDC has been collecting 500 Kyats per household, each month for the authorities' expenses, such as dinner, reception and entertainment expenses, as well as for the village development fund. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Phounn-daw village, Tavoy Township**

On 16 August 2001 it was reported that the LIB 379 army camp in Phounn-daw village orders the villagers to send a schooner each day in case it is needed by the army. The Village PDC als collects 500 Kyats per family, each month, saying that the money is to pay the fuel costs of the stand-by schooners. The current price of gas in the village is 1800 Kyats per gallon. (Source: ABSDF)

**Yebyu Villagers Face Heavy 'Tax' Burden**

Natkyizin village is in Yebyu township of the Tavoy district in northern Tenasserim division. It has about 500 households. On Sept 24, township authorities ordered the chairman of the town council to have every household supply materials for the repair of the rail line between Ye and Tavoy. Each household was required to provide a hundred cubic feet of road metal and a wooden sleeper and take it to railside before

the end of September. According to the villagers the damage to the rail-line was caused by poor workmanship and materials used during the construction of the line from 1994-8. The embankment which were never properly compacted washes away during the rainy season and the sleepers decay year after year because of the poor quality of the wood. Trains on the line are often derailed and overturn and passengers have been injured and died in some incidents. The Ye-Tavoy line was constructed using the forced labour of thousands of villagers from four townships in Tavoy district as well as Ye township in Mon state. More than a hundred persons died from illnesses brought on by exhaustion, heat, malaria and diarrhea as well as landslides and killings. Residents of Natkyizin are also required to provide five porters a day to assist a platoon from the Burma Army's Infantry Battalion 273 that is quartered in the town. Those unable to participate have to pay 500 kyat to hire someone else to do their duty. In addition, a Mon militia unit that split from the New Mon State Party has been demanding 1.5 million kyat (approx US$ 3,000) from the town every year. This has meant that the each household has secretly had to give 3,000 kyat to support the Mon group every year. Other payments required without fail from each household include a 100 kyat a month towards a village development fund, 100 kyat to host visiting military officers and 100 kyat for an armed militia unit connected to the Burma army. (Source: Burma Courier)

**The Situation in Ler Mu Lah Township**

On 21 December 2001, KHRG reported that in Ler Mu Lah township, extortion money and taxes are regularly demanded from the villagers in addition to the money they pay to avoid forced labour. 'Porter fees' are one such form of direct extortion which is demanded monthly and can amount to 2,000 to 5,000 Kyat per month per family. These fees are supposedly used to hire porters so the villagers do not have to go, but in reality the money is simply pocketed by the officers while the villagers still have to go as porters. Failure to pay these 'porter fees' can result in arrest or additional forced labour as a porter. More formal taxes are demanded from villages nearer the coast, but villages in the mountains are usually too impoverished to pay these. There are also rice quotas levied on the villages in the area. The quotas are from 10 to 15 baskets of paddy (rice still in the husk) per acre, which represents 20% to 50% of the crop depending on yield. The rice is gathered and sent by forced labour porters to the area Army headquarters at Ler Pa Doh on the southern Tenasserim River. (Source: KHRG)

## *Restrictions on Agriculture and Forced Sale of Crops*

**Situation in Kha Maung Taung village, Long Lon Township, Tennasserim Division**

As reported on 31 May 2001, Kha Maung Taung village has 120 households, and the chairperson of the VPDC, Thein Aung, collects two porters every month. Every house has to pay 1000 kyat a month for porter fees. One porter receives 40,000 kyat. If someone refuses to pay the 1000 kyat he or she cannot stay in the village anymore. Therefore, if they want to stay in their homes they have to find a way to earn the money. Those who are asked to be porters dare not refuse. According to a farmer who arrived at the border area on May 31, it costs the following to farm one acre of land.

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. to plow one acre | 3,500 kyat |
| 2. to plant the rice | 2,500 kyat |
| 3. to fertilize (de su par, made in Thailand) 1 bag, | 5,000 kyat |
| 4. to fertilize (pa le, made in Thailand) 2 bags | 8,000 kyat |
| 5. to weed | 2,500 kyat |
| 6. to thresh the rice | 2,500 kyat |
| 7. transportation and general fees | 2,000 kyat |
| Total for one acre: | **26,000 kyat** |

In this village, one acre produces 80 to 100 baskets of rice. The farmers give the agriculture authorities 12 baskets per acre. Moreover, every rainy season, the

farmers are forced to borrow money (1800 kyat per acre) from the authorities (agriculture department). When the rice growing season is over, the farmers have to sell the rice to the authorities at a price of 350 kyat per basket even though the normal price should be between 500-600 kyat. They also have to pay back the money they borrowed. On some occasions, the farmers do not grow any rice, but because they have to sell rice to the authorities, they have to buy rice from other sources to sell to the authorities. If they cannot sell rice the agriculture authorities, their farms will be occupied for the military by the agriculture authorities. The farmers are afraid of this, so they try to get rice by any means. The agriculture authorities give local farmers fertilizer made in Burma, but the quality is very low, therefore the local farmers have to rely on expensive fertilizers made in Thailand. (Source: ABSDF)

**Confiscation of land**

In March 2001, villagers from Kyaung, Kann Nee and Kind Taw, Ye Township, Tennaserim Division, were forced to work constructing camps for LIB 583 and 591. About 160 soldiers from LIB 62 and 343 guarded the projects. The local military authorities also confiscated 400 acres of gardens and vegetable fields owned by local people. In addition to forced labor, the villagers had to lend bullock carts and saws to the military without payment. The authorities also sent letters to the surrounding villages demanding that 1,000 to 3,000 leaves to be collected for the roofs of the new camps. The local villagers reported the forced labor incident to the New Mon State Pary (NMSP) which has a cease-fire agreement with SPDC. NMSP complained to SPDC when the project was 70% finished. The authorities agreed to make a contract with businessmen close to the junta to finish the project, however it did not happen and the villagers had to finish the construction of the camps without any payment. (Source: THRF)

On 4 April 2001, No. 965 Engineering and Construction military battalion/unit based in Tha Byae Chaung village arrived at the train station in Kyauk Ka Nyar village, 2 miles from Ye Phyu township. Upon arrival the battalion started to measure the paddy fields and gardens. On April 25, gardens and paddy fields that had been measured on April 18 were confiscated by the military. Signboards were placed in the area stating "This area is owned by the military. No one is allowed to enter." The owners of the land were ordered to vacate the land, but leave their homes intact. They were told not to destroy their trees and plants in the gardens. The residents of Kyauk Ka Nyar village lost the following land:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Hla Pe (m) | Betel nut, cashew, vegetables | 7 acres |
| 2. Pe Khin (m) | Betel nut, cashew, vegetables | 10 acres |
| 3. Hla Khin (m) | Rubber | 12 acres |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4. Tin Win (m) | Rubber | 7 acres |
| 5. Hla Pu (m) | Betel nut, rubber | 15 acres |
| 6. Suu Mae (m) | Betel nut, rubber, vegetables | 8 acres |
| 7. Ba Sein (m) | Betel nut, rubber, durian | 40 acres |
| 8. See San (m) | Betel nut, cashew, vegetables | 6 acres |
| 9. Aye Nyan (m) | Betel nut, cashew | 8 acres |
| 10. Hmwe (f) | Cashew | 15 acres |
| 11. Thein Nyunt (m) | Cashew | 5 acres |
| 12. San Kyay (m) | Betel nut, cashew, rubber | 15 acres |
| 13. Win Tin (m) | Betel nut, rubber, vegetables | 30 acres |
| **Total:** | | **178 acres** |

A few hundred other acres were seized by Unit 965, but exact details are unavailable. No one is currently allowed to enter the lands that have been seized, and Unit 965 has warned that if they catch villagers in these areas they will be accused of being rebel soldiers and be shot. In May 2001, Unit 965 used bulldozers to clear the ground and they brought construction materials for future building. According to villagers from Kyauk Ka Nyar, gardens near the confiscated land are now also in danger of being seized. At the end of May 2001, this unit started their activities again (measuring gardens). In the village, there are now 300 acres occupied by the military. In the future another 400 acres will be occupied by the military and made into a military camp. Every village group is responsible for constructing the buildings for the future camp (one village group per building). The cost of construction is 700,000 to 800,000 for one building. Ye Phyu TPDC has ordered the VPDCs to collect the money for the above mentioned project, which will start in June 2001. Meanwhile, Unit 965 is forcing the locals to work on other construction projects. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Kyaukkanyar Village - Yepyu Township**

In April 2001, Ka Ya Kha seized 300 acres of agricultural land and 400 acres of extra land for the army, all together about 700 acres, which belonged to people in the region, without giving any compensation. The land was to be used to construct the No (34) missile aircraft squadron. After seizing the land, the TPDC of Yepyu Township ordered people to work without pay to construct the squadron, and collected 500 Kyat per household for the construction fund from near by villages. The construction took 2 months. The owners whose land had been seized, sent a

representative to Commander Major General Aye Kywe to negotiate a way to reclaim their land. The Commander responded that if the owners agreed to pay 30,000 Kyat per a piece of land, the military would withdraw. All the owners agreed and collected 30,000 Kyat each -a total 1,200,000 Kyat- and sent with the money to General Aye Kywe. However, the owners did not get any answer from the Commander. Currently the infrastructures for No(34) Missile aircraft squadron has already temporarily built and nobody is allowed to enter the area. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Gantgor-thaung Village - Yepyu Township**

Gamtgor-taung village is a subordinate village of Kanpauk village Tract of Yepyu Township, and is located beside the Ye -Tavoy railway which is under the control of the military base of Ka La Ya (272). The people in the region make their living as farmers. In April 2001, the SPDC Forestry Department extended the area of its forest reserve. Consequently, 170 acres from 20 cashew nut plantations belonging to people in the region, were confiscated without compensation and added to the forest reserve. The SPDC Forestry Department cut down all the cashew nut trees in the areas they confiscated and cleared the land for substitute teaks. Besides Gantgor-thaung village, some of the plantation land of Thaungnyin-inn village, Phakhaung village and Kayinshindaphi village were also seized for the forest reserve by SPDC Forestry Department. Despite the fact that there are foreign natural gas companies located in the region of Kanpauk village, the jobless rate has increased. This is a result of the foreign companies' limited hiring of labourers and reducing daily wages. People from the village who worked as daily wage labours with the foreign companies earned wages that were inadequate to feed their families. Currently a daily worker earned 400 Kyat per day from Totel Company and Pelemia Oil Company, and if he had meals from company, he would get only 200 Kyat per day. In all villages in Lanpauk village tract, a family of 3 members needs 600 Kyat a day to survive, a 5 member family needs 1000 Kyat, and a family over 5 members family need more than 1500 Kyat for daily food expenses. Due to this, most men and women have left and gone to the Thai border to find jobs. (Source: ABSDF)

**Situation in Tapye-khaung Village - Tavoy Township**

On 27 August 2001, a person from the village who arrived at the border reported that the SPDC authorities were checking peoples' I.D. cards, and those who did not have their IDs with them were unable to travel to their plantation land and were made to return home.

Usually, farmers in the region, grow other vegetables after the main harvest season, to earn extra money. However, since two years ago, after the harvest the army has requisitioned the land to grow vegetables and rice to feed their troops. As the

village is surrounded by many SPDC army camps, it seems that there would be no theft, but villagers lose their poultry every night. This is because the stealing is done by SPDC army themselves, but the villagers do not dare to speak out. (Source: ABSDF)

# 6 . Rights of the Children

## 6. 1 Situation of Children in Burma

Burma became a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on August 15, 1991. The SLORC (now called SPDC) promulgated a new Child Law on July 14, 1993 in order to "implement the rights of the child recognized in the Convention." Chapter V, section 8 of the Child Law states that "The state recognized that every child has the right to survival, development, protection and care, and to achieve active participation in the community." SLORC's Child Law was seen as a positive sign internationally and temporarily improved SLORC's image for the world community. However continuing violations of the rights of children has shown that while national laws to protect children may be in place, little is done to enforce them. Exploitative and dangerous forms of child labor have been widely reported, including working on infrastructure development projects, in military support operations, as child soldiers and in the sex industry. The military government continues to prioritize strengthening the military over improving the heath and education systems the civilian population has little or no access to quality health and education services. In a 2000 report the United Sates Department of Labor cited the SPDC's apparent lack of commitment to primary education and widespread poverty as factors contributing to child labor in Burma. Almost half of all children get no education. According to UNICEF, out of 1.3 million children born in Burma every year, 92,500 die before their first birthday and 1 in 3 children under 5 are malnourished.

All children in Burma suffer the consequences of a decades long civil war and military dictatorship. However, ethnic minority children are more vulnerable due to the fact that civil war is often drawn along ethnic lines and fought in ethnic minority areas. In addition to contending with the discrepancy between access to social services available to the military and civilian populations, ethnic minorities face the more direct consequences of internal conflict: physical injury and death; torture and rape; forced labor; the witnessing of atrocities; separation from parents and community; no access to health care, education and housing; eviction and forced relocation; life as refugees and displaced people; the destruction of villages and crops. As part of marginalized groups, minority children are in a precarious situation.

## 6. 2 Status of Education and Health of Children in Burma

**Education**

Despite a compulsory education law, less than half of children in Burma enrol in

school and only 25-35% of those students complete primary school. According to the World Bank, the government only spends 28 cents a year per child in public schools. "By the late 1990's, the regime's expenditure on (civilian) education equaled only 1.2% of the country's Gross National Product – compared to 3.8% for developing countries – and had declined 70% in real terms since 1990. Meanwhile, school attendance has also dropped nationwide, partly because of rising school fees. Schools in some parts of the country have closed down due to lack of state funding." (Source: Earthrights International, "Valued Less than a Milk Tin: Discrimination Against Ethnic Minorities in Burma by the Ruling Military Regime", 2001, pp. 21)

Those children who are able to attend school rarely receive a quality education. Textbooks, equipment and school supplies are outdated and in short supply. The requirements for passing grades have been lowered and the introduction of a new exam system has lessened the need to study in order to pass in the primary, middle and high school levels. Cheat sheets are widely available and bribes, corruption and favoritism are linked to passing with high marks. In addition, the low salaries paid to teachers, between 900-1200 kyat per month (approximately $2-3), has meant that teachers put in extra hours tutoring individual students to earn extra money. The effect of this is that teachers cannot devote their full time and energy to their classes and the practice contributes to favoritism and corruption in the education system.

The high cost of tuition and school-related fees is a major factor in prohibiting children from completing their education. School fees include fees for enrollment, textbooks, exercise books, school cleaning, examination papers, sports fees, tutoring and USDA membership. The continuing economic crisis in Burma has meant that the dropout rate is steadily increasing as children are forced to leave school and work and their families cannot afford to pay school fees. A joint research project between the Burma Labor Department and UNICEF found that of 1163 children between the ages of 5 and 14 who dropped out of school in Rangoon and Mandalay in 1994-5, 57.6 had done so because of high tuition and fees.

Female students are disproportionately affected by high drop-out rates. According to a shadow report for the 22nd session of CEDAW prepared by women's groups from Burma, female children are the most at risk for dropping out of school when a family faces hardship. Fewer than 1/3 of all girls who enroll in primary school make it through. Even though education is highly valued for both male and female children in the majority of Burma's ethnic groups, because the female's role in the family is perceived to be helping with family duties, girls are often taken out of school to help provide the family with basic necessities during times of hardship.

In addition to dropping out of school for financial reasons, thousands of children are forced to drop out, or interrupt, their education for reasons such as forced labor

requirements, the burning of villages by the military, the extra-judicial killing or arbitrary arrest of parents and the general disruption of village life by military authorities who view all civilian activities as subordinate to military and state interests.

In one example, in late 2000, an elementary school in Naa Kham village, collectively built and supported by the villagers in Kaeng Phawng tract, Kaeng-Tung township, Shan State for more than 10 years was confiscated by SPDC military authorities of the Golden Triangle Special Regional Command, in order to make room for residential buildings for a new teachers college. The college was built on cultivated land confiscated from local villagers who were ordered to build a new elementary school themselves in a place that was not easy for the children to access. (Source: SHRF Monthly Report, February 2001)

On May 26, 2001, SPDC troops burned down two village school buildings in Nyaung-lay-bin Districts. SPDC troops from LIB 11 burned down the primary school building in Mae Ka Ti village and troops from LIB 111 burned down the village school in Mae K'ti, Shwe Tin Kyin township. As a result of increased SPDC activities in Nyaung-lay bin District since the middle of 2000, villagers have had to flee their homes and move from place to place. Temporary shelters have been set up to use as schools in the jungle. These school have no walls or chairs and the children use bamboo as blackboards. (Source: KORD, Nyaung-lay-bin District Field Report, June 15, 2001)

*When ethnic minority children do get the opportunity to attend school, the education system is set up to cater to Burmese speakers and oriented towards Burmese culture. Burmese is the only medium for instruction permissible for state primary and secondary schools. Ethnic minority children rarely get the opportunity to study in their own language or to study topics related to their cultural heritage. One member of the Shan ethnic minority group described the situation:*

*"The school teachers are mostly Burman…There is no Shan language or culture taught at school. They let the students learn about Burmese history, and the good things that Burmans are doing. They don't teach about Shan – they don't say anything good or bad about Shan culture."* (Source: Earthrights International, "Valued Less Than a Milk Tin: Discrimination Against Ethnic Minorities in Burma by the Military Regime", 2001, pp. 23/4)

In Wan Pek village, Murng-Paeng township, Shan State, on July 7, 2001, SPDC banned the teaching of Shan literature and traditional dance at a local Buddhist monastery. Approximately 40 Shan students had been studying under the supervision of the abbot, Ven. Wi-La-Sa until it was banned by the SPDC Department of Religious Affairs. The Director of the Department said it wasn't appropriate for a Buddhist monk to be involved with the studying of Shan

literature and traditional dance, and the students should only be interested in their school lessons, which were all in Burmese. Most of the students were then sent back to their parents in Murng Poo Awn tract by SPDC authorities. (Source: SHRF Monthly Report, August 2001)

Reports from Karen State and a study of education in Mon State have also provided evidence that the education policy of SPDC promotes Burmanization through the education system to the detriment of ethnic minority groups. This has the dual effect of placing ethnic minority students who attend state-sponsored schools at a disadvantage in the classroom behind their native-speaking Burmese peers and promoting the marginalization of ethnic minority members who do attend the state-run education system.

Another way in which ethnic minority children are disproportionately affected is through sheer neglect. Remote areas which are difficult to access, and that are largely populated by ethnic minorities, suffer the most. In the Naga hills, there are only a few matriculates and graduates due to its geographical isolation and neglect by the government. Although there are primary and high schools in some villages and townships, the government appointed teachers are often not found in the villages where they are posted even though they are receiving salaries and use facilities provided by the government. Under these circumstances, schools are being run by villagers at their own expense, using local college drop-outs as teachers. Besides lacking furniture, students are not provided with the requisite textbooks and stationary materials that should be provided free to the students.

**MI Unit No. 5 Threatens Mon National Schools**

"In the last week of March 2001, the military regime SPDC's Military Intelligence (MI) Unit No. 5, inquired and collected data about the operation of Mon National Schools in the southern part of Ye Township, Mon State, by questioning Mon village headmen with a threatening questionnaire. MI Unit No. 5, which is based in Ye town asked Mon village headmen from Hangan, Kalort, Singu, Toe-tat and Khawza and gave them a questionnaire that contained 9 questions about the operation of Mon national schools, the teachers and students and education. On March 25, village headmen from Singu were asked to meet with MI No. 5 Unit officers and were instructed to provide facts according to questions given by the officers. The questionnaire included questions such as: (1) Whether the Mon National Schools have been operating in the southern part of Ye Township or not?; (2) If they have, whether the Mon teachers have just taught Mon language only or not?; (3) If there are Mon teachers, how many Mon teachers and how many students have attended their classes?; (4) Whether Mon schools and teachers have attempted to operate a competitive education system against the government?; (5) Do the students and teachers have separate school uniforms from government students and teachers?; (6) List the subjects that they are teaching in their own

schools; (7) What are their teaching methods and what are the contents of each subject?; (8) Whether villagers have supported Mon teachers with food and shelters, or not?; and (9) Whether NMSP supports these teachers or not. After receiving the questionnaire, the village headmen were instructed to send correct answers to the questions within one week. According to past experiences, whenever MI Unit No. 5 has sent out questionnaires or asked for meetings about Mon education and national schools, it has been one way of threatening the village community to stop their support for Mon schools. They also threaten teachers to leave Mon schools by collecting their background information.

The Mon national education system and community-supported Mon national schools have been established for over 20 years by NMSP's Education Department. They also have gradually separated to other areas under NMSP control and areas semi-control by SPDC. School teachers are supported by both NMSP (especially for salaries) and the community supports them with food and shelter. When the regime's education situation deteriorated, the Mon education system gradually developed. In June 1995 NMSP-SLORC made a ceasefire and NMSP leaders asked for Mon language to be taught in government schools. Initially, SLORC promised they would provide this chance, but the promise was broken in 1998 and they tried to arrest Mon teachers and close some Mon schools. Since then, MI No. 5 Unit have always made trouble for Mon schools, teachers, students and students' parents. In the 2000-2001 Academic Year, according to a report by NMSP's Education Department, it had about 161 primary schools, 6 middle schools and 2 high schools. There were about 907 teachers in these schools and it had about 37,135 students total. The locations of these schools are in Mon State, some parts of Karen State and some parts of Tenasserim Division." (Source: HURFOM, Mon Forum, March 2001 Issue)

**Health**

All of the shortcomings of Burma's health care system are felt by children. According to the WHO World Health Report 2000, Burma is ranked 139th out of 191 countries in terms of the overall level of health of the population and 190th for the performance of health care systems given the level of resources. Government studies sponsored by U.N. agencies in 1997 found that, on average, 131 of 1,000 children died before reaching the age of 5 years, and that only 1 of 20 births in rural areas was attended by a doctor. Those same studies indicated that, of children under 3 years old, 37 percent were malnourished, and 13 percent were severely malnourished. (Source: US State Department, Country Report on Human Rights 2001).

The government is estimated to spend US $9 per person per year on all health care even though US $12 is considered the minimum expenditure for basic health care requirements. Burma's health care system has been found to be the most discriminatory in the ASEAN region in terms of responsiveness. The differences are most likely between ethnic groups, income levels and civilians and the military.

The military government cut expenditures on public health care even more sharply than it cut spending for education and in 1998-99 expenditures for civilian health care were only 0.3 percent of GDP. The result is a health care system with insufficient facilities, too few health care workers, inadequate health education programs and lack of rural services. Children continue to die from preventable illnesses as they lack basic medicines. Furthermore, they are also victims of diseases that strike adults as they can lose their parents.

At the same time the health problems of many are exacerbated by the ongoing armed conflict which disproportionately affects ethnic minorities. The populace is affected directly by things such as landmines and military violence, while displacement and forced relocations are the cause of malnutrition and other conditions that lead to the spread of disease.

Due to a severe lack of health facilities, a Chin woman estimated that 95% of babies have jaundice, and that the infant mortality rate exceeds 10%. A Chin Pastor refugee has recently estimated that there are as many as 10,000 orphans in Chin State. Orphanages are extremely poor and children must go from house to house begging. He says they are severe malnourished, estimating they get to eat meat about once a month. TB is a serious health problem. (Source: ALTSEAN, *Report Card* Burma: Still Waiting, 1st Feb – 30 April 2001: 46)

There is much evidence that Burma is on the verge of an AIDS epidemic, the impact of which will surely be felt by children. According to figures from the National AIDS Program, HIV prevalence has increased over the last decade with and average of 2.65% of pregnant women HIV positive in March 1999. According to one estimate, there were anywhere from 42,000 to 58,000 HIV positive children born in Burma between 1988 and 1998. (Source: Beyrer C., *War in the Blood: Sex, Politics and AIDS in Southeast Asia*, 1998). In addition, there is increasingly high number of young girls being trafficked to Thailand to work in the sex industry. These girls are at high risk for contracting HIV as many of them are sold, and re-sold a number of times, as virgins and therefore the men do not use condoms. Many of the countries ranked lower than Burma in the WHO World Health Report are currently suffering from the ravages of AIDS, a situation which has yet to come to a head in Burma.

## 6. 3 Children in Prison and Labor Camps

Children under the age of 5 can be found in prison with their mothers for 3 reasons, they have no relatives to care for them, their mothers have requested that they stay together, or they are born there. However, all children must leave at the age of 5 and if there are no relatives to care for them they are placed in social services. Female political prisoners are only allowed to keep their children with them if they are born in prison. Male prisoners are never allowed to have their children stay with

them.

Children live in prison under the same conditions as other prisoners which includes inadequate health care, unsanitary conditions and lack of nutritious food. Prisoners are allocated 7-8 cups of water a day for washing which must be shared with their children. Meals consist of rice gruel in the morning and two other meals a day of boiled rice and watery soup made with a little fish paste and unwashed vegetables. This must also be shared between the mother and child.

No special provisions are made for education or recreational needs of children in prison. They have no books, toys or play area and because they have to stay with their mothers at all times, their movements are restricted and they can rarely go outdoors or out of the multiple occupancy cells. They are not given immunizations-because there is rarely medicine in the prison clinic, the prisoners must rely on family members or other prisoners for medicine if the children get sick. T.B. is a common problem in prison and also affects children. Because their mothers are not tested for H.I.V., the number of children with this condition is unknown. In addition, women giving birth in prison do not receive adequate pre-natal care and during birth they are only assisted by a midwife who is a fellow prisoner. A high number of children die during childbirth due to complications.

According to one former female political prisoner, there were approximately 50 children staying in Insein prison from 1992-1995. Of these, 15 were born in prison, mostly to long-term prisoners. There are three prison labor camps in Burma that have women prisoners; Pyinmana-Yezin, HtoneBon, and Mandalay-Pathein Gyi. Mothers have to work long days and have quotas to fill; if they don't they are beaten. For this reason, some women choose to tie their children to trees so they aren't bothered while they are working. Many children die in the labor camps due to the heat, no health care, and no medicine for treatable conditions such as diarrhea.

**Juvenile Prison Laborers**

There is an unknown number of juveniles serving out time for petty offences in prison labor camps. Conditions in prison labor camps are notoriously difficult, and there are no special provisions made for underage prisoners. In 2001, the Federation of Trade Unions Burma interviewed a 16 year-old escaped convict from (6) New Life prison labor camp in Kyaik Ma Yaw Township, and Mawlamyaing Township, Mon State. He was sentenced to 6 months imprisonment after failing to report to the local PDC office. While in the camp he reported that 3 prisoners died a month from mistreatment and food and health care were inadequate (see interview at the end if this chapter).

# 6. 4 Child Labor

**Forced Labor and Children**

In 2001, government and military authorities continued to used forced child labor, including the forced conscription of minor boys into the armed forces. Children have been used as forced labor on infrastructure development projects, income generating projects for the military, and support for military operations. This includes such work as portering, road construction, sanitation and building maintenance for military camps, building construction, acting as messengers and various other chores for military personnel. In many cases, when the military demand forced labor from families or villages children are sent, either to free their parents so they can perform incoming generating work, or to ease the burden for the village. In addition to the duties previously described, there are reports that children have been used as human minesweepers and human shields during military operations.

## Sample Incidents of Forced Labor Involving Children

**Arakan State**

February 2001: In the months after anti-Muslim rioting broke out in Sittwe, Arakan State in February 2001, approximately 3,000 students, teachers and monks were taken into custody in Sittwe. They were taken by Military Intelligence, Police and Paramilitary forces and held without trial. Students as young as ten and eleven were interrogated. Two thirds of those arrested were released after paying bribes to officials. The rest went missing or were sent to the Thai border for portering and forced labor. Some parents who traced their children to the Thai border followed them there and bribed law enforcement authorities to release their children. In one case A Ko Ko Naing (not his real name), aged 16, of Moouleik quarter, Sittwe, was taken to Tacheleik of Shan State along with 47 of his fellow students. He was forced to porter by the military in areas where there were operations going on. His father paid a bribe to Military Intelligence 10 of Sittwe and went to Shan State to bring back his son. Most parents of missing children have been afraid to ask the authorities the whereabouts of their children. (Source: Narinjara News, 'Arakanese Students Missing Since The Race Riot', September 28, 2001)

**Mon State (child labor being used in place of forced labor)**

March 2001: In Moulmein, the capital of Mon state, SPDC's regime's local authorities have been using child labor for the construction of the road in March 2000 and additionally, they also collected funds for construction from people under the name of "self-help" program. In Moulmein most roads were built during British colonization of Burma or parliamentary governments before 1962, so they are now in need of repair. Just two years ago, SPDC adopted a "self-help" road construction

or road repairs program and has encouraged its concerned authorities to newly build or repair roads in their own area. Policy rebuilt, a ruined road in Moulmein, Tha-main-bran, which is in Myaing-thar-yar city quarter, applied to be rebuilt in March 2001. To avoid requisition of forced labor as ruled by SPDC's Ministry of Home Affairs, the authorities in Moulmein collected 15, 000 Kyat from each household in that city quarter. Then, with collected funds, the authorities hired labor. But they are using child labor, under 16 years of age, because it is cheaper by half than adult labor. According to a witness, an old mother, who lives in the city quarter, near the road under repair, children under 16 years of age are being used as laborers. She named Khin Lin, a 12 year-old boy, whose father drives a tricycle taxi, a 12 year-old boy, Naing Win, who attended 4 standard as employed on the project. The children are earning about 150 kyats per day. Early in the morning the children start work in the construction site until midday. After one hour rest, they work until sundown every day. These children are not of working age, but they are working for their family's livelihood she added. (Source: HURFOM, Mon Forum, May 2001 Issue)

**Tenasserim Division**

From February to June 2001, 1,000 villagers from Pyin Phyu Gyi, San Sin and Winn Way village groups, Thayet Chaung Township were forced to work building a 50 kilometer road between Ye Byat and Tuang Pyork villages to Bann Chuang area. As some of the families had no male members, girls as young as 12 years old and women over 70 were forced to work on the project. The total number of children and elderly working on the project was 70. Some 30 people died while working on the project and over 200 got ill, mostly young girls and elderly women. The causes of death were starvation, malaria, exhaustion and accidents. The villagers went through a similar experience in 1999 and 2000, when 37 people died and 150 were injured and ill while working on road construction projects. (Source: THRF 2001)

On March 4, 2001, in Kaywt city, Tennaserim Division, Ko Mayth Thaw, aged 14, was on his way home from taking his final examination for 6th standard when he was stopped by SPDC troops and sent to Ta Nin Tha Ye District, Tenasserim Division to a military operation area. In August, 2001 he ran away and escaped to Thin Baw Naw Village, Ta Nin Tha Ye township. He was then sent back home by the villagers. (Source: THRF 2001)

On March 9, 2001, soldiers from LIB 103, led by Lt. Col Aye Kyaing, arrested 80 male and female villagers in Tennaserim Township, Tennaserim Division for use as forced porters. The villagers were between the ages of 12 and 60. They had to carry foodstuffs, rations and arms for three days to Kyauk Lone Gyi camp. Along the way about 20 villagers got ill but were not given any medical treatment and no payment. A 12 year-old boy, Htway Hla broke his right hand. Gyi Tin, 62, of Thin Baw Nan village died while carrying his load. The porters were taken from the following villages: Thin Baw Nan, Ye Pu, Kaw Ma Pyin, Mine Seip, San Pyi. (Source: THRF 2001)

**Shan State**

On June 16, 2001, SPDC troops from LIB 514 forcibly conscripted 250 civilian porters, including 108 women and children - some as young as 8, from among the displaced persons who had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Murng-Kerng town 4-5 years ago. The forced consription occurred after an armed clash between SPDC troops and Shan resistance soldiers in Murng-Kern township. The SPDC troops took all of the adult men, and when men were not available they took women and children, many of whom were between 8 and 16 years old, to carry ammunition, rice, food stuffs and military items. Some of the children were only able to carry 6 cans of condensed milk, 1 pyi of rice or 10 rounds of m79 motor shells each. If they could not go fast enough they were kicked and beaten. The porters were forced to serve for 16 days without pay, during that time all of the women porters over the age of 15 were said to have been raped by SPDC soldiers. They were released on June 28, 2001. Approximately 5-6 days later, the same SPDC troops ordered the village headmen in the area to provide 10-15 civilian porters from each village. (Source: SHRF Monthly Report, August 2001)

**Karen State**

Starting May 1, 2001, a column from SPDC IB 75 under LID 66, operating in Tantabin Township, Toungoo District, Karen State demanded more than 200 villagers for porters. On May 1, the SPDC troops operating in Hu-mu-der village, demanded 200 villagers, including women and children from Klaw-mee-der, Hu-mu-der and Ler-klah-der villages to carry military supplies from Pet-let-wah to Klaw-mee-der village for two days at a time. Also starting in the beginning of May, troops from IB 75 based in Glaw-mee-doe village regularly demanded 12 porters from the villages. The porters included women and children who had to carry food and military supplies. If the villagers failed to provide a porter, they had to pay 700 kyat. The villagers in Glaw-mee-doe area also had to pay 252,000 kyat a month in porter fees, or if the month had 31days, 336,000 kyat. (Source: KIC, Press Release No. 24/2001)

# 6. 5 Child Soldiers

The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers has cited Burma as one of the world's single largest users of child soldiers. Factors that lead to the use of child soldiers include poverty, displacement, lack of educational opportunities, arms proliferation and the militarization of society. All of them occur in Burma. Many children in their early teens are serving in the Burmese army voluntarily, however other children under the age of 18 are enlisted forcibly. In one example, in 2001, the All Burma Muslim Union reported that SPDC authorities have been stopping passenger buses travelling from Kaw Ka Rate to Myawaddy, Karen State and arresting male passengers under the age of 15. Those who could pay a bribe were

released, but others were sent to Pa'an and put on a list to become soldiers. Particularly at risk for forced recruitment are orphaned and street children. Often children are arrested for minor infractions of the law and then given the option of joining the army or going to prison.

According to a March 2001 Karen Human Rights Group report, many children between the ages of 13-19 are enlisted and some as young as 9. In some cases, children were taken from their parents under the guise of wanting to give them educational opportunities, but they were then placed in military schools after which they were expected to join the SPDC. Children are given the same basic training as other soldiers, but if they are not strong enough to carry their own guns or backpacks they can be kept in battalion camps for months or years. If they are too young to be sent out on operations, under the age of 12 or 13, they can be used as forced labor on projects such as digging roads, taking care of animals or cutting grass and bushes. Child soldiers are often beaten by other soldiers or their commanders. The following testimonial comes from a KHRG interview of a former child solder:

> ***"They also have children as young as 10 or 12 years old. They really need the manpower at the frontline of the battlefield so they arrest children. Some are too young so they keep them to take care of goats, cows and chickens [at the camps]. They also have children that they send to school. It is because they need higher numbers of soldiers that they are arrested like that…The 10 and 11 year olds have to attend the training. If the couldn't follow to the frontline and couldn't carry their backpack and gun, they were ordered to go to the rear area and raise goats for one or two years."*** – Soe Tint (M,18), Lance Corporal from LIB #504, Papun District (KHRG Interview #6, Abuse Under Orders: The SPDC and DKBA Armies Through the Eyes of their Soldiers, 3/2001).

Child soldiers serving in the Burmese military often have little or no contact with their families, are underpaid, frequently beaten and not given adequate food or medicine.

On October 28, 2001, a main military command in Ye Township of Mon State, Military Operation Management Command No. 19 called a meeting with all village headmen in Ye township for 3 days and instructed all village headmen to provide the list of men between 15 and 30 years old and instructed that these men must join army. (Source: Mon Forum, Women and Child Rights Project).

# 6. 6 Child Trafficking for the Sex Industry

**Trafficking of Virgin Girls**

Children from the majority Burman and ethnic minority children from Shan and Kachin States are the largest percentage of child migrant prostitutes in Thailand. Although the Child Law states that "*every child has the right to… protection and care"* very little action has been taken to prevent the trafficking and exploitation of young women from Burma. Government efforts have been ineffective and limited to infrequent arrests and regulations restricting the cross border movement of young females which rarely has any affect in combatting trafficking. Contributing to this problem is the tacit approval, and sometimes complicity, of Thai and Burmese officials in the trafficking of women and children.

The trafficking of women from Burma for commercial sex work in Thailand has been well documented. However a new trend emerging is that trafficked girls are increasingly virgins who are in demand because of the belief that there is less chance that young girls are HIV positive. According to the Women's League of Burma (WLB), doctors at a clinic in the Thai border town of Mae Sot have reported that the increased demand for virgins has led more and more families to sell their daughters into brothels for a short period of time until the "value of their virginity" has expired, at which point they return to their families. In practice, young girls are sold as virgins several times until the amount they can be sold for steadily decreases.

According to one 13-year old Karen girl who was sold into prostitution against her will:

> *At first, they didn't put me in the prostitute house. I don't know what they call it - is that "Par Kin-Paunt"? ("Par-Kin-Paunt" is a Burmese word that literally means "first opening" or "deflowering" and refers to virgin girls who are new to prostitution and who are free from HIV/AIDS) I don't know. They sent me to that place. As soon as they sent me there, a man started to "Par-Kin-Paunt" me. I asked him, "what are you going to do to me?" The uncle told me, "I paid for you, I can do whatever I want." I tried to fight him, but he beat me and then used me. At this place, they sold me as "Par-Kin-Paunt" maybe three times, I don't remember. After that, the head-person of Darling Prostitution House came and took me to work at their brothel. They didn't allow me to go out or look out the windows. They beat me when they saw me looking out the windows. And they didn't feed me enough food."*

These young prostitutes are not adequately educated about sexually transmitted diseases and customers who pay more for a virgin girl are rarely willing to use a condom. Child prostitutes are often held against their will after being sold into

prostitution and do not receive adequate food or health care and live in physically insecure situations where they fear bodily harm from both their employers and customers. If a girl is no longer profitable because of pregnancy or disease she is often turned out on the street.

# 6. 7 Children in Armed Conflict

**Violence Against Children**

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically refers to the protection of children in armed conflict and provides that every child has the right to life, survival and development; that no child under 15 should take part in hostilities; that children should not be separated from their parents except for their own well-being; that states should protect children from harm and neglect; and that children of minority and indigenous populations should freely enjoy their own culture, religion and language, as well as all other rights enshrined in the convention, without discrimination.

Children living in conflict areas in Burma are routinely deprived of most of these rights; violence committed against children being the most blatant breach of these rights. Children are victims of rape, torture, landmines and killed by the army and security forces. Girls under the age of 18, and sometimes boys, are routinely raped by SPDC troops operating in their communities and during forced labor. They are sometimes killed to prevent leaving behind a witness to the crime. Persons, including children, doing forced labor, particularly clearing roads and forced portering, are often forced to act as human minesweepers and human shields. In free fire zones, known as "Black Areas", troops regularly shoot at villagers and into their homes regardless of whether there are children present.

According to Karen Human Rights Group, "Children make up a large percentage of the people shot dead or wounded by the SPDC's soldiers. A villager from Lu Thaw township related to KHRG how the soldiers came upon her hut in the forest and immediately opened fire on her three children. There were no adults as they were away in the fields. As her two sons were running, one of them 7 years old and obviously not an adult, a rifle grenade landed behind them and wounded the 7 year old boy in the leg. He was carried away by his brother and survived, but many others have not. Some villagers have lost whole portions of their families. During an attack on an IDP site in Shwegyin township in January 2000, "Saw K'Baw's" *[not his real name]* 6 month old son was shot in the head and killed while suckling milk from his mother's breast as she was fleeing. After another shooting in late 1999 in Lu Thaw township a villager interviewed by KHRG learned that he had lost his 13 year old daughter, his 11 year old son, his brother and his uncle." (Source: KHRG, Flight, Hunger and Survival: Repression and Displacement in the Villages of Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, October 2001)

Whether or not a child is a direct target of violence, children living in areas of armed conflict are subjected to numerous hardships that mar their entire lives. Family, community and cultural life are disrupted by violence and insecurity. Children witness killing and violence directed against family, neighbors and community members. The emotional and mental toll that this will take over a lifetimes is impossible to calculate. Their opportunity to grow up in an environment that nurtures and promotes their development is taken away from them. They miss out on education, and their health and well-being are directly threatened. The list goes on. Children need special protection because they are vulnerable- both because of the direct harm they sustain and lost opportunities. Children have a crucial role in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction and need to be recognized as actors in their own right.

**Killing of Children 2001 – partial list of incidents**

On 19 December 2001, approximately 120 combined troops from DKBA brigade 999, led by battalion second-in-command Bo Ga Don, and SPDC IB-35, came to Thay-po-kyu place Thay-doh-kwee village in Mae-pa-leh area, Pa-an District, Karen State and shot and killed Pa-klo villager Saw Pah Bi (M,41), son of Saw Kyaw Yin, and Toe-kor-ko villager Saw Keh Keh ( M,17 ), son of Saw Pa Gay, after accusing them of being KNU spies. (Source: KIC, KNU Press Release No.2/2002, January 9, 2002).

On 18 December 2001, in Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State, troops from SPDC LIB 561, led by Bo Thant Zin, shot and killed two Ta-po-hta villagers: (1) Khar Maung Di, 14, son of Saw Na Ha and Naw Lah Lah, and (2) Saw Baw Htoo, 16, son of Saw Meh Doe and Naw Dee Aye, without reason, while they were grazing their buffaloes. (Source: KIC, KNU Press Release No. 7/2002, January 18, 2002.)

On 10 October 2001, about 20 troops from SPDC LIB 55, led by Major Myo Thant, came to Bo-khee area, Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State, and shot at villagers while they were working in their paddy fields. In that incident, a child Saw Eh Htoo (M,10) was killed and villager Saw Blai Yu, (M,30) was wounded in both of his knees. These troops forced Naw Htweh, (F,30) wife of Saw Blai Yu, to take off all her clothes and forced her to go back into the village. (Source: KIC, KNU Press Release No.65/2001, November 28, 2001).

On 8 June 2001, SPDC troops from IB 75, led by deputy commander Thet Tun Aung shot and killed Naw Paw Ler, aged 9, from Kho Lu village, Taw Tha Htoo township, Toungoo District, Karen State. She was killed on her way back home from collecting betel leaves with her brother. Her family could not get her body for three days as there were still troops in the area where her body lay. After seeing the body, her family believed that she had been wounded first in the arm and then shot at closer range, once in the back and once in the head. (Source: CIDKP)

On 29 March 2001, a family of 4 was beaten to death by a patrol of SPDC troops from Nam-Zarng-based IB66, led by, at a rice farm in Ton Hung tract in Murng-Nai township, Shan State. The family, from Ter Hung village, was staying on the farm to clear a plot to grow rice. Zaai Ma-La, 26, and his wife, Naang Kya Yong, 24, their son, Zaai Bee, 6, and their daughter, Naang Thun Nae, 4, had been clearing the land since March 5 and were killed by IB66 troops who were patrolling the area and shooting cattle. (Source: SHRF)

On 24 March 2001, SPDC troops arrived at Htee Ler Hkee, a place in the jungle where villagers were hiding from SPDC troops, on the Tenasserim riverside, Mergui-Tavoy District and opened fire on the villagers. Naw Mu Sei, 17, daughter of Saw Beh was killed, and Saw Be Nuh, 20, son of Saw Nya was wounded. Two other villagers were missing. (Source: CIDKP)

On 24 March 2001, SPDC troops arrived at Htee Thee Hkee, a place in the jungle where villagers were hiding from SPDC troops, on the Tenasserim riverside, Mergui-Tavoy District and opened fire on the villagers. Naw Ka Beh, 7, daughter of Saw Be Po was killed. Pa Te Shwe Ta, 29, son of Saw Po Kyaw was wounded. Two women, Naw Deh and Naw Leh Hka, and their two children were captured and taken away. (Source: CIDKP)

## 6. 8 Sexual Assualt Against Children 2001– partial list of incidents

On 14 July 2001, Naang Aam (not her real name), aged 16, was raped by Capt. Naing Oo the commander of Co. No. 4 of LIB 333 of the SPDC, about 1-1/2 miles south of Murng Tum village in Murng Tum tract, Murng-Sart township. On that day, Naang Aam was looking for their cow which they had let loose to graze in the fields south of their village, Murng Tum, when she ran into Capt. Naing Oo who pointed a pistol at her and dragged her by the hand into a nearby bush. As Naang Aam was crying and shouting for help, Naing Oo covered her mouth with one hand and threatened to shoot her dead if she continued to make noise and raped her. When Capt. Naing Oo released her, Naang Aam started to cry and shout even louder than before and he struck her on the head with his pistol butt, and she fell down on the ground. Naing Oo then beat her with a stick until she lost consciousness. Some hours later, Naang Aam was found lying unconscious in a bush by her father who was worried about her having gone too long and had come looking for her. She was then nursed back to consciousness by her father and they walked slowly, helped all the way by her father, back to their village, where she related her plight to her parents. (Source: SHRF Monthly Report – November 2001)

On 2 June 2001, Naang Seng (not her real name), aged 17, of Paang Sa village in Naa Loi tract, Lai-Kha township, was raped by commander Chit Htwe from Co.

No. 4 of IB 64 at the edge of a field near her village where she had been gathering vegetables. While Chit Htwe was raping her, Naang Seng's father who was worried about his daughter and had come after her saw it and shouted for help, and Chit Htwe quickly ran away.

When Naang Seng and her father, with the help of the village tract leader, went to file a complaint with the battalion commander, Aung Kyaw, at the LIB 333 base, she was asked if she would recognize her assailant. When Naang Seng said yes, the commander told all 3 of them to come back the following morning when the troops lined up for morning check, and dismissed them. The next morning, Naang Seng, her father and the village tract headman, accompanied by 13 other fellow villagers, went to the military base and the commander told her to point out her rapist among the lines of 250 or so soldiers. Naang Seng, however, could not find Chit Htwe and told the commander that he was not among the lined-up soldiers.

The commander then said that those were all the soldiers in the camp and accused Naang Seng of trying to frame one of the soldiers under his command, and asked the village tract headman what he wanted to do. The headman said that if the rapist was not among the soldiers he would just have to drop the case, and asked permission to return home. But the commander stopped them and said that they had insulted him by accusing one of his soldiers of raping their daughter, which was not true, and they would have to pay a fine for that or be put in jail. The 3 villagers who had filed the complaint were obliged to pay 30,000 Kyat each and the other 13 who had accompanied them had to pay 20,000 Kyat each. The villagers were ordered to pay the money to the village tract headman within 5 days and the headman was to bring it to the commander within 7 days. (Source: SHRF Monthly Report – November 2001)

On 24 April 2001, 4 women from Kam village, Yebyu township, Tenasserim Division were repeatedly raped by 4 soldiers from LIB 407 led by Lt Col Aung Win. The women had been on their way to a donation ceremony in Gaw Zun village. The victims were Daw Myint Sein, 40, Ma Ohn Myint, 25, Ye Ye Win, 18 and Cho Mar, 14. A fifth woman managed to escape. (Source: THRF 2001)

On 30 March 2001, a column of SPDC troops from Nam-Zarng Based IB 66, who had killed a family of four on March 29, tied a man up and gang-raped his 17-year-old niece for several hours in Kun Mong tract, Murng-Nai township, Shan State. As the troops left Ton Hung tract and continued to patrol the adjacent Kun-Mong tract, they saw Lung Wong, 51, and his niece, "Naang Suay Kya" (not her real name), 17, from Kun Kawk village in Kun Mong with an ox-cart carrying pieces of wood and bamboo. The troops stopped them, tied the Lung Wong up and took Naang Suay Kya to another place and gang-raped her, while other troops killed the oxen for meat. Naang Suay Kya was gang-raped by about 13-14 SPDC troops, including Capt. Soe Win, for more than 6 hours. She was able to untie Lung Wong when the troops had gone. (Source: SHRF)

On 6 March 2001, Sargent Than Aung and two of his men from SPDC LIB 349, based at Mon Town, came to Kone-daw village, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State at 12 midnight and arrested U Maung Ni, his wife, Daw Shwe Aye and their daughter, Ma Than Than, 17. They were tied up and beaten severely. Later, Sargent Than Aung repeatedly raped Ma Than Than. All the three were released later. A complaint was made to SPDC LIB 349 Battalion Commander Htay Win regarding this incident, however the complainants were told that if they wanted to stay in peace they should not say anything. (Source: KIC)

On 24 January 2001, 2 displaced villagers were beaten to death and a 14-year-old girl was taken away and raped for 3 nights by a patrol of SPDC troops from Kun-Hing-based IB246 at a deserted farm northwest of Ton Hoong village relocation site in Ton Hoong tract, Murng-Nai township. The victims were 3 villagers, a father, a son and a daughter, from Ton Hoong relocation site. They were gathering wild vegetables at an old farm some distance northwest of Ton Hoong when they were arrested by a patrol of 45-50 SPDC troops from Co.4 of IB246 led by Capt. Zaw Thein, stationed at Ton Hoong relocation site. The SPDC troops tied up the father and the son and interrogated and tortured them, and eventually beat them to death with sticks. Capt. Zaw Thein then raped the daughter and took her along with the patrol for 3 nights before she was released.

**The 3 victims were:**

1. Sa Ti Ya, aged 35, the father, beaten to death

2. Zaai Khat, aged 16, son of Sa Ti Ya, beaten to death

3. Naang Muay Khur (not her real name), aged 14, daughter of Sa Ti Ya, raped and taken away for 3 nights

Some time after she got back to Ton Hoong relocation site, Naang Muay Khur reported the incident to the village elders and community leaders, and they went to find the bodies of the 2 dead victims and buried them properly. No one dared to do anything more than this, for fear of further abuses. (Source: SHRF)

On 17 January 2001, a villager was beaten to death and his daughter was raped and held for two days by SPDC troops from IB66, led by, about 1-1/2 miles from Ho Ha village in Nam-Zarng township, Shan State. The victims, Lung Seng, 40, and his daughter, Naang Zaw (not her real name), 17, were going to cut firewood, carrying with them a saw, an axe and a knife, when they ran into the column of 70-80 SPDC troops. Lung Seng was interrogated and beaten to death, while Capt. Aung Kyaw raped Naang Zaw. The troops took her but she was released two days later. (Source: SHRF)

**Other**

On November 1, 2001, when a SPDC military column from LIB No. 378 led by Lt. Col. Sein Tin Aung, launched a military activity in southern part of Ye Township, they were attacked by a Mon splinter group near Mi-htaw-hla-kalay village and the soldiers believed the villagers from that village were supporting the rebels against them. On the next day, on November 2, the commander of LIB No. 278 ordered all villagers from every house to gather in village's football field including elderly, women and children. Some women also had to bring 3 month old babies and other children with them and gathered them in the football field where there was no shade. They were kept there in the hot sun for about 4 hours. Some children cried because of the heat and hunger, but the commander did not allow them to stay under shady trees or to return home. While the villagers were under the hot sun as a punishment, the soldiers climbed into every house in the village to find evidence of who had supported the rebel soldiers. However, the soldiers took villagers' properties including gold, home-use materials and others property. After 4 hours in the football ground, and completion of the looting, the soldiers released the women and children to their homes. (Source: Mon Forum, Women and Child Rights Project)

On 15 October 2001, soldiers from SPDC LIB 558, led by Major Myo Thant, on their way from Ka-byaung to Wa-thoo-lor village, found Wa-thoo-lor villager Saw Ta See, (m), age 15, son of Tee Gaw Kay and Naw Pwa Mu Doh, while he was grazing his buffaloes. The troops demanded that he give them his machete and when he refused, they struck him violently on the head with a rifle butt, causing a 2-inch wound. Saw Ta See reported to Major Myo Thant that his soldiers had tried to strike him with his machete, but Major Myo Thant did not take any action against his men. Moreover, he told Saw Ta See that he himself had already had killed more than a hundred people without the knowledge of his senior officers. (Source: KIC)

On 6 April 2001, SPDC troops opened fire on internally displaced villagers hiding in Maw Saw Ko, in the west of the Tenasserim River region, Mergui-Tavoy District. Saw Pla, 38, was killed. Saw Ba So Gay, 12, was captured. The fate of Saw Ba So Gay was not learned after his arrest. The troops burned down five houses, at least 40 sacks of rice and all the villagers' belongings. (Source: CIDKP)

On 2 April 2001, troops from No. 2 column of LIB 20, under SPDC LID 77, came to Ka-wa area and shot up the village. Villager Naw Ma Pyu (F, 23) and her baby were seriously wounded. The troops forced the villagers to come down from their houses and looted all kinds of belongings of the villagers. They also killed, for food, all chickens and pigs found. In addition, they looted 60,000 Kyat and 30 silver coins from the villagers. They tortured brutally the villagers, who were; (1) Saw Maung Sa; (2) Saw Pa Nge; (3) Saw Pah Kway; (4) Saw Gaw Lah; (5) Saw Da Bleh; (6) Saw Toe and (7) Saw Pah Lee. (Source: KIC)

On 16 March 2001, two members of SPDC police force in Ta-Khi-Laek township stripped naked and beat an 8-year-old Akha child, took away one kilo of seasoning powder he was carrying, and left him unconscious on the road. Aa Mer, an Akha woman from Pung Thun quarter in Ta-Khi-Laek, was hired by someone to carry a little amount of consumer goods across the Mai Sai river. Since Aa Mer had to carry her baby in one hand, she had only one hand to carry the consumer goods and could not carry it all, so she let her 8-year-old son carry a one-kilogram package of seasoning powder with her. After they had crossed the river, they were chased by two SPDC police officers. Although Aa Mer was able to escape by running and hiding, her 8-year-old son was caught by the police. The police officers seized and scolded the boy, stripped him of his clothes, beat and kicked him several times and took away his seasoning powder, leaving him naked and unconscious. Aa Mer returned to look for her son, and found him sitting naked near a pile of clothes, crying. Due to the closure of the border since February 11, 2001, consumer goods have become very difficult to obtain for most of the townspeople of Ta-Khi-Laek. The people in the area try to smuggle in consumer goods from Mae Sai when and wherever possible, especially across the Mae Sai river at remote spots out of the sight of the soldiers from both sides. (Source: SHRF)

# 6. 9 Personal Accounts

**Interview with a former (juvenile) prisoner from No (6) New Life Camp**

Interviewed by : Federation of Trade Unions Burma

Name : Aung Aung

Age : 16 yr. (at the time of the incident)

Prison Registration. No. : 1616

Court where sentenced : Mawlamyaing District Court

Home Address : Zayyar Thiri (11) St., Mawlamyaing Tsp.

Convictions : 1) Quarreling with neighborhood P D C official; under Act 5/1, made to report daily to police station for 1 year

: 2) Sentenced to 6 months imprisonment for failing to report to the police station

After his court hearing, on November 25, 2001 Aung Aung was transferred to Mawlamyaing Prison. One month later, on December 18, 2001, he was sent to the No (6) New Life Camp.

Upon arriving at the camp he had to give a Kyat 2,000 bribe to the camp officials so that they would treat him well and so that he would not be assigned hard work. He

had to pay a further bribe of Kyat 1,500 whenever his family came to see him.

Aung Aung reported the following information about conditions at the camp.

The camp officials used convicted laborers to manually operate a heavy machine which removes the skin off the rice seeds and instead of using cows they use prisoners pull the ploughs. There were 320 convicted laborers, of these there were three companies (Company 1, 2 and 3) with 70 laborers in each who worked in the rice fields. Some of the other convicted laborers grew vegetables for camp officials and their families. Other prisoners worked in the houses of camp officials. Most prisoners preferred to work in the houses of camp officials, because the work was much lighter than other kinds of work, but to be assigned to this type of work they had to pay a bribe.

Whenever the relatives of a convicted prisoner came to visit them, they had to give between 100 and 200 Kyats as a 'donation' to the prison, even though they had already been forced to pay Kyat 200 to get permission for the visit. Actually, the policemen made the donation box and kept the money. Usually a prisoner who receives a visit from his family considers it a lucky thing. However in this camp it was not lucky, because after the visit, the prisoner had to pay his company commander Kyat 2,000, Kyat 1,000 to his group leader (also a prisoner) and Kyat 200 to the prisoner in charge of his block. If the prisoner couldn't pay, they would beat him and assign him very hard work. Sometimes, the officials beat the prisoners until they became unconscious or even until they died. A prisoner named Kyaw Myint Oo (aka Moe Gyi) from Aukkyint Quarter, Mawlamyaing was one of these prisoners who was killed by beating. The average death toll among the prisoners is 3 persons per month.

The prisoners in this camp were fed only a cup of rice and bean-curry, which was like water. So the prisoners were forced to scavenge for other kinds of vegetation, chopped crabs, chopped fishes and even water snakes. Due to their poor diet some prisoners suffered from cholera.

At the camp there was only one medic with one assistant. Whenever the workers had an illness or injury they were only given *Burmeton*, a type of cold medicine. When the prisoners got sick they were fed only a cup of boiled rice in water. The sick prisoners were made work cleaning three buildings and shoveling human excrement from the latrines. Some of the ill prisoners couldn't tolerate this work and so they fought with the other prisoners, and in some cases even killed each other, in order to get an extra sentence and be transferred to prison from the camp.

The camp is shaped like a square. There are three buildings that are 100 ft long and 20 ft high. There are about 80 to 100 prisoners in each building.

Aung Aung reports that there was religious oppression carried out by camp officials. In the camp there were about 25 Muslim prisoners. The camp officials treated them

more brutally than the other prisoners. At some point all of them were severely tortured and as a result of the torture, 2 of them died.

The camp officials did not allow these Muslim prisoners that were killed to be given a traditional religious burial. Instead they just buried them in the same hole.

## Child Soldiers Interview 1

*March 8, 2002*

***Interviewed by: Human Rights Documentation Unit***

***Translation by: Karenni Information Network Group***

Name: "Min Zaw"

Age: 14

Ethnicity: Burman

Religion: Buddhist

Education Completed: 2nd Standard

Address: xxxx village, Thatoun* township, Tennasserim Division

Family: Father's name xxxx, Mother's name xxxx, six children including "Min Zaw"

Rank: Army normal/ no rank

Unit: Infantry Battalion 246, Company 1

Area: Unit based in Khoun Hein Township, Shan State

Time spent in the army: 3 years

**I:** How did you become a soldier?

**MZ:** In 1999 I went with my mother to visit Yangon. My mother returned home first, and I left for home five days later. On the way home there were many checkpoints. At one checkpoint the police stopped me because I had no ID card, and took me to the police station. There the police threatened me, saying that because I had no ID card I could be put in jail for 6 years. Then they told me that I could choose to either go to jail for 6 years or join the army. I was afraid of spending 6 years in jail so I decided to join the army. At this time I was 11 years old.

**I:** What happened after you joined the army?

**MZ:** After I told the police that I would join the army they sent me to Mingaladon, which is one of the main places where new soldiers are collected before being sent out to training camps. I stayed here for 10 days. Then I was sent to No. 5 training camp, also called Ye Ni training camp, where I spent 5 months and two weeks in training. The army officer in charge of the training camp was second captain, Tun

Naing. Then I was sent to the IB246 based in Khoun Hein Township. My battalion commander was Second Captain U Myat San. The Sergeants in charge of my company, company #1 were Khin Maung Win, and under him, Hla Theing. Our area of activity was from Khoun Hein to Kholan Township (Southern Shan State).

**I:** How did they treat you in the army, during and after training?

**MZ:** When I began the training I was very young, only 11 years old, so I could not understand how to use a gun, and I made many mistakes. So the officers training me would beat me. After training when I was with my unit one time we had to go on a journey (on foot) but I was ill. I told sergeant Myint Win that I was ill and asked if I could stay back, but he forced me to go. Twice a day, in the morning and evening all the soldiers had to line up. Sometimes I was late and then the officers would beat me with a stick, or their hands, or sometimes kick me.

**I:** What kind of food did they give you?

**MZ:** We were given only rice and fish paste, no curry. We got one cup of milk every 2 or 3 months. We were given food two times a day, in the morning and evening. We had no lunch and no money to buy extra food so we were always hungry.

**I:** What happened when you got sick?

**MZ:** There was an army hospital in Khun Hein that had medicine. I sometimes had stomachaches or headaches and they would give me tablets and then send me back to the line. I would not be allowed to rest. Other soldiers who had malaria were given medicine and then sent back to the line. Only if they had a severe case of malaria or TB were they sent to the hospital.

**I:** What work did you do in the army?

**MZ:** For six months we would be on patrol. Two times we had battles with the SSA. We each had to carry a total of 20 kilos of equipment, including our guns, food, and supplies. Everyday we would start walking at 5:30 or 6 am, we would walk for 2 or 3 hours and then we would have a 5-10 minute break. We would stop at 12 pm, when we would eat for the first time some cold rice that we had prepared the night before. After this would have to continue walking until we reached our destination village, even if we had to walk into the night. When we got there we would cook our dinner, saving some food for lunch the next day. One time we had been climbing a mountain for 3 and a half days, and because our equipment was so heavy I was unable to climb any further, so the older soldiers beat me. After six months on patrol we would have one month rest at the army camp. There every day we had to make bricks for building and cut brush around the camp. We worked from 6 am to 10 am, then from 12:30 pm to 4 pm. The older soldiers also had to do this work. We only got to rest on Sunday, then we could leave the army base and go visit the town market.

**I:** Did you ever go to school while in the army?

**MZ:** No

**I:** What kind of weapons did you use?

**MZ:** A G-3

**I:** Did you ever have to shoot people?

**MZ:** Yes

**I:** How many younger (under 18 years old) soldiers were in your battalion?

**MZ**: In the battalion 1/3 out of a total of 1,000 soldiers were younger. There were many who were 12 years old. In my Company, Company 1, there were 30 soldiers and 15 were under 18 years old. New soldiers would not be sent to the battalion before they were 12, but they would be taken for training if they were 10 or 11.

**I:** How did the younger soldiers feel about being in the army?

**MZ:** Every day they were unhappy, every day they were very homesick, and missing their mothers and brothers.

**I:** Could you contact your family? Could your family contact you?

**MZ:** I have been unable to contact my family since I joined the army when I was 11 years old.

**I:** How did the soldiers treat civilians (villagers) in the area you were stationed in?

**MZ:** Because we did not know the way through the jungle we would make some villagers walk in front of us. We also took food from the villagers, like chickens and pigs. We also took villagers for porters. Every time we went on an operation we would take 40 villagers for porters. When we came to a village all the villagers would run and hide in the jungle because they were afraid of being taken as porters. If a porter tried to run away then the section commander would tell the captain on his walkie-talkie that a porter had tried to run away, and the captain would say that he should be killed. This happened six times [*porters were killed for running away*] while I was in the army.

**I:** Why did you leave the army?

**MZ:** It was very bad. We were unable to carry all the weight, we did not have enough food, we were always tired. Our officer would order us to go get water or search for food, and even though we were very tired we could not complain. During our training we were told that the army is good for the future of Burma, but after I was in the jungle I think that the army is not good for the people, because of things like forced portering.

**I:** How did you escape from the army?

**MZ:** On the night of January 29th we (Min Zaw and Aung Kyaw) had security

duty. At 9 p.m. we left our equipment and ran away into the jungle. We kept going till 4:30 a.m. then we were very tired so we slept. When we woke up we walked for 30 minutes until we reached the border and we crossed over into Thailand. We found a path through the paddy fields and we walked until we reached a Thai village, I don't remember the name of the village. The villagers sent for the police who came and took us to the xxxx police station. We had to stay there for five days, and there was no one who could speak to us in Burmese. Then the police contacted UNHCR who came and brought us to xxxx. We did not tell the UNHCR people our real names, or that we were soldiers, we just said that we were porters. We were afraid that we would be killed.

**I:** How did you feel about the time you spent in the army?

**MZ:** I was unhappy every day, every day I was homesick.

**I:** Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience that we didn't ask you?

**MZ:** I want to share my experience with many people.

## Child Soldiers Interview 2

*March 8, 2002*

***Interviewed by: Human Rights Documentation Unit***

***Translation by: Karenni Information Network Group***

Name: "Aung Kyaw"

Age: 16

Ethnicity: Burman

Religion: Muslim

Education completed: 4th standard

Address: Phey Township, Pegu Division

Family information: Father and mother divorced/separated, Father's name is xxxx, Mother's name is xxxx, five children in the family including "Aung Kyaw".

Rank: Army normal/no rank

Unit: IB 246, Company 3

Area: Unit based in Khoun Hein Township, Shan State

Time spent in the army: 2 years

**I:** How did you become a soldier?

**AK:** When I was 14 years old I was working in an eyeglasses repair shop in the Phey township bazaar. One day I went to work and the owner of the shop told me

that today was a holiday and he was closing the shop. The shop owner told me that I could go out and enjoy himself at the bazaar. I stayed out all day, and at 10 pm that night I was returning home with three of my friends, when soldiers stopped us. We were taken to the army camp, and there the army officer said that none of us had ID cards. We were accused of being outsiders (people not from Phey township), and the army officer asked us what they were doing out at night. Then he told us that we should join the army, that the salary was very good, and that by the time we finished our army training we would be big strong men. At the time we didn't know about the army, and the army officer said that the army is good for the country, so we said we would join the army. My three friends were:

1. "Lin Soe Min", 13 years old

2. "Zin Win", 14 years old

3. "Than Ni", 16 years old

**I:** What if you had said that you didn't want to join the army, would you be allowed to return home?

**AK:** No I was forced to join, I would not have been able to return home.

**I:** What happened after this?

**AK:** We slept in the army camp in Phey township for one night. Then we were sent to the Da Nyin Kone soldier collection point in Yangon. After this I was sent to No 4 army training camp in Panglong township Shan State, for five months of training. The head of the training camp was Captain Htain Kyaw. After five months I was sent to Khon Hein IB 246. The seargents in charge of my company, Company #3, were Maung Khin and Win Shwe.

**I:** How did they treat you in the army, during and after training?

**AK:** It was difficult to learn how to take out the bullets from the gun, so at the training I was unable to do it properly and the trainers beat me. Also during training sometimes we would be ordered to walk a long ways, and if we were unable to continue we would be beaten with sticks or slapped. After training when I was in the army camp sometimes the older soldiers would get drunk on whiskey and beat me, even though this time I had made no mistakes. The older soldiers would bully the younger ones.

**I:** Did you ever get sick?

**AK:** I had malaria 2 times, but I was only given tablets. I was sent to the clinic where the medic examined me, he wrote a note to the head officer that I had malaria and should have 5 days of rest, but the head officer did not allow me to have any rest. If we got sick while in the jungle we were only given tablets. If someone became extremely sick then they would be sent back to the army camp.

**I:** How many young (under 18 years old) soldiers were there in your company?

**AK:** In my company, company 3, there were 27 soldiers and 15 of them were younger soldiers.

**I:** Could you contact your family while you were in the army? Could your family contact you?

**AK:** I have not been able to contact my family since I was taken for the army two years ago.

**I:** How do you feel about the time spent in the army?

**AK:** I was unhappy every day.

**I:** Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience in the army that we didn't ask you?

**AK:** I want to share my experience with everybody.

**Supplementary questions asked to both interview subjects**

**I:** did you or other soldiers lay landmines?

**AK:** Yes we both put landmines many times on the frontlines, surrounding our camps, and also along the paths.

**I:** Can you tell me about your experience fighting?

**AK:** We experienced face-to- face fighting with the SSA two times. But we were ambushed by the SSA many times. During the fighting some of the younger soldiers were injured. Soon after I joined my battalion, two of the younger soldiers in another company committed suicide. I don't know their names.

**I:** did you learn about the laws of war or the Geneva Convention?

**AK:** We were given 60 paragraphs about the army, and one said that if someone surrenders (with their hands up) we should not shoot them. But we never experienced this happening. The army officers also told me that if a foreigner asks how old you are, then don't say that you're 14, say that you're 18.

**I:** Have you heard of the UN convention on the Rights of the Child?

**AK:** No

**MZ:** No

**I:** What do you want to do in the future, now that you've left the army?

**AK:** Go to school

**MZ:** Go to school

# # Photos




*Photo #H1 : A 15-year-old SPDC soldier who deserted from LIB #xxx in xxxx District in March 2001. In October 2000, he was in 5th Standard (Grade 5) at middle school when an Army Corporal forced him to leave his mid-term exams and 'sold' him to an Army recruiting centre for money. After a few months training he was sent to the frontline, but was not even strong enough to pull the bolt on his G3 assault rifle - "The Corporal had to do it for me". He says he was constantly beaten by the officers and NCOs because he wasn't strong enough to carry his backpack and couldn't keep up, so after only a few days at the frontline camp he fled. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #H2 : Deserter from the SPDC Army Ko H—, 23, gives testimony of his experience after reaching a refugee camp in Thailand in May 2001. Ko H— says he was at a teashop in Rangoon with friends at 9 p.m. one evening in May 2000 when suddenly the lights were doused, an Army truck pulled up and all the men and boys were forced onto the truck. Later all those over 30 were released, but all those aged 14 to 30 were told that "If you do not become a soldier we will accuse you under any political article and put you in prison". Afraid of imprisonment, he and the others joined. After training he was assigned to #xx Infantry Battalion and sent to xxxx District. "When I arrived at the #xx IB camp they ordered us, 'If you see any men along the path shoot and kill them all.' They said all the people in the jungle are rebels and that we must kill them, shoot and kill them all with our guns. 'There are no friends - only our Army troops are your friend, all the rest are rebels'." He says his fellow soldiers ranged in age from 13 to 26, and that the four or five 13-year-olds in his platoon were constantly used for forced labour by the officers because they couldn't do proper soldiering, that they cried often and wanted to go home. Ko H— fell sick in February 2001, so he fell and spilled some of a sack of rice he was carrying with the Column, causing the NCOs to punch, kick, and beat him with bamboo sticks all over the body and face until his mouth was bleeding. After this he fled at the first opportunity. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*

*Photo #H3 : Saw M—, age 19, a Pwo Karen who was a soldier in SPDC LIB #xxx in Papun District until he fled in December 2000. Originally from M— area in central Burma, at age 18 he was staying with relatives in Rangoon when a group of soldiers stopped him in the street and told him he could either join the Army or they'd send him to prison for life. He chose the Army and was immediately put on a train to Thaton for training. Afterwards he was sent to the frontline with LIB xxx but couldn't take the hard hikes over the hills so he was always sick and tired, and he was punished for this by being forced to carry water to the mountaintop camp, bake charcoal and dig trenches nonstop. Whenever he couldn't do it anymore he was punched and beaten, until he fled his unit at night on December 2nd 2000. He now says he doesn't dare return to his village for fear that the SPDC will kill him, and he just wants to go on living wherever he can. The SPDC is now getting many of its recruits by randomly stopping young men and threatening them with prison, and the desertion rate in the Army has been soaring in the past 2 to 3 years because of brutality like that suffered by Saw M—. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*






*Photos #H4, H5 : Z— (left), age 17, and W— (right), age 19, two SPDC soldiers who fled Light Infantry Battalion #xxx in xxxx District in March 2001. When W— was a 14 year old schoolboy in August 1995, he went to visit his Aunt in Rangoon but was grabbed by soldiers and police the moment he stepped off the train in Rangoon station, and was told that if he didn't join the Army they would send him to prison. He says he told them he was a student but they refused to listen, and he was forced into the Army where he remained for over 5 years. Z— was also 14*

*when he was forced into the Army in 1998; he was grabbed after his 3rd Standard (Grade 3) midterm exams when he was visiting his Aunt, and says he is sad that he never got to go back to school. Z— and W— say they fled the Army together because their commander stole most of their salaries and beat them and tortured them every time he got drunk, which was often. Photo #H5 shows Z— with his G3 assault rifle. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*

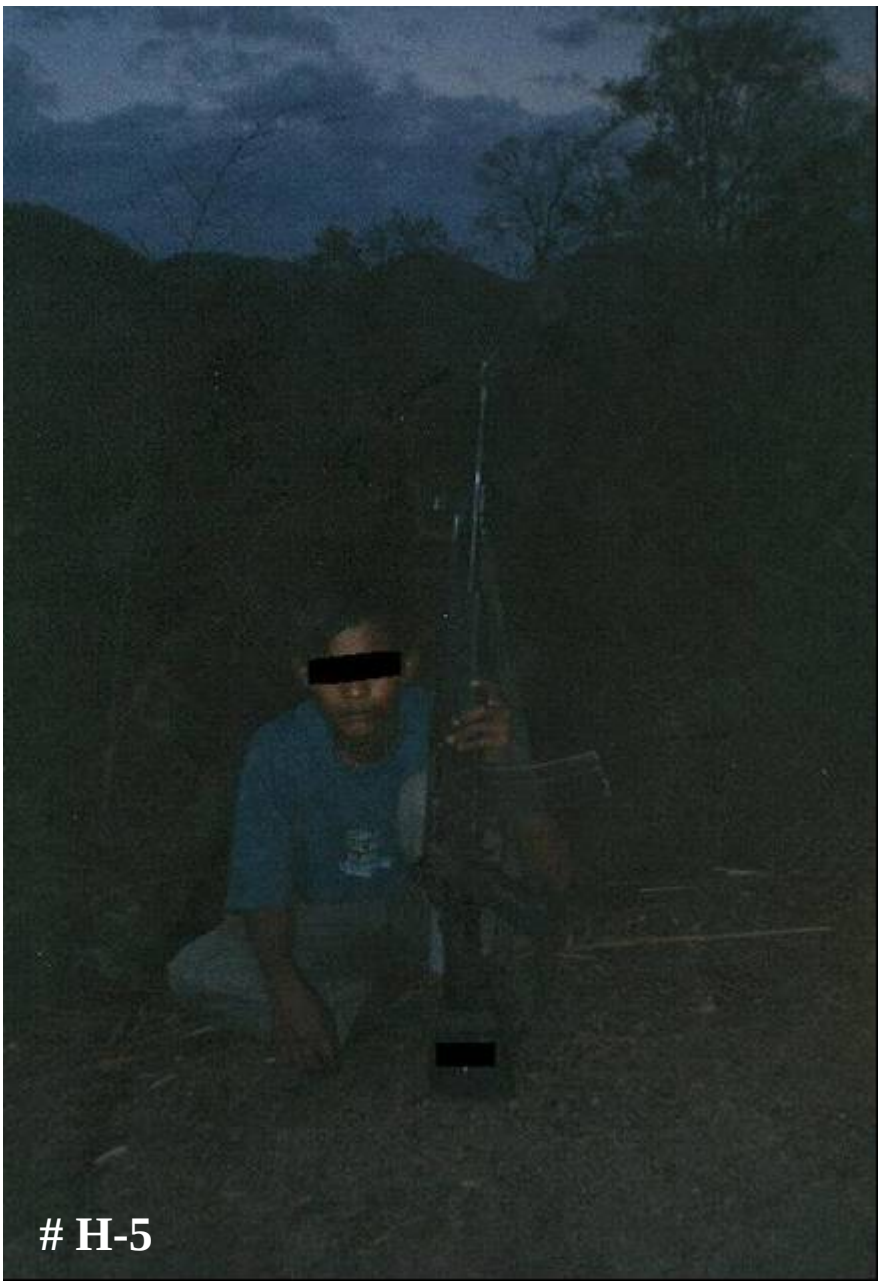





*Photo #H6 : An SPDC deserter in Papun District; the badge visible on his arm says "66", for #66 Light Infantry Division. Desertion rates in Papun District are rapidly increasing, with most deserters complaining of brutal treatment by their officers. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #H7 : A KNLA patrol in Papun District, including two child soldiers (second and fourth from left). Though the KNLA has stopped actively recruiting or conscripting child soldiers, there are still quite a few in the ranks. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*

# 7. Rights of Women

## 7.1 Background

"*[There are] continuing violations of the human rights of women, in particular forced labor, trafficking, sexual violence and exploitation, often committed by military personnel, and especially directed towards women who are returning refugees, internally displaced or belong to ethnic minorities or the political opposition*."

UNHCR Resolution on Burma

Since the military regime took power in 1962, it has had to put disproportionate resources into maintaining its power and strengthening the military. The result of this and the ongoing civil war is poor infrastructure, inadequate health care and education systems, widespread poverty and a militarized society that puts the needs of the civilian population, particularly women, second to military concerns. The elevation of the military in society has enforced stereotypes about the subordinate status of women while at the same time blocked access to the tools, such as education and health care, that women need to attain genuine equality. Although the military regime became a party to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women (CEDAW) in 1997 it has done little more than make token changes, such as the formation of some women's organizations, to implement the tenets of the convention.

Ethnic women living in conflict areas are particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses. Health care and education is severely underdeveloped in these areas, including access to family planning methods. Women in these areas are also subject to forced relocations, forced labor, forced portering in war zones, physical abuse and sexual violations. These are directed, primarily, at ethnic minorities seeking autonomy. Women in conflict areas find themselves vulnerable to abuse and lacking in their basic needs, which may force them into becoming refugees or migrants.

**Women in Politics**

Although Burma signed the U.N Convention on Political Rights in 1954, male dominance is also seen in the Burmese political arena. Women and girls are educated less frequently than males and are often relegated to low-paying, unskilled jobs in the economy. As a result of this and other factors women have less access to positions of power, and excluded from decision and policy-making processes. Since 1962 the number of women reaching high-level positions in their careers has declined, and, because women are barred from serving in the military, they are effectively blocked from all positions of leadership in the country. The few women who are in senior positions, such as Dr. Khin Win Shwe, leader of the

MMCWA, are often the wives and relatives of SPDC officials. In 1996, following the Beijing conference on women, a Myanmar National Women's Affairs Committee was established, which was followed by the establishment of Women's Affairs Committees at the state/division and township levels. However, on the national level both the chair and vice-chair are men, and of the remaining 32 members, only half are women. On the state/division, district and township levels, the wives of SPDC administrators hold the second positions. There are no women in the SPDC cabinet. And at the district and township levels administrators are male military appointees. In addition, in villages and remote areas that have little contact with the central government, most local authority figures, such as village heads and village council members are men.

During the 1988 pro-democracy uprising many women took to the streets to protest against the military dictatorship and during the violent suppression of the movement hundreds were shot and killed while demonstrating in Rangoon and other towns. After the formation of independent political parties in 1988 several women, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi he NLD, rose to prominent political leadership roles. In the election of 1990, the results of which have never been honored, 14 women, out of 485 members, were elected to parliament. Since that time hundreds of women have been imprisoned, systematically harassed, interrogated or detained for being politically active, aligning themselves with a political party, or speaking out for human rights. Wives and mothers of male political prisoners have been harassed by MI and are left with the financial responsibility of the family in the absence of their husbands and sons. The number of politically active women on the whole has been smaller than that of men, in part because of a fear that they are vulnerable to sexual abuse if taken in to custody. Young women who are part of banned student unions are also routinely arrested and deprived of their liberty, often in the context of peaceful protest demonstrations. Moe Kalayar Oo, a university science student in her early 30s, was arrested in 1995 for participating in a funeral eulogy of former Prime Minister U Nu and sentenced to seven years imprisonment. She currently remains in Tharawaddy Prison, central Burma, where she is in poor health. (Amnesty International, *Unsung Heroines: the Women of Myanmar*)

# 7.2 Health of Women from Burma

As a result of the SPDC prioritizing military expenditures over spending for social services, such as health care, women's health has suffered. Not only has the prolonged military conflict in Burma created new health care concerns for women-such as landmines- access to basic health cares services, including family planning and prenatal care, is extremely limited, particularly in rural and conflict areas. Women are denied access to adequate health care for many reasons, including violence or threats of violence (such as actual warfare or fear of encounters with SPDC troops), inadequate infrastructure and transportation, and the high cost of medicine. In addition, Burma is seriously lacking in facilities with sufficiently

trained health care workers. Women who are on the run or in relocation sites, suffer from exposure to the elements, lack of clean water and sanitation, not enough food and no medicine, and are thus more likely to contract diseases such as malaria, anemia, hepatitis and dysentery. Family planning education is extremely limited, and for those who have the necessary information, access to family planning methods is scarce. In 1994, the World Health Organization helped the National AIDS Program measure HIV infection among addicts. The results showed that HIV infection rates among Burma's addicts are the highest among drug addicts worldwide. The lethal drugs-AIDS combination is found particularly in ethnic minority areas that are the source of the drugs. Because most addicts are men, this facilitates the fast spread of the infection to women. According to figures from the National AIDS Program, of all the HIV infections estimated to have occurred by 1995, 50 percent were among pregnant women attending antenatal clinics.

The maternal mortality rate for women in Burma is approximately 517 per 100,000 live births. Infant mortality is 105 per 1,000 live births and both figures are presumed higher in conflict areas. Births are more dangerous as a result of complications from repeated pregnancy. Access to family planning education and methods is extremely limited and contraceptives were only legally introduced in 1991 and condoms in 1993. Sterilization for women is cost prohibitive, difficult to get and permission must be given from the husband. Vasectomies for men are illegal. For ethnic women, particularly IDPs, even when there are health care facilities available, information is often not printed in their native language and they are either not aware of contraceptives, contraceptives are unavailable, or they cannot afford them. Women who do attempt to use modern contraceptives often do not have information on how to use them correctly, which leads to misuse and negative experiences. Women who have bad experiences with contraceptives are deterred from using them again in the future, as are others who hear negative things about them. Women under 20 years old account for approximately 8 percent of maternal deaths. Unmarried adolescents are especially vulnerable to unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, since what limited reproductive health education and services are available have traditionally targeted only married women of reproductive age. (Source: WLB)

Lack of access to contraceptives and lack of education about reproductive health, have made illegal abortions a common form of birth control in Burma. A recent UNFPA paper on Burma estimates that one in three pregnancies ends in abortion, which indicates that approximately 750,000 abortions are carried out each year, or about 2,000 abortions per day. The UNFPA estimates that illegal abortions are responsible for around 50 percent of all maternal deaths. The following is a typical case of botched abortion that was seen in a clinic on the Thai border.

*"Two young women came to the clinic…one was bleeding from an abortion she had with the help of a woman who claimed to be a traditional medical practitioner.*

*The practitioner put a stick in the woman's cervix, then the ovary to abort the pregnancy. An hour later, the young woman started bleeding heavily. She was still bleeding when she arrived to our clinic. It cost 500 baht. She was married. Both her husband and she decided to have an abortion because they could not afford to raise a child with earnings from daily-wage jobs."* (WLB Report)

In March 2000 it was reported that over the previous six months more than 300 women from Burma had been hospitalized in Mae Sot, Thailand for botched abortions. In addition, the *Globe and Mail* reported that doctors in a Mae Sot hospital have been sterilizing Karen women without their knowledge after they have given birth. The women were forced to thumbprint authorization forms for sterilization, which they could not read. This covert family planning policy was in practice throughout most of the 1990's.

## 7.3 Women and Forced Labor

Burma ratified Article 11 of ILO convention No. 29 in 1955; the article states that the use of compulsory labor must be confined to males between the ages of 18 and 45 and only used under very limited circumstances. Despite this, the SPDC does not hesitate to use women in all kinds of forced labor, such as building railways, hydro-electric dams, building and maintaining military supply roads, digging ditches, breaking stones and portering in war zones. Ethnic women, who largely live in rural areas, are routinely taken for forced labor duties, including teenage girls if both their parents are busy working and they must fill a household forced labor quota.

Forced labor, and in particular forced portering, puts women at greater risk for sexual violence. In addition to being vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse during forced labor, women most often do not receive adequate food or medical treatment which combined with the physical strain of forced labor puts their health at risk. Women who are pregnant are not exempt from forced labor assignments. Generally it is possible for people to pay another person to go in their place, but women who cannot afford to do this must risk their own health and that of their unborn child to carry out what are often arduous tasks. The following incident recorded in a recent WLB report illustrates how pregnant women are sometimes forced to make agonizing choices for what is in the best interests of their babies.

*"There is a young woman who lives 3 houses away from me. She was 5-months pregnant and went to carry logs for the army from the top of the hill to the downhill to the road. I don't know where her husband was on that day. She went to do this by herself, as hiring another person to do the job would cost 1,500 Kyat, which she could save for her future baby. The task for the army was that everyone was given a pile of wood, and had to finish taking it down to the road as soon as possible. So she carried the wood down the hill, and walked up the hill to carry the wood down all*

*day long. At one point, she had a miscarriage. It was a baby boy. She got unconscious and other men brought her back to the village. The medic was not at the nearest clinic, so I told people to send her to the hospital. So people carried her and walked to the main road where we could hitchhike a car and sent her to the hospital in China. She was saved."* (Source: WLB)

Even when women are not directly engaged in forced labor, the absence of men, either because they have been taken for forced labor or because they have fled their homes to avoid capture for forced labor, puts greater financial burden and responsibility on the female members of a family.

**Example incidents of Women and forced labor**

12 February 2001, Troops from SPDC LIB 370, based at Mae-waing demanded 30 women from Mae-waing village, Pa-pun Township to winnow and clean rice. (Source: KIC)

From the beginning of May to until now (May 18th 2001), a column from SPDC IB 75 under LID 66, based in Glaw-mee-doe village, Tantabin Township regularly forced 12 people, including men, women and children from the villages to go for portering. Any villager who failed to go when it was their turn had to pay a 700 Kyat fine. The villages in the Glaw-mee-doe area had to pay 252,000 Kyat porter fees each month if the month had 30 days, but if the month had 31 days, the villagers had to pay 336,000 Kyat. At present, SPDC troops from battalions, columns and guerrilla units of Operation Command No. 3, under Southern Command, have been operating in Glaw-mee-doe area, planting landmines, demanding porters, runners and food from the villages. The SPDC troops from battalions, columns and guerrilla units of Western Command in Than-daung Township, demanded cash from the villages in their operational area. In addition, the troops place all kinds of restrictions on the villagers in Ba-yin-naung-tat-myo and demand food and various kinds of items from the villagers in that area. (Source: KIC)

In mid-June 2001, SPDC troops from LIB514, led by Capt. Thein Maung, forcibly conscripted 250 civilian porters, including 108 women and children, with some as young as 8, from a relocation site in the outskirts of Murng-Kerng town, Shan State. The villagers were conscripted on the orders of battalion commander, Lt. Col. Hla Myint, on June 13, after an armed clash between SPDC troops and Shan resistance soldiers in Murng-Kerng township. The SPDC troops took all the adult men, and they took women and children from houses where men were not available. Many were between the ages of 8 to 16, and were forced to carry ammunition, rice and other foodstuffs as well as military equipment. Some children were forced to carry 6 cans of condensed milk each, some carried rice and others carried 10 rounds of m79 mortar shells each, and were kicked and beaten when they could not go fast enough. The porters were forced to serve the military without pay for 16 days, during which all the women porters above 15 years of age were

said to have been raped by the SPDC soldiers. They were released on June 28 but, 5 days later, the same SPDC troops ordered the village headmen in the area to provide 10-15 civilian porters from each village, either men or women. The 150 porters were displaced persons who had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Murng-Kerng town 4-5 years ago by the SLORC troops. (Source: SHRF)

## 7.4 Violence against Women

According to a shadow report prepared by the Women's Affairs Department of the NCGUB and various women's groups from Burma for the 22nd session of CEDAW, violence against women is present in 3 realms of society; the family, the community and the state. Domestic violence is a worldwide problem, however it has been found that incidents of domestic violence increase in situations where there is fear, anxiety, desperation and anger that can turn to violence, such as in areas where there is ongoing civil war. One symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which has been found present in up to 15% of some adult refugee populations, is irritability and anger than can lead to aggressive and violent behaviour. All types of violence are aggravated by the militarised nature of Burmese society and the ongoing civil unrest.

Women, particularly ethnic women, are the targets of state violence in Burma. Rape is a common form of violence carried out against women and troops often rape ethnic women in conflict zones knowing that they will not be punished. Because women are often raped during everyday activities they cannot avoid situations where they might be at risk of rape and are in constant fear of sexual violence. Gang rapes are common, suggesting that rape is not a random act of violence but is systematically carried out by the military, and women are not infrequently killed afterwards to prevent them from reporting the incident. In addition, women and in particular young girls often die of injuries sustained during rape. There are also known cases of soldiers raping women in order to force marriages. The SPDC has shown itself at worst to be encouraging the practice of rape of ethnic women and at best to be indifferent to it. Villagers that complain about rape can either be met with apathy or threats of retaliation if they continue to complain about it.

In May 2002 the Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF) and Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) released a report, " License to Rape: The Burmese military regime's use of sexual violence in the ongoing war in Shan State," which documented 625 cases of Shan girls and women raped by SPDC soldiers between 1996 and 2001. The following excerpt from the report provides information about the victimization of Shan women. Thousands of other ethnic women suffer from a similar situation to that described below:

"In accordance with their subordinate status, women are expected to be demure in public, and, unlike men, chaste until marriage. Women who lose their virginity before marriage are described as "soom to" or "spoiled", and any women engaging in sex outside marriage are liable to censure, even if the sexual encounter was forced upon them. Fear of censure within their own communities thus inhibits women from reporting incidents of rape.... Nevertheless, in the past, rural Shan women had recourse to customary legal processes to punish rapists. Cases would be brought before village elders, and if found guilty, men would be punished by a fine payable to the women, her parents and the village elders. Women also had the option of taking the cases to the township courts to be tried under the Burmese penal code (according to which the maximum penalty for rape is 10 years in prison.)... Therefore there was some measure of legal protection available to women in the case of sexual violence. However, this has now been eroded by the Burmese military's contempt for the law. In numerous instances of rape in this report the Shan women survivors attempted to seek justice within their community, turning to their parents and the village headmen according to their custom, but were inevitably thwarted by the absolute power exercised by the Burmese military in their areas.

The context of the civil war has given Burmese troops licence to practice sexual violence against local ethnic women with impunity. As potential supporters of the resistance, women are perceived as legitimate targets for violence. Sexual violence serves the multiple purpose of not only terrorizing local communities into submission, but also flaunting the power of the dominant troops over the enemy's women, and thereby humiliating and demoralizing resistance forces. Furthermore, it serves as a "reward" to troops for fighting in the war.....Ethnic factors have exacerbated the tendency to violence, as the military regime has deliberately deployed troops of other ethnicities in the various ethnic states. Alienation of the troops from the local communities, and Burmese nationalist sentiment fuelled by propaganda, facilitates violence, including sexual violence, against the local ethnic civilians.... The regime has continued to build up its army over the past decade, and has increased the number of troops deployed in the ethnic states, which has inevitably led to an increase in sexual violence....

In the vast majority of these cases (85%) the officer was on duty with other troops, and made no attempt to hide his crime. In fact, in 10 of the cases, the officer actually passed on the victim(s) to his troops either to let them gang-rape her, or to let them kill her....The extreme and unrestrained brutality displayed by the troops committing the sexual abuses reveal clearly that the rapes are being used together with other acts of violence, such as torture, as part of a campaign to terrorize and subjugate the local civilian populations. In 25% of the incidents documented, the girls or women were killed following the rape, by being shot, suffocated, beaten, stabbed or burned to death.... In many of the incidents documented, the women were not only raped, but were also physically tortured in other ways, including

being beaten, suffocated by having plastic put over their head, and having their breasts cut off... In most of the incidents, there were no efforts made to conceal the bodies of the dead rape victims.... 61% of the rape incidents documented involved gang-rape. These incidents were thus committed collectively, with no fear of being witnessed. In many of the gang-rape cases, the victims were also killed by the troops. However, in a number of the cases, the women were released, showing that the perpetrators clearly had no fear of repercussions arising from the incident... In twenty-four of the cases, women were kept by the regime's troops for periods of up to four months for the purposes of rape. Again this open use of "comfort women" without fear of reprisal indicates the climate of impunity regarding rape amongst the armed forces...

Evidence in this report shows clearly that not only are there no serious efforts on the part of the military authorities to bring perpetrators of rape among their ranks to justice, but they are actively discouraging the reporting of such incidents by inflicting physical abuse, imprisonment and fines on any complainants... In most of the rape incidents documented in this report, the victims reported the abuse first to a family member and then to a village headman or other community leader. Together they would then advise the girl or woman of the best action to take. Often (in 22 cases, 13%), the headman advised the family not to take the case any further as it would not only fail to bring justice, but might also be dangerous for the complainants. The fact that in one case a headman was himself beaten and tortured to death by SPDC troops for having reported a rape shows the disincentive for community leaders to get involved in such matters... Other factors discouraging girls and women from reporting rape incidents to the SPDC authorities were: they could not speak Burmese, which would clearly disadvantage them during any subsequent judicial proceedings; and they often did not know the name and the military unit of the rapist, and thus realised that they had almost no chance of proving the case. However, in as many as 37 (21%) of the rape incidents documented, the victims, their relatives or community leaders actually dared to report the crime to the SPDC authorities. In only one of these cases (in April 1997) was the perpetrator, from the SPDC mortar battalion in Murng Hsat, punished by his commander... However, even in this case, it does not appear that the matter went through the process of law, and it is thus unlikely that the perpetrator would have been given the maximum 10-year jail sentence for the rape. In eleven cases, the SPDC officers registered the complaint, but did nothing further. In nine cases, the SPDC officers arranged for a "line-up" of as many as 80 soldiers in order for the victim to identify the rapist, but deliberately left the rapist out of the line. Following the lack of positive identification, in one case the headman who had made the complaint was beaten unconscious and detained until the family of the rape victim paid 2,000 kyat for his release. In two other cases, the victim herself was imprisoned and up to 20,000 kyat had to be paid for her release. In another case the headman and his deputy were imprisoned until 5,500 kyat could be paid for their release. In three other cases, the

complainants were not imprisoned but had to pay fines of up to 30,000 kyat for defaming the military. Only in one case was there a positive identification from a line-up, which appears to have been the result of an intervention from an officer from one of the Shan cease-fire organisations. However, following the identification no further action was taken.

More commonly, the SPDC officers rejected the accusation outright. In three of these cases, the SPDC officers claimed that the perpetrator had not been in the area when the crime was committed, in one case stating that he had long been transferred. Significantly, in two of the cases, the officer accused was indeed immediately transferred to another unit... Out of the eleven cases when the SPDC officers rejected the accusation outright, in seven cases the complainants were punished for making the complaint. In three cases, the complainants were physically abused: the rape victim was beaten unconscious, the father of one victim was beaten, and a headman was slapped. In six cases, the complainants were actually fined, as much as 60,000 kyat, for making the complaint. In one case, the father of the victim was arrested and detained until village leaders paid a cow for his release.

In none of the cases documented for this report was there any mention of the SPDC authorities asking that the raped women be given proper medical examinations, which could be used as a basis for rape prosecution. This again indicates that they had no serious intention of bringing the perpetrators to justice.

There is information that in eleven of the cases, women themselves or their families arranged for medical treatment, either for injuries or illnesses arising from the rape, or to test blood for possible infection. In two of the cases, the hospital workers documented evidence of the sexual abuse, and in one case (of a 5-year-old girl who was raped in her home by an SPDC soldier), even took photographs and said they would try and report the incident. However, no further action was taken, and in one case, hospital workers who had treated a woman who had been beaten and raped, advised the woman to lie about the cause of her injury. In other words, the medical personnel themselves were too afraid of the military authorities to dare to push for justice in the case...

Although specific physical details are not available in most of the incidents in this report, in several of the cases it was clear that the survivor was severely injured during the assault. In several cases, survivors were unconscious when found after the incident, and in at least two cases, the survivor was unable to walk. One of the cases was a woman who was gang-raped when she was 7-months pregnant, and who then gave birth prematurely to her child...

There is a lack of detailed information concerning the mental state of the survivors, mostly because interviews conducted for this report were too brief to explore fully the depth of emotions experienced by the women involved... It is apparent that

some of the physical symptoms suffered by survivors following the incidents, were closely linked to their mental state. For example, several women spoke of insomnia, loss of appetite, loss of weight, and lack of energy. Some women mentioned feeling "depressed," "sad" and "afraid." One woman stated: *"When my mind wandered to what had happened, my heart would beat so hard. I was afraid of all men." (case 1). Another woman "kept to herself after the incident. She didn't want to see or communicate with anyone." (case 119)* Several of the survivors stated a strong desire to bring their rapists to justice. One mentioned feeling "angry" when justice was not done. At the same time, several of the survivors mentioned feeling "shame" at what had happened, undoubtedly a result of prevailing gender attitudes and censure within the community... In none of the incidents mentioned were any counselling services available for the survivors. From the little evidence available, it is clear that the survivors were in urgent need of such services, particularly those facing censure from their communities... The fact that one of the women repeatedly raped during a period of almost two months (case 51) became insane is an indication of the level of trauma experienced by women subjected to rape. Another woman became an opium addict following the rape (case 76), and abandoned her young child as a result.

In three of the incidents, the women suffered blame by their boyfriends or husbands following the rape. One of these women had her engagement broken off by her boyfriend, who refused to come and see her after the rape. Another woman was taunted by her husband, who called her "Burmese leftovers." In a particularly disturbing case, a woman was beaten by her husband following the rape..In three of the incidents, the women suffered blame by their boyfriends or husbands following the rape. One of these women had her engagement broken off by her boyfriend, who refused to come and see her after the rape. Another woman was taunted by her husband, who called her "Burmese leftovers." In a particularly disturbing case, a woman was beaten by her husband following the rape." (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

In addition to the abuse they suffer from SPDC soldiers, women from Burma are also often victims of sexual violence while staying in Thailand where such incidents often tolerated. This is both because of negative attitudes and stereotypes about Burmese and because rapists feel certain of their impunity if they attack an undocumented migrant worker. See the partial list of incidents at the end of the chapter for more information on rape.

# 7.5 Trafficking of Women

*"Trafficking in persons - the illegal and highly profitable recruitment, transport or sale of human beings for the purpose of exploiting their labor - is a slavery-like practice that must be eliminated."* Human Rights Watch

Many refugees, particularly from Shan State, Chin State and Sagaing Division are unable to enter refugee camps and therefore are restricted in their options for leaving the country. Seeking the help of agents and being trafficked, whether for sex work or other types of employment, such as factory work or domestic service is one option open to them. The greatest number of women are trafficked to Pakistan via Bangladesh and Thailand. In a best case scenario trafficked women are able to escape exploitative labor situations and enjoy greater self-determination than they would have by staying in Burma. In worst case scenarios they are sold into bonded labor situations where they are kept incommunicado in slavery like conditions. Age is an important factor in determining what kind of situation a trafficked person will face, with younger women and girls being more easily exploited. The continuing economic crisis in Burma combined with the lack of social welfare services and the strong sex industry in Thailand, as well as inside Burma, has left sex work as one of the only viable employment opportunities for women. It is estimated that there are more than 40,000 Burmese sex workers in Thailand alone. Sometimes women willingly go into this kind of work, but often don't realize the conditions they will be working under or the risks to their health, while in other cases women and girls are sold by their families, or others, into prostitution. Once inside brothels, their bonded labor situation continues, with the women being forced to pay for mandatory HIV tests and abortions, and exorbitant living costs, thus ensuring that they remain in debt to the brothel owners. Brothels in Thailand are frequently raided, with some of these raids carried out with owner's cooperation in order to further raise the women's debts. In February 2001, 33 teenage girls were arrested in Thailand on charges of prostitution, with four of them admitting that they were from Burma. During these raids police frequently find women and girls tied up or chained to prevent them from trying to escape. (Source: Burmanet)

Individuals who traffic women and girls are often powerful and easily escape prosecution as a result of maintaining close ties with border police and other officials who profit from the trafficking. The complicity of officials allows the trade to continue and thrive and limits women's access to other types of work as they are often passed from the trafficker directly into the hands of the brothel owner. Women who return home after working in the sex industry often face discrimination and can be prosecuted for illegal departure and prostitution with sentences of up to three years. To combat the migration of women for sex work the SPDC enacted laws to restrict the movement of women who want to travel both domestically and internationally. A law initiated in 1995-6 prohibits women from obtaining a passport that allows them to work abroad and for travel within the

country, women between 16 and 25 must be accompanied by a legal guardian. However, rather than curtailing trafficking, this has just put women in a more vulnerable position where they are more dependent on traffickers for their movement.

**Sex workers in Burma**

In August 2001 the WHO produced a report including Burma in the list of Asian countries where a growing sex industry severely inhibits the work of HIV/AIDS prevention programs. According to UNAIDS statistics, up to 95% of people in developing countries with HIV/AIDS are unaware that they are infected. In Burma most women involved in sex work do so on a part-time basis to supplement their primary work as traders, laborers, and transport service workers in roadside teashops. Due to the fact that many of these women do not identify themselves as sex-workers, and because of their high mobility, establishing HIV/AIDS support and awareness programs for sex workers in Burma has been difficult. Female sex workers in Burma are concentrated in cities such as Rangoon, Pegu, Prome, Magway, Mandalay, Monywa, Lashio, Pa-an, Tavoy, and Mergui; or else along trade routes or international border towns such as Tachilek, Muse, Mong La, Keng Tung, Myawaddy, Kawthaung, or Tamu.

In many cases women are forced into the sex industry, and significant physical and sexual abuse is used in order to 'break them in.' Such violent sexual acts can result in abrasions increasing a women's susceptibility to contracting HIV. A practice gaining in popularity is the selling of young girls as 'virgins.' These girls face increased risk for infection due to the immaturity of their cervix. Most girls and women engaged as sex workers feel that they are unable to insist that customers use a condom, and thus it believed that most commercial sex in Burma, and the rest of Asia, occurs without a condom.

There are many obstacles to empowering and educating all women in Burma about sex-issues. Cultural taboos limit open discussion about any kind of sexual activity, and there is a tendency for many people to view sex in general as immoral. There is also a huge stigma against people with HIV, and many women who are infected feel that they cannot return to their communities. (Source: ALTSEAN)

**Trafficking of Rohingya women to Pakistan**

A report by Images Asia states that large scale trafficking of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh via India to Pakistan has been going on for about a decade and the number of Rohingyas in Karachi is estimated to be over 300,000. Exoduses of Rohingya refugees from Burma in 1978 and 1991/2 have coincided with influxes of immigrants into Pakistan. The refugee camps in Bangladesh have become recruiting areas for traffickers and a Bangladeshi NGO found that there have also been various cases of disappearances, abductions, rape and sexual assault of women living outside the camps. Many women are trafficked into brothels in the southern province of

Sindh and some have been sold to feudal landlords as concubines. Rohingya prostitutes are extremely likely to contract sexually transmitted diseases because they have little knowledge of contraception and are afraid to visit health authorities for fear of being caught by the police. The Rohingya in Bangladesh are unwanted refugees and face the threat of repatriation and deportation to Burma where they are deprived of citizenship and face atrocities committed by the military junta. This and the conditions of the refugee camps where they are unable to meet their most basic needs means that being trafficked is often the only option for survival. During the journey to Pakistan the women are vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse whether it be from traffickers, police, border guards or while in detention. The Dhaka Ahsania Mission, a Bangladeshi NGO, reported one case to Images Asia in 1998 in which a bus carrying 71 passengers, mostly women and children, was intercepted on its way from Cox's Bazaar to Benpole on the Indian border, after the bus driver got suspicious. It was found that all the passengers were going to be trafficked illegally to India, and after the passengers gave fake addresses in Cox's Bazaar to the police, it was assumed that they were all Rohingya.

Not only Rohingya women are trafficked into Pakistan. There is large scale trafficking of women of other ethnic groups from Burma into Pakistan on the pretense of finding them legitimate work. However, they are then sold to third parties, mostly for prostitution, but also as domestic servants. In some cases they are sold like slaves in an open market, such as the one in Thar district of Bangladesh, in which buyers are able to examine them, molest them and harass them before buying them. At least one former minister and two members of the disbanded parliament maintain huge stakes in the business of selling women in Thar. They are often sold and resold after their utility has been used up by one buyer. Human rights lawyer Zia Awan, says women can be bought in any Burmese slum in Karachi where 2.5 million of the residents are illegal.

## 7.6 Rape and sexual violence - Partial list of incidents

***Incidences of Rape and Killing***

**Rape and Killing in Mergui**

On 11 January 2001 a column from LIB 101, led by Major Aung Myint Oo arrived to Taket Lor village in Tenasserim township, Mergui District, Tenasserim Division, Southern Burma, and opened fire on village residents. Four villagers: Saw Ta Pu (male 45 yr.), Naw Nyunt Lay (Female 28 yr.) Naw De Hse (F 22 yr.) and Naw Lay Myit (F 25 yr.) were wounded. After shooting at the villagers the troop captured a villager Naw They Satin, age 20 yr. daughter of Saw Pe Lo and Naw Pi. The soldiers took her to a house, raped her, and then stabbed her to death. The next day, that troops cleared the area and took all everything that the villagers left behind

them when they fled. (Source: Unity)

**Rape and Murder in Laikha Township**

On 14 February 2001 Captain Kyaw Myint, Company 4, LIB 515 (Laikha) raped and murdered Nang Liengsa, 18, from Wan-khai village, Panghsang Tract, Laikha Township, Shan State, in the woods outside the town. Her body was found two days later after a soldier from the unit tipped off her relatives. "The captain, during his patrol on that day, came across her picking vegetables in the woods, forced her and beat her to death because of her resistance," one villager quoted the soldier as saying. A few days after the incident, Captain Kyaw Myint and his men passed through the village and he was pointed out to her brother, Sai Mon, and sister-in-law, Nang Lu. One of the members of the patrol then overheard them talking about Liengsa's death in connection with Capt Kyaw Myint and he took them to him. Captain Kyaw Myint then beat them and sentenced them to a 3-month imprisonment. Liengsa was one of those thousands of people who were forcibly moved to Laikha from her home village in 1997, when the massive 4 cuts campaign was launched by Rangoon against the Shan State Army of Yawdserk. (Source: SHRF)

**Farmers Beaten to Death, Women Raped and Killed**

On 11 July 2001, 5 rice farmers, 3 men and 2 women, were beaten to death by a patrol of SPDC troops from IB 247, led by Capt. Mya Htoo, on a rice farm about 3 miles southwest of Wan Phui village in Kho Lam tract, Nam-Zarng township. The women were raped before they were killed. On July 7, troops from IB247 had found several fresh footprints close by the rice farm and they suspected that the farmers were providing rice for the Shan soldiers. Upon finding out that the farmers lived in Wan Phui village, the commander of IB247 sent an order to the village headman of Wan Phui to bring the 5 farmers to the military camp at Kho Lam where they were interrogated and later released. However, when they returned to the farm on July 11, they were arrested by SPDC troops from IB247. The 3 men were tied up and interrogated, tortured and beaten to death. The 2 women were taken into the farm hut and gang-raped by the SPDC soldiers, and finally beaten to death in the hut. (Source: SHRF)

**The five victims were:**

1. Lung Kan Na (m) Age 51
2. Zaai Wi-La-Sa (m) Age 43
3. Naang Seng (f) Age 30
4. Naang Maai (f) Age 24
5. Zaai Kaw (m) Age 21

**Woman Raped and Killed while Traveling**

***On 3 August 2001 at 3:00 pm, a young woman, Naw Moo Kler, age 20, was raped and killed by a group of soldiers from SPDC troop IB-124, based in Ba Yint Naung Ta Myo (Ba Yint Noung Military town), led by the battalion commander Thu Ra Saw Mya Thoung. The soldiers attacked Naw Moo Kler while she was traveling between Than Doung Gyi and Kyauk Kone, section (5), Than Daung Township. Naw Moo Kler was a teacher who lived in Than Doung town, section (2). Her father's name is Saw Khin Maung. The soldiers also took from the victim 1 gold necklace, 1 gold ring and 1 watch valued at 100,000 kyats. (Source: KORD, KIC)***

## *Incidences of Rape*

**Woman Gang Raped for Four Days**

Name: Naang Yin (not her real name)

Age: 18

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Shopkeeper, High School Student

Location: Market quarter, Kaeng Tawng town, Murng Nai township S IB 246,

PDC Troops: Kun-Hing-based, Commander Myint Oo, Officer San Win Po

Date of Incident: January, 2001

Naang Yin was the 18-year-old daughter of two shopkeepers, Lung Tha and Pa Khong. Lung Tha and Pa Khong sold dry foods in their shop, such as oil, beans, seeds, and rice. Naang Yin studied at the high school in Kaeng Tawng town, and so she spoke Burmese in addition to Shan. SPDC troops from the local military camp regularly came to the shop to sell staples they got from the military camp, and to supplement their basic provisions. The troops from IB 246, including officer San Win Po, invited Naang Yin to come to the camp to buy some basic provisions at cheaper prices.

Naang Yin went to the camp for the first time alone in January, 2001. She arrived to find that many of the commanders, captains and soldiers were away from the camp, patrolling the surrounding area. But there were still a few soldiers at the camp, including officer San Win Po. Coming into the camp alone, she was taken by officer San Win Po and ten other soldiers. They held her prisoner and gang raped her for four days. Her parents searched everywhere for her, until, finally she was released on the fourth day. She reported the incident to the village headman, and

received a medical check-up from a relative who was a nurse.

The village headman, worried for her safety, told her, 'If you have a place to go, you should go. If you have a place to move, you should move. You shouldn't face those soldiers again." And so Naang Yin stayed on the move, spending each night at a different relative's house. Her parents were anxious about her security, but they didn't dare complain to the military for fear of repercussions. Ten days after her release, Naang Yin's mother took her to Thailand. The people in village were angry and blamed the soldiers for what had happened. When the village headman counseled the young girls in the village, many of them would talk about what happened to Naang Yin. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Woman Raped While Traveling**

On 28 January 2001, Lieutenant Thein Myint Zaw from IB 104 raped a traveling villager and took away all her money . According to villagers from Tavoy Township who arrived to the border, Ma Aye Aye Khaing (daughter of U Chit Tin) who worked in a Thai border town Htong Hpa Hpon was traveling back to her home village in Kyet San Pyin, in Tavoy Township, when on the evening of January 28 she arrived at a Burmese Army camp at the Thuka border check point, opposite Thailand's Kanchanaburi province. Lt. Thein Mhint Zaw a company commander in that camp summoned her to his hut and said that he needed to search her. Afterward Lt. Thein Myint Zaw raped her in his hut. After raping her, Lt. Thein Myint Zaw stole 10,000 Baht from her. The next morning Thein Myint Zaw gave her back 1,000 Baht for her traveling expenses and then released her. (Source: Unity)

**Gang Rape in Wan Pa Khae Village**

Name: Ar Phue (not her real name)

Age: 24

Status: Widowed 2 years ago, married at 14, mother of 3- year-old son

Ethnicity: Akha

Religion: Christian

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Wan Pa Khae village, Nam Phung tract, Ta-Khi-Laek township

Date of Incident: February, 2001

SPDC Troops: LIB 359, Ta Khi Laek township

Note: When Me Lue was 10 years old, she had lost partial use of her leg due to an illness. As a result, she cannot walk very well.

Two years prior to being raped, Ar Phue's husband, 30-year-old Ah Kho, had been beaten to death by SPDC soldiers. He had been taken to be a porter for their troops,

and Ar Phue did not know exactly where her husband had died, nor the identification number of the battalion that had killed him. Nevertheless, she was left to work on their farm alone, a half-hour walk from the village. In February, 2001, seven soldiers from LIB 359 base in Ta-Khi-Laek approached her and threatened to shoot her with their guns. Not able to speak Burmese, she couldn't understand what the soldiers were saying, and could not run away on her bad leg. The soldiers proceeded to gang rape her for an hour. A villager, hearing her screams, ran over to help. Upon seeing the villager, the soldiers stopped their attack, and left the scene.

Ar Phue reported the incident to the village headman. Luckily, she did not get ill, but at the time of the interview, she was three months pregnant. Fighting between the Shan army and the Burmese army broke out two days after the rape, preventing Ar Phue from seeking medical attention. Her village is close to the Burmese camp, and she could hear bombs and shelling near by. She was forced to relocate, with her child and relatives, to further inside Shan State away from the border with Thailand. She stayed there for 4-5 days before moving to an IDP settlement on the border. She traveled to the camp with her neighbor's family, as her parents did not live in the same village.

On days it did not rain, Ar Phue left the camp to work on a tea plantation. She left earlier than the others, because her bad leg forced her to walk slowly and she wanted to get there early enough to get work. She received 3 baht for every kilogram of tea leaves she picked, and one day she earned as much as 30-40 baht for her work. At the time of the interview, there were so many people looking for jobs, that there were days when there was no work for Ar Phue to do.

Knowing she was pregnant, her neighbor's family urged her to find a husband. "If other people knew that I was pregnant with a Burmese baby," Ar Phue said, "who will like that?" She didn't want to marry a soldier, for fear of having to either worry about his safety, or endangering herself or her child by accompanying him on his forays into the jungle. "I know that we'll have a difficult time, but I don't want my child to have a step-father," she said. "Some men love only women, but not their children. If I get married it will be difficult to get a divorce." Added to her difficulties, Ar Phue was not educated and spoke limited Shan. "I don't know how to deal with the incident," she said. After her husband died, Ar Phue had decided not to go to live with her parents. Her father had died due to illness around the same time as the attack. Her mother visited her at the camp and stayed to marry a Shan villager there. The village she had left, which was so close to the Burmese army camp, often fell prey to the Burmese soldiers when fighting broke out. The troops regularly forced villagers to be porters for the army, and looted village houses for livestock, food and household items. Although she didn't know exact details, Ar Phue believed that other women in her village had also been raped by Burmese soldiers. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Lahu Woman Raped in Kaeng-Tung**

On 23 February 2001, a 19-year-old Lahu woman, A-juay (not her real name) was raped by an SPDC soldier, Lt. Kyi Htun, from IB226 at a farm in Nawng Hoi village, Huay Koi tract, Kaeng-Tung township, Shan State. He arrived at her farm with 20 soldiers, but after discovering her alone, he ordered them to go ahead of him to Maak Khaam Bawm, the next village. He then ordered her into her hut at gunpoint and raped her before leaving for Maak Khaam Bawm. A-juay and her father, A Nu, reported the incident to the village headman and the next day they lodged a complaint at the SPDC township office in Kaeng-Tung. However, no action was taken against Lt. Kyi Htun. (Source: SHRF)

**5-year old Girl Raped**

Name: Naang Mie (not her real name)

Age: 5

Status: single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: N/A

Location: Ba Sar village, Kaeng Tawng, Murng Nai township

Date: March, 2001

SPDC Troops: IB 99, Mitthela and Myinchan-based from Central Burma, new camp in Ba Sar Village.

Naang Mie lived with her parents, Lung Lao and Pa Kham Sar in Ba Sar village. In March 2001, when Naang Mie was five years old, her parents went to work on their farm, leaving Naang Mie with her twelve-year-old sister. That night, her elder sister went out to a movie. The movie finished at 9 p.m., and their house was far away from the other houses in the village. So Naang Mie was left alone.

At 7 o'clock, an SPDC soldier from IB 99 came into the house. He tied up Naang Mie's hands and legs with rope, and raped her. When her sister came home from the movies, she found Naang Mie there, tied up and crying, with her sexual organs bloody. There was no one else around. Naang Mie was too afraid to tell her sister what had happened, because the soldier had threatened to kill her if she complained to anybody. A neighbor came and took Naang Mie to the hospital that night. She summoned the courage to tell a doctor what had happened, and a nurse stitched up her ripped vagina. They gave her medicine and took photographs for their records. The doctor and nurses told the girls that they would try to report the incident. Naang Mie's parents complained to the village headman, but they were too afraid to go to the military with their grievance. They were afraid for their children's safety, and

because they were often away from their house all day, they worried that the military might loot and destroy their home. Many of the villagers blamed the parents for the incident, believing that if the parents had not been away, Naang Mie would not have been raped. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Woman raped in Mergui-Tavoy District**

On 4 March 2001, troops led by Major Htein Win, under SPDC Local Tactical Command 19, came to Wan-chaung village from Pa-law Township of Tavoy District, Tenasserim Divison, to arrest U Maung Ni. U Maung Ni was not at his home, so they took his wife and raped her. (Source: KIC)

**Robbery and Rape of Travelers by the SPDC**

On 20 March 2001 at about 8:00 am, approximately 20 ethnic Burmese travelers coming from Pin-si village, Taung-pa-pu township, Kanchanaburi district in Thailand, arrived at Thu-kha border camp. The travelers were originally from Aok-tu village, Ka-sit village, and Chaung-wa-pyi village, Tha-yet-chaung township in Tavoy district. When they arrived at Thu-kha camp, IB 104 column (2) commander Khin Maung Htway, collected 200 baht from each of these travelers for crossing the border and sent seven soldiers from their group to accompany the travelers, stating that this was necessary for security reasons. These seven soldiers from IB 104, left Thu-kha border camp with the 20 travelers and when they had traveled 3 miles to the base of Thu-kha mountain, they lied to the travelers saying it was not safe to travel further because the security situation was bad, and made them stop. Then the soldiers started searching the bodies of the travelers and taking all of their valuables, including gold jewelry, money, radios, cassettes, clothes and Thai and Burmese currency. Then they took one of the travelers, an 18 year old woman from Aok-tu village, to the forest for about 30 minutes where she was raped by the 7 security force members, one by one, and then released. In a few short hours the travelers had lost all the money and household goods that they had earned during the two years they worked in Thailand. Continuing on their way, they encountered the SPDC IB 25 column and again were inspected and questioned. The travelers were afraid to tell the truth about what had happened to them. (Source: ABSDF)

**Woman Raped in Nong Tao Village**

Name: Naang Shwe (not her real name)

Age: 18, youngest daughter

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: 4th Standard Student in primary school, Farmer

Location: Nong Tao village, Nong Long tract, Larng Kher township

Date of Incident: 29-3-2001

SPDC Troops: Co. 4, LIB 525, Captain Soe Nyint

Eighteen-year-old Naang Shwe went out to her family farm to look after their cows. At that time, SPDC troops from Co. 4 of LIB 525 led by Capt. Soe Nyint were patrolling the area and noticed Naang Shwe staying at the farm. The Captain called her to him, and when she approached he grabbed her and raped her. She cried and shouted, but he didn't release her until he had finished. She told her relatives what had happened, and her uncle, Lung Aue Zay Ya, went to complain to the village headman and village elder. A Shan police captain told Lung Aue Zay Ya not to bother reporting the incident because he expected that the villagers would lose the case, and that there would be no consequences for Capt. Soe Nyint. After the rape, Naang Shwe felt ashamed, angry and sad. Eventually, she traveled across the border to Thailand. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Rape in Tenasserim Division**

On 30 March 2001, Sergant Ba Sein and one of his soldiers repeatedly raped Ma Khin San Ye, age 21 and Ma Nway Nway, age 16 from Ta Byay Chaung village, Tenasserim Division. The soldier were from LIB 401 led by Cap Thurein Thant Zin. (Source: THRF)

**Attempted Rape of 12-year old Girl**

Name: Naang Tong (not her real name)

Age: 12

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: en route to Ton Hoong village from temple in Ba Sar village, Kaeng Tawng, Murng Nai township

Date of Incident: April, 2001

SPDC Troops: IB 99, Mitthela and Myinchan-based from central Burma, new branch in Kaeng Tawng, Murng Nai township.

Twelve-year-old Naang Tong lived with her parents, Lung Malar and Pa Ong, in Ton Hoong village. She had had trouble with her eyes since she was a baby, and could not see very well. In April, 2001, the villagers from Ton Hoong went to worship at the temple in Ba Sar village, Kaeng Tawng, Murng Nai township. On her way to the temple, she walked with the elders of her village. On the way back, however, Naang Tong walked alone with a friend. An SPDC soldier, from IB 99, saw the two girls, grabbed Naang Tong and tried to rape her. Her friend was afraid

and ran away, but Naang Tong could not run far because of her poor eyesight. She struggled away from the soldier, but tripped and fell on the ground in the dirt road. The soldier grabbed her and tried again to rape her. At that moment, a woman riding a bicycle from Ton Hoong to Ba Sar village passed by and saw what was happening. When the soldier saw the woman watching him, he released Naang Tong.

Though the soldier didn't have a chance to rape Naang Tong, her face was bruised and scarred from the blows he had inflicted, and her body was sore. She reported the incident to the village headman, and a villager took her to Kaeng Tawng hospital for medical treatment. A doctor and several nurses took photographs of her injuries to keep on record.

The family and village headman did not complain to the military, for fear of repercussions. Others had been raped in the past, and when they went to complain they were forced to pay a fine of ten chickens and one bucket of oil to the military. Many of the villagers blamed Naang Tong for the incident, claiming that she had been foolish to return to Ton Hoong without the elders. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Rape in Koong Sar Village**

Name: Naang Mya (not her real name)

Age: 19

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Koong Sar village, Nar Kharn tract, Murng Nai township

Date of Incident: 16-4-2001

SPDC Troops: Co. 3, LIB 248, Captain Hla Phey

On April 16, 2001, 19 year old Naang Mya was alone at home, in an area regularly patrolled by SPDC troops from Co. 3, LIB 248. When Captain Hla Phey, the commander of the patrol unit saw that Naang Mya was alone, he approached her and said, " One of the soldiers from my battalion is lost. He might be hiding in your house." Claiming that he needed to search the house, he entered and ordered Naang Mya to come with him. He directed her into the bedroom, where he raped her. After the rape, he ripped Naang Mya's gold necklace off her neck and took it with him. Her gold necklace weighed 1 baht and was worth 5000 Thai Baht. Ashamed, and fearful of retaliation by the Burmese soldiers, Naang Mya did not complain to the authorities. She kept to herself, lost weight and eventually fell ill, becoming severely jaundiced. Though her relatives supported and took care of her, her fiance,

21 year old Zaai Moon, would not come to see her. As a result of the rape, they broke off their engagement. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Mother and Daughter Raped**

On 19 April 2001, two soldiers (one nicknamed 'Ka Lar') repeatedly raped Ma Than Hla, age 36 and her daughter Myint Myint Htway, age 13. The victims complained to the military officials but no action was taken against these two soldiers. (Source: THRF)

**Rape in Nong Kor Village**

Name: Naang Nyunt (not her real name)

Age: 18

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Nong Kor village, Wan Zad tract, Ke See township

Date of Incident: 1-5-2001

SPDC Troops: Co.5 of LIB 424, Captain Soe Phu

Naang Nyunt, an 18-year-old woman from Nong Kor village, Wan Zad tract, Ke See township, Shan State was attacked and raped in her house by Captain Soe Phue on 1.5.2001. After the incident, Naang Nyunt's father complained to the village headman, Lung Tun Hla. Together they reported the rape to Captain Thung Zaw, commander of LIB 424 based in Ke See township. As there were no eyewitnesses, other than Naang Nyunt herself, the commander said he could do nothing. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Lahu Woman Raped in Murng-Ton**

On 4 May 2001, a villager from Naa Kawng Mu village in Murng-Ton township, Shan State, was raped in her home by SPDC Capt. Thaung Sein, Commander of No.4 Company from Murng-Phyak-based LIB503. The troops were returning from an attempt to recapture Pa Khee camp, which had been seized by Shan resistance, when Capt. Thaung Sein entered a house where a young Lahu woman was staying alone. Nakhaa (not her real name), age 18, is the wife of Zaai Kaw (not his real name), aged 24, a Shan man who was out on security duty at the time. When he arrived at her house, Thaung Sein ordered Nakhaa to go into the bedroom. When she shouted in protest, he slapped her, dragged her into the bedroom and raped her, threatening to shoot her with his pistol if she did not comply. Villagers heard the shouting but no one dared come near the house. Soon after the incident, the SPDC troops left Naa Kawng Mu village. (Source: SHRF)

**Woman Fined After Being Raped**

Name: Naang Phong (not her real name)

Age: 21

Status: Married

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Nam Kat village, Nar Boi tract, Nam Zarng township. Nam Kat was relocated to Nam Zarng town on 11-3-1997.

Date of Incident: 18-5-2001

SPDC Troops: IB 66, Captain Than Maung Tun

On May 18th, 2001, local camp commander, Captain Than Maung Tun, ordered fifteen women from Nam Kat village, Shan State to come to the military camp to clean the camp's guardhouse. The fifteen women entered the camp, and Captain Than Maung assigned fourteen women to clean the bedrooms of the other captains, while ordering Naang Phong to clean his room. As Naang Phong entered the room to begin cleaning, Captain Than Maung followed her, closing the door behind him. He grabbed at her, and she screamed "The Captain is raping me!" He slapped her mouth with his hand, and raped her. When she got home, she told her husband, Zaai Pan Ti, what had happened. He reported the incident to the village headman, Lung Au Li Ya, who in turn took Naang Phong and her husband to see the Captain. Naang Phong accused the Captain saying, "Yesterday, you raped me in your room." In response, Captain Than Maung replied, "If I raped you, why didn't you tell anyone, or call for help? If I raped you, why didn't the other fourteen women who came with you see or hear any noise or sign of a struggle?" Turning to the other fourteen women, the Captain asked, "Did anybody here see me rape this woman? If so, raise your hand." No one raised her hand, because no one had seen the rape with her own eyes. They had only seen the Captain take Naang Phong into his room. Upon that, the Captain fined Naang Phong 15,000 Kyat for causing him to "lose face."

After the incident, Naang Phong felt sad, ashamed and afraid. She was lethargic and had no appetite. Her husband and relatives understood and supported her, and she and her husband continue to live together. Two to three months after the incident, Naang Phong and her husband came to live in Thailand. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Gang Rape in Murng-Ton**

On 8 June 2001, a resident of Naa Kawng Mu village in Murng-Ton township, Shan State, was gang-raped at her house by SPDC troops from Co. No.4 of LIB333, led by Capt. Win Zaw. At about 10 pm, Capt. Win Zaw and 5 of his soldiers went to inspect all of the houses in the village for unreported guests. When they came to the house of Naang Seng Num (not her real name), whose husband had been conscripted to provide forced labour at the local military camp, the troops saw her alone and Capt. Win Zaw raped her, threatening her with his pistol, while the other soldiers stood guard around the house. When he had finished raping her, Capt. Win Zaw let the 5 other soldiers into the house and they gang-raped her. When her husband returned from his forced labour duty, he and Naang Seng Num both went to report the rape to the village elders and community leaders, and they all went to lodge a complaint with the SPDC local military camp commander, Captain Myint Lwin, Commander of Co. No.4 of IB65. Captain Myint Lwin listened to the case and said that he would report it to the superiors of the soldiers responsible. But so far no action has been taken. (Source: SHRF)

**62 Year Old Woman Raped in Murng-Ton**

On 7 June 2001, a 62-year-old woman from Paang Ken village in Pha Khe village tract, Murng-Ton township, Shan State, was raped at her house by Capt. Htun Myint, commander of Co. No.4 of IB225. The SPDC troops were on their way to relieve the troops from IB65 stationed in Loi Laang and Murng Yawn areas, when they stopped at the village for a rest. Capt. Htun Myint chose a house to spend the night in, and told his troops to find some food for dinner and stay where they liked. The house he entered belonged to Zaai Pan-Ta (not his real name), aged 36, and his family, but they had all gone to work overnight at their rice farm, leaving only their 62-year-old widowed mother, Me Thao Mung (not her real name), to look after the house. Once in the house, Captain Htun Myint raped Me Thao Mung and when she tried to shout he closed her mouth firmly with one of his hands until he finished raping her. Me Thao Mung did not dare to tell anyone until the troops left the village. (Source: SHRF)

**Women Raped in Po Kheh Hta Village**

On 14 June 2001, Than Win a soldier from SPDC division 33, tactical strategy command No. (332), LIB-111, entered the house of Naw Thain Mya, in Po Kheh Hta village, Karen State, and raped her. Naw Thain Mya is 51 years old and married, her husband's name is Saw Kyaw Tint. Naw Thain Mya reported the rape to the village headman, and the headman reported it to the battalion commander Aung Min Lwin. Then Aung Min Lwin forced Naw Thain Mya to accept 50000 kyat to drop her case and to keep quiet about what had been done to her. Aung Min Lwin threatened Naw Thain Mya, saying that if she continued pressing her case, she would be in trouble. (Source: KORD)

**Mass Forced Portering and Rape in Murng-Kerng**

In mid-June 2001, SPDC troops from LIB514, led by Capt. Thein Maung, forcibly conscripted 250 civilian porters, including 108 women and children, some as young as 8, from a relocation site in the outskirts of Murng-Kerng town. They were conscripted on the orders of battalion commander, Lt. Col. Hla Myint, on June 13, after an armed clash between SPDC troops and Shan resistance soldiers in Murng-Kerng township. The SPDC troops took all the adult men, and took women and children from houses where men were not available. Many of those taken were aged between 8 to 16, and were forced to carry ammunition, rice and other foodstuffs, and military supplies. Some children were forced to carry 6 cans of condensed milk each, some carried rice and others carried 10 rounds of m79 mortar shells each, and were kicked and beaten when they could not go fast enough. The porters were forced to serve the military without pay for 16 days, during which all the women porters above 15 years of age were said to have been raped by the SPDC soldiers. They were released on June 28 but, 5 days later, the same SPDC troops ordered the village headmen in the area to provide 10-15 civilian porters from each village, either men or women. The 150 porters were displaced persons who had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Murng-Kerng town 4-5 years ago by the SLORC troops. (Source: SHRF)

**Woman Raped for Five Hours**

Name: Naang Ang (not her real name)

Age: 27

Status: Married, no children

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Ter Hong village, Nong Hee tract, Murng Nai township. Ter Hong was relocated to Ton Hoong on 11-4-1996.

Date of Incident: 4-7-2001

SPDC Troops: Co. 3, LIB 524, Capt. Tun Oo, Kun Hing town-based

On June 29, 2001, as SPDC troops were patrolling the area around the Ton Hoong relocation site, Shan State, Captain Tun Oo noticed Naang Ang in the village. The Captain then ordered 30 troops, led by Captain Tan Aung, to patrol the area. A few days later, the captain ordered Lung Min, the village headman, to bring Naang Ang's husband, Zaai Maung Hla, to him. When Zaai Maung Hla arrived, the Captain said, "Today, I want you to serve as a guide for my troops for two days.Go pack your things and come back and wait here." Zaai Maung Hla could not protest,

and had to do as he was ordered.

On July 4th, Zaai Maung Hla was still away from home. Knowing her husband was away, Captain Tun Oo went to see Naang Ang, and without any questions, walked right into the house. "What do you have in your bedroom? Let's go and see." "Captain," Naang Ang said, "go and see by yourself." At that, the Captain said, "You will go inside with me." He pulled out his pistol, aimed it at her forehead, and threatening her, he dragged her into the bedroom and raped her. He raped her for five hours, from 10 in the morning until 3 in the afternoon.

When Zaai Maung Hla came home, Naang Ang told him all that had happened. Her husband reported the incident to the village headman and a village elder. Upon hearing what happened, they said. 'The only eyewitness is Naang Ang. Though we want to report the incident, it is your word against his. We will not be able to win." They decided not to complain to the military.

At times, her husband called Naang Ang "Burmese leftovers." But family members from both sides intervened and talked through what had happened, making it clear that Naang Ang had not chosen to have sex with the Captain, but rather had been raped at gun point. In August 2001, she and her husband came to Thailand. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**16-Year old Girl Raped**

Name: Naang Aye (not her real name)

Age: 16

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Koong Sar village, Wan Nong-Koong Mong tract, Nam Zarng township

Date of Incident: 16-7-2001

SPDC Troops: Co. 2, IB 66 Nam Zarng-based, Captain Zaw Hlaing

On July 16, 2001, Naang Aye, a 16-year-old girl from Koong Sar village, Wan Nong-Koong Mong tract in Nam Zarng township, was raped by Captain Zaw Hlaing one and a half miles east of her village. She did not report the incident to authorities. 9-10 days after the rape, however, Naang Aye fell ill. She was depressed, lethargic, and had no appetite. Her relatives brought her to Nam Zarng Hospital, where she stayed for 5 days. As she still had not recovered after 5 days in the hospital, her family moved her to Loi Lem Hospital. After 10 more days of treatment and 17,000 Kyat in medical bills, Naang Aye felt well enough to return home. (SHRF, SWAN:

"License to Rape," May 2002)

**Gang Rape in Murng-Kerng**

In the early morning of July 23, 2001, 3 Shan women were raped by 7-8 SPDC soldiers in a guardhouse at the base of LIB383 in Murng-Kerng township, Shan State. The three women were from Pang Kae Tu village in Pang Kae Tu tract, Murng-Kerng township, and on the day of the incident were going to their rice field to plant rice when they passed by the LIB 383 base. When the 3 women got near the base, they were stopped by the soldiers and forced into the nearby guardhouse. The 3 women were gang-raped by all the soldiers in the guardhouse for some time and then released. As they let the women go, the soldiers said, "We don't have any friends here and we are not afraid of anyone. Having to stay at a remote place like this, we will do as we like." (Source: SHRF)

**Rape of Mon Women in Yebyu Township**

On 28 July two members of the Yapu village militia forcibly raped two women and attempted to rape a third in Aleksan village, Yebyu township, Tenasserim Division. Deputy Commander U Aung Win and one of his subordinates had spent the evening drinking with friends in Aleksan village, approximately 10 miles from their base in Yapu village. When they became drunk they left their friends and began looking into villagers' houses for women who were alone. At midnight U Win Aung's subordinate entered the house of a 50 year old women, Ma Mi, and threatened her with a knife. When she attempted to defend herself he cut her hands with the knife, pointed the knife at her throat and other body parts, and then raped her. She was too afraid of being killed to cry for help. While this was occurring U Win Aung entered the house of another woman, Mi Pae, age 40. When she tried to defend herself he cut her hands with a knife, beat her and threatened her with a knife. Then he raped her. After being raped Mi Pae lost consciousness because of loss of blood. After raping Mi Pae, U Win Aung climbed into the house of another woman, Mi Kayae Lun, age 20, and attempted to rape her as well. Mi Kyae Lun cried for help, and when U Win Aung attempted to cut her with his knife she was able to run out of her house and escape. Mi Kayae Lun's cries summoned the other villagers who came to her assistance, and the two rapists were arrested. By that time Mi Pae had lost a lot of blood and was in critical condition. The villagers sent her by truck to Yapu village to be treated by a medic there. The villagers sent the two soldiers to Yapu village and reported the rape and physical assaults on the three women to the military commander. The two rapists received no serious punishment, but were only dismissed from their command and given permission for retirement. (Source: HURFOM)

**Rape of Pregnant Woman in Keng Lom Village**

Name: Naang Hla (not her real name)

Age: 16

Status: Married, with 2-month-old child

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Keng Lom village, Keng Lom tract, Kun Hing township, Shan State. Keng Lom was relocated to Kun Hing in 1996.Lived in Kun Hing for 2 years due to difficulty in securing money and food. In 1998 she went into hiding in the jungle near Keng Lom, and had been there until the incident. After the attack, she crossed the border into Thailand.

Date of Incident: August, 2001

SPDC Troops: LIB 246

Naang Hla was sixteen years old, had been married three years, and was seven months pregnant when she and her husband were attacked by SPDC troops patrolling the area. Naang Hla lived with her twenty-six-year-old husband, Zaai Kue Na, in a small hut on their farm. In August, 2001 SPDC troops entered their farm and beat, tortured and interrogated Zaai Kue Na. They blindfolded him with a towel and tied him to a tree. After beating Zai Kue Na, the soldiers took Naang Hla into the hut and beat her with a stick, threatening her with their guns. They pushed at her body and face with their guns until her nose bled. Then, although she was seven months pregnant, they raped her, one after the other. In all, ten soldiers raped her while others stood outside the hut, laughing when she cried and shouted. They had tied her husband near enough to the hut to hear everything happening to his wife and to hear her cry out loudly in pain. They treated her as though she were not a human being, and raped her from 8am until 4pm. As the nightmare continued, Naang Hla lost consciousness several times. When they had finished raping Naang Hla, the soldiers took her husband with them to be a porter for the SPDC troops. He never came back. Naang Hla knew that he must have died.

Naang Hla was left alone, sick and numb, in the small hut in the jungle. She was too dizzy to stand or walk. She had a constant headache, violent dysentery, and bled so profusely she thought she had lost the baby. Still alone four days later, Naang Hla gave birth to her child, after only seven months of pregnancy. The next day, her husband's relatives arrived from Kun Hing to take her to Thailand. They were worried about the troops patrolling the area, and by the time they arrived, they had heard about the rape and Zaai Kue Na's death. She wanted to complain about her husband's death, and to punish the soldiers who raped her, but she couldn't. She

spoke no Burmese, and did not know how to approach the authorities. Not being sure of the troop number of the soldiers, she was hesitant to report the rape or her husband's murder. At the time of the interview, her baby was two months old and very ill. Drinking her milk gave the child violent dysentery, but Naang Hla had no money to buy milk. Too weak to work, she had no money to travel to a clinic or pay for medical attention. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Rape of 13-year old Girl**

Name: Naang Mo (not her real name)

Age: 13

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Nam Kham village, Kun Hing township, Shan State

Date of Incident: August, 2001

SPDC Troops: LIB 246, Kun Hing-based

SPDC troops were patrolling the area near Kun Hing base, when they saw thirteen-year- old Naang Mo with her fourteen-year-old friend, Naang Jung collecting vegetables in the forest, two hours outside Nam Kham village. They approached the girls, and Naang Jung managed to escape and run to safety. But a captain caught and raped Naang Mo and then released her near Nar Khue village early the next morning. Just outside Nar Khue village, Naang Mo put her face in her sarong and cried. Eventually, she made it back to her village and told her relatives what had happened. They wanted to complain to the local base commander, but they were afraid that, if they were to report the incident, they would be punished with fines or imprisonment. Although they wanted justice, there was nothing they could do. Naang Mo felt depressed, ashamed, and lethargic. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Four Women gang raped at Thukha Camp**

On 1 August 2001, four women were stopped in Thukha Camp, Tenasserim Divison, and gang raped by soldiers from LIB 104 led by Lt Col San Tee. They were released the next day.

**The victims were:**

1) Ma Nu, age 21, from Ya Wel village, Thayetchaung tsp

2) Ma Than Sein, age 18, from Min Yep village, Launglon tsp

3) Ma Pu Lay, age 17, from Min Yep village, Launglon tsp

4) Ma Khin Aye, age 17 from Min Yep village, Launglon tsp. (Source: THRF)

**Gang Rape at 'Ta Saang' Bridge in Murngton**

From 11-18 August 2001, 3 Shan women were detained and raped by SPDC troops from IB225 led by Capt. Myint Lwin, stationed at Ta Saang bridge on the Salween river, at Ta Saang bridge camp in Murng-Ton Township, Shan State. On August 11, 2 truckloads of Shan villagers, mostly from central Shan State, heading for Murng-Ton were stopped at Ta Saang bridge checkpoint by the said SPDC troops. While the troops searched the villagers' belongings and questioned them, Capt. Myint Lwin picked out 3 women from among the villagers, took them to a separate place and interrogated them. After searching and questioning them for a while, one of the troops said to the truck drivers, "We received an order from our superior to keep the 3 women here until we learn more about them, and they may be released later", then he ordered them and the other villagers to go on their way. While detaining the 3 women at the Ta Saang bridge camp, Capt. Myint Lwin brought them into his bed room one at a time and raped them, starting with the youngest.

After he had raped all 3 women Myint Lwin let his close subordinates also rape the women. Later, all the 21 soldiers manning the Ta Saang bridge checkpoint raped the women. The three women were released them on August 18, 2001.

**The three women were:**

1. Naang Naw (not her real name), aged 28, a teacher, from Wan Long village, Ham Ngaai tract, Murng-Kerng township

2. Naang Khur Zed (not her real name), aged 20, from Wan Long, Ham Ngaai tract, Murng-Kerng township

3. Naang Thuay Zaam (not her real name), aged 18, from Wan Long, Ham Ngaai tract, Murng-Kerng township (Source: SHRF)

**Rape and Extortion in Kae-See**

On 17 August 2001, a patrol of about 37 SPDC troops from LIB516, led by deputy battalion commander, Maj. Tin Maung Htoo, came to Wan Zing village in Kae-See township and issued an order requiring the villagers to provide them with 3 tons of teakwood. When the villagers explained that there was no teakwood in the area, the SPDC troops ordered them to give 210,000 kyat instead. Although the villagers tried to protest several times the troops kept demanding the money, and eventually the villagers had to comply with the order for fear of further abuses. While stationed at the village monastery in the evening of that day, the troops were said to have forcibly taken the following things from nearby villages: (a) 20 viss (1 viss = 1.6 kg) of chickens, 5 pairs of canvas boots and 13 bags of peanuts from Loi Long village; (b) 30 viss of chickens from Wan Kung village. A young housewife at Wan Kung village, Naang La (not her real name), was also reported to have been raped by some of the SPDC soldiers. (Source:SHRF)

**A Women Raped, Beaten, and Robbed in Murng-Khark**

On 30 August 2001, Naang Kham (not her real name), aged 21, from Nam Kaa Long village in Nam Saw tract, Murng-Khark township, Shan State, was raped and beaten unconscious by SPDC soldiers from IB 227. The rape and beating occurred on the banks of Nam Luay river near Paang Mu village in Murng-Khark township. After visiting the town market with some other people from her village, Naang Kham returned before the others in order to stop on the way back and visit relatives in Paang Mu village. After her visit she was waiting for the other villagers near Nam Luay river when 3 SPDC soldiers suddenly appeared and dragged her into the nearby bush. Although she shouted for help a few times before one of the soldiers covered her mouth, no one came to her aid. The soldiers took turns raping her one after another, while the other 2 held her down and covered her mouth. After all 3 soldiers had raped her, they beat her until she lost consciousness. When she regained consciousness, the soldiers were gone and had taken 600 kyat from her. Although her relatives later lodged a complaint with the SPDC township authorities, no action had been taken as of November 2001. (Source: SHRF)

**Widow Raped in Htee Baw Lo Village**

On 31 August 2001, DKBA commander Kyaw Shwe, called Po Kha Hu, entered Htee Baw Lo village, Papun District, Karen State, and raped a widow in village. The victim was Naw Aye, age 51, also called Paw Say Moe, and she is the daughter of Saw Pah Kaw. After raping her, Po Kha Hu threatened Naw Aye that if she told anyone about the incident she would have problems, and he put 4500 kyats on her mouth. (Source: KORD)

**Girl Raped in Loi Noi Village**

Name: Naang Kham (not her real name)

Age: 16

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer, Finished 4 Standard in primary school in Murng Pan town

Location: Loi Noi village, Nong Long tract, Murng Pan township, Shan State. Loi Noi was relocated to Murng Pan town in 1998.

Date of Incident: 11-9-2001

SPDC Troops: Co. 4, LIB 520, Captain Kyaw Won

Sixteen-year-old Naang Kham was alone at home when Capt. Kyaw Won came into the village, saying that he wanted to buy some chickens. Finding Naang Kham alone, he entered her house and raped her. She cried out loudly, and he slapped her

face, leaving it badly bruised. After the incident, she did not complain to authorities, but confided in her family. She later went across the border to Thailand with her relatives. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Woman Washing Clothes Gang-Raped in Kaeng-Tung**

On 16 September 2001, a woman from Wan Lawn village in Murng Khawn tract, Kaeng-Tung township, Shan State, was gang-raped by 3 SPDC troops from IB244. On the day of the incident, Naang Long (not her real name), aged 19, was washing clothes alone in a stream some distance west of her village. As she was standing knee-deep in the water washing clothes, 3 SPDC soldiers from Loi Muay-based IB244 approached her and, when they saw she was alone, dragged her out of the water, letting all her clothes be swept away in the stream. The 3 soldiers raped her and then left the scene, leaving Naang Long alone. She returned to her village told her parents what had happened to her, but they had no one to complain to. There was no one who would dare file a complaint with the military authorities.(Source: SHRF)

**Two Bamboo Shoot Gatherers Raped in Murng-Yawng**

On 22 September 2001, 2 Akha women from Pa Pek village in Pa Hok village tract, Murng-Yawng township, Shan State, who were collecting bamboo shoots were raped by SPDC troops from LIB334 in the forest near their village. The 2 women, Aa Pyae and Aa Nu (not their real names), aged about 24-25, were collecting bamboo shoots in the forest near their village when a patrol of 7 SPDC soldiers forced them into a bush and raped them. The troops brutally pulled and tore off their clothes while raping them. When all the 7 soldiers had raped the 2 women, they went away leaving the women lying with their torn clothes. Although the women and their village leader reported the rape to the head of the people's militia of their village tract, no one dared take the case to the SPDC soldiers. (Source: SHRF)

**Woman Gathering Vegetables Raped in Kun-Hing**

On October 1 2001, a displaced villager from Ka Li village relocation site who was gathering wild vegetables was raped by an SPDC military officer from LIB524 at the edge of a rice field about 1 mile from Ka Li village in Kun-Hing township, Shan State. The victim, Naang Man (not her real name), aged 20, was originally from Kung Lom village in Kung Lom tract, Kun-Hing township, and had been forcibly relocated to Ka Li village relocation site in 1997 by the Burmese troops. Naang Man was gathering wild vegetables along the edge of a rice field about 1 mile from the relocation site when an SPDC soldier called out to her asking her if she had seen Shan soldiers passing through. When she said she had not seen any Shan soldiers, the SPDC soldier ordered her to come near him, aiming his pistol at her. Fearing the gun, she went to him as ordered and recognised him as Capt. Soe Win Hpyu from LIB524. He ordered her to sit down and, when she sat down, he raped her. Before releasing her, Soe Win Hpyu warned Naang Man not to tell anyone about the incident, or he would come and kill not only her but also her parents. (Source: SHRF)

**Wife Raped, Her Husband Beaten, in Murng-Yawng**

On October 9, 2001 a woman from Wan Thaang village in Wan Dap tract, Murng-Yawng township, who was returning home from the town market with her husband, was raped and her husband was beaten by SPDC troops from LIB334, at a remote point on the way between the town and their village. On that day, Naang Seng Non (not her real name), aged 23 and her husband, Zaai Long Seng (not his real name), aged 29, went to the town market with some other villagers, but the couple returned home alone, because the others had left before them thinking that they had already returned. At a remote place on the way back to the village, the couple ran into a group of 3 SPDC soldiers from LIB334, who stopped them and searched their things and their bodies. While searching, the soldiers deliberately and repeatedly touched Naang Seng Non's private parts in front of her husband, prompting him to intervene. One of the soldiers then punched the husband in the temple with his fist, pushing him to the ground, and pointing his gun at him warned the man not to move or he would kill him.

Meanwhile, the soldier who seemed to be the commander of the SPDC troops dragged Naang Seng Non into a nearby bush and raped her. When the soldier released her after raping her, she ran crying to her husband and he held her in his arms, and begged and pleaded with the troops to stop molesting them. The troops then laughed at them loudly and went away. When they got back home, the couple reported the rape to the village headman and the head of people's militia of their village. The head of the people's militia reportedly filed a complaint with the Murng-Yawng township SPDC authorities the next day, but so far there has not been any action taken in relation to this case. (Source: SHRF)

**Two Women Gang-Raped While Fishing In Ta-Khi-Laek**

On 19 October, 2 women from Mae Hai village in Murng Hai tract in Ta-Khi-Laek township were raped until they lost consciousness by a patrol of SPDC troops from IB221. The rape occured near Nam Hai stream some distance from their village. Naang Seng Kham (not her real name), aged 18 and Naang Suk (not her real name), aged 19, were catching fish in the Nam Hai stream that evening when a patrol of 25 SPDC soldiers from Murng-Phyak-based IB221 came and ordered them to come to the bank of the stream. When the women got to the bank, the soldiers gang-raped them without speaking to them. After being raped repeatedly for some time, both of them lost consciousness. When they regained consciousness, it was almost dark, and they managed to get back to their village that night where they related what had happened to their parents. Although their parents reported the incident to the village elders and village leaders, no one dared to take the case any further. (Source: SHRF)

**Woman Punished for Reporting Rape**

Name: Naang Tun (not her real name)

Age: 19

Status: Married

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Kang Oon village, Nong Kaw tract, Lai Kha township, Shan State. Kang Oon was relocated to Wan Long Bue Hui, Lai Kha township on 4-4-1997.

Date of Incident: 24-10-2001

SPDC Troops: Co. 3, LIB 515, Captain Soe Soe Aung

On October 24, 2001, 4 SPDC soldiers, led by Captain Soe Soe Aung, left the local military camp to buy chickens in the relocated village of Kang Oon. Arriving in the village, Captain Soe Soe Aung noticed Naang Tun alone, and asked her, "Where is your husband?" "He is away, doing forced labor," she answered. "I need to search your house,' he said. "You must come with me to protect against the loss of any personal property." At the house, the captain grabbed Naang Tun's hand and forced her to lie down, pointing his pistol at her head. "Don't get up," he ordered. "If you do, I'll shoot you." As he was raping her, she cried out loudly two or three times, screaming "Don't do this to me, Captain!" He slapped her face and threatened her again with his pistol, saying, "Do you want to die?" Afraid, she grew silent and said nothing more until he had finished raping her and left with his troops to go back to the camp.

Naang Tun reported the incident to headman Lung Kan Na and 7 or 8 elders in the village. They asked her to wait until her husband came home. He arrived home 2-3 days after the rape, and Naang Tun, crying, told him what had happened. They went with the headman and village elders to the camp. In all, 13 villagers approached to local LIB 515 military camp to talk to the camp commander, Captain Than Tun. The Captain said, "Captain Soe Soe Aung has been patrolling the area for the last 19-20 days. He's not back yet." Naang Tun insisted that she would easily recognize him, so the camp commander ordered a line-up of all his troops. 146 soldiers stood in line, but Captain Soe Soe Aung was not among them. When Naang Tun could not identify the rapist, Captain Than Tun said, "These are all the soldiers in my camp right now. I don't know who raped you, but you can't blame my soldiers and my military camp like that." Upon saying that, he sent Naang Tun to a military jail. She stayed there for one day and one night, until a village elder went to see Capt. Than Tun again. The villager apologized to the Captain, and asked that Naang Tun be released. The Captain said, "You have to pay for Naang Tun's release. You have made me feel shame, and have caused me to lose face. You must pay 20,000 Kyat." The villagers paid the money, and Naang Tun was released. After her release, Naang Tun did not feel well. She had a headache and was dizzy and had to go to the

hospital in Lai Kha town five times. Eventually, she recovered. Her family is supportive and understanding, but Naang Tun wants to see her rapist punished. (SHRF, SWAN: “License to Rape,” May 2002)

**Woman Raped for 6 Days**

Name: Naang Lawnt ( not her real name)

Age: 32

Status: Married, with 3 children (Zaai Won, 9, Naang Moon, 7, and Zaai Lin, 5)

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Loi Sim village, Wan Lone tract, Murng Kerng, Shan State. Loi Sim was relocated to Murng Kerng town on 27-4-1997.

Date of Incident: 6-11-2001

SPDC Troops: LIB 514, Officers Thein Myint & Nyan Lin

60-70 SPDC troops were patrolling the area around Naang Lawnt's village. When her husband, Zaai Tun, saw the troops approaching, he ran away, but the soldiers saw him leaving. They surrounded Naang Lawnt's house, and searched it thoroughly, inside and out without finding anything illegal. When they were finished searching the house, they ordered Naang Lawnt to come with them, but she didn't want to go. Officer Thein Myint slapped her face three or four times, saying, "Are you coming with us, or not?" She had no choice, and was forced to leave with the troops. They took her first to the jungle for two nights, where both officers Thein Myint and Nyan Lin raped her. They then took her to the deserted village of Koong Ben, Hui Hey tract in Murng Kerng township. They kept her there for three nights, and then took her to the local LIB 514 camp for one last night. She was raped throughout this time, for a total of six days and nights. Finally she was released at 7 am. Before she left, officer Thein Myint warned "If you tell anybody about this, I will come and kill you and your husband." When Naang Lawnt got home, she told her husband everything, but they were too afraid to complain to anyone.

Naang Lawnt and her husband still live together. He is understanding, and only blames the Burmese soldiers for what happened. Naang Lawnt is depressed, and frustrated that there was no way to punish to soldiers for what they did to her. She fell ill after the incident, and spent seven days in the hospital in Murng Kerng town. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Gang-Rape in Murng Kerng Township**

Name: Naang Ying (not her real name)

Age: 17

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Wan Khom village, Murng Khun tract, Murng Kerng township, Shan State. Wan Khom was relocated to Murng Kerng on 11-6-1997.

Date of Incident: 6-11-2001

SPDC Troops: Co. 5, LIB 514, Captain Kyaw Myint and 4 of his officers

Naang Ying was outside the village, searching for food, when 60-70 SPDC troops passed by. They saw her working, and took her with them. They took her to the jungle for two nights and the deserted village of Koon Ban, Hui Hey tract in Murng Kerng township for three nights, and then, finally, the local camp for one night. Captain Kyaw Myint, along with 4 of his officers, gang raped her every night for those six nights. They released her at 6am on the seventh day. When she got home, she told her parents and relatives what had happened. Her family took her to the hospital in Murng Kerng for a blood test, and her uncle, the village headman Lung Nan Ti, went to report the incident to Murng Kerng town's headman, Lung Hla Shwe. Upon hearing what had happened, Lung Hla Shwe went to discuss the incident with a Shan Captain, Shwe Hla of Company 3, LIB 515. The Captain said, "Burmese soldiers have a habit of lying. Since we didn't witness the incident ourselves, they will ask who can verify that it happened. Although Naang Ying knows which soldiers raped her, they can still claim that she is lying. I'm not saying this because I want the soldiers to go unpunished. Even though I'm an SPDC soldier, all my relatives are Shan, and I'm very sorry about what happened. I just know that it will be impossible to win this case." Her family was understanding and supported Naang Ying. She was frustrated, because she wanted to punish the rapists, but she could do nothing. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**14-year old Girl Raped**

Name: Naang Seng (not her real name)

Age: 14

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Nar Lein village, Wan Phey tract, Murng Kerng township, Shan State. Nar Lein was reclocated to Murng Kerng township on 13-9-1997.

Date of Incident: 6-11-2001

SPDC Troops: Co. 5, LIB 514, Captain Kyaw Myint

When 60-70 SPDC troops entered Nar Lein village, the men of the village ran away in fear of being forced to be porters for the SPDC, leaving only women in the village. Captain Kyaw Myint approached Naang Seng's house and saw that the fourteen-year-old girl was alone at home. Ordering his troops to stand guard outside the house, Captain Kyaw Myint dragged Naang Seng into the bedroom and raped her. She cried loudly, and he slapped her. After the troops left the village, her family came back. Naang Seng told them what had happened, but they were too afraid to complain to authorities. Two days after the incident, Naang Shwe, Naang Seng's older sister, took her to the hospital in Murng Kerng for a medical exam. Afraid and depressed, Naang Seng couldn't sleep for five or six nights. She wanted to punish the captain, but could do nothing. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Gang-Rape in Murng-Yawng**

On 11 November 2001, 2 women were gang-raped by 7 SPDC soldiers from LIB331 on the bank of Nam Ngaw stream near Nam Ngaw village in Hawng Zaang tract, Murng-Yawng township. During the rape the soldiers squeezed and roughly grabbed their necks, severely bruising them. Naang Seng Kham (not her real name), aged 19 and Naang Bo La (not her real name), aged 19, of Nam Ngaw village were catching fish in Nam Ngaw stream some distance from the village when 7 SPDC troops from LIB331 approached them. The SPDC soldiers seized the 2 women in the stream, dragged them up on to the bank and gang-raped them. Because the women were struggling and kicking fiercely all the time, the soldiers held them down on the ground by pressing and squeezing their necks, making it difficult for them to breathe and causing them severe pain. After all the soldiers had raped the women, they left, leaving their victims with severely bruised and painful necks. Although the women and their parents complained about their plight to the village residents and village tract leaders, except for saying some words of consolation to the victims, the village leaders did not dare to take the case any further. (Source: SHRF)

**Woman Raped While Gathering Vegetables**

Name: Naang Khei (not her real name)

Age: 24

Status: Married (8 years ago, has 6-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son)

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Na Lae village, Murng Boo Long tract, Murng Paeng, Shan State

Date of Incident: 28.11.2001

SPDC Troops: Co.3, IB 248, Captain Tun Yin and Lt. Than Maung

On 28.11.2001 Naang Khei was gathering wild vegetables on her farm one mile from her village. Capt. Tun Yin and Lt. Than Maung saw that Naang Khei was alone there. They aimed a gun at her and walked toward her. She thought that the 2 officers might want to steal the villagers' vegetables from the farm. But after they reached her, they ordered her to put both her hands up and searched her whole body. When they didn't find anything, they ordered her to go to a pile of straw on the farm. Naang Khei didn't go at first, but they pointed their gun at her back and forced her forward. When they arrived at the straw pile one pointed his gun at her while the other raped her. Then they switched. In all, it took 2-1/2 hours before they let her go back home. When she arrived home, she told her husband and parents about the incident. Together with her parents and her 33-year-old husband, Sai Kaw, Naang Khei went to report the incident to the village headman Loong Saw. The village headman then accompanied the four of them to complain to Co.3, Commander Capt. Kyaw Kaeing in Murng Boo Long tract base. Naang Khei told him all the things that happened to her. The Commander said that it was good for him to know. He told the five of them to come again tomorrow at 8:30 am. On 29.11.2001 at 8:30 am, the five of them arrived at the military camp. The Commander asked Naang Khei to identify the rapist. "Look carefully at their faces, and point out the ones who raped you," he instructed. She was shown a line-up of soldiers, but she couldn't find Captain Tun Yin and Lt. Than Maung among them. Naang Khei told the Commander that Capt. Tun Yin and Lt. Than Maung were not among the 48 soldiers. "I would recognize them," she said. The Commander said, "These are all the soldiers in Co.3. We are all here together 49 soldiers including myself. This means you wanted my military branch to be blacklisted." He started to send all five of them to prison. But the village headman intervened and asked for forgiveness. Instead of prison, the Commander imposed a fine on each of the five villagers. Within five days, Naang Khei and the village headman each had to pay 10,000 Kyat, her husband had to pay 5,000 Kyat and her parents were required to pay 7,000 Kyat each. This came to a total of 39,000 Kyat. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

**Rape in Warn Lao Village**

Name: Naang Ku (not her real name)

Age: 18

Status: Single

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Farmer

Location: Warn Lao village, Warn Lao tract, Kun Hing township, Shan State

Date of Incident: 4.12.01

SPDC Troops: Co.4, LIB 524, Captain Myint Maung Htwe

On 4.12.01, Capt. Myint Maung Htwe from Co. 4, LIB 524, was on a regular patrol of a relocation area to which villagers were relocated in early 2001. When the captain saw Naang Ku alone at home in the relocation site, the captain went up to her house and asked, "I see you're alone at home. Where are your parents?" "My father is away doing forced labour and my mother and my elder sister went to work on the farm," Naang Ku answered "Last night, who came to your house? Did you have a guest?" "Nobody came," she said. The captain, saying he would find out whether or not a guest had stayed there, asked Naang Ku to let him see the house and bedrooms. He ordered her inside with him, drew and aimed his gun at her and ordered her to lie down. When she refused, he grabbed her hand and forced her to lie down. Twice Naang Ku shouted, "The captain is raping me!" The captain slapped her face and her mouth and continued to rape her. "If you scream or tell your parents or relatives what happened, I will come and shoot all of you dead," he threatened as he was leaving her house. In the evening time, when her parents and her relatives came back home from work, she told them about the incident. They didn't report the incident to anyone. The next morning her mother brought her to Kun Hing hospital for a medical check up. After the incident, her parents didn't want to stay in the relocation site any longer. They moved to Murng Ton and later to Thailand. They arrived in Thailand on 26.12.01. (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

## 7.7 Personal Accounts



Name: Naw Mu Pe

Age: 19

Family: 4 Sisters, Father's name Saw Maung Thet, Mother's name Naw Yor Koot,

Husband's name, Saw Hsar Kwa, age 29

Previous village: Kyaut Pyu kee, Pa Law area, Ler Mu Lah Township, Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State

Present Village: Tee Poe Lay Tae (IDP hiding site), Ler Muh Lah, Mergui-Tavoy district

When I was a child my parents lived in Kyaut Pyu Kee, a small village in the area. Our village was far from the main village. When I was old enough, my parents sent me to school and I studied up till third grade. My parents earned their living by hillside rice cultivation using the slash and burn method. They went and lived in the rice fields and returned to the village to live with us when they finished their work. In our village we also had a betel plant garden where we lived. When I was thirteen my farther died of disease. As we only had women in our family, my elder sister and I left school and worked with my mother in rice cultivation. Every year we cultivated enough rice for our family. In 1996, at the time we were clearing a site for rice cultivation, the Burmese Army ordered everyone to move out from our village. They did not say where the villagers had to move to or live. They only ordered us to move out from the village and live elsewhere. Some villagers moved to other villages and others fled into the jungle or up the river near to our village. Some people, they did not know where to move to and continued to stay in our village. For our family, we did not know where to move to. If we went to the main village we would not have any food and if we fled into the jungle we also would not have any food. So, as with some other villagers we remained in our village. After one month the Burmese soldiers arrived at our village and burned down thirty houses including ours. After that we fled to the tip of a stream in our area with other villagers and lived there. In that hiding site we earned our living with rice cultivation by slash and burn method. As there were only women in our family, we did not have any man to take care of our security. Whenever we had to go and find fish paste and salt in the village my elder sister and I fearfully went with other people. Sometimes only three of us, my mother, sister and I went to get food.

In 1999,when I was seventeen I married a villager, who was also an internally displaced person. After a year we had a daughter. We lived with my mother and we moved from place to place and lived in the jungle in constant fear. It was more difficult to get food from the village because of the Burmese troops' frequent patrols. For four years we moved and lived with many difficulties. One day, in November 2000, my husband went hunting at 4 p.m., while our families were preparing dinner. During this time we heard gunfire near our house. Many bullets hit our house and landed close to us. We realized that the Burmese troops were firing at us and we ran out from our house. Just after leaving the house I remembered that my daughter was sleeping in the hammock inside and I rushed back to the house and took my daughter. When I came down from the house I saw my younger sister lying dead under the ladder, she had been shot in the head. The Burmese troops were continuing to fire their guns and some bullets landed close to me so I had to keep running and could not care for my sister. After running for a while I heard my daughter moaning and when I looked at her I saw that her leg was bleeding. I realized that my daughter's leg was hit but as the bullets were still coming very close to me, I had to keep on running. When I had been running for a while, I was shot in my shoulder. After some distance I could still hear the gunshots but as none of the bullets were landing close to me, I

stopped to rest. After a while my mother arrived and when she saw my daughter was shot, she took off her sarong and tied it round my daughter's wound. After this, as we feared that the Burmese troops would capture us, I took out my sarong and used it to carry my child. My mother and I continued running without any clothes on the lower part of our body. We were running for the whole night in the jungle. Near dawn, we reached a group of our villagers' hiding place and they shared with us some clothes and food. But I could not take any food because I had seen my sister dying from gunshot wound to her head, my daughter was shot and bleeding and I myself was also shot and bleeding. My whole body was covered in blood and I could not eat. I was worried that the Burmese troops would find us and I was very sad about the death of my younger sister, sorry for my daughter and also worried for my husband. All of our family were crying the whole night. I did not see my husband that night. I did not know when he would arrive. The next day he was looking for us and we met him. When we fled from the Burmese troops gunfire, we could not carry anything. Our entire household's property, paddies and rice were taken by Burmese soldiers who burned our house to the ground. Nothing left with us, except the clothes on our body. Other displaced people shared with us and fed us with what they had left. Later we move to another place and we met with Karen resistance fighters who looked after us and treated our gunshot wound. One month later my wound was healed. My daughter's wound did not heal well and she could not walk. When my daughter was shot she was only ten months old.

I remember clearly in my mind what happened to me that time and the fear and sadness are always in my heart. At present we have to live in hiding at the tip of a stream, deep in the jungle, in fear and with many difficulties. We are trying hard to get enough food for our families but we never have enough. We do not know what will happen to us and what we have to face in the future. In my life I never made anybody hurt or sad, so I do not understand why I have to face this kind of trouble. Sometimes these problems cause me to ask God, "Why Lord? Why do you allow this to happen to us? Why Lord?" (Source: CIDKP)

## 7.8 Appendix I-List of SPDC battalions whose members committed sexual violence (SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

| | Military Unit/No. | Location of base (if known); on patrol (if known) | No. of Cases | Area/township where sexual violence occurred & No. of Cases |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | IB 246 | Based in Kun Hing | 19 | Kun Hing 14, Murng Nai 2, Nam Zarng 3 |
| 2 | LIB 515 | Based in Lai Kha | 14 | Lai Kha 11, Loi Lem 1, Murng Kerng 2 |
| 3 | IB 66 | Based in Nam Zarng & patrolling | 13 | Nam Zarng 10, Murng Nai 2, Murng Pan 1 |
| 4 | LIB 524 | Based in Kun Hing | 11 | Kun Hing 8, Murng Nawng 1, Murng Nai 2 |
| 5 | LIB 514 | | 8 | Murng Kerng 6, Loi Lem 1, Ke See 1 |
| 6 | IB 99 | Based in Malkthila and Myingan(Central Burma)2, based in Larng Khur 1, based in Nam Zarng 1 | 7 | Larng Kher 2, Murng Nai 3, Nam Zarng 2 |
| 7 | IB 225 | Based in Murng Ton | 6 | Murng Ton 6 |
| 8 | LIB 333 | Based in Murng Sart | 6 | Murng Sart 5, Murng Ton 1 |
| 9 | LIB 334 | Based in Murng Yawng | 4 | Murng Yawng 6 |
| 10 | IB 64 | Based in Murng Nai 2, based in Lai Kha 1 | 4 | Murng Nai 3, Loi Lem 1 |
| 11 | LIB 520 | Based in Murng Pan | 4 | Murng Pan 3, Murng Nai 1 |
| 12 | LIB 513 | Patrolling | 3 | Loi Lem 3, Murng Kerng 1 |
| 13 | LIB 332 | | 3 | Murng Pan 4 |
| 14 | IB 49 | Based in Murng Sart | 3 | Murng Sart 3 |
| 15 | IB 227 | Based in Murng Yarng 1, based in Murng Phyak 1 | 3 | Murng Yarng 1, Murng Khark 2 |
| 16 | LIB 314 | Patrolling | 3 | Kaeng Tung 3 |
| 17 | LIB 316 | Based in TaKhiLaek | 2 | TaKhiLaek 3 |
| 18 | LIB 424 | Based in Ke See 2, based in Kun Hing 1 | 2 | Ke See 2, Kun Hing 1 |
| 19 | LIB 359 | Based in Ta-Khi-Laek | 2 | TaKhiLaek 1, Murng Sart 1 |
| 20 | LIB 519 | Based in Murng Ton 1, based in Kun Hing 1 | 2 | Kun Hing 1, Murng Ton 1 |
| 21 | IB 247 | Patrolling | 2 | Nam Zarng 2 |
| 22 | IB 226 | Based in Kaeng Tung | 2 | Kaeng Tung 2 |
| 23 | IB 55 | Patrolling | 2 | Lai Kha 2 |
| 24 | IB 248 | | 1 | Murng Nai 1, Murng Paeng 1 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 25 | LIB 277 | Based in Murng Ton 1, patrolling 1 | 1 | Murng Ton 1, Murng Pan 1 |
| 26 | LIB 525 | Patrolling | 1 | Larng Kher 1 |
| 27 | IB 45 | Patrolling | 1 | Murng Sart 1 |
| 28 | LIB 378 | From Arkan State | 1 | Kun Hing 1 |
| 29 | LIB 44 | Patrolling | 1 | Kun Hing 1 |
| 30 | IB 43 | Patrolling | 1 | Murng Paeng 1 |
| 31 | LIB 242 | Patrolling | 1 | Kae See 1 |
| 32 | LIB 442 | Patrolling | 1 | Lai Kha 1 |
| 33 | LIB 517 | Patrolling | 1 | Lai Kha 1 |
| 34 | LIB 502 | Patrolling | 1 | Murng Pan 1 |
| 35 | IB 65 | Based in Murng Ton | 1 | Murng Ton 1 |
| 36 | LIB 324 | Based in Nam Tu | 1 | Nam Tu 1 |
| 37 | IB 22 | Patrolling | 1 | Nam Zarng 1 |
| 38 | LIB 422 | Based in Murng Nai | 1 | Murng Nai 1 |
| 39 | LIB 527 | Based in Murng Sart | 1 | Murng Sart 1 |
| 40 | IB 102 | Patrolling | 1 | Kun Hing 1 |
| 41 | IB 279 | | 1 | Murng Yarn 1 |
| 42 | LIB 514 | Patrolling | 1 | Kae See 1 |
| 43 | LIB 529 | Based in Kaeng Tung | 1 | Murng Ton 1 |
| 44 | IB 245 | | 1 | Kaeng Tung 1 |
| 45 | IB 226 | Patrolling | 1 | Kaeng Tung 1 |
| 46 | LIB 503 | Based in Murng Phyak | 1 | Murng Ton 1 |
| 47 | LIB 383 | Based in Murng Kerng | 1 | Murng Kerng 1 |
| 48 | LIB 516 | Patrolling | 1 | Kae See 1 |
| 49 | IB 64 | | 1 | Lai Kha 1 |
| 50 | IB 221 | Based in Murng Phyak | 1 | TaKhiLaek 1 |
| 51 | IB 9 | | 1 | Murng Kerng 1 |
| 52 | IB 244 | | 1 | Kaeng Tung 1 |

## 7.8 Appendix II-Names of perpetrators of sexual violence

(SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. IB 246**<br>- Maj Saw Win<br>- Maj Too Nyeing<br>- Maj Tu Nyein<br>- Maj Aung Shein<br>- Commander Myint Oo<br>- Capt Soe Naing Oo<br>- Capt Tin Maung Win<br>- Capt Than Naing Oo<br>- Capt Kyaw Aye<br>- Capt Than Maung<br>- Capt Aung Moe<br>- Capt Htun Myint<br>- Capt Aung Htay<br>- Capt Kyaw Myint<br>- Capt Zaw Thein<br>- Officer Saw Win Po | **2. LIB 515**<br>- Maj Soe Hpyu<br>- Commander Maung Maung<br>- Commander Han Aung<br>- Capt Tun Aung<br>- Capt Myin Oo<br>- Capt Aung Hpyu<br>- Capt Soe Soe Aung<br>- Lt-Col-Htun Sein | **3. IB 66**<br>- Commander Htun Myint<br>- Commander Tin Myint<br>- Commander Myint Sein<br>- Capt Than Kyaw<br>- Capt Htun Aung<br>- Capt Htay Aung<br>- Capt Aung Kyaw<br>- Capt Soe Win<br>- Capt Nyunt Maung<br>- Capt Than Maung Tun<br>- Capt Zaw Hlaing<br>- Sgt. Khin Maung<br>- Sgt. Sein Win | **4. LIB 524**<br>- Maj Htun Mya<br>- Commander Htun Mya<br>- Commander Khin Hla Win<br>- Commander Khin Maung<br>- Commander Hla Aung<br>- Capt Htun Mya<br>- Capt Win Naing<br>- Capt Tun Oo<br>- Capt Soe Win Hpyu<br>- Capt Myint Maung Htwe |
| **5. LIB 514**<br>- Capt Kyaw Myint<br>- Capt Sein Win<br>- Capt Myint Aung<br>- Capt Than Maung<br>- Capt Thein Maung<br>- Capt Kyaw Myint<br>- Capt Than Myint<br>- Officer Thein Myint<br>- Officer Nyan Lin<br>- Lt. Aung Hla<br>- Sgt Pa Thein | **6. IB 99**<br>- Capt Aung Zaw<br>- Capt Than Than<br>- Capt Aung Htun<br>- Capt Than Maung<br>- Capt Maung Soe | **7. IB 225**<br>- Capt Aung Zaw<br>- Capt Kyaw Aye<br>- Capt Htun Myint<br>- Capt Myint Lwin | **8. LIB 333**<br>- Commander Thein Maung<br>- Capt Maung Maung<br>- Capt Naing Oo<br>- Corporal Kin Maung Soe |
| **9. LIB 334**<br>- Copal Kyagyi<br>- Private Kyaw San | **10. IB 64**<br>- Commander Khin Than Aye<br>- Commander Chit Htwe<br>- Maj Kyaw Khang<br>- Officer Soe Maung Nyo | **11. LIB 520**<br>- Maj Than Maung<br>- Maj Maung Ong<br>- Capt Than Maung<br>- Capt Kyaw Won | **12. LIB 513**<br>- Maj Kooma<br>- Commander Hla Thaung |
| **13. LIB 332**<br>- Capt Maung Maung Soe<br>- Capt Hla Hpe<br>- Capt Kyaw Win | **14. IB 49**<br>- Capt Han Sein | **15. IB 227**<br>- Capt Sein Win<br>- Private Hla Tin | **16. LIB 314**<br>- Lt Kyaw Soe<br>- Lt Hla Htwe |
| **17. LIB 316**<br>- Commander Naing Lin<br>- Private Maung Bo | **18. LIB 424**<br>- Maj Maung Kyaw Tun<br>- Capt Soe Hlaing<br>- Capt Soe Phu | **19. LIB 359**<br>- Capt Htun Kyaw | **20. LIB 519**<br>- Maj Min Sein<br>- Sgt Hla Phyu |
| **21. IB 247**<br>- Commander Tha Aye<br>- Capt Mya Htoo | **22. IB 226**<br>- Private Kyaw Lwin<br>- Lt. Kyi Htun | **23. IB 55**<br>- Capt Khin Soe<br>- Capt Thein Win | **24. IB 248**<br>- Capt Hla Phey<br>- Capt Tun Yin<br>- Lt Than Maung |
| **25. LIB 277**<br>- Maj Aye Thant<br>-Capt Khin Maung Nyunt | **26. LIB 525**<br>- Capt Soe Nyint | | |

## 7.8 Appendix II-Chart of Rape Cases-2001

(SHRF, SWAN: "License to Rape," May 2002)

| No. | No. of women | Date of rape | Age of woman | Age of girl under 18 | Village of origin, tract, township | What the woman was doing; place |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 130 | 1 | 17.1.2001 | | 17 | Ho Ha village, Nam Zarng township | she and her father were going to gather firewood, 1-1/2 miles from village |
| 131 | 1 | 19.1.2001 | | | Ho Ha village, Kaeng Tawng area, Murng Nai township | in their house, in the village |
| 132 | 1 | 24.1.2001 | | 14 | Ton Hoong village relocation site in Ton Hoong tract, Murng Nai township | they were gathering wild vegetables at an old farm some distance northwest of Ton Hoong |
| 133 | 1 | Jan-01 | 18 | | Market quarter, Kaeng Tung | going to buy basic provisions in the camp |
| 134 | 1 | 23.2.2001 | 19 | | Nawng Hoi village, Huay Kos tract, Kaeng Tung township | she was gathering vegetables in a farm near her village. |
| 135 | 1 | Feb-01 | 24 | | Wan Pa Khae village, Nam Phung tract, TaKhiLaek township | working on their farm alone, a half-hour walk from the village |
| 136 | 1 | 29.3.2001 | 18 | | Nong Tao village, Nong Long tract, Larng Kher township | While working on the farm |
| 137 | 1 | 30.3.2001 | | 17 | Kun Kawk village, Kun Mong tract, Murng Nai township | She was with her uncle on an ox-cart carrying pieces of wood and bamboo. |
| 138 | 1 | Mar-01 | | 5 | Ba Sar village, Kaeng Tung township | alone at home, in her house, in the village |
| 139 | 5 | Mar-01 | | | Kho Lam village, Nam Zarng township | serving as forced labourer at the military camp |
| 140 | 1 | 16.4.2001 | 19 | | Koong Sar village, Wan Nong Koong Mong tract, Nam Zarng township | Staying alone at home, in her house, in the village |
| 141 | 1 | 27.4.2001 | 19 | | Naa Ing village, Ho Lin tract, Murng Pan township | She and 3 men were on the way to their farm |
| 142 | 1 | 30.4.2001 | 50 | | Ta Mark Laang village, 3 miles north of Lai-Kha town | Alone at home. |
| 143 | 40 | Apr-01 | | | Mai Nyawng Khongkhang village, Murng Pan township to Ton Hung village in Murng Nai township | they had been conscripted as civilian labourers for road construction in township |

| No. | No. of women | Date of rape | Age of woman | Age of girl under 18 | Village of origin, tract, township | What the woman was doing; place |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 144 | 1 | Apr-01 | | 12 | Ton Hoong village, Kaeng Tung township | Walking back to her village with her friend. |
| 145 | 1 | 1.5.01 | 18 | | Nong Kor village, Wan Zad tract, Ke See township | In her house, in the village |
| 146 | 1 | 4.5.01 | 18 | | Naa Kawng Mi village, Muang Ton township | in the house, in the village |
| 147 | 1 | 18.5.01 | 21 | | Nam Kat village, Nar Boi tract, Nam Zarng township | She was ordered to come to the military camp to clean the guard house. |
| 148 | 1 | 2.6.01 | | 17 | Paang Sa village, Naa Loi tract, Lai-Kha township | She was gathering vegetables to feed her pigs along the edge of a rice field outside the village |
| 149 | 1 | 7.6.01 | 62 | | Paang Ken village, Pha Khe tract, Muang Ton township | Home alone as all the family were out working |
| 150 | 1 | 8.6.01 | | | Naa Kawng Mu village, Muang Ton township | Husband had been conscripted to provide labour at the local military camp, she was alone at home. |
| 151 | Up to 108 | 13.6.01 | | 8 up | from the relocation site in the outskirts of Muang Keng town | They were conscripted and forced to carry ammunition, rice and other food stuff. |
| 152 | 1 | 4.7.01 | 27 | | Ter Hong village, Nong Hee tract, Muang Nai township | Alone at home, in her house, in relocation site |
| 153 | 2 | 11.7.01 | 24, 30 | | Wan Phui village, Kho Lamtract, Nam Zarng township | In a rice farm hut about 3 miles southwest of village |
| 154 | 1 | 14.7.01 | | 16 | Muang Tum village, Muang Sart township | she was looking for their cow which was grazing in the fields south of their village |
| 155 | 1 | 16.7.01 | | 16 | Koong Sar village, Wan Nong Koong Mong tract, Nam Zarng township | On the way to her village |
| 156 | 3 | 23.7.01 | | | Pang Kae Tu village, Pang Kae Tu tract, Muang Keng township | They were going to their rice field to plant rice, forced into the nearby guardhouse at the military base |

| No. | No. of women | Date of rape | Age of woman | Age of girl under 18 | Village of origin, tract, township | What the woman was doing; place |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 157 | 3 | 11-17.8.01 | 18, 20, 28 | | Wan Long village, Ham Ngaai tract, Mueng Keng township | They were stopped at Ta Saang bridge check point, on the Salween river |
| 158 | 1 | 17.8.01 | | | Wan Zing village, Wan Kung village, Kae See township | the villagers were ordered to provide the military with 3 tons of teakwood. |
| 159 | 1 | 30.8.01 | 21 | | Nam Kaa Long village, Nam Saw tract, Mueng Khark township | She was sitting alone, waiting for her friends on the bank of the Nam Luay river, near Paang Mu village, in Mueng Khark township |
| 160 | 1 | Aug-01 | | 16 | Keng Lom village, Kun Hing township | Staying on their farm with her husband hiding in the farm near deserted village |
| 161 | 1 | Aug-01 | | 13 | Nam Kham village, Kun Hing township | Collecting vegetables in the forest with her friend |
| 162 | 1 | 11.9.01 | | 16 | Loi Noi village, Nong Long tract, Mueng Pan township | Alone at home, in relocation site |
| 163 | 1 | 16.9.01 | 19 | | Wan Lawn village, Mueng Khawn tract, Kaeng Tung township | She was washing clothes alone in a stream some distance west of her village |
| 164 | 2 | 22.9.01 | 24, 25 | | Pa Pek village, Pa Hok tract, Mueng Yawng township | Collecting bamboo shoots, in the forest near their village |
| 165 | 1 | 1.10.01 | 20 | | originally Keng Lom village, Keng Lom tract, Kun Hing township relocated to Ka Li relocation site | She was gathering wild vegetables along the edge of a rice field about 1 mile from relocation site |
| 166 | 1 | 9.10.01 | 23 | | Wan Thaang village, Wan Dap tract, Mueng Yawng township | She and her husband went to the town market with some fellow villagers, when returning home from the town market, at a remote point on the way between the town and their village |
| 167 | 2 | 19.10.01 | 18, 19 | | Mae Hai village, Mueng Hai tract, Ta-Khi-Laek township | they were catching fish in the Nam Hai stream, some distance from their village |
| 168 | 1 | 24.10.01 | 19 | | Kang Oon village, Nong Kaw tract, Lai Kha township | Alone at home in relocation site |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 169 | 1 | 6.11.2001 | 32 | | Loi Sim village,<br>Wan Lone tract,<br>Murng Kerng township | Home, in the jungle, in deserted village and in military camp |
| 170 | 1 | 6.11.2001 | | 17 | Wan Khom village,<br>Murng Khun tract,<br>Murng Kerng township | Searching for food, outside village, in the jungle, in desert village and in military camp |
| 171 | 1 | 6.11.2001 | | 14 | Nar Lein village,<br>Wan Phey tract,<br>Murng Kerng township | Alone at home, in the village |
| 172 | 1 | 28.11.2001 | 24 | | Na Lae village,<br>Murng Boo Long tract,<br>Murng Paeng township | she was gathering wild vegetables on her farm |
| 173 | 1 | 4.12.2001 | 18 | | Warn Lao village,<br>Warn Lao tract,<br>Kun Hing township | Alone at home, in relocation site |

# 8. Rights of Ethnic Minorities

**Background**

Ethnic minorities, which make up more than one-third of the population of Burma, have long struggled for political rights and greater independence from the Rangoon government as a reaction to political isolation and oppression. As a result, the military junta has implemented a "divide and rule policy" in which divisions between and within ethnic groups are developed and encouraged and majority Burman troops in ethnic minority areas oppress the general population. Throughout the year, Burmese soldiers were responsible for a large number of documented abuses against minority peoples including killings, beatings, and rapes.

According to the US State Department, widespread governmental and societal discrimination against minorities continued throughout 2001. As part of the government's policy of systematic discrimination of non-Burmans, people's ethnicity is generally indicated on their national identity cards and passports, either explicitly or through the use of a personal title in the ethnic minority language rather than in Burmese. Minorities also experienced discrimination in the spheres of education, livelihoods, cultural and religious expression, freedom of movement, and access to health care. (For more information see relevant chapters)

The effects of governmental policy that encourages discrimination are far reaching both geographically and into the future. No one can calculate the time or effort it will take to reverse the psychological, economic, political and social costs of generations of discrimination and the resulting animosity and divisions between the people of Burma. This is especially true when violence against ethnic minorities and discrimination in education are part of the equation. The elimination of discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities in Burma is not only a human rights issue, but is of vital importance in creating lasting peace in a country that has seen decades of civil war.

## SPDC Campaigns of abuse against minority villagers

Much of the abuse suffered by minority peoples has come out of SPDC's "four cuts policy," named after its goal of separating rebel forces from communities that may lend them support. Begun in the 1970s, the centerpiece of the policy has been forced relocation, and so it has caused as much, if not more, suffering for non-combatants as it has for combatants. Villagers who are not forced to relocate are immediately suspected of aiding rebel forces, or being rebels themselves and are likely to be shot on sight, or worse, raped, beaten or tortured before being killed. Often these suspicions are based on nothing more than ethnicity.

In addition to relocating minority villagers, since the early 1990's there have been credible reports that the SPDC has also sought to resettle groups of Burmans in ethnic minority areas. Evidence of this type of resettlement is apparent along the Heho-Nyaungshwe road in Shan State and along the Mandalay-Mogok road toward Shan State, as well as in other areas. (US State Dept) Such resettlement invariably leads to increased hardship for minorities, straining local resources and increasing tensions between ethnic groups.

In 2001, inhabitants of minority areas far from insurgent operations, such as the large Karen areas of Irrawaddy Division, were nevertheless subject to stricter controls on personal movement, including more frequent military checkpoints, closer monitoring by military intelligence, and larger military garrisons. As a result, people in these areas were also more vulnerable to extortion by military forces or 'informal taxes,' than residents in majority Burman areas. (US State Dept)

Ethnic villagers are also likely to be forced into portering for the military for no compensation. Portering usually consists of grueling manual labor, hauling heavy loads through rough terrain at gunpoint, standing guard for 24 hour shifts or even being used as human shields in combat. Forced portering is one of SPDC's most notorious human rights violations, as well as one of the most common. Repeated condemnations from the UN and ILO have brought attention to conditions porters must endure (the chapter on *Forced Labor* addresses the situation more fully). Forced labor for minorities differs not only in terms of the number of people involved but-as the following quotations from Earth Rights International's 2001 report, *Valued Less Than a Milk Tin,* describe- in their treatment as well:

*"If you ask anyone who portered, they will know the difference in how groups were treated. The Karen and Shan were treated worse. If we got food, if the Burmans got one cup, we would only get one-half cup. For carrying things, we had to carry more than the Burmans...(29)"*

**Another Karen concurs:**

*"The Burman porters would receive more food while the Karen porters would receive very little. The military also made the Karen porters carry heavier things than the Burmans, and if the Karen porters were sick while they were carrying things, they would be punched and hit and left behind. If the Burmans became sick or couldn't carry things, however, they could just go back. I don't know why we were treated differently; it is probably because we are Karen, but I can't say for sure. The soldiers were probably all Burman because they all speak Burmese (30)."*

**Discrimination in Education**

The SPDC's policy towards ethnic minority peoples is forced assimilation or "Burmanization." One of the principle means of carrying out this objective has been the manipulation of the education system. All ethnic minorities have their own languages, but Burmese is the only language of instruction in both primary and secondary states schools, even in areas where ethnic minorities dominate. In most cases instruction in local ethnic minority languages is not available, even as a second language. Additionally, nationwide there are only a small number of domestic publications in indigenous minority languages. This has the effect of curtailing the ability of ethnic minorities who attend state run schools to speak or be literate in their own languages, thereby separating them from their cultural identity.

At the same time, millions of ethnic minority members cannot attend school at all due to poverty and the high cost of school fees, forced relocations, underdeveloped education infrastructure and life on the run or in hiding as internally displaced persons. Although education is notoriously inadequate throughout the country for all ethnic groups the ethnic minorities, particularly those living in conflict zones, are disproportionately affected by this condition. The two tier education system of military vs. civilian education becomes a three tier system with ethnic minority civilians at the bottom. Those ethnic minority members who become "Burmanized" are rewarded with better educational and professional opportunities while others are left behind. Education is thereby used as a weapon rather than as a tool for individual and national development. By consciously denying ethnic minorities equal educational opportunities today, the military government is setting the stage for discrimination for years to come.

The systematic discrimination that is so commonplace in the education system is also reflected in civil and military service, where advancement in, or even entrance in to, can depend on ethnicity:

*"Most Shan are not employed after they graduate from school; they don't get jobs. They could never become a general in the military or some other high ranking official...When these educated people apply for jobs and don't get work, they just leave by themselves because they are disappointed that although they have the same education level, they can't apply for and get the same jobs (Valued 24)."*

**Another Shan has a similar story to tell:**

*"The Burman are mostly government officers with the military. There are some Shan who have government jobs, but the Shan cannot get the higher positions. They just work as clerks in the office do, in low -level positions...I don't know why Shan can't get the higher positions. Mostly the higher positions are brought in from the central government. Maybe the reason is that Burmans want to oppress Shan people (Valued 25)."*

**Denial of cultural expression and identity**

The SPDC views all forms of expression that have not been co-opted or otherwise controlled by the state to be threatening, and thus ruthlessly suppresses the freedom of ethnic minorities to celebrate their cultural identity. In addition to facing the hardships which all Burmese citizens have been subjected to under military rule, ethnic minorities in Burma are also victims of a system of discrimination with threatens the survival of their cultures. In many cases it has only been an incredible act of collective will that has allowed these unique cultures to survive.

A 2001 report issued by Earth Rights International, entitled *Valued Less Than a Milk Tin: Discrimination Against Ethnic Minorities in Burma by the Military Regime*, uses first hand accounts, such as the following, to give insight into the current situation for the Karen and Shan peoples who have been systematically victimized by SPDC:

*"I do not celebrate the Karen New year because the Burmese do not allow it. [Ethnic minorities sometimes call ethnic Burmans the "Burmese."] If we were to celebrate it I don't know what would happen, so we don't dare. Even when we celebrate Christmas and the regular New Year's Day, the military will come and listen and ask people to translate for them to make sure they are not celebrating Karen holidays. I never had a chance to celebrate Karen holidays, and I don't even know when they are (Valued 19)."*

Similarly, a Shan describes how Burmese solders repainted pagodas in a Shan village:

*"No one was happy about it, because in Shan culture we just paint them in plain white. ...The pagodas have Shan religious and cultural significance. The white means purity and cleanliness. People feel unhappy because of the pagoda's different colors. Shan People think it is very much against Shan culture. They feel oppressed for their religion....They are trying to replace Shan religious life with the Burmese religious life(Valued 19)."*

(Source: Earthrights International, *"Valued Less Than a Milk Tin: Discrimination Against Ethnic Minorities in Burma by the Military Regime"*, 2001, pp. 23/4)

In some ethnic minority areas, such as Chin State, there are continuing reports that the army offers financial and career incentives for Burman soldiers to marry Chin women, teach them Burmese, and convert them to Buddhism. (US State Dept)

**Discrimination Against The Shan People**

On 18 September 2001, a group of 15 SPDC troops, led by the Chairman of the Nam Kham Township Peace and Development Council, Capt. Tin Maung Win, came to several villages in Nam-Kham township, Shan State and tore down signboards that contained village names in both Shan and Burmese, recently set up by community leaders, and replaced them with signboards with village names written in only Burmese. After that the SPDC troops extorted 35,000 Kyat from each village for the costs of the replacement of the new signboards. The following are the affected villages: Maan Kham, Zae Hai, Kung Sa, Maan Kaang, Kawng Waeng and Nawng Khaang villages. (Source: SHRF)

**Discrimination Against The Chin People**

The State Peace and Development Council in Sagaing division have established three new villages between Kalay and Tamu town since March 2001. In the new three villages, only Burmese Buddhists are allowed to settle, although the surrounding areas have been co-inhabited by ethnic Chin and Shan-Bama decent. The names of the three villages are Yanmyo-Aung, Yantaing-Aung, and Yanngein-Aung. The meaning of the villages name literally translates "conquest of the enemy". The inhabitants in the area are prohibited to extend their farm or plough the virgin land. Since January 2001, SPDC has been collecting or seizing goods and commodities, such as rice, cooking oil, bicycles, medicines and farm animals from traders and villagers. The goods they seized have been provided to the new settlers from the three villages. (Source: CHRO)

Since June 2001, SPDC administrative officers have started to resettle Buddhist (community villages) near Chin minority villages in rural areas of Chin State. Tamu township administrative officers led by Chairman, Capt. Khin Maung Myint recruited Buddhist community from other places and resettled them near Kuki (people) villages in Tamu Township. Moreover, the authorities forced three Kuki villages to provide free labor to the Buddhist resettlements. The three Kuki villages are:

(a). Khon Mun Nuon village ( about 60 houses)

(b). Yan Lin Faing village ( about 50 houses)

(c). Faing Lin village ( about 70 houses) (Source: MICB)

**Interview With Lieutenant Colonel Biak To**

The life and views of a veteran Army and Police Officer

( Rhododendron Note: Lieutenant Colonel Biak To a B.A graduate from Mandalay University, enlisted as a private in the Burmese Army on 17 November 1973 after

he found out that his movement as leader of Haka University Students Association was closely monitored by the notorious Military Intelligence Service (MIS). It was the time when a new constitution for Socialist authoritarian regime was being drafted in Burma and the authorities were in full alert to crush every possible hindrance to the progress of constitutional making process. After going through different levels of military training with a number of postings in different parts of Burma including one in the Light Infantry Battalion (101) under Divisional Command 77 stationed in Wa area, he became a Captain in 1984.

In 1990, he shifted from the Army to Police service on a rank-to-rank basis, becoming a police inspector. Being an educated man with adequate service experience, he was promoted Major in 1994. And by 1998, he became Lieutenant Colonel in the 1st Police Regiment. In 200, for the reason that was never made clear to him, Lt. Colonel Biak To had his position stripped from him. Much to his surprise, he was fired with a fine of Kyats 15,9000, which he had to pay apparently without knowing why.

In the following disclosure to CHRO, Lt. Colonel Biak To revealed how he was discriminated and unfairly treated by his superiors in the Army and Police simply because of his religious and ethnic identity. He also explained his views and perspectives involving the various aspects of problems facing Burma.)

**CHRO:** How was your life during your service in the Burmese Army and Police?

**Lt. Col. BT:** My father was Rev. Lal Hnin. He was one of the first Chin converts into Christianity. So, I grew up in a good Christian family. I finished high school at Haka State High School and graduated from Mandalay University in 1972.

I was a weight lifter and healthy young man. I wanted to become an army officer. Therefore, after my graduation from university, I applied for Military Officer Training School. However, because I am a Chin ethnic nationality, my application was not considered. So, I joined the army as a private on November 17,1973. I tried very hard to please my superiors in performing my duties. I was promoted to Lance corporal in February l976 and corporal in October of the same year in 1976. Because of my work performance, I was allowed to join Officer Training School in 1979 in service. Then I became second Lieutenant in April 1980. That means it took me almost 8 years to reach this level while other Burmese Buddhist graduates could attain this level of rank just one year after their graduation from a university.

The vast majority of the ranking officers in the Burmese Army are Burman Budhists. As a result, I was always discriminated against by the dominant Buddhists for being an ethnic Chin Christian. For example, the non-Burman soldiers were selectively assigned in the front line to fight against the Karen rebels, saying that we were brave and loyal. The ethnic soldiers were, in fact, respected as the most brave and hardy fighters in the Burmese Army. As ethnic minority

soldiers, we were given virtually no rest time and were never given permission or leave to visit our relatives. The most frustrating thing was when we returned from a successful operation or captured enemy positions, the Burman soldiers who remained in the camps all the while and did not participate in the actual combat got promoted, while we, the actual fighters were neglected for promotions. A Burman officer with less educational background and service experience would become a Colonel while I remained as a Captain. Our superiors would always encourage us to become Buddhists so as to be considered for promotions, but we always decided not to be promoted rather than abandoning our faith. An ethnic minority soldier would not be promoted to a position higher than Major regardless of his service years and how many times he had been transferred. There is no difference in the Police either. We were repeatedly told to convert to Buddhism if we really aspired for promotions. This also tended to be a mere deception. A close friend of mine, Thein Lwin, an ethnic Shan Christian converted to Buddhism for want of promotions but was never promoted. He just ended up being cheated of his faith.

On July 10, 2000, I gave a speech to the police parade mentioning my being a Chin Christian and son of a pastor that from childhood, I never wanted to tell lies, steal or misbehave and that I wanted everyone to do likewise. Four days later, on July 14, I received an order saying that I have been dismissed from the police.

**CHRO:** Do you know the reason why you were laid off?

**Lt. Co. BT:** I still have no idea on what exact account I was dismissed. The order came all of a sudden without any formal procedures. Under normal circumstances either a preliminary inquiry or departmental inquiry should have been conducted before a government service could be tried for any misconduct or violations of rules. There was not any such thing happening in my case. At the time of my dismissal, I was the only person holding a B.A degree among officers of my rank in the entire nine Police Regiments in Burma. In fact, I should have been the first one to be considered for promotions. Obviously, the authorities did not want to see a Chin Christian holding high position that they made a pre-emptive move to dismiss me without any apparent charges. It just did not end with my dismissal. In an attempt to prevent me from leaving the country, the authorities disqualified me from being eligible for a passport in seven years. However, I was able to obtain a passport under a fake name and secretly managed to sneak out of the country. I have a wife and three children remaining in Burma. I am constantly worried about them because if the authorities found out my absence, they would be subject to harassment and persecution.

**CHRO:** How would you describe your views with regards to the present military regime and the country's problems in general?

**Lt. Co. BT:** What appears to be the main problem with the present military regime is a notion that they can stay in power as long as they can cheat the people. They do not seem to care about what is going on around the world other than their own ideological belief. They have sold off all the country's natural resources including teaks and gemstones and pocketed it for themselves. Huge amounts of money are spent on military hardware and equipments. They projected some money on building bridges and dams, which they boasted them in the State-controlled Television broadcast and newspapers as the unprecedented achievements that ever happened only under their reign. They believe that no one including the UN can interfere with the internal matters and that they will run the country as they like.

What military regime has in mind is only the benefits and welfare of their own families while the people at large are being pushed to the point of starvation. Prices are skyrocketing day after day and year after year. A person could live easily on 3.15 kyats a day earning in the 1960s. But today, kyats 300 cannot even survive a person. Inflation rate is fast becoming high because the government had allowed former Drug lord Khunsa and his associates to launder their drug money in the country, which involved large scale buying of properties and land across the country.

The question of democracy seems to be still far away. The military officials have enjoyed very much the taste of being in power that they will never want cede it again. They do not even attempt to understand what democracy really is. The cry of ethnic minority for self-determination and federalism means some sort of separatism or independence movement to the military junta. All their intention and attempts are only to suppress any kind of elements they deem a threat to them. Their targets have constantly been the NLD and Aungsan Suukyi. They are now trying to expand the arm force on a daily basis. More than thrice the numbers of normal recruits are now in the Defense Studies Academy in Maymyo. Because the junta has held everything so tight that without any assistance or effective pressure from abroad, I think the question of democracy is still not within reach.

(Source: CHRO VOL. (IV). No. (I) JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2001)

# 9. Rights to Education and Health

## 9.1 Background

***"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care."***

- Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Burma has one of the poorest health records and lowest standards of living in the developing world. Health and education are given incredibly low priorities in the national budget, and lip-service to these issues often take the place of substantial reforms or programs. Because of political considerations the root causes of problems in these arenas, such as the affects of landmines and forced labor on health and the effect of school closings and censorship on education, are not dealt with in meaningful ways. Low salaries and lack of transparent and effective supervision has made it easy for corruption to flourish among medical personnel and educators. Patients more often than not have to pay a bribe to be seen by a doctor, get a bed in a hospital, or receive essential medicine. Primary school students can pay to receive better grades or get private tutoring from their teachers. Higher education in Burma is particularly substandard with students, during those times that the universities are actually open, being given rush degrees in order to prevent any political opposition to the military regime to spring up on college campuses.

The political situation in Burma has a direct impact on the poor quality of education and healthcare available to the general public. The level of access a person has to health and education infrastructure depends on economic level, geographical location and individual, family or ethnic group relations with the military regime. For example, a Burmese military officer and his family living in Rangoon has much better access to high quality education and medical treatment than a family that is part of an ethnic and religious minority group living in a conflict area on the border. As yet, the military regime has been unwilling to address these inequalities to ensure that all people living in Burma, regardless of their ethnic group, religion, political affiliation, economic status or geographical location have access adequate health care and education.

# 9.2 Situation of Education

Section 34, Chapter IV of the 1947 Constitution

***"The State shall pay special attention to the young and promote their education."***

Section 36, Chapter IV of the 1947 Constitution -

"***The State shall regard the raising of the standard of living of its people and the improvement of public health as among its primary duties."***

*"The Government continued to restrict academic freedom severely. University teachers and professors remain subject to the same restrictions on freedom of speech, political activities, and publications as other government employees. The Ministry of Higher Education routinely warns teachers against criticizing the Government. It also instructs them not to discuss politics while at work; prohibits them from joining or supporting political parties or engaging in political activity; and requires them to obtain advance ministerial approval for meetings with foreigners. Like all government employees, professors and teachers have been coerced into joining and participating in the activities of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), the Government's mass mobilization organization. Teachers at all levels also continued to be held responsible for the political activities of their students.*

*In June and July 2000, the Government reopened the remainder of the institutions of higher education that were closed in 1996 following widespread student demonstrations. However, the Government has taken a number of special measures to limit the possibility of student unrest. Campuses have been moved to relatively remote areas, teachers and students have been warned that disturbances would be dealt with severely, and on-campus dormitories have been closed. This has disrupted university life severely. There is evidence that many students have chosen to continue with self study because the universities deteriorated to such an extent during the time that they were closed, that they largely have become inaccessible."*

– US State Department Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 2001

Education in Burma has been severely impacted by more than four decades of military rule. Because the military regime views potentially politically active university and high school students as one of the biggest threats to their grip on power, all-non military education is treated as expendable. All civilian schools and universities throughout Burma suffer from a lack of resources and qualified educators, a problem found in many developing countries, however, unique to Burma is the fact that the ruling government actively tries to thwart universal and

advanced higher education.

In order to receive higher education in Burma several conditions must first be in place: the student must not be politically active or have politically active family members; the universities must be open; the student must be from a social and economic group and have an educational background that makes higher education feasible. When these conditions are met, a student then faces a university system where teaching materials and classroom topics are heavily censored, group activities are restricted and freedom of thought is generally hindered. Students are then rushed through courses that focus on memorization rather than critical thinking and upon graduation are ill-equipped to find quality employment.

(See chapter on children for information on primary education)

**Partial Re-opening of Universities**

In 2000, civilian universities, which were closed since 1996, were "re-opened" with one year's course content packed in to 3 months and 2/3 of courses offered by mail. Before students could enroll they had to take an oath that they would not become involved in political activities, which many refused to do and as such only 1/3 of previously enrolled students were allowed to re-enroll. It is reported that between 25,000 and 60,000 students enrolled, however more than 400,000 students matriculated from high school since the closures in December 1996.

Despite the fact that only 0.5% of GNP is spent on education in Burma, compared to 2.7% in other Southeast Asian countries, the military government went to the extra expense of building university facilities on the outskirts of major cities near military barracks in order to stop students from gathering and protesting. The main campuses of Rangoon University and Rangoon Institute of Technology, which have been centers of student protest in the past, were moved 20 kilometers outside of Rangoon. Students from the provinces were being spread out among the new universities in order to prevent a concentration of students. Several people who attended a forum on education at the NLD headquarters on August 21, 2000 emphasized that the quality of education presently available was lower than in 1988 and that there were few educational opportunities. In addition, the distance of the campuses prevented some students from attending classes regularly because they couldn't afford transportation.

**Quality Higher Education Lost for a Generation of Students**

The erratic nature of civilian higher education in Burma since 1988 has led to a generation that has lost the opportunity to receive a quality education. Many students have been forced to abandon their studies altogether either for economic reasons or because they have fled their homes or been imprisoned for political activities. In order to support their families some student have quit school to take jobs that don't require a high education level, such as taxi drivers, or have migrated

to other countries where there are more employment opportunities. Those students who have attempted to continue, or begin, their studies, have faced numerous school closures and low standards for materials, facilities, and educators. The current backlog of students who had their studies interrupted has meant that the authorities are currently trying to push students quickly through the university system. The school year has been cut down to 3 months and the education students receive is mostly cramming and memorizing answers to exam questions. The result is that the value of a degree has been downgraded and there is danger that the current generation of graduates will be disregarded by employers.

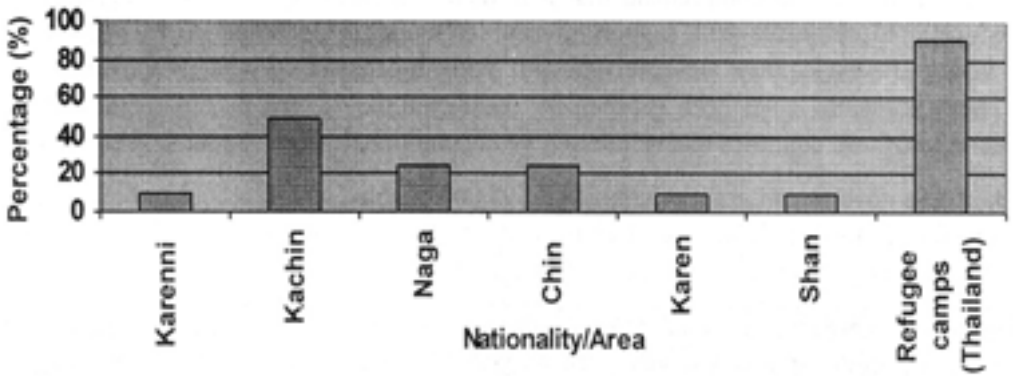
**Disparity Between Civilian and Military Education**

The hallmark of the current education system in Burma is the discrepancy between education received by the military and their families and the civilian population. Following the 1988 pro-democracy movement, the military authorities decided it was vital to strengthen the armed forces and began to set up military institutions for education. As a result the military regime has put most of the resources allocated for education into military institutions of education while neglecting and oppressing civilian education. While the civilian population has to struggle to pay education expenses for their children as a result of the ongoing financial crisis, the children of the military get higher quality education with the financial support of the military regime. Although SPDC manages all basic education schools in the state, it has also founded and operates 15 basic education schools for the children of military elite. During summer holidays, the military runs computer training and English courses and field trips for students from military families. Upon completion of high school these students are usually easily accepted into any military Institute and are eligible for scholarships and scholastic awards. These students are required to be full members of the USDA. (For information on primary level education see chapter on children)

48 Burma's Plea

Figure 3: Crude estimates of school attendance, by nationality/area

*(Source: NHEC (26-28 April 2001))*



Although civilian universities were only allowed to be open for 40 months from 1988-2000, military institutions did not face the same restrictions. One result has been that military school graduates have been trained to run the civilian education system. One third of graduates of military schools enter civilian universities as lecturers and tutors. Those loyal to the military are rewarded with educational and employment opportunities not open to the rest of the population. The military government provides well for its army students, and gives them stipends, scholarships, and for the very elite, chances to study abroad. Military institutes do not suffer from lack of facilities or materials. The opportunities afforded are miniscule in comparison with world standards, yet many youth in Burma are drawn into the military circle through promises of status and opportunities that are otherwise unattainable in the harsh economic environment of the country.

Civilian students have therefore become interested in some military institutes due to the lack of opportunities in civilian institutions. Civilian students may be accepted into military institutes. However, the government has created a strict system of application, which includes mandatory recommendations from various government officials, including military officials. This system ensures that the applicants, or the applicants' relatives, have had no history with opposition political parties and no criminal history. The applicants must also promise not to be involved in politics, and pledge to serve in the army for a number of years upon graduating**.** In some universities, which are affiliated with but not directly under the auspices of the military government, students are screened for such things as USDA membership and political affiliations before they are allowed to take entrance exams. Students who attend these universities are also required to go into military or government service upon graduating. Students who are related to the military elite are favored above civilian applicants and in many cases military students do not have to pay tuition unlike civilian students**.**

# 9.3 Situation of Health

**"The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social conditions."**

-World Health Organization Constitution (Preamble) –

*"The junta has cut government expenditures on public health care even more sharply than it cut spending for education. Government expenditures for civilian health care in 1998-99 equivalent to only 0.3 percent of GDP. Government studies sponsored by U.N. agencies in 1997 found that, on average, 131 of 1,000 children died before reaching the age of 5 years, and that only 1 of 20 births in rural areas was attended by a doctor. Those same studies indicated that, of children under 3 years old, 37 percent were malnourished, and 13 percent were severely*

*malnourished. The World Health Organization considers the country's health care system to be extremely poor."*

- US State Department Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2001

The ongoing civil war in Burma has meant that non-military expenditures, including those for health care, are given a low priority in government spending. This results in a health care system with insufficient facilities, too few health care workers, inadequate health education programs and lack of rural services. At the same the health problems of many are exacerbated by the ongoing armed conflict which disproportionately affects ethnic minorities. The populace is affected directly by things such as landmines and military violence, while migration and forced relocations are the cause of malnutrition and other conditions that lead to the spread of disease.

According to the WHO World Health Report 2000, Burma is ranked 139th out of 191 countries in terms of the overall level of health of the population and 190th for fairness in financial contribution. Regardless of gender, people in all groups can expect to live 51.6 years in full health. On average women can expect to live 7.1 years with a disability and men 7.4 years. Life expectancy for men is 58.4 years, for women 59.2 years. In the ASEAN Region only Cambodia and Laos have lower life expectancies. The government is estimated to spend US $9 per person per year on all health care even though US $12 is considered the minimum expenditure for basic health care requirements. Many of the countries ranked lower than Burma are suffering from the ravages of AIDS, a problem which has yet to come to a head in Burma. Burma's health care system has been found to be the more discriminatory than that of any other country in the ASEAN region in terms of responsiveness. People's access to healthcare is directly correlated to their ethnic background, income level, and whether they are civilians or military personnel.

Lt. Gen Khin Nyunt condemned the report saying that "*The WHO report, based on false information from antigovernment sources aimed at tarnished the image of the country is unjust and unacceptable…The ministry totally rejects the assessment*." Khin Nyunt claimed the military had made progress in the health sector since it came to power — spending 3.09 billion kyats as of March 31 1999, compared to 464 million on the same date in 1988. At the free market exchange rate of about 350 kyats to the dollar, government health expenditure for that year, in a country of 47 million, totaled just $880,000. At the official rate of six to the dollar it was about $51 million. The kyat traded at five to the dollar officially in 1988 and at about 88 on the black market. According to a World Bank report, health spending in 1999 represented just two percent of government spending, while military spending was 32%.

**Performance of ASEAN Health Care Systems, given the level of resources from**

**WHO World Health Report 2000**

**HIV/AIDS**

*"Burma has the highest population prevalence of HIV in Asia after Cambodia, with as many as 1.0 — 1.2 million cumulative infections, although estimates are highly unreliable. Burma is perhaps the most likely to become like an African country in terms of the spread of the virus. There are several factors contributing to this scenario: official denials on the part of the ruling junta; lack of political will; a collapsing health sector; and unclean blood supply; very high rates of HIV infection in drug users; a growing sex industry; a large, poorly educated, and unpaid army; multiple refugees as well as migrant populations from Thailand, India, and Bangladesh; and large numbers of internally displaced persons — estimated at 1 – 2 million persons last year. The national HIV prevention budget for 1998 was estimated at $ 50,000 for a population of 48 million people. Data suggests that more than 90 percent of drug users in some states in Burma are infected with HIV which is among the highest infection rates ever reported anywhere." - The Washington Quarterly:* "the Regional Impact of HIV and Aids Accelerating and Disseminating across Asia". 2001 Winter. Vol. 24, No. 1; Pg. 211.

UNAIDS estimates 440,000 cases of HIV in Burma. However, most experts suspect the number is much higher since most parts of the country are closed to outsiders and the military junta controls the flow of information, concealing the real picture. Over the past several years the SPDC has denied that Burma faces any kind of HIV/AIDs problem. This denial of the facts affects not only Burmese citizens, but also neighboring countries. As drugs, migrant workers and prostitutes leave the country, Burma has become an AIDS exporter. In neighboring China, India and Thailand, the provinces with the highest HIV rates are those that border Burma. A report released by Johns Hopkins School of Public Health have connected outbreaks of HIV and injection drug use with overland heroin trafficking routes originating in Laos and Burma and spreading throughout the region.

According to the Director of UNICEF, The SPDC is sending out confusing and conflicting messages about the HIV crisis while not allocating resources to the problem and unnecessarily politicizing the problem. Dr. Peter Piot, UNAIDS's executive director, has said that Burma has the second worst AIDS epidemic in Asia after Cambodia. Estimates suggest that 60% of teenage drug users are HIV positive. Intravenous drug use in on the rise and Burmese official statistics have rates of injecting drug use among adults from 1.7% to 25%. The government claims that there are 66,463 drug addicts in Burma but the UNDCP and NGOs

estimate that the number is more likely to be between 400-500,000. HIV infection rates among Burma's addicts are among the highest in the world, and as there is a shortage of syringes along with other medical supplies, the spread is facilitated by widespread needle sharing. Internal migration for the purpose of employment is also a cause of the spread of HIV. Hundreds of thousands of people work seasonally in the jade and ruby mines in Shan and Kachin states and it has been found that most young adults who are HIV positive in central Burma have worked in the mines, bringing HIV with them when they return home.

The health infrastructure in Burma is not equipped to deal with HIV; counseling is nonexistent, condoms are too expensive for most people and only made legal in 1993; and HIV tests are rarely free and people cannot afford the $10 it costs to take one. According to two prominent doctors in Burma, once a patient is diagnosed he or she usually dies within 3 months. There are no anti-HIV drugs in the country and a shortage of antibiotics for tuberculosis, which kills most HIV infected people in Burma. The virus is also spreading in prisons where needles are often re-used several times, and in monasteries where young men shunned by their families move to die. One doctor said that he has treated a number of monks, including elderly monks, who have AIDS.

**SPDC Ministry of Health Data on HIV**

**HIV Prevalence Rates Among Injecting Drug Users**

**Mental Health**

Mental health is an often overlooked aspect of health care in many societies and the situation is exacerbated in Burma by the lack of resources allocated to health care in general. Ongoing civil war and violence is accompanied by an increase in mental health disorders. Studies of refugees on the Thailand-Cambodia border found that 55% suffered from some form of depression and 15% from post-traumatic stress disorder. The literature on the subject indicates that because mental trauma is a concern for a sizeable portion of war-affected populations, it should be addressed as a major public health issue.

**Prisoners' Health**

The general health situation in prisons is terrible as there is not enough medicine, doctors or timely assistance. After a prisoner enters prison their health situation generally deteriorates as the result of torture, malnutrition, improper sanitation, and inadequate accommodation. If medicine is provided it is usually temporary pain relievers or the like, such as Paracetemol, Sodamit and Burspro. Doctors neither examine patients nor prescribe medicine for them; these tasks are carried out by prisoners jailed for criminal offences who are designated as 'medics.' Prisons have also become distributing centers of communicable diseases, such as AIDS, because when the prisoners receive injections the same needle is used for

up to 20 people. In some instances a prisoner may request that a family member bring in a clean needle from outside if they need to receive an injection. In addition, prisoners are sometimes bribed with the promise of extra food (such as a single egg) to donate blood, and the equipment used is rarely cleaned or sterilized.

**Health Related INGOs Working in Burma**

INGOs began re-entering Burma in 1991, with the majority of them working in the health field. This was a controversial move because many people felt that an INGO presence in Burma would provide legitimacy to the military regime. However, the INGOs that decided to work in Burma felt that some issues, such as the spread of HIV, could not wait for a change in the political situation and affected the entire Asian region not only Burma. When the INGOs entered Burma they found that the most immediate needs were in the health sector. The health care system was extensive but not adequate for the size of the population, the budget was small in comparison to needs and propaganda took the place of actual services. From the start SPDC has shown a preference for working with intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations. U.N. bodies, such as UNICEF, UNDP and WHO, play a larger role in funding than INGOs and have taken a lead in development, especially in the areas of management and assessment and are often the only buttresses against the collapse of government health and education programs. INGOs have been more active in implementing development projects at the community level and have focused their efforts on training rather than providing hard resources or cash. In 1994, the SPDC decided to accept offers of assistance from international agencies and NGO's in areas covered by the Border Areas Development Program "as long as they do not threaten national security and solidarity." As a result, some organizations have established their own programs and some have funded projects through local community group but they have not used a common structure, system or method.

In order to work in Burma, INGOs have to agree with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which state the conditions under which they are allowed to work. To be granted a MOU, INGOs first must approach the relevant ministry, such as the Ministry of Health and then have their case presented by a ministry representative to the Foreign Affairs Committee. After this, if all goes well, final permission to operate is granted by the Cabinet.

Problems faced by INGOs working in Burma include: lack of accurate information; lack of access to all parts of the country; and an inability to address the underlying problems that affect health such as forced labor, forced relocations, and armed conflict. Furthermore INGO's are also hampered by a shortage of trained personnel in ethnic areas and political restrictions on who they associate with. They are also frequently subject to arbitary whims of local military commanders and SPDC officials regarding their status.

**Health related INGO's working in Burma**

Alction Contre la Faim

The Association of Medical Doctors of Asia for Better Quality of Life for a Better Future

Medecins du Monde

Medecins Sans Frontiers (Holland)

World Concern

World Vision Myanmar

Association Francois Xavier Bagnoud

Adventist Development and Relief Agency

CARE Myanmar

Marie Stopes International

Populations Services International

**Health Situation in Border/Conflict Areas**

In 1992, The Ministry for Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs (MPBANDRA) initiated a number of projects for the development of border areas while giving priority to health and education activities. The National Health Plan for 1996-2001 of the Ministry of Health included the following objectives for border areas:

- to improve the quality of health care by providing sufficient amounts of essential drugs and health services not only at hospitals and dispensaries but also at homes

- to promote the heath status of national races of the border areas especially to reduce the mortality and morbidity of diseases among women and children

- to provide primary health care, especially maternal and child health care.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that these goals have not been met. Despite government statistics that show an increase in the construction of health facilities and number of health staff in border areas, this does not reflect the true situation. The poor state of infrastructure development in conflict areas has meant that physical access to health facilities is limited. Health staff is often poorly trained, cannot speak the local languages, and is concentrated in cities and towns where

they may draw government salaries but work in the private sector. Although money may be allocated to build a clinic, in many cases it is siphoned off by various officials and replaced with forced donations from villagers, or not replaced at all. Adequate medicine is rarely found in border area hospitals or clinics and in some cases medics have to buy medicine with their own money and then sell it to the villagers. There are incidents of medical personnel selling medicine, including UNICEF donations, at black market prices. Traditional medicine or Paracetamol may be the only medicine available in rural clinics if there is any at all.

In areas under SPDC control, villagers are not allowed to build their own clinics or create independent organizations that work on issues such as health or education. Their participation in government projects is generally limited to providing labor or financing for the construction of facilities which does not allow them to gain organizational or other experience and limits outreach.

**Health situation in relocation sites**

Internally Displaced People, or IDPs, have little access to medicine or health care while at the same time living in conditions of poor sanitation and food scarcity. The large number of people relocated to one site makes proper sanitation difficult and people don't know which sources of water are good and which ones are contaminated. In some sites wells have been dug in addition to streams and lakes. Yet in some sites, such as the Shadaw relocation site in Karenni State, the lack of drinkable water has resulted in several problems, including sickness and death that was caused when chemicals were added to the water in an attempt to clean it. Elderly people are especially at risk for disease because of food scarcity and malnutrition and those who are relocated from mountain areas have no immunity to tropical diseases.

**Health situation for villagers in hiding villages**

Health is a predominant problem for people in hiding. Life in the tropics without norms of shelter or food supply leads to high sickness and mortality rates from malnutrition, diarrhea, and malaria. Malnutrition is exacerbated by irregular supply of food as SPDC troops regularly destroy their crops and fields. They are unable to grow vegetables or raise animals and have to rely in large part on plants scavenged from the jungle. With a complete absence of health care facilities, people mainly rely on herbs and traditional medicine. Although there are some healthcare teams, the medicine and care they are able to provide is insufficient for the numbers of IDPs in hiding across many border areas. The mortality rate is rising at an alarming rate for these displaced people, and many villagers are dying from sicknesses easy to treat or prevent, and from minor wounds. In 1999, 20 displaced people in Ha Toh Per died from diarrhea due to lack of basic medicine.

An additional problem for villagers living in conflict areas is their use as forced porters by the military. Porters often sustain injuries while performing their duties, such as through beatings or landmines and have increased susceptibility to diseases because of malnutrition and exhaustion. Porters do not receive medical treatment while under the command of SPDC and what medicine is available is first given to soldiers. In addition, porters that sustain serious injuries often cannot afford to pay for the medical treatment they may require when they return home.

**Health Situation for IDPS in Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State**

In their October 2001 report, *Flight, Hunger and Survival Repression and Displacement in the Villages of Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts*, Karen Human Rights Group reported the following:

*"Health is the most important thing. I think that if it is possible and we can build a clinic it would be good. Health is a big weakness. For example, if I am seriously sick and I go to ask for medicine from the medic they say there is no medicine. It is difficult. I also think about other things. The way is difficult. The medics have to cross the car road [the Kyauk Kyi Saw Hta car road which is heavily guarded and mined on both sides] among the enemy. It is a problem. If the medicine arrives there are a lot of people and they can't share it out to everybody, so the medics apologise. Some of the villagers went to get 'kyaw pi' [a type of leaf used to make herbal medicine] and some of them are healed. Some of the villagers who believe in animism treat the animist way and people are also healed. Some people can't be treated and die. Some of them were single, some were old."* - "Po Naw" (M, *xx*), internally displaced villager from S— village, Lu Thaw township (Interview #61, 3/01); the medics he refers to are from the KNLA and from Karen organisations operating from Thailand.

Medicine and people trained in medicine are almost nonexistent in the Papun hills and eastern Nyaunglebin District. Most villagers rely on traditional medicines made from roots, leaves and tree bark which can be foraged in the forest. People do occasionally come up into the hills and sell medicine to the IDP's, but it is usually only in small quantities and not very strong. Most of the medicine consists of Burmese patent over the counter drugs which are often of low quality. Injections and other high quality medicines, usually from Thailand, are difficult to obtain and very expensive. It is very risky for the people to come up to sell medicine because any villagers caught carrying medicine in the hills can be executed by the SPDC soldiers after being accused of aiding the resistance.

The KNU and other organisations do maintain small mobile medical teams which move about the area, but these can't reach everyone and many villagers have never met them. These medical teams are made up of trained medics but usually don't have much medicine, and what they do have has to be rationed to the point of sometimes turning away all but the most seriously ill people. Villagers don't dare

to take sick or wounded people down to the towns for treatment for fear of being arrested. The hospitals are too expensive anyway, and in Burma the sick are turned out of the hospital as soon as they run out of money.

The result of this is that many people are dying from treatable illnesses. Malaria, fevers and diarrhoea are common and deadly. Small children and the elderly are especially susceptible to illness and many newborn babies don't live past their first few months. The constant movement, poor diet, stress and general living conditions leave the villagers especially susceptible to many diseases and infections. Villagers wounded by SPDC bullets or shrapnel have to make do with traditional medicines. Those more severely wounded, especially people who have stepped on landmines, usually succumb to their wounds due to lack of treatment. A typical example is Sho Per Ko village, a cool highland village of 70 families high in the hills of northern Lu Thaw township. It was abandoned and then destroyed when SPDC troops set up a base at nearby Ler Mu Plaw in 1997, and one of the village elders told KHRG that since then 28 adults from his village of 70 families have died of treatable illnesses - more than one from every three families, leaving at least 50 orphaned children. (Source: KHRG. Full report can be found at www.khrg.org).

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# CHRO Interview:

"Mr. Green" Male.

From: Chin State.

Occupation: training officer for an NGO.

Education: BA, Mandalay University.

Ethnicity: Chin.

Religion: Baptist.

Left Burma: December 2000.

Q: Why did you decide to leave Burma?

A: I was afraid I'd be chased by the Burmese military. I was told by my uncle that I was going to be arrested by the Burmese military. [because he helped to get a list of political prisoners to give to the Red Cross].

Q: Had you had problems with the authorities before?

A: Yes, I did. While I gave the training about the NGO. I showed my card from the NGO to the military, but they did not know that card or about the NGO, so they arrested me and detained me for one night. They got all my speeches with a recorder. That was in June 2000.

Q: When did you start working with the NGO?

A: I joined the NGO from 1999. My friend had told me there was a post at the NGO.

Q: What was your work with the NGO?

A: The aim of the NGO is the prevention of HIV infection. So we worked for the prevention of HIV, awareness of HIV and distribution of education about the prevention of HIV.

Q: How aware of HIV/AIDS were the people in the area?

A: In the town, we could teach the people and the people know about HIV. But it is not easy to travel around the remote areas, so the villagers did not know about HIV.

Q: How were people becoming infected by HIV?

A: It is hard to find out the mode of transmission in that area, because the government did not do any research about HIV infection. They want to cover all things up. So it's hard to find which mode of transmission is the worst thing. The government always denies about HIV, so it's very hard to find out the actual and the real situation in that region.

Q: What materials did you have in your program, and what language were they in?

A: Posters and flyers in Burmese and Chin. We didn't have enough for each and every person, but to some extent we can do. Because of the limitations of the facilities we had not enough funds.

Q: Did you have any idea of what percentage of infection was happening in that area?

A: It is hard to find the actual facts in the country, because the government wants to deny HIV infection. According to my own research, in one clinic in Kalemyo, I reviewed the blood tests, and 8 to 9 percent of those blood tests showed positive for HIV. That percent is of people who they think may have the HIV infection, the high risk group. In the Kale Hospital, the percentage was lower than that percentage.

Q: What kind of treatment could people get if they were diagnosed with HIV or if it had progressed to AIDS?

A: In that place, when people know that a person is infected with HIV/AIDS disease, the persons around that patient are afraid of him, of the threat of that disease, and they don't want to take care of the patient. Even in the hospital and the clinic, they don't want to take care of that HIV patient. The patients didn't want to stay anymore in the hospital, because they got depression, because they were outcast by society. So the patients leave the hospital and stay at home and the

patients' parents take care of them.

Q: Do people advertise medicines that will cure HIV/AIDS?

A: No.

Q: Are there people who are not real doctors who give injections in the villages?

A: Yes, a lot of the illegal ones. The villagers told me about it. One person, previously he worked in mining, some other place in Burma, and later on he went to Malaysia and worked, and he came back to that area [Chin State] and he was tested HIV positive. He was tested in Rangoon. And he went back to his native village near to Kale. The people in that village thought that HIV positive is the AIDS disease. He was treated by a person who practices illegally, and he gave some IV [drip] line with some glucose, some vitamins and other things to that patient. The patient is so weak, he cannot bear that IV line, and half of the bottle was left. They don't want to discard the remaining [IV solution] so the father of that patient went to continue that IV line, because it is good for that person, it has a lot of vitamins. So the person who practices illegally, he made the IV line to the father of that patient. And later on, the patient died. After that, then the father also died, because of the infection.

Q: In the hospital and clinics, is the equipment clean?

A: In some places, they use disposable syringes. But in some places they cannot use the disposable syringes, they just flush the syringes and other needles with hot water for one time. Just one time. The hot water that they use to flush the needles and the syringes, they use that same hot water to do that again.

Q: Did you notice the rate of tuberculosis infection?

A: I was not familiar with that.

Q: Were people using narcotics by injection?

A: Around the Kale area, Tamu border area, I found a lot of narcotic abuse in that area. In that area they used the IV method, they got that habit from the people in mining areas, where they dig for the jade.

Q: What were the conditions for the workers in the mining areas?

A: I went to Maishu in 1994 and 1995 and Mogok in early 2000. And the conditions of the workers are very poor. Most of the time they didn't find any stones or any valuable things so they have no money. They got depression because they didn't get anything from that mine, sometimes and to replace their depression they use the narcotics. Some people. The heroin is sold by somebody, and they can buy it easily, they can buy it freely. And the syringe and other things, they can buy it easily. It's available easily. They can inject it, the shot they can give by themselves or to each other, sharing.

Q: Do you know about mining in the Chin State in an area called Mwe Thaung at all?

A: I have heard the name of Mwe Thaung, before, several times, but I don't know the work there. It's near to Kalemyo.

Q: Were you visiting the mining areas for AIDS education?

A: I visited to Maishu mining area because I wanted to know the conditions for my own personal interest, and Mogok is for my NGO job. The trip there was not very successful. The mission of the trip was to distribute the condoms to the workers of the mining and to give the health education for the workers of the mines. But that trip was not very successful because of the people in that area were very busy with their work and they couldn't take the time to hear that speech on prevention of HIV.

Q: Had the availability and affordability of condoms changed?

A: The NGO sold the condoms to the public at very cheap price. After that service, the condoms were more easily available than before. They can get them easily in the marketplace and anywhere around that area.

Q: How did you get information, news?

A: The main way we heard information is through the broadcasting services of foreign countries like the VOA, BBC and RFA, Radio Free Asia. And other democratic broadcasting services. The newspaper that's issued by the government in Burma, we're not interested about, because we couldn't get any information about politics from that newspaper. We rely on only the foreign broadcasting service.

Q: Did your office have a computer, fax, international telephone?

A: They had one computer for the office work, and one telephone for local use only. They had no [internet access].

Q: Tell about any Chin cultural problems...

A: They want to change our Chin people and other minorities to become Burman, by the government, all the time. Since the Burma Socialist Program Party time, the way they want is "one nation, one race, one religion, one country." They use this method in this time by the military more than before. Even in our Chin State, our people cannot learn Chin language in the school at this time. The Chin language is not examined in the primary level. Even if they taught it in the school they didn't cover it in the exams. The Chin language is not included on the schedule for the students. They meet only once a week [for Chin language study], only when they have extra time. In Burma, each and every state and division has the college and university. In the Chin State we have none up 'til now.

Q: Can you buy publications in the Chin language?

A: Only some books that are released by religious permission, we can get a small number of. Other magazines and books, we cannot get it. Years ago, to teach the ABC alphabet in the Chin language, we used, "A for Aung San" and "B for Bible" but the military doesn't allow to publish that poem anymore. Because of the restriction of the military, except for the books issued by the church and the mission, there's no other books [in Chin] available. There's a lot of restrictions about cultural things, about shows, even in the ceremonies, we have to get the permits before. Because of all the restrictions, the cultural shows are less than before. In the country, there's a Ministry of Religious Affairs. In the Ministry, there's a Department of Religion. In that department there's only a branch for Buddhism. No other religions. The government opened the school for the "Hill Regions" but in that school they teach only the Buddhism. For that school, the teacher, the headmaster, must be a Buddhist. After they implemented that project, before that my friend was principal of the school, but after that policy my friend was shifted because they didn't want a Christian to be principal of that school. So it is clear that they want our Chin people to change to Buddhism and be made Burman. In the schools in the Chin State, they forced the students to pay homage whenever the elders come in [with a "Buddhist" gesture], and say the Buddhist words. The Burmese soldiers, whenever they went in the Chin villages, they arrest people and they persecute people whenever they want to, anywhere in the Chin State. The military check each and every household in the town, with their full equipment, about the guests. Even in my house, my sister in law was back from Rangoon because of a terminal stage illness. And some relatives and friends came to the house to stay with the patient to comfort her. But the military came to the house with their uniforms and didn't listen to them, and the military threatened them and treated them rudely.

Whenever they went in the town or the village, the Burmese military opened fire in the air or somewhere, every night to alarm the people or to threaten the people. So the people, the Chins, in their heart, they have in their minds, fear and anxiety about the uniformed people who don't speak the Chin language. Most of the people have anxiety even when they hear the footstep or song of the soldiers, or bark of the dogs.

In every [government] department, the head of the department is a Burman. Most of the Chin people don't speak Burmese, so they are scolded. So they are afraid to go to the departments anymore. Even the small number of Chin people who are educated are shifted far away from the Chin State, so we don't have our Chin people to rely on.

I was in Thantlang and saw when the military government destroyed the crosses that were erected to mark the Centenary of the Christian missions in the Chin State,

1999 January. At that time, the crosses erected on the hill were destroyed by the Burmese military and the pastors in Thantlang town were arrested by the Burmese military. That's why I and other people gathered to pray in the church for the release of the pastor. Like we were making a demonstration. So the Chairman of the Chin State [military government] Col. Than Maung, came to Thantlang and ordered us to get out from the church. He didn't step down from his car. We stood out in front of the church. He said, "don't worship in the church and don't make any prayer meeting anywhere. But what you need to do is work in the road for the construction." The Burmese soldiers and police along with him forced us to scatter out. And only the pastor and the elders of the church to follow him. He told them that, "you are making the anti-government [protest]" and he was going to punish them severely. But they said they were praying in the church to make peace in the region. That's why later on he released them.

One of the female pastors was warned by that colonel that she spoke to the public about anti-government, so he was going to punish her very severely. And he told all of us not to do this kind of things in the future. Otherwise he would give us very serious punishment. Imprisonment or very serious persecution. And so there's no rights for religion or politics at all in Chin State.

The education system is also very poor, so there's no way to progress for education in Chin State. There's not enough facilities, and there's not enough teachers. Most of the schools were built by the villages on their own. In some cases, the government forces the students to wear a [military type] uniform and forces them to shout the anti Aung San Suu Kyi slogans. The military government uses that trick.

When they formed the USDA, they used some students in that association too. Most of the time the students are taken by the government to be involved in sports and a lot of activities so the students didn't have time to study in school. For example, the student festival that was held in Haka, the students practiced for the contests in sports for the whole year, so the students didn't have time to study their subjects in school. But all the students must have examinations that year. Even though they learned nothing in school, they passed the exams.

Q: In the two or three months just before you left, at the end of 2000, was the army asking people to work for it?

A: Yes, they did, for the plantation of tea in the Chin Hills. They forced all the villagers to do the plantation. They forced the villagers to plant only tea. The military got the tea seeds from somewhere else, and the agriculture department raised the seeds, and the [seedlings] they forced them to plant. They forced them to plant it in many areas of Chin State. Most of the places were forest areas. They cleared the forests and forced them to plant the tea. They started in July and August to force them to clear the forests. They were still doing [the planting] in

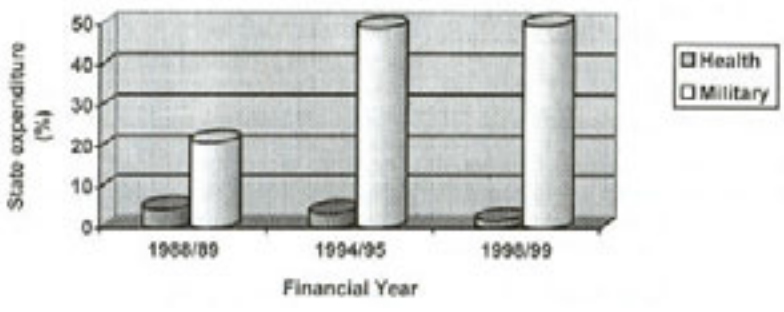
October, November. I want to tell about the killing of two people during the construction of the road from Thantlang to Hriphi and Vuang Tu. The [government military] built a new camp in Vuang Tu village, that's situation on the boundary between India and Burma. The built the road from Hriphi to Vuang Tu. They forced the people to work day and night. They collected the people from each and every village around the township. They brought the oil for the lights from India, and the explosives to use for construction from India, with money they collected from the villagers. That evening I was in that village when the one was killed in the road construction. March 5, 1999. The villagers dared not to say anything about that killing. The dead body was brought by the villagers into the village.

In that road construction, the villagers including the men, women and children, worked in that work camp. Right now, the military forces the people to serve as sentries to watch over it at night time, until today. They forced the villages [each] to collect at least ten people ready in position to carry the things of the military whenever they needed.

The alcohol was previously not used in Chin State very much, but at this time, the government opens to sell the alcohol everywhere, and they even force the village headpersons to sell the alcohol to the local people. They [government] get the funds from that alcohol and they destroy the morals of the young men.

Most of the Chins in the town and the students who are Christians are forced to collect funds for the Buddhist festivals, and they are forced to work in the compounds of the pagodas for cleaning and something like that. The government employees are forced to work in the paddy fields to grow rice for the government. In Tiddim town, the public water was cut off by the military, so the water would be used for the government's tea plantations. So most of Tiddim has a shortage of water, and even in the township education office they got the water only once a week. That was my experience when I held training in Tiddim. In general they are doing all the things to destroy the morals and the character of the Chin young men and all Chin people. (Source: CHRO RHODODENDRON NEWS VOLUME IV. NO. III )

Figure 1: Health and Military Expenditure



# 10. The Freedom of Belief and Religion

## 10.1 Background

While the majority of Burma's population follows Theravada Buddhism, there are significant numbers of Christians (mostly Baptists as well as some Catholics and Anglicans), Muslims (mostly Sunni), Hindus, and practitioners of traditional Chinese and indigenous religions. Government statistics record that almost 90 percent of the population are Buddhist, 4 percent Christian, and 4 percent Muslim; however, these statistics most likely understate the percercentage of adherants to religions other than Buddhism. In Burma, there is some correlation between ethnicity and religion, with Theravada Buddhism serving as the dominant religion among the majority Burman ethnic group, and among the Shan and Mon ethnic minorities of the eastern part of the country. The Kachin ethnic group in Northern Burma and the Chin and Naga ethnic groups in the west (some of which practice traditional indigenous religions) are largely Christian, and Christiantiy is also is widespread among the Karen and Karenni ethnic groups in the south and east. Other Karen and Karenni are Theravada Buddhists. Hinduism is practiced by Indians, for the most part Tamils and Bengalis, the majority of whom live in larger cities and in the south-central region (though a number of Tamils are Catholic). Islam is widespread in Arakan Division on the western coast, where it is the major religion of the Rohingya minority. Many Indians and Bengalis along with their descendants are also Muslims. A small Chinese ethnic population practices traditional Chinese religions. Traditional indigenous religions remain prevalent among the smaller ethnic groups in the northern regions.

On 9 November 2001, the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma, expressed strong concern over the worsening of religious rights in the country during his report at the 56th Session of the UN General Assembly. This concern was prompted by the fact, that among other things, throughout 2001 there was a marked increase in violence against Muslims with credible reports that some of this violence was supported and engineered by the government. These incidences of violence significantly contributed to anti-Muslim sentiment, increasing tensions between Muslim and Buddhist communities. In addition, during the year the government continued its general policy of restricting religious freedoms while vigorously promoting Theravada Buddhism as the state religion. As a result, non-Buddhists continued to be discriminated against and denied upper-level employment opportunities. To date only one non-Buddhist has served as a government minister, and this same person, a brigadier general, is also the only non-Buddhist known to have held high rank in the armed forces in the 1990s. The Government generally discourages Muslims from serving in the military, and Christians and Muslims who do serve as military officers are frequently encouraged by their superiors to convert to Buddhism. (US State Department)

The following was taken from the 2001 US State Department Country Report on Burma:

The constitution permits both legislative and administrative restrictions on religious freedom, stating that "the national races shall enjoy the freedom to profess their religion. And provided that the enjoyment of any such freedom does not offend the laws or the public interest." Most adherents of all religions duly registered with the authorities generally are free to worship as they chose; however, the Government imposed restrictions on certain religious activities and frequently abused the right to religious freedom. In addition in practice the Government systematically restricted efforts by Buddhist clergy to promote human rights and political freedom, and coercively promoted Buddhism over other religions in some ethnic minority areas.

The Government operates a pervasive internal security apparatus, which generally infiltrates or monitors the meetings and activities of virtually all organizations, including religious organizations. Religious activities and organizations of all faiths also are subject to broad government restrictions on freedom of expression and association. In addition, the Government subjects all publications, including religious publications, to control and censorship. Such monitoring and control undermines the free exchange of thoughts and ideas associated with religious activities. The Government requires religious organizations, like all organizations, to register. Although there is a government directive exempting "genuine" religious organizations from registration, in practice only registered organizations may buy or sell property or open bank accounts, which induces most religious organizations to register. Religious organizations register with the Ministry of Home Affairs with the endorsement of the Ministry for Religious Affairs. The State also provides some utilities, such as electricity, at preferential rates to recognized organizations. There is no official state religion; however, the Government continued to show preference for Theravada Buddhism, the majority religion. State-controlled news media frequently depict junta members paying homage to Buddhist monks, making donations at pagodas throughout the country, officiating at ceremonies to open, improve, restore, or maintain pagodas, and organizing ostensibly voluntary "people's donations" of money, food, and uncompensated labor to build or refurbish Buddhist religious shrines throughout the country. State-owned newspapers routinely featured, as front-page banner slogans, quotations from the Buddhist scriptures. Buddhist doctrine remained part of the state-mandated curriculum in all elementary schools; however, individual children generally are permitted to choose not to receive instruction in Buddhism, although the Government at times deals harshly with those who do. The Government also funded the construction of the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary niversity in Rangoon. The Government continued to discriminate against members of minority religions, restricting the educational, proselytizing, and building

Uactivities of minority religious groups. There is a concentration of Christians among some of the ethnic minorities (for example, the Karen and Kachin) against which the army has fought for decades, although groups that practice Buddhism (for example, the Shan) also have waged many of the ethnic insurgencies. Christian groups continued to have difficulties in obtaining permission to build new churches, while Muslims reported that they essentially are banned from constructing any new mosques. Buddhist groups are not known to have experienced similar difficulties in obtaining permission to build pagodas or monasteries. In parts of Chin State authorities reportedly have not authorized the construction of any new churches since 1997. The Government reportedly also has denied permission for churches to be built along main roads in cities such as Myitkina, the capital of Kachin State. In Rangoon during the year, authorities closed more than 80 home-churches (a traditional gathering place for many Christians) because their operators did not have proper authorizations to hold religious meetings. At the same time, the authorities have made it increasingly difficult to obtain approval for the construction of "authorized" churches. In most regions of the country, Christian and Muslim groups that seek to build small churches or mosques on side streets or other inconspicuous locations at times have been able to proceed, but increasingly only based on informal approval from local authorities. These groups report that formal requests encounter long delays and, especially for Muslims, generally are denied. However, obtaining an informal approval from local authorities creates a tenuous legal situation. For example, there were instances cited during the year in which local authorities or conditions changed and the informal approval for construction was rescinded abruptly. Since the 1960's, Christian and Islamic groups have had difficulties importing religious literature into the country. Religious publications, like secular ones, remained subject to control and censorship. Translations of the Bible and Koran into indigenous languages may not be imported legally, although Bibles may be printed locally in indigenous languages with government permission. However, state censorship authorities continued to enforce restrictions on the local publication of the Bible in particular, and Christian and Muslim publications in general. Although possession of publications not approved by the censors is an offense for which persons have been arrested and prosecuted in the past, there have been no reports of arrests or prosecutions for possession of any traditional religious literature in recent years. Non-Buddhists continued to experience employment discrimination at upper levels of the public sector. ....There continued to be credible reports from diverse regions of the country that government officials compelled persons, especially in rural areas, to contribute money, food, or uncompensated labor to state-sponsored projects to build, renovate, or maintain Buddhist religious shrines or monuments. The Government calls these contributions "voluntary donations" and imposes them on both Buddhists and non-Buddhists. In recent years, there were credible reports that Muslims in Arakan State have been compelled to build Buddhist pagodas as part of the country's forced labor program. These pagodas often were built on confiscated Muslim land. However, there were no known reports

of forcing persons to build pagodas during the year. There also were reports of forced labor being used to dismantle temples and monasteries....Religious groups of all faiths were able to establish and maintain links with coreligionists in other countries and travel abroad for religious purposes. However, the Government closely monitored their activities. Religious affiliation at times is indicated on government-issued identification cards that citizens and permanent residents of the country are required to carry at all times. There appear to be no consistent criteria governing whether a person's religion is indicated on his or her identification card. Citizens also are required to indicate their religions on some official application forms, such as passports." (Source: Department of State, c. Freedom of Religion. September 5 2001)

## 10.2 Religious Discrimination against Christians

A recent study by Christian Solidarity Worldwide reports that new laws in Burma have been enacted to restrict Christians' right to freedom of worship. Through these new laws the SPDC has attempted to force the closure of all churches under one hundred years old, sent priests into hiding, and banned the construction of new church buildings. In some parts of Burma it is also illegal to hold church services in private homes. (Source: Asian Legal Resource Center)

Government regulations prohibit Christian clergy from attempting to proselytize in some areas, and there is at least one report of a clergy member being beaten to discourage him from proselytizing. The Government has a general policy of prohibiting permanent foreign religious missions to operate in Burma. This policy has been in place since almost all foreign missionaries were expelled by the government in the mid-1960s, at which time all private schools and hospitals, the majority of which were affiliated with Christian organizations, were nationalized. Following the take-over of these institutions no compensation was offered to those who had previously run them. While some Christian theological seminaries established before 1962 continue to operate; there were reports that in 2001 a Bible school in Tamu Township, Sagaing Division was shut down by the SPDC. (Source: US State Dept). Prior to this, in July 2000, Captain Khin Maung Myint had ordered all Christian schools in Tamu Township to be shut down.

On 4 October 2001, CHRO reported that Chin Christian ministers are limited in their access to further study in foreign countries, especially in the United States. While the government does not explicitly impose restrictions on Christian ministers who seek to study abroad, many Chin Christian ministers have had their applications for passports rejected for unknown reasons. The majority of Christian pastors who go for further studies in the United States from Burma are Chins, and Chin Christian ministers make about two third of the population among those who

travel to the States for further studies in theology. (Source: CHRO)

In recent years it has become increasingly difficult for Christian groups to obtain government permission to build new places of worship. In some areas of Chin State it has been reported that authorities have not given permits for the construction of new churches since 1997. In cities such as Myitkyina, the capital of Kachin State, the SPDC has also refused to allow churches to be built on main roads; in Rangoon they have mandated that some Christian groups refer to their places of worship as ''social centers'' rather than ''churches.'' (Source: US State Dept) Only after paying a large amount of bribe money to lower level, township or district authorities, are Christians allowed to repair, expand, or build places of worship. In addition, Christian sermons were reportedly subjected to censorship. (Source: CHRO)

There are numerous other ways in which the military government has attempted to prevent Burmese Christians from practicing their religion. Army units frequently destroy churches and Christian graveyards to build their camps, forcing local Chin Christians to assist them. Sometimes churches are not destroyed but instead taken over by the SPDC to use as military bases, an act that is experienced as desecration by local Christians. Since the early 1990's, military authorities have taken down or forced villagers to remove all crosses standing outside Chin Christian villages. In many cases the government has replaced the crosses with Buddhist pagodas, sometimes forcing resident Christians to provide the labor to construct them. As part of a larger campaign to ''Burmanize'' the Chin, the SPDC has greatly increased their military presence in Chin State and other majority Chin areas, sponsored and encouraged Buddhist Burman monks to emigrate from other areas, and built Buddhist monasteries and shrines in Chin communities with few or no Buddhists, frequently requiring the residents to contribute forced ''donations'' of money or labor.

In their efforts to encourage Chin Christians to convert to Buddhism, the government has resorted to using a carrot-and-stick approach. Christians that convert to Buddhism are promised monthly payments, and Buddhists are able to take advantage of reduced price rice supplied by the government, free food distributed on Sunday mornings when Christians are in church, and exemption from forced labor. It has also been reported that SPDC soldiers stationed in Chin State were given higher rank and pay if they married Chin women who would convert to Buddhism.

To punish those who refuse to convert, authorities frequently disrupt church services and celebrations and force Christians to clean and repair Buddhist shrines. Christians are also ordered to attend sermons where Christianity is disparaged or are made to join training courses for monks, after which they are pressured to convert. In addition there have been reported incidences when Christian children have been taken from their families, under the pretext of receiving a secular education, and then converted to Buddhism without the knowledge or consent of their parents. There have also been credible reports that in Pa'an Township, Karen State army

units routinely conscript young men leaving Sunday church services for forced portering, causing young men to avoid church attendance. Throughout 2001 there continued to be reports that Chins had been taken for forced portering by the military, both in Chin State and Sagaing Division. (See Chapter on Situation of Forced Labor)

Another Christian minority group are the 20,000 ethnic Naga Christians who live in northwest Burma, on the border with the Indian state of Nagaland. (Source: AFP) While there is less information available about the situation of Naga Christians, there have been reports that indicate that they suffer many of the same restrictions on their freedom of religion as the Chin. In 1999 it was reported that more than 1,000 Naga Christians fled to India, to escape from religious persecution. These refugees reported that they were being pressured to convert to Buddhism by the military and by local monks, and that the churches in their villages had been shut down by the government and then desecrated (Source: US State Dept)

## *Persecution of Christians-partial list of incidents*

**Junta resettles Buddhists beside minority areas in Burma**

Since June 2001, SPDC administrative officers have begun a campaign to resettle Buddhist (community villages) near Chin minority villages in rural areas of Chin State.

Tamu township administrative officers led by Chairman, Capt. Khin Maung Myint have recruited Buddhist families from other places and resettled them near Kuki (Chin) villages in Tamu Township. Moreover, the authorities have forced three Kuki villages to provide free labor to the Buddhist resettlements. The three Kuki villages are:

1. Khon Mun Nuon village (about 60 houses)
2. Yan Lin Faing village (about 50 houses)
3. Faing Lin village (about 70 houses) (Source: MICB)

**New Law Bans Christians from meeting**

On 28 September 2001 Christian Solidarity Worldwide reported that the military government in Burma has banned Christians from meeting in buildings less than a century old. In early July, this order, known as the Higher Policy of the State Peace and Development Council, was issued and it is currently having a widespread impact on Christian communities throughout the country. Since June 2001 more than 80 church buildings have been closed in Rangoon, and a further 20 have been shut in Shwe Pyi Tar, a township north of the capital. All church buildings have been forced to close in the southern township of Hlaing Tai Yar. Christians in

Hlaing Tai Yar have been permitted to meet in private homes, but ordered not to sing. The regime has warned church leaders from Rangoon, Mandalay Division, Shan State, Rakhin State, Sagaing Division, and other areas that if they defy the order all places of worship will be closed down. Currently many Christian groups meet in residential apartments or schools as it is almost impossible to obtain official permission to construct or repair church buildings, many of which are very run-down. The new policy also forces churches more than a hundred years old to silence their church bells on Sundays and forbids the placing of crosses on the buildings.

The SPDC has also forced two Christian children's homes, Agape Orphanage House and Agape Orphanage Ministry, both near Rangoon, to also close down. At least 17 Christian ministers have gone into hiding and five missionaries are known to have been ordered to leave the country. One minister was arrested and at the time of this report was still missing. (Source: Burmanet)

**Indian rights group accuses Burma of forcible conversion of Christians**

On 11 November 2001 a human rights group in northeastern India accused Burma of forcibly converting hundreds of Christians to Buddhism. The Naga People's Movement for Human Rights (NPMHR) group said that in the past few weeks large numbers of Christians had been converted by the military government and Buddhist organizations. "Nagas residing in Myanmar were forced to convert to Buddhism, while those resisting were persecuted and kept as bonded labourers by the junta and Buddhist monks," said NPMHR leader N. Krome. "Many of the Christians Nagas were lured (by the offer of) government jobs to get converted to Buddhism," Krome reported.

These allegations followed the recent visit of NPMHR fact-finding team to border areas, where they reported meeting hundreds of villagers fleeing Burma following their religious conversions. "Some of the families are taking shelter in villages in the northwest Mon district of Nagaland bordering Myanamar, following threats and intimidation," Krome said. "The villagers are scared to return to Myanmar amid reports that some areas are mined." "Christian leaders claimed the Nagas were being forced to close down their churches. "We have come across people who said churches in Myanmar were being desecrated by the military and Christians were being tortured and harassed on the slightest pretexts," T.L. Kikon, a Baptist church leader in Nagaland said. An Amsterdam-based human rights group, the Naga International Support Center, reported that earlier this week, troops from India and Myanmar had jointly raided strongholds of Naga tribal separatists inside Burma, leading to the displacement of more than 3,000 people who were forced to flee to India. (Source: AFP)

## 10.3 Religious Discrimination against Muslims

Discrimination is compounded in the case of Muslims living in Burma, as they are considered ethnic as well as religious minorities. Muslims suffer from a full range of human rights abuses, from restriction of movement, extra-judicial killings, and forced labor, to discrimination in hiring and higher education. Many Muslims are not indigenous to Burma and because long familial links to Burma must be proven in order to gain citizenship, many Muslim families who have been living in Burma for generations are denied citizenship and are thereby excluded from government positions and subject to domestic travel restrictions. In Burma today there are estimated to be more than seven million Muslims.(Source: MICB)

Large numbers of Indians of both Muslim and Hindu faiths migrated to Burma during the colonial period. Many were employed by the British in the civil service sector, while others became traders, landowners, and money lenders. Generally accorded higher status by the British, the Indians were often resented by the Burman population and frequently became targets of Burman anti-colonialist actions. Muslims also began moving into Karen State at the time of Great Britain's annexation of Upper Burma in the 1880s. The Muslim population in Karen State numbers in the thousands, with Muslims engaging in a range of professions from farming to shop-keeping. Many Muslims in Karen State refer to themselves in Karen as 'Pwakanyaw Thu' or Black Karen and consider Karen State to be their homeland. Although the Muslims tend to live in separate areas within Karen villages, relations between Muslims, Buddhists and Christians have generally been smooth.

However, whatever Anti-Muslim sentiment is present among the public has been readily exploited by the government. There is a history of anti-Muslim riots breaking out in Burma when the government wants to divert the public's attention from political and economic concerns. In 1988, the SLORC provoked anti-Muslim riots in Taunggyi and Prome during the pro-democracy movement. In May 1996, anti-Muslim literature, widely believed to have been written by the SLORC, was distributed in four towns in Shan State, which led to several incidences of violence. In September 1996, the SLORC razed a 600-year old mosque in Arakan State and used the rubble to pave paths between new military base camps in the area. And in March 1997, SLORC officials were accused of instigating attacks against Muslims and of exacerbating existing tensions between the Muslim and Buddhist communities in Central Burma. (Source: The BurmaNet News: SLORC Anti-Muslim Campaign in Karen State, April 29, 1997, Issue #707)

In 2001, two major anti-Muslim demonstrations, which quickly turned into riots, broke out in Sittwe, Arakan State and Toungoo, Pegu Division. It was reported that members of MIS, USDA and soldiers dressed as monks instigated the riots in Sittwe and Toungoo and were among the demonstrators. In both incidents hundreds

of Muslims were killed by rioters while the military, which is always quick to stop any type of political demonstration, took no action to prevent the killings, lootings and destruction of mosques, homes and private property. The riots occurred over a period of several days, beginning in the cities and then spreading out to surrounding areas. In the case of a mass murder of 20 worshippers at Han Tha Mosque on May 15, 2001, a military truck was present to carry away the bodies of the victims after they were killed but failed to prevent further killings that day or the following days.

Although the rioting in Sittwe was anti-Muslim, the aftermath brought repression for all, particularly students, teachers and monks, groups which have traditionally been involved with pro-democracy activities. On September 28, 2001, Narinjara News reported that approximately 3,000 students, teachers and monks had been taken into custody in Sittwe, Arakan State since the anti-Muslim riots broke out in February 2001. These individuals were arrested by Millitary Intelligence, Police and Paramilitary Forces and held without trial. Students as young as 10 and 11 were taken in for interrogation. According to one student, two thirds of those arrested were able to bribe their way out. Those who could not pay were sent to the Thai border for portering and forced labor or have been missing since then.

**Discrimination of Rohingya in Arakan State**

Members of the Muslim Rohingya (Bengali-speaking Muslims) minority in Arakan State, on the country's western coast, experience severe legal, economic, and social discrimination. The Government denies citizenship status to most Rohingyas on the grounds that their ancestors allegedly did not reside in the country at the start of British colonial rule, as required by the country's highly restrictive citizenship laws. In 1991 tens of thousands of Rohingya, according to some reports as many as 300,000 persons, fled from Arakan State into Bangladesh following anti-Muslim violence alleged, although not proven, to have involved government troops. Many of the 21,000 Rohingya Muslims remaining in refugee camps in Bangladesh have refused to return to Burma because of fear of human rights abuses, including religious persecution.

More than thirty thousand Muslim Rohingya living in and around Sittwe, the Capital of Arakan State, have no national identity cards as the government refused to issue new identity cards to them after the existing identity cards were abolished in 1988. Without ID cards, these people are unable to travel freely, attend educational institutes or start a business.Hundreds of Rohingya are without identity cards in other parts of the State, including Maung Taw township, Buu Thee Taung township and Paut Taw township. People have written many times to the Home Ministry on the issue, yet there has been no reply from the government. (Source: AHRW)

It is virtually impossible for Rohingya to move within Arakan State or to other parts of Burma from Arakan State. Only citizens carrying ID cards are able to travel within the country, which precludes movement by those unable to meet the restrictive provisions of the "citizen law." While foreigners in Burma are generally issued a foreign registration card (FRC), Rohingyas, who are considered foreigners by the government, are denied these cards as well. Instead, they are required to obtain permission from the concerned area authorities whenever they wish to leave their village area. In June 2000, more severe restrictions on the movement of Rohingyas were introduced (See Chapter on Freedom of Movement). A Muslim from Bu Thi Taung reported that, "in Kyauk Phyu, Myay Pon, Bu Thi Taung and Maung Taw towns (which are close to Bangladesh border), a Muslim requires a visa from the immigration office to travel to other States and Divisions, whether he or she has National Identity Card or not." In addition, "two acquaintances need to vouch for the traveler in order for him or her to get a one-month visa. If the traveler does not come back, the two people having vouched for him or her are liable to punishment of three months in jail term and a fine of fifty thousand Kyats." (Source: Mizzima)

While permission to travel to Rangoon usually is not granted to Rohingya Muslims, sometimes wealthy individuals can obtain permission through bribery. The unfortunate ones are caught. U Kar Man (41) from Bu Thi Taung was sentenced to seven years of imprisonment in August 2001 when he was intercepted by the Ward authorities in Nwe Aye Ward, Daw Bon town, Rangoon. U Kar Man had been attempting to travel secretly by bribing his way from Bu Thi Taung to Rangoon. (Source: Mizzima).

Muslims in Arakan state also continue to suffer as victims of forced relocation. Currently there are townships such as Suchas, Thandwe, Gwa, and Taung-gut, that have been declared "Muslim-free zones." In these areas where Muslims are no longer permitted to live, mosques have been destroyed, and Muslim lands have been confiscated. To make sure that these mosques are not rebuilt, they have been replaced with government-owned buildings, monasteries, and Buddhist temples. As further evidence of the anti-Muslim sentiment entrenched in government policies, the SPDC has issued a court order in Arakan State which mandates that the killing of a Muslim be punished with a minimum 3-month sentence, while the if a Muslim hits a Buddhist, they will be sentenced to 3 years imprisonment. Additionally, by the end of 2001 there were reports that in the northern part of Arakan State the SPDC was systematically destroying mosques in some small villages. In one area, local government authorities had already destroyed at least 10 of a total of 40 mosques that had been marked for destruction. These mosques, which in most cases were little more than thatch huts, reportedly were constructed without proper authority by villagers who were unable to go to mosques in neighboring towns because of strict travel restrictions placed on Muslims. (Source: US State Dept)

**Persecution of Rohingya - partial list of incidents 2001**

On 20 December 2001, the junta's Military Intelligence (MI) forced 20 engine boat-owners to each give 7,000 kyat to the MI in Arakan State of Burma, according to three traders who requested anonymity. Sergeant Kyaw Tee of Man Aung Myo MI Branch (10) called all the boat-owners at Kha O Maw jetty, Man Aung and demanded the money, the traders said. The boat owners were afraid that if they failed to comply with the demand, the MI would frame them for crimes they did not commit and extort more money. The Boat-owners were:

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. U Gna Pyu Gyi, | Tan Hlwe village, Man aung, |
| 2. U Sein Tha Aung, | Tan Hlwe village, Man Aung, |
| 3. U Kyaw Pyu, | Tan Hlwe village, Man Aung, |
| 4. U Aloon Shay, | Nga Moon Daing village, Man Aung, |
| 5. U Kyaw Zan Hla, | Nga Moon Daing Village, Man Aung, |
| 6. U San Hla Phaw, | Nga Moon Daing Village, Man Aung, |

In Sandwe township, Arakan State, police officers have been levying 'under the table' taxes on Muslim fishermen, even though the Muslim fishermen have permission from district authorities to fish in these areas and they already pay taxes. There are six villages in Sandwe township and the majority of villagers are Muslims who are professional fishermen. The six villages own over 300 fishing boats. The Shwe Li police station chief in that area collects 1,000 kyat from each fishing boat monthly, according to local traders. The six villages are;

(a). Lin The (about 150 houses),

(b). The Bru Chaung (about 300 houses)

(c). Pyin Hong (about 100 houses)

(d). Zee Kyun (about 400 houses)

(e). Ta Hlaing Te (about 100 houses) and

(f). Nat Maw (about 100 houses). (Source: MICB)

**Muslims and National Registration Cards - partial list of incidents**

On 5 September 2001, SPDC authorities were checking IDs in Thin Gan Nyi Nong, Myawaddy township, Karen State, when they stopped 200 Muslims and destroyed their IDs. Some people were freed after they paid a bribe. Others were sent to Pa'an Town and put in prison. This is a common occurrence. (Source: ABMU)

On 2 December 2001, Immigration officers confiscated family registration cards from villagers in five Muslim villages in Arakan State. They then extorted 1,000 kyat for each of the cards, according to two villagers speaking on the condition of anonymity. The officers, led by Deputy Inspector U Kan Gaung of Rambre Myo, Kyauk Pyu township arrived in Kyauk Ni Maw Ywa Ma (main village), Kyauk

Pyu township on an inspection tour and called a meeting, during which they confiscated the registration cards. Kyauk Ni Maw Ywa Ma main village are incorporates the smaller villages of: Kyauk Hta Yin Yat-Kwet, Ywa Tha Ya Yat-Kwet, Taung Baing Yat Kwet, Myauk Paing Yat Kwet and Allae Baaing (central) Yat Kwet. The 5 villages have about 1,500 families total. (Source: MICB)

On 13 December 2001, Tamwe township Immigration and Development department officers refused to give National Registration (ID) cards to Muslims when they distributed them to Burmese students, aged 18 and above, at Tamwe High School No. 5 (Rangoon Division), according to two Muslim students on the Thai-Burma border, speaking on conditions of anonymity. The two students said that during the ID distribution five Muslim students, including themselves, approached the officers and requested to be issued the cards. However, the officers said " there is no order from higher authorities to give ID cards to the Muslims". The 2 students said, "there is no future for the Muslim students in Burma." So they left the school for good. According to the students, the Immigration and Development Department officers came to the school on October 10, 2001 and collected all necessary data from all students including Muslims. The authorities have refused to issue ID cards to the Muslims in Arakan State since the Ne Win-led socialist government took over, and to Muslims from other parts of Burma since 1997. (Source: MICB)

## *Persecution of Muslims - partial list of incidents*

**Forced Relocation of Muslim Villagers**

On 6 February 2001, the SPDC, Division-22, LIB-210 led by the battalion commander Myo Min Htun, base in Poung Yay Bu, Sat Kon entered Kan Galay village where they shot and ate 4 goats and burnt down 4 houses belonging to Muslim villagers, forcing the owners to relocate to Poung Yay Bu village. (Source: KORD)

**Soldiers beat students in Muslim School**

On 20 May 2001, DKBA and SPDC soldiers entered a Muslim religious school with over 2,000 students on No. 3 Rd., Myine Tha Zin, Pa'an township and beat and hit the students. Many of the students were wounded and one of the teachers was seriously injured. The soldiers said that if they saw any of the students the next morning they would kill them. Some of the students were frightened and drowned in a nearby river as they were running away. While this was occurring other Muslims schools in Karen State were being threatened in a similar manner. (Source: MICB)

**SPDC officials seize money from Muslims while traveling**

On 15 August 2001, junta security officials seized Kyats 82,000 from 6 Muslim

passengers in Karen State, according to three victims who requested anonymity. The officers, some from Border Security Force led by Sayagyi Htey Naung andMilitary Intelligence (MI) officers from MI unit No.25 led by Lt. Win Min Tun and Sayagyi Mar Sein, stopped a passenger car at Kawkareik-Hlaing Wa gate and checked passengers' National Registration (ID) cards, according to the victims. The 3 victims said that the 6 Muslim passengers showed their ID cards along with the other passengers, but the officers did not allow them to continue their journey. The officers then seized 82,000 Kyats from them and drove away, warning them not to report the incident.

**The six Muslim victims were:-**

1. U Kasem (28 years old), Pa-an, Karen State.
2. U Mohammad Ali (26 years old), Pa-an, Karen State
3. U Chit Swe,(31 years old), Kyaikkaw, Mon State
4. U Hla Min( 24 years old),Rangoon,
5. U Hla Myint (30 years old), Thaton, Mon State,
6. U Ismail (36 years old), Hlaing Bwe, Karen State. (Source: MICB)

**SPDC shoots at and arrests Muslims in Mosque**

On 15 September 2001, between 9:30 and 10:00, LIB 342, led by commander Ye Tun U, came to The Paw Late village in Tenasserim Division. They shot into the mosque and ordered people to come outside. There were 50 people who were traveling for religious reasons inside the mosque. The soldiers took 5 of them to their camp on the Thai-Burma border and what happened to them after that remains unknown. (Source: ABMU)

**Forced conversion order drives Muslim refugees from Karen State**

On 2 October 2001, it was reported that SPDC troops operating in Karen State have been ordering Muslims there to leave unless they convert to Buddhism or Hinduism. This round of forced conversions has caused an unusually large outflow of Muslim refugees to Thailand. Mae La, the largest Burmese refugee camp in Thailand is bearing the brunt of the exodus with nearly one new arrival in three being a Muslim. (Source: Burmanet)

**Increased Pressure on Muslims following September 11th terrorist attacks**

On 15 October 2001, Irrawaddy magazine reported that last week Burma's Ministry of Home Affairs ordered all police forces and intelligence units locate the source of anti-American pamphlets being circulated among the country's Muslims. The ministry said that "serious action" should be taken against those caught distributing the pamphlets, which criticize the United States for its recent air strikes on Afghanistan. The pamphlets have been distributed widely within Burma's Muslim community, first appearing early last week in cities in central

Burma, including Magwe, Taungoo, and Pyinmana, before spreading to Rangoon a few days later. The pamphlets accuse the United States of unfairly blaming Muslims for the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington on Sept 11. In line with sentiments felt in much of the Muslim world, the pamphlets state that the US has offered no evidence to prove that Osama bin Laden and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan were behind the attacks. The pamphlets also call on Burmese Muslims to join the global jihad, or holy war, against America. While some believe that the pamphlets have been published by an extremist Islamic group, MICB has speculated that some if not all of the pamphlets may actually have been printed by the government to justify crackdowns on Muslims throughout the country.

Signs of Muslim unrest have been reported throughout central Burma since the attacks on Afghanistan began last Monday. In Prome, about 300 km northwest of Rangoon, five people are believed to have been killed last week as a result of communal clashes between Muslims and non-Muslims, and many others were reportedly injured. Although the state-controlled media has not reported the recent violence, sources in Prome said that a 6 p.m. to 6 a.m. curfew has been imposed, and all phone links to the city have been cut. The unrest appears to have been brought under control, the sources added.

News reports on the events of Sept 11 have been strictly censored in Burma, as the government is reportedly concerned about the risk of renewed communal violence. Although the junta has repeatedly denied reports published in *Jane's Defense Weekly* and the *New York Times* that there are terrorist cells linked to bin Laden operating in Burma, since September 11th they have placed mosques around the country under close scrutiny. (Source: Irrawaddy)

**Authorities restrict Muslims' celebration of Prophet's birthday**

On 16 October 2001 DVB reported that SPDC authorities have been restricting Burmese Muslims from celebrating Prophet Mohamed's birthday. The Burmese Muslims attempted to hold prayer services to commemorate Prophet Mohamed's birthday at a Persian mosque in KengTung, Shan State on 12-14 October. However, government authorities, citing the recent Islamic terrorism in the US, attempted to restrict and prevent the ceremonies. Prior to the religious holiday, on the 8th of October, the Shan State Peace and Development Council summoned the mosque elders and ordered them to limit their ceremonies for the event. The authorities also prevented them from inviting guests such as Chinese Muslims from Mong La region and other Muslims from around the country, who had traditionally been present at these events. Similarly, in Amarapura, Col Hla Win, commander of Mandalay No. 7 Region, informed the responsible personnel from the respective regions to undertake security measures in order to prevent religious riots and disturbances. (Source: DVB)

**Villagers warned not to buy from Muslim Shops**

On October 25 2001, it was reported that Buddhist monk leaders belonging to the DKBA warned villagers in Pa-an Township, Karen State, not to buy anything from Muslim shops. The monks allege that anyone buying from Muslim shops is an anti-national and a traitor. DKBA monks put up notices to this effect in shops and on trees across the town. (Source: Mizzima)

**Arrest and Disappearance of Muslims Traveling to Rangoon**

On 2 December 2001, junta authorities arrested six Muslims from Sandwe district, Arakan State, and now their whereabouts remain unknown, according to three traders who requested anonymity. The six Muslims were traveling, with other traders, to Rangoon by bus in order to search for work. The authorities stopped the bus at the Gwa Myo (town) entrance gate, accused them of being connected to Osma bin Laden and arrested them. The bus-gate was under the control of Light Infantry Battalion No.55. Gwa Myo is about 83 miles away from Sandwe. According to the traders, the six Muslims were from Zeegoon Kwet Thet (village) of Sandwe. They are:

(a). Ms. May Loon (25 years),

(b). Ko Win Naing (28 years),

(c). Ko Hla Htwe (27 years)

and three others (names unknown). (Source: MICB)

**Closure and Destruction of Mosques - partial list of incidents**

During April 2001, the SPDC has ordered local government officials of Maungdaw township, Arakan state to demolish a total of 70 mosques and religious schools. These religious buildings are located in the villages of kadirbil, Nalbannya, Bagguna, Nurullafara, Shairafara, Fatonza, Gazzandia, Kiladong, Godusara, Daunkhali, Charkumbaw, Lumbaguna, Kuinnafara, Hanssara, Saindapara, Shilkhali, Khongyabill and Hanchurata all in the southern area of Maungdaw township. Orders have been issued to the Chairman, of the Village Peace and Development Council of these villages that they must demolish the mosques and religious school without delay or face punishment. By the first week of July, a total of 13 mosques: Kadirbil -1, Bagguna -2, Nalbannya -1, Nurullafara -3, Shairafara -1, Kiladong -2, Daunkhali -1 and Gadusara -2 have already been completely demolished and a total of 17 religious primary schools Kadirbil -2, Bagguna -3, Nurullafara -6, Kiladong -1, Daunkhali -3, and Gadusara -2 have been destroyed. (Source: Arakan News Agency)

Since 10 April 2000, Muslims in block No.114 of Dagon township in Rangoon Division have been prohibited from praying in their mosque by the members of the USDA. The USDA members have also been instigating anti-Muslim demonstrations, forcing many Muslim residents to leave. (Source: MICB)

On 14 May 2001, pro-junta anti-Muslim elements destroyed 7 mosques in Kyauk Pyu district, Arakan State. Two Buddhist merchants who witnessed the incident said that a mob of about 500 people, some of them disguised as Buddhist monks, marched in four groups shouting anti-Muslim slogans, towards the four mosques in Kyauk Pyu Myo town and destroyed them. The witnesses said that most of the law-breakers were members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) along with some young soldiers from LIB No.34. The four mosques destroyed were Nga La Pwe mosque, Jetty mosque, Than Ban Chaung mosque and Kanna Lann mosque in Kyauk Pyu Myo.

On the same day, about 300 members of the USDA, led by local Military Intelligence personnel destroyed two mosques in Rambre (Island) Myo and another mosque in Ting Byin village, Rambre township, according two Muslims from Rambre Myo, who also requested anonymity. Rambre Myo is in Kyauk Pyu district, Arakan State. Ting Byin village is about 5 miles away from Rambre Myo. (Source: MICB)

On 18 July 2001, SPDC gave an order to destroy the mosques in Sen Goo village and other villages nearby in Hlaing Bwe Township, Karen State. They also ordered the villages to move to a place 20 miles away. Many Muslim schools are located in those villages and every year there is an increasing number of students. The villages asked permission from SPDC to expand the schools, but they were ordered to move instead. In addition, every family in the villages has to pay 1500 to 2000 kyat each month to DKBA in porter fees and guard their mosques day and night because of fear of DKBA. (Source: MICB)

**Prohibition of Construction, Reconstruction or Repairs of Mosques - partial list of incidents**

On 5 December 2001, SPDC township administrative officers ordered Muslims to stop building their mosques in Sagaing Division, according to two traders speaking on condition of anonymity. The Kan Tha Gong village Muslim elders had obtained prior permission from Shwe Bo township officers to reconstruct their old mosques, however, when they began construction Shwe Bo township SPDC chairman, U Khin Aung ordered the Muslim villagers to stop. Currently, the old buildings have been destroyed and the Muslim villagers are unable to build new ones. (Source: MICB)

On 12 December 2001, SPDC township authorities prohibited repairs to a mosque in Sagaing Division, according to some traders who requested anonymity. The wooden mosque in Ywa Thit Gong village, in Kant Balu township was more than 70 years old and during rainy season it was damaged by water and was in urgent need of repair. Four walls of the mosque were also damaged and needed urgent repairs. In early December 2001, the villagers started to repair the mosque. However, the authorities ordered them to stop. Ywa Thit gong village has about 300 houses. (Source: MICB)

**Muslims restricted from travel - partial list of incidents**

On 20 November 2001, SPDC's Home Ministry issued an order to its respective departments not to issue new traveling documents (passports) to Muslims in Burma, according to two retired Burmese officers, speaking on conditions of anonymity on the Thai-Burma border. However, the officers said that the junta would allow a token 200 Muslims to perform Haj in 2002, in order to avoid criticism from human rights groups and the international community. (Source: MICB)

On 10 December 2001, a group of 7 Muslims from mainland Burma were traveling by a car along the Prome (Pyi)-Taunggup highway, when they were stopped by the authorities at Oo Shet Pin Check-point, under the control of Light Infantry Battalion 92, in Prome District, opposite Rakhine Yoma (mountain). The authorities searched all their belongings and later forced them to return to their homes. It has been reported that Arakan state military commander, Major General Aung Htwe, has issued an order not to let Muslims cross between Mainland Burma and Arakan State. (Source: MICB)

On 15 December 2001, SPDC authorities in Chin division sentenced 5 Muslims to 5 year prison sentences, according to two traders speaking on condition of anonymity. The Ta Mu township SPDC chairman Capt. Khin Maung Myint personally ordered the arrest and imprisonment of the Muslims because they crossed into a 'not permitted area'. The 5 Muslims, who are now in Mon Ywa prison, are originally from Arakan State where the junta restricts free movement of all Muslims even in areas where they are in the majority. Muslims in Arakan state are not permitted to travel to other parts of Burma. (Source: MICB)

## *Incidences of Anti-Muslim Violence*

**Sittwe Riots**

On February 4 2001, anti-Muslim riots broke out in Sittwe, the capital of Arakan State. The Muslim League of Burma (MLOB) reported that the riots started at approximately 8 pm, when SPDC agents, angered after witnessing Muslim youths allegedly harassing some Buddhist girls, disguised themselves as Buddhist monks, and together with USDA member and set fire to dozens of houses, one teashop and Gon Guest House in Maw Leik quarter. The group then destroyed another 40 houses about 150 meters away from the main police station of Sittwe. During the night, 8 Muslims were killed, with one of the victims reportedly killed by an SPDC soldier. The following day, the SPDC agents attempted to set fire to Ambler Ywa, Nazi Ywa and Bu Me Ywa villages, where sword and stick-fighting were taking place between Buddhists and Muslims. During the fighting in these villages 15 Muslims and 2 Buddhists were killed, and many hundreds of houses were burnt down. On 6 February, the SPDC agents destroyed the mosque in Mee Zan quarter about half a

kilometer away from the main police station of Sittwe. (Source: MLOB)

There are credible reports that government security and fire-fighting forces did little to prevent attacks on Muslim mosques, businesses, and residences. Furthermore consistent reports indicate that a number of the monks leading the attacks against Muslims were in fact military or USDA member, dressed as monks. 4 days after the riots began, security forces acted to end the rioting and prevent further violence. It has been estimated that over 50 Muslim homes burned to the ground and that both Muslims and Buddhists were killed and injured. (Source: US State Dept) The Arakan Rohingya National Organisation (ARNO) said in a statement that: "At least 450 Rohingyas were killed and more than 1,500 were seriously injured when the Rakaines posing as monks attacked six villages near Sittwe on February 4.'' An SPDC spokesman said that a curfew had been enacted in Sittwe because of disturbances between Muslims and Buddhists after "a quarrel," but that the situation had returned to normal. (Source: Reuters)

RSO reported that following the riots several hundred people remained missing, most of whom were students at Akyab Degree College staying in dormitories in the centre of the city where the riot started. A total of six Muslim quarters: Molvipara, Amlapara, Rohingyapara, Kawshypara, Nazirpara, and Sakkibazarpara have been burnt to ashes, and RSO estimates that over 2000 houses, shops, hotels and other businesses were destroyed. Six mosques were also completely burnt down.

On 16 February 2001 RSO reported that anti- Muslim riots had spread from Sittwe to all parts of Arakan State. The continuing violence took a heavy toll of lives, destruction of properties and sacrilege of places of religious worship in the towns of Rathidaung, Mrohaung, Kyawktaw, Minbya, Ponnagyun and Myebon in north Arakan and Kyawkpyu, Man Aung (Chedube) Sandaway in Southern Arakan. There is little information available about the destruction and loss of life caused by rioting in these areas. However, there are reports that at least 15 people have been killed and more than 30 houses have been burnt down in Rathidaung township. (Source: RSO)

Following the riots, the SPDC has further restricted, already limited travel for Muslims in the area, essentially preventing them from traveling between Sittwe and other towns in the region. An unconfirmed report states that in late March or early April 2001, seven Arakanese politicians were sentenced to 7- to 12-year prison terms for inciting the riots. (Source: US State Dept)

**Toungoo Riots**

On 15 May 2001, anti-Muslim demonstrations which soon turned to riots broke out in Toungoo Township, Pegu Division. It is estimated that there are 2,000 Muslims living in Toungoo, out of a total population of 90,000. During the rioting, which is believed to have been instigated by SPDC authorities, an estimated 200 Muslims were killed, and 11 mosques and 400 houses were burned down. The Muslim victims were killed in mosques while worshipping, in their houses and were pulled from buses and trains and beaten to death. Several Muslims were tied up and then burned alive as rioters set fire to their homes and mosques.

Credible eyewitnesses have reported that MIS members, USDA members and fake Buddhist monks were among the demonstrators, and that one of the leaders of the demonstrations was Captain Khin Maung Yin from No. 3 MIS, based in Toungoo. Following the riots, the government prohibited Muslims from entering the remains of their Mosques and houses which had been burned, by placing armed soldiers and notices in those areas reading "Restricted Area - Do Not Enter". (Source: MICB) There are reports that local government authorities warned Muslim elders before the attacks not to retaliate in order to avoid escalating violent reprisals. (Source: US State Department)

**Sequence of Events**

*The following is an account of the anti-Muslim rioting that took place in Toungoo, Pegu Division in May 2001. Reported on July 25, 2001 by MICB.*

**May 15, Toungoo City:**

**Han Tha Mosque:** According to one victim who managed to escape, rioters entered Han Tha Mosque, built in 1780 by Dabin Shwe Htee, a famous Burmese Monarch, and killed 20 muslim worshippers. Among the worshippers were two Imans (religious leaders). The rioters first burned all of the Korans in sight and then murdered the worshippers. Some had their throats cut and others were beaten to death. The dead bodies were then placed in a military truck and taken away.

**24 Muslims burned to death in their homes:** Relatives of the victims reported that fifteen Muslims living on Kone The Gyi Street, Haji Soe Myint, 70 and six of his family members and Haji Yong Sein, 60, and 7 family members were tied up and left inside their homes which were then burned down. Five muslims, including a pregnant woman, were tied up in Moe Lin Restaurant, located on the Rangoon/Mandalay Highway Road and left inside while it was burned down. The body of the pregnant woman was taken to the hospital to see if the fetus could be saved; it was found that she was pregnant with twins but they were already dead by the time her body arrived at the hospital. Her family requested that the body be returned to them for burial but the authorities refused. In addition, Tin Maung and 3 of his family members were tied inside their house before it was burned down.

**May 16, Toungoo City:**

**31 Muslims killed in their homes:** A Bhuddist merchant reported that a religious leader, Khalid and six of his family members, Are Bin and five of his family members, Kyaw Kyaw and six of his family members, Maung Tin Hla and four of his family members and Anwar and five of his family members were killed by having their throats cut and beaten to death. Before they were killed, all the valuables were looted from their houses. Later their homes were set on fire.

**Muslims killed and 8 mosques set on fire:** According to an eyewitness, 21 Muslims were killed by having their throats cut. One victim was Ahmed, age 45, owner of a mini-market located on Bohmu Pho Kont Road. In addition, 8 mosques were set on fire. They were: Toungoo Mosque; Nut Mosque; Han Tha Mosque; Wai Zin Mosque; Kan Daw Mosque; Kha Kha Mosque; Pan Thay Mosque; Ya Htar Bu Dar Mosque.

According to an eyewitness, Sein Hlaing, a businessman with military ties and owner of Shwe Hninn Zi Cheroot Company, donated money for food and transportation for the rioters.

**Bus passengers killed:** During the demonstrations, 35 muslim passengers were pulled from various buses by demonstrators led by Captain Khin Maung Yin from MIS No. 3. Seven passengers were killed and the rest managed to escape and found refuge with a Buddhist merchant.

**May 17:**

**Muslims, including small children, killed in surrounding townships:** On May 17 the anti-muslim demonstrations spread into the countryside. A total of 47 muslims were killed in Oat Twin, Tha Gaya, Phyu, Yay Tha Shay, Swa, Kyauk Tagar. Among the 47 victims were children between 3 and 5 years old. Some pregnant women were also killed. Eighty-five houses owned by muslims were burned down.

**Toungoo City:** On May 17, SPDC Secretary, Win Myint and the Minister of Home Affairs visited Toungoo. On that day, a curfew was ordered and has been in place until the time of this report (July 12). For that reason transportation and communication has been very difficult in this area.

**May 18:**

On May 18, Han Tha Mosque was completely destroyed by bulldozers.

**May 23:**

A passenger train from Mandalay to Rangoon stopped for a moment at a small station, Lay Daung Kan, located 40 miles from Rangoon. Four fake Buddhist monks and about 15 armed men wearing uniforms entered the train cars and pulled out 18 Muslim passengers. 4 were beaten to death and 14 escaped.

**May 25:**

Thirteen muslims who had escaped from the Toungoo riots were arrested by soldiers from LIB 35, 20 miles from Toungoo and 30 miles from Than Duang Township. They were later killed. (Source: MICB)

**July:**

In Mone Township, Pegu Division and Kyauk Kyi Township, Pegu Division, Muslims were arrested and killed by orders from Colonel Htain Linn. On the 20th of July, 3 Muslims were arrested. Tin Sein, 36, father's name Tun Hlaing, Than Win, 40, fathers name Kha Sin, Salin, 35, father U Phyu were arrested and since then their wherabouts remain unknown. They were arrested MIS agents, led by Captain Myint Lwin. (Source: MICB)

It was reported on July 25, 2001 that 5 Muslims, including Nyunt Maung, 46, father's name Kyuu Hlaing, Khin Oo, 42, father Sein Maung, were arrested by MIS and USDA members. The leader of USDA was Soe Win. All were killed. Meanwhile, all muslims in the area continue to live in fear of being arrested and killed by MIS, USDA or fake Buddhist monks. This information was reported by Tun Oo, age 27, who was beaten and then escaped to the Thai/Burma border. (Source: MICB)

**Rioting in Prome**

DVB reported that on 9 October 2001 from 3pm to 5 pm fighting occurred between Muslims and Buddhists at the central mosque on Aungchantha Road in Lanmadaw Ward, Prome. Fighting continued until the Lone Htein riot police arrived and managed to disperse the crowd. Information about the riots has been largely based on eyewitness accounts and so varies widely. A DVB source stated that 8 Buddhists and 2 Muslims were injured in the clashes, while a staff member in Prome Hospital reported to Mizzima that "nearly 50 Muslim shops were destroyed. One person was killed and over 100 people were wounded in Prome alone." Reportedly the fights were instigated by an incident in which Ma Khin Ni, a 19-year-old Buddhist woman, from Lanmadaw Street eloped with Abdullah Ahmed, a 28 year old Muslim, from the same street who later allegedly forced her to become a Muslim. When Ma Khin Ni's parents discovered that she had become a Muslim and planned to get married they approached the mullahs at central mosque and requested that they not carry out the marriage ceremony. The mullahs refused this request and fighting broke out after

a heated argument. The next morning, Ma Khin Ni's parents and other members of her family entered Abdullah Ahmed's house and forcibly took Ma Khin Ni away. Fighting again broke out and this time her relatives also destroyed Abdullah Ahmed's house. When Muslim neighbors attempted to attack those that were destroying the house, the situation escalated out of control. At this point, Lone Htein riot police and the Fire Service Department personnel arrived at the scene and used tear gas and a water cannon to disperse the crowd. Simultaneously, Muslim-Buddhist riots broke out in the Prome central market and the Lone Htein riot police had to disperse the crowd. In the riots one Buddhist was killed and over 40 Buddhists and 65 Muslims were injured. The injured were all taken to the hospital for treatment.

On 10 October the Prome District authorities issued a curfew in the city, under the Section-144 law. According to Section-144 anyone seen on the road between 6pm and 6am can be shot. The curfew also states that any form of gathering in town is prohibited, as are all protests, and carrying of weapons, or potential weapons, such as knives, spears, and sticks. People who violate this law may be shot. At the time of this report (12 October) the curfew had not been revoked and 30-member strong platoons were patrolling the town. Furthermore, heavily armed policemen are stationed at schools, markets, bus terminals, and railway stations. (Source: DVB)

On October, 12, the riots spread to Pakokku, where some young men disguised as Buddhist monks, began beating Muslims and destroying their houses. About 15 houses were destroyed and dozens of Muslims were injured. According to witnesses, the incidents took place when Muslims were on their way to the mosque for Friday Juma prayers.

On October, 19, similar anti-Muslim riots occurred in Pegu, when some Buddhist monks tried to purchase medicines from a Muslim shop. The monks began to quarrel with the shop owner and many other people joined them, with the violence escalating as the shop owner was assaulted and a mob tried to loot and smash all the medicines in the shop. (Source: MICB)

As religious violence spread from Prome, the authorities also imposed curfews in five townships in Pegu Division, and police and soldiers were stationed near the mosques in Toungoo Township. In addition, and ostensibly to prevent further violence, the SPDC imposed further travel restrictions on Muslims, forbid Muslims from attending prayers in mosques and monitored the activities of Muslim leaders. One Rangoon resident reported that "In Tha Kay Ta Quarter in Rangoon, people have not been allowed to pray in mosques since June." It has also been reported that those Muslims in Rangoon, Moulmein, Pegu, Pa-an (Karen State) and Bu Thi Taung, Maung Daw, Kyauk Phyu (townships in Arakan State), who continue to worship in mosques are under close scrutiny by MI agents.(Source: Mizzima)

While rumors of the rioting circulated throughout the country, the SPDC publicly confirmed that riots had occurred in Prome only after foreign news agencies had reported on the incident. On 19 October, Hla Min, a government spokesperson, confirmed only that there had been religious clashes in Prome, without providing further details. Rangoon residents have reported that at this time there still was no news about the riots in the state-run media. (Source: Mizzima)

When DVB contacted monasteries in Thayet and Toungoo, which are near Prome, one monk gave the following commentary on the situation on 12 October 2001

[Unidentified monk] We were going on our regular alms collecting round. We did not know exactly what happened but heard that the riots broke out and some were hurt. The police, monks, people, and some Muslims were injured. There were no casualties, only some injuries.

Another monk said the situation has almost returned to normal.

[Unidentified monk 2] We also heard that. Nothing more.

[Htet Aung Kyaw] I believe the phone lines were cut in Prome.

[Unidentified monk 2] Yes. We could not call from here. All the lines were cut.

[Htet Aung Kyaw] Reverend, could you please explain to us what happened?

[Unidentified monk2] We did not get clear news report either. We heard that there were some problems. These things are never quite certain and not easy to confirm.

[Htet Aung Kyaw] Did the riots break out?

[Unidentified monk2] Yes, it did happen. We know that it happened for two nights and were later controlled.

[Htet Aung Kyaw] Were there any casualties?

[Unidentified monk2] Well, we heard that some shops and houses were destroyed. We did not hear of any casualty. (Source: DVB)

**Burma declares 45-day state of emergency period for fear of mass unrest**

The Ministry of Home Affairs has issued a directive declaring a state of emergency for 45 days from 15 October to 30 November. The emergency period has been declared because the government fears that the current religious riots might escalate into widespread public unrest. During this time, respective township authorities have been convening emergency security meetings in accord with the directive on riot control and security issues. The central government has mandated that the security groups formed should include township level officials and that they should monitor the movement of people in the township, keep close watch on suspected persons and

monks, and report any unusual activity immediately to the security authorities. These officials have also been told that the township riot control company, and reserved forces such as the Union Solidarity and Development Association members and the Fire Services Department personnel should be kept on the alert. Moreover, there are orders that security checks should be carried out at the tollgates of the entrance and exit of any city and that SPDC military intelligence members should carry out surprise checks at night at guesthouses, motels, inns, and hotels. (Source: DVB)

**Anti-Muslim Riot in Hinthada Township**

On 23 October 2001, it was reported that Buddhist monks and Muslims had rioted the previous Saturday night in Hinthada Township, Irrawaddy division. The riot began in a Muslim-owned tea-shop from a quarrel between the proprietor and some monks. Earlier that evening the authorities had declared an urgent curfew.

"Hinthada is half-Muslim, so the riot spread quickly through the entire town," a truck driver reported. "The riot was not only fighting between Muslims and Buddhist monks, but rioters were also setting fire to houses,"

When *the Irrawaddy* contacted regional police from Hinthada, an officer denied any report of the riot. News groups inside the country have also failed to report on the riots. A spokesman for a weekly journal said that they had heard about the riot but had not been given permission to cover it in their publication. This incident marks the fourth anti-Muslim riot in Burma this month (Source: Irrawaddy)

**Riots in Pha-auk village, Mon State**

On 27 October 2001 almost one hundred people were killed in a riot between Muslims and members of Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) in Pha-auk village in Mon State. About 150 members from USDA were attempting to destroy a mosque in Pha-auk village, about four miles from Moulmein, where one hundred Muslims were worshiping on the evening of October 27. A clash broke out between the Muslims in the mosque and the USDA members around 7 pm and about 60 Muslims and 35 USDA members were killed.

Similar religious riots occurred in Pyi and Pegu early this month and about 40 shops, including Tawthargyi store, on the main road in Pyi were destroyed during these riots. About 34 prisoners arrested during the May riots in Taungoo and those in Pyi and Pegu in early October, will be sent to Khamti prison, in a remote area of Upper Burma near the Indo-Burma border. These prisoners include 24 from Mandalay prison and 10 from Pegu prison, a source reported to NMG. "Although there are reports about the arrests, we have not yet known how many Muslims and Buddhists were among these arrested people," said U Kyaw Hla, chairman of Muslim Liberation Organization Burma (MLOB). (Source: Network Media Group)

# 10.4 SPDC control over Buddhism

Throughout 2001, the SPDC continued both to show preference for Theravada Buddhism, the majority religion, and to control the organization and restrict the activities and expression of its clergy ("sangha"). The SPDC prohibits any organizations of Buddhist clergy other than nine state-recognized monastic orders, which submit to the authority of a state-sponsored State Clergy Coordination Committee ("Sangha Maha Nayaka Committee"-SMNC) elected indirectly by monks. The SPDC provides guidance and enforcement for the committee at the national level and for its subordinate bodies at local levels. The SPDC continued to fund two State Sangha Universities in Rangoon and Mandalay to train Buddhist clergy under the control of the SMNC. The State's relations with the Buddhist clergy and Buddhist schools are handled chiefly by the Department for the Perpetuation and Propagation of the Sasana (DPPS-"Sasana" means Buddhist doctrine) in the Ministry of Religious Affairs.

In October 1990, the military junta promulgated Order 6/90, which bans any organization of Buddhist clergy other than the nine orders constituting the SMNC; Order 7/90, which authorizes military commanders to try Buddhist clergy before military tribunals for "activities inconsistent with and detrimental to Buddhism;" and Decree 20/90, "Law Concerning Sangha Organizations," which imposes on Buddhist clergy a code of conduct enforced by criminal penalties. These edicts remain in effect.

The Government monitors the activities of members of all religions, including Buddhism, in part because clergy and congregation members in the past have become active politically. During the 1990's over 100 monks were imprisoned for their activities supporting the democracy and human rights movement. To date, over half of these monks have been released; while others have died in prison. In 1995 the military Government prohibited the ordination as clergy of any member of a political party. In addition, the regime has also has subjected the Buddhist clergy ("sangha") to special restrictions on freedom of expression and association. All of these measures remained in effect throughout 2001.

In 1999 the senior abbots of five monasteries near Mandalay protested a new order by the regional military edict that prohibited Buddhist monks from leaving their township of residence without first handing over their identity cards and obtaining written permission from local authorities. This restriction on movement of Buddhist clergy was more severe than was generally the case for people in the area. (Source: US State Dept)

**Thai Buddha images forbidden from public display**

9 April 2001 Thai monks of Shan descendents who recently returned form Monghsat District, opposite Chiangmai and Chiangrai provinces, reported that Buddha images of Thai styles have been ordered to be kept out for public view by the Burmese authorities since last month. The monks said all the Buddha statues, big or small, old or new alike, residing in all the temples had to be put away. "What upset the local people the most was the removal of the 5 cubit (7 feet) tall Sitting Buddha from Mae-sawn Temple within Monghsat's city limits itself," said a monk. "It is now dwelling at the abbot's abode." "This single act symbolizes the hatred the Burmese feel against the Thais," said another monk. "The lord Buddha had always counselled against hatred, but it seems many of us so-called Buddhists are only Buddhists outwardly." (Source: SHAN)

**Old Shan monastery Burned, Suspected Arsonists remain Unpunished**

On 5th May 2001, a 60-year old Shan monastery at Nong Pha, Shan State, was set on fire and destroyed. Ancient artifacts, Buddha images of bronze and wood, and hundreds of sacred scripts were lost in the fire. Following the blaze, villagers captured 2 ethnic Burmans they suspected of setting the fire, and sent them to TangYan court to stand trial. Nong Pha is a village situated approximately 12 miles, north-east of Tang Yan on the way to the Salween river crossing. The village is controlled by a pro-Burmese militia group as well as by Burmese troops camping in the village Prior to the incident, 3 Burman peddlers had come to beg permission from the abbot to lodge at the monastery's kitchen. For some time they had come to the monastery frequently, sleeping in the kitchen by night, wandering and selling their goods by day. It is widely known that the Burmese military intelligence are sending their men to observe cease-fire groups, and these peddlers are therefore suspected of being MIS. Even more suspicious was the fact that before the fire there were 3 peddlers, but after the incident there were only two. These two peddlers claimed that their companion had gone to TangYan to buy merchandise. When they were asked to show their ID cards, they said their companion had taken them away with him to town. The village headman then arrested them and brought them to TangYan, where they were handed over to the township authorities for interrogation and trial. Two months have passed, but the authorities have yet to take action against the suspected arsonists. Local Shan people would be severely punished merely for traveling without papers, and there is speculation that the peddlers have bribed the authorities, or are receiving lenient treatment because they are Burman. Ironically, the burning coincided with the "Fire fighter's day" recognized by the Burmese military dictators. (Source: SSA)

**SPDC's attack on Buddhist monks**

On 15 July 2001, U Nandiya, one of the abbots of Sin Kuu, Mae Long Gyi and Noh Hta Paung villages was poisoned and passed out for two days. Shortly before this, U Nandiya and other abbots had called on the local authorities not to destroy or close the local mosques. DKBA troops, led by Capatin Phar Nwee and the NIB (28) control these villages, and they have threatened to punish the monks for disobeying them.(Source: MICB)

# 10.5 Personal Account

## Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Biak To

Lieutenant Colonel Biak To, a B.A graduate from Mandalay University, enlisted as a private in the Burmese Army on 17 November 1973 after he found out that his movements as a leader of the Haka University Students Association were being closely monitored by the Military Intelligence Service (MIS). After completing different levels of military training with a number of postings in different parts of Burma including one in the Light Infantry Battalion (101) under Divisional Command 77 stationed in a Wa area, he became a Captain in 1984. In 1990, he shifted from the Army to Police service on a rank-to-rank basis, becoming a police inspector. Being an educated man with adequate service experience, he was promoted to Major in 1994, and by 1998, he became a Lieutenant Colonel in the 1st Police Regiment. In 2000, for reasons that were never made clear to him, Lt. Colonel Biak To had his position stripped from him. Much to his surprise, he was fired with a fine of Kyats 15,900, which he had to pay without knowing why. In the following interview with CHRO, Lt. Colonel Biak To reveals how he was discriminated against and unfairly treated by his superiors in the army and police force because of his religious and ethnic identity.

**CHRO:** How was your life during your service in the Burmese Army and Police?

**Lt. Col. BT:** My father was Rev. Lal Hnin. He was one of the first Chin converts to Christianity. So, I grew up in a good Christian family. I finished Haka State High School and graduated from Mandalay University in 1972. I was a weight lifter and healthy young man. I wanted to become an army officer. Therefore, after my graduation from university, I applied for Military Officer Training School. However, because I am Chin, my application was not considered. So, I joined the army as a private on November 17,1973. I tried very hard to please my superiors in performing my duties. I was promoted to Lance corporal in February l976 and corporal in October of the same year in 1976. Because of my work performance, I was allowed to join Officer Training School in 1979 in service. Then I became second Lieutenant in April 1980. That means it took me almost 8 years to reach this level while other Burmese Buddhist graduates could attain this rank just one year after their

graduation from a university. The vast majority of the ranking officers in the Burmese Army are Burman Budhists. As a result, I was always discriminated against by the dominant Buddhists for being an ethnic Chin Christian. For example, the non-Burman soldiers were selectively assigned to the front line to fight against the Karen rebels, saying that we were brave and loyal. The ethnic soldiers were, in fact, respected as the most brave and hardy fighters in the Burmese Army. As ethnic minority soldiers, we enjoyed virtually no rest time and were never given permission or leave to visit our relatives. The most frustrating thing was when we returned from a successful operation or captured enemy positions, the Burman soldiers who remained in the camps all the while and did not participate in the actual combat got promoted, while we, the actual fighters were neglected for promotions. A Burman officer with less educational background and service experience would become a Colonel while I remained a Captain. Our superiors would always encourage us to become Buddhists so as to be considered for promotions, but we always chose not to be promoted rather than abandon our faith. An ethnic soldier would not be promoted to a position higher than Major regardless of his service years and how many times he had been transferred.

There is no difference in the Police either. We were repeatedly told to convert to Buddhism if we really aspired for promotions. This also tended to be a mere deception. A close friend of mine, Thein Lwin, an ethnic Shan Christian converted to Buddhism but was never promoted. He just ended up being cheated of his faith.

On July 10, 2000, I gave a speech to the police parade mentioning that I was a Chin Christian and the son of a pastor, and saying that from childhood I never wanted to tell lies, steal or misbehave and that I wanted everyone to do likewise. Four days later, on July 14, I received an order saying that I have been dismissed from the police.

**CHRO:** Do you know the reason why you were laid off?

**Lt.Co. BT:** I still have no idea on what exact account I was dismissed. The order came all of a sudden without any formal procedures. Under normal circumstances either a preliminary inquiry or departmental inquiry should have been conducted before a government service member could be tried for any misconduct or violations of rules. Nothing like this happened in my case. At the time of my dismissal, I was the only person holding a B.A degree among officers of my rank in the entire nine Police Regiments in Burma. In fact, I should have been the first one to be considered for promotions. Obviously, the authorities did not want to see a Chin Christian holding a high position, so they made a pre-emptive move to dismiss me without any apparent charges. This did not end with my dismissal. In an attempt to prevent me from leaving the country, the authorities disqualified me from being eligible for a passport for seven years. However, I was able to obtain a

passport under a fake name and secretly managed to sneak out of the country. I have a wife and three children remaining in Burma. I am constantly worried about them because if the authorities found out about my absence, they would be subject to harassment and persecution. (Source: CHRO, January/February 2001)

# 11. Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and the Press

## 11.1 Background

Freedoms of opinion, expression, and the press have been virtually non-existent in Burma since the military coup of 1988. The Press Scrutiny Board (PSB), a division of the powerful Ministry of Information, scrutinizes every publication for anything perceived as 'anti-government.' Similar censorship boards retain tight control over art, music, film, performance, and all other forms of artistic expression. All authors, publishers, journalists and poets must submit a personal biography to the board of literary censorship. The board then investigates to find out if these individuals have any association to opposition political parties or connections to other people or groups deemed threatening by the regime. Anyone suspected or proved to have 'undesirable' connections is placed on a blacklist and their work is not allowed to be published.

As part of their overall effort to control information, the military regime severely restricts all forms of communication. Without a government permit, which is expensive and difficult to obtain, individuals can be arrested for possessing or using fax machines, mobile phones, photo copies or computers.

People's access to information in Burma is officially limited to one main state run news agency, that disseminates information to government controlled newspapers, radio, and television stations. Burma's four daily newspapers are all published by the News and Periodicals Enterprise (NPE), a division of the Information Ministry. While currently there are approximately 50 private weekly and monthly magazines published in Rangoon, all are kept under close scrutiny by the regime. Burmese people are well aware that much of the news from official sources is propaganda, and to find out what is really happening in their own country and the rest of the world they must depend on sources of information outlawed by the regime.

A main source of outside information is the daily Burmese-language radio broadcasts by Radio Free Asia (RFA), Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB). In addition, copies of international newspapers and newsmagazines are smuggled into the country, as are a limited number of publications by exiled groups working along the Thai/Burma border. The junta is aware of and attempts to cut off these sources of information. Outside radio broadcasts are closely monitored and sometimes scrambled, and individuals caught distributing or possessing dissident or foreign news material are punished. At present, within Burma, there is almost no

underground press activity, as the students who undertook such activities in the past, have largely been imprisoned, killed, or forced into hiding or exile.

International Media watchdog groups such as the Center to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters Sans Frontières (RSF - Reporters Without Borders) have repeatedly criticized the Burmese regime for its suppression of press freedoms, and its imprisonment of journalists

In June 2001, the military regime issued edicts reminding people that it was illegal to own books, magazines, cassettes and videos that contained information "hostile to the SPDC". Violating this law carries a sentence of up to 10 years in prison. (Source: DVB)

## 11.2 SPDC Laws Restricting Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and the Press

(Source: Burma UN Service Office)

**The Official Secrets Act 1923**

This law makes it an offence, among other things, to possess, control, receive or communicate any document or information, the disclosure of which is likely to affect the sovereignty and integrity of the state or friendly relations with foreign states or otherwise prejudicial to the safety of the state (sec. 5). No exception is made for disclosure of classified information on public interest grounds. Anyone convicted of an offence is liable to be punished with imprisonment for up to two years, or with a fine, or with both. Other, lesser known laws have been used by the military regime to justify their frequent clampdown on freedom of statement. These include:

***The Burma Wireless Telegraphy Act 1933***, which makes it an offence to possess, without official permission, any 'wireless telegraphy apparatus'. This law was amended in 1995 to cover the use of unlicensed fax machines, and again in 1996 to cover computer modems. Anyone found possessing these apparatus without official permission was made liable to be imprisoned for up to three years or fined up to 30,000 kyats. In April 1996, the SLORC used this law to prosecute James Leander Nichols, a close friend of Aung San Suu Kyi, on charges of operating unregistered telephone and facsimile lines from his home in Rangoon. Nichols was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, but died two months into his prison term, allegedly as a result of previous medical problems.

***Section 122, Penal Code of Burma***, makes it an offence to commit treason against the government. This offence is punishable with death, or with imprisonment for life. Several of the NLD functionaries who attended meetings in Mandalay in September and October 1990 with a view to forming a provisional government-in-exile after the election results were disregarded, were arrested and sentenced from 10 to 25 years' imprisonment under this section.

***The Law Protecting the Peaceful and Systematic Transfer of State Responsibility and the Successful Performance of the Functions of the National Convention Against Disturbances and Oppositions***, makes it an offence, among other things, to incite, demonstrate, deliver speeches, make oral or written statements and disseminate anything which would 'disrupt and deteriorate the stability of the state, community peace and tranquillity and prevalence of law and order', or 'affect and destroy national reconsolidation', or 'affect, destroy and belittle the tasks being implemented at the National Convention for the emergence of a firm and enduring Constitution and cause misunderstanding among the people'. It also forbids anyone from drawing up or writing or distributing a Constitution for the country without legal authorization, and makes any attempts at collaboration in any of the above-mentioned acts an offence.

Each of these acts is made punishable with imprisonment from between three months to twenty years and a possible fine. Organizations found guilty of any of the offences risk being banned or disbanded and their properties confiscated. This law was used, for example, against nine students in September 1996 after they had distributed leaflets outside Aung San Suu Kyi's house in Rangoon. Observers believe this law specifically targets the NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi who, in 1996, announced that she and her colleagues had decided to write a new constitution for the country due to the SLORC's continued refusal to hand over power to the 1990 elected representatives.

**Emergency Provisions Act 1950**

This law confers sweeping powers on the authorities to silence and punish any real or perceived dissent, even in the absence of a proclaimed state of emergency.

It is an offence, punishable with imprisonment for up to seven years, to commit any act which 'violates or infringes upon the integrity, health, conduct and respect of State military organizations and government employees towards the government' (art. 5(a)), or 'causes or intends to spread false news about the government' (art. 5(e)), or 'causes or intends to disrupt the morality or the behavior of a group of people or the general public' (art. 5(j)).

Article 3 renders any act which is 'intended to cause, or causes, sabotage or hinders the successful functioning of the State military organization and criminal investigative organizations' liable to be punished with death or life imprisonment.

Similar punishment is prescribed for 'collecting and divulging, or intending to divulge, information to people involved in treason against the State, on the movements, the strength, the location, the guidelines and regional defense strategies of the State military organizations and criminal investigative organizations who are engaged in preserving the stability of the State' (art. 2).

**The Printers and Publishers Registration Law 1962**

This law has historically been the main instrument of official censorship, requiring all books, magazines, other periodicals, song lyrics, and motion picture scripts to be submitted for vetting to the SPDC prior to publication or, in some cases, prior to distribution. The effect has been to shut out any criticism whatsoever of the regime. Anyone who fails to comply with any rules or regulations framed under the law could be imprisoned for up to seven years and fined up to 30,000 kyats.

**State Protection Law 1975 (also known as the 'Law to Safeguard the State from the Dangers of Destructive Elements')**

This law allows the government to declare a state of emergency in a part or the whole of Burma and to restrict any fundamental rights of the citizens in specified regions or all over the country (sec. 4).

The law gives the authorities sweeping powers: anyone who is suspected of having committed, or who is committing, or who is about to commit, any act which 'endangers the sovereignty and security of the state or public peace and tranquillity', can be imprisoned for up to five years without trial on the orders of the executive (sec. 14, as amended by Law 11/91, dated 9 Aug. 1991).

This law also allows the executive to pass restriction orders under which anyone can be confined to a specified area or have their freedom of movement otherwise restrained, or be prohibited from possessing or using specified articles (sec. 11). No order passed under this law can be the subject of an appeal to any court, although appeals are allowed to be made to the Union Cabinet.

**The Television and Video Law**

This law provides for compulsory licensing of television sets, video cassette recorders and satellite television by the Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs, and of the video business by newly constituted State or Divisional Video Business Supervisory Committees. The latter have been given responsibility for deciding on the grant of video business licenses and for inspecting and supervising video businesses within their territorial jurisdictions.

The law also provides for mandatory censorship of all video tapes, whether locally produced or imported, by a Video Censor Board composed of government officials and representatives of the public. The requirement of obtaining censorship

certificates has been extended also to videotapes imported by foreign diplomatic missions or agencies of the UN for public exhibition. Operation of a television transmission business without permission from the SPDC is punishable by imprisonment for up to five years or an unspecified fine.

**The Motion Picture Law**

This law creates a regime of censorship for conventional cinematograph films. A license must be obtained from the Myanmar Motion Picture Enterprise, a State agency. Violation of the terms and conditions of a license are punishable with a fine ranging from 5,000 kyats to 50,000 kyats and with revocation of the license. The law also provides for the establishment of a Motion Picture Censor Board. Foreign diplomatic missions and the UN have been made subject to the censorship regime under this law. Appeals against decisions by both entities can only be made to the Ministry of Information whose decision on appeals are final and conclusive.

**The Computer Science Development Law**

This law requires anyone who wishes to import, possess or use computer equipment, notably those with networking or communication facility, to obtain a license from the Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs. It also requires those who wish to set up 'a computer network or connecting a link inside the computer network' to apply for prior sanction to that Ministry' (sec. 28).

The Ministry is granted absolute power to grant or refuse licenses and sanctions and to impose conditions. Failure to obtain a license or sanction is made punishable with imprisonment for between seven and 15 years and with an unspecified fine (secs. 31, 32).

It establishes strict controls on the formation and operation of computer-related associations - three types of associations may be formed with official sanction (the Computer Enthusiasts, Entrepreneurs' and Scientists' Associations), all others are illegal. Anyone forming, running or belonging to an illegal association is liable to be punished with imprisonment for up to three years, or with a fine, or with both.

The law makes attempts or conspiracy to commit an offence punishable with the same everity as the offence itself.

## 11.3 State of the 'Freedom of the Press' in Burma

Strict government censorship ensures that the Burmese media exists largely as a propaganda machine for the regime, and that journalists are prohibited from reporting on any events of real importance. Topics banned from media coverage include: natural disasters, debates about government policies, criticisms and commentary about the poor state of the national economy, or any local, national or international news which could be seen as uncomplimentary to the government. Currently, the on-going dialogue between the Junta and Aung San Suu Kyi, while widely reported on in the international press, has also been off-limits to most media in Burma. In addition, coverage of important international events is also frequently restricted. In Burma, the September 11th terrorist attacks on the United States went unreported by state television stations and received only brief mention in government newspapers. Vendors hawking contraband videotapes of CNN's September 11th coverage were threatened with arrest by police, who confiscated the tapes.

In March 2001, Chief of Military Intelligence, Khin Nyunt, gave a public speech explaining the regime's press policy to members of the Information Ministry. He stated that: "The staff should know the importance of the news value in line with the time and condition. As the staff…are experienced persons in the journalism field, they have the ability to differentiate between the news which will benefit the nation and the people and the news which will have a bad effect on the nation and the people." (Source: CPJ)

Severely restricted in the news they can print, the 50 or so private journals published in Burma are also regularly forced to pay stiff bribes just to get non-offensive materials passed by the censorship board. If an article is found to violate government standards, the editors are forced to change the entire layout of the magazine to hide the removal of the censored material. Thus there is a strong incentive for magazine editors and writers to engage in self-censorship in order to avoid this extremely time-consuming and expensive process. In addition to being forced to remove 'sensitive' articles, private magazines are also frequently ordered to print articles supporting the military and denouncing Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD. Individuals that fail to fall in line with these regulations are denied jobs, harassed, and sometimes thrown in jail. According to RSF, 18 media professionals are currently imprisoned in Burma, leading the organization to label the country "the largest prison for journalists in Asia." (Source: RSF)

Foreign journalists, while not subject to the same risks and pressures as Burmese journalists, also face restrictions on reporting news from Burma. No foreign journalists are allowed to live in Rangoon, with the exception of one correspondent for China's official Xinhua News Agency. Visiting foreign reporters must apply for special journalist visas as well as a "Permit to Conduct Journalistic Activities."

Reporters granted visas are kept under close surveillance by MI agents, who try to prevent them from interviewing opposition leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi. International journalists who write articles critical of the regime can find themselves banned from the country. (See article below on recently banned foreign journalists). Swedish journalist Bertil Lintner, a reporter for the *Far Eastern Economic Review* and internationally renowned authority on Burma, has been blacklisted from the country for the past fifteen years. However, since the onset of the dialogue between the NLD and the junta, some foreign correspondents report that it has become easier to enter Burma and that once inside they are given more freedom.

Several other positive developments for press freedoms linked to the talks have also occurred in 2001. State newspapers, for the first time in many years, have been able to refer to Aung San Suu Kyi without attaching negative rhetoric to any mention of her name. A further, more controversial development, is the continuing publication of *The Myanmar Times*, a glossy weekly magazine launched in March 2000, and published in English and Burmese. The magazine is privately owned by an Australian publisher, but is closely linked with the Office of Strategic Studies (OSS), which is controlled by military intelligence chief Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt. *The Myanmar Times* has more latitude than any other news source in the topics it is allowed to cover, and recent issues have included articles about the release of political prisoners and the reopening of NLD offices. While some analysts see this as a sign that the regime is becoming more open, others believe that Khin Nyunt's support of the *Times* merely highlights a split between factions within the Junta on how to present information. Doubts about the *Times* objectivity increased when a February 2001 article in the *The Irrawaddy*, a newsmagazine published by Burmese journalists in exile, reported that OSS officials had privately credited *The Myanmar Times* as the best source of information for the intelligence agency's views.

Whatever the perceived loosening of restrictions on the press it is important to note that at the present time, Aung San Suu Kyi continues to be detained under house arrest and remains prohibited from talking to the press.

**Soe Thein released from prison after completing a five-year sentence**

On 13 June 2001 editor and parliament member Maung Wuntha, also known under his pen name Soe Thein, was released from Insein prison. Editor of the magazine *Ah-twe-Ah-myin* (The Thought), Soe Thein was arrested on 21 May 1996 and sentenced to five years in prison for writing articles defending the NLD. While in jail he suffered from a serious stomach disease and high blood pressure, that caused him to have two heart attacks while incarcerated. Despite international pressure Soe Thein consistently failed to receive proper medical treatment, and instead was subjected to psychological abuse by prison guards and members of the Military Intelligence.

According to information collected by RSF, the decision to release him was prompted by a letter sent by Soe Thein's wife to the military authorities asking them to let him leave prison at the end of his sentence. (It is common practice for political prisoners to be given additional jail sentences just before their release dates.) (Source: RSF)

**San San Nwe released from prison**

On 18 July 2001, San San Nwe, a journalist, novelist, and political activist was released from prison. She was jailed by the Burmese government in August 1994 on charges of spreading information damaging to the state, and served almost seven years of a 10-year sentence for allegedly "fabricating anti-government reports" which she sent to international media and foreign embassies. She had also spent time in jail previously for her involvement with the NLD.

San San Nwe was released along with 10 other members of the National League for Democracy (NLD). In 2001 San San Nwe was a recipient of the Golden Pen Freedom Award given by the World Association of Newspapers. (Source: CPJ)

**Two foreign reporters blacklisted**

During the week of 9 July 2001, Burmese embassies around the world received orders from the Minister of Foreign Affairs, to ban Evan Williams and Tony Emerson from receiving visas to enter Burma. Evan Williams, an Australian journalist, published a report about the SPDC crackdown against the NLD in 1998, and then produced a TV report highlighting the Burmese junta's involvement in drug smuggling, which aired on 26 June 2001. Tony Emerson wrote an article criticizing the SPDC's education policy, which was published in Newsweek magazine on 9 July 2001.

Since 1988, dozens of foreign journalists have been blacklisted from Burma. Most foreign reporters are forced to surreptitiously enter the country with tourist visas in order to avoid the tight control that the SPDC exercises over those journalists who are granted press visas. Robert Ménard, general secretary of RSF wrote a letter of protest to the SPDC minister of Foreign Affairs stating that: "while the SPDC and the NLD have begun a dialogue, it is the duty of your government to let the international press work freely in Burma… To prevent the international public opinion from knowing the real situation in the country is a grave violation of the right to be informed." (Source: RSF)

**Another foreign journalist blacklisted**

It has been reported that journalist George Scott, who wrote "fabrications" in The Weekend Australian Newspaper, has been on a blacklist and denied a visa to Burma since 3 August 2001. (Source: SHAN)

**Junta article blasts award nomination for jailed journalists**

On the 13th and 14th of August, 2001 an article in the state-run *New Light of Myanmar* denounced the nomination of a "media group" consisting of 24 imprisoned journalists and dissidents, from receiving the International Press Freedom Award. The nomination came from the Burma Media Association (BMA), a group of exiled Burmese journalists. BMA president Maung Maung Myint said the nomination is part of an effort to focus attention on the nominees' work to promote press freedom from inside Insein prison. For taking part in this movement the award nominees were given additional sentences ranging from 5 to 12 years. "We nominated them for their wonderful media movement including magazine publishing inside prison, smuggling out the report to UN special rapporteur Yozo Yokota and a prisoner's shirt on which prisoners of conscience put their signatures to the UNHRC [United Nations Human Rights Commission] annual meeting in 1995," said the Norway-based president.

A two series article in *The New Light of Myanmar* entitled "They Dare not Show Their Faces -24," refers to the award nominees as "lawbreakers." The article further describes the BMA as an organization of colonialist informers, and refers to international media watchdog group, RSF as a collaborator. (Source:BMA)

**Burmese Journalist Honored with Canadian Press Freedom Award**

On 8 November 2001, Burmese prisoner of conscious, Myo Myint Nyein was one of two journalists honored with the Canadian Press Freedom Award. The award was sponsored by Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE).

Myo Myint Nyein, an editor of Pay Phu Hlwar magazine and a member of Information Department of the National League for Democracy (NLD), was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment in 1990, for publishing literature critical of the military government. While imprisoned he became one of 24 political prisoners who joined together to advocate for free media movement in Rangoon's Insein prison. Due to these activities he was sentenced to an additional 7 years imprisonment, along with his 23 other colleagues. (Source: BMA)

# 11.4 Continuing Detention of Journalists

(all photographs courtesy of AAPP)

According to RSF, at least 18 media professionals remain behind bars in Burma, making it the country with the most journalists imprisoned in Asia. RSF has compiled the following list of people who have been arrested and imprisoned for reasons such as "distributing information hostile to the State", owning undeclared video cameras, talking with foreign journalists or sending information to Burmese media in exile. The majority of journalists imprisoned in the country are also members of the NLD. Most of these journalists were active in the "Spring of Burmese press" in August 1988, when some one hundred new publications appeared, many of them openly denouncing crimes perpetuated by the dictatorship led by general Ne Win. Since the military regime seized power in Burma, three journalists have died in prison. (For more information on conditions for political prisoners see chapter on Arbitrary Detention and Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance).

- Aung Pwint was sentenced to eight years of prison several months after his arrest inSeptember 1999 for "illegal possession of a fax machine", and for sending information to banned Burmese publications. He is currently held in Insein prison. A poet and video producer, Aung Pwint, fifty-five years old, is a well-known Burmese media personality. In 1996, the authorities banned the broadcasting of his video reports on the situation in Burma, considered to be "too negative". Aung Pwint is also a democratic activist who spent three years in prison in the 1970s. His wife, a teacher, lives in Pathein,the capital of the Irrawaddy province, with their two children.

- Journalist and poet Kyi Tin Oo was arrested on 1 March 1994. Several weeks later, he was sentenced to ten years in prison by a special Court in Insein prison according to articles 5(j) of the law for the protection of the State, and 17(1) of the law concerning illegal association. The authorities accused him for publishing political articles in the monthly *Moe Wai* (closed in 1996 for financial reasons) and in the magazine *Tha-bi*n, banned in 1988. Kyi Tin Oo, fifty-seven years old, already spent three years in jail in the 1960s, then seven more years beginning in 1978, and finally a few months after the 1988 coup d'etat.Kyi Tin Oo has therefore spent 18 of the last 40 years of his life in jail. According to a journalist currently living in exile in Thailand, Kyin Tin Oo is "well-known in journalistic and literary circles for his columns on daily life in Burma. He has always had a deep love of our peoples' culture. He wrote very beautiful articles full of compassion for those who suffer." Kyi Tin Oo has been married to Than Yi, prominent writer and owner of a small bookshop, since 1970. He has four children, including Aung Kyaw Hein, known as Kyaw Zaw, who is serving a fourteen-year prison sentence in Khaley for belonging to a banned student movement. Kyi Tin Oo's health is poor; he suffers from chronic

hypertension resulting from the awful prison conditions.

- Ko Sein Ohn and Khin Aye Kyu, brother and sister, were arrested together in September 1996 and sentenced to ten years in prison for distributing videotapes not approved by a censor, and for possessing "imported video copying equipment" without official permission. Ko Sein Ohn, currently forty-eight years old, made films of Aung San Suu Kyi as a cameraman with the NLD and reports critical to policies of the junta. In July 1996, he interviewed peasants who complained about the authorities' negligence in providing assistance after the serious floods of the Irrawaddy delta. This report was taken out of the country. Two other members of the NLD and two peasants were also arrested after this report was made. Like his sister, he is being held in Insein prison. As for Khin Aye Kyu, she was arrested for her activities as a photographer with the NLD. She was also accused of distributing videotapes not approved by a censor.

- Myint Thein, known by his pen name Myint Myat Thein, is a teacher and journalist specialised in international relations. He worked for several magazines including the monthly *Ah-twe-Ah-myin*, founded by Soe Thein, *Shwe Wut Hmone*, *Nwe-ni* and *Thaung-pyaung-htway-la*. He was arrested on 4 December 1996 during the student demonstrations in Rangoon, and severely beaten by police officers during his interrogation. Myint Thein was convicted, several weeks later, to seven years in jail for supporting the student movement, especially through his articles. He is currently being held in Thayet prison.

- Yan Aung Soe was arrested in October 1998 by members of the Military Intelligence

Service (MIS), and sentenced, several weeks later, by a special court to 59 years in prison for being "in contact with foreign organisations". Yan Aung Soe is known for his articles on education published between 1994 and 1997 in semi-legal university journals *(Unit*y, *New Century*, etc.), then in private magazines such as *Thought* and *Your Lif*e, with pen name Thu-rein-htet-linn. An activist in student associations and the NLD since the age of fifteen, he was in charge of writing and distributing leaflets for these organisations. He was tortured during his interrogation at an MIS centre. He is currently held in Myaungmya prison, in the south of the country.

- Thaung Tun, born in 1959, better known by his pen name Nyein Thit, is a journalist and poet. He worked for the magazine *Padaut Pwint Thi*t, which was banned in 1995. He also wrote for the Rangoon city magazine and produced video reports for independent production companies. Originally from Mandalay, this journalist is also known for his poems. As a political activist, he was forced to live in hiding for several years. Arrested on 4 October 1999, he was tortured during his interrogation, which lasted more than three weeks. Two months later, he was convicted by a special Court and sentenced to eight years in prison according to

article 5(j) for collecting information concerning human rights violations in Burma and sending it overseas. Initially held in Insein prison, he was transferred to Moulmein prison (capital of the Mon state) in April 2001. He already spent three years in prison in the late 1970s. He is reportedly in good health, but the only visits he receives are those of his wife and mother who live in Mandalay (more than a thousand kilometres from the prison) once every two months.

- Sein Hlaing is imprisoned in building 3 of Tharrawaddy prison where he was transferred in November 1997 after spending seven years in Insein. He is serving a fourteen-year sentence. He was convicted, on 15 November 1990, and sentenced to seven years in jail for publishing an article entitled "What is going on?" in the magazine *Yin-Kyae-Hmu* (Cultural). The military court also found him guilty of publishing satirical poems ridiculing the military junta. On 28 March 1996, he was sentenced to an additional seven years in jail for taking part in writing a document denouncing human rights violations; this document was sent to the United Nations' special rapporteur on Burma. According to one of his former cellmates, Sein Hlaing has lost a great deal of weight and has no more hair. His three sisters can only visit him once each month.

- Win Tin was arrested 4 July 1989 and placed in detention in Insein prison. Successively sentenced to three (October 1989), ten (June 1992) and seven years in prison (March 1996), he is serving a total twenty-year prison sentence. Charges against Win Tin for his third trial state that he "secretly published anti-governmental propaganda" while in jail. He is being held in a special section of Insein prison, in cell 10, but his very poor health has forced the authorities to regularly transfer him to the prison hospital. During the twelve years he has spent in jail so far, Win Tin has suffered two heart attacks, a herniated disc and underwent one operation. Because of the poor prison conditions, he has also lost most of his teeth, and, for several months, the authorities refused to provide him with dentures. Former editor-in-chief of the newspaper *Hanthawath*i, author of many articles against the regime and close advisor to Aung San Suu Kyi, Win Tin, now 71 years old, refused several times to sign a letter of resignation from the NLD in exchange for his freedom. Admired by political prisoners, he is called Saya (The Wise Man) by Aung San Suu Kyi and NLD activists. According to a former political prisoner, he constantly kept up peaceful resistance to the authorities' orders and discussed politics often with his cellmates. He finalized the report on human rights abuses in Insein jail secretly sent to the United Nations' special rapporteur on Burma. While being held in one of the prison kennels, in 1995, Win Tin made a speech celebrating Burma's national day.

- Aung Myint was sentenced to twenty-one years in jail on 20 December 2000 for passing on NLD information to foreign press agencies and western embassies in Rangoon. He had already been arrested on 14 September 2000 by men of MIS Unit 14. He is held in Insein prison. Better known by his pen name, "Phyapon" Ni Loan Oo, this former journalist with the magazines *Cherry* and *Mahaythi* saw many of his

articles and poems refused by private magazines or blocked by censors. His wife Ma Tha-bye, a well-known writer, is the chief-editor of the *Cherry* magazine.

- Aung Zin Min has been imprisoned in Tharrawaddy since May 1997, after serving several months in Insein prison. He was arrested in December 1996, together with journalist Cho Seint, and sentenced to seven years for supporting the student demonstrations of 1996 in his articles and poems, published in the magazine *New Style*. He was a staff editor of this private magazine. Currently fifty-one years old, he suffers from headaches and dysentery. He is also depressed and worried about the fate of his destitute family. In 1998, he tried to smuggle out of jail fifty short poems written on bits of plastic. A guard caught him just as he was handing them over to his wife during a visit. The poems were confiscated and he lost visiting rights for more than a month.

- Kyaw San, known by the pen name Cho Seint, was, like Aung Zin Min, transferred to Tharrawaddy in May 1997. He was also sentenced to seven years in prison for supporting the 1996 student demonstrations in his articles and poems, published in opposition magazines. He was severely beaten during his interrogation in early 1997, and suffered partial hearing loss from this. Grandson of Thakin Kotaw Hmime, one of the fathers of independence with general Aung San, his family was deliberately deprived of its resources by the military authorities. He has practically no visits nor outside assistance. According to one of his former cellmates, he has never lost his fighting spirit and even took part in a June 1998 hunger strike asking for more water and that the cell doors be opened during the day. The prisoners succeeded in obtaining their demands.

- Myo Myint Nyein was arrested 12 September 1990 and convicted, in November 1990, for publishing in the magazine *Yin-Kyae-Hmu* (Cultural), of which he was co-editor, an article entitled "What is going on?", and in March 1996 to seven years in prison for participating in the creation of underground magazines in Insein prison. He is therefore serving a fourteen-year sentence in Tharrawaddy prison where he was transferred in 1996 after six years spent in Insein (see below).

- Ohn Kyaing, better known by the pen name Aung Wint, is serving a seventeen-year sentence (sentenced to seven years in October 1990 and ten years in May 1991) in Toungoo prison after being transferred from Insein in late 1993. He is an NLD elected Member of Parliament for Mandalay. He was convicted for publishing an article "The Three Paths to Obtain Power" in an opposition publication. Born in 1944, Ohn Kyaing suffers from high blood pressure and hemorrhoids. Married and a father of four, his wife had to sell half of their house to meet Ohn Kyaing's needs. A journalist for *Kyemo*n, *Botahtaung* and the magazine *Youqshin Aungla*n, Ohn Kyaing is known for writing articles in favor of democracy.

- Sein Hla Oo has been held in Myitkyina prison since February 1997. Before that,

he was in Insein prison after being arrested in August 1994 together with San San Nweh. He is serving a seven-year sentence that ended in August 2001, but at the time of writing he has yet to be released. He is a member of Parliament-elect and is accused of distributing some of his articles, considered "anti-governmental", to foreign embassies and media. This former journalist with *Botahtaung* has a journalism degree from a North-American university, and is a well-known cinema critic.

- Khin Maung Win, known by the pen name Sunny, is reportedly held in the new Kalay prison (in the north-west of the country, near the Indian border). He was sentenced to seven years for being involved in an interview with Aung San Suu Kyi before the ASEAN (Association of South-Eastern Asian Nations) summit in 1997. According to the authorities, Sunny was member of a group involved in anti-governmental activities. Several weeks after his June 1997 arrest, lieutenant general Khin Nyunt called them "puppets of the American government". His wife recently sent a letter to NLD headquarters explaining the difficulties she was having to see her husband.

- Thein Tan was sentenced to ten years in prison and is being held in Thayet prison, after spending six years in Insein. He was convicted by a military court of writing an article about the killing of four people in Mandalay in August 1990. He was arrested in late 1990. Originally from Mandalay, currently seventy-one years old, his health has reportedly deteriorated greatly in recent months. Owner of a bookstore in Mandalay, he wrote for the official publication *Kyemon* before working with several private magazines in the 1980s.

- Tha Ban was arrested in March 1997 and sentenced to seven years in prison for his articles in favor of democracy. He was also convicted for helping a student compile a history of the All-Burma Federation of Students Union. He has been reportedly transferred from Insein prison to a prison in Arakan state (west of the country) where he is from. Sixty-four years old, Tha Ban has suffered from dysentery in recent years and can only count on his wife, a retired schoolteacher, to bring him medicine. His health worsened in 1995, but the authorities refused to transfer him to the hospital. His vision has recently deteriorated, and, according to his family, he may become blind if he does not get treatment from a specialist. Authorities have so far turned down this request. In the following four cases, Reporters Without Borders is continuing its investigation into the reasons these individuals were imprisoned:

- Htay Thein is a university professor in Rangoon and the author of many political and philosophical articles. He was arrested in June 1989 and sentenced, on 13 November 1989, to twenty years in prison according to articles 5 (j) and 17 (1), for his presumed involvement with the banned Burmese Communist Party. In 1993, his sentence was reduced to ten years; he should have been released on 12 November 1999. But, several days before his release, an additional one-year sentence was

imposed according to article 10/A of the emergency law. This arbitrary decision was repeated this year. According to recent information, he is morally devastated by his continued detention. Htay Thein is imprisoned in Mandalay, after several years in Insein and suffers from psychological problems. According to one of his former cellmates, he talks to the walls of his cell and bed incoherently. Traumatized by the torture he has undergone, he is persuaded that if he eats some of the food given to him, Aung San Suu Kyi will be killed.

- Monywa Aung-Shin was arrested in September 2000. Former editor of the magazine *Sar-maw-khung* (The Literary World), banned in 1990, Monywa Aung-Shin became one of the NLD information directors in the 1990s. He was sentenced to seven years in jail according to article 17 (20). Win Khet, the former publisher of *Sar-maw-khun*g, currently living in exile in Australia, says that Aung-Shin was a skilled journalist and brave supporter of the NLD. His articles and poems were regularly published in magazines such as *Guita Padat*a, *Moe Wai* and *Sbai Phy*u. He was arrested in Rangoon while he was taking care of his daughter hospitalized for a heart problem. She died three days after his arrest but he was never told.

- Tun Myint is a writer and is in charge of information research with the NLD in Rangoon. He was arrested on 13 September 2000 for distributing a press release stating that Aung San Suu Kyi had been placed under house arrest. It asked that sanctions against party leaders be dropped. He was sentenced to twenty-one years in jail according to articles 5(j), 17(20) and 17(1) of the emergency laws. He is suffering from problems with his vision.

- Doctor Zaw Min is known for his involvement in the 1988 demonstrations. Author of many articles, essays and short stories under pen name Zaw Nat Zaw, he is in Mandalay prison serving a twenty-year sentence, handed down in July 1989, for his participation in the popular uprising of 1988. According to his family, he is suffering from very serious mental problems and can no longer recognize some members of his family. Tortured after his arrest, he was often kept in isolation during his detention period of more than ten years.

Finally, seven members of the clandestine distribution network of the banned publication *Mojo* are also imprisoned. They are: Mg Hla Soe, arrested in August 1999 in MyaWaDee (Karen State); Ko Win Naing, arrested in September 1999 in Pegu (east of Rangoon); Mg Kyaw Wae Soe, arrested in September 1999 in Tha-Ka-Ta (near Rangoon); Joseph, arrested in September 1999 in Pa-an (Karen State); Tint Wae, arrested in May 2000 in KaMarYut (near Rangoon); Ko Myo and Ma Htay Htay, both arrested in May 2000 in Belinn (Mon State). Most of them were convicted to seven-year prison sentences after distributing this opposition monthly, printed in Mae Sot (Thailand), three thousand copies of which were sent to Burma. After this wave of arrests, new distribution networks were developed including some fifty people in Burma and just across its borders. (Source: RSF Website)

# 11.5 Control of Computer Technology and Communications in Burma

A UNDP Human Development report released in July 2001, entitled "Making New Technologies Work for Human Development", argues that: "Technology is like education - it enables people to lift themselves out of poverty. Thus technology is a tool for, not just a reward of, growth and development." The report includes a Technological Achievement Index, which measures "how well the country as a whole is participating in creating and using technology." While neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Malaysia scored highly, Burma is listed in the category of "no data available."

What is known about communications and technology in Burma is that existing laws mandate that all post, telecommunications, and e-mail services must be provided through a state agency, the Myanmar Post and Telecommunications (MPT). Regulations released by the government in 2000, stipulate that all computers, fax machines, and modems, must be registered by the government. Individuals that fail to do so face a 7-15 year prison sentences.

**The Internet and Electronic Mail in Burma**

In January 2000 the MPT became the sole Internet provider in the country. To connect to the Internet, individuals and businesses must first obtain a license from MPT. This is extremely difficult for the average citizen, as priority is first given to government officials and organizations, then to foreign embassies and foreign businesses, and finally to favored local businesses. Furthermore, the costs for accessing the internet, which include a US $390 hook-up fee, approximately US $100 for a modem, and E-mail connection charges of US $3 an hour, effectively put it out of reach for most Burmese. The government monitors the content of e-mails for any "anti-nationalistic" sentiment. At the beginning of 2000 the MPT issued regulations for the Internet in which any mention or discussion of politics was explicitly banned.

While there are a few 'Internet cafes' in Rangoon, in actuality they do not offer direct access to the Internet, instead only allowing customers to use CD-ROMs. To send an e-mail, an individual must first put the information (text only) on a floppy disk, then take it to an office with an e-mail server, and pay US$1 per page to send it.

At present Burma has about 3,000 e-mail users and about 25 IT companies have Internet access. Most IT companies are owned by relatives or business associates of the SPDC generals. 2001 was the first year that private periodicals and journals were allowed to launch their own websites, however this must be done through an

approved IT company. Ironically, without access to the Internet, editors of these journals cannot see their own websites. In 2001 the government announced that it will introduce the Intranet, not the Internet to Burma. The Intranet will be for local use only, and will not offer access to the World Wide Web.

In March 2001, an RSF report entitled "Enemies of the Internet", decribed how the military regime had responded to the Internet presence of many of its opponents by launching its own propaganda site in 1996: myanmar.com. The junta also sends out large amounts of disinformation e-mails in an attempt to discredit political opposition groups, specifically the NLD. In addition, The Defense Ministry and government intelligence services closely monitor the Internet and have sent virus-infected messages to Burmese dissidents. (Source: RSF)

**Fax and other Communications**

SPDC regulations have ensured that international phone calls are too expensive for the majority of Burmese. The average income of a government employee in Burma is $25 a month; applying for an international calling facility costs as much as $1,000, and calls to the United States can be as steep as $50 for five minutes.

**SPDC cracks down on use of illegal satellite receivers**

On 17 January 2001, the Burmese language newspaper, Kyemon reported that various township communications departments have already compiled a list of satellite receivers used illegally without licenses and are in the process of scrutinizing and assessing those illegal satellite dishes that should pay license fees. The SPDC has stated that individuals who have illegal satellite receivers in their possession should contact in writing to the Director General, Directorate of Communications, on or before 28 February 2001 by registered post stating the owner's name, name of organization, foreigner or citizenship registration card, occupation, full mailing address, the location of the satellite dish, the particulars of the satellite dish - make, model, serial number, size, and the date of installation. Those who failed to send this information to the Director General, Directorate of Communications, during the prescribed period will face legal action according to existing laws. (Excerpt from report by Burmese language newspaper Kyemon on 18 January 2001, translated by BBC SWB)

**SPDC restrictions on Cordless Phones**

In June 2000, the MPT ordered all users of non-registered cordless phones to surrender them within thirty days or face three years imprisonment, or a fine of 30,000 kyats, or both.

In March of 2001 Burma began using the Global System of Mobile Communications (GSM) phones in major cities of the country. The government has announced it plans to have 70,000 lines, with 30,000 lines each in Rangoon and Mandalay. There are also plans to extend GSM access to some other major cities

including Myitkyina, Moulmein, Bhamo, Taunggyi, Sittwe and Prome.

To purchase a GSM phone in Burma officially costs 500,000 Kyat (US $one thousand). However, it costs around 700,000 Kyat on black market. At present only a few people are using GSM phones. In addition to GSM, Burma has been using cell phones connected to CDMA (Code Dialing Multiple Access). According the 2001 UNDP report, Burma has 6 telephones (landline and cellular) per 1,000 people, while Thailand has 124 telephones per 1,000 people and Nepal has 12 telephones per 1,000 people. (Source: Mizzima)

**Confiscation of Mobile phones in Murng-Ton**

In June 2001, SPDC troops from Murng-Sart-based LIB333 seized about 30 mobile phones from the people in Murng-Ton township, mostly in village tracts close to the Thai border. On May 30, 2001, a column of about 100 SPDC troops, led by Maj. Myint Aung, came to Naa Kawng Mu village in Murng-Ton township where they were temporarily stationed. Upon arrival the SPDC troops investigated to find out who was using mobile phones in the area. On June 10th, after some days of investigation, SPDC troops began to confiscate all mobile phones used by people suspected of providing information to the Shan resistance soldiers. At least 26 mobile phones have so far been seized mostly from Naa Kawng Mu, Huay Aw, Mae Ken, Pung Pa Khem and Nawng Pa Yaen villages in Murng-Ton township, and some in Murng-Ton town itself. To confiscate the phones, SPDC troops simply went to the houses of the suspected mobile phone owners or summoned them to a military camp and ordered them to hand over their mobile phones, threatening to severely punish and fine them if they refused. Many of the mobile phone owners were said to be women and small shop owners who were most likely not in contact with Shan resistance groups. (Source : SHRF)

## 11.6 State of the Freedom of Speech in Burma

As there are laws that clearly prohibit people from saying anything in opposition to the government, the freedom of speech in the civil and political rights of the people of Burma. The MI undercover agents has caused people to be cautious in what they say, and open, verbal support of groups such as the NLD can, and has led to imprisonment.

Throughout Burma, November is traditionally “Literature Month,” and literary talks or speeches are held nationwide. On these occasions, invited authors or poets come and give speeches about literature to the public. The military regime has forced some of these speeches to be canceled by refusing to issue a permit for public gatherings. In some places, the authorities insist on being involved in selecting which authors are to be invited. Some famous authors are unable to give public speeches because of their political background. Authors that are allowed speak are warned by the

authorities not to talk about political issues. Members of the MIS attend these events and tape all the speeches. If any speech is suspected or interpreted as having political content, action is taken against the author and organizers of the event.

**Famous Comedians Released from Prison**

On 13 July 2001, U Pa Pa Lay and his cousin U Lu Zaw, two Burmese comedians known as "the Moustache Brothers" and their colleagues U Aung Soe and U Htwe were released after spending five years in prison. During their imprisonment Amnesty International mobilized a widespread and sustained international campaign for their release.

The two comedians, U Pa Pa Lay, 49, and U Lu Zaw, 45, were sentenced in March 1996 to seven years' imprisonment for one of their comic performances. U Htwe and U Aung Soe, two political activists who arranged this performance, were also sentenced to seven years' imprisonment.

On 4 January 1996, the anniversary of Burma's Independence, U Pa Pa Lay's Anyeint troupe, a traditional Burmese entertainment group, performed for a celebration at the home of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon. During their routine U Pa Pa Lay and U Lu Zaw joked about government cooperatives being thieves and sang a comic song about Myanmar's generals. Following the performance they returned to their homes in Mandalay where they were arrested. U Aung Soe and U Htwe, two NLD members who had arranged the performance, were also arrested.

In early April 1996 U Pa Pa Lay and U Lu Zaw were transferred from prison to Kyein Kran Ka labour camp, 25 miles from Myitkyina in Kachin State. There they were forced to work with iron bars across their legs and their health deteriorated. U Pa Pa Lay was later transferred to Myitkyina Prison, Kachin State and U Lu Zaw to Katha Prison, Sagaing Division. (Source: Amnesty International)

**Mandalay monk arrested over critical sermon**

7 August 2001, regional military intelligence personnel arrested a monk for delivering a speech criticizing the prevailing economic and political situations at an umbrella raising religious ceremony held at the Mahamyatmunni Payagyi Pagoda in Mandalay on 1 August. The monk, Ashin Pandita, climbed up the pagoda's scaffolding and delivered a sermon to the monks and guests attending the ceremony. The military intelligence personnel present immediately removed him from the ceremony, took off his monk's robes and detained him at No 10 Police Station. The authorities are planning to take action against the monk for inciting unrest. Although Ashin Pandita is believed to be a resident of a monastery near the Mandalay Technological University more details about him are not known. His actions caused a commotion among the monks who attended the ceremony. (Source: DVB)

# 11.7 State of the Arts and Freedom of Expression in Burma

Writers, poets, filmmakers, actors, musicians, painters, and other artists in Burma are subjected to numerous restrictions which seriously inhibit their freedom of expression. In her article, "*'People's Desire':* Cultural Expression and State Oppression in Burma," Dr. Nancy Hudson-Rodd describes how the military government attempts to control interpretations and expressions of Burmese culture in an attempt to promote their vision of a unified state. To this end she states that: "The military regime have used and continues to impose their vision of cultural heritage by suppressing the voices of the citizens, the authors, the artists, the performers."

The paranoid censorship of the PSB has stilted the creativity and variety of art that was once famous in Southeast Asia. The censorship board ensures that nothing produced in Burma or imported from outside the country can be interpreted as "anti-military" or "western-influenced" which could be detrimental to "national security" or "culture. " Such censorship is in direct opposition to the very nature of art and artistic expression, as any change to the original piece can potentially ruin a masterpiece. The SPDC lavishes awards, luxuries, and chances to go abroad on artists who choose to be pro-military and who stay away from expressing any ideas deemed political, and those who refuse are isolated and unable to get their artistic work in the public eye.

**Censorship of Film and Television and restrictions on actors/actresses**

Filmmakers in Burma are required to submit the script to the PSB, and the censorship boards are notoriously sensitive to what might be interpreted as "anti-regime." The filmmakers are then restricted in how much film they can buy, and after the shooting, the completed film is again presented to the censors before it is released. Filmmakers are required to occasionally produce government propaganda films, and likewise actors and actresses who work in these propaganda films receive benefits and recognition. It has been the case that actors who have participated in pro-military films have won the Burmese academy awards. It is also common for actors and actresses to be seen in posters or TV specials, which promote the army. Beautiful young actresses dressed in military uniforms appear on calendars saying, "We're with you!" Such actors and actresses are given opportunity for great popularity and wealth.

The 2 Television stations in Burma are known for their propaganda, and most of the programming is dedicated to showing the "achievements" of the military. There are a limited number of Chinese TV programs and foreign cartoons which make their way onto the airtime. Foreign films are also subject to censorship.

**Censorship of Music and Musicians**

Musicians face many difficulties in finding ways to express themselves through their music in Burma. The economic situation has made music a formidable occupation as instruments and music lessons are prohibitively expensive for all but the wealthy military elite, and finding venues at which to play is difficult. Lyrics to music are put through the same censorship as other writings, and even the musical style itself is often censored. Rock and Roll music is now common in Burma, and other western influenced styles, such as rap, are making their way in, but most western music is not widely available. Instead, Burma has an active "copy" industry, where original western melodies are converted into Burmese lyrics deemed un-harmful to the regime or the "national culture." The regime continues to monitor dress styles of musicians, and forbids them to dance on stage. The regime encourages (through the offering of privileges) musicians to sing government and pro-military songs and sing at government sponsored events, and those who try and refuse are threatened with not being able to have their music produced.

**Censorship of Painting, photography, sculpture, other visual arts, and performance art**

Painters, photographers, sculptures, and other visual artists are also subjected to military scrutiny. As visual art played an important role in the 1988 uprisings, along with the other arts, the regime has aimed to put an end to art deemed 'revolutionary.' After the military re-took power in 1988, the fine-arts building at Rangoon University was destroyed and the fine arts program discontinued. Today it is only possible to study visual arts under private tutorship, or at the Cultural University in Rangoon. The Cultural University (CU), a military institute, is a prime example of the situation of artistic expression in Burma. According to the ABFSU 2000 report, 'The Current Education System in Burma', the CU only accepts 100-150 students per year, who are required to be USDA members. The authorities at the Cultural University admit students to CU according to such requirements, without first learning of the applicants' artistic abilities. In addition, the Minister of Culture of the SPDC has told CU students that if they do not participate in any student strikes or demonstration, the regime will ensure them positions as officers in government administration. In the 1998-99 academic year, 27 students were enrolled for the Arts (Music), 48 Students were enrolled for the Arts (Performance), 29 students were enrolled for the Arts (Painting), and 5 students were enrolled for the Arts (Sculpture). At the CU, students of Music and the Dramatic Arts are denied the chance to study international music and western plays, due to prohibitions from the military regime. The professors, lecturers and schoolmasters of the university are academics from the elite military society and military servicemen.

According to Christina Fink's book, *Living Silence*, art exhibition organizers are required to submit a detailed written description of each of the art items to the

Information Ministry prior to any art exhibition in Burma. Then, before the exhibition opens, the authorities come to do a final inspection. If any of the art pieces are considered to be "subversive", the art is not only taken down or away, but also stamped "censored" on the art work itself.

Performance art in Burma has also been restricted. The SPDC has promoted dance as part of its campaign to retain "national culture", yet dancers are only given career opportunities in such government sponsored campaigns or events. Comedy also suffers under the military eye, and comedians who make jokes, however innocent, that are considered to be "disruptive" are often threatened, interrogated, or even detained. (See information on two comedians recently released from prison in the section in this chapter on Freedom of Speech).

## Other Acts Infringing on the Freedom of Expression

### SPDC announces harsh punishment for possession of anti-government materials

Since June 1st, announcements have been put up in ward Peace and Development Council [PDC] offices in Rangoon warning that anyone caught with anti-government books and tapes will be arrested. The announcement states that anyone caught with anti-government magazines, books, tapes, CDs, or videos in their possession will be arrested and sentenced to 5 to 10 years imprisonment while anyone caught renting, selling, or reproducing such items will be arrested and sentenced to 10 to 20 years imprisonment. The announcement also stated that anyone caught publishing, producing, selling or renting any pamphlet, magazine, book, tape, CD, or video without the approval of the relevant government ministry or the regional administrative authorities will be regarded as an anti-government individual and will be punished accordingly. (Source: DVB)

### Burma bans stamp of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from Norway

On 14 September 2001 the Norwegian postal authorities, issued eight new stamps with pictures of former Nobel laureates, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the Nobel Peace Prize. The same day the Norway-based radio station, Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) offered to give away stamps of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi free to the first 300 people who wrote to the station. Within weeks, DVB received dozens of letters from inside Burma and hundreds of letters from abroad, requesting the stamps of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

One DVB listener from Burma wrote: "I know that it is very risky to write to your station, but I take a chance because I am so eager to see our beloved leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's stamp."

DVB promptly replied to these requests and sent the listeners the stamp of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. However, after contacting listeners by phone and receiving

letters of complaint, DVB learned that none of the listeners who requested the stamp had received the letters they were sent. It takes approximately one month for a letter from Europe to reach Burma. According to the Universal Postal Union (UPU), "no risk or mail violations were identified in Burma during a Quality of Service test conduced by the UPU in 1996". Ms Juliana Nel, spokeswomen for the UPU states "If it is true (that the Burmese postal service is refusing to deliver the letters), it is a violation of our constitution," she said. "All members of the UPU have an obligation to deliver all private mail without delay. Besides, the postal authorities need to maintain the confidentiality of the mail, except when suspecting dangerous substances in it." (Source: DVB)

**SPDC Prohibits English Signs in Chin Areas**

On 22 September 2001, the directorate office of religious affairs in Kalay township, Chin State released an order requiring that all the English signs, including street signs and signs in front of churches, should be replaced with signs in Burmese. In Chin state and many other Chin inhabited areas in Burma, the street names, signs for Churches and welcome signboards such as " welcome to..." are commonly written in English. The order further suggested that all the citizens of Burma should show their patriotism by using "Burmese names" and not to fall prey to Western pro-colonialists. (Source: CHRO)

**Muslim man arrested in Moulmein for wearing Bin-Ladin T-shirt**

The DVB has reported that since 12 October 2001 SPDC authorities have been arresting some Muslims in Moulmein for wearing Usamah Bin-Ladin T-shirts. Following the US bombing of terrorist camps in Afganistan, Usamah-Bin-laden T-shirts had been widely available and worn by many Muslims and non-Muslims in Thailand and Burma. On the 12th of October Muslim religious leader, Haji Yusuf, age 40 years, from Moulmein was arrested for wearing an Usamah Bin-Ladin T-shirt. DVB sources report that Haji Yusuf was sent home after being interrogated by police intelligence personnel for a week. Since then, no one in Moulmein has dared to wear Usamah Bin-Ladin T-shirts. While the SPDC authorities have not officially prohibited the wearing of Usamah Bin-Ladin T-shirts, the import of Usamah Bin-Ladin T-shirts made in Thailand have been prohibited at the Mae Sot-Myawadi and Ranong-Kawthaung border check points. (Source: DVB)

# 12. The Freedom of Movement

## 12.1 Background

Throughout the year 2001 the SPDC continued to interfere with and monitor the movement of people in Burma. Through its extensive intelligence network and administrative procedures, the SPDC systematically monitors the travel of all citizens, especially the movements of politically active people in the country. All residents in Burma are required to carry national identity cards, showing the citizenship status, normal place of residence, date of birth, name of father, and so on. In 1990 these cards were also required to describe the holders' ethnicity and religion. All residents and citizens of Burma are required to apply for these cards, with the exception of the Muslim Rohingya minority, who are not considered citizens by the government (see chapter on minority rights for further information). As possession of these national identity cards is mandatory in order to buy train or bus tickets, to register with a local council outside one's normal place of residence, to vote in any future election, or to enroll in institutions of higher learning, those without such cards face severe restrictions on their freedom of movement and liberty as human beings.

Citizens with proper identification are able to travel freely within the country except for limitations in areas of ethnic armed activity. However, there is the requirement that any person who spends the night at a place other than his registered domicile must inform the police in advance, and that any household that hosts a person not domiciled there must submit to the police a guest list. The name of the overnight guests must be reported to and registered with the local authorities. SPDC's Order 1/90 on May 22, 1990 said "*action will be taken against all those who fail to report people illegally residing in their home*." (See the chapter on freedom of assembly and association for more on this law) Authorities sometimes enter homes during night hours to check registration documents of occupants as a form of monitoring personal movements. Security forces also commonly search private premises and other property without warrants in other contexts. Curfews have also been enforced in parts of Burma.

Leaving the country (legally) requires the possession of specific government authorization, which it is extremely difficult to obtain. The SPDC carefully scrutinizes prospective travel abroad. This produces rampant corruption as many applicants are forced to pay large bribes to obtain passports to which they are otherwise entitled. The official board that reviews passport applications denies applicants in some cases apparently on political grounds. All college and higher education graduates who obtain passports (except for certain government employees) are required to pay a specific education clearance fee to reimburse the government for the cost of their education.

The authorities on occasion restrict the issuance of passports to young women applicants seeking work abroad, reportedly to prevent young women from being enticed to travel abroad for jobs in the commercial sex industry. Burmese citizens are required to return their passports to the authorities each time they re-enter the country; a passport application must be submitted each time they want to travel outside the country.

Government servants, in general, are required to obtain advance permission before meeting with foreigners. Military intelligence continues frequently to monitor the movements of foreigners and to question citizens about conversations with foreigners. Burmese embassies abroad issue tourist visas, valid for one month, however, select categories of applicants, such as foreign human rights advocates, journalists and political figures, continue to be denied entry visas unless traveling under the agency of a sponsor acceptable to the SPDC, and for purpose approved by the authorities. Although some areas of the country remain closed to foreigners for security reasons, the authorities permit travel to most other destinations. Rangoon-based diplomats generally must apply ten days in advance for travel outside the capital. Throughout 2001 international NGO's were officially required to pay for a government representative to accompany them on all field visits. However, this requirement was not always fully enforced. (Source: US State Department, 2001)

As there is no legal provision to determine the legality of detention, the SPDC continued to arbitrarily arrest and detain Burmese citizens throughout 2001 (see chapter on Arbitrary Detention). The most prominent detainee was Aung San Suu Kyi, who after twice being held incommunicado in September 2000, remained under house arrest without charge throughout 2001. Though she was allowed to meet with visitors while detained, these visits were closely monitored by the SPDC.

Despite the continued detention of Aung San Suu Kyi, restrictions on the NLD in were loosened in 2001. Yet while travel restrictions on all but the most senior NLD members have been relaxed in Rangoon Division, restrictions on the movement of some NLD leaders in other parts of the country remain in place. The degree of control maintained over NLD members appears to vary depending on the local area commander or township authorities. For this reason, many NLD members-elect of parliament who have been released from prison are reluctant to return to their districts fearing that they would not be allowed to return to Rangoon. (Source: US State Department, 2001)

## 12.2 Roadblocks, curfews, and guest lists in SPDC controlled areas

**Roadblocks and Checkpoints in Conflict areas**

Travel within the country, the majority of which is under SPDC control, continues to be monitored and numerous checkpoints exist along all major travel-routes. In areas of conflict, the number of these checkpoints increases dramatically, and there have been incidents where checkpoint officials have forced passengers with torn or tattered ID cards to pay large fines. During military operations or times of military insecurity, more checkpoints are opened and roads are often blocked off.

## 12.3 Restrictions on the movement of villagers in border conflict areas

In areas of ethnic insurgency, there are often severe restrictions placed upon movement. In "brown" or "black" areas, people wishing to leave their village often must obtain a permission slip from local officials before they can go out to tend their farms, or travel. In These permission slips are usually only obtained if a "fee" is paid. In relocation sites, people are often not allowed to return to their land, as they have been warned that anyone moving about in their former fields and towns will be shot on site. In addition, it is common for the army to burn houses and place landmines in the former fields and towns of relocated people to further prevent them from returning.

**Examples of villagers prohibited from leaving their villages in conflict areas**

On 1 January 2001, SPDC IB- 81, column- 2, led by officer Zaw Win and DKBA-999, officer Pah Nu came and burnt down the remaining 6 houses of Kalawlu village. These same troops had burnt down all the other houses in the village during the previous rainy season. Currently the DKBA Pah Pa Na group is conducting activities in the area of Tagreh Ni and Hteeper, Pa-an District, Karen State, and they have ordered the villagers who are now living in the jungle to move back to the Hteeper village. They have warned that after 7 days anyone found in the jungle will be shot. (Source: KORD)

The tactical command (3) under military operation command (9) from Mit-ta village, which has been operating in the eastern part of Tavoy township, Tennasserim Division since the beginning of April 2001, has begun to oppress residents of the villages in Mye-kan-baw village tract including Pyin-tha-taw, Tha-pyu-chaung, Kye-tha-inn, Ka-mit, Nayung-done, Hninn-pa-yoke, Mye-kan-baw, Zee-pyu, etc. One of the ways they oppress the villagers is by refusing to allow them to transport rations from Taung-thone-lone village to the villages of Mye-kan-baw village tract without SPDC permission or without a recommendation letter from the tactical command

(3). They have warned the residents that anyone who is found to be transporting rations without permission will be severely punished. (Source: ABSDF)

During June 2001, following the arrival of LIB 376 in Myitha village, Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division, people in the region were ordered by the military to build a bamboo fence all around the village. LIB 376 only allowed people to enter the village through 2 gates – a river gate in the east of the village and another gate in the west towards Tavoy. Soldiers from LIB 376 stood at a checkpoint at the gates full-time. Whenever people in the region want to go out or come in, they need a traveling recommendation from LIB 376. The authorities from LIB 376 only allow people to travel between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. After 5:00 p.m., those remaining outside the village have been arrested and accused of having connections with the KNU. In addition, LIB 376 authorities warned people that those without traveling recommendations would be arrested and fined 20,000 Kyat. Thus, the villagers in the region were faced with difficulties to go out and work on their plantations, farms and paddy fields. (Source: ABSDF)

On 25 June 2001, SPDC military strategy No. (2) base in Kler Lar village, (Taw Ta Tu) Tantabin township sent for the village head man, teachers, the religion leaders and village elder, a total of 200 people, and forced them to take sign a statement that they would not deploy of land mine, or support the KNU by providing them with rice, medicine, money, information, batteries etc. This troop restricts the car owners in the area from traveling to Kler Lar and Kaw Thay Der. Villagers in the area are only allowed to buy rice according to their family numbers. If any one is found buying more rice than the SPDC has determined is needed for their family they are punished by the troops. (Source KIC)

On 2 July 2001, it was reported that currently in Yepone village, Yepyu Township LIB (408) has ordered the W/V PDC to keep an exact list of the movements of all overnight guests. Thus, the W/V PDC makes an overnight guest check every night, searching each house. Guests in the village must pay 50 Kyats and inform the local authorities days before their arrival. If any unregistered guests are discovered they are fined 500 Kyat and their hosts are fined 800 Kyat. In additon, the Yepone W/V PDC forcibly collects every month 150 Kyat for the village development fund and 100 Kyat for general food expenses from people in the region. (Source: ABSDF)

On 8 July 2001, a column of approximately 100 soldiers led by Lieutenant Khin Maung Htwe from Column 2 of LIB 104 did a house to house investigation in Myekanbaw village, located 40 miles east of Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division in order to obtain information about KNU movements. Those villagers who could not answer their questions were dragged from their houses and beaten. Area residents were also warned that they could not leave the village without LIB 104's permission. They needed permission from the battalion to go out to their

plantation field, to fetch water and even to take a bath in a stream near the village. (Source: ABSDF)

On 18 August 2001, troops from SPDC Division 33 transported military rations from Bi-lin to Mae-waing, Pa-Pun District, Karen State, by boat and set up full security guards along Bi-lin river. The security troops did not allow the villagers to go and work on their fields and hill farms. Due to this, the fields and hill farms were all destroyed by cattle and some of the fields were overgrown with weeds. In addition, the troops demanded that 30 villagers from the nearby villages carry rice bags down from the boats on to the river banks, without any payment and the villagers had to bring their own food. The destroyed fields and hill farms were: (1) 13 hill rice farms of Wah-law-klo village, (2) all hill rice farms of Saw-mee-ta village, (3) 9 hill rice farms of Mae-waing village, Papun District, Karen State and 10 rice fields, which were distant from the village. (Source: KIC)

On 25 August 2001, the SPDC IB (73) base in Klaw Me Der Daw Pa Ko) Than Daung township instructed the villagers to get a pass from them if they wanted to go to their paddy farms or fruit tree gardens. Each family was allowed to get a pass for 7 days a week and had to pay 60 kyats for it. If any one was found without pass he was fined 5 visses of chicken. (Source: KIC)

On 27 August 2001, a person from Tapye-khaung Village, Tavoy Township who arrived at the Thai border reported that in that area the SPDC authorities were checking peoples' I.D. cards, and those who did not bring with them were restricted from traveling further and forced to return home. Therefore, people who want to go to their plantation land which has yet to be seized by the SPDC, have to bring their I.D. card with them.(Source: ABSDF)

On 27 August 2001 it was reported that in Phounn-daw village, as in the other villages under Myay-khan baw village unit of Tavoy Township, the SPDC army troops have imposed restrictions on the residents who wish to obtain food supplies from Tavoy. Phounn-daw villagers who want to buy supplies from Tavoy have to first go to ask for permission at the SPDC army camp, bringing their family registration form and a recommendation from the Village PDC. The SPDC camp commander checks the villager's list of family members and after that the individual is permitted to buy only the food supplies (such as rice and dehydrated food) determined necessary for that many people for one month. After the supplies are brought back from Tavoy, they are held by the Village PDC and issued back to the residents on a daily basis. The LIB 379 army does not allow the residents to keep more than a day's rations in their homes. The army troops have threatened that if anyone is found violating their orders, and keeping more rations,they will be severely punished. The LIB 379 army camp at Phounn-daw village has imposed restriction on the food supplies of the residents to prevent them from being transferred to the guerrillas of Squadron 1, under KNU Battalion 10. They have also

ordered the residents living in the proximity of Phounn-daw village to put up a fence all around the village, leaving only two gates, one for exit and one for entrance. To travel back and forth from their houses in the village and their fields outside, the residents need to have two credentials; one from the Village PDC and one from the SPDC troops. The villagers have to pay 100 Kyats for each document. Even those who have permits to go outside are not allowed to stay overnight and have to return to the village by a fixed time. It is reported that those villagers found without any permit will be arrested and if they try to flee, they will be shot. (Source: ABSDF)

In the first week of September 2001, troops from SPDC IB 34 and IB 232 forced villagers to organise militias of 10 persons each from Anan-gwin, Pah-pya, Pa-ya, Na-Kwee, Myay-ni-gon, and Win-taung villages in Win-yae township, Dooplaya District, Karen State. In addition the troops did not allow villagers to leave the village and go to in their fields and huts or to tend to their cattle and buffaloes outside the village. The SPDC troops threatened that if they are found outside the village they will be shot. This order was issued on August 6,2001 and at the time of this report villagers under duress because of these restrictions. (Source: KIC)

In September 2001, combined troops from SPDC and DKBA Moe Jo came to Ta-u-kee, Ta-u-nee, Nya-po-kee-Pauk-kee and Ler-ka-der, Thaton District, Karen State and banned the traveling of villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 8 September 2001, troops from column 1 of SPDC LIB 303 and 10 DKBA soldiers came to monastery of Kweeh-lay village, Pa-an District, Karen State and summoned the village heads for a meeting. The troops informed the village heads of the order banning Klaw-ta, Kweeh-lay, Ka-wan-ta, Wah-ker-ta, Noh-ber-baw, Lar-kyo-kaw-tee, Mae-taw-kee and Taw-klaw-kee from going outside of the villages and sleeping in field huts at nights. If the villagers had to go to their farms they were to do so, with a pass, during the time from 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM. The villagers had to pay a chicken for a pass. The troops threatened to execute villagers found without a pass outside of the village. As a result, the villagers had to keep their cattle near the village for grazing. The troops forced 2 villagers from Klaw-ta, 4 villagers from Kweeh-lay and 3 villagers from Wah-ker-ta to serve as porters. (Source: KIC)

On September 26, 2001, sergeant major, Kyaw Win from company 3 of SPDC IB 26 came to Baw-plaw-ta of Be-lin Township, Thaton District, Karen State and demanded 2 Viss of chickens and refused to allow the villagers to go outside the villages. Troops from SPDC LIB 106 led by Sein Htun based in Kweeh-lay-tha-waw-pya village captured some women and tortured them by putting plastic around their heads. The troops cut off the travelling and transporting routes of villagers in the area of Toe-the-kee, Taw-klaw-ta and Htee-pah-doh-ta villages. (Source: KIC)

As of 5 October 2001 it was reported that many young people from villages such as Toe-teh-khee, Klaw-hta, Kwee-lay, Kawa- hta, Wah-keh-hta, Noh-ber-baw, Htaw-klaw-khee, Htaw-klaw-hta, Lay-kaw-hti, Nya-po-khee and Ta-eu-khee villages could no longer tolerate the oppression and torture from SPDC and DKBA troops, and had fled from the area. Troops from SPDC and DKBA were not allowing villagers from Toh-teh-khee, Klaw-hta, Kwee-lay, Kawa-hta, Noh-ber-baw, Htaw-klaw-khee, Htaw-klaw-hta, Lay-kaw-hti, Nya-po-khee and Ta-eu-khee to go to their upland paddy fields in Thaton District. As a result, buffaloes, cattle, wild pigs and monkeys ate and destroyed the paddy fields. This occurred during the time that the ILO team came to Burma to investigate human rights abuses, and as a result the SPDC troops claimed that all abuses were carried out by the DKBA. During this time, SPDC troops launched a block and cut-off operation, with troops under SPDC LIB 77 patrolling many parts of the jungle in Tha-ton District and also deploying a large number of guards both inside and outside of the villages. (Source: KIC)

On 10 October 2001, company commander Aung Naing Moe from SPDC LIB 106, with some DKBA troops, demanded rice from villagers of Kwee-lay-law-hta, Thaton District, Karen State. The villagers replied that they had no rice to give, after which the troops went to search the paddy barns and pounded the paddy that they found to get rice. They then banned the villagers from leaving the village to buy rice and also demanded paddy from the villagers. As a result, the villagers were facing great difficulty. (Source: KIC)

**Forced registration, military conscription and restriction of movement**

On 15 October 2001, SPDC military authorities in Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township, Shan State, issued an order requiring people in the area to serve in the people's militia and put more restrictions on their movement by registering family members and issuing registration cards to everyone 8-years-old and older. The SPDC stated that at least 200 men, aged between 25 and 50, would be conscripted from the 4 village tracts in the area and the conscription was to be completed in December 2001. Anyone who refused to be conscripted or complained about the conscription would be severely punished, according to the order.

A similar conscription order was issued previously sometime in July 2001, but many people had run away to other places, including Thailand, in fear of being forcibly conscripted, temporarily thwarting the plan. In an attempt to stop people from fleeing and prevent strangers from staying in the area, SPDC military authorities have since then made registration of all the household families and their members mandatory in the Kaeng Tawng area, and issued registration cards to everyone.

When houses were checked by the authorities, every registered family member had to be accounted for and every member had to be able to present their registration cards. Missing family members and strangers would be punished. (Source: SHRF)

**Robbery and rape of travelers by the SPDC**

On 20 March 2001 at about 8:00 am, approximately 20 ethnic Burmese travelers coming from Pin-si village, Taung-pa-pu township, Kanchanaburi district in Thailand, arrived at Thu-kha border camp. The travelers were originally from Aok-tu village, Ka-sit village, and Chaung-wa-pyi village, Tha-yet-chaung township in Tavoy district. IB 104 column (2) commander Khin Maung Htway from Thu-kha border camp collected 200 baht of Thai currency from each of these travelers for crossing the border and sent seven soldiers from their group to accompany the travelers, stating that this was necessary for security reasons. These seven soldiers from IB 104, left Thu-kha border camp with the 20 travelers and when they had traveled 3 miles to the base of Thu-kha mountain, they lied to the travelers saying it was not safe to travel further because the security situation was bad, and then made them stop. Then the soldiers started searching the bodies of the travelers and taking all of their valuables including gold jewelry, money, radios, cassettes, clothes and Thai and Burmese currency. In a few short hours the travelers had lost all the money and household goods that they had earned during the two years they worked in Thailand. The soldiers then took one of the travelers, an 18 year old woman from Aok-tu village, to the forest for about 30 minutes where she was raped by the 7 security force members, one by one, and then released. After this they were allowed to continue on their way. (Source: ABSDF)

## 12.4 Restriction on the movements of religious minorities

It is still virtually impossible for Muslim Rohingya people to move within Arakan State or to other parts of Burma from Arakan State. Only citizens carrying identity cards are free to travel within the country, which precludes movement by those unable to meet the restrictive provisions of the “citizen law”. Formerly, Rohingya (Bengali-speaking Muslims) who wanted to travel outside their village could apply to the local SPDC authorities for permission, however this changed in June 2000.

On June 7 2000, a meeting was held by Maj. Gen. Aung Htwe, the commander of the Western Command in Arakan state capital Akyab (Sittwe), and was attended by members of the all Township PDC, Districts PDCs, the Director of Immigration, the Head of the MI and Director of the NaSaKa (Western Area Command) Headquarters. Following this meeting Rohingyas were no longer allowed to travel within their own localities unless they carried with them recommendations or exit passes from the Town-ship PDC, District PDC, Military Intelligence, or Area Commander of NaSaKa. In addition, they had to fill out “Form-4” issued by the Department of Immigration. To obtain these documents, the Rohingya traveler has to pay a sum of kyats 2,800 to the authorities to process Exit Passes that are usually valid only for 24 hours. Any Rohingya who is found to be traveling with improper

documentation, is accused of illegally trying to immigrate and is jailed for 3 years. (Source: ARNO)

In most cases, passes are only granted for a twelve-hour period; only on rare occasion are Muslims permitted to stay outside their village overnight. To travel further, for instance, to the Township capitals at Maungdaw or Buthidaung or the state capital at Sittwe is virtually impossible. The only Muslims able to travel to Sittwe, or further to Rangoon, are those who can afford to bribe SPDC officials. Reportedly, Muslim traders have paid bribes of 500,000 kyat to be able to travel to Rangoon. (Source: Narinjara News)

In 2001 there continued to be reports of SPDC authorities systematically oppressing Muslims in certain areas and forcibly relocating them. Currently there are townships in Arakan State, including, Thandwe, Gwa, and Taung-gut, where Muslims are no longer permitted to live. In these areas, which have been declared 'Muslim-free Zones,' mosques have been destroyed, and lands confiscated. To ensure that the mosques are not rebuilt, they have been replaced with government-owned buildings, monasteries, and Buddhist temples (for more information on oppression of Muslims see chapter on freedom of Religion).

Following periodic outbreaks of anti-Muslim violence in 2001 restrictions on the movement of Muslims were increased. In February riots between Buddhists and Muslims broke out in the town of Sittwe, the capital of Arakan State, which some reports indicate may have been instigated by the government. Following the 4-days of rioting, the SPDC tightened the already strict travel restrictions for Muslims in the area, preventing Muslims from traveling between Sittwe and other towns in the region.(Source: US State Department, 2001)

## 12.5 Restriction on the movements of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD

The military authorities have maintained strict controls on Aung San Suu Kyi's travel outside the capital since freeing her from six years of house arrest in 1995. Since then she has been permitted to travel outside Rangoon only once to visit to a monastery. On August 24, 2000, Aung San Suu Kyi and her companions were prevented from traveling to an NLD party meeting in Kungyangon, near Rangoon, which led to a 9-day roadside standoff, during which she was denied access to other NLD member. On September 2, 2000, the standoff ended when police took Aung San Suu Kyi and those with her into custody and held them incommunicado at Aung San Suu Kyi's Rangoon residence, finally releasing them on September 14, 2000. On September 21, 2000, the SPDC again put her under house arrest, following her attempt to travel by train to Mandalay, and she remained in detention throughout

2001. On both occasions other leaders of the NLD, including the vice chairman of the NLD, U Tin Oo were detained along with Aung San Suu Kyi. During the year she was thus prevented from attending a ceremony in her honor held in Oslo, to mark the 10th anniversary of her receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991. Since 1996 security forces have also restricted public movement along the street in front of Aung San Suu Kyi's residence. (Source: US State Department)

## 12.6 Restriction on movement of migrant workers to Thailand

**New law prohibits illegal migration to Thailand**

On 5 October 2001, it was reported in Kawthaung, a Burmese border-town opposite Ranong in southern Thailand, that the Burmese government had enacted a new law which punished anyone caught illegally crossing into Thailand with a fine or a mandatory prison sentence. The Tenasserim Division's General Administration Department has notified all police stations, immigration departments, and township-level authorities of the new law. This new law has been put in place at the same time that immigration to Thailand is increasing as Burmese workers seek to cross the border in order to apply for a work permit before the October 13th deadline. This law has been interpreted as Burma's attempt to placate Thai authorities who for years have been trying to reduce the number of illegal migrants arriving in Thailand.

Sentencing under the new law is divided into three sections based on age and place of residence. Offenders under thirty-five years of age who are living in Kawthaung face one-and-a-half years in prison or must pay a 15,000-kyat fine; anyone over thirty-five years of age faces two-years in prison or a 20,000-kyat fine; and finally, Burmese nationals living outside of Kawthaung, if apprehended face a three-year prison sentence or a 30,000-kyat fine. In addition, any resident of Kawthaung who is caught housing individuals who are trying to illegally enter Thailand will be subjected to the same penalties. According to the new law, Township-level courts must hand down their judgements within twenty-four hours of the individual's arrest. If the person convicted can pay the fine, they will reportedly be allowed to return to their home, however their movements will be restricted. (Source: Irrawaddy)

**Migrant workers forced to pay bribes to leave Burma**

Since late November 2001, SPDC authorities in Mon State have been extorting money from migrant workers when they enter and leave the country, according to two migrant workers who recently arrived in Mae Sot, Thailand. These workers reported that the SPDC's administrative village officers and police officers in that area, have issued order No.13/1, which prevents local people from going to foreign countries, such as Thailand and Malaysia, for work. The order states that those who

try to do so will be sentenced to 5 years imprisonment. However, it has been reported that Pa Lae village (SPDC) Chairman, U Khin Hlaing allows villagers to leave the village to travel abroad, who give him 1,500 kyat, and accepts those migrant workers back who can pay him the same amount. Pa Lae village is in Bee Lin township of Mon State. (Source: MICB)

## 12. 7 Restrictions on the movement of women

In an effort to stop the trafficking of women, the SPDC has enacted regulations forbidding girls under age 25 from crossing the border unless accompanied by a guardian. For the same reasons, the government has made it difficult for women to obtain passports or marry foreigners. In fact these restrictions have little effect in preventing women from being trafficked, as most citizens who are forced or lured into prostitution cross into Thailand without passports. Instead in many cases the restrictions serve to make women more vulnerable to traffickers, corrupt police officials and employers (for more information see Chapters on Situation of Migrant Workers and Rights of Women). (Source: US State Department)

# 13. Internally Displaced People and Forced Relocation

## 13.1 Background

The situation of Internally Displaced People (IDP's), in Burma remained critical throughout 2001. The US State Department estimates that there could be up to1 million members of ethnic minority groups who the SPDC has forcibly relocated from their villages and districts, and who are currently living along the Thai border. Reports from NGOs also estimate that an additional 1 million IDP's are living a precarious existance in other locations throughout the country. (U.S. State Dept, 2001)

In 2001, Human Rights Watch reported that tens of thousands of villagers in the ethnic insurgent areas remained in forced relocation sites or were internally displaced. Total estimates of the number of IDPs throughout all of Burma range between one and two million, with around 300,000 in north-eastern Shan State, 100,000-200,000 in Karen State, 70,000-80,000 in Karenni State, 60-70,000 in Mon State and about 100,000 in Arakan State. (UN 22 August 2000 para.52; USCR annual reports; U.S DOS February 2001, section 2.d). As is apparent from these figures, the most significant displacement has occurred in the border ethnic areas where the military regime has been at war with ethnic armed opposition groups for over 50 years. Ethnic minorities such as the Muslim Rohingyas of Arakan State, the Shan, Karen, Kachin and the Karenni, as well other smaller ethnic groups that live in the same areas have suffered disproportionately. Whatever their background, internally displaced persons in Burma live under conditions of severe deprivation and hardship. Almost all are without adequate access to food or basic health and education services. A large number of IDPs are women and children. In January 2001 BBC released a report stating: "Currently, little can be done to resolve the IDP problem. The SPDC denies that it exists and there is virtually no access to the affected areas from inside the country. The only assistance that can be provided is whatever the ethnic groups themselves are able to deliver. This amounts to very little compared with overall needs."

Compilation of figures on internal displacement by the Burma Ethnic Research Group (BERG) – (2000)

| State and Divisions | No. of people Affected | Date of Data and Number of Sources | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Karen State | 108,280 | (Dec 1997) | ( 1 ) |
| Shan State | >300,000 | (April 1998) | ( 3 ) |
| Mon State | >20,000 | (Sept 1998) | ( 4 ) |
| Karenni State | 31,620 | (Dec 1998) | ( 5 ) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chin State | 40-50,000 | ( -) | ( 6 ) |
| Kachin State | 67,000 | (Jan 1994) | ( 7 ) |
| Arakan State | >250,000 | (Aug 1997) | ( 12 ) |
| Yangon | 504,000 | (Oct 1994) | ( 20 ) |
| Mandalay | 150,000 | (May 1990) | ( 21 ) |
| Bago | 36,000 | (May 1990) | ( 21 ) |
| Sagaing | 1,260 | (Dec 1999) | ( 24 ) |
| Ayeyarwaddy | 18,000 | (May 1990) | ( 21 ) |
| Tanintharyi | 37,000 | (May 1990) | ( 21 ) |

Source: BERG September 2000

People in Burma become displaced as a result of SPDC policies that either directly or indirectly compel them to leave their homes. Villagers are subject to forced relocation by the SPDC as part of the military's *four-cuts* program; for urban resettlement or "beautification" projects, which are often linked to the SPDC's campaigns to promote tourism; and for rural resettlement programs. People are also frequently left with no choice but to flee their home villages when faced with resource scarcity, and the loss of their security and livelihoods that result from oppressive SPDC policies. Economic reasons for fleeing include: numerous demands for forced labor and portering; government crop quotas; ceaseless taxes and fees to support the army; army looting or destruction of property; and uncompensated loss of land or property due to SPDC development projects. Even more pressing are people's fears of the torture, rape, arbitrary arrest and arbitrary killings perpetuated in border areas by the military. Finally, villagers also often flee in anticipation of forced relocation.

The majority of crossborder refugees report that before arriving in refugee camps they had spent some time living as IDPs. Currently however, those IDPs that would seek asylum in neughboring countries are finding it much more difficult to flee Burma, due to increasing SPDC control of the border, increased use of landmines in border areas, and the increasingly restrictive policies on refugees adopted by neighboring governments.

As mentioned above, the military regime has subjected people to displacement for both economic and security reasons. Government displacement programs have been in place since the late 1960s, and possibly before. Since that time, under the guise of regional or area development, private land and plantations from civilians have been confiscated by the military - without any compensation - for military plantations, farms or animal breeding ranches, or for the construction of roads, railways, hydroelectric power plants, large dams and small scale infrastructure projects. In addition, the regime has forced numerous urban populations to move into areas away from city centres. In the 1990s the trend has been for the military to displace civilians from cultivable land which is then used for the construction of military

bases or for income-generating projects.

In the volatile border regions, displacement campaigns have been aimed at securing combat zones, cutting off civilians support for insurgents, and curtailing the activities of ethnic armed groups. These activities fall under what the SPDC refers to as the '*four-cuts'* policy. This program was introduced in 1974 with the aim of cutting the supplies of 1), food, 2) funds, 3) recruits, and 4) information to the resistance groups. In some border areas which the regime had labeled *brown areas,* forced relocation programs were carried out systematically. In other areas, which were classified as *black areas,* all villages were destroyed, fields and paddy barns were burnt, and anyone found in the area was shot. These campaigns against civilians were intensified after the 1988 pro-democracy uprising. Currently under the four-cuts campaign, villagers and village elders suspected of having contact with the resistance are detained, tortured, and executed; regime troops systematically extort and pillage villagers' crops, food supplies, livestock, cash and valuables; and villagers are forced to labor for army projects. Any village that is suspected to be supporting the opposition is forced to relocate. In 1996-1997, the military regime launched programs to forcibly move or wipe out all rural villages in areas not directly under the their control. As a result of these intensified programs to destroy the populations in the ethnic areas, the number of people displaced has continued to increase dramatically.

When a village is forced to relocate, the villagers are usually told that they will not be permitted to go home until the opposition groups have capitulated. The SPDC issues written orders addressed to village headmen, which specifies the date by which the entire village must be relocated to a designated site. Relocated persons are not compensated for their homes nor are they given enough time to collect all of their belonging. Villagers must leave behind the majority of their belongings, including their livestock. Often people must also leave behind elderly and sick relatives. The areas cleared of villagers are then designated as "*free-fire" or black areas*. Houses, villages, and crops left behind are often pillaged and then dismantled and/or scorched to prevent the return of villages. Villagers seen in the areas of their former homes are considered to be rebel soldiers and shot on site. In some cases landmines are laid on the roads leading into villages, or in abandoned fields and homes.

# 13.2 IDPs in Burma

### *There are four types of displacement in Burma:*

**1) Displacement into state-controlled relocation sites and satellite towns**

Villagers forcibly relocated generally are required to move to one of the areas designated as "relocation sites" by the SPDC. These sites are most often located in other villages or towns near army bases, car-road sites where there are no villages,

and barren areas where there are no resources or transportation. In the cases of urban resettlement or "beautification" projects, the townspeople are moved to outlying areas of the city called "satellite towns."

**Satellite Towns**

These new towns are made of populations forced to relocate by the military government, and are located in the outskirts of cities, usually a few miles out where there are very few facilities. In the last five years, the junta has forcibly resettled tens of thousands of potentially restive poor people from city centers into these distant slums. Clean water is scarce and sanitation is poor in these slum areas. In addition, the people who are relocated face great difficulty as public transportation into the cities is either nonexistant, or else extremely poor and unreliable. Employment in the new satellite towns is scarce. There are inadequately equipped schools in these towns, but health care is a problem as the few clinics that exist are understaffed and under supplied and the city hospitals (also understaffed and under supplied) are difficult to get to.

**The Relocation Sites**

In most of the places that have been chosen as "relocation sites" by the SPDC, little preparation or organization is done in order to receive the displaced people. The SPDC is unconcerned whether or not water, food, cultivatable land, employment and services are available in the new areas. The burden for sheltering and caring for the displaced at relocation sites generally falls on the local community. If the relocation site is part of, or near another village or town, this extra burden results in increased depletion of the resources of the original population. No humanitarian assistance comes from the government, although at some sites there is very limited assistance from church organizations. In some cases, rice has been distributed to the IDPs during the initial relocation period, yet these rations are insufficient and the distribution period is short. One refugee who came from the relocation site at Mawchi in Karenni State stated that rice intended for the relocated people was diverted and sold by local township authorities.

The SPDC troops force the villagers in the relocation sites to work on a daily or weekly basis; generally one person from each family must go. This forced labor includes clearing bushes and trees from the roadsides both inside and outside the relocation sites, cleaning military buildings, cultivating land for the military bases, hauling water for the troops, building fences around the military camps, digging bunkers, road construction, portering for the military and other general servant work. The villagers are also forced to work in the infrastructure projects in the area. Moreover, they are made to pay various fees for development projects, military funds, food for visiting troops, and so on.

Services at the relocation villages vary from site to site, as each site is under the responsibility of relevant state or township committees. However, in general there

are no arrangements made to provide services for the relocated people.

**Access to water** varies – in some sites wells have been dug in addition to streams and lakes. Yet in some sites, such as the Shadaw relocation site in Karenni State, the lack of drinkable water has resulted in several problems, including sickness and deaths caused by chemicals that were added to the water in an attempt to clean it.

**Sanitary facilities** are usually nonexistent for the IDPs and they either are required to build their own, or use outer areas of the sites for latrine purposes.

The poor water and sanitation at the sites, among other things, has resulted in higher levels of sickness and mortality, yet **health care facilities** are either missing altogether, or else seriously under-equipped and under-supplied.

There is no **access to electricity** in most sites, and in some sites, such as Shadaw relocation site in Karenni State, torches (flashlights) are banned and dry cell batteries are not permitted to be sold in the site. This lack of provisions for night lighting increases the vulnerability of women, among other things.

**Education facilities** are also insufficient or nonexistent. In most cases, the relocated people establish makeshift schools themselves. If there are pre-existing schools, school buildings, teaching materials and teachers are never sufficient, and families often do not send their children to school as they cannot afford the school costs, or they require their children to help in the family's attempts for survival. (See chapter on health and education for more information)

At all relocation sites in Burma, access to farmland and employment is a serious problem for the relocated villagers. In some sites, IDPs are able to access farmland around the relocation site, yet this allocated land is usually insufficient for basic survival or unsuitable for farming. In other sites, access to surrounding land is denied, especially when villagers are relocated to sites where local residents are already farming the land, either for themselves or for the military. New refugee arrivals at the Thai border in 1999 reported that they had been able to find daily labor at local farms near the relocation sites, earning between 40 and 120 kyats per day. In some cases, villagers are permitted to return to their former farms and plantations, yet due to the restrictions imposed on their trips out of the sites and the dangers these villagers face outside of the sites, most are unable to make a living in this way.

Villagers in relocation sites live in constant fear of the violence and demands of the state forces, both inside and outside the relocation sites. Villagers are not permitted to leave the sites without passes, which they must purchase from either SPDC soldiers or local authorities. The passes are usually only valid for 1 day, from dawn to dusk, although in rare cases week passes have been granted. (see chapter on the freedom of movement) This leaves the villagers little time to travel to their places

of work, complete their work, and then return. In addition, security for the villagers outside of the relocation sites is notoriously bad. Villagers seen outside the camps are vulnerable to capture, arrest, torture, and killing, even if they hold valid passes, as they are accused by SPDC troops of leaving the camps to support rebel forces. Women are especially vulnerable, and many cases of rape have been reported by women who have gone outside the camp to forage for vegetables or get water. (see chapter on women) The local authorities do nothing when cases of abuse are reported to them by the villagers.

**2) Displacement into areas under full SPDC control;**

Many villagers suffering from abuse under the SPDC *four-cuts* program, or who have been told to relocate without a specified site have chosen to resettle in areas under full SPDC control, which they feel are safer and more stable than the conflcit areas, or where they have friends or relatives. Yet as most of the displaced villagers are farmers, they face many difficulties when they are forced to move into new villages or towns. Available land in these areas is often scarce and the search for other employment in new areas is difficult. In larger towns or cities farmers are often forced to seek work as day laborers in low paying jobs. The families who have been forcibly relocated also usually move without being able to bring all their belongings, adding to their problems of resettlement. Villagers sometimes move to villages and towns where they have relatives, but their relatives are often not able to provide the extra support needed, as they themselves are suffering. In addition, these IDPs living in areas under SPDC control are subject to the same abuses as the other villagers around them. These include the demands for forced labor, fees, and restrictions that are commonplace across Burma. Yet because the abuses committed are sometimes less then in areas under the *four-cuts* program, many villagers choose to face the risk of moving to areas under full SPDC control.

**3) Displacement into areas and camps controlled by armed opposition groups**

Villagers who have been forced to flee their homes and villages for any of the above mentioned reasons, are sometimes able to seek shelter in areas controlled by armed opposition groups, where they feel they have some protection from SPDC abuses. Several of the armed opposition groups operate camps and resettlement sites in their areas of activity. However, in these camps and sites, supplies and services are very limited, and often the shelter and supplies offered are only temporary. Access to food, education and health varies from site to site, as does the level of security. In some camps and sites schools, health care and other services are provided for a limited number of IDPs, and the area is safe from SPDC attack, yet in almost all such places, there are no employment opportunities. Therefore, the IDPs have to live off of whatever the opposition groups can provide for them.

**4) Displacement into jungles, fields, and other remote, usually "*free fire*" or *black* areas of Burma**

There are nearly 1 million people estimated to be hiding in the border conflict areas of Burma, and this is the IDP group with the least access to basic survival needs. These villagers have fled into hiding, despite the risks, because of various factors. These IDPs include:

- Those who flee SPDC troops in advance of their arrival;

- Those who can no longer stand the abuses they suffer in their villages;

- Those who were ordered to move from their village to a relocation site or other place, and who chose not to do so; and

- Those who have fled from relocation sites due to unlivable conditions.

These IDPs are regarded as enemies by the SPDC troops, as the areas where most villagers hide are located in *black* or "*free-fire*" zones. They are shot on sight, or else captured, tortured and then sometimes killed whenever they are found. Their shelters, rice plantations and belongings are looted or destroyed when discovered. Under the guise of ridding areas of opposition forces, the SPDC has launched several "search and destroy" operations, in which soldiers root out and destroy everything they see in the area including people. The troops often plant landmines on paths that they suspect the IDP villagers use, and they practice a "scorched earth" policy of looting, destroying and burning any signs of habitation or food supply. Troops have even been known to cut down fruit trees growing naturally in the forest in these operations in an attempt to make it impossible for anyone to survive in the forests or jungles.

Villagers often hide in areas near their old villages and risk attempting to work and harvest their crops in secret. This work is extremely dangerous, and if crops are discovered by soldiers, they are burned or destroyed. If the villagers are unsuccessful in harvesting rice, they forage for other sources of food in the forests. Villagers in hiding, for the most part, are unable to travel outside of their area of hiding to purchase other necessities, and must make do with what they can find around them.

Health is a major concern for people in hiding. Life in the tropics without shelter or adequate food leads to high sickness and mortality rates from malnutrition, diarrhea, malaria, minor injuries and other easily preventable illnesses. With a complete absence of health care facilities, people mainly rely on herbs and traditional medicine. Although there are some healthcare teams which seek to reach IDPs, the medicine and care they are able to provide is insufficient for the numbers of IDPs in hiding across many border areas.

IDPs hiding in the jungle are sometimes able to operate temporary makeshift

schools with volunteer teachers. These schools lack any supplies, and are forced to shift from place to place depending on SPDC activity. With the increase in SPDC activity, in recent years, and the common occurrence of "search and destroy" operations, the number of these schools has been greatly reduced.

## 13.3 Situation in Arakan State

There has been a considerable amount of internal displacement within Arakan State over the last decade. Forced relocation has not been uncommon. Most relocation is connected to military efforts to install military camps, to build administrative or religious infrastructure, to move the Muslim Rohingya population to the north of the state and to settle Buddhist people throughout the state in "model villages." Small minorities of Arakan (notably the Mro) have also been relocated from their mountainous and remote homelands to the plains. The recent development of tourism in Arakan State has also caused the displacement of people living close to historical sites that the government wishes to promote.

Within Arakan State there is significant displacement due to the government's continuing discrimination and repression of the Rohingya Muslim minority. The SPDC's abuses against Rohingya Muslims, including denial of citizenship, forced labor, and arbitrary confiscation of property continue to prompt new refugee flows and limit the reintegration of those who have returned from refugee camps in Bangladesh.

Muslim villages outside the far north are becoming rare. Most of the Rohingyas who lived in the Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U or Minbya districts have been forcibly displaced to the north over the past few years. These forced relocations, which go hand in hand with serious human rights violations, have been denounced by the UN Special Rapporteur on Burma, notably in February 1993 and January 1995. According to villagers still living in Rathidaung, out of the 53 Muslim villages existing in the district before 1995, only two remained in 1999. The construction of model villages for Buddhist settlers in the north of the state also entails the forced relocations of Muslims who are moved to less fertile lands, usually without adequate time to prepare or any compensation.

**SPDC plans to establish more Settlers' Villages in North Arakan**

On 16 November 2001 it was reported that the SPDC is preparing to establish more settlers' villages in the Muslim majority border areas of north Arakan during the 2001 dry season. Instructions have already been sent to local authorities to make the necessary arrangements for this. So far, 33 settlers' colonies, dubbed 'model villages,' have been established in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships on lands confiscated from Muslims. The new settlers are ethnic Burmans, Rakhines and some members of hill tribes from Arakan Hill Tracts in eastern Burma. They have all been provided with readymade houses, farmlands, bullocks and carts, free rations for

more than one year and free labour from Muslim forced labourers.

Although the above settlements are established in the border areas they are not under the control of the Na Sa Ka (border security force) like Muslim villages. Instead they are controlled by the Headquarters of Military Intelligence under the Western military command and Township Peace and Development Council in Buthidaung. These new settlers have been responsible for various crimes against Muslim villagers including picking fights and stealing livestock. (Source: Arakan News Agency)

## 13.4 Situation in Karen State

"In early 1997 the SPDC began a campaign to wipe out all Karen civilian villages in the hills. Where villagers could be found they were ordered to relocate westward into the plains; where they could not be caught, their villages were shelled without warning, looted and then burned to the ground, while villagers found afterwards were shot on sight. Most villagers fled into the hills to live in hiding in small groups of families while trying to grow small patches of rice, and many others moved westward as ordered into the plains, either to stay with relatives or to garrison villages along the main roads as the SPDC troops had demanded. Many of the people who moved into the plains have now fled back into the hills, They say that they returned to the hills because they could not survive in the plains; they had no land to plant, there was no paid labor to survive on, and they could not face all the demands for forced labor and money from the SPDC troops. Some had died because they were not used to the water and the illnesses in the plains. In the end they fled back into the hills. Now they join the thousands of Karen villagers who have lived as internally displaced in these hills since 1997.

In the hills, the villagers are hiding in small groups of a few families in high valleys and other remote places. They try to grow small patches of rice but have little or nothing to eat....SPDC patrols come through the hills as often as two or three times per month, burn any rice storage barns they find, shoot at villagers they see in the fields or the forests, and burn any shelters they find. The displaced villagers are always fleeing from one place to another to avoid the patrols. They have no change of clothing and few or no blankets, and have to sleep around fires in temperatures which can drop to 10 degrees Celsius or lower.... They have no medicines and speak of treating gunshot wounds by applying sesame oil after saying incantations. These villagers don't dare go down to the plains for fear of arrest as 'insurgents', and it is difficult or impossible for most of them to get to Thailand because they would have to pass through all of northern Papun district, where SPDC troops have destroyed even more villages and are patrolling to shoot villagers on sight. (NCGUB 2000, pp. 136-137)

**Situation in Pa-an District**

"Escalating abuses by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in northeastern Pa'an district, Karen State have forced a stream of families over the border into Thailand. In mid-January of this year, at least 13 families from Hlaing Bwe township fled their village and walked a day and a half across the mountains to cross into Thailand. Currently over 70 Karen villagers are gathered near a Thai Karen village and they have told KHRG that many more may soon arrive.

The new refugees come from the village of Meh Kreh located among the Dawna Mountains in eastern Hlaing Bwe township of central Karen State, about 120 kilometers (75 miles) north of the town of Myawaddy and the Thai town of Mae Sot. Those interviewed by KHRG say they fled their village on January 15th and arrived in Thailand on the 16th. The villagers cited many motives for fleeing villages in the area, the most salient being the increasing use of forced labour by the SPDC. All villages in the area are compelled to send people for forced labour, the only variation being the degrees of severity and frequency... Many villages also face forced recruitment of porters by the SPDC-allied DKBA (Democratic Karen Buddhist Army) operating in their region. DKBA brigades #555 and 999 recently demanded 70 porters from villages in the Kwih Law Ploh area.

The painful burden of carrying immense loads is exacerbated by the villagers' fears of landmines. Some porters are forced to walk in front of the military columns in order to clear mines, which are laid heavily in the area by all sides in the conflict: the SPDC, DKBA, and KNLA (Karen National Liberation Army)... Consequently, at the beginning of January 2001, Major Win Naing, Column 2 commander of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion 201, summoned the village heads from Kwih Law Ploh, Dta Kreh Kee, Deik Kya, Meh Tha Po Kee, Kha Leh Dee, Day Law Ploh, Tha Wih Hta, Kleh Ka, Haw Tee Po, Tee Ler Doh, Meh Pu Hta, and Meh Kreh villages and ordered them to clear parts of the mountain of landmines. The village heads were threatened with forced relocation to Ywa Po Hta, about 30 kilometers (20 miles) to their southwest, if they failed to carry out these orders. Villagers were understandably distressed over the ultimatum and many decided to flee to Thailand. Back in Hlaing Bwe township, the village heads have been attempting to exempt their villages from the order by offering large sums of money to LIB 201.

Unable to bear the danger and hardship of working as porters, some villagers have fled into the jungle. If caught, the porter can face harsh punishment or even death. A villager from the neighbouring township of T'Nay Hsah told KHRG that an older porter who tried to flee from the SPDC was recaptured and tortured. SPDC soldiers bound his hands behind his back, force-fed him massive amounts of salt and rice and forced water down his throat. Then they beat him with a gun, released him and fined him chicken and rice. The fact that people risk recapture, retribution and a flight through a jungle rife with land mines attests to the desperation of the situation for porters.

In addition to their conscription as porters, villagers in Hlaing Bwe township are enduring an increasing burden of additional forced labour duties including constructing army camps, building and maintaining roads, cutting and transporting wood and bamboo, farming for the Army, making and delivering thatch roofing shingles, and acting as unarmed sentries along the roads.

Since December 2000, LIB 201 has forced villagers to work around their army camp at Kha Leh Dee. Another notable forced labour project in the township is bridge construction at Meh Kheh Kloh and Tee Hsaw Meh. For the villagers, forced labour bears the risks of being beaten or killed by soldiers as well as enduring severe health problems from overexertion and exposure to disease. But on an even greater scale, it takes them away from their farm work. Overtaxed villagers face severe difficulties feeding themselves due the increasing demands placed on them by the military. This problem is compounded by the actions of SPDC and DKBA troops when they arrive in villages. Soldiers relentlessly loot food and belongings from villagers who can no longer afford to resupply themselves. They have taxed, fined and robbed the villagers into severe poverty. Making things worse, the villagers from Meh Kreh say they had heard that a well-known DKBA commander named Moe Kyo (meaning 'Lightning' in Burmese) is to come to their area. Moe Kyo is infamous for ordering the burning of houses and the execution of villagers in other areas on the slightest suspicion of any contact between any village and the KNLA.

The SPDC have made it very clear that they will stop at nothing short of complete control of the villages. Their continued attempts to strengthen their hold on the area means an increase in the use of forced labour, looting, extortion, landmines and brutality. As the situation in the Dawna mountains of eastern Hlaing Bwe township stands, villagers face a choice between starvation, violence and utter desperation or an unpredictable and dangerous flight to the Thai border. And at present, it still remains unclear whether Thai authorities will grant asylum to these refugees or not." (Source: KHRG, "Northeastern Pa'an District: Villagers Fleeing Forced Labour Establishing SPDC Army Camps, Building Access Roads and Clearing Landmines" February 20, 2001)

**Villagers Forced to Relocate or Flee**

On 16 May 2001, the combined troop of SPDC and DKBA, LIB-341 led bed officer Myint Tin and DKBA, officer Chit Maung entered the villages of Doo K'meh Khee, Pway Lu and Kyaw Nyo Hta, May Tay Hta, Kay Hta and Kler Lu. They stayed 3 days in the villages and conducted activities around the area during planting time. When the troop entered, the villagers had to flee, leaving their belongings, while the troops took what they wanted and could carry. The troops ate up rice and other food that they found in the farm huts and destroyed all the rest that they could not carry. People in these villages now have to stay temporarily in the jungle, some in the farm huts and some by the streams as the above mentioned

troops of SPDC and DKBA continue their activities in the area. As a result, now the villagers are facing several shortages of food, medicine, clothing and security. (Source: KORD)

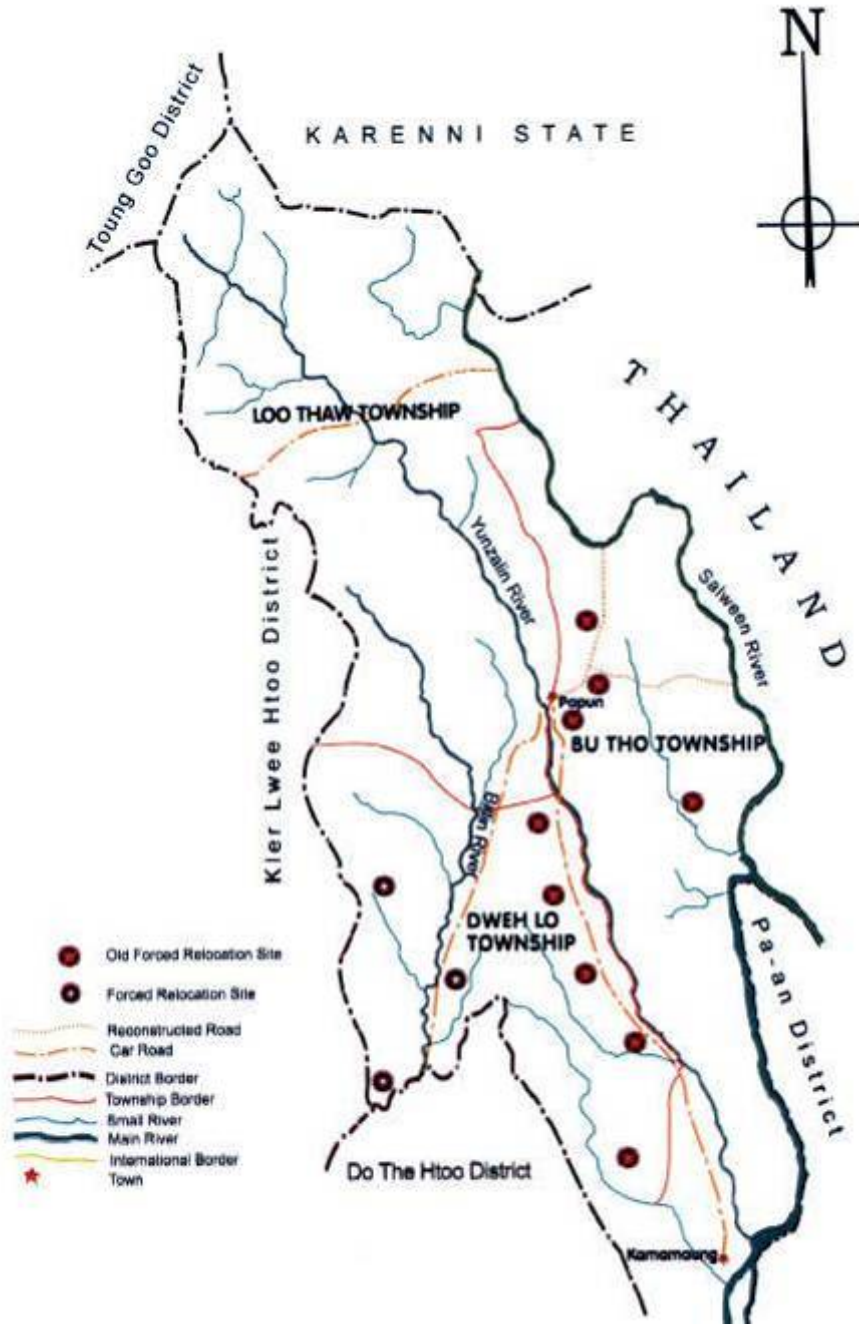
On 25 May 2001, 170 SPDC and DKBA soldiers entered the 2 villages of Kler Ka Pa Doh (Kler Ka Gyi) and Kler Ka Poe (Kler Ka Galay) in Kwee Lor Ple village tract, Hlaing Bweh township Pa-an district, Karen State, where they threatened the villagers and accussed them of supporting the KNU. The soldiers then ordered the villagers to relocate to " Kler Day " village, which is near their camp. The troops ordered the villagers to move within 3 days, and warned that if any one failed to move, he or she would be punished. In addition, these troops looted paddy, rice and domestic animal from the villagers. The soldiers involved in this incident were from the following units: SPDC division No 66 under the control of LIB 6, battalion commander lieutenant colonel Aung Soe Win with 80 soldiers; LIB 10, under column commander, Maj Htun Aung Lwin with 60 soldiers; and DKBA troop, brigade No-(555) led by battalion commander Pah Galay alias Pah Day Poe and his troop of 30 soldiers.

The villagers did not move to the place they had been ordered to go to by the SPDC, but instead took temporary shelter in the jungle living in small groups of 4-6 families. To move to the jungle, the villagers had to leave secretly at night so that the soldiers would not see them fleeing. To escape detection they had to hurry, and were not able to take all of their paddy, rice, domestic animals and other belongings. The distance between their village and the village, "Kler Day" which they had been ordered to relocate to is about 4 miles, and takes one and half hours to walk to. The distance from their old villages to their temporary settlement in the jungle is about 5 miles, and it took up to three hours for all of the villagers to walk there at night, including children, and the ill and elderly. When the soldiers found out that the villagers had not moved to the place they had been ordered, they went to the village and ate or destroyed the remaining food, and also destroyed some houses and huts which they used as firewood for cooking their meal. At the time of this report, 3 July 2001, the villagers remained afraid to return to their villages, and were living in the jungle, unable to decide whether they should return to their homes or cross the border and enter the refugee camp. (Source: KORD)

On 8 August 2001, the residents of 6 villages in Kwee Lor Plo village tract, in Lu Pleh township of Pa-an district were driven out of their villages by SPDC and DKBA troops and forced to relocate in Klaw Ka Ti and Myaing Gyi Ngu. The reason given for this forced relocation was that the villagers had been in contact with the KNU. The soldiers responsible for driving them out were from SPDC division No (66) LIB (201) and LIB(6) and DKBA Brigade (555) led by the column commander Win Naing, Captain Than Myint Zaw and Capt: Maung Zaw and the DKBA - Pah Leh and MaeTet Let. (Source: KORD)

Forced Relocation Sites in Papun (Mu Traw) District, Karen State

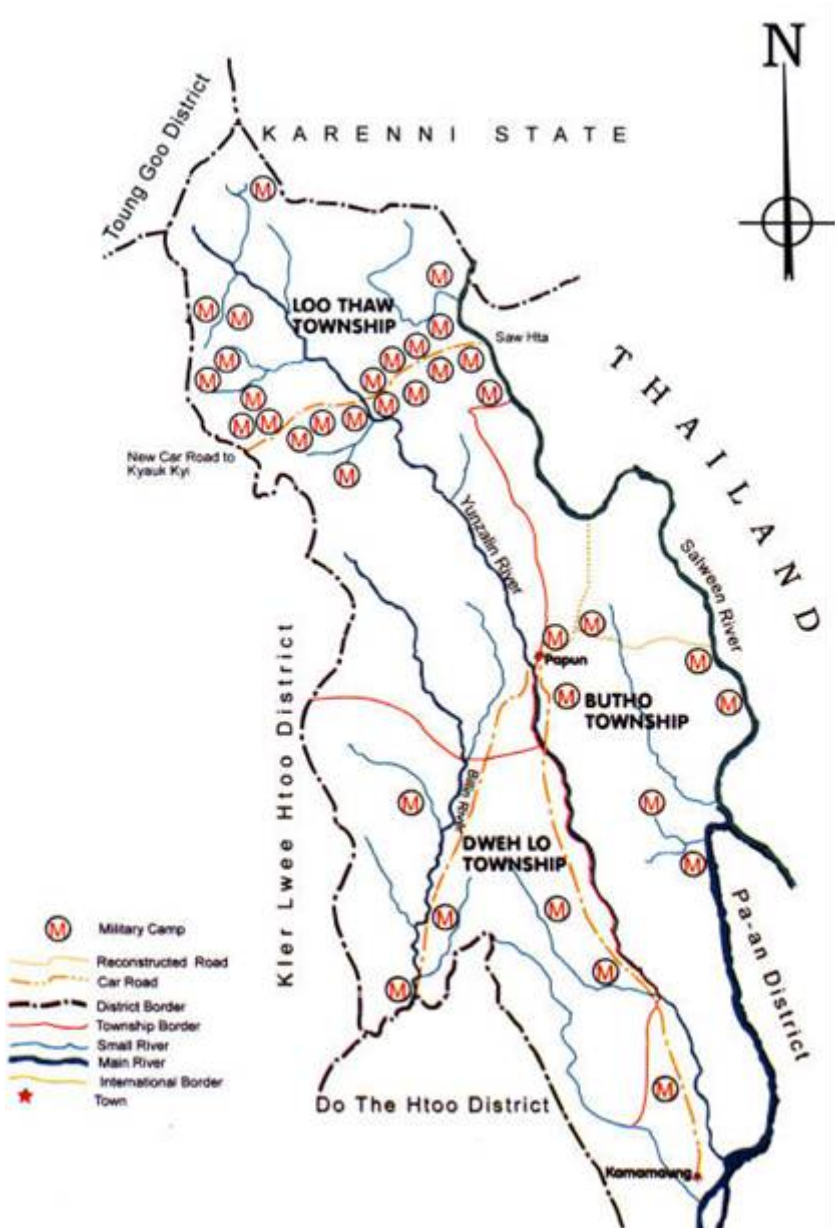
Map by CIDKP Dec. 2000



***HRDU Note: The relationship between the location of SPDC military camps and the location of the IDP clusters is of significance***

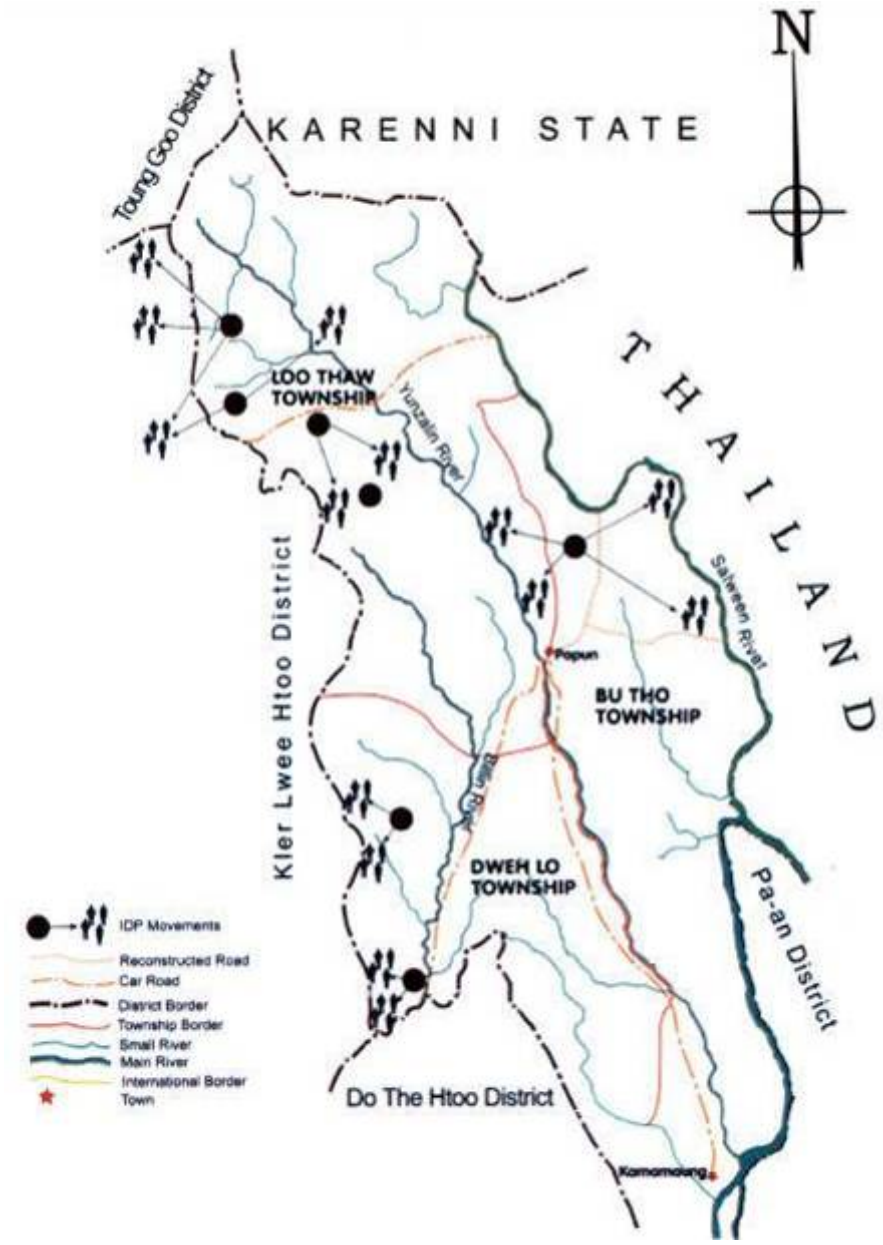
Location of SPDC Military Camps in Papun (Mu Traw) District

Map by CIDKP. Dec. 2000



IDP clusters in Mu Traw (Papun) District.

Map by CIDKP, Dec 2000



**Brief Background of Mae La Po Hta IDP site**

In September 1998 SPDC troops stormed an area in the eastern Dawna Mountains, near the Thai border in Pa'an District, and shelled and burned 5 villages without warning. The villagers fled across the border but soon returned and camped just on the Burma side of the Moei River, hoping to return to their crops and villages if the SPDC troops withdrew. The troops did not withdraw; instead, many more internally displaced people came to join those camped beside the Moei River at Meh La Po Hta. By late 1999 the population had swelled to 5,000 and it had begun to look a bit like a refugee camp, with food and other supplies sent in from Thailand. The site was heavily encircled by KNLA landmines, but it was never safe from attack by the nearby SPDC Army units. Similar camps slightly further south at Tee Ner Hta and Law Thay Hta were attacked by SPDC units in late 1999, and the villagers there fled into Thailand. (Source: KHRG 2000)

**Situation in Papun (Mu Traw) District**

96% of the people in Papun (Mu Traw) District are Sgaw Karen, and most are farmers. In the past, they farmed peacefully, but this changed in 1979 when the BSPP introduced their 'four cuts' operation to Mu Traw District. When this occured, villagers were forced to flee from the numerous abuses committed by the army. Beginning in 1997, SPDC forces mounted a concerted campaign to gain control over the rugged territories of Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts in northern Karen State and eastern Pegu Division. This effort targeted civilians, rather than insurgent armies, and included the destruction of over 200 villages and the forced relocation of thousands of villagers to garrison villages. The campaign also included the establishment of military camps throughout most of the Karen areas, and the forcible relocation of any villages considered too remote to be controlled by an army camp. Typically, after residents are relocated to an army-controlled area, soldiers enter and destroy their former home. This has happened in the plains along the Sittaung River, in parts of Papun District along the lower Bilin and Yunzalin rivers, and near Papun town. As the majority of people living in the rugged Papun hills had never been under SPDC control and for the most part would flee before soldiers could get to them, in 1997 the SPDC began to systematically destroy hundreds of these villages without formally ordering them to relocate.

Today the SPDC continues to search out and kill villagers who have fled into the hills to escape forced relocation. As part of this campaign over 40 Battalions have been sent to the region. New roads have been built, and all villagers relocated into areas under SPDC control are ordered to do forced labour to support these battalions. Since 1999 increasing numbers of soldiers have been sent to the hills in order to hunt down villagers trying to hide near their villages. Since 2000 the soldiers have focused on destroying the crops and food supplies of the villagers in hiding. Internally displaced people in these areas are shot in the fields at harvest time, have their crops burned, and their fields and abandoned villages landmined. SPDC troops

leave 'Peace Passes' in the destroyed villages to encourage IDPs to come to a relocation center. The passes say *"Do not think, take this pass and come to the nearest Army camp"*. In the SPDC-controlled villages people face constant demands for forced labour, money, food and materials and the arbitrary torture of village elders and others. Villagers in the region are facing an increasingly desperate situatation, with little hope for relief anytime soon. (Source: KHRG: "Flight, Hunger and Survival Repression and Displacement in the Villages of Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts," October 2001)

In November 2001 CIDKP issued a report stating that 37,007 Karen remained displaced in Papun district where over 50 villages had been forcibly relocated. People from neighboring Nyaunglebin, Taungoo and Thaton districts have also resettled in Papun district since fleeing army attacks last year. Over 1,000 IDPs from Nyaunglebin (of the 2,000+) who fled between November 2000 and February 2001, remain in Papun district, while an additional 1,000 IDPs who had hoped to remain in this area had to go to refugee camps in Thailand due to the shortage of food. These new arrivals have put a strain on the meagre food supplies of Papun villagers.

In April 2001 it was reported that displaced people from Nyaunglebin District have continued to flee east into northern Papun District, while the situation in Papun District also deteriorated. Along the Bilin River west of Papun, some villagers have been able to return and stay in and around their original villages, but they live in constant fear of SPDC soldiers and flee into the hills whenever they hear news of troops approaching. Further down the Bilin River, the SPDC Light Infantry Division #66 has been active since 1999 causing most people in the area, from Meh Gha Law to Ker Kaw Law to flee their homes. To date these people have been afraid to return, and instead traveled further up the Bilin River out of the reach of Division 66 instead." (Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run," April 9, 2001)

**Situation in Lu Thaw Township**

There are 22 army camps in Lu Thaw Township, which makes life for villagers as well as for the estimated 7,000 IDPs in hiding very difficult. There are also frequent "search and destroy" operations. There are no relocation sites in the township, but most of the people in hill villages in the township are living in hiding. There has been little opportunity for outside groups to provide assistance for the IDPs in Lu Thaw Township. The health and education situation for IDPs hiding in the township is very dire. There are no hospitals and the backpack medical teams cannot always reach these areas. Almost all people in Lu Thaw have fled from the SPDC troops, but there are a few families in Klaw Hta and Baw Thay Hta village tracts living under SPDC control. They are determined not to leave their land if they can possibly stay, but present conditions are forcing many of them to

consider fleeing to Thailand. This, however has become difficult, because of the landmines and the proliferation of SPDC Army camps and patrols. Even if IDPs can make it to Thailand, if they encounter Thai Army troops or Border Patrol Police units before making it to a refugee camp, they are routinely forced back across the border at gunpoint. (Source: CIDKP)

"In northern Lu Thaw township, northwest of Papun, the SPDC has fortified its new road from Kyauk Kyi (at the Sittaung River in Pegu Division) to Saw Hta (on the Salween River at the Thai border) with at least 7 army camps, fences protecting the road, and landmines laid along the roadsides. The road itself is impassable to vehicles for much of the year, so the SPDC columns still use large numbers of forced labour porters to carry supplies to the camps along the route. The SPDC uses camps along the new road to launch military operations to secure the Salween River and the entire region. Along the 100-150 kilometre stretch of the Salween River which acts as the border with Thailand there are now over 10 SPDC Army camps dotted at regular intervals, including Saw Hta, Thee Mu Hta, Kyauk Nyat, Oo Da Hta, Meh Ka Hta, Oo Thu Hta, Thaw Leh Hta, Meh Paw Mu Hta, and Thu Mweh Hta. The troops at these camps attempt to shut down Karen ational Liberation Army (KNLA) supply lines, block he escape of refugees, and hunt down people in hding.

One internally displaced person reported seeing hundreds of porters carrying supplies for the army down the Kyauk Kyi - Saw Hta road on January 31st 2001. All of the villages along the road route were destroyed 3 to 4 years ago and no one dares live there anymore. Meanwhile, the military activity along the road and the mines around it have essentially cut off escape routes and supply lines for the people living to the north, in northern Lu Thaw township and in Toungoo District. It is now extremely difficult to send supplies to the thousands of displaced people in these areas, and it is equally difficult for them to flee to the Thai border. Some have managed to reach Thailand by making an extremely difficult and dangerous trip eastward into Karenni (Kayah) State and then southward to the Thai border. Some have managed to break across the road and join the internally displaced in the Yeh Mu Plaw area of central Lu Thaw Township, though conditions there are also extremely difficult. But for most, they are now not only displaced and hunted, but more isolated from the outside than ever before. They are presently suffering from food shortages, mortality from diseases ranging from diarrhoea to malaria with no access to medicines, and the need to regularly flee SPDC columns. (Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run," April 9, 2001)

**Situation in Dweh Loh Township**

Villagers from Dweh Loh township, just southwest of the town of Papun, began fleeing the area in large numbers after SPDC troops burned and then landmined at least 9 of their villages in March 2000, at the same time that villagers throughout the region were fleeing in increasing numbers from increased SPDC militarisation and forced labor. In November 1999 SPDC troops had entered the township, causing the villagers to flee into the jungles. The villagers had remained in hiding, hoping the troops would leave, but they didn't and instead the SPDC began landmining pathways around their home villages. Then in March 2000 they began burning one village after another, including the villages of Meh Gha Law, T'Kaw Hta, Baw Wah Der, Lay Hta, Maw Bpu, Tee Th'Reh Kee, Dta Baw Kee, K'Pu Soh, and Maw Thay Hta. The troops also burned all the rice storage barns they could find in order to eliminate the IDPs' food supply, and burned the villagers' hill fields which were being prepared for the June/July 2000 planting. The scrub in these fields had been cut and was being dried for the usual burnoff before the rains; however, by torching them early, only part of the scrub was burned and the villagers say it will now be impossible to do a proper burnoff or to plant a crop. They no longer dare go back to their villages for food either, because the troops mined the villages after burning them and are still encamped near the villages. Faced with starvation, many of the villagers have now fled the area.

The Burma army has established itself in six main locations in Dweh Lo township, Mae Wai, Khu Thu Hta, Waw Mu, Ka Ter Ti, Blow Lu and Taung Thone Lone. DKBA troops are located at Ma Taw. There has been a buildup of SPDC troops in Dweh Lo township since the beginning of 2000. In 2000 there were 4 relocation sites in the township. (Sources: KHRG, CIDKP)

"In Dweh Loh township south and southwest of Papun, the SPDC is gaining increasing control. Most of the villagers there have little choice but to stay in their villages, particularly if they are strongly attached to their land and livestock. Those who stay, however, face constant and heavy demands for forced labour, money, food, and materials from the SPDC Army units and authorities in the area. A KHRG researcher from southwestern Dweh Loh township reports that villagers there are constantly forced to cut bamboo for the Army camps, go with the Columns as porters, provide thatch roofing for barracks, and pay extortion money. The people of one village in the area were all forced to go to the forest to cut giant bamboo, then take it and sell it in Bilin and hand all of the money over to Light Infantry Battalion #366. The SPDC officers have stated to the village elders, "If you cannot pay the money, you cannot stay in the village", so many villagers have sold off their livestock to pay the extortion. Some have fled into the hills, but the Army has sent patrols out to hunt them down and shoots at people on sight in the hills. Villages such as Kwih Dta Ma have to send anywhere from 50 to 80 people at a time, men and women, for forced portering of supplies to outlying Army camps, and smaller villages have to send 25 to 30 people at a time. Children as young as 12

and 13 have to go for the labour so that their parents can try to make a living for the family. Beginning in November 2000, everyone from the villages of Wah Mu, Po Kheh Hta, Nya Cha Gaw Hta, Kwih Dta Ma, Ma Lay Ler and Gkay Gkaw was forced to work building fences around their entire villages, leaving only one to three gates into their village which could be guarded, and the villagers' movements to and from their fields are now strictly controlled. They were then forced to cut and clear the roadsides, build road bridges, and build 3 rings of fencing around Wah Mu Army camp of Light Infantry Battalion #366. Anyone who failed to go for this labour had to pay 500 Kyat per day, and they must also pay up to 100 Kyat per piece of bamboo which they fail to send. The KHRG researcher in this area estimates that the villagers are only left an average of 10 days in each month to work for their own livelihood, and must work the other 20 days without pay for the SPDC.

Villagers from Dweh Loh township report that SPDC Battalions have issued orders to 25-30 villages that prohibit residents from leaving their villages for the three months from September to November 2001, not even to go to their fields. At the time of this report, the rice harvest was about to arrive, but due to the order none of the thousands of people in these SPDC-controlled villages are able to harvest. People who have recently fled these villages report that the people there are preparing for starvation." (Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run," April 9, 2001)

**Situation in Bilin River area**

"While displaced people from Nyaunglebin District flee eastward into northern Papun District, the situation in Papun District also continues to worsen. In areas along the Bilin River west of Papun, some villagers have managed to return and stay in and around their villages, but they must live in constant fear of the approach of SPDC columns and flee into the hills whenever they hear of troops coming near. In late 2000 many of them managed to secure a small rice harvest, but they are having to share some of this with several thousand people who have fled into the area from Nyaunglebin District to the west... The new arrivals from Nyaunglebin District are still living on the ground in small lean-to's, and many of them have nothing so the local villagers are giving them what food they can.

Slightly further down the Bilin River, SPDC Light Infantry Division #66 has been active since 1999 so most people in the area from Meh Gha Law to Ker Kaw Law have fled their villages and have not been able to return, heading further up the Bilin River out of the reach of Division 66 instead. Over the past 3 years many villages have been forced to move to the SPDC garrison village of Meh Way, where the population is heavily used for forced labour at the Army camp and as porters for the columns heading out into the hills to destroy villages." (KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40

SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run," April 9, 2001)

**Villagers forced to flee**

On 12 March 2001, SPDC LIB-38 led by the commander Ba Lin, combined with the DKBA, brigade No. 777 led by Pah Kay Kay and Pah Hsi entered the areas of Mae Khu Hta, Htee Doh Hta, Maw Ler Khee, Mae Khu Khee, Toe Mu, Thwa Hta, Kler Hsi Kho, Ta Per Pah, Doo Ta Ba, U Thaw Hta, Mae Nyu Hta, Bgo Ler, U Thaw Khee villages. The troops stayed for 3 days conducting military activities. They arrived while the villagers were clearing the land, cutting down the trees and drying the trees that were cut down, in order to burn them up for the paddy plantation. When the SPDC troops entered tha areas, villagers ran into the jungle, afraid the Burmese soldiers and DKBA soldiers might shoot them or torture them if they were captured. When fleeing, villagers could not take enough food and other belongings along with them, and had toleave behind most of their belongings such as clothing, utensils, domestic animals, rice and paddy. When the troops entered the villages, they ate the rice, domestic animals and other food and took as many of the villagers' belongings as could as they could carry and burnt down and destroyed all the rest.

Again on 21 April 2001, LIB-341 led by battalion commander Myint Tin left from their base camp at Pa Pun and entered Kyaw Nyo Hta village and stayed there 3 days, after the villagers had already fled. They had to abandon their belongings and all the rice and paddy that they could not take with them while fleeing. The troops took all the rice, pigs, chickens, goats, ducks and properties of the villagers that remained in villages and destroyed all the rest.

Again on 16 May 2001, combined troops of SPDC and DKBA, LIB-341 led by officer Myint Tin and DKBA, officer Chit Maung entered the villages of Doo K'meh Khee, Pway Lu and Kyaw Nyo Hta, May Tay Hta, Kay Hta and Kler Lu. They stayed 3 days in the villages and conducted activities around the area. Again when the troops entered, the villagers, in great fear had to flee, leaving their belonging, rice, and paddy while the troops took what they wanted. The troops ate up all the rice and other food that they found in the villages and the farm huts and destroyed all the rest.

Villagers in these aforementioned villages are now forced to stay temporarily in the jungle, some in the farm huts and some by streams, as the SPDC and DKBA troops continue to conduct activities in the area. As a result the villagers are now facing severe shortages of food, medicine, and clothing and a lack of security. (Source: KORD)

On 8 August 2001, the 6 villages in Kwee Lor Plo village tract, in Lu Pleh township of Pa-an district were driven out from their villages and forced to relocate to Klaw Ka Ti and Myaing Gyi Ngu. They were forced out by SPDC and DKBA

troop. Those were the SPDC division No (66) LIB(201) and LIB(6) and the DKBA Brigade (555)led by the column commander Win Naing, Captain Than Myint Zaw and Capt: Maung Zaw and the DKBA - Pah Leh and MaeTet Let, who accused the villagers of being in contact with KNU troops. (Source: KORD)

On 11 November 2001, nine Burmese army battalions launched attacks in three areas of Papun district in Karen State. The attacks began shortly after midnight and have driven at least 800 people north and east out of their homes. Most fled with only the clothes on their backs. Those on the run include over 70 children from a primary and middle school that was located on the Bilin River. (Source: CIDKP)

**Situation in Thaton District**

"In an effort to drive a wedge between the villagers in northeastern Thaton district and the resistance forces of the KNU/KNLA (Karen National Union / Karen National Liberation Army), the SPDC continues to intimidate villagers with violence, threats and military retaliation. Information sent by KHRG field researchers indicates that in Bilin township, east of the Bilin River spanning the border of Mon and Karen States, soldiers are using innocent villagers in a campaign to gain complete control over the villages and defeat KNLA opposition forces. They are capturing and torturing civilians, forcing them to work for the army and committing many kinds of abuses. Interviews by KHRG have documented stories of exploitation and violence in Bilin township, fuelled by ongoing SPDC attempts to gain both military and financial advantage...The SPDC use the Karen villagers in the region as tactical pawns in their war against the KNLA. With every SPDC casualty or setback, a price is exacted on the civilians. If a soldier steps on a landmine, the villagers pay. If there is fighting with the KNU, homes may be ransacked and burned. If any of the troops are wounded in battle, the village might be fined, threatened or even destroyed. One less violent example occurred recently in Htoh Kloh Hta village. After a DKBA soldier was wounded in the area, SPDC and DKBA troops visited the village and demanded 200,000 Kyat, a very large sum by villagers' standards. Although the villagers have scarcely the resources to feed their own families, they paid out of fear of the consequences if they refused.

Villagers in Bilin township face great difficulties providing their families with enough food because of the actions of the SPDC army. They continue to grow their hillside rice crops, but whenever SPDC patrols come close, they flee into the jungle. The combination of working under this cloud of fear and being kept away from their work by forced labour projects allows them little time to properly maintain their crops. The amount and severity of forced labour tends to depend on each village's distance from an SPDC army camp. But all villages have to send people on a regular basis to be unpaid army porters, workers or messengers and are forced to work making thatch roofing shingles, constructing camps or maintaining roads. This leaves them little time to work on their crops. Consequently the villagers,

particularly the men, have to flee when troops visit the area. They live in fear of being captured and forced to work for the army. Many families have fled their villages entirely, seeking refuge in the surrounding jungle. Around 15 to 20 households have already done so from each of the villages of Baw Naw Po Kee, Ther Khaw Doh Kee, Ther Gkee Pu and Pleh Po Hta. Many villagers prefer this unpredictable life away from their villages and food sources to the constant threat posed by visits by the SPDC and DKBA troops.

In order to minimise the use of villages as KNLA resources, the SPDC have sporadically used forced village relocation to consolidate the Karen in selected SPDC strongholds. This also provides the army with a large, easily accessible pool of forced labourers. This can be accomplished first by oral or written demands, and later by burning and destroying the villages, driving some villagers to relocation sites and others to escape into the jungle. In recent years, they have destroyed the villages of Htee Mu Kee, Nya Po Kee, Kwih Lay Pu, Wah Tho Klah, Ther Rer Kee and many others." (Source: KHRG: "Thaton District: SPDC using violence against villagers to consolidate control," March 20, 2001)

On 10 October 2001, Pah Ni Tho from DKBA came to Kweeh-lay village and started to make block and cut-off operation in Pauk-kee, Ta-u-kee, Nya-po-kee, Noh-po-kee and Yo-kla area, Thaton District, Karen State. The villagers in that area escaped from their villages and hid in the jungle. It was learned that the order for the block and cut-off operation programme came from the army general head quarters of SPDC, and was carried out in order to make it impossible for the ILO to investigate forced labour issues in the area. (Source: KIC)

**Situation in Dooplaya District**

There have been several forced relocation campaigns in Dooplaya District over the last 3 years. In 1999, around 100 villages were forcefully relocated to sites across the district, including Ye Tagun, Anan Gwin, Taungzun, Phar Pyat, Kyi Soe, and Kyar Ein Seik Kyi relocation sites. However, many villagers, out of mistrust for the SPDC refused to move into the relocation sites, and fled into the jungle. Many others who moved into the relocation sites ended up moving out due to the conditions. Due to these forced relocations, as well as the numerous abuses committed by the SPDC troops, there were mass displacements of people throughout 2000, as people attempted to flee. Those interviewed by KHRG reported widespread hunger and starvation in central Dooplaya, and of IDPs subsisting off of taro roots and jungle vegetables. Entire villages were reported to have been fleeing, and many of these who attempted to seek refuge in refugee camps across the border in Thailand were denied access. (See chapter on refugees)

**Forced relocation of Taung Galay and Kwee Pa Doh Villages**

Due to the fighting with KNLA troop near the Taung Galay village, SPDC battalion IB - 62 column, No (2), column commander Nay Myo Win and his troop with the strength about 60 soldiers forced the village head, Naw Ka Neh to provide 2 guns to them as a fine. They threatened that they would kill her if she could not provide the guns as demanded. The troop then instructed Naw Ka Neh that her village had to relocate to a fixed place. The relocation had to be completed by 13 February 2001. At that time, no houses, including the monastery, should remain in the village. A total of 2 villages were forced to relocate, Taung Galay village and Kwee Pa Doh village. The army fixed 4 relocation sites for the 2 villages, and these were (1) ( Pah Pya) Pah Pra village (2) (Hleh Lan Gu) Mu village (3) (Maung U) Maw Oo village and (4) T 'reh Kyaw village. The distance between the two villages and the relocation sites are as follow:

- Taung Galay village to Pah Pra, about 5 hours walk.
- Taung Galay village to Mu village, about 2 hours walk.
- Taung Galay village to Maw Oo village, about 2 hours walk.
- Toung Galay village to T 'reh Kyaw village, about 3 hours walk.

(The distances from Kwee Pa Doh village to the 4 relocation villages are similar to those above)

The commanders threatened the villagers, that anyone, including children and elderly people, would be shot and killed if still found in villages after the fixed date.

On 13 February 2001, the combined troops of SPDC, IB - 62 column 1 and 2 led by the commanders Col: Than Win, registration No. Ka (A - 15533) column No. 1 and column No. 2, commander Nay Myo Win entered the two villages of Taung Galay and Kwee Pa Doh in order to drive the villagers to the relocation sites. Column No. 1, led by commander Than Win had about 80 soldiers and column No. 2, led by commander Nay Myo Win had about 60. When they arrived, the troops could find no one in the villages, as the villagers had run away at their approach. When fleeing the villagers could only carry a few days worth of food. After finding the villages deserted, the troop destroyed and burnt down houses, looted things and ate the villagers'domestic animals.

Currently the villagers are temporarily sheltering in different places, some in the paddy huts, some with friends and relatives that live far enough away from their villages, some in betel nut fields and some in the jungle. These villagers in hiding are now facing starvation. (Source: KORD)

**Villagers killed while in hiding**

In April 2001, a group of soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion 548 and 549 led by Company Commander Aung KHain Soe arrived at the hiding area of a group of IDPS, between Wah Blaw Lu and Ta Kaw Htee, in Kya Aye Township, Doo Pla Ya District and opened fire on the people hiding there. Two villagers were killed and another two escaped after being wounded. (Source: CIDKP)

**Situtation in Nyaunglebin District**

"The people of Nyaunglebin were some of the hardest hit by the Burma Army's 2000-2001 offensive. Over 2,000 IDPs fled into Papun district between November 2000 and February 2001. 13,000 IDPs remain in central and eastern Nyaunglebin district and 370,000 are displaced in relocation sites in the western lowlands of the district. Of the 13,000 IDPs in the central and eastern areas, 5,450 are from Mone, 3550 from Ler Doh and 4,000 from Hsaw Hti townships. They fled because of the forced labor and "special" taxation as well as direct attacks of the Burma Army. Since November 2000, 83 villages were forced to move to 12 relocation sites. Forced labor is practiced by the Burma Army on the road project between Shwygin in the southwest and Bye Gyi Ma They in central Nyaunglebin district. The road is not yet complete. Around the larger towns and villages of the district, the SSS or "short pants", (terror squads that work to intimidate villagers and execute suspected KNU supporters), continue to operate, terrorizing the populace. These units are controlled directly from Rangoon and operate independently from the local commands. 15 Battalions of the Burma Army conduct operations in the district with orders to "destroy all rice supplies and disrupt the population in the mountains". They were also ordered to attack villages and IDP hide sites, but were given the order, " do not burn down the houses because human rights organizations will take photographs and accuse us". While a relief team was in the area in October 2001, Burma Army units attacked a village, and close by, shot a 16 year old villager who was gathering firewood. This same relief team also came across the skeletons of two porters (one of whom was beaten to death), who were used by the LIB 367 and LIB 368 commanded by Ltc. Ko Ko Aung, and then left to die, during their November 2000 offensive in this area. In this district, since November 2000, 50 villagers have been killed by the Burma Army, over 100 injured during attacks and 20 women raped. In spite of this, the people of Nyaunglebin district have not given up and continue to rebuild their lives and farms. Where this is not possible they have moved deeper into the mountains to start new villages. Here they have also re-opened their schools and as of November, 2001, there are 27 primary schools and 3 middle schools in operation. There are also mobile clinics and a public health program in place. The churches too continue to function as places of worship and hope as well as providing social organizations that provide assistance to the people." (Source: Burmanet)

**Situation in Loh Kee/Thay Ko Hser Der area**

"Since the beginning of January 2001, over 2,000 villagers have fled eastern Shwegyin township in Nyaunglebin Distict and crossed into Papun District near the Bilin River, where they now live in the hill fields in hiding...One large group consists of most of the villagers in the Loh Kee/Thay Ko Hser Der area, who fled in early January when a large column of SPDC troops from Light Infantry Battalion #369 came and stayed in their villages for a week, looting and destroying food supplies. According to a KHRG researcher and villagers in the area, the SPDC Battalions have been ordered to clear out all hill villages west of the Bilin River by any means necessary. Where possible, the villagers are to be forced to move to Army-controlled sites further west for use as forced labour building and maintaining more Army posts, but in most cases the villagers flee before the troops arrive and go into hiding in the hills, so the Army columns shoot them on sight instead. The Army appears to believe that if all villagers can be driven out of the hills, it will no longer be possible for any resistance to operate there. To this end, their military attacks are all aimed at villagers and the internally displaced rather than the Karen forces, and their landmines are planted around ricefields and the ruins of villages where they believe the villagers will return.

One villager from a village in Loh Kee village tract told a KHRG researcher a typical story of SPDC abuses leading to the flight of villagers. West of his village, SPDC activity has been increasing as troops step up their use of forced labour and violent harassment of the villagers. Then an army unit from Shwegyin came to the village during the harvest season at the end of 2000. All of the villagers fled before their arrival out of fear that the soldiers would arrest and torture them, force them to work or just kill them on sight. After staying in the villagers' homes for a week, the soldiers walked off with whatever rice they could carry and destroyed the rest by dumping it on the ground, devastating the village's already dwindling food supply. The villagers eventually fled into Papun District, to join 60 or more families who had fled the other villages in their area." (Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run,"April 9, 2001)

**Situation in Kyauk Kyi Township**

"...In Kyauk Kyi township of Nyaunglebin District many villagers are always on the move. Villagers leave their homes for periods of time ranging from hours to months, waiting for troops to leave the area. One villager from eastern Kyauk Kyi township described to a KHRG researcher the cat and mouse game they must play whenever SPDC columns come into the region, fleeing from one hiding place to the next in the forested hills carrying whatever they can and living off of hidden food caches. Flight is not without risk, however. On December 1st 2000, Column #1 of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #362 entered L— village in Kyauk Kyi township and sprayed the

village with gunfire. People were caught off guard and fled in various directions. Amid the confusion, the SPDC gunfire wounded a pair of fleeing villagers, a six year old girl and a 20 year old man. Three months after that incident, the 10 families from the village had yet to return and were living in the jungle at the foot of a nearby mountain. One family left to try to get to a refugee camp in Thailand. After their attack, the SPDC soldiers looted and destroyed the homes and belongings. Some of the villagers' rice was stored in paddy storage barns which escaped the attack, and they have occasionally been able to sneak back into the village to get some rice; however, those interviewed by KHRG say that when this supply runs out, they may try to make it to the border with Thailand to stay in one of the refugee camps. Their story is typical of people hiding throughout the region. The villagers are aware of, and have even received messages about, the SPDC's plans to clear out all the villages west of the Bilin River. Such a plan makes it unlikely that villagers like them will be able to return to their homes anytime soon." (Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run,"April 9, 2001)

**Villagers forced to flee or relocate**

"Since the beginning of January 2001, over 2,000 villagers have fled eastern Shwegyin township in Nyaunglebin Distict and crossed into Papun District near the Bilin River, where they now live in the hill fields in hiding. Slightly further north in Kyauk Kyi township of Nyaunglebin District, many villagers are always on the move. Villagers leave their homes for periods of time ranging from hours to months, waiting for troops to leave the area. One villager from eastern Kyauk Kyi township described to a KHRG researcher the cat and mouse game they must play whenever SPDC columns come into the region, fleeing from one hiding place to the next in the forested hills carrying whatever they can and living off of hidden food caches ...Once the villages are emptied, the areas become shoot-to-kill zones and landmines are often laid on village land or in rice fields. Villagers then must choose whether to hide in the jungle, flee to another area or adhere to SPDC orders. For those who risk moving to relocation areas, they live under tight Army control and are forced to provide free labour for the army carrying supplies, acting as Army servants, and building security fences and traps at Army camps and around their own relocation sites. The new areas are often without access to rice fields, making the acquisition of food supplies very difficult, and the Army provides nothing. From north to south in Nyaunglebin District, KHRG has already documented the existence of forced relocation sites at Mone, Weh Gyi, Thit Cha Seik and Yan Myo Aung in Mone township; and Yan Gyi Aung and Kaw Tha Say in Kyauk Kyi township.... KHRG researchers recently reconfirmed the continued existence of these sites, and added that in Kyauk Kyi township the 40 households of Dtone Dta Dta village have been forced to move to Shwe Dan on the Kyauk Kyi-Shwegyin

motor road (where there is a camp of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, DKBA), and Leh Gkaw Wah village has been forced to move to Lay Bin Weh on the bank of the Sittaung River. In addition, independent sources report that there are also relocation sites in western Nyaunglebin District right now at Kyaut Na Ga with five villages and 1,000 people; Kwin Seit with eight villages and 1,500 people; May Po Hta with five villages and 500 people; and Win Maung with 10 villages and 2,000 people." (Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run,"April 9, 2001)

On 24 March 2001, 47 villagers from 7 families from Mae Yan Khi, Kaw Mu Der, Mae Yen Khi village tract in Hsaw Hti (Shwe Kyin) township, Kler Lwe Htoo District, Karen State, fled Burmese army persecution and arrived in eastern Mutraw District, on the Thai-Burma border, opposite Thailand's Mai Hong Song Province on 31 March. According to a villager, they travelled for seven days on foot through an area with much Burmese military activity and where many landmines had been planted by Burmese troops. Of those traveling, two were men who had been wounded by landmines and lost their legs in October of last year. According to the villagers they could not tolerate the activities of the Burmese soldiers any longer, and believing that their lives were in great danger and that the situation was getting worse, they decided to find a way to escape. These are villagers who did not go to the Burmese military's designated forced relocation sites and instead hid near their villages in the jungle. While in hiding they were constantly being hunted by the Burmese troops who wanted to kill them and destroy their food supplies and belongings. There are eight battalions which have been active in their hiding area from 2000 until now. These villagers report that because of the military presence they could not properly tend their rice fields, and their rice was ruined. The eight battalions have been specially assigned by the Burmese army to "search and destroy" or to conduct "Scorched-Earth" military operations to eliminate villagers who are hiding in the jungle and valley around Hsaw Hti Township, Kler Lwe Htoo District. (Source: CIDKP)

In September 2001, as 10 IDP families were attempting to flee the Mae Yae area, Burma Army troops captured them and sent them to the relocation site at Win Maung on the Bilin river. Win Maung is a major main forced relocation site along the southern border area of Nyaunglebin and Papun districts. The following villages were forced to move to another relocation site at Ma Way (north of Win Maung, also on the Bilin river); Wah Tho Ko,Ler Wah Ko,Klo Kee, Pwa Ya Kee, To Ko Kaw Kee, Day Law Po,Mae Tha Ko Hta and Wah Tho Lo. (Source: Burmanet)

**Situation in Western Plains Area**

"On the western plains of Nyaunglebin District the official SPDC relocation sites are expanding and multiplying, and many villages have been forced to move to these places, particularly villages on the eastern edge of the plains or those which are any great distance from the nearest SPDC Army camp. In these areas, the Army orders people to move to a relocation area within a specified timeframe. Villagers face severe consequences if they do not comply.

In western Nyaunglebin District near the Sittaung River, KHRG has previously documented the activities of the Sa Thon Lon "Guerrilla Retaliation" SPDC execution squads, a specially trained unit which has been roaming villages since 1998 and executing anyone suspected of present or past ties to the Karen resistance. KHRG researchers report that this unit continues to exist and to execute villagers on a regular basis using brutal methods, but that they are not executing as many people as when they first began operations and they are not doing it quite as openly; they now reportedly take people off into the forest never to be seen again, whereas before they sometimes went so far as to impale villagers' heads on stakes as a warning to others. The decrease in the number of people they are killing may not be due to any change in their mission, it may simply result from the fact that they have already killed most of the people they could identify, while many others have already fled in fear even if they never had any real ties to the Karen resistance. Villagers now avoid the Sa Thon Lon members at all cost, so it may also be getting more difficult for the unit to get good intelligence from those who are left." (Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run,"April 9, 2001)

**Situation of IDPs in 5th and 3rd Brigade Areas (Muthraw and Kler Lwee Htoo districts)**

As of December 2000 over 2,000 new IDPs had fled from Kleer Lwee Htoo (3rd Brigade) into Western Muthraw due to attacks, or the forced labor and relocation operations of the SPDC. The Burma Army is now stockpiling rice, oil, salt, and other foodstuffs along the Salween for transport to their forward units. Supplies are also being sent down the road from Kyauk Kyi to Saw Hta. Hundreds of sacks of rice line the Salween River in front of major SPDC strong points. During the last weeks of January 2001, every SPDC commander in Muthraw was recalled to higher headquarters at Naunglybin, Toungoo and Rangoon. It is not clear what this means, but the local population is preparing for another dry season offensive by the SPDC. The villagers and IDPs in Loo Thaw township north of the new road continue to face extreme hardship and CIDKP reports that it has not been possible to provide regular assistance to that population. This is a black area where the SPDC troops shoot to kill. The new road is patrolled aggressively by 10 SPDC

Battalions, who have also erected a bamboo fence with land mines all along the road, thus making it difficult for relief teams to cross or for IDPs to escape through to the south. Some however have managed to break through and have resettled in Yae Mu Plaw village tract, putting great pressure on the land and natural resources that are already at their limit in providing sustenance for the villagers and IDPs of Yae Mu Plaw. One IDP in Yae Mu Plaw said that, "We don't want to run any further, we want to stay in our land, we are not brave, we can do no other, we leave all in the hands of God. We believe God will protect us."

Since November 2000, over 2,000 IDPs have crossed the Bilin River from Kler Lwee Htoo district. On 30 January 2001, 200 more IDPs from Htee Bla and Saw Tha Kee came into Muthraw district. IDPs from Htee Maw Kway Hta, Law Moo Der, Htee Ler Pah Hta, They Ko Ser Der, Htee Bla, Mee Tha Nang Der, Saw Tha Kee, Saw Roko, Lo Khee, and Kyaw Pla Kee villages have all fled because of attacks on their villages by the SPDC as well as demands for forced labor. In this area 124 people have been killed, women raped and many tortured. Most recently, on Nov. 4, 3 villagers at Saw Roko village were beaten to death by troops of LIB 360 while they were gathering rice. On Nov. 10, a father and his two children were wounded by an SPDC mortar attack and on Nov. 16, one was killed by an SPDC land mine. Paddy is routinely destroyed resulting in over 5,000 people being deprived of rice in January 2001 alone. (Source: CIDKP)

**Situation in Mon Township**

On 20 Februrary 2001, it was reported that SPDC troop, LIB-349 had entered the Mon township area, set their base camp at Kaw La Wah Lu and had been conducting activities in that area since the end of 2000. There are also troops of IB-35/59/60 currently conducting activities in the Mon township area, as well as a guerilla force led by officer Tin Hla, which is responsible for the security of the car road that is being constructed.

On 4 February 2001, 200 combined troops from SPDC IB 26,39 & 35 arrived at Kyouk Kyi Pok with 2 D-7 bulldozers for road construction and one truck for transporting fuel for the 2 bulldozers during the construction work. Again, on February 7, 2001 the troops arrived at Ter Kwe Lay Kho and gave instructions to the Ma La Daw villagers to clear the car road. One person from each family had to go and work every day starting on February 9. Construction on this road has been going on since 1998. The road is supposed to go to Bu Has Khee in Toungoo District. The starting point of this car road is in Mon township, Nyaunglebin district. Throughout the construction period the SPDC has patrolled the area constantly and villagers in the neighboring areas have had to abandon their villages, homes, food and property and hide in the jungle as they believe it is not safe to stay in their villages. Villagers forced to flee were from (11) villages; Saw Tay Der, Kyouk Pya, Kheh Po Der, Yaw Khee, Ka Waw Kho, Thet Baw Der, K'pa Hta, Saw Kher Khee, Nya Mu Khee, They

Khay Lu and Nwah Hta. The construction up to Kheh-Po-Der has been finished. (Source: KORD)

On 20 September 2001, troops from SPDC LIB 120 came to Mae-yai-khee and Paw-kyaw villages Shwe-gyin township, Nyaung-lay-bin District and seized 48 villagers from 7 families who were hiding in the jungle. Those troops camped at Thay-kyo and Doh-kho-wah to seize villagers hiding in the jungle. (Source: KIC)

**Relocation sites**

Relocation operations in Kler Lwee Htoo continue. The following are forced relocation sites:

Kyawt Naga 5 villages = (more than) 1,000 people

Kwin Seit 8 villages = 1,500 people

May Po Hta 5 villages = 500 people

Win Maung 10 villages = 2,000 people.

Each site is fenced, patrolled and the inhabitants must provide labor free of charge to the SPDC. Labor includes road improvements, bridge building, gathering bamboo (often in mined areas), and portering. Quote from an IDP family, "We can't work our own land, we can't feed our families so we ran away." IDPs from Kler Lwee Htoo continue to flee into Muthraw district but due to new SPDC outposts on the west side of the Bilin River, this is dangerous. (Source: CIDKP)

**Situation in Toungoo District**

"As of November 2001 the IDP population of Taungoo district was over 9,600 and with an increase of Burma Army activity in the district (mainly related to forced labor for road construction), this number will probably increase. There are three major road projects ongoing in the eastern part of Toungoo district. Each of these road projects entails the use of forced labor. The SPDC is building a road from the city of Taungoo (site of a Divisional HQ), to the city of Mawchi in Karenni State. The road is not yet complete but when it is it will connect the two areas with a year around road. There are still 27 miles of un-navigable tract. (Near Mawchi in the Karenni State, the SPDC force villagers to do road work, however they do pay each village headman 8,000 kyat and 2 sacks of rice for each mile of road cleared-70 feet wide by 1 mile long. This amount must be divided among the entire village and the entire village must work. No villager willingly works as this amounts to almost nothing per person. The work is not only difficult it also takes the villagers away from their fields and farms, jeopardizing their harvest). The second road is from Toungoo to Siday in the south central part of Toungoo district. This road also serves Bu Sa Kee where a Strategic Command HQ is located. The third road is a branch road off the Taungoo-Mawchi road, that when complete will link Taungoo

with Thandaung in the northeast. Thandaung is important as it quarters a Training HQ for officer, NCO, Land mine operations, guerrilla and SSS training programs. These roads in the north and central areas combined with the highway system to the west and the Kauk Kyi- Saw Hta road to the south, will when complete, enable the Burma army to exert greater pressure on the resistance forces as well IDPs hiding in the mountains.

There are now 15 battalions operating in this district. They conduct road building security missions, patrols and sweeps to find IDPs. The smallest force they usually travel with is 30 men and most often they operate with no less than a column of 100 men. Each column has at least 1 60mm mortor, 2-5 RPG-7s, M91 rifle grenadiers, 1-3 crew served light 7.62 machine guns and 5.56 automatic rifles of Burma manufacture (copies of G-3s and AK 47s). NCOs often carry M1 carbines. They also carry locally produced MM1 and MM2 anti-personnel mines (copies of Chinese mines) as well as mines supplied by China. There is a contingent of SSS ("short pants"-terror units). The SSS operate in mobile teams of 10 men (each of these 10 man units belong to a larger mobile force of 65-85 men), terrorizing villagers with summary executions, brutal interrogations, and the planting of land mines on village paths suspected to be used by the resistant forces. Each team is equipped with automatic weapons as well as 2 land mines each to place as needed. "They have a list of suspects and enter the village at midnight, tie up the victim, torture and interrogate him, then take to the riverside and kill him, throwing his body in the river....this is very terrifying for the people...they also lay in wait and capture people on the way to the market and kill them if they have a flashlight or plastic sheet as these items are thought to be headed to Karen resistance soldier.....on July 24 near Yee Thu Gyi village they killed two men on the trail, Mr. Apollo age 30 and another man I did not know, they were only farmers not Karen soldiers.", statement by a Karen man , Mae Ii, age 60, from Taungoo district. Each battalion of infantry must supply 10-20 men for the SSS program which is under the direct control of General Maung Ne who is in turn under the command of General Khin Nyunt in Rangoon." (Source: Burmanet)

**Situation of villagers hiding in the forests**

The villages in large areas of Toungoo District have been abandoned and their inhabitants have become internally displaced. In Than Daung township, the villagers north of the Kler Lah-Mawchi car road in the area east of the Day Loh River are all living in the forest; the villages north of Kler Lah as far as the Day Loh River were all originally relocated to Kler Lah, but many of them have fled back to their villages and are now living in the forest; and the villagers in northern Than Daung township who were relocated to Leit Tho have also fled back to their villages to live in the forest. Together, these areas comprise over half of Than Daung township. In Tantabin township, all of the villagers between the Kler Lah-Mawchi and Kler Lah-Bu Sah Kee car roads and many of the villages on both sides of the Yaw Loh River

are displaced and living in the forest. The villages along the route of the new road construction project from Bu Sah Kee to Ma La Daw appear to still be staying in their villages and facing the soldiers, but increased portering, forced labour, and extortion payments will probably result in these villagers also fleeing into the forest. There is also an area of displaced villagers near Swa Loh village and the Day Loh River, however the SPDC battalions in the area are actively cleaning them out.

The villages in the triangle between the Kler Lah-Mawchi and Kler Lah-Bu Sah Kee car roads are in an especially difficult situation. Most of the villages near the Kler Lah-Bu Sah Kee car road have been displaced since the project began in 1995. Now with the ongoing rebuilding of the Kler Lah-Mawchi car road, these villagers are sandwiched between the camps along the two roads. The villagers in Hsaw Wah Der, Ha Toh Per, Kho Kee, Hee Daw Khaw, Thay Ghee Lah, Sho Ser and Wah Soe were not able to plant crops in the year 2000 because of the close proximity of the new Army camps. Hsaw Wah Der and Ha Toh Per are only 30 minutes' walk from the nearest Army camp. This has caused a food shortage among these villagers.

The villagers in the forest live in small groups of one to seven families. Smaller numbers of people in one place means it is easier for them to hide when SPDC troops come near. Villagers are shot on sight if they are seen by the soldiers, so the villagers run whenever Burmese patrols come near. The SPDC's campaign against the villagers in the area began in earnest in the dry season of 1997 when the SPDC units were ordered to burn the villages east of the Day Loh River and north of the Kler Lah-Bu Sah Kee car road. Having done that, the battalions were ordered in 1998 to destroy the fields. This was to deny the villagers still hiding near their villages any means of growing food. The soldiers continued to destroy the fields in 1999, and they were assisted by early rains in April (before the fields have been properly prepared for planting) which did not stop until November, and strong winds which then blew down and destroyed much of the paddy when it grew tall. The result has been a desperate shortage of rice over the past year. In 2000 the SPDC troops used a new tactic, burning off the fields early before all the cut brush and trees have properly dried. In the Karen system of rotating hill fields, the scrub and trees which have grown since the field was last used are cut in January/February and are then left for 2 or 3 months to dry before burning; this ensures that the fields burn off evenly and the whole field can be used, and the new ash also provides protection for the seeds which are planted with the first rains. By searching out fields which the villagers have cut and burning them early, the soldiers have prevented the villagers from being able to properly burn off their whole fields, and have thereby ensured that there will be a bad harvest in 2000 and continued hunger in 2001. According to the KNU, orders have been given to the SPDC units in Tantabin township to find the hill fields and huts and burn them all as well as to plant landmines in the hill fields and shoot dead any villagers they see.

The military wants to force the villagers to come down out of the mountains to the relocation sites in order to deny the KNU a support base, while also bringing the civilians under direct control and making them available for forced labor. However, most of the villagers have already lived in the relocation sites or have heard about conditions there, so they are determined to hold out in the hills.

Aid is occasionally brought in from Thailand to the internally displaced villagers, but as the area is so remote and there are so many people, the aid is never enough and the problems are only getting worse. Each aid trip from Thailand requires a month or more of difficult and extremely dangerous hiking through landmine-infested areas avoiding SPDC patrols, and can only bring in enough supplies for 2 months for a small number of people. Only the villagers to the east of the Day Loh and Klay Loh Rivers can be reached with such aid.

There is no other place for the villagers to run to. In the other districts to the south there is the possibility of fleeing to Thailand, but the distance is just too far from Toungoo District and there are too many soldiers along the way. If the villagers flee westward to bigger villages or the plains they are at high risk of being caught along the way, and even if they make it they face arrest if the authorities find out they are from the hills. Some villagers who have fled to Toungoo town found that their relatives could not feed or protect them there, so they eventually fled back up into the mountains. As of July 2000 the number of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the district was estimated by a KHRG researcher at over 10,000. The researcher reported that in Than Daung township, from the Day Loh River to the Klay Loh River, there were more than 30 villages now abandoned with 4-5,000 villagers becoming IDPs, and in Tantabin township, there were nearly 30 such villages with another 4-5,000 villagers displaced. These are only the villagers that could be reached and counted. The villagers in the Leit Tho and Swa Loh areas, as well as those from relocation sites west of the Day Loh River and along the Toungoo-Kler Lah car road who have fled back to the area around their villages, were not counted and would add substantially to these figures.

Education for most of the hiding villagers is non-existent. In the villages closer to the Army camps, the villagers must be constantly ready to run and it isn't possible to set up a permanent school. At best, when there is some free time and the situation is relatively calm, some of the better educated parents gather the children in one of the houses or a forest clearing and teach them there. (Source: KHRG 2000)

In the second week of January 2001, a group of SPDC's (State Peace and Development Council) soldiers led by Lt.Col. San Myint from Infantry Battalion 73 shot and killed a 40-year-old woman in Hsaw Wah Der village. Naw Boe was collecting vegetables in the forest when a group of SPDC soldiers appeared and immediately opened fire on her. She was hit by the bullets and died on the spot. The

SPDC troops had previously classified that area as a free fire zone after forcibly relocating the villagers. Now the soldiers shoot anyone on sight who is found in this area and conduct regular patrols to search for villagers who remain in hiding near their villages. Villagers who do not go to the SPDC's designated relocation sites are considered resistance supporters. There are 25 SPDC battalions active in the area around Hsaw Wah Der village, Kaw Thay Der area, in Taungoo District. Most of the local villagers are farmers. (Source: CIDKP)

**Relocation Sites in Toungoo District**

There are 9 relocation sites around Taungoo and 6 new relocation sites. In one of the newest ones (Yee-Tha-Gong/ Klaw Mee Dur), the IDPs were forced to fence in the site, live under a curfew and are forced to provide labor for local road projects. This site is under the direct control of LIB 73. LIB 73 was also the battalion that on August 27th 2001 looted Yee Da Gong village and stole all the money from the church. The 6 new sites are; Aung Myin Ywa, Tha Bya Nyu, Ye Tha Go, Daw Ga Li Gyi, Na Ka Mau, and Ya Za Ka. In the Thandaung area only one original village remains, the rest have been abandoned or their inhabitants forced to enter relocation sites. In the Tantabin area there are only 2 original villages remaining. (Source: Burmanet)

The villages of Kler Lah and Kaw Thay Der, which have reached agreements with the SPDC, and are supposedly "peace" villages, include large numbers of forcibly relocated villagers.

**Kler Lah Relocation Site**

In 1998 the villages of Maw Ko Der, Peh Kaw Der, Der Doh, Naw Thay Der, Klay Soe Kee, Thay Kaw Der and Ku Pler Der were forcibly relocated to Kler Lah and not allowed to return home. These villages each now occupy their own ground around the perimeter of Kler Lah village and keep their own headmen, but are often referred to by the SPDC simply as sections of Kler Lah village, and both the original inhabitants and the relocated villagers are now considered as "*Nyein Chan Yay" (peace)* villagers.

**Forced Labor, travel restriction, and looting at Kler Lah**

Relocated villagers are looked on by the military as a convenient pool of forced labor, and these relocations have turned Kler Lah and Kaw Thay Der into large forced labor camps. Villagers there are taken daily to carry supplies to the Army camps along the Kler Lah-Bu Sah Kee and Kler Lah-Mawchi car roads, and to work on these car roads in the dry season. A new dam project, which has begun on the Day Loh River near Pa Leh Wah, will probably result in the forcible relocation of more villages in the area. As of October 2000, there were already reports that forced labour is being used on the project.

Many of the villagers relocated to Kler Lah in recent years have already fled back to their villages due to the heavy demands for forced labor and extortion money imposed on them in Kler Lah. They must work at daily labor to get enough money to pay the fees, while still trying to find time to work a field so they will have enough rice to eat after harvest time. Travel outside the village is heavily restricted, villagers need passes to go anywhere and these often force them to be back by sunset, or at best within a few days. The villagers growing cash crops have seen their plantations looted and their produce sold for the soldiers' profit. This is compounded by the rising prices of rice and commodities. Inflation has caused the prices of goods throughout Burma to rise, but in Toungoo District it is particularly bad because of the extortion 'fees' which traders must pay to every one of the many Army checkpoints on the road up from Toungoo to Kler Lah and beyond. Facing all of these problems, many of the relocated villagers felt that they could plant bigger plots if they stayed in hiding in the forest, and that they would be able to spend more time working in their fields without all the forced labor and movement restrictions they face in a *Nyein Chan Yay* village. Fear of forced labour on the roads to Mawchi and Bu Sah Kee is also a major factor in the decision to flee for many villagers.

**Education at Kler Lah**

The high school in Kler Lah has only three teachers. Often the teachers' salaries, while officially paid by the SPDC, really come from money demanded by the authorities. Because the schools are understaffed, the villagers often hire better-educated people from within the village to teach in the schools alongside the SPDC teachers. All of the students' school supplies and textbooks have to be bought and school fees have to be paid by the parents. Faced with forced labor, extortion and all the other problems in the region, most families don't have enough money left to pay the costs of sending their children to school. The unstable situation also forces many parents to keep their children at home or to send them to work in the fields. Enrollment at Kler Lah school has dropped because many of the students have fled into the forest with their parents.

**Health at Kler Lah**

The hospital in Kler Lah is called the *"Tine Ni Say Yone"* (Township Hospital) and has been actively promoted by the authorities. It has one doctor, a head nurse, and some other nurses, but no medicine. The villagers who go to the hospital are asked to give a 'donation' and then allowed to buy medicine. What little medicine the hospital has is sold at the market price, but most medicines have to be bought outside and then brought back in to be administered. Most of the villagers are not able to buy medicines due to their lack of income. Seriously ill villagers, if they can afford it, are taken by their family or friends to Toungoo to the *Pyithu Sit* (Militia) Hospital. This hospital doesn't have much medicine either, and the villagers have to pay for service or they will not even be admitted. It is common in Burma for patients

to have to pay to be seen by the doctors as well as for the medicine, and to be ejected from hospitals when they run out of funds even if they have not fully recovered.

Villagers who were relocated to Kler Lah in 1998 have reported that many of the old people have died since being relocated and many of the other villagers are sick. There is an increased health risk in Kler Lah and the other relocation sites due to the relocation of so many people to one place. There is also a higher chance of contracting malaria or diseases and infections related to poor sanitation and a general lack of basic health education. Older people who have lived their whole lives higher in the cold of the hills cannot adapt to the different climate and diseases of lower areas, and once displaced in a relocation site people no longer know which sources of water are good and which are contaminated. Many of the villagers don't have enough rice or other foods to eat, so there are high rates of malnutrition and vitamin deficiency. The heavy labor demands levied by the military do not give the villagers much of a chance to rest. (Source: KHRG 2000)

**Situation in Mergui-Tavoy District**

On 16 April 16 2001, a troop from Burma army's Infantry Battalion 280 led by Khin Maung Aye arrived to a villagers' hiding site, Ka Hkee, east of Palaw township, Mergui district, and shot to death a villager name Saw Paw Bwe, 40 years old and then burnt him down in his house. (Source: CIDKP)

# 13.5 Situation in Karenni State

**Brief summery of the situation of Internally Displaced Persons in Karenni**

Currently in Karenni State there are three types of displacement: conflict-induced; development-induced; and displacement arising as a result of resource scarcity. Conflict exists in these areas as a result of the Karenni National Progressive Party's (KNPP) efforts to cecede from the central government. These efforts have been strongly resisted by the military government, with displacement used as a tool since the 1960s to secure areas from rebel forces. This displacement has included the confiscation of land and natural resources by the military, greatly impoverishing local communities.

The successive military regimes of Burma have three times carried out forced relocation programs in Karenni State. First under the BSPP, particularly in No. (2) District of Karenni State, when an estimated 50 villages were destroyed and burnt down and tens of thousands of villagers in the area became homeless. Second, under the SLORC, who forcibly relocated many villages in No. (3) District of Karenni State, and about 500 of the villagers in the area died from diseases such as malaria and diarrhea. Then in 1996, the military government again carried out its forced relocation program across the Karenni area. A forced relocation order with the deadline of July 7, was first given to villagers living between the Salween and

Pon rivers, the two major rivers in Karenni State. According to the order, the villagers had to leave their villages in seven days and go to forced relocation sites designated by SPDC. The villagers were warned that seven days after the order, the area would be declared a free-fire zone, and anyone found in the villages or in the free-fire zone would be considered a rebel and shot dead on sight. In the year 2000, the SPDC allowed many Karenni people who had been living in forced relocation sites since 1996 to go back to their own villages. The villagers however, were ordered to report to the nearest SPDC outposts at least once a week. Currently, they are not allowed to stay over night at their farms, and are required to possess passes, which cost 20 kyat in order to travel to their farms during the day. Villagers are prohibited from carrying military uniforms or traditional guns used for hunting, and from trading in medicine or batteries, and the purchasing and selling of rice is restricted. Villagers are allowed to travel from village to village only twice a week-on Tuesday and Thursday. When they travel they are checked for their National ID cards, and are required to pay 20 kyat at every checkpoint.

According to a representative of the Karenni people who spoke with Christian Solidarity Worldwide in late 2000: "It was noted that the situation in the Karenni State is worsening. No NGOs are working there although the ICRC is trying to. The SPDC has closed many of the Relocation Camps. Starvation is a problem with hundreds dying. Villages and harvests have been destroyed, and livelihoods lost to the extent that some people were reduced to begging. Large numbers of land mines have been laid by the SPDC, killing and maiming people and animals. However, cross-border attacks on Karenni camps had not taken place since 1998, possibly due to SPDC awareness of world (and Thai) opinion. Fear was expressed concerning the repatriation of the Karenni within 3 years mooted by some Thai politicians. The SPDC continues to view the Karenni refugees as rebels rather than refugees, hindering negotiations to return." (CSW November 2000)

**Villagers displaced by government infrastructure projects**

"Recent data indicate that while villagers have been displaced by fighting, it is also government-initiated development schemes, aimed at separating people from non-state groups by forcing them into relocation sites, that has resulted in most displacements since 1960s. These schemes were responsible for the wide-scale displacement of about 25,206 people in 1996 alone. Of these, 11,669 are known to have moved to relocation sites, 4,400 were registered in refugee camps and a further 9,137 unaccounted for. Since 1998, many IDPs have moved out of relocation sites back to their villages (some voluntarily, while others have been ordered back) or to refugee camps in Thailand. (BERG September 2000)

"Another project that caused an unknown number of displacements was the rail link between Loikaw and Aung Ban on the border with Shan state. Work on the railway, which is 40 kilometres long, started in 1991 and was completed in 1994. During this time, 31 acres of farmland plus 9 acres of land in Loikaw city were requisitioned to make way for the line [...] A further 24 households were displaced in Loikaw to make way for additional but unspecified transport infrastructure projects. In each case no compensation was made. In addition to the displacements which came about directly as a result of the railway, the building of the embankments disrupted (in some cases blocked) irrigation systems and supplies of water to local farms. This then resulted in a further voluntary displacement, the extent of which is not known." (BERG May 2000)

"Land ownership is extremely fragmented and a significant proportion of the population is landless in Karenni State. There are large numbers of displaced connected to economic interests in the area. With an economy based on access to teak resources - and of equal importance, hydro-electric power and mining concessions - the government has in some cases taken steps to pacify areas, quelling so-called 'insurgency' problems before undertaking investment in the areas. Much of this displacement is carried out in military style outside any civil or legal framework. Moreover, the deterioration of the formal economy has fostered the growth of an extra-legal state economy, focused on the extraction of natural resources that all groups, including the state, rely on. In the absence of lasting and substantive peace, the displacement of civilians is likely to continue. The current cease-fire agreements in the state appear to be ad hoc economic deals rather than a process aimed at political resolution and peaceful reintegration. The cease-fires in fact have allowed armed groups to legitimise their the extra-legal state economy and added to further factionalism in the competition for increasingly scarce resources." (BERG September 2000)

**Situation in Relocation Sites**

Relocation sites have been scattered throughout the state at Shadaw, Ywathit, Mawchi, Pah Saung, Baw La Keh, Kay Lia, Mar Kraw She, Tee Po Kloh and Nwa La Bo. As more villages were relocated, more sites such as Daw Dta Hay were created. All were under complete control of the Army, usually located adjacent to new or existing Army bases. Although living in the jungle was fraught with problems associated with the danger of the patrols and finding food to eat, some people still tried to remain there, but many gave in to the order and moved to the relocation sites. Conditions at the relocation sites were extremely basic, with the lack of proper shelters, pure drinking water, and little food or medicine contributing to many deaths from starvation and illness. At each of the large sites, there is evidence of an intention to provide health care to IDPs, either at a health facility inside the site or at a nearby health centre. In practice, however, given the general constraints to the public health system, services were not utilised well.

With facilities both under-equipped and under-supplied, health care providers were often left to do the best they could. In some of the other sites, such as Htee Poh Kloh and Mar Kraw Shay, refugees said there were no health facilities at all.

Approximately, 1000 villagers in No. (1) District alone died in both forced relocation sites and hideouts. International relief organizations have no access to the sites. Leaders from a couple of local churches tried to provide food and other needed materials for the villagers in the hideouts but they were not allowed to do so. The villagers were not allowed to go out of the sites to farm. Recently, villagers from some sites have been allowed to farm outside the sites, but they must return at the end of the day. The villagers also face forced labor and portering. A certain number of villagers have to go to the nearest strongholds of the SPDC everyday where they are forced to offer free labor such as digging trenches, making fences, fetching water and collecting firewood. Women and children are also made to do forced labor.

Perimeters of the relocation sites are reportedly largely left unguarded and the fences that the villagers are often forced to build are primarily around the army camps and not the actual relocation sites. Troops are lax in securing the camp perimeters realizing that villagers have no choice but to forage for food outside the camps. This is often used by the villagers as a chance to flee the relocation site and go into hiding in the jungle, usually near their old villages. The continual flight of residents has been ongoing since the relocation sites were first established, and many villagers report that a large number of people have already left the relocation sites in search of food and that the current populations of the relocation sites are much less than what they were initially. (NCGUB, KNAHR)

By November 2000 CSW was reporting that most of the relocation camps in Karenni State, apart from the two largest at Shadow and Mawchi, had been closed down, because the SPDC could no longer supply them with food. The majority of IDPs who had been forced to live in these Relocation Camps were forbidden to return to their villages, which for the most part had been destroyed. They therefore joined the large population of nomadic IDPs trying to survive while hiding in the rain forests near the Thai border.

*A leader of a team who had returned from taking aid to IDPs inside Karenni State says the following about the situation:*

"…the conditions of the IDPs were most severe. Many have little food, no access to medical care, and malnutrition is widespread amongst the children. The people driven from the Relocation Camps are allowed neither torches nor any hunting weapons. A few have returned to their villages in an attempt to rebuild their homes and dislocated lives. Some have been injured by land mines placed around the village. Some have rebuilt their homes, only to have them wrecked again by SPDC

units as soon as they have been rebuilt. In the south part of Karenni state, bordering with Karen territory, some areas are under KNU control, and IDPs have been able to buy a little food and some have found work with Burmese traders, herding buffalo or cattle into Thailand (these mostly originate in India and are herded for weeks across Burma into Thailand where they are sold). (CSW November 2000)

**Situation of IDPs in Hiding**

A large number of villagers who were ordered to leave their villages in 1996 remain displaced outside relocation sites. In the first few months following the order to relocate, there were at least 13,537 IDPs living in hiding. These villagers find their lives are in great danger as they are constantly being hunted by SPDC troops. While on the run and in hiding the villagers suffer from many kinds of diseases such as malaria, diarrhea and skin infections. Many villagers have died from treatable diseases. Villagers fall ill frequently due to lack of proper shelter. They are all the time on the move, especially when SPDC troops approach their hideouts. While on the move, villagers have to travel in all kinds of weather, sleep on the ground, eat what they find in the jungle and drink impure water. Many IDPs in hiding have also died from starvation, as most are not able to farm. These IDPs also have no access to education. Some communities in may be able to set up a kind of makeshift way for the children to study, but they cannot keep up this way of studying when attacks and hunting from the SPDC come. Killing of innocent people, destruction of villages, looting of property and making the people's lives miserable are signs of genocide by the SPDC against the Karenni people. Shortly after the relocation orders in 1996, the military launched a campaign to find IDPs in hiding and force them into relocation sites. As part of this effort, soldiers destroyed rice supplies, domestic animals and fruit trees in the deserted villages. Two years later, in May and June of 1998, there was a further attempt at forcing IDPs into relocations sites, which caused some 87 IDPs to flee to refugee camps on the Thai border.

**Villagers ordered to relocate**

The Pakyeh village chief received a verbal order from the Burmese commander of LIB No. 250 on July 7, 2001 and saying that all families in the village must move at the latest by July 30 without fail. If they failed to move by the given date, they would face direct action. The Burmese commander gave no reason for moving the village. (Source: KNAHR)

## 13.6 Situation in Mon State

"In Mon State, the ethnic Mon have suffered serious displacement after nationalists under the New Mon State Party (NMSP), took up arms against the military government after the 1962 military coup. Reported to be more urbanised than either Karen or Karenni State to the north, where inhabitants are mainly rural dwellers, forcible or compulsory displacement has occurred largely in urban areas, such as Moulemein city. While displacement in rural areas has taken place, its incidence has decreased since the cease-fire between the government and NMSP in 1995 - which has held generally with the exception of areas overlapping with Karen-insurgent-held areas."(BERG September 2000)

"The Mon, numbering about two million, are descended from the ancient Mon-Khmer civilization. They first took up arms in 1948 and have been represented by the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and its armed wing, the Mon National Liberation Army, since 1958. When Mon refugees first arrived in Thailand, the NMSP followed the KNU [Karen] example and formed their own Mon National Relief Committee to organize the refugees and coordinate assistance. In June 1995 the NMSP signed a cease-fire agreement with the SLORC, which allowed them to retain their arms in small pockets of territory in Mon state. The agreement also included the repatriation of Mon refugees in Thailand which was completed a year later, though since the refugees did not feel safe to return to their homes and instead established camps in NMSP-controlled areas, as of July 1998 they remained internally displaced in Burma....

While military offensives were the major cause of Mon refugee outflows in the 1980s, by 1992 - when the NMSP had already lost much of its former territory - forced labor, forced relocations, arbitrary taxation, and the extrajudicial execution of villagers suspected of assisting Mon soldiers were the main causes of flight. The SLORC set about developing the Mon state and Tenasserim division peninsular, embarking on a massive program of road and railroad construction and clearing economically important areas of people who might support the Mon and Karen ethnic armies. The single most common reason for flight over the next five years was the construction of the railroad between Ye and Tavoy (a distance of 160 kilometers). In late 1993 the SLORC started rounding up villagers in Mon state to provide labor to build the railroad, and as of May 1998 the use of forced labor on this project was continuing. Over this period of time, thousands of Mon, Karen, and Tavoyan villagers were forced to work at the site for up to two weeks per month, sometimes more. As in other forced labor projects, the villagers were forced to find their own transportation to the site, take with them their own tools and food for the duration of their stay, and work without pay until their allotted section of work was complete. Villages nearest the site were targeted first, but as the project continued, people from further afield were used. The work was overseen by Tatmadaw soldiers,

who often beat people considered not to be working hard enough, and there were few safety precautions, so that laborers sometimes died in accidents and landslides. After months of such work, during which time they were no longer able to tend their fields, villagers lost the ability to sustain themselves and had no option but to flee to Thailand....

The other major development project that affected the Mon was the gas pipeline that was to be built to carry natural gas from the Gulf of Martaban across Burma and into Thailand. The original route was to have taken the pipeline to Three Pagodas Pass, though a shorter land route coming out further south at Nat Ei Daung was finally agreed upon. Nevertheless, in preparation for the pipeline, which would be vulnerable to attack by ethnic minority forces, Mon and Karen villages were forced to relocate, and in 1995, the SLORC created a new army command position, the Tenasserim Coastal Military Command, whose headquarters were in Tavoy. The increase in Tatmadaw soldiers in the area led to an immediate increase in the forced recruitment of civilians as porters and as laborers to build new army barracks in the region, and this contributed to refugee outflows from 1994 onwards." (Source: HRW: "The Ethnic Minorities" & "The Mon,"September 1998)

In most cases, whenever forced relocation happens in rural area in Mon State, the commanders who order the villagers to leave their homes do not give the villagers a place they need to move to. Instead they tell the villagers that they can resettle anywhere, as long as it is not in the area of their former village. Some villages are accused of being rebel bases and villagers are suspected of being rebel-supporters. These villagers suffer more than other villagers from torture and killing by the SPDC, and those villagers who are afraid of being killed and tortured try to leave the village. For example in 2001 HURFOM reported that *"Ah-mae village in Yebyu Township has been accused as a rebel base for a Mon splinter group and the villagers and village headmen were always beaten by soldiers from IB No. 104. Some villagers were killed by soldiers. Because of systematic persecution against this village community, the villagers from that village have gradually fled to another area, especially, to NMSP control area."*

Sometimes after villagers have been displaced they try to return to their original villages despite the dangers, to harvest cash crops such as betel-nut, and coconut, or to try and cultivate paddy in the fields. When the battalion that ordered them to leave their village is replaced with a new battalion, IDPS are in some cases able to return to their homes, and if the new battalions are less brutal than the previous ones, they can stay longer in their villages. When more brutal battalions come, they flee again. Population displacement is a main problem in southern Burma especially in Karen State, in some part of Mon State and most parts of Tenasserim Division. (Source: HURFOM)

**SPDC destroys IDP settlement**

On the morning of November 27, 2001, about 120 troops from Burmese Army's IB No. 62 led by Lt. Col. Wai Tun burnt down 32 houses in a Karen village called Htee-wah-doe, which is situated about 5 kilometers from the border with Thailand's Sangkhlaburi District. Troops from IB No. 62 arrived at the village on October 25th, searching for KNLA troops and a recent Mon splinter faction led by Col. Pan Nyunt. When they could not find any rebel soldiers, the commander ordered his men to burn down the village. The troops burned and looted houses, a hospital, and a school, and arrested 15 Karen villagers. Some were forced to act as porters for the army and several are still missing. One man suffered a bullet wound in his leg, which was eventually amputated. Some 500 villagers who feared arrest and torture by the Burmese soldiers had already fled into Halockhani Mon village before the arrival of the Burmese army. After the Burmese army burnt down their village, all 300 remaining villagers fled to Halockhani to seek haven under New Mon State Party (NMSP) protection. The IB No. 62 commander warned that they would come back to the village later to check for rebel activities. Currently, over 800 villagers are living displaced in makeshift shelters in Halockani. While the troops were in the village, they stole villagers' belongings and took livestock. The Halockhani resettlement site is populated with Mon refugees who were spontaneously resettled during the NMSP-SPDC ceasefire.

Htee-wah-doe village was established by displaced villagers, who fled from mostly Kya Inn Seikyi Township of Karen State after the 1997 dry season offensives launched by Burmese Army. Following the attack, the Burmese government gave the Karen civilians an ultimatum to either remain near Htee Wah Doh or go to an area to the north under government control. Amnesty International released a statement about the incident stating that: "Neither option is secure for these people, who are literally caught between two countries, with nowhere safe to go...It is imperative that the Thai Government immediately allow them ... to enter a Karen refugee camp for protection.'' (Source: AI, Independent Mon News Agency)

**Forced Relocation for government construction projects**

In the first week of March 2001, Township PDC authorities forcibly relocated three Mon villages in Paung Township with a plan to construct a dam, rendering about 3300 villagers from 350 families homeless. The villages which were relocated include : (1)Kadeik, (2) Inn-myaung and (3) Kyaukyetwin. They were situated in the eastern part of the township, beneath the Kalarma Mountain Range. During the relocation of villagers, the authorities did not provide any compensation cost and or set up resettlement places for them. Instead they just ordered them to leave their villages and stay anywhere within the "army zone'. Most of the villagers moved into villages where they had relatives and friends. Those relocated were given about one week to move from their villages. About 350 families were displaced by the SPDC's

development project; including about 200 families from Ka-deik village, 150 families from Inn-myaung village and 300 families from Kyauk-ye-twin village. The displaced villagers are Mon ethnic people who have lived in these villages since before Burma gained independence. In Mon State, because of development projects, such as the construction of roads, dams, water canals, bridge, etc the Mon State PDC authorities frequently confiscate lands by force or order the landowners to abandon their lands and houses. Most of these projects are implemented under the name "border area development program." (Source: HURFOM)

On 1 October 2001, over one hundred houses were destroyed and their inhabitants relocated by SPDC authorities in Moulmein, Mon State, in the course of a road construction project that includes the building of a guest house and a bridge. According to a notice issued by the Moulmein Township Peace and Development Council on 1 October, nearly 130 houses in Kyet Tan ward, on the bank of Salween river, were slated to be destroyed and the inhabitants were ordered to move immediately. This relocation caused a loss of 650 million Kyats (about 1 million U.S.dollars) worth of property. About 700 people (inhabitants of 128 houses) were moved to Kywe Chan Khone, six miles to the west of Moulmein. At their relocation destination, the displaced people were not provided with houses or clean water. The relocation site consists of a swampy plot of land. SPDC authorities did not compensate for losses incurred by relocation and did not cover the cost of transportation to the relocation site. While plans had been aired previously to start construction in Kye Tan ward, on 2 October Moulmein authorities also gave notice that Hlaing ward and Shwe Pyi Aye ward (encompassing a total of 300 houses) were to be evacuated so that construction on these sites could commence in November and December. (Source: Mizzima)

## 13.7 Situation in Sagaing Division

"...In Sagaing Division, the designated administrative boundaries of the division conceal the ethnic diversity within its borders and the internal displacement which has occurred. Many Naga people, estimated to be around 100,000 strong in total, populate the four northern townships of the division, near the town of Khamti and the Patkai mountain range […]. Fighting for an independent Nagaland in both India and Burma, and facing increased internal divisions, the Naga have suffered significant conflict-related displacement. In the last six years particularly along the Khamti-Tekai road, numerous Naga villages have been displaced after fighting between SPDC and Naga insurgent forces.... It is estimated that up to 1,300 villagers have been displaced and fighting seems presently to have increased with recent reports of a military crackdown on villages in Eastern Nagaland. The construction of the Kalay-Gangaw railway line in Sagaing Division illustrates clearly that the problems of forced displacement are not only confined to the war-affected zones. The line crosses mostly flat farmland and paddy fields; these were

destroyed without any compensation being paid by the national government." (BERG, September 2000)

**Racially selective settlement and relocation being implemented in Kalay-Tamu Area**

Since March 2001 the State peace and Development Council in Sagaing Division has established three new villages between Kalay and Tamu town. Only Burmese Buddhists have been allowed to settle in the new villages, despite the fact that the surrounding areas have been co-inhabited by ethnic Chin and people of Shan-Bama decent. The names of the three villages are Yanmyo-Aung, Yantaing-Aung, and Yanngein-Aung. These names literally translate to mean "conquest of the enemy," and reportedly were chosen by the SPDC based on superstitious astronomical reading. The area is mostly inhabited by Chin and Shan-bamas and the surrounding the villages are surrounded by much virgin land and forest. However, the non-Burmese inhabitants in the area are prohibited from extending their farms or ploughing the virgin land.

The SPDC has persuaded (Burman) people from Minkin township of Magwe division to settle in the new villages, promising them that they will be given whatever they need. Since January 2001, the SPDC authorities have seized goods and commodities from non-Burman residents, including: rice, cooking oil, bicycles, medicines and farm animals, from local traders and villagers. The SPDC than gave these stolen items to the new settlers in the three villages.

According to "U Than Aung," a 60 year old Burmese farmer from Tamu township, people from all the nearby villages have been forced to work in the three new villages since March 2001. The villagers have to build schools and houses, as well as dig wells, cut wood, and plough the farms for the new settlers. (Date of interview with U Than Aung, 11 August 2001).(Source: CHRO Volume IV. No.V. Sept- Oct 2001)

# 13.8 Situation in Shan State

In 1996 the SPDC delineated a huge area of Shan State, and ordered the forced relocation and destruction of every village in the region. The villagers were forced to move into sites more directly under SPDC control. By 1998 over 1,400 villages in 8 townships had been forcibly relocated and destroyed, displacing a population of at least 300,000 people. Since that time, the forced relocation has continued, although not on such a large scale. "For the last three years Amnesty International has documented this pattern of forced relocation and other attendant human rights violations in the Shan State. Other non-governmental organizations have also extensively reported on these incidents, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar and a number of governments have repeatedly raised the issue. However it is

regrettable that despite widespread calls from the international community, no improvement in this pattern of violations has occurred in the Shan State or in any other area of Myanmar." (AI July 2001)

"Some villages have been issued written orders to move, but in most cases the order is just given orally by the local military officer or a passing patrol. Sometimes village leaders of several villages in an area are summoned to meetings and given orders to relocate. The order generally allows them three to seven days, sometimes longer, to get out of their village, after which they are told that all belongings will be destroyed and all villagers shot on sight. The officers give reasons for the relocation, usually accusing the villagers of harboring Shan soldiers or telling them that the civilians must be cleared out so the Shan soldiers can be killed, though in many cases these villages have had little or no contact with Shan soldiers. In the earlier relocations, many villages were ordered to move to more central "consolidation villages", and many others were simply driven out without being told where to go. More recently in 1998, most villages being relocated are being ordered to empty fields beside army camps, motor roads, or large towns such as Kun Hing and Lai Kha, rather than to other villages. Most villagers begin moving their belongings immediately, making several trips to save as much of their food supplies and possessions as possible before the deadline. Those without bullock carts or "trologies" (small motorized Chinese tractors which can haul small carts) find it very difficult to save their possessions in time, particularly if it is a full day's walk or further to the relocation site. In some cases, SPDC troops have confiscated everyone's rice supplies just before the move, then redistributed only a small part of it back to the villagers once they arrive at the relocation site." (NCGUB 1999)

"There are various patterns of displacement for the Shan villagers who have been forcibly relocated from their homes. There are basically four alternatives, which are detailed below. However, many of the displaced have not chosen a single alternative, but have chosen more than one or, in some cases, even tried all four, in different orders. Thus, there are countless variations on the patterns of displacement.

**Moving to the relocation sites**

The term "relocation sites" refers to the sites designated by SLORC/SPDC troops to which the relocated villagers were forced to move. These were usually areas of bare land near towns, main roads and army bases where nothing at all was provided for them by the local authorities.

**Going into hiding**

One option for the villagers ordered to move was simply to go into hiding in the jungles near their villages, and then lead a precarious existence dodging Burma Army patrols while seeking to continue cultivating their crops.

**Moving to towns or other areas of Shan State (outside of relocation sites)**

Some forcibly relocated villagers moved straight to towns. The main factor influencing whether people did this was either money, which meant that they could afford to purchase land or housing there, or else having relatives in towns with whom they could stay, and perhaps find work.Other people moved to villages on the periphery of the area of forced relocation, which they felt would be safe from relocation because they were under the control of the ceasefire organisations such as the Shan State Army, the Shan State National Army, the Shan Nationalities People's Liberation Organisation or the Pa-O National Army.

**Moving to Thailand**

There has long been a pattern of migration of Shans to Thailand to find work, as particularly during the time of economic expansion before 1997 there was a huge demand for migrant labour. Thus, despite the fact that there are no refugee camps on the Shan-Thai border, Thailand was thus the obvious place for many of the relocated villagers to flee for survival, as opposed to some of the other neighbouring countries such as Laos and China." (SHRF 1999, pp. 6-9)

"Over three quarters of refugees interviewed by Amnesty International [in 1999] had been forcibly relocated from their home villages in Murngnai, Kunhing, Laikha, Kaesee, Murngton townships. Most of these people had initially gone to designated relocation sites near towns or military bases, but had eventually found it impossible to survive there. Of the 300,000 relocated civilians in the Shan State, there are approximately 100,000 people in relocation sites, about 50,000 people hiding in the forest, some 50,000 people who have fled to other areas, and over 100,000 who have escaped to Thailand. Most of these people have been deprived of the right to earn a livelihood, after they were pushed off land where they cultivated rice and raised livestock." (AI June 1999, "Update on the Shan State")

Since 23 October 2001, the SPDC has been conducting a year-long project to connect Hsihseng and Mongnai. 900 villagers, 150 from each of the six townships in the area: Namzang, Mongnai, Hsihseng, Mawkmai, Langkher and Mongpan, have been forced to work on the 103-mile section between Hsaikhao (Hsihseng township) and Mongnai. In addition to having to bring their own food for 2 weeks, they were required to bring knives and digging material. "Even women are not exempted," said one source. "At least 200 among the first shift were women."

Villagers in Shan state report that the most oppressive SPDC action is the rice procurement policy which requires them to sell their farm products at prices far lower than market prices. “They instructed us to tell the ILO (high-level team) that we were doing all this out of our love for the army,” said another. “But how much more do we have to love them?”

People who fail to meet the official rice quota were punished by imprisonment in Hsipaw. There were isolated protests about this policy throughout the year, including one in Hsihseng on 15 January, when a number of protesting farmers were reportedly jailed. An official from Taunggyi later said to the farmers: “You don’t own the land. You are only using the land owned by the State with its permission.” (Source: SHRF)

**Situation in Kengtawng, Mongnai Township**

On 13 October 2001 Sir Stephen Ninian, a member of the ILO High Level Team sent an inquiry to Senior Gen Than Shwe regarding a report by the Shan Human Rights Foundation about the killing of 7 people by SPDC soldiers in Kengtawng, Mongnai township, on 14 July. The villagers in the area had earlier lodged a complaint with the SPDC military authorities about the increasing use of forced labor, despite government orders against it. SPDC Deputy Foreign Minister Khin Maung Win responded on 27 November that “thorough investigations” had revealed that the report of the killings was “baseless and false”. Despite official denial of this incident, reports of forced labor and multiple other human rights abuses were received by S.H.A.N. from all parts of Shan State throughout 2001. The most notable abuses occured in connection with the Kengtawng Urban Project, the Hsaikhao-Mongnai railway project and the SPDC rice procurement policy in Shan State.

Kengtawng, on the basin of the Namteng, one of the Salween tributaries, is situated among five towns: Namzang, Kunhing in the north and Mongnai, Langkher and Mongpan in the south. Its waterfall, Zong-arng, is the biggest in Shan State, 975 ft with an estimated generating capacity of 60 mega-watts. Thousands of relocated villagers who have now been allowed to return to the area are being forced to labor in the following activities: road building, logging, construction of barracks, digging trenches, putting up fences, tending fields owned by the military, taking turns in the sentry-boxes, serving as “firefighters” and growing opium poppies for the military. Villagers in the area were also forced to leave their homes for two weeks in December and travel with the military to lower Burma while their fields at home were left untended.

Relief workers in Thailand report that thousands of the Shan refugees who arrived at the border during 2001 were from Kengtawng. “If people were executed for telling the commanders about forced labor,” said one, “we feel sure the situation there must be really serious.” (Source: SHRF)

**Forced Displacement in Murng-Sart and Murg-Phyak**

On 3 March 2001, about 500 Shan villagers, including men, women and children, were driven out of their villages by SPDC troops from IB330 and IB224, causing them to seek refuge along the border in Thailand's Chiangrai Province. The refugees were from Murng Tum, Murng Kaan, Murng Long and Naa Yaao villages in Murng-Sart township and Murng Kok and Murng Lung villages in Murng-Phyak township. On March 31 and April 1, SPDC troops had gone to those villages and ordered them to move out within 24 hours. Any village that failed to move in time would be burned down. The refugees reached Thailand on March 3 and are still camping at the place near Mae Maw village. The refugees are facing difficulties trying to get work to feed their families because there is little wage-earning work and no land to farm in the area. (Source: SHRF)

**Mass Relocation of Wa people to southern Shan State**

Beginning in October 1999, the SPDC and the United Wa State Army, which is described by the US State Department as a leading drug-trafficking syndicate, began cooperating in an unprecedented 3 year program to relocate 50,000 ethnic Wa families from the Wa region in northern Shan State near the Chinese border to Mongton and Mongsat townships in southern Shan State. This would effectively displace half the population in the region, which consists of Mongmai, Pangwai, Manhpang, Nahparn, Pangyang and Mangseng Townships. Although the joint UWSA and SPDC authorities claimed the program was part of a drug eradication plan, Laoyi, 68, one of the new resettlers, told S.H.A.N., "*Nothing was spoken about drug eradication. They told us the trans-Salween areas were historically ours and we needed to reclaim them. And that the soil was richer than the barren hills in the north. They said they were planning to bring down 50,000 families. So we moved down here with our families although we hated to leave our homes and fields.*" The relocations were compulsory, but many of the Wa people reportedly came willingly because of the promises made by their leaders that land and loans for a whole year were guaranteed.

However there are reports that not all Wa settlers came willingly, or recieved what was promised to them. An 86 year old Wa settler, who arrived in July 2001 in Mongton, said: "The Wa soldiers trained their rifles at us and told us to get on board the trucks. We didn't even have time to collect our belongings. They also told us we would receive assistance here, but from what we've heard from those who arrived before us, the assistance is only in name. They said many of them have survived only through eating bamboo shoots, edible leaves and tuberous roots."

More than 5,000 of those resettled have also reportedly succumbed to malaria and diarrhea during the past two years. Arrival in the new land has also not contributed to the end of the poppy culture, which was one of the aims and objectives of the program. "When we were in our former village, they said we would not be able to

grow opium," said Ya Kap from Pangwai who arrived in 1999, "but we could grow rice and we could get as many fields as we wanted. But when we arrived at the new place, the Wa organization and SPDC made an agreement that we were able to grow opium for three years because we could not yet grow other crops." (Excerpt from Interview by Lahu National Development Organization, 2001).

During 2001 a Lahu research team reported that more than 100,000 people from the Wa region in the north were resettled to 5 townships in eastern Shan State; Mongton, Monghsat, Tachilek, Mongpiang and Kengtung; and in other townships east of the Salween, south of the Wa region including: Mongyang, Mongyawng, Monghpyak and Mongkhark. Burmanet estimates that some 50,000 Wa families, or about 200,000 men, women and children, have been settled along the border of Chiang Rai province since late 1999 as part of the SPDC's mass migration policy. Most of the Wa migrants have settled in new border towns, such as Mong Yawn and Mong Mai, but others have moved into villages and farms once occupied by Shan, such as Mong Klan, Mong Thon and Mong Hsat. When the Wa move into Shan territory, they reportedly tell the displaced Shan families that they have been given permission from Lieutenant General Khin Nyunt, First Secretary of the ruling junta in Rangoon, to claim their lands.

At least 15 Shan village headmen and civilian leaders from three Shan villages have been arrested by the Myanmar army, and imprisoned in Mong Hsat jail since October last year, said Shan State Army (SSA) Lieutenant Colonel Gon Chin. "They are using every way to drive the Shan out," said Gon Chin. "They accuse the Shan headmen of breaking the law and imprison them indefinitely." The migration of the Wa to the border area, and their involvement in the illicit production of methamphetamines and heroin, has severely strained Thai-Burma relations. The Thai government also fears that the mass migration will lead to increased ethnic fighting.

The three year program to move 50,000 households will come to a close at the end of the 2001 dry season, far below the target figure, if LNDO numbers are correct. The most conservative estimates gave the following statistics for the number of Wa resettled as part of this program.

| **Year** | **Township** | **Number of people resettled** |
|---|---|---|
| 1999-2000 | Monghsat | 55,000 |
| 2000-2001 | Mongton | 35,000 |
| 2001 (rainy season) | Tachilek | 15,000 |
| **TOTAL** | | **105,000** |

(Source: SHAN November 2001)

**2001 Timeline of Wa Resettlement**

At the beginning of **January** 2001 people traveling through Panghsang, the Wa capital near Chinese border, reported seeing tens of thousands of people outside the town in temporary shelters waiting to be transported to the Thai border in Mongton Township. "The townspeople told us these people were forced out from mountain villages," one said. "Not all of them were Wa. We saw many Lahus, Chinese and even some Shans among them." (Source: SHAN)

In **February** Thai Army sources estimated that as many as 300,000 Shan refugees had crossed into Thailand and about 120,000 more were expected to arrive during the year.

In **mid May** 2001 an order came from the Triangle Region Command in Kengtung to increase the pace of the relocation. Following the order Shan villagers south of the Monghsat-Tachilek highway were ordered to leave their villages by both Burmese and Wa forces in the area.On 20 June, Kawnzing, 51, headman of Mongton Tract, Monghsat Township, and his secretary, Zai Nyunt, 45, were arrested by Captain Saw Maung, Commander,Company 4, LIB 336 (Mongphyak) on charges of collaboration with the Shan State Army. They were beaten and tortured until they were unable either to eat or drink. "It naturally terrified us, so we decided to leave fearing it may also befall on us," said a villager who arrived in Fang, Chiangmai provicne, with his family from Mongtoom. Villagers arriving at that time in Thailand also reported the forced possession of their homes and fields by the Wa troops."They took wheatever they wanted from our fields," said the same villager. "If they decided they liked a particular field owned by a villager, they just put up a house in there without paying anything. A home of one of our neighbors was taken after promising to pay rent. But in the end he received no payment and just lost his home...More than 300 of us have fled our homes," the villager estimated. Mongtoom is near Mongkarn Tract that is opposite Therdthai tract of Mae Fa Luang District, Chiangrai Province. (Source: SHAN)

On **7 June** 2001, one refugee, Nan Thaw, staying at Piang Phra Camp, on the Thai-Burma reported that he had fled last month with his wife and two small children to escape Wa settlers. "They took our farms and stole our pigs, chickens and even our clothes," "We had to run away or starve," said Nan Thaw, a former resident of Mong Klan village, about 15 kilometres to the west. Like 300 other Shans, his small family has erected a bamboo hut in Piang Phra, a hilltop camp just across the border from Hintek village, in Chiang Rai province of northern Thailand. (Source: Burmanet)

On **14 November 2001**, SHAN reported that the Wa had resumed the annual resettlement program by bringing in nearly 400 compulsory emigrants to Mongton township, opposite Chiangmai in the previous week. The resettlers were unloaded between Hwa Aw, 21 miles from the Thai border, and Poong-an, a village south of

Hwe Aw. "The locals were told to expect 2,000 families between 1 November and 5 May next year," according to one local resident.

**Details of the arrivals are as follows:**

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 November, Male 47, Female 59 Total = | 106 |
| 5 November, Male 41, Female 56 Total = | 97 |
| 7 November, Male 75, Female 88 Total = | 163 |
| **Grand total, Male 163, Female 193 Total =** | **366** |

"Fourteen among them were age between 86-97," he said. (Source: SHAN)

**Situation in relocation sites in Shan State**

In late 2001, displaced people in relocation sites in Kaeng Tawng and Kaeng Kham areas in Murng-Nai and Kun-Hing township were told by SPDC military authorities to grow opium in their respective areas. At a meeting held in a football ground at the camp of Co. No.3 of Kun-Hing-based IB246, in Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township, which all the village and tract leaders in the area were forced to attend, an SPDC military commander who had recently arrived from Tawng-Gi (Taunggyi) was reported to have told the villagers to grow opium. In his speech to the villagers the SPDC commander said, "You people here now don't seem to have any kind of business with good enough income. Now we are in contact with businessmen who want to buy opium, so we will let you people grow a lot of opium so that you can generate good incomes. Those who want to go outside the relocation villages to grow opium can get a pass from the commander of this camp, the pass will be for 10 days at a time for each person. The opium seeds will also be distributed by this camp, you can come and get as much as you can grow".

Since then, opium has been cultivated abundantly in the relocation areas of several deserted villages where previously people were not allowed to return to farm their original lands, such as Saam Kawng, Nam Naa, Saai Khaao, Nam Tao, Nam Lin, Maak Laang, Wan Huay and to the north, Ho Thi, Paang Wo, Huay Pherng and Khaai To near Kun-Hing township. A lot of people from Kun-Hing relocation sites have also been seen cultivating opium in the deserted relocation areas of the township. According to several sources, large areas of land, probably the largest opium cultivating areas under supervision of SPDC troops in Shan State, south of Nam-Zarng, in Murng Zid area down to Mawk-Mai township, and Wan Yurng and Nawng Leng areas in Lai-Kha township are currently under opium cultivation. The amount of opium seeds used in cultivating these areas are said to have numbered in hundreds of baskets.

In another development, in early December 2001, a Major from IB66 was said to have ordered the displaced villagers at Kho Lam village relocation site in Nam-

Zarng township to grow opium. Those who were ordered to grow were not allowed to refuse, and were obliged to pay a tax of 20,000 Kyat for a certain measure of opium-growing land to the SPDC troops. Several acres of land in the areas of several deserted villages near Kho Lam are now being used for opium cultivation on the order of an SPDC commander. The opium growing areas include at least the following deserted villages: Maak Mong Lao, Wan Pung, Nam Lin Yaao and Kai Ek (Muaytaw Phaa Sang). Certain villagers were given the duty to collect the taxes from the opium growers. If the collected tax from an opium grower was less in ratio than the measure of the cultivated land, the collectors would be punished and their property might even be confiscated. Among the recently arrived refugees near the Thai border, there were many who had to flee because of the forced opium cultivation. Some simply did not want to grow opium for moral reasons and had to leave the opium growing areas, while others had to flee because their crops failed and they fell into debts which they could not repay.

Most of these people had been rice farmers all their life and did not have enough experience and skill in opium cultivation, and because the weather was bad, many opium plants died away before the harvest time, and the farmers did not know what to do. (SHRF)

**Nam Wan relocation site**

Nam Wan relocation site is on the border of Nam Zang township, about a four hour walk from Nam Khai. Villagers from Nam Khai face the same problem that plagues villagers across Shan State who are forced into relocation sites far from their native villages: all surrounding land is already owned, so it is impossible to work a field and earn a living. After being relocated twice, the Nam Khai villagers no longer retained any hope of returning to their original village to stay, especially after the village was finally destroyed. Fighting for survival at relocation sites is even more precarious, especially when the sites consolidate or more people are forced into them. Securing jobs as field hands becomes competitive, as does foraging for the little food available, and there is no possibility of farming their own fields. The SPDC military and civilian authorities provide nothing at all to the relocated villagers; instead they demand forced labor, food and money from them.(Source: KHRG 2000)

**Relocation sites in Murng Pan Township**

Villagers in Murng Pan township have mainly been relocated to the main town and sites along the motor road. Nam Tong and Nong Harn villages were forced to move to the village of Hwe Mark Pun close to Murng Pan, where they quickly doubled the size of the small village. The main problem they immediately faced was that native villagers in the area already owned the surrounding fields, so the newcomers had no opportunity to farm close to the relocation site. Consequently they were forced to tend fields quite far away, but the military authorities only permitted them to leave

the immediate vicinity of the relocation site between dawn and dusk. Many villagers' fields were at least a half day's walk away, leaving them no time to farm by the time they had to return by evening. They were never allowed to return to their villages to collect their stored food or belongings to sell—most of which had already been looted by SPDC troops anyway—and if soldiers caught them trying to return to their villages they were shot on sight.

The other factor preventing people from earning a living at relocation sites is the forced labour they are required to do for the Army, whose officers see the relocated villagers as a convenient pool of forced laborers. Villagers living at Hwe Mark Pun site are constantly called to work, mainly to build military camps in the township. Standard practice is to force civilians to go to villages that have already been relocated, dismantle people's homes and fences, and then use those materials to build the camps. People complain of having to work for the SPDC Army twice as much as they are able to work for themselves, and no one is spared from duty. While typically the men go as military porters, women and children have to fulfill the Army's demands for other forms of forced labor. These usually include building and maintaining Army camps, doing unarmed sentry duty on motor roads, clearing scrub from the roadsides (to make it difficult for resistance forces to ambush SPDC columns), and maintaining roads. Villagers living in smaller relocation sites like Hwe Mark Pun are called on for forced labor and portering more often than in larger sites, where the work load can be rotated among a larger population. It is extremely difficult for these villagers to earn enough to survive under such constraints.

In addition to fearing capture to be used as porters, villagers must also avoid SPDC soldiers who beat and kill civilians without explanation. Extrajudicial killings are commonplace in relocation sites throughout Shan State, and Murng Pan township is no exception. While all the victims were killed outside the relocation site, some were not far from the sites at all. In several cases, people have actually been dragged off the main street of the relocation site to the surrounding bush and beaten terribly, in at least one case almost to death. Villagers have always known that they are vulnerable to the whims of drunken or aggressive SPDC soldiers if caught outside the sites working in fields, selling vegetables in town, or searching for food in forests, but they must even be on guard within the 'safe' confines of the relocation site. Ironically, the SPDC claims that it sequesters villagers in relocation sites so that its troops can 'protect' the civilians against attacks by 'insurgent' groups. It is the SPDC soldiers, however, whom villagers fear the most. (Source: KHRG 2000)

**Relocation Sites in Kun Hing Township**

Relocation sites in Kun-Hing Township continue to be places of extreme violence. Villagers are restricted from travel outside the sites, but in many cases have been given day passes with which to travel. However, these passes do not guarantee the

security of these IDPs, as in several cases, relocated villagers who were given passes are killed by SPDC units waiting for them. In 2000 there were over 500 villagers from relocation sites in Kun-Hing township killed by SPDC troops, including 3 massacres which occurred on January 30, February 12, and May 23. (See chapter on extra-judicial executions)

## 13.9 Situation in Tenasserim Division

"Tenasserim Division (renamed Tanintharyi by the SLORC/SPDC military junta) forms most of Burma's long southern leg, sandwiched between the Andaman Sea to the west and southern Thailand to the east, measuring approximately 600 kilometres (400 miles) north-south but seldom more than 100 kilometres (60 miles) in east-west width. The population of the villages and towns along the Andaman coast is a mix of Burman, Karen, Mon, Tavoyan and some villagers of Indian descent; some villages and areas are almost exclusively Karen or Mon, while others are various mixtures. Villages further inland, in the hills and river valleys nearer the border with Thailand, are predominantly Karen with some Mon villages in the north of the area and a mixture of Mon, Karen, Thai and Burman in the far south. Travel in the region is difficult; the 'main' road along the coast is often little more than a wide dirt track, and roads heading into the interior are often more like oxcart tracks. In the hills most travel is on foot, or by canoes (powered by paddles or motors) along major rivers such as the Tenasserim, which are dotted with rapids and can be treacherous.

The region has long been a world unto itself in the struggles between Burmese regimes and the resistance groups. The succession of military juntas in Rangoon have never managed to gain more than limited control over the coastal towns and most of the coastal road, while a variety of resistance groups have traditionally dominated the interior. The most significant of these are the Karen National Union (KNU) and the New Mon State Party (NMSP), though there have also been and continue to be smaller Tavoyan, Muslim and Burman resistance groups, Mon splinter groups, and in the remotest regions even remnants of the Burmese Communist Party. Even the KNU has always left its people in the area (referred to as Mergui-Tavoy District or KNLA 4th Brigade area) to operate with a great deal of autonomy. The NMSP made a ceasefire deal with the SPDC in 1995, but since then various splinter groups have broken off and restarted fighting the Rangoon regime, sometimes in the south of Tenasserim and sometimes in the north; the most recent breakaway of Mon soldiers began in September 2001 in the northern part of the district.

Tenasserim Division began to attract more international attention when reports of gross human rights abuses connected to the construction of the Ye-Tavoy railway and the Yadana gas pipeline were reported from 1993 onward...Both the Yadana gas pipeline and the Ye-Tavoy railway are now complete but they continue to have

repercussions on the human rights situation of villagers in the region, as do the plans for new commercial projects which have driven the powers in Rangoon to intensify their campaigns to subjugate Tenasserim Division in the past 5 years.

In September 1996, the State Law & Order Restoration Council (SLORC) military junta began a campaign of forced relocations and forced labour road building in the entire area from Palauk in the north to Tenasserim town in the south. By the end of January 1997 over 60 Karen villages between the Andaman coast and the Tenasserim River had been destroyed, with their inhabitants forced to move to Army controlled sites to do forced labour building new roads into their home areas. Army camps were then established and supplied along these roads.... In February 1997 the SLORC followed this up by launching a massive military offensive into KNU stronghold areas along the upper Tenasserim and Paw Kloh rivers. The KNU was forced to give up most of its territory and take up guerrilla operations, while tens of thousands of villagers fled to Thailand or into hiding in the hills... Most of the predominantly Karen villagers, both in the pre-offensive relocation zones and the areas devastated by the offensive, were either trapped in their villages by SLORC troops, herded to relocation sites for use as forced labour building roads and Army camps, or fled into hiding in the forests where they avoided SLORC patrols with orders to shoot them on sight. The SLORC sent in bulldozers just behind its attack troops to begin work on a road from the port at Tavoy to the Thai border at Bong Ti, fuelling speculation that a major purpose of the offensive was to begin work on a joint Burmese-Thai commercial project linking Bangkok to a new deep-water sea port on the Andaman Sea at Tavoy. Also in February 1997, the SLORC launched an offensive against the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) 12th Battalion headquartered at Kaw Tha Say southeast of Mergui, almost at the southern tip of Burma. This followed the destruction of several Karen villages in the area a few months earlier, and attempts by the junta to force the villagers into road labour camps.

Though the 1997 offensives took most of the territory previously controlled by the KNU, the SLORC (renamed in late 1997 to the State Peace and Development Council) has failed to fully consolidate its control over the region for several reasons, primarily the difficulty of supply and troop movement, harassment by KNLA guerrilla forces, and the determined non-cooperation of the villagers. Low level fighting continues throughout the region, and human rights abuses by the occupying SPDC forces have become endemic. Those living in villages under SPDC control have found themselves repeatedly relocated to place them under more direct Army control, and suffer under constant demands for forced labour, extortion and demands for materials and food. Many are still fleeing into the hills to join the internally displaced, where they must struggle to grow some food and avoid being shot on sight by SPDC patrols. Many have tried to flee to Thailand, but the Thai 9th Infantry Division patrols this part of the border and they frequently force refugees back across at gunpoint.

There have been no large-scale military operations in Mergui-Tavoy District since the 1997 offensive, but the SPDC has been systematically trying to militarise and consolidate control over the area. According to reliable lists, there are presently 36 battalions stationed in Tenasserim Division. Army units from other areas of Burma are sometimes brought in when needed for specific operations. The Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) still operates in the district conducting guerrilla attacks on SPDC columns and outposts. The KNLA also provides some measure of protection for the hiding places of internally displaced villagers, acts as security for the small amount of food and medical aid that reaches the villagers from across the Thai border, and has medical teams which provide basic health care and emergency treatment. Landmines are used heavily in the area by both sides...

The New Mon State Party (NMSP) has maintained, with difficulty, a ceasefire area in the northern part of Tenasserim Division since its 1995 agreement with the Burmese junta. The ceasefire has always been tenuous, mainly because the SPDC repeatedly breaks the promises which were part of the agreement, such as territorial guarantees, the cessation of forced labour as porters by Mon villagers, and the right to teach the Mon language in schools. The NMSP has had very little success in pressing the SPDC to honour these commitments, because whenever the NMSP complains the junta simply threatens to abandon the ceasefire and annihilate both the NMSP and Mon villages. The resulting dissatisfaction with the ceasefire has led various small groups to splinter off from the NMSP and return to the armed struggle over the past six years. Most recently, a group of over 100 men under Colonel Pan Nyunt broke away in early September 2001 to resume armed resistance against the SPDC.

The SPDC has not had a great deal of success in consolidating its control over the area since the 1997 offensive because of the lack of enough infrastructure to support a large military presence and the continued activities of resistance groups. Internally displaced villagers are still scattered throughout the region, and SPDC patrols and small camps are regularly subject to ambush by guerrilla forces and victimised by landmines. Much of the area east of the southern Tenasserim River remains a virtual no-man's land. Shortly before the 1997 offensive a new regional command, the Coastal Command, was created to militarise and subjugate Tenasserim Division, and a heavy military presence has been maintained there. New military access roads have been pushed through to enable the Army to better resupply its units in the area. Throughout the Division, most villages located in the hills and those not near an Army camp or a vehicle road have been ordered to relocate to roads or garrisoned villages, and the houses have been destroyed. Patrols move through the hills seeking out and destroying the hiding places of the internally displaced, and shooting displaced villagers on sight or taking them as porters." (Source: KHRG: "A Strategy of Subjugation: The Situation in Ler Mu Lah Township,Tennasserim Division," December 21, 2001)

**Displacement in Tennasserim Division**

In Tenasserim Division, population displacement occurs throughout rural areas as civilians try to flee from their villages to escape systematic persecution by the Burmese Army. Civilians in conflict constantly suffer from killing, arrest and torture, as they are accused of being of rebel-supporters by the SPDC. They are also forced to contribute forced labour for the army and serve as unpaid porters for military offensives. Women also frequently suffer sexual abuse from SPDC soldiers.

The length of the period of displacement varies from situation to situation. When SPDC troops are planning military offensives against rebel forces, soldiers attempt to arrest large numbers of villagers to use as civilian porters. To escape this forced portering men in villages have to flee and hid in the forests or in farms or fruit plantations. In this situation, the men are only displaced from their families for about 3 days, or until the troops leave their area. Sometimes however, if the troops remain active in the region, they could be forced to remain in hiding for up to 2-3 months. Similar displacement occurs whenever villagers attempt to avoid the constant demands of forced labour from the army, which leaves them no time to complete their own work. In these cases, all family members could be displaced, because if the men are absent, women are forced to work instead. If villagers attempt to hide at their farms or fruit plantations, they must avoid soldiers operating in the area. If they are discovered they can be tortured or killed as 'rebel-supporters.' Displacement that occurs when villagers hide in their fields or plantations to avoid forced labor can last from 1-6 months.

Long-term displacement occurs when the SPDC battalion commanders order the villagers to leave their villages and relocate. The commanders give the villagers a deadline to move from their villages, which is sometimes insufficient time for the villagers to gather all of their belongings.

Generally, most villagers are displaced due to a variety of factors. In one family, a husband may be arrested for porter service, and his wife conscripted to contribute labour in a construction site or army camp. Then the family has less and less time to work on their own farm and ultimately they decide to flee from their villages and find another place where they can get more food and suffer less abuses from soldiers. Sometimes, IDPs move many times searching for safety and a regular food supply.

**One man from Pain-Tun village, Tenasserim township explained:**

*"I was from Pain-Tun village and I arrived to this village (a village under NMSP control) about one month ago. I left from my native village since 1997 and I have stayed in many villages before I reached here. In 1996, when the government soldiers from IB No. 103 and IB No. 101 battalions built a motor road from Tenasserim town to Thein-taw village, the soldiers forced many villagers to*

*contribute labour in construction. Through our headmen, U Sein, the army commander*

*ordered to get the defined number of villagers from our village. My wife or me had to work in construction about two weeks within one month. On the other hand, we also could not have enough time to find work as day-labourer. I have no land like other villagers. Then, our family faced food-shortage problem and then we decided to move to another place. We moved along Tenasserim river and arrived to a Karen village, 'Tala-bwe', I stayed there for 7 months. We built a small house and received a work of paddy cultivation from a Karen family. However, we could not stay in stable situation, because the Burmese Army launched a big military offensives (it was 1997 offensives by SLORC), burnt all houses in that village. There were about 30 households in the village. From that village, we moved to the north and arrived another village, 'Kin-ni-kyun' and there were 40 households in that village. I stayed there for one year but the situation in that village was not so stable and in early 1999, the Burmese Army launched military offensives and tried to arrest all villagers with suspicion of rebelp-supporters. Then I fled to another Mon village, 'Kyauk-lon-gyi', in Yebyu Township area. I stayed in that village for another one year, but the cultivation conditions in that area not good and not so safe and so I moved to this village."*

Another villager explained that: "*In early 2000, with accusation of rebel-supporters against the villagers, the Burmese Army's IB No. 25 ordered all villagers in Shwe-ta-maw village, Tavoy township, to leave their houses within a few hours. Then,the soldiers burnt all 400 villagers' houses. After the village was burnt down, some about 100 families moved to Mergui town and stayed with their relatives and only some of them could buy new house and land in town. Many families moved to more stable villages and the remaining about 100 poor families found the ways moving to border area and into Thailand, where they could work and safety."* (Source: HURFOM, February 28, 2001)

**Situation in Relocation Sites**

"Villagers in relocation sites and SPDC-controlled villages are forced to build fences around their villages, both to limit their movements and so that SPDC patrols can quickly seal off the village and capture people for forced labour before they have a chance to flee. Those who have been relocated may be given the chance to go home to farm their own fields if it is not too far, but they must obtain passes to do so which often do not allow them to go overnight. (people interviewed for this report make references to) forced relocation sites at Ka Pyaw, Naw Deh Hta, Pway Palaw and Ta Pwoh *[Kyo Gu in Burmese]*, to which remoter villages are still being forced to relocate. Forced labour is demanded daily from the villages under SPDC control. Villagers are constantly ordered to go as porters carrying the Army's supplies and rations and as guides for SPDC units. The SPDC also forces the villagers to build

and maintain the roads in the area and to cut the brush along the roadsides to make it more difficult for resistance forces to mine the roads or spring ambushes, and to prevent the movement of internally displaced villagers across the roads. No payment is ever given for the work. Villagers must come on rotating schedules and bring their own tools and food. Medicine is almost never given to workers who become sick. Villagers who do not have time to go for their stint at forced labour must pay bribes to get out of the work. These fees are usually based on the number of days of work demanded, at a rate of 500 Kyat per person per day. Most villagers, particularly those who have been relocated off their land, cannot afford to pay these fees on a regular basis, so they have no choice but to do the labour.

Physical abuse by SPDC soldiers is common. Village heads are beaten when demands are not met. Villagers are also beaten when they go for forced labour, especially when they go as forced labour porters. SPDC officers often demand weapons and walkie-talkies from villagers, so that they can report these items as 'captured in battle' and gain promotions and other rewards. Villagers are often held under torture and threat of death unless the other villagers can somehow find or buy a gun or walkie-talkie to hand over.

Extortion money and taxes are regularly demanded from the villagers in addition to the money they pay to avoid forced labour. 'Porter fees' are one such form of direct extortion which is demanded monthly and can amount to 2,000 to 5,000 Kyat per month per family. These fees are supposedly used to hire porters so the villagers do not have to go, but in reality the money is simply pocketed by the officers while the villagers still have to go as porters. Failure to pay these 'porter fees' can result in arrest or additional forced labour as a porter. More formal taxes are demanded from villages nearer the coast, but villages in the mountains are usually too impoverished to pay these. There are also rice quotas levied on the villages in the area. The quotas are from 10 to 15 baskets of paddy (rice still in the husk) per acre, which represents 20% to 50% of the crop depending on yield. The rice is gathered and sent by forced labour porters to the area Army headquarters at Ler Pa Doh on the southern Tenasserim River.

The shortage of food is becoming serious for many villagers living under SPDC control. The constant forced labour leaves the villagers with very little time to work their own fields. The situation is often worse for relocated villagers. There is often no available land near the relocation sites. Sometimes villagers are allowed to return to work their fields, but for many it is a long walk to the fields and some commanders refuse to allow the villagers to be away overnight. Without being able to stay in their field huts to take care of the crop and chase off animals, much of the paddy is destroyed or eaten with very little left at harvest time. The soldiers' looting of vegetable gardens and fruit plantations compounds the problem by taking away more of the villagers' food, some of which they could otherwise sell to get money to buy rice or to pay SPDC extortion fees. Buffaloes, cattle, chickens

and pigs kept by villagers are killed and eaten by soldiers when they come to villages. Soldiers have sometimes shot and killed an animal, then eaten only a small part of it and thrown away the rest. Some villagers have resorted to eating rice porridge, a last resort to try to make the rice supply stretch further. Other villagers are moving to the villages of more prosperous relatives. Others are fleeing into the hills where they can at least try to grow a crop, even if they risk being shot on sight by SPDC patrols." (Source: KHRG: "A Strategy of Subjugation: The Situation in Ler Mu Lah Township,Tennasserim Division," December 21, 2001)

**Situation of Villagers in Hiding**

"Some villagers are trying to eke out a living in hiding in the mountains and forests of the area. They are often on the move fleeing SPDC Army columns which are sent out to hunt them down. The homes and huts of villagers living outside SPDC control are also routinely burned down. SPDC soldiers commonly shoot villagers on sight on encountering them in the forests or fields, and assaults are also made on undefended villages with the soldiers shooting indiscriminately at the villagers as they flee. In early 2001, an SPDC unit ran into a group of 10 villagers near Htee Ter Kee village and opened fire on them, killing two villagers and wounding a 20 year old man and a 16 year old girl. The soldiers then went to Pee Thee Kee and shot and killed Naw Lay Tay and her 12 year old daughter, Naw K'Yeh. Attacks like this are common.

The SPDC forces do occasionally capture villagers. These villagers are taken to relocation sites or Army camps and kept there. The fate of these villagers is often unknown to their families still in hiding. They simply disappear until weeks or months later when they manage to escape, or when news reaches the family of where they are now living. One villager told KHRG how his mother-in-law, younger brother, his son and a married couple disappeared and he only found out later that they were being held at an SPDC militia camp

The SPDC also targets the villagers' food supplies in an effort to starve them out of the mountains. When soldiers come across fields they burn or trample the crops. Paddy storage barns are also looted and then burned when found by soldiers near villages or the hiding places of internally displaced villagers. Some villagers manage to buy or barter for rice and other food from people in villages under SPDC control or from traders along the Tenasserim River. Even for those who can do this, rice bought in this way is only a temporary solution and is usually not enough to last the year." (Source: KHRG: "A Strategy of Subjugation: The Situation in Ler Mu Lah Township,Tennasserim Division," December 21, 2001)

In Feb. 1997, the Burma army launched a massive offensive against Mergui-Tavoy District of the KNU. Many villagers in the Banchaung River area were forced to

flee to the jungle in fear of persecution. Those who fled were accused of supporting the resistance groups and marked as enemies. The SPDC has continued to hunt them and kill them and destroy their property. According to CIDKP, at least 15,995 displaced Karen villagers are still hiding in the jungle of Tenasserim Division as a result of the 1997 SPDC offensive and SPDC forced relocation programs. (Source: CIDKP)

**Situation of IDPs attempting to Flee to Thailand**

"Refugees fleeing forced labour, the miserable conditions of the relocation sites, or internal displacement find Thailand an unwelcoming host. This entire section of the border is controlled by the 9th Infantry Division of the Thai First Army, which is notorious for human rights abuses and corruption and has direct cross-border business links with the SPDC Army. Unlike the Thai Army Task Forces controlling segments of the border further north, the 9th Division acts as a law unto itself and appears to have very little accountability to the Army high command in Bangkok or to government authority. Officials in the Thai Ministries of the Interior and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs openly state their complete helplessness in the face of the lawless 9th Division, and there appears to be a great deal of physical fear involved in this. During the 1997 offensive it was the 9th Division which assisted Burmese offensive troops to move through Thailand, and began supplying the same troops with rice when their supply lines were cut. When refugees began streaming across the border the 9th Division was quick to force them back into combat zones at gunpoint, at Tee Lai Pa in the north (bordering Dooplaya District) and at Bong Ti, Thu Ray, Ter Lwee and other locations in the south.... Some of these people fled and were forced back several times in succession.... those finding refuge in other parts of the 9th Division's territory have found themselves moved back and forth great distances from their home areas, apparently in a deliberate effort to keep them destitute and disoriented, and forced into unsafe sites like Ban Don Yang, within easy sight and shelling range of an SPDC Army camp across the border. At present, Thai policy is that no new refugees are allowed except those 'fleeing fighting', and the Thai authorities say there is no fighting in Tenasserim Division. This argument is used by the 9th Division to forcibly repatriate all new refugees." (Source: KHRG: "A Strategy of Subjugation: The Situation in Ler Mu Lah Township,Tennasserim Division," December 21, 2001)

**Villages Forced to Relocate**

In January 2001, Kyauk Taung village and Tha Pyuu Chaung village, in Thayetchaung township were ordered to relocate by LIB 403. (Source: THRF)

On 9 and 11 March 2001, people from five villages were forced to move away and the villages were destroyed. The villages were: Ywa Thit, Oo Yin Gyi, Taung Phyar, Ma Yan Chaung, Koke Chaung, Kyauk Tan Nge, Myaing Tha. All were in Kyunsu township, which is under the control of LIB 17 and 224. The villagers were accused of being in contact with rebel activists on the Thai-Burma border. They

were warned not to stay in their village or they would be killed. (Source: THRF)

In April 2001 people in Ma Kyone Ta Lit village, Kawthaung tsp and Ma Naw Lone Chaung Phya area, Bokepyin tsp were ordered to relocate. (Source: THRF)

In April 2001 Za Lut village and Yay Kyang village, Chaung village, Launglon tsp, and Ma Yan village, Yebyu tsp were ordered to relocate By LIB 104.(Source: THRF)

## *Relocation sites in Tenasserim Division*

**Situation of Katuangni Relocation Site**

Kataungni is a village east of Tavoy on the bank of Banchaung River, Tenasserim Division. In February 1997, the village was deserted as the SPDC troops launched a massive offensive against KNU Mergui/Tavoy district (KNLA 4 Brigade area). Due to difficult living conditions in the jungle brought on mostly by the SPDC's incessant search and destroy operations against them, the villagers eventually returned to their deserted village. There the SPDC troops grouped them up and ordered them to live at the center of the village along with other relocated people.The villagers have had to live under strict rules arranged by the military. They are forbidden to leave the relocation site without permission from the troops there (No.1 Tactical Command Headquarters). Those who attempt to leave are shot on sight. According to one Kataungni villager who escaped the relocation center and arrived at the border on May 21 2000, at least 70 of his fellow villagers have been killed or have disappeared over a stretch of 4 years while serving as porters. Some of those victims were also from nearby villages including Maw Ma Tru, Kyauk Hton, Thebyuchaung, Maw Ler Kay, and Myintmolekka. (Source: TIR 2000)

**Situation of relocation sites in Palaw and Theyetchaung Townships**

The SPDC launched a massive relocation of Karen villages in Palaw and Theyetchaung Townships, Tenasserim Division in1997. Some villagers were forced to move to a distant area designated and controlled by the army, and some villagers had to group up in the middle of their village. Since then, the villagers have faced constant abuses such as; forced labour on military plantations, car road construction, and bridge construction, and forced portering for the army. They have also faced many forms of extortion such as porter fees, military funds, development funds, sentry fees, fees for feeding the army and so on. In addition, the SPDC troops have executed many villagers in this area, accusing them of having contact with the resistance groups.(Source: TIR 2000)

**Situation in Padaw relocation site**

Pawdaw villagers were forced by the SPDC in 1997 to relocate to the center of the village under SPDC control. Many villagers did not move to the relocation site, but hid behind the village. Villagers who do not stay in relocation sites designated for them are considered rebels by the SPDC and they shoot anyone outside the relocations sites without questioning them. (Source: TIR 2000)

## 13.10 Situation in Other Areas of Burma

There is little information available about the situation of IDPs in other areas of Burma, such as in the Chin and Mon States, and many of the Divisions, as the plight of these people has not been well documented. However, it is known that there is a significant population of IDPs in these areas, as villages have been relocated in the past, relocation sites exist, and the conditions which push people out of their villages have been documented.

**Situation in Chin State**

There is little information available regarding internal displacement in Chin State, and the true scale of the problem remains unknown. However, estimates by The Chin National Front (CNF), a pan Chin nationalist movement, report that widespread displacement is a major problem in the area. CNF estimates that there are 40-50,000 persons in Chin State who have been displaced from their homes. Many of these people have reportedly fled to Mizoram State in northeast India

**Situation in Kachin State**

"While the situation of internal displacement is not reported and hence the scale of the problem not well known in Kachin state, 30 years of internal conflict between the various Kachin independence movements and the Burmese army has resulted in large-scale displacement of the Kachin population. Figures from Kachin State suggest that perhaps 100,000 were forcibly relocated from their homes by counter-insurgency operations between the 1960s and 1990s, while other estimates suggest that in 1994 - prior to the signing of a cease-fire - there were around 67,000 internally displaced. More recent estimates suggest that although conflict-related displacement has decreased, the impoverishment of many rural dwellers following three decades of strife have led to significant rural displacement. As no peace dividend followed the cease-fire agreements, leaving the issue of resettling previously displaced groups obscure, many rural populations in Kachin State have become landless and forced to seek a livelihood in the extractive natural resources (mining) sectors or in the service sector in urban areas.

Indeed despite the negotiated cease-fire arrangements between the central govemment and the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) and the Kachin Democratic Army (KDA) there continue to be problems of displacement and land confiscation. As has been remarked by numerous civilians in Kachin State, cease-fires have allowed the different armies to retain their arms and territory, controlling and taxing the populace, while basically prioritising business for themselves through the extraction of natural resources. These complaints are not solely levied at the rebel groups, but more importantly at government, as the army has claimed much farmland, principally to grow food. Recently the government put up 27,000 acres of fallow land for paddy production and has opened a land-title registration office in Myitkyina to facilitate the transfer of such land to new owners." (BERG September 2000, "Kachin State")

**Forced Relocation of Muslims**

Muslims in Arakan state continue to suffer as victims of forced relocation. Currently there are townships such as Suchas, Thandwe, Gwa, and Taung-gut, that have been declared "Muslim-free zones." In these areas where Muslims are no longer permitted to live, mosques have been destroyed, and Muslim lands have been confiscated. To make sure that these mosques are not rebuilt, they have been replaced with government-owned buildings, monasteries, and Buddhist temples. (Source: US State Dept)(For more information on abuses against Muslims see chapter on Freedom of Belief and Religion)

# 13.11 Personal Accounts

(Source: KHRG: "A Strategy of Subjugation: The Situation in Ler Mu Lah Township,Tennasserim Division**," December 21, 2001)**

***Interview #1.***

**NAME:** "Saw K'Paw Muh"

**SEX:** M

**AGE:** 30 Karen Christian farmer

**FAMILY:** Married with two children

**ADDRESS:** Naw Deh Hta village, Ler Mu Lah township

**INTERVIEWED:** 3/01

*[He was interviewed after fleeing a relocation site at Naw Deh Hta village to live in hiding in the forest.]*

**Q:** Can you tell me how you felt when you still lived in your village?

**A:** When I stayed in my village the enemy relocated us. They didn't shoot us dead with their guns, it is their forced labour and portering that will injure and kill us. We are not free to do our own work. If they shoot us dead it would be easy for the civilians or other countries to see. The painful thing for us is that they *[the SPDC]* are forcing us but people *[foreigners]* don't know about it.

**Q:** When were you relocated to Naw Deh Hta village?

**A:** On May 2nd, 2000. I left on March 20th, 2001.

**Q:** Did the people have to find their own food in the relocation site?

**A:** We had to find food to eat ourselves. We could eat when we could pull cane *[for making baskets or furniture]*. When we couldn't pull cane we couldn't eat.

**Q:** Did you have to build a fence around the *[relocation]* village?

**A:** We had to fence around the village. The villagers fenced it. The Army came and ordered us to do it. That was #371's operations commander, Myint Soe. He ordered us to do it.

**Q:** Are people allowed to travel around?

**A:** Yes, before they allowed us only seven or eight days *[at a time]* but the chairperson *[village head]* went and asked for 15 days. If we go over the date *[on their travel pass]* and can't come back, we must pay 1,000 Kyat per day. If the pass hasn't expired we can come back.

**Q:** What do they do if they see people travelling outside the village?

**A:** You must show your pass.

**Q:** Do the Burmese soldiers near the village make problems for the villagers?

**A:** No.

**Q:** What about in other villages?

**A:** In the other villages some people were holding weapons *[as KNU sponsored village militia]*, but when the situation changed some of them weren't holding weapons anymore and went back to face them *[they surrendered to the SPDC]*. Some people who never had weapons have been beaten when the soldiers couldn't find them. When the people can't suffer it they get diseases.

**Q:** Does the SPDC take care of people who become ill?

**A:** They don't take care of them. They have to treat themselves.

**Q:** How many houses are in Naw Deh Hta village?

**A:** There were over 80 houses and another two or three houses of widows before, but now there are only a little over 40 houses. Some people have moved to Pay Kya. Some people asked for permission to move to Pay Kya but they didn't go. They are now hiding in the middle *[in the forest]*.

**Q:** What are the widows doing?

**A:** The widows are staying and working themselves. They are not forced by the soldiers. They don't collect anything from them.

**Q:** Did they take care of you with medicine when you stayed in the relocation village?

**A:** They gave us only what they had. They didn't have enough, they had only a little bit. They gave us only a half a tablet of Paracetamol, but it wasn't good because we usually take two tablets.

**Q:** What do they do if there are any serious problems in the village?

**A:** They can't do anything. The villagers have to find their own way and go to a hospital.

**Q:** Since you had to move, did anyone die from a beating?

**A:** No, but they forcibly arrested people *[to force them to move down to the relocation site]*, and when they reached the top of a mountain they beat some of them to death. Some of the villagers were injured but the soldiers didn't take care of them and left them. The villagers didn't get rice to eat, so when they arrived at the Htee Moh Pwa river the villagers knew the beginning of the path *[on the other side of the river]* and they swam across *[to escape]*. There were over 100 villagers who swam, but six people died. They were all villagers. They swam and crossed the river to escape with their lives. Six villagers died because they couldn't make it across. There were 130 or 140 villagers. The other villagers escaped. The soldiers shot at them but didn't hit them and they escaped.

**Q:** Did you ever have to go as a porter when you lived in the *[relocation]* village?

**A:** I had to go and porter twice and I had to go and send *[as a guide]* their soldiers once. The first time I had to porter was for the soldiers of #371 and #542 *[Light Infantry Battalions]*. #542's commander is Maung Maung Win, but I have forgotten #371's commander. The second time was for #342 *[LIB]*. I also had to guide #342. I don't know the name of their commander. There are people who find out these things, but for me, I didn't find out about this.

**Q:** Did the soldiers beat or curse the porters when you went?

**A:** No. When we went they said we would come back to eat at 10 o'clock. There were a lot of soldiers there when we arrived. There was also another Army unit. They didn't allow us to go back. We had to continue going forward. We had to continue going the whole day and they didn't feed us rice. If they gave us rice, it wasn't enough. They gave us 2 milk tins *[391 grams / 14 ozs]* of rice each. When we came back they also didn't feed us rice. We could only get rice to eat when we arrived home. We also had to take along rice pots when we went to porter.

**Q:** Did they give you any medicine if you got sick while portering?

**A:** They gave only a little bit. They didn't give us enough.

**Q:** Was anyone beaten or punched by the soldiers when you went as a porter?

**A:** We are new people *[they had been recently relocated to the village]*. They could see that we were afraid so they didn't do it so much. But there are their people such as the *yeh beh [convicts]*, the people that they had forcibly arrested and called to come with them, they mistreated them a lot. They *[the soldiers]* beat them. When they *[the convicts]* couldn't walk anymore, the soldiers gathered them in one place and they died there. The soldiers didn't shoot them dead, they beat them to death. There was no need to shoot them, so they beat them to death.

**Q:** Do you know any of their names?

**A:** I don't know their names.

**Q:** Does the Army always take porters when it travels?

**A:** They always take their convicts. The people they brought from the west *[the convicts]* are tied together in groups of three to six people. They are tied with rope so it is not easy for them to run away. The loads are heavy so some of them flee because they are tired.

**Q:** How did you sleep when you went as a porter?

**A:** We prepared our sleeping place ourselves.

**Q:** Did they guard you?

**A:** Their soldiers kept to themselves.

**Q:** How many days did you go have to go as a porter?

**A:** They called me for four days, but I had to go for seven days. They called me at Kyi Praw Koh and said we would come back at 10 o'clock. I hadn't had any rice to eat yet.

**Q:** How many villagers did they call at that time?

**A:** At Kyi Praw Koh they called 30 villagers. On our way to Thay Kaw Oh there were 30 villagers, and then they called another 50 villagers from Thay Kaw Oh. The total number of people was 80 villagers.

**Q:** Were there any women when you were portering?

**A:** There were no women. There were only men but it did include children who were 12 or 13 years old. There were three children but I only know my uncle N—-'s son.

**Q:** How heavy were the loads of the children?

**A:** They were the same weight as those of the older people, 10 mess tins of rice. One mess tin is five milk tins of rice *[975 grams / 2 lbs; the full load was 9.75 kgs / 20 lbs]*.

**Q:** Did the KNU ever shoot the Burmese when you were carrying for them?

**A:** No, but when I went to porter the first time some of them *[soldiers]* were injured by a landmine. Five people were injured by the landmine. Two of the people died and three lived. Then one *[of the three wounded]* died and they threw him in the Toh Tay Hta *[River]* and two were still alive. One of the NCO's *[Non-Commissioned Officers]* was hurt. I don't know any of their names, but the NCO was over 30 or 40 years old. That was #542 *[Battalion]*, under Major Maung Maung Win.

**Q:** Did any of the villagers die from portering?

**A:** No one yet.

**Q:** Do they collect money or taxes in the *[relocation]* village?

**A:** They don't do it in our village but they do it in the lower places *[in the plains nearer the coast]*. In the lower places some people have plantations and some people have boats with engines. They are rich people. The people in our place at Naw Deh Hta don't have gardens or fields *[because they have been relocated]*. We don't have any income and they *[the SPDC]* don't have any way to collect so they don't collect anything.

**Q:** Where are the lower places?

**A:** They are called Kee Mi Kyo, Kyauk Lon Gyi and Thay Kaw Oh. They collect porter fees in these places, but they still have to porter as well.

**Q:** Do the villagers *[at the relocation site]* have to go and work at the Army camp, like fencing or cutting bamboo for them?

**A:** They do not call us for this, because they brought the *yeh beh [convicts]* and force them the whole day without rest.

**Q:** Do they force the villagers to go and build any roads?

**A:** They forced us to build a road in the village. After we cleared *[the route]* for the road and took out the tree stumps, we had to dig and build the road. After we dug and made it level, we had to carry stones and sand. Then we had to use them to cover it. If it rained and the road washed away, we had to carry again.

**Q:** What time did you have to start work when you were building the road?

**A:** We started at 7 o'clock and worked to 12 o'clock, then we started again at 1 p.m. and worked until 5 p.m. They specified the time.

**Q:** How many days did you have to work for?

**A:** When we went to stay there at first *[after being forced to relocate there from their home village]*, we had to work every day in that month. After we had finished some of the work, it was reduced. The chairperson *[village head]* was also present. When we worked for them every day we didn't have food to eat, so the chairperson asked permission to work only two times a month for them. We came back every fifteenth day and worked at the village *[forced labour at the relocation site]* on the

sixteenth day, then we went out again and came back after 15 days, and we worked for one day again. We worked two days a month at the *[relocation]* village.

**Q:** Did they specify the dates?

**A:** The chairperson specified the date. If the Army specified it would have been every day.

**Q:** What did you have to do when you worked in the village?

**A:** They forced us to work at so many things that we can't say. To dig the road and dig the road.

**Q:** Did they give you payment for doing this?

**A:** They didn't pay us. They also didn't give us food.

**Q:** Did you see them burn and destroy houses or abuse people when you were in the relocation village?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Did the villagers ever have to move to another place?

**A:** Some of the villagers didn't have food anymore and couldn't do anything. If they had stayed there they wouldn't have had free time to work, because the Burmese enemy *[SPDC]* always forced them to work. They had to go *[flee]* and rely on their aunts and uncles who have plantations and fields, because if they had stayed in the village they would have only had boiled rice porridge to eat.

**Q:** Did you ever see a company or organisation or foreign people come to your place?

**A:** They didn't come.

**Q:** Do they continue to do these things in the village?

**A:** They continue to do it.

**Q:** Are they still forcing the villagers to porter?

**A:** They are still forcing them, but they don't call it portering. They call it *loh ah pay* and 'helpers'. They say that 'porter' isn't the right word to use.

**Q:** Will other villagers flee the village like you?

**A:** Yes. If they don't have food to eat, I think all of them will come up. They think the enemy is torturing them because they have seen it with their eyes and felt it with their hands. If they come to this place their families will get food to eat and they will go back to help their nationality. Me and them, all of us, we love our nationality.

**Q:** How did you flee and escape?

**A:** When I went to stay in the *[relocation]* village I hadn't decided if I would stay there or not. I went there to see and understand whether their actions would be the

same as their words. Once I was there I could see the true situation. They *[SPDC]* spoke very sweetly, but their words were not followed by their actions. So when the time was right and the way was clear, I left.

**Q:** Could you leave like that?

**A:** Yes, I could. I had to find a way. When I left together with my family I told the soldiers that we would relocate to Pay Kya, but they didn't know that I came here. They didn't know. If they had known they wouldn't have let us. They wrote us a pass, but I threw it away on the path. The pass said I was allowed to stay in Pay Kya for as long as I wanted.

**Q:** Where will you go?

**A:** I think I will plan for my family. I will go and find out the things I must do. I will pray first and then I will meet with all my parents and teachers. After that I will come up and work together with them.

***Interview #2.***

**NAME:** "Saw Kri Muh"

**SEX:** M

**AGE:** 28 Karen Christian farmer

**FAMILY:** Married with two children; 1 and 4 years old

**ADDRESS:** *xxxx* village, Ler Mu Lah township

**INTERVIEWED:** 3/01

*[He was interviewed near his village.]*

**Q:** Is the SPDC forcing you to do *loh ah pay* in your village?

**A:** Yes, they do. We have to do things the whole day. If we don't finish it we have to continue working until it is finished. When we had to repair the road it took one week. They are going to use it as a car road. They didn't pay. We had to bring our own food.

**Q:** Where did you have to repair the car road?

**A:** We had to go and repair it starting from Naw Daw and down to Maw Ka. It was all the villagers from *xxxx*. Villagers from four villages repaired the road. One person from each house. That includes women and children. The youngest children were 12 or 13 years old. The oldest people were 30 or 40 years old.

**Q:** Did they give you materials to repair the road?

**A:** We had to bring our own.

**Q:** Have you seen any foreigners or companies or organisations enter the area?

**A:** No, I didn't see any.

**Q:** What types of labour do the Burmese usually force the villagers to do?

**A:** They force us to do *loh ah pay [general forced labour]* and to porter. We have to repair the Army camp.

**Q:** What times do you have to work?

**A:** They specify that we start working at 7 o'clock in the morning and stop at 4 o'clock in the evening.

**Q:** Do they pay you?

**A:** They don't pay. They don't give us food. They also don't give drinking water.

**Q:** Can you sometimes go home at night?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** How do they allow you to sleep if you have to sleep at their camp?

**A:** We sleep without anything *[no blankets or mosquito nets]*. We didn't sleep in a good place.

**Q:** Do the soldiers guard you when you work?

**A:** Yes, they do.

**Q:** Who orders you to go and work?

**A:** The Army battalion, #280. The battalion commander is Thein Chit. Kyaw Yeh Aung Pay is one of their officers. I don't know the others.

**Q:** Did the soldiers ever hurt you when you went to work for them?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Did anyone get sick the most recent times when you had to go to work for them?

**A:** Yes. They mostly had diarrhoea. They *[SPDC]* didn't give medicine.

**Q:** Did anyone die when they went to work?

**A:** No.

**Q:** Did any villagers run away from the work?

**A:** Yes. It was because they couldn't work.

**Q:** Did you run away from forced labour sometimes?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Do they continue to force people to do *loh ah pay*?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Do you think they will continue to do it in the future?

**A:** They will.

**Q:** Have you had to go as a porter before?

**A:** I had to occasionally go as a porter. It was in 2000, during the dry season *[March-May]*. We took them from Palaw to Way Toh Ray.

**Q:** Did you see anyone die while portering?

**A:** The Burmese porters died. I don't know their names.

**Q:** Which unit were they with?

**A:** I don't know their division or battalion.

**Q:** Why did they die?

**A:** The soldiers beat them to death because they couldn't walk.

**Q:** Do you know the name of the soldiers who did it?

**A:** I don't know. He was an NCO *[Non-Commissioned Officer, i.e. Corporal or Sergeant]*.

**Q:** Did they feed you food when you went as a porter?

**A:** We brought our own food.

**Q:** Did they pay you?

**A:** They didn't pay us.

**Q:** Did you flee and escape or did they allow you to come back when you portered?

**A:** They allowed me to come back.

**Q:** Have you ever heard of them torturing or beating villagers in other villages?

**A:** Yes, at Ta Lay Koh. It is always happening.

**Q:** Do they also demand porter fees?

**A:** We have to pay once a month. It is 2,000 Kyat. I avoided it one time. When we can't pay we have to borrow money and pay it.

***Interview #3.***

**NAME:** "Saw Lah Ghay"

**SEX:** M

**AGE:** 32 Karen Christian farmer

**FAMILY:** Married with four children (one deceased)

**ADDRESS:** *xxxx* village, Ler Mu Lah township

**INTERVIEWED:** 3/01

*[He was interviewed after he fled his village and is now displaced at another village.]*

**Q:** Do you have a place to stay here?

**A:** I had a house when I arrived, but after I built it the enemy came up and burned it down.

**Q:** Do the soldiers come and abuse the people in your village?

**A:** They do not come to rape, but they do come to shoot people dead and burn down houses. It happened in 2001 at one place called K'Saw Lu Htee Kee and at another place called Pee Thee Kee. They burned down one house at Pee Thee Kee and then went up and burned five houses *[at K'Saw Lu Htee Kee]*. In the lower place *[Pee Thee Kee]* all of their belongings were burned as well. At the higher place *[K'Saw Lu Htee Kee]* it included their rice and paddy, about 50 or 60 baskets of paddy.

**Q:** Did they also burn down your house when they burned the houses down?

**A:** Yes. My household things were not burned, only my brother-in-law's paddy. We received news in advance *[that they were coming]* so we moved our things.

**Q:** When did they come and destroy things?

**A:** During March 2001.

**Q:** Where do you get food now that you stay here?

**A:** When it is easy to reach the Htee Moh Pwa *[the main river; the Tenasserim River]* we take it from there. When that is not easy, we take it from in front at K— and P— *[villages]*.

**Q:** Where was it that the people were shot at by the soldiers?

**A:** It was at Htee Ter Kee *[village]*. There were more than 10 people, including seven women. One woman was wounded and another one was killed. Two people were wounded in all, including one man. The name of the dead woman was Auntie Naw Mya Thein. She is over 50 years old. They didn't question her. They met each other and the soldiers shot them. The wounded woman is Naw M—, she is 16 years old. The man who was wounded is Pa B—, he is 20 years old. They were all going together.

**Q:** Where did the soldiers go after they shot them?

**A:** After they shot them they went up to another place and shot at people there. That was at Pee Thee Kee. Two people died, two women. They were Naw Lay Tay and her daughter, Naw K'Yeh. Naw Lay Tay was 25 or 26 years old and her daughter was 12 years old.

**Q:** Why did the soldiers come to shoot them?

**A:** I don't know the reason. They came up and when they saw the villagers' houses they opened fire. When the villagers saw them they fled, so the soldiers shot at them. The soldiers didn't have time to ask the people anything. We fled before we saw them and when we saw them we fled. They shot before they had time to ask anything.

**Q:** Was that the only place they shot at people?

**A:** They shot at people in that place and then they went back down. After they went down they came up again and shot at people at Ku Pa Leh. No one was injured. They burned down all the houses including the rice and paddy in the houses.

**Q:** Did they rape any women?

**A:** I haven't heard of this yet.

**Q:** Have they arrested people in that area?

**A:** Yes. They arrested one of my parents-in-law, one of my younger brothers and Pa N— and his wife. My mother-in-law is Auntie P—. She is over 60 years old. I don't know what they did to her because I haven't seen those people again. We haven't heard anything about them yet. My younger brother's name is Saw P—. He is 17 years old. The other two people are Pa N— and his wife, Naw P—. There was also one of my sons, Pa S- He was going to stay with his grandmother.

**Q:** Do you know where they have taken those people now?

**A:** They are at *xxxx*. They are keeping them with the militia. The *Pyi Thu Sit ['People's Army'; SPDC organised militia]* came to watch over the bosses' work there. The SPDC handed them over into the *Pyi Thu Sit's* hands.

**Q:** Which group of bosses came to work there?

**A:** I don't know, they are Burmese. They are making a lead mine. I haven't heard that they force people *[to work]* for free there. They give salaries.

**Q:** Do they force the people to do *loh ah pay* at M— where they took those people?

**A:** There is *loh ah pay*. When they need it they call the villagers.

**Q:** How many people do they call for *loh ah pay* each time?

**A:** They never call less than 10 people. They call at least 10, 20 or 30 people.

**Q:** Do women and children also have to do *loh ah pay*?

**A:** I haven't heard of women and children doing it yet, only the people who are strong and can do it.

**Q:** Do they also have to go as porters?

**A:** They have not called for porters yet. The villagers only have to go to do *loh ah pay* at the battalion camp. If they *[the soldiers]* order it, we have to go and sweep their barracks and build their living places. Sometimes we have to build barracks and sometimes we have to fence their camp.

**Q:** Do the villagers also have to build a fence around their village?

**A:** The villagers have to make fences around every village in the frontline area.

**Q:** Are these the villages that had to relocate?

**A:** Yes.

**Q:** Do they also have to construct a road?

**A:** When we went down there before *[to a relocation site]* we had to build a road, but I haven't heard about it lately.

**Q:** Have you heard that they are going to build any roads?

**A:** I haven't heard of it in any place yet.

**Q:** Do you think the soldiers will come to destroy villages and burn houses in the future?

**A:** If they come they will do it. When they see houses now they burn them.

**Q:** Do you think they will kill and shoot people dead?

**A:** If they meet people they will shoot them. They shoot whenever they meet us.

**Q:** Do they ask the people any questions before they shoot?

**A:** How are they going to ask questions? We don't dare to face them. When we see them we flee and they shoot. They call but we don't dare to face them. When we see them we flee and escape. If the bullets hit us we are finished.

**Q:** Do they fire shots just to threaten you?

**A:** In the past they shot to threaten us, but now I don't know if they are threatening or not. They shoot at the houses but it doesn't hurt the houses.

**Q:** How long do they shoot for when they shoot?

**A:** They don't shoot for very long. They shoot 100 or over 100 bullets.

**Q:** Do they also shoot with big weapons?

**A:** When they shoot in the lower places they don't use big weapons, but when they come up *[into the hills]*, one time they fired a big weapon three times. No one died.

**Q:** Have you heard of them killing people, torturing people or burning houses in

other villages?

**A:** We haven't heard about it from other places because we do not go to other people's places. We have not heard of them raping women in our area.

***Interview #4.***

**NAME:** "Saw Play Htoo"

**SEX:** M

**AGE:** 42 Karen Christian KNU

**ADDRESS:** *xxxx* village, Ler Mu Lah township

**INTERVIEWED:** 3/01

*["Saw Play Htoo" is a KNU civilian official. His interview is included here because it provides an overview of the situation in the area.]*

**Q:** Where do you live now?

**A:** I have come to stay in the Ka Pyaw, Ta Pwoh and Ma Zaw area.

**Q:** What is the situation in the Ka Pyaw area now?

**A:** When I recently went to the Ka Pyaw area, enemy battalion #559 was there. The battalion commander is Htay Win, the deputy battalion commander is Nay Lin Soe and the name of their camp commander in Ka Pyaw is Khin Zaw. On March 15th 2001, the enemy arrested Saw M— and Saw B— and demanded a gun from them. They couldn't get a gun from B— so they beat him painfully. Then they demanded money from him and fined him for the cost of a gun. It cost 90,000 Kyat. They also arrested Saw M—, beat him and tied his hands behind his back. After that they heated a knife until it became red and then enemy *[deputy]* battalion commander Nay Lin Soe touched it to M—-'s legs. His legs became blistered, burned and smelly. On the same day they arrested Naw M— and interrogated her. Afterwards they raped her. They arrested her at 12 o'clock and released her at 4 p.m.

**Q:** How many people did they rape?

**A:** They interrogated four people. I don't know for sure if they raped all of them or not, but they raped half of them, two people.

**Q:** How old are the women they raped?

**A:** Naw M— is about 42 years old. She is a villager from Ka Pyaw village.

**Q:** Do the soldiers also force the villagers to do *loh ah pay* or build a road?

**A:** In the Ka Pyaw area where the enemy has settled, the enemy forces the villagers to fence their villages. The villagers didn't want to fence them so they only built a gate along the road. Later, when the enemy came to check the fence, they weren't satisfied and they forced the people to fence around the entire village. They have

now finished fencing.

**Q:** Do the villagers have to go and work at the battalion camp?

**A:** The mobile battalion stays at Ka Pyaw. They are always gathering rice at Ka Pyaw. When they need rice they have to send it to the division at Ler Pa Doh. They force the villagers from Ka Pyaw village to send it to K'Saw Po Yweh. The villagers were told they would be released when they arrived at K'Saw Po Yweh so the villagers went as the Army commanders ordered them. When they arrived the Army commanders told them to keep going. The villagers didn't want to go so they all fled. They then came back to stay in Ka Pyaw.

**Q:** What is the weight of one load?

**A:** A load is no less than one big tin of rice, 12.5 kilograms *[27.5 lb]*.

**Q:** Do the villagers have to pay porter fees or other fees?

**A:** They always have to pay porter fees. Some villagers also go to carry loads, even women. Sometimes they also include children. Most of the people are women. The youngest women are 17 or 18 years old and the oldest is over 40 years old. They make a point of forcing women to carry if they can. Before I heard they took 50 or 60 women. The one who led them was Thramu *[female teacher]* H—. She is over 50 years old. She didn't have to carry anything. She had to take care of and lead the carriers.

**Q:** Do the people who carry loads receive any payment?

**A:** The people who go to carry loads never receive any payment. They are forced to do it for free. They have used this system since long ago.

**Q:** Do the villagers have to build or repair the roads?

**A:** They are always doing this. Right now they have to go and cut the brush along the road. They cut it from K'Saw Po Yweh to Ka Pyaw. It takes one or two days. You can't cut it and finish it on the same day.

**Q:** Do they give the villagers food when they go to do this?

**A:** The villagers have to bring their own rice, rice pots and machetes. They don't give rice and they don't give drinking water. They also don't give payment.

**Q:** Have they beaten people there?

**A:** They beat people but not always. They always force people to work.

**Q:** Do they burn houses?

**A:** I had not heard of it yet since I have been staying in the Noh Pa Doh and Ka Pyaw area.

**Q:** Did you hear about them torturing people or demanding taxes in other areas?

money from the people who can't go to carry. Each person must pay 2,000 or

**A:** They are always doing it in other places. Ka Pyaw village always has to pay. Weh Bone village also has to pay. They have to pay porter fees. They demand 3,000, up to 5,000 Kyat. Whether the villagers work for one day or one month, the soldiers still demand money as they like.

**Q:** Do any of the people get sick when they go as porters?

**A:** We have seen that the people leading the villagers in the village are not sympathetic. They call the people to work whether they are sick or well. They can't do it but they have to carry loads.

**Q:** Do the soldiers hit and beat the villagers who are sick and can't carry?

**A:** When they can't walk they are beaten. I don't think they curse them, because they already beat them. I haven't heard it. The Burmese don't curse them with "*ma aye loh [motherfucker]*".

**Q:** Do they demand things from other villages?

**A:** Ka Pyaw village has to pay a lot. We don't have exact information from other villages like Pa Thwee because they are far from us. The villagers at Pa Thwee always have to pay. I don't have exact information, but the enemy is gathering the villagers at Ta Pwoh *[Kyo Gu in Burmese]* and Pway Palaw. The villagers must come and stay there so they can torture and force the villagers to work. When the villagers go to fetch water and do not let the soldiers know it, they are fined 500 Kyat. The SPDC forced them to dig a well, but it is the villagers' water.

**Q:** Have the soldiers confiscated any farmland?

**A:** When the enemy came to stay in the village they did as they liked in the villagers' betelnut plantations. The villagers couldn't do anything. The soldiers climbed up to get all the nuts.

**Q:** What about the flat fields?

**A:** The soldiers demand paddy. They have to give more than 10 baskets for each acre. It is about 14 or 15 baskets *[per acre]*.

**Q:** Have they burned the villagers' paddy?

**A:** They destroyed and burned over 200 baskets of paddy at Ka Pyaw and Per Yweh. It was on March 17th 2001.

**Q:** Do you think they will still abuse people in the future?

**A:** Most of the people think it will be peaceful soon. But for me, I think they will still do it in the future. Recently I have been thinking that they are always abusing people. In the past there was a man named Saw K'Way. They came up and shot him dead. He had made no mistake. When he was travelling he was also holding one of the enemy's passes, but they didn't look at the pass and shot him dead. It happened

at the highest field in Kyet Ma Oh in the beginning of March 2001. He had a wife and two children. I don't know his wife's name but his mother is Auntie M—.

**Q:** Do the villagers have to go and do anything else?

**A:** In Ka Pyaw village they also have to build a monastery. The villagers have to go and give all of their energy there. They don't give payment for it. When they build a bridge or whatever, the villagers have to give all their energy. The soldiers don't pay a single Kyat. There is money given *[by the State for the project]*, but it is taken by their leaders.

**Q:** Where did they build a bridge?

**A:** They built bridges at Ta Mu and Kweh Gu. In the past over 20 people at a time had to go and build them. It took over a week, one or two weeks. It was not only at one place. The people from the Burman villages also had to build, but it was mostly Karen villagers who had to go and build them.

**Q:** Do they come to demand money for food fees in Ka Pyaw village?

**A:** In Ka Pyaw village the soldiers who pass through are always demanding money. It costs 4,000, 5,000, up to 10,000 Kyat.

**Q:** Do the soldiers eat the villagers' livestock?

**A:** They eat the villagers' poultry but they also shoot dead and eat people's cattle and buffaloes. They don't pay any Kyat. They shot them dead and ate them for free. When they couldn't eat it all, they threw the rest in a hole and left it. They eat only the thigh of a cow or pig and then go back. They also climbed up the betelnut and coconut trees and ate the young fruit. The owners don't even get to eat them anymore.

**Q:** Do they always do this?

**A:** They are always doing this, but then when they come the next time there is no fruit so they can't do it. They always do this in Kyet Ma Oh.

**Appendix 1: List of Destroyed and Abandoned Villages**

(Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run," April 9, 2001)

"This is a partial list of villages confirmed as burned, destroyed or abandoned due to the operations of SPDC soldiers between 1998 and June 2001. There are 226 villages on this list but it is important to emphasise that this list is not complete and that more villages are being burned as the SPDC expands its control. Some of these villages were given orders to relocate and therefore also appear in Appendix B, but most were simply destroyed or abandoned without receiving any specific orders to relocate. The destruction of these villages has been described in the interviews and field reports conducted for this report. Many of them have been corroborated by

several interviews and field reports. Under **'Source'**, **FR** indicates Field Reports from KHRG field researchers, **KHRG** indicates information given in the form of verbal reports or lists by KHRG field researchers and '**I*x*'** indicates interviews with villagers, **'*x*'** being the interview number used in the report. Under **'Village Name'**, ***** after the village name indicates a village which has not been destroyed but has been abandoned due to SPDC military presence."

# Papun District

## Lu Thaw Township

| # Village Name | Source |
|---|---|
| 1- Ler Mu Plaw | KHRG, I51, I60, I50, I45 |
| 2- Yay Gho Loh Der | KHRG |
| 3- Ta Er Nah Kee | KHRG |
| 4- Hser Tih | KHRG, I51 |
| 5- Tee Khay Kee a.k.a. Loh Koh | KHRG, I51 |
| 6- K'Neh Mu Der a.k.a. Paw Kho Kee | KHRG, I51, I58, I59 |
| 7- Bler Ghaw | KHRG, I51, I60 |
| 8- Hee Koh Loh Der | KHRG |
| 9- Dta Baw Meh Plaw | KHRG |
| 10- P'Nah Ay Per Ko | KHRG, I58 |
| 11- K'Baw Kee | KHRG, I51 |
| 12- Saw Ay Kee | KHRG |
| 13- Hser Hta | I31, I44 |
| 14- Kho Kyaw Der | I46 |
| 15- Naw Yo Hta | I60, I29, KHRG |
| 16- Kho Kaw Der | KHRG |
| 17- Bler Lu* | I52, I46 |
| 18- Ma Mee* | I52 |
| 19- Lay Wah* | I52 |
| 20- Thu Kler | I46, KHRG |
| 21- Keh Koh Mu Der | I52, I39, I46, KHRG |
| 22- Kha Tha Lo Der | KHRG |
| 23- Thaw Khee Der | KHRG |
| 24- Taw Paw Der | KHRG |
| 25- Saw Khu Der* | I60 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 26- Tee Ler Kee | I32 |
| 27- Kay Pu | I50 |
| 28- Plo Kee* | I39 |
| 29- Sgho Per Ko | KHRG |
| 30- Si Day | KHRG |
| 31- Baw Lay Der | KHRG |
| 32- Saw Mu Plaw | I51 |
| 33- Tee Baw Kee | I40, I33, I34, I51 |
| 34- Dta Baw Ko Der* | I36 |
| 35- Blaw Ko | KHRG |
| 36- K'Bu Kee | KHRG |
| 37- Li Pway Kee | KHRG |
| 38- Hsi Mu Heh Der a.k.a. Klaw Thay | KHRG |
| 39- Bee Ko Der | KHRG |
| 40- Ko Say* | I35 |
| 41- Theh Kee | KHRG, I53 |
| 42- Shway Mu Der | KHRG |
| 43- Paw Khay Ko | KHRG |
| 44- Keh Meh Der | KHRG |
| 45- Toh Pwih Der | KHRG |
| 46- Theh Hsa Kee | I53 |
| 47- Tee Lee Kha Kee | KHRG, I56 |
| 48- Ko Kee | KHRG |
| 49- Kaw Kyay Der | KHRG |
| 50- Pla Koh | KHRG, I35 |
| 51- Paw Mu Der | KHRG |
| 52- Kyo Moh Lay Der | KHRG |
| 53- Saw Ker Der* | KHRG, I68 |
| 54- Tay Thu Der | KHRG |
| 55- Thay Koh Mu Der | FR12 |
| 56- Khaw Hta* | KHRG, I3, I96, I105 |
| 57- Per Kee Der* | KHRG, I88, I3, I96, I105, I99 |
| 58- Yoh Po Loh* | I89, I3, I92 |
| 59- Wah Ka Der | I126, I128 |
| 60- Paw Thu | 01-26-17 |
| 61- Lay Poh Kaw Tih | I96, I105 |
| 62- T'Lay Ghaw Der* | I89, I105 |
| 63- Tee Mu Der* | I91 |
| 64- Kay Mu Der* | I69 |
| 65- Lah Eh Der | I37, I57 |
| 66- Hsaw Moh Hu Der* | I57 |
| 67- Baw Peh* | I57 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 68- May Per Hta* | I57 |
| 69- Htee T'Kay Hta* | I57 |
| 70- Dta Bo Hta* | I57 |
| 71- Nga Mu Per | I53 |
| 72- Ler Taw | I53 |
| 73- Tee Pweh Ko* | I29 |
| 74- Sho Po Hta | I40 |
| 75- Saw Pa Kaw Der* | I40 |
| 76- Nay Pweh Kee* | I40 |
| 77- K'Per Kee* | I40 |
| 78- Lah Kaw* | I40 |
| 79- Deh Bo Plaw* | I38 |
| 80- Kler Ka Plaw* | I39 |
| 81- Klu Thay Der* | I39 |
| 82- Thaw Pi Der* | I39 |
| 83- Deh Bo Hta* | I39 |
| 84- Dta Law Ploh* | I39 |
| 85- Paw Wah Hta | I68 |
| 86- Kyay Baw Ka | I68 |
| 87- Taw Thu Kee | I44 |
| 88- Na Ku Plaw | I46 |
| 89- P'Nah Po Plaw | I46 |
| 90- Meh Hta Ko | I46 |
| 91- Saw Toh Kee | I48 |
| 92- Pa Hta | I51 |
| 93- Khaw Kho Hta* | I51 |
| 94- Yu Loh Der | I51 |
| 95- Khaw Thu | I3 |
| 96- Theh Pa Tee* | I52 |
| 97- Wah Daw Klah a.k.a. Mu T'Ru Pu | I40 |

## Bu Tho Township

| # Village Name | Source |
|---|---|
| 98- Bwah Der | KHRG |
| 99- Meh Paw Mu Hta | KHRG |
| 100- Ma Mu Der | KHRG |

## Dweh Loh Township

| # Village Name | Source |
|---|---|
| 101- Nya Peh | KHRG |
| 102- Noh Nay Pu | KHRG |
| 103- Meh Kleh | KHRG |
| 104- Nya Hsa Day | KHRG, I146, I4 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 105- T'Kaw Hta KHRG | I130 |
| 106- P'Nweh Hta | KHRG |
| 107- Meh Toh Kee | KHRG, I141, I150, I151, I4 |
| 108- K'Neh Khaw Hta | KHRG |
| 109- Maw Hta | KHRG, I151 |
| 110- Doh Koh Wah | KHRG, I4 |
| 111- Thay Ko | KHRG |
| 112- Hsaw Pwih Hta | KHRG, I4 |
| 113- Hsaw Pwih Kee | KHRG |
| 114- Lay Kee | KHRG, I4 |
| 115- K'Waw Kee | KHRG |
| 116- Baw Naw Kee | KHRG |
| 117- Poh Loh Kee | KHRG |
| 118- Poh Loh Hta | KHRG |
| 119- Pway Day | KHRG, I144, I141 |
| 120- Ler Wa Ko | KHRG |
| 121- Kloh Kee | KHRG, I4 |
| 122- Toh Meh Kee | KHRG |
| 123- Wa Tho Law | KHRG |
| 124- Noh Baw Law | KHRG |
| 125- Meh Paw Hta | KHRG |
| 126- Wa Law Kloh | KHRG |
| 127- Per Ko | KHRG |
| 128- Plaw Kee | KHRG, I138, I142, I151, I139, I4 |
| 129- Meh Thu Kee* | KHRG, I4, I129, I149 |
| 130- Meh Paw Kee | I141, I145, I149 |
| 131- Thay Day Plaw Kee* | I149 |
| 132- Nya Hsa Kee | I131, I132 |
| 133- Ner Kee | KHRG, I114, I125, I131, I3 |
| 134- Wah Tay* | I131, I132 |
| 135- Ler Toh Po | I132 |
| 136- Ker Kaw Law | KHRG, I131, I3, I132 |
| 137- Maw Pu | I114, I130, I126, I128, I77 |
| 138- Lay Hta | I114, I130, I126, I77 |
| 139- Da Baw Kee | I130, I128, I126 |
| 140- Meh Gha Law | KHRG, I130, I126, I132, I3, I77 |
| 141- Paw Wah Der | I130, I127, I132 |
| 142- Noh Paw Per | I114 |
| 143- Dta Hu Law | I191 |
| 144- Ka Pu Soh | I130 |
| 145- Maw Thay Hta | I130 |
| 146- Baw Oo Toh* | I143 |
| 147- Th'Waw Kha | I140 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 148- Th'Waw Ku | I140 |

# Nyaunglebin District

## Mone Township

| # Village Name | Source |
|---|---|
| 149- Thay Nweh Kee | I42, I43, FR5, I49 |
| 150- Saw Ka Der* | I70, I5 |
| 151- Nwa Kee* | FR11 |
| 152- Haw Kho Dreh* | FR11 |
| 153- Saw Kee* | FR11 |
| 154- Tee Ghaw* | FR11 |
| 155- Saw Tay Der | I28, I30, FR6 |
| 156- Pah Kaw Kee* | I48 |
| 157- Wah Kee | FR6 |
| 158- Kwih Day Ko | FR6 |
| 159- Taw Ray Der | FR6 |
| 160- Saw Nyeh Der | FR6 |
| 161- Tee Ner Hta | FR6 |
| 162- Nwa Lay Ko | FR6 |
| 163- Play Kee | FR6 |
| 164- Yaw Kee | FR6 |
| 165- Play Pa | FR6 |
| 166- Si Daw Ko | FR6 |
| 167- K'Nay Kee | FR6 |
| 168- K'Pah Hta | FR12 |

## Kyauk Kyi Township

| # Village Name | Source |
|---|---|
| 169- P'Yah Hser Der | FR12 |
| 170- Tee Mu Hta | I66, I94 |
| 171- Per Po Kee* | I5 |
| 172- Maw Kee | I80, I83 |
| 173- K'Du Mu Der* | I94 |
| 174- Kheh Der | I73, I75, FR12 |
| 175- T'Kaw Der | I75, FR12 |
| 176- Oo Keh Kee | FR12 |
| 177- Mu Kee | I75, FR12 |
| 178- Doh Daw Kee | FR12 |
| 179- Dta Baw Kee* | I77 |
| 180- Tee Nya B'Day Kee | I74, FR12 |

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| | |
|---|---|
| 181- Poh Hta | I75 |
| 182- Po Khaw Der | I75, FR12 |
| 183- Maw Lay Kee | I75 |
| 184- Kee Tee | I75 |
| 185- Nyah Tay* | I75 |
| 186- Kee Kheh Der* | I75 |
| 187- Thaw Mi Der* | I75 |
| 188- Poh Kyo* | I75 |
| 189- Hoh Lu | I75 |
| 190- Paw Poh Der* | I75 |
| 191- Peh Po Kee | I9 |
| 192- Saw Baw Der | I30 |
| 193- Lay Pway Kee | KHRG, I2 |
| 194- Kler Kee* | I94 |
| 195- Kwih Lah* | KHRG, I2 |

## Shwegyin Township

| # Village Name | Source |
|---|---|
| 196- Hsaw Gho Kee | KHRG |
| 197- Du Pa Leh | KHRG |
| 198- Tee Klay Kee | KHRG |
| 199- Tee Blah Hta | I90, I79, I111 |
| 200- Thaw Gheh Ko | I76, I99 |
| 201- Saw Ther Kee* | I76, I102 |
| 202- Tee Thareh Kee | I71, I76, I130 |
| 203- Yah Aw* | I76 |
| 204- Ghaw Kee* | I71, I76 |
| 205- Dta Kaw Lay Ko* | I76 |
| 206- Tee Nya Mo Kee* | I109 |
| 207- Tee Ler Ghaw Kee* | I99 |
| 208- Loh Kee* | KHRG, I1, I98, I99 |
| 209- Kaw Mu Der | KHRG, I1, I97, I98, I100, I101, I99, I105 |
| 210- Thay Ko Hser Der* | KHRG, I1, I97, I101, I96, I105 |
| 211- Saw Ru Ko* | KHRG, I1, I99 |
| 212- Mee T'Nay Der | I99 |
| 213- Dta Keh Pu* | KHRG, I1 |
| 214- Mi Tha Mi Der* | I98 |
| 215- Thay Ko Pu | I103 |
| 216- Dta Say Der | I71 |
| 217- Htoo Lu* | I72 |
| 218- Maw Pu | I77 |
| 219- Saw Aw Hta | I78 |

| | |
|---|---|
| 220- Meh Kyi Kee a.k.a. Kyaw Mu Chaw Day: | I80 |
| 221- Prah Kee* | I81 |
| 222- Wah May Kee* | I81 |
| 223- Dta Kwih Kyo* | I82 |
| 224- Meh Thee Hta* | I86 |
| 225- Meh K'Dtee* | I85 |
| 226- Kyay Kee* | I101 |

**Appendix 2: List of Relocated Villages**

(Source: KHRG: "Papun and Nyaunglebin Districts, Karen State: Internally displaced villagers cornered by 40 SPDC Battalions; Food shortages, disease, killings and life on the run," April 9, 2001)

"This is a partial list of villages which were given specific orders to move to relocation sites according to villagers in the area. Many of these villages also appear in the list of burned and destroyed villages because they were subsequently burned after the villagers moved. This list is not complete. Under **'Source'**, **FR** indicates Field Reports from KHRG field reporters, **KHRG** indicates information given in the form of verbal reports or lists by KHRG field researchers and '**I*x*'** indicates interviews with villagers, **'*x*'** being the interview number used in the report."

## Papun District

| # Village Name | Township | Relocation Site | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1- Wah P'Nah Lo Ko | Wa Mu | Wa Mu | KHRG |
| 2- Wa Wee Lay | Meh Kyo | Ku Thu Hta | I116 |
| 3- Nya Hsa Day | Meh Kyo | Wa Mu | I146 |
| 4- K'Neh Khaw Hta | Ma Lay Ler | | I157 |
| 5- Thay Kyo | Ma Lay Ler | Wa Mu | I146 |
| 6- Lay Kee | Ma Lay Ler | Wa Mu | I146 |
| 7- Kyaw T'Koh Kee | Ma Lay Ler | Wa Mu | I146 |
| 8- Khaw Tee Ko | Ku Thu Hta | | I133 |
| 9- Dweh T'Kaw Kee | Ku Thu Hta | | I133 |
| 10- Meh T'Ru Kee | Ku Thu Hta | | I133 |
| 11- Tee Na Day | Ku Thu Hta | | I133 |
| 12- Kloh Kee | Meh Way | Meh Way | KHRG, I4 |
| 13- Wa Tho Law | Meh Way | Meh Way | KHRG, I4 |
| 14- Noh Bo Law | Meh Way | Meh Way | KHRG, I4 |
| 15- Wa Law Kloh | Meh Way | Meh Way | KHRG, I4 |
| 16- Plaw Kee | Meh Way | Meh Way | I137 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 17- Meh Thu Kee | Meh Way | Meh Way | KHRG, I4 |
| 18- Du Baw | Meh Way | | I143 |
| 19- Ka Hser Ghee Tee | Meh Way | Meh Way | KHRG, I4 |
| 20- Toh Kyaw Kee | Meh Way | Meh Way | KHRG, I4 |
| 21- Da Baw Kee | Meh Thu | | I114 |
| 22- Meh Gha Law | Meh Thu | | I113, I114 |
| 23- Khaw Tee Ko | Meh Nyu Hta | Klaw Hta | I220 * |
| 24- Meh Nyu Hta KhawKla: | Meh Nyu Hta | Meh Nyu Hta | I221 |

* This village had been told it would be relocated, but moved to a place of its own choosing.

## Nyaunglebin District

| # Village Name | Township | Relocation Site | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 25- Kheh Pu Der | Mone | | FR6 |
| 26- Theh Baw Der | Mone | | FR6 |
| 27- Kyaw Pya | Mone | | FR6 |
| 28- Ploh Pa | Mone | | FR6 |
| 29- Gko Nee | Mone | | I26 |
| 30- Noh Taw Hta | Mone | Yan Myo Aung | I5, I10 |
| 31- P'Reh See | Mone | Yan Myo Aung | I5, I10 |
| 32- Ta Maw Ma | Mone | Yan Myo Aung | I5, I10 |
| 33- Twa Ni Gone | Mone | Yan Myo Aung | I10 |
| 34- Mah Pee Doh | Ler Doh | P'Deh Kaw | KHRG |
| 35- Mah Pee Po | Ler Doh | P'Deh Kaw | KHRG |
| 36- Leh Gkaw Wah | Ler Doh | Lay Bin Way | I9 |
| 37- Shwe Dtee | Ler Doh | | I9 |
| 38- Taun Dta Daw | Ler Doh | | I9 |
| 39- P'Zu An | Ler Doh | | I9 |
| 40- Ma Oo Bin | Ler Doh | | I9 |
| 41- Nga Peh Inn | Ler Doh | | I9 |
| 42- Shan Su | Ler Doh | Kaw Tha Say | I9 |

## # Photos




*Photo #B-4 : Saw B—, age 50 (back, second from right), and his family, from xxxx village in xxxx village tract, northern Papun District. In October 1998 SPDC troops came to relocate his village and captured the whole family as well as some of the other villagers, totalling 16 people aged from 1 year to 67 years. They beat and interrogated Saw B—, then force-marched all 16 people to Mu Theh, an SPDC LIB #349 Army camp along the new Kyauk Kyi - Saw Hta road. The family was forced to settle there. For the first 3 months they were given some food, but after that they were told to find food for themselves. They were constantly forced to do labour making thatch, cutting and hauling logs and bamboo for the Army camp, and were forced to carry Army supplies to Maw Kyaw Ko at the top of La Lah mountain once every week. Every day the relocated villagers also had to send 3 people for forced labour sentry duty. While they were there, the Mu Theh villagers were selling some food to the people in hiding in the hills, and when the SPDC found out about this they executed village headman Pa Baw, who left a wife and two children. Eventually Saw B—'s family couldn't bear the conditions anymore so they fled back into the hills, but they couldn't dare go back to their village so they now live in the forest with other displaced villagers. This photo was taken in April 2001. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #B-9: Abandoned house in Bu Tho township, eastern Papun District. This village was forced to relocate in early 2001, and the SPDC ordered the villagers to dismantle their house walls before moving so that passing SPDC patrols would easily be able to see if anyone is hiding inside. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*



# B-14



# B-15







*Photos # B14, B15, B16, B17, B18: Villages abandoned due to forced relocation, April 2001. Since 1997, the SPDC has forcibly relocated more than half of all villages in the plains east of the Sittaung River in Nyaunglebin District to SPDC-garrisoned sites. These photos, taken in April 2001, are from some of the 16 villages in western Mone township which KHRG has already documented as being relocated [see "Death Squads and Displacement" (KHRG #99-04, 24/5/99)]. Photo #B14 shows the abandoned schoolhouse in Ta Maw Ma village; Photo #B15 is from Yeh Kyo village; Photo #B16 shows the abandoned church in Ter Bpaw village; Photo #B17 shows the old school in Po Thaung Su village; and Photo #B18 shows Po Thaung Su village's abandoned church. In most of these villages, there is nothing left but these buildings and whatever parts of their houses the villagers couldn't take with them. More details on the forced relocation of these villages can be found in the report "Death Squads and Displacement" (KHRG #99-04, 24/5/99). [Photos: KHRG researcher]*




*Photos # B19, B20: Coconut palms which SPDC troops cut down and forced the villagers to cut down before forcibly relocating them from villages in the Sittaung River plain, Mone township, Nyaunglebin District, April 2001. All of these villages have been forced to relocate to SPDC-garrisoned sites since 1997 (see description with preceding photos), and the SPDC orders the destruction of anything which could be used as food by the resistance forces or internally displaced villagers. Photo #B19 shows the stumps of an entire coconut plantation cut down in Twa Ni Gone village, and Photo #B20 is from Noh Htaw Hta village. Most of the destroyed trees had taken several decades to grow. Villagers are also ordered to dismantle their houses before moving so they cannot be used as shelter. More details on the forced relocation of these villages can be found in the report "Death Squads and Displacement" (KHRG #99-04, 24/5/99). [Photos: KHRG researcher]*



# B-19



# B-20




*Photo # B21: An SPDC-garrisoned forced relocation site just east of the Sittaung River in Mone township, Nyaunglebin District, taken from a distance in April 2001. This particular open field site just south of Weh Gyi village is near the new forced labour vehicle road along the Sittaung River (the photo is taken from this road), and is now home to villagers from Lu Ah and some other nearby villages. More details on the forced relocation of the area villages can be found in the report "Death Squads and Displacement" (KHRG #99-04, 24/5/99). [Photo: KHRG researcher]*






*Photos #B23, B24: Villagers from northern Toungoo District who have been forced to relocate to the outskirts of xxxx village, seen at the relocation site. Over the past 3 years many villages have been forced to relocate here, and they are now used for forced labour portering supplies and building and maintaining roads for SPDC troops. They cannot go back to farm their own land, yet neither the military nor the authorities provide them with anything. They must now survive however they can, as day labourers or petty traders. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*






*Photos #B28, B29 : After forcibly relocating villages in the xxxx area of eastern Papun District in the first part of 2001, SPDC Division #44 troops forced the villagers to fence themselves in, allowing only the one entry and exit point shown in Photo #B29. Their movements are now tightly controlled, and they are regularly called for various forms of forced labour by the Army camp. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #B30 : Villagers in xxxx village, Dweh Loh township, Papun District, work on a fence that SPDC Division #33 ordered them to make around their village in late April 2001. Most villages under SPDC control are now ordered to fence themselves in, leaving only one or two entry points and posting forced labour sentries on these at all times. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photos #B31, B32 : xxxx village, Papun District. Officer Bo aaaa from SPDC LIB #30 ordered the villagers to build a fence around the entire perimeter of their village with only one entry and exit point. The SPDC forces many villagers to do this, supposedly to restrict the movements of resistance forces, though the main result is to restrict the activities of the villagers. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*



# 14. The Situation of Refugees

## 14.1 Background

A refugee, under international law, is defined as any person who:

*... owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence ... is unable or, owing to such fear is unwilling to return to it.*

(Article 1 of the Refugee Convention)

There are currently more than 135,000 refugees living in Thailand. Refugees from Burma are also in refugee camps along the Bangladeshi and Indian borders, as well as working and living in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Malaysia. The line between refugee and migrant is a thin one and there are also an estimated 1 million migrant workers living in Thailand who have fled from their homes for many of the same reasons that official refugees have. (The topic of migrant workers from Burma is covered in the next chapter) The majority of refugees living in Thailand are from the Karen, Karenni, Shan and Mon ethnic groups with migrant workers coming from all ethnic groups and all areas of Burma. The majority of Burmese refugees in Bangladesh are Rohingya Muslims who face religious and ethnic persecution in their native Arakan State in western Burma. Many Rohingya refugees have been repatriated since 250,000 of them fled to the Cox's Bazaar District of Bangladesh in 1992 and there are currently 22,000 refugees remaining in the camps. Thousands of Rohingya refugees have also migrated or been trafficked to India and Pakistan where there are a number of Rohingya refugee women and girls who have been sold into prostitution.

Refugees flee Burma for a number of reasons, including large scale human rights abuses such as forced relocations, rape, forced labor, torture, the confiscation of land and property, arbitrary arrest and lack of personal security. In areas where there are ethnic armed resistance groups still active, such as in Shan and Karen States, villagers have faced mass forced relocation programs in the past few years along with other human rights violations. More than 1 million people are living as IDPs with the potential to become cross-border refugees during times of increased military pressure or hardship. A new trend is more ethnic Burmese leaving Burma from both urban and rural areas in family groups. They usually become migrant workers and leave Burma due to forced labor, heavy taxation, corruption, inability to maintain an adequate standard of living and interference with their livelihood through the theft or confiscation of land, property and livestock.

The Refugee Convention states that refugee protection rests on the principle of *non-refoulement*, which dictates that no refugee should be returned to any country where he or she is likely to face persecution on grounds of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership of a particular social group. This principle has been repeatedly violated by the governments of Bangladesh, India, and Thailand, who continue to forcibly repatriate refugees back to areas where their safety cannot be guaranteed.

# 14.2 Situation in Thailand

**Refugee Demographics in 2001**

The Burma Border Consortium (BBC) reported that at the end of 2001 there was a total refugee population in Thailand of 138,117, an all-time high. Since the beginning of 2001, 10,203 new refugees have arrived in Thailand. From July to December 2001, the rate of new arrivals in the camps was approximately 800 per month. According to BBC, these number are slightly lower than average for the last three years, but normal for the rainy season. It is important to note that lower numbers of refugees do not reflect an improvement in the situation across the border, and there has been no reprieve from human rights abuses committed by the Burmese Army. Instead the lower numbers reflect the fact that escaping Burma and entering the camps in Thailand has become increasingly difficult for potential refugees. The Thai policy to accept only those "fleeing fighting" has been strictly maintained, and local authorities have ordered camp committees not to allow any increase in camp populations. In order to slip by SPDC patrols and to avoid notice by the Thai Authorities, refugees have begun to split up and arrive in smaller numbers. When they do arrive, many decide not to register themselves for fear that they will be sent back. BBC estimates that there are at least 1,500 new arrivals in the camps who have not been recorded. If this is the case, then the actual rate of arrivals in camps in Thailand was around 1,200 per month, which is consistent with previous years. (Source: BBC)

The breakdown by age and sex reported by the Karen, Mon and Karenni Camp Committees in December 2001 was as follows:

| Group | Families | Adult* | | Children | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Male | Female | Male | Female | |
| Karen | 18,603 | 30,336 | 29,159 | 21,466 | 20,808 | 101,769 |
| Mon | 3,780 | 4,540 | 4,4[illegible] | 3,456 | 3,400 | 15,[illegible]4 |
| Karenni | 4,114 | 6,425 | 5,711 | 4,002 | 3,848 | 20,037 |
| Total | 25,502 | 41,301 | 39,269 | 27,924 | 27,056 | 135,410 |

*For Karen and Mon, this is over 14 years old, for Karenni over 14 years old

(Source: Info-Net Month Report, 31 December)

**Thai Government policy towards refugees**

Refugees in Thailand face a lack of protection due to Thai government policies that largely fail to comply with international norms and standards. Thailand is not a party to the 1951 United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention), the main international treaty for the protection of refugees, and lacks an adequate legal framework for determining refugee status. The Thai government's attitude towards the refugees is based on the belief that any assistance offered by NGOs and the UNHCR serves as a 'pull' factor to encourage refugees to enter Thailand and a deterrent to their eventual repatriation. Since 1992, the government has maintained a policy towards the refugees that rests on several key components, these include:

- Only allowing Burmese to cross into Thailand if they are fleeing active fighting, and denying entry or forcibly repatriating those refugees who are fleeing systematic human rights abuses;

- Locating refugee camps in areas too close to the border to be considered secure;

- Severely limiting the role of UNHCR;

- Working to promote cease-fire agreements between the ethnic insurgents and the Burmese government as a way of solving the refugee problem. (Source: HRW)

Thai policy towards the refugees is further complicated by the country's shifting and sometimes contradictory strategic and economic interests in Burma, and the state of Thailand's diplomatic relations with the SPDC. A series of incidents involving armed Burmese dissidents that began with the Burmese Embassy siege in October 1999 and ended with the shooting of 6 Thai villagers in December 2000, led the Thai public to adopt a very negative view of Burmese refugees and migrant workers. In 2001 the Thais gained a better understanding of the true nature of SPDC activities in the border areas, following a series of clashes between the Burmese and Thai armies along the border of northern Shan State. These skirmishes, which arose from conflicts over insurgent activities, drug smuggling, and border demarcation disputes, caused a temporary strain in Thai/Burma relations, and led the Thai public to adopt a more sympathetic attitude towards the refugees. In June 2001 Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra visited Rangoon, normalizing relations between the two countries and continuing a dialogue with the SPDC on how to repatriate both refugees and illegal workers. To date there has been little concrete progress from these meetings, but it is distressing that the discussions have so far ignored the concerns of the ethnic minority groups involved, and not taken into account the true situation of conflict along the border. This year pressure to repatriate the refugees has increased as a number of Thai officials have publicly protested that the refugees are an intolerable burden on Thailand, wasting government money, wrecking havoc on the environment and spreading diseases.

Many prominent members of the international community disagree with the Thai government's contention that the presence of camps and some limited assistance 'encourages' people to come to Thailand as refugees. Instead there is overwhelming evidence that people flee to Thailand as a last resort, to escape an intolerable situation of systematic SPDC abuses. The majority of people arriving in refugee camps have previously been living on the run as IDPs inside Burma. It is estimated that in the last 5 years, as many as one million people have been victims of SPDC village relocations, with hundreds of thousands of people displaced and forced to live in resettlement sites, or in hiding, constantly moving to escape SPDC troops. Throughout 2001 the Burmese military continued to root out IDPs, destroying their food supplies, and torturing and killing those they could catch. When a community had been ordered to relocate, SPDC troops returned repeatedly to prevent people from re-establishing their homes. The Karen organizations estimate that in Karen State alone there are 120,000 IDPs in hiding, all of whom are potential refugees. There are many other IDPs who are living in resettlement areas controlled by the SPDC, where they are frequently conscripted for forced labour and forced portering, as well as facing many other abuses. A large number of people living in these areas also attempt to flee to Thailand.

New asylum seekers, whose cases are now handled by Provincial Admissions Boards (PABs), face the rejection of their applications unless they are fleeing direct fighting in border areas. This is despite the fact that in the 1998 working arrangements worked out between Thailand and the UNHCR, it was noted that people fleeing "the effects of fighting," should also be given consideration. The process for asylum seekers has been extremely slow as PABs have no consistent meeting schedule and there is a delay between the time asylum-seekers are interviewed by district officials and when their cases are actually presented to the PABs. UNHCR's statistics show that 29,067 persons have sought admission to Thailand from May 1999 to December 2001. Of these, 11,718 were accepted as refugees (41%), while 10,048 were rejected (35%) and 6, 941 (24%) are still waiting for a decision to be made regarding their status. UNHCR has stated that they believe that the 10,408 rejected cases have legitimate fears of persecution if they return to Burma and they are appealing the decision to repatriate these individuals. Currently 5,541 of these cases have been reconfirmed as rejected with 330 people already repatriated.

The most recent incidence of forced repatriation occurred on 6 November 2001, when 63 Karen asylum seekers were sent back to Burma through the Mon cease-fire area at Halochanee. (For more information on this event see timeline below). At the time of writing, the situation for the Karen in Halochanee and that of the 5,211 refugees whose requests for asylum have been rejected by the Thai authorities remains precarious. There is also concern over what will happen to the growing number of new arrivals who are not registering themselves. While Thai government policy states that all rejected cases must be repatriated, it remains

unclear when or how this will be carried out.

**Situation in the Camps**

The biggest problems among camp refugees continue to be HIV/AIDS and drug addiction. Skyrocketing birthrates are adding to overcrowding and could possibly contribute to developmental problems and malnutrition among children. The average population growth for Thailand is 1%, while in the camps it is 4%. The problem is most serious in camps at Tham Hin in Suan Phung district, Ratchaburi, and Mae La in Tak's Tha Song Yang district. Every month 20 babies are born at Tham Hin camp, said one official. The figure is even higher at Mae La, which is the largest camp with some 30,000 refugees. Officials have encouraged refugees to plan their families and use condoms but have only limited success because birth control is against the religious beliefs of many refugees.

In a visit to Tham Hin camp in October 2000, former High Commissioner for Refugees, Mrs. Sadako Ogata, stated that the camp, which houses 8,200 Karen refugees, was unacceptably overcrowded. Tham Hin camp has a population density approximately 4 times greater any other camp. In February 2001 United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson reiterated concerns about the living conditions of refugees in camps along the Thai/Burma border publicly and to the Thai prime minister. In June 2001 there were serious outbreaks of dengue and typhoid in Tham Hin, which caused the international community to advocate for the camp to be relocated. While a possible relocation site has been found several kilometers from the current site, to date no decision has been made to move the camp.

In recent years, as refugees have become more aid dependent due to restrictions on their movement, this has impacted their nutritional intake. Refugees receive a basic food basket of rice, salt, yellow beans, oil and fish paste from relief agencies, and in the past were able to supplement their diets by foraging, cultivating vegetables, raising livestock, growing crops on land held by opposition groups and purchasing other needed items with wages from seasonal work in Thailand. As the self-sufficiency of refugees has declined, due to tightened security in Thailand and the loss of land to the Burmese army, relief organizations have had to go from providing 50 percent of staple diet needs in 1984 to providing 100 percent by the mid 1990s. In February 2001, a food consumption/nutrition status survey carried out by BBC in Mae La camp indicated that current refugees are even more dependent on aid than was previously thought. The study also showed that despite the fact that most Mae La residents had lived in Thailand for a substantial amount of time, the majority of families remain very poor, with only 4% of the population receiving a year-round income. Finally, the BBC study showed that as a result of poor living conditions, frequent infection, and a diet lacking in animal protein and micronutrients, low-level, chronic malnutrition is prevalent among children in the camp.

**Situation of Women in Refugee Camps**

Most refugees in camps live in family units, either arriving as such or reuniting after separate arrivals. The ratio of males to females is 51:49 and there are relatively few single mothers. The average family size is 5.3. Women tend to be under-represented in the committees that organize the day-to-day administration of the camps, but are active in areas such as teaching, health care work and home visits to gather information about the daily routine of refugees. Obstacles to increased participation of women in camp administration are lack of education and basic knowledge about their rights. There are various women's groups in all the camps, some focusing on the daily needs and welfare of women and some on the more political aspects of women's rights. (Source: BBC)

The majority of refugee women come from ethnic minority groups and suffer from a wide range of human rights violations prior to arrival in the camps. Ethnic minority women living in conflict areas are used as forced labor on infrastructure projects and forced porters for the military, are subject to the constant threat of rape and have virtually no personal security. Conditions in the camps vary from place to place, but women have generally suffered from the recent tighter restrictions on movement outside the camps and have seen their ability to be self-sufficient decline. The conditions of refugee women strongly effect children, of whom women are the primary caregivers.

**Situation of Refugee Children**

Although the decision to flee one's home is usually made by adults, children are deeply affected by the situation. The physical dangers for children during flight are immense. They are threatened by landmines, shelling, sudden attacks and their health is put at severe risk due to long days of walking without adequate food and water. They become malnourished and their resistance to diseases, such as malaria, is lowered. Unaccompanied children are vulnerable to neglect, military recruitment, sexual assault and other types of abuse. Children also suffer greatly from the emotional effects of fleeing their homes. They leave behind friends, relatives, possessions and established social structures and witness the fear and uncertainty felt by adult authority figures. This is in addition to the their exposure to the factors that caused their flight to begin with, such as the killing, torture, rape and use of forced labor of their family and community members. All of this, along with shortages of basic resources, can lead to harmful effects of the physical, psychological and social development of refugee children.

**Closure of the Maneeloy Burmese Student Center**

Following the attack by Burmese rebels on the Ratchaburi Hospital in January 2000, the Thai government made the decision to close the Maneeloy Burmese Student Centre. The center had been the only place of asylum outside the refugee camps and had been holding students, as well as other "Persons of Concern" who had applied for asylum in Bangkok but could not stay at the border for their own security. With UNHCR assistance, by the end of October 2001, 2,300 of the former residents had been resettled in third countries. In addition, Most of the 200 or so individuals remaining from the registered caseload already had resettlement places and were only waiting to be processed. The Thai government set the date of closure for December 15th, and announced that the remaining refugees would be resettled in Tham Hin camp.

At issue was the fact that in addition to registered refugees, Maneeloy also housed around 170 UNHCR Persons of Concern (POCs), who were recognized by UNHCR as refugees, but were not part of the originally registered Maneeloy caseload, and thus were considered by the Thai government to be "safe" at the border. Of further concern were the over 100 other Burmese in the camp, who were not registered or recognized as POCs. The Thai government announced that these people would be treated as illegal immigrants and subject to arrest and deportation.

Following the announcement of the camp's imminent closure, there were some demonstrations and protests by the Burmese student leaders. Meetings took place between the students and high-ranking Thai officials, UNHCR and the NGOs, and the deadline was extended a short time in order to provide time for these meetings and for the preparation of accommodations in Tham Hin.

On 27 December 2001, a total of 393 people were transferred to Tham Hin, with many of the illegal residents having previously "disappeared." When they arrived, Tham Hin had prepared accommodations, food, cooking utensils and medical services for them.

So far there have been no major problems with the new residents, who are receiving services from NGOs in the camps, and appear to have accepted their situation for the present time. Some people however, have expressed unhappiness with their isolated location, and living conditions that are far below what was available at Maneeloy. Currently these individuals have all been registered by UNHCR and so in theory, are eligible for resettlement on a case-by-case basis. However, only those refugees in the original Maneeloy caseload are actually guaranteed resettlement. Most of the remaning refugees have previously failed UNHCR's criteria for resettlement.

The closure of Maneeloy highlights the fact that there are many UNHCR POC's, and many other Burmese asylum seekers not officially recognized or registered, who

cannot easily seek refuge in the camps. Many of these people are politically active, ethnic Burmans who would find it difficult to fit in with the other ethnic nationalities in the border camps. Some of these individuals have had past conflicts with the leadership of communities on the border, and others would find it difficult to adjust and survive as single persons in camps that are run on established family and community structures that would be alien to them. Despite these problems there currently remains no other option for these people. (Source: BBC)

**Situation of Karen Refugees**

The Karen, like the other ethnic minority groups, have settlements on both sides of the Thai/Burma border. With an estimated population of between 3 and 4 million, they are one of the largest ethnic minority groups in Burma. The majority of Karen support and consider themselves represented by the KNU and its army, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Large numbers of Karen refugees began crossing from Burma in 1984, and since that time they have received assistance from the KNU-linked, Karen Relief Committee (KRC). At the end of 1994, 400 former KNLA soldiers left to form the break away Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA). They claimed that KNLA Christian commanders had persecuted Buddhist KNLA soldiers. The split was partly engineered by the SPDC as part of their 'divide and rule' strategy, and since 1994 the DKBA troops have attacked Karen camps inside the Thai border, sometimes in cooperation with the Burmese military.

**Situation of Karenni Refugees**

In 1989 small and relatively low populated Karenni state had four separate armed groups. In the early 1990s two of these groups signed cease-fire agreements with the SPDC, which left the two larger groups, the Karenni Nationalities People's Liberation Front (KNPLF) and the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) continuing their armed struggle against the Burmese government. In 1992, as a result of mass forced relocations carried out by the SPDC (then SLORC) in their area of operations, the KNPLF was forced into agreeing to a cease-fire agreement. As the situation remained insecure, most people who had fled the area did not return. The KNPP also signed a cease-fire with the Burmese government in March 1995, but by June SLORC troops had violated the agreement and it was discarded. In 1996 the Burmese military began a large-scale forced relocation program in areas they perceived as sympathetic to the KNPP. By the end of March 1998 there were 12,500 Karenni refugees in Thailand, and today there are over 20,000. (Sources: BBC & HRW).

**Situation of Mon Refugees**

With a population of approximately 2 million, the Mon began their struggle for autonomy from the Burmese government in 1948. Since 1958, the Mon people have been represented by the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and its armed wing, the Mon National Liberation Army. When Mon refugees began to flee to Thailand in growing numbers, the NMSP, like the KNU, formed their own organization, the Mon National Relief Committee, to coordinate assistance to the refugees. In June 1995 the NMSP signed a cease-fire treaty with the Burmese military, which enabled them to retain their arms within a few areas in Mon state. The agreement also mandated that Mon refugees in Thailand be repatriated, which was done the following year. The newly repatriated refugees however remained afraid to return to their homes, and instead established new camps in NMSP-controlled territories. Currently these individuals remain internally displaced within Burma, while a further 13,000 remain in camps in Thailand. (Sources: BBC & HRW)

**Situation of Pa-O Refugees**

The Pa-O live primarily in the Taunggyi area of southwestern Shan State. A smaller number live in the Thaton area of Mon State in Lower Burma. The Pa-O in the Thaton area have largely become "Burmanized" and like their neighbors the Mon and Karen, they have adopted Burmese language, dress and customs. The Pa-O in southwestern Shan State have learned to speak Shan, but have maintained their own distinct language and customs.

Forced relocation programs carried out by the SPDC have been particularly sweeping in Mon, Karen and Shan States, the states where most of the Pa-O live. The Pa-O Nationalist Army signed a ceasefire with SLORC in 1991, but because the Pa-O live in many of the areas where other rebel groups are still active they have been swept up in the forced relocations and human rights abuses for which the ruling junta has become infamous. (See interviews with Pa-O refugees at the end of this chapter) (Source: Pa-O Human Rights Watch)

**Situation of Shan Refugees**

Shan State is the largest ethnic minority state in Burma, and one of the most ethnically diverse. Aided by Shan armed groups, for decades Khun Sa, the notorious drug warlord, ran his drug production operations in Shan State and along the Thai border. The Shan are the largest ethnic group in Shan state, and their language and culture is closely related to Thailand's. Because of this, many Shan people have been able to find temporary seasonal work across the border when fighting or economic factors made it difficult to survive in Shan State. However due to their prevalence as migrant laborers, and more importantly the large amount of illegal drugs produced in Shan state, Thailand has consistently refused to recognize any Shan people as refugees, instead labeling them 'economic migrants.'

In January 1996 Khun Sa officially surrendered to the Burmese government, and Burmese troops launched a major relocation program trying to extinguish the remaining Shan armed groups. Lack of refugee status became a major concern, as tens of thousands of Shans fled across the border from a forced relocation campaign that disrupted the lives of over 300,000 people. By the end of 1997, the three Shan opposition armies had reportedly joined forces to create the Shan States Army (SSsA). At the beginning of 1998 fighting broke out near the Thai border between the SSsA and Burmese military troops. It is estimated that up to 150,000 Shan refugees have entered Thailand since 1996. (Source: SHRF)

In the last six months of 2001 there were approximately 4,500 new arrivals reported in Fang District alone. As these people continue to be denied recognition as refugees by the Thai government, NGOs are largely prohibited from providing them with any assistance. The majority of Shan people who have fled from Burma live in the fields and orchards of Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai and Mae Hong Son provinces, subsisting on poorly paid seasonal work. Access to health care is minimal, and children have little opportunity for education. Without any official status, Shan people in Thailand are subject to abuse by their employers, and frequent arrest and detention. A health concern for Shan refugees is their unprotected exposure to pesticides in the orange orchards where they live and work.

Currently there are two informal Shan refugee camps right on the border, close to areas where the SSA is carrying out anti-drug operations, and continuing its opposition against SPDC/Wa troops. In these areas the situation remains very volatile and insecure, and if there is an SPDC/Wa attack the refugees in these camps would almost certainly have to flee into Thailand. A number of the newly arrived refugees in these camps have been displaced by Wa people relocated from Northern Shan State. Up to 250,000 Wa people are reported to be scheduled for relocation, with possibly 100,000 to 150,000 having already have been moved. This massive resettlement is affecting large numbers of Shan people, who are increasingly being forced to flee across the border as they lose their homes and livelihoods.

In August 2001 the political wing of the Shan State Army, the Restoration Council of the Shan State (RCSS) submitted a formal request that the Thai Government allow camps to be established for the most vulnerable Shan refugees. The RCSS proposed that one camp be created in each of the three northern provinces, to provide refuge for a total of 6,000 refugees. So far there has yet to be a positive response on this issue from the Thai government. (Source: BBC)

## Timeline of major refugee related events on the Thai/Burma border in 2000

**January**:

On 15 January escalating abuses by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in northeastern Pa'an district, Karen State forced a stream of families over the border into Thailand. On January 15 at least 13 families from Hlaing Bwe township fled their village and walked a day and a half across the mountains to cross into Thailand. Currently over 70 Karen villagers are gathered near a Thai Karen village and they report that many more may soon arrive. The new refugees come from the village of Meh Kreh located among the Dawna Mountains in eastern Hlaing Bwe township of central Karen State. The villagers cited many motives for fleeing villages in the area, the most salient being the increasing use of forced labour by the SPDC. All villages in the area are compelled to send people for forced labour, the only variation being the degrees of severity and frequency. (Source: KHRG)

On 18 January international relief workers reported that recent campaigns by the Burmese army against Karen guerrillas have displaced up to 30,000 people in eastern Burma. As part of their effort to cut off support to insurgent forces, the Burmese army has for the past few months increased their use of scorched-earth tactics in the hill area between the Sittang and Bilin rivers. As numerous villages have been burned down their inhabitants have been forced to flee to the nearby hills. Aid workers expressed concern about the Karens' welfare, reporting that many are starving and suffering from diseases such as malaria, typhoid and diarrhea. It is predicted that this current campaign by the Burmese army will trigger a fresh influx of refugees into Thailand. (Source: Burmanet)

On the same day, 81 Karen villagers arrived in Bor Wi, Thailand reporting that they had to flee after SPDC troops torched their homes inside Burma. The refugees said that they had to leave more than 40 of their elderly and ill relatives who were unable to make the arduous journey. One of the villagers, Pert, age 24, said the group had walked eight days through the jungle after Burmese troops raided their settlement at Mae Kong Ni in eastern Burma, killing one Karen man and taking another 17-year-old woman away. Her fate is not known. "I can't remember how many times we've moved on. We have to hide in the jungle to save our lives," said Pert, who uses only one name. "I miss home but I don't dare to go back," he said at the camp, set up 10 kilometers (six miles) inside Thailand. A volunteer who works with displaced civilians at the border, feared there could be hundreds more trapped inside Burma opposite Ratchaburi province. The volunteer, who requested anonymity, believed that 200 or more villagers had been heading toward the border near Bor Wi, Thailand but had either gotten lost or were forced into hiding in the forest. The group at Bor Wi arrived in Thailand Dec. 20 with virtually no personal

possessions. “Five years ago, life was very different,” said one villager, who did not want to be named, referring to when they lived in an area under KNU control. “I lived well and I didn’t have to hide. There was plenty of food.” The plight of the Karens in this area of the border, opposite Thailand’s western Ratchaburi province, has worsened over the past year amid growing military pressure from Yangon forces, according to local residents. Thailand has also tightened its control over the frontier, cutting off sources of basic supplies. (Source: AP)

**March:**

On March 3 about 500 Shan villagers, including men, women and children, were driven out of their villages by SPDC troops from IB330 and IB224, causing them to seek refuge along the border in Thailand’s Chiangrai Province. The refugees were from Murng Tum, Murng Kaan, Murng Long and Naa Yaao villages in Murng-Sart township and Murng Kok and Murng Lung villages in Murng-Phyak township. Earlier SPDC troops had gone to those villages and ordered them to move out within 24 hours. The soldiers threatened that any village that failed to move in time would be burned down. The refugees reached Thailand on March 3 and are camping in a location near Mae Maw village. They are facing difficulties trying to get work to feed their families because there is little wage-earning work and no land to farm in the area. (Source: SHRF)

**April:**

On 3 April Shan reported that since the previous week hundreds of people who had been forced by SPDC troops to leave their villages have been arriving in Thailand. Since 27 March, at least 600 villagers, the majority of them Shans and Akhas, from village tracts east of Monghsat Township have arrived at Therdthai Tract, Mae Fah Luang District, Chiangrai Province. Local Thai authorities have given the refugees temporary shelter near Phyaphrai village in Therdthai Tract. “We hope we are not driven back in a hurry, because we won’t be able to go back to our old homes and farms,” said a refugee from Nayao Tract. “They have been taken over by the Wa.” (Source: SHAN)

**July**:

On 18 July DKBA soldiers staged a surprise attack on a KNU border camp. The attack lasted about 20 minutes and then the camp was overrun by Burmese troops. Thai authorities reported that 194 Karen civilians fled from the camp and had sought refuge in Tha Song Yang district, in Tak province. About 200 other guerillas and their families abandoned the camp, which is located on the Thai border, and fled inside Burma. (Source: Burmanet)

On 23 July flash floods hit the Baan Mae Surin detention site, home to more than 10,000 displaced persons in Khun Yuam district, destroying 18 houses. The flood also damaged 31 other houses in the area but no casualties were reported. Non-

stop rain over the past few days has left roads to the area impassable. "Scores of Karen families in the area are suffering food shortages and the damaged road prevents food-laden vehicles from reaching the area to provide assistance to these people," reported someone at the scene, adding that five ill residents could not be taken to hospital. (Source: Burmanet)

**August**:

On 14 August it was reported that Thai and UNHCR officials have put on hold their plan to repatriate more than 5,000 illegal immigrants from Burma who are currently living in a refugee camp in Tha Song Yang district. UNHCR officials have determined that the current political situation in Burma makes it unsafe for the refugees to return. The repatriation of 5,606 illegal immigrants from Mae La refugee camp was slated to begin on Sunday. (Source: Burmanet)

**September:**

On 4 September the small camp of Chumphorn was relocated to Ban Don Yang. Some 266 refugees were relocated without incident, with only a few Chumphorn residents choosing to "disappear". (Source: BBC)

On 23 September Thai military sourced reported that they have stepped up security around a major refugee camp on the Burma border, as a result of rumours that it was targeted for attack by the DKBA. Thai army sources report that the DKBA planned to torch the Ban Bae Koh refugee camp in Tak province's Tha Song Yang district, in retaliation for a KNU killing of one of their leaders. KNU leaders also report hearing rumours of possible attacks on Mae La camp. (Source: Burmanet)

**October**:

On 2 October information sources on the border reported that SPDC troops operating in Karen State have been forcing resident Muslims to leave unless they convert to Buddhism or Hinduism. This campaign of forced conversion is causing an unusually large outflow of Muslim refugees to Thailand. The majority of these refugees go to Mae La, the largest Burmese refugee camp in Thailand, where currently one new arrival out of three is Muslim. (Source: Burmanet)

**November**

On 6 November, 63 asylum seekers who had arrived in Thong Pha Phum District on 25th October, were sent back to Burma through the Mon cease-fire area at Halochanee. These people had been interviewed upon arrival by UNHCR who confirmed that they were fleeing from a dangerous situation and requested that the Thai government grant them temporary asylum. Their case was rejected at a PAB meeting without UNHCR representatives present, and their deportation was ordered. UNHCR, NGOs and a number of embassies sent letters of concern to the Thai authorities, considering this a clear case of 'refoulement.' Fears for the safety of the deportees was based on the fact that as ethnic Karens it was dangerous for them to

be sent back to a Mon cease-fire area. These concerns proved valid on 21st November, when the settlement they had moved to was attacked and destroyed by the Burmese Army. Following the attack the entire Karen population of up to 800 had no choice but to evacuate to the Mon camp at Halochanee. Here, while they remained prohibited from entering Thailand, one of the 63 original deportees was shot and forced to have a leg amputated. Further pleas by the international community to allow the Karen at Halochanee into Thailand were to no avail. At the beginning of 2002, fighting at the Baleh Donpai section of Halochanee, drove the Karen population to seek refuge in Thailand, only to be sent back the next day. At the time of writing their situation remains critical. (Source: BBC)

On 11 November, the Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People (CIDKP) reported that nine Myanmar army battalions had recently launched attacks on Karen settlements in three areas of Papun district in Karen State, forcing many to flee toward the border with Thailand. CIDKP reported that the attacks, which began shortly after midnight on Nov. 11, have driven at least 800 people from their homes. Most fled with only the clothes on their backs, and among those fleeing were over 70 children from a primary and middle school that was located on the Bilin river. (Source: CIDKP)

**December:**

On 26 December the Ler Ber Her refugee settlement was attacked yet again by SPDC troops. The people living here had originally set up camp on the Burmese side of the Moei River in late 1998. NGOs provided some limited assistance, and the refugee population grew to 4,000. In April 2000 the Burmese army overran the camp, and the refugees were evacuated into Thailand. All the refugees were given the opportunity to stay in Mae La, and some chose to do so. A number of others 'disappeared', and a group of about 2,000 went back across the river to reestablish a settlement near Ler Ber Her. In July 2000, Ler Ber Her was once again attacked and the refugees were again briefly evacuated into Thailand. Soon after a number of them returned again to Ler Ber Her but BBC stopped sending rice in December 2000, because they were unable to monitor the situation and considered the camp location unsafe. The camp population had declined further when Ler Ber Her was attacked again on 26th December 2001. This time around 200 people escaped into Thailand. The following day Ler Ber Her was burnt to the ground and the number of refugees rose to 400. (Source: BBC)

## 14.3 Situation in India, Bangladesh and Malaysia

**Situation of Rohingya Refugees**

The Muslim Rohingya of Arakan State suffer human rights abuses above and beyond their non-Rohingya Buddhist neighbors living in the same area. Victims of ethnic and religious discrimination dating back to independence, most Rohingya

have never been given Burmese citizenship. As a result of this, their status as both migrants and refugees is made more precarious, with Burma refusing to accept some repatriated refugees back, stating that they are not Burmese citizens. Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and Malaysia, as well as Chin refugees in India, are all subject to the constant threat of forced repatriation or deportation, raising concerns of refoulment, which is contrary to international law.

**Bangladesh**

In 1991 more than 250,000 Rohingya refugees fled from Burma to the Bangladeshi district of Cox's Bazaar to escape atrocities committed by the military government during a crackdown on Rohingya in Arakan State. Since that time more than 31,500 children have been born and nearly 7,500 refugees have died in the camps. In 1996, between 10,000 and 15,000 new asylum seekers entered Bangladesh as the result of increased forced labor, heavy taxation on Muslims and cases of rape in Arakan State. New refugees were not welcomed by the Bangladeshi authorities, and in April of 1996, 15 women and children who were part of a group of asylum seekers drowned in the Naf river as they were being brought back to Burma by border authorities. The majority of refugees were repatriated before 1997 as the result of agreements between Burma, Bangladesh and the UNHCR worked out in 1992. However, the agreement contained no provisions for impartial screening of the refugees before they went back or for monitoring their well-being when they return. The majority of the refugees who were initially repatriated did so involuntarily and there are reports that the authorities in Bangladesh with held food and used beatings to force people to return home. In 1997 repatriation was halted by the Burmese government and only began again in very limited numbers the next year.

In June of 1997, 5,000 new refugees arrived in Bangladesh, however 500 of them were sent back by local authorities. Refugees who managed to find places to stay in the camps, with friends or relatives, were tracked down by the Bangladeshi authorities and charged with illegal entry. Others did not enter the camps but hid in jungle areas or slums in Cox's Bazaar. It is estimated that a between 10,000 and 15,000 Rohingya arrived in Bangladesh in 1997, as well as 1996, but because they didn't enter refugee camps there is no exact population count. As of 1997, police officials announced that 2,000 newly arrived refugees had been sent back to Burma in the preceding months. One commander of the border security forces stated, "If caught, we are pushing [refugees] back or sending them to jails".

As of 2001, there were approximately 21,500 refugees living in UNHCR-run refugee camps and temporary shelters in Noryapara (Ukhia) and Kutuplong (Teknaf) in Phalongchake Township, Cox's Bazaar. This number does not include those Rohingya refugees who live outside the camps, and are thus undocumented. UNHCR estimates that a more realistic total number of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh is 100,000, and the Bengali press puts the number as high as 250,000.

The Burmese government has agreed to take back only 7,000 of these, saying the rest are not Burmese nationals. The UNHCR requested that the Bangladeshi authorities allow the remaining 14,300 Rohingyas to settle in Bangladesh, but this request was turned down. As of July 2001, 50 refugees were supposed to be repatriated each week, but in reality the repatriation is proceeding much more slowly. UNHCR figures show that in the first 6 months of 2001 only 209 refugees had been repatriated back to Burma. This number was offset by the natural population growth in the refugee camps.

As a result of this, the Bangladeshi government has been pushing Rangoon to expedite repatriation. Among Rangoon's conditions for repatriation were that repatriated refugees must not be from a split family to avoid people illegally going back to Bangladesh to meet family members left behind. In January 2001 the repatriation of Rohingya refugees came to a halt due to tensions along the border between the Burmese and Bangladeshi militaries.

Rohingya refugees living outside the camps suffer abuses common to illegal migrants in Thailand. They must work for extremely low pay in poor conditions, sometimes in situations tantamount to slavery. As illegal migrants can be forced to serve prison sentences for not having proper documentation, most live in fear of immigration raids. Rising racial tensions between local communities in Bangladesh and Rohingya refugees exacerbates the situation, with Rohingyas accused by local and national leaders of smuggling weapons and drugs to armed insurgent groups in India and Bangladesh. The Rohingya deny these claims, but continue to suffer frequent harassment by the police.

There continue to be Rohingya refugees arriving Bangladesh, but not in large numbers and it is difficult to ascertain the exact number as many of them enter with valid permits for one week and then become migrant workers. In addition there is large scale trafficking of Rohingya from Bangladesh to Pakistan. Apart from these registered refugees in the camps, there are estimated twenty thousand Muslim refugees who are scattered in the Chittagong Hills and other areas of Bangladesh having run away from the two refugee camps.

**160 Rohingyas arrested in Cox's Bazaar**

On 4 September 2001, it was reported that in the previous two weeks approximately 160 Arakanese Rohingya Muslims have been arrested by Bangladesh police in the Teknaf area of Cox's Bazar district in Southern Chittagong. Many of these people have lived for years in the villages of the Cox's Bazar district. Those arrested have been put in jail while the police continue mounting an operation against the Rohingyas living illegally in the area. Arrest of Rohingya settlers by the police is a regular phenomenon in the Cox's Bazar and Bandarban districts of Bangladesh. (Source: ARNO)

**Military junta forcing Muslims to flee**

October 20, 2001 increasing pressure on Muslim inhabitants of Arakan State by the SPDC has recently compelled many of them to flee across the border into Bangladesh. Abdul Hakim 42, from Fakira Bazar in Arakan State, reported that his family, along with two other families fled their homes across the border on October 15 and are currently living with relatives in the village of Gundhum, just over the Bangladesh side of the border. Abdul Hakim stated that many other Muslim families had also fled recently from different villages in the northern part of Maungdaw as a result of increasing oppressive measures against them, lack of security and economic hardship. (Source: Arakan News Agency)

**Malaysia**

According to UNHCR figures, there are currently 5,100 Muslim Rohingya refugees in Malaysia. A 2000 Human Rights Watch Report criticized both the UNHCR and the Malayasian Government's treatment of Rohingya in Malaysia, saying that the "treatment of the Rohingya falls short of internationally accepted standards," and the treatment of refugees from Burma is "bad and getting worse." Rohingya refugees in Malaysia are considered illegal immigrants even if they are recognized by the UNHCR and are at constant risk of arrest. There is no asylum system in Malaysia, which is not a signatory to the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. Malaysia is selective in which refugees groups it recognizes and the Rohingya have been refused recognition despite the fact that their situation has been deteriorating in recent years. The HRW report also criticized the Malaysian police and immigration officers, saying that they are ignorant of what it is to be a refugee and that because detainees are kept out of the view of international monitors, they are beaten, robbed, inadequately fed and denied medical care in detention camps. Rohingya children are often not allowed to go to school and have been detained with adult non-relatives and deported alone. The report also says that the UNHCR has not fulfilled its role to provide international protection and seek durable solutions.

In 2001 it was reported that Malaysia was increasing police raids to crack down on illegal immigrants. During one of these raids on February 11th, 2001 a Burmese woman fleeing from police fell into an abandoned mining pool and drowned. (Source: Burmanet)

**Situation of Chin Refugees in India**

There are an estimated 40,000 to 50,000 Chin, an ethnic and religious minority in Burma and Lushai, living in Mizoram State, India. In a decision criticized by the US Committee for Refugees (USCR), HRW, and Amnesty International, the Indian government made a decision to deport hundreds of ethnic Chin living in the northeastern region back to Burma. A USCR spokesman said that the Chin should be treated as refugees because they fled Burma due to persecution and that their forced repatriated could constitute refoulment, or forced return, which is contrary to international law. India is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee convention but is a member of UNHCR's Executive Committee.

On January 14th 2001, the UNHCR office in India informed Burmese refugees living in New Delhi that due to budget cuts, they would no longer provide them with a monthly subsistence allowance. Currently there are approximately 800 Burmese refugees living in New Delhi who are officially recognized by UNHCR and receive a monthly stipend of US $30 per person. Burmese refugees have strongly protested this, stating that it is very difficult for them to obtain work in India. Since 1999 the Indian government has issued residential permits to most of the Burmese refugees in Delhi. (Source: Mizzima)

**Chin immigrants being evicted from Mizoram**

On 27 September 2001 it was reported that thousands of Chin nationals who are currently living in Lunglei District of Mizoram State are being forced out by a powerful local Mizo organization, according to Chins who fled from Mizoram to New Delhi. forty eight year old Pu Pan Tu reported that he was forced to leave his home in Lunglei District after a local branch of the Young Mizo Association (YMA) issued an eviction notice stating that all "foreigners" staying illegally in the area had to leave their houses. He had lived in Lunglei District for more than ten years. In Lunglei district, Chin families from Burma live primarily in five areas: Ramthar Veng, Salem Veng, Electric Veng, Chanmari Veng and Farm Veng house. The majority survive on low-paid day-wage jobs. On August 18 2001, the Ramthar Veng Branch of the Young Mizo Association widely circulated a statement ordering all foreigners and non-Mizos living illegally in the area to leave their houses by the end of August. The YMA further warned that action would be taken against those Mizos who try to hide Chins in their homes. Similar eviction announcements were made in other adjoining localities. On September 8, the Salem Branch of the Young Mizo Association made an announcement that all the foreigners and non-Mizos had to leave the area by September 15 and urged local property owners not to rent houses to any "illegal foreigners". This announcement appeared in a daily newspaper, the Lunglei Times.

"Following the announcement, some YMA members came into our house and broke our dishes and threatened us not to dare to live here anymore", recalled Pu Pan Tu who lived in Ramthar Veng with his family of five. "The worst is that YMA even does not allow us to bury those who died in the locality. We are forced to bury the body in far away villages. For us, there is no place even to bury our body after we die".

Pu Pan Tu escaped to New Delhi with two friends, to try and alert other Chins, Indian NGOs and the UNHCR Office in New Delhi to the oppression of Chins in Mizoram. According to local reports, there are over 5,000 Chin nationals from Burma living in Lunglei District, and some NGOs estimate that the total number of Burmese immigrants in the entire state of Mizoram is around fifty thousand, however exact numbers are not available. The new campaigns against "foreigners" (Chins) in Lunglei District, have caused some families to leave their homes already, moving to remote villages and border areas. Many of those fleeing try to rent new houses in villages, by pretending to be Mizo nationals. The Mizoram state government officials and YMA leaders claim that the large numbers of Chins in the state threaten the economic, political and social stability of Mizoram. These authorities have tried several times previously to deport Chin immigrants, but have been forced to halt deportations due to protests of international and Indian NGOs and human rights organizations.

In July 2001 Mizoram Chief Minister Mr. Zoramthanga gave an interview where he expressed concern over the large number of Chin immigrants in the state. He further stated that he wanted the border with Burma to be fenced in order to check further immigration of Chins into Mizoram. The Mizoram government claims that more than 75% of the crimes and drug-related activities in the state are being committed by the people from Burma. (Source: Mizzima)

**Situation of Burmese Nagas in India**

Ethnic discrimination, forced labor, and economic hardship have forced an estimated four thousand Christian Nagas to leave Burma and take refuge in India. The majority of these immigrants are currently living in Manipur and Nagaland. In an interview with the Mizzima News Group, Mr L. Longsa, General Secretary of the Naga National League for Democracy (NNLD), reported that Nagas from Burma continue to leave their villages in the Naga Hills due to forced labor and military campaigns launched by the Burmese army. Sixty mile-long Htamanthi-Layshi is one of the roads in the Naga Hills area where the SPDC continues to use forced labor.

Mon District and Tunsang District of Nagaland, are home to approximately three thousand Nagas from Burma who fled to India after their villages were burnt down by the Burmese army in its attacks on NSCN (Khaplang) camps in Burma last year.

The National Socialist Council of Nagaland (Khaplang) is one of the separatist Naga armed groups fighting India. These refugees have come from various areas in the Naga Hills including the towns of Hkanti, Layshi, Nanyun, Lahel and Homelinn.

While there has been no recent major influx of Naga refugees to India, Nagas from Burma continue to cross over the Indian border in small number almost everyday to escape abuses of the SPDC army. These refugees, who settle in remote and difficult terrain, are able to survive by working in hill farms or by the limited support that they received from local churchs. So far they have received no support from international humanitarian organizations.

While there are no current accurate census records available, the Naga population in Burma is estimated to be around 500,000. (Source: Mizzima)

## Other Refugee Issues

**Burmese seeking U.S. asylum held in Guam**

23 January 2001 it was reported that in the last few months, more than 700 people have fled Burma and sought political asylum in the US protectorate of Guam. The asylum seekers were able to enter Guam due to a visa loophole designed to encourage tourism, which allows citizens of Asian countries to enter without a visa. However, due to a backlog in the system for processing such cases and the fact that there are no asylum officials on the island, the refugees have been trapped in Guam, potentially having to wait months for the U.S. Justice Department to consider their pleas. Currently Burmese refugees stranded on Guam are living in very crowded conditions, as they are ineligible for work permits or government aid, they are forced to survive on handouts from church groups. The majority of them are left to pursue their asylum claims on their own, as they cannot afford to hire the few local attorneys willing to help. Thirty-eight of the refugees have spent months locked up in the Guam Detention Center because they answered honestly at the airport when asked if they intended to seek asylum in the U.S. or to stay in Guam for just 15 days. Under detention, family members who arrived together have been separated for months. One pregnant woman was kept in isolation in a cramped, locked cell for four months because officials feared that she might be carrying tuberculosis and were afraid, because of her pregnancy, to conduct a chest X-ray. Currently international church groups are lobbying the US government to allow the refugees to enter the US. The INS had taken the position that the rules of the visa-waiver program mean they can neither release those in custody nor permit others to travel to the mainland United States. This week however, INS officials stated that the agency has agreed to ease its stance and release the Burmese in custody in Guam, and will consider permitting them to relocate to the mainland United States while their asylum claims are pending. (Source: Burmanet)

# 14. 4 Personal Accounts

(Source: Pa-O Human Rights Watch, "Pa-O Relocated to Thailand: Views from Within,"Christensen & Kyaw)

**TaSee Charaa Mu**

Former medic (about 38 years old)

My home town is near Hsi Hseng in southern Shan State. I was a tea trader so I went north to Panglong area to buy tea. One day I met a friend. She told me that if I wanted to be a medic the training would be free. So I went with her and joined the Communist (Red) Pa-O army. I was told I would work at the central hospital, but we were always moving around in the forest. There were no people. It was a place for bears and tigers. I wanted to go home, but I could not; I was sad and often cried. I was wounded.

When I left the Red Pa-O I stayed at Pan Ta Wee, a Shan village, east of Hsi Hseng toward the Salween River. There were about 200 houses. I stayed there for several years and I served as a medic to earn money. I got married and had eight children. Two of my girls (four and six years old) died after being sick for only a few days.

A unit of the Burmese army was stationed nearby. The Shan rebel army came through our village. They thought we were cooperating with the Burmese army. The leader of the Shan soldiers gave a threatening letter to the village headman. After the Shan left, the headman informed the Burmese soldiers, who promised to protect the village.

The headman then sent a note to the Shan saying, "If you want food, we have no rice only chilis [bullets]." A short time later, the Burmese commander who had promised to protect the village left with most of his men. Only 15 soldiers stayed in the camp near the village.

The next night about 10:00 p.m. the Shan soldiers came into the village. They surrounded the village headman's house, took him prisoner, and beat him. He said, "If you came to fight the Burmese soldiers, there are only 15 of them." They told him that they had come to kill the villagers. They shot him and his family, including his children and grandchildren. The soldiers shot people and burned houses. Those who tried to run away were captured and brought back and made to sit in a group. The commander told the soldiers, "That is enough, leave enough for seed." But the young soldiers said, "We need to kill more!" He shouted back, "Enough! Enough!" But the soldiers began shooting the villagers. I saw them fall over one by one. The man next to me was shot and fell over on me. Another man was yelling in pain and one of the Shan bayoneted and shot him. Then he was silent. They also killed people like chickens-they cut their throats.

I had a bullet wound in my upper arm. So I pretended to be dead. They bayoneted me in the side. I tried to stay quiet. When they went away at about 1:00 a.m. I covered the wound in my side with a towel, but I was still bleeding. I saw that all the houses were burned down. Many had old or handicapped people in them. The soldiers didn't seem to be human. They killed about sixty people. Some villagers from nearby came and gave me an injection to stop the bleeding. They took me to Lan Kae hospital were I was given medicine. The bayonet had penetrated almost to my heart. The doctor told me I was very lucky. During the winter season when it is cool, even now, I have pain.

My life is too hard. I am very poor, but I want to stay in a peaceful place. I was unable to bring my horse and household things from our camp on the border.

Sometimes I think I will go crazy.

*TaSee Charaa Mu fled from Pan Ta Wee to a village near the Thai border. Soldiers from a Burmese army camp nearby harassed the villagers. Her village fled into Thailand when fighting broke out between Shan insurgent soldiers and the Burmese army. They were given a choice by the Thai authorities to either return to Shan State or go to a refugee camp. TaSee Charaa Mu is staying in a Karenni refugee camp in Mae Hong Son Province near the Thai-Burma border. She and her family have enough clothes and food, but there is little to do. A number of Pa-O who also went to the camp at the same time have left to return to the northern part of the province where they try to survive by hillside farming or by working on small farms near the border.*

**Lo Pra**

Former soldier, traditional healer (62 years old)

A long time ago (late 1960s, early 1970s) when I was a Pa-O soldier, I fought against Shan soldiers near Moung Koun, northeast of Taunggyi in southern Shan State. The Shan wanted to control all of the rebel groups fighting against the Burmese army in Shan State. So we fought against the Shan as well as the Burmese army.

I and my friend were 2nd lieutenants in the Pa-O army. We were staying at a house when we heard two men come up the steps at 4:00 a.m. The door opened and one of them asked the old woman who lived there, "Is anyone else sleeping here?" She replied, "I'm the only one here." The man said, "Don't lie to me, if you do I will beat you. I know somebody is here."

We were sleeping with our rifles. When they came in the door they saw us. As they stepped back my friend shot them and they fell. We fled the house. There was heavy fighting between our soldiers and theirs. One of our men was shot in the face and

killed. The Shan had more soldiers than we did, but they retreated when we killed two more of their men.

One of my friends was very lucky. He was hit, but the bullet lodged in a packet of sugar cane in his pack. I told him he was fortunate to have gone to the market earlier in the day.

One time we fought with the Burmese soldiers near Panglong. A passing Chinese trader overheard us planning our attack and told the Burmese captain. The captain replied, "They won't attack. They are afraid of us." We did attack and captured seven of their rifles.

I had joined the Pa-O army after Bo San Thein was killed (in 1968) by a Shan officer. All of the important Pa-O leaders were in prison and those now leading the Pa-O began to listen to the Communists who were sent to win them over. When the Pa-O leaders were released and returned, the Pa-O army split into two groups the Nationalist Pa-O and the Communist (Red) Pa-O. They began fighting each other in 1973. I stayed on with the Red Pa-O. We wore Mao Tse Tung pins on our uniforms. After six months I got sick and retired. The Burmese soldiers were happy that we fought each other like dogs biting each other instead of them. I was a soldier for seven years.

I went back to my home village. Some of the Red Pa-O soldiers surrendered to the Burmese army and they knew that I had gone home. Because I was afraid they might tell the Burmese soldiers where I was, I left and went to another village.

I thought about why the Pa-O fight each other. I don't want to be involved in this situation. Even now when I think about the Pa-O and why they fight and kill each other I am very sad. I settled in a village on the west side of the Salween River in southern Shan State. In 1978, the Burmese army told the headman that we would have to move to an army-controlled "relocation area." We decided to move to the border near Thailand instead. It took us three days of traveling and we had to leave most of our things behind, but it was very nice there. There was good soil beside the stream; we could grow many crops including rice, chilies, corn, and even coffee and tea on the hillsides. A detachment of the Pa-O army had a camp on a hill overlooking the village.

In March of 1984 Khun Sa, the drug lord, attacked the camp and village. The camp was burned and our houses were looted. We fled across the border into Thailand. After six months, however, the Thai authorities forced us to leave. We crossed back into Burma, this time into Karenni State. We stayed there, farming rice, for four years. The valley where our village was located was attacked and occupied by the Burmese army and again we fled across the border into Thailand, this time to an uninhabited forested area. It had a good water supply and we cleared the hillsides to plant rice. After about five years of fighting the Burmese army captured all the rebel

positions on the border.

They began to send patrols into Thailand. We were afraid, especially for our women, so we moved again, a kilometer or two farther into the Thai forest. Still the Burmese soldiers came, asking for food and taking our chickens, paying us only half of what they were worth. We also lost all of our horses and cows (about twenty). They would wander off at night, a few at a time, to return to our old village location where water and grass were plentiful. The Burmese soldiers took them prisoner and wouldn't return them. In the middle of the rainy season of 1996 we moved to a nearby village where the headman let us stay. We have been here since then. We have moved many times, but we have stayed together. We are safe now.

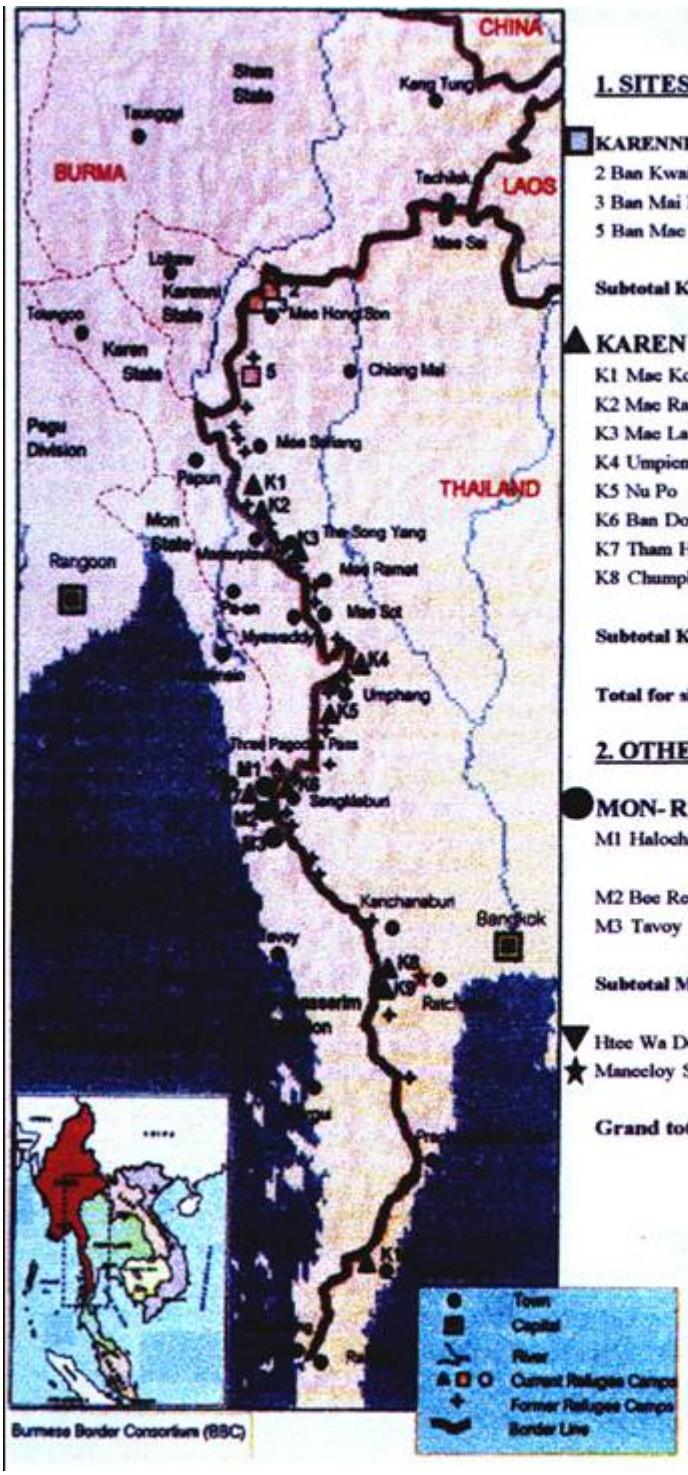
I learned traditional Pa-O medicine by studying books and talking with the monks in a monastery. I have practiced it for many years. I also learned about Pa-O literature at the monastery. I would like to pass on my knowledge to the younger generation but they don't seem to be interested.

I am old and have no one to take care of me.

Sometimes I have no food.

*Lo Pra lives in a village near the Thai-Burma border. He stays alone in a small bamboo and thatch hut in a corner of the village. Lo Pra is too old to farm the nearby hills as do most of the men in the village. Once in a while he will be asked to practice his traditional medicine for which he receives a small fee.*

# BURMESE BORDER REFUGEE SITES WITH POPULATION FIGURES - DECEMBER 2001




| | | Dec-01 | Jun-01 |
|---|---|---|---|
| **1. SITES IN THAILAND** | | | |
| **KARENNI** | | | +/(-) |
| 2 Ban Kwai | (Site 1) | 12,530 | 154 |
| 3 Ban Mai Nai Soi | (Site 1) | 4,321 | 244 |
| 5 Ban Mae Surin | (Site 2) | 3,240 | 60 |
| **Subtotal Karenni sites:** | | **20,091** | **458** |
| **KAREN** | | | |
| K1 Mae Kong Kha | (Site 3) | 15,268 | 220 |
| K2 Mae Ra Ma Luang | (Site 4) | 9,830 | 245 |
| K3 Mae La | | 40,503 | 1,656 |
| K4 Umpiem Mai | | 16,758 | 214 |
| K5 Nu Po | | 9,612 | 778 |
| K6 Ban Don Yang | | 3,907 | 150 |
| K7 Tham Hin | | 9,149 | 643 |
| K8 Chumphon | | 0 | (276) |
| **Subtotal Karen sites:** | | **105,027** | **3,730** |
| **Total for sites in Thailand:** | | **125,118** | **4,188** |
| **2. OTHER SITES** | | | |
| **MON- RESETTLEMENT SITES** | | | |
| M1 Halochanee : | Mon | 5,637 | 0 |
| | : Karen | 500 | 500 |
| M2 Bee Roe | | 3,484 | 0 |
| M3 Tavoy | | 3,378 | 0 |
| **Subtotal Mon sites:** | | **12,999** | **500** |
| Htee Wa Doh | | 0 | (1,635) |
| Manerloy Student Centre | | 0 | (377) |
| **Grand total all sites:** | | **138,117** | **2,676** |

# 15. The Situation of Migrant Workers

There are an estimated 1 million illegal immigrants from Burma and other neighboring countries working in Thailand. Migrant workers from Burma come from a variety of geographical locations and ethnic groups and work in several different industries and service sectors in Thailand. There are both push and pull factors at work when people make the decision to migrate to Thailand. The pull factors include the close geographical location of Thailand to Burma as well as the demand in Thailand for cheap labor. The push factors include the poor state of the Burmese economy and massive human rights violations that occur all over the country. Many workers have come to Thailand to escape the demands for forced labor and in their home states and divisions. In the case of the more than 300,000 Shans working in Thailand, the majority of them have fled from human rights abuses that include forced labor, forced relocations, arbitrary arrest and rape, but are denied refugee status by Thailand and therefore are considered illegal migrants.

All migrant workers face a common fear of arrest and deportation. This fear keeps many migrants from moving freely and impedes their access to health care and other social services that may be available. For this reason migrants suffer in silence from easily treatable diseases, and the spread of communicable diseases is facilitated by lack of access to health care facilities and medicine, cramped living conditions and poor sanitation. Lack of knowledge of the local language also prevents migrants from seeking help when they face unhealthy or dangerous situations. This combination of fear of arrest and lack of knowledge about the laws, customs and language of their host country means that migrants are easily exploited and abused by their employers, the Thai authorities and each other. However, the conditions inside Burma make migration to other countries preferable for a large number of people despite the risks and dangers involved in such a move.

“Migrant workers generally do work shunned by Thais, that pays little and is dangerous. For example, approximately 95% of fishing crews working on the almost 2,000 boats in Samut Sankorn are illegal migrant workers. Many have families, women and children, depending on such work for daily subsistence. Others have family members who are also migrant workers, working in factories and markets. A recent media report shows that while many Burmese flee Burma in search of a better life and money to send their families, life is Thailand is often a struggle. Although some come to Thailand thinking they will return to Burma upon saving some money, this quickly becomes a dream as wages are so low, brokerage fees so high and illegal migrants vulnerable to all sorts of abuse and exploitation, including in one incident, murder for demanding wages. Furthermore, many are prevented from working due to ill health for which they can seek no remedy in a second country that treats them as criminals.” (Source: ALTSEAN)

In 2001 the biggest change for the situation of migrant workers was the mass registration of migrant workers in September. Migrant workers were given the option of registering with the Thai government for an initial fee of 3,250 bhat with an additional 1,200 to be paid after 6 months. This has made the situation for workers who were able to register more secure in relation to deportations. However, the situation has become increasingly difficult for those workers who were unable to register. Workers that are registered did so for a number of reasons, from lack of financial resources to arrival in Thailand after the registration period. For many workers who are registered, the continue to be dependent on the goodwill of their employers. Factory owners who initially paid the registration fees often deduct money each month from the salaries of their workers. Their registration cards are normally held by the employer, and sometimes the worker is given a photocopy. This means that workers cannot quit their jobs easily as they do not hold the original card. Although the registration fee included a fee for use of health care services in Thailand, the original registration card has to be shown at the time of treatment. Therefore, although registered workers have paid for the right to be treated by the Thai health care system, they often do not have access to this service. Workers who are stopped by the police carrying only a photocopy of their registration card are subject to extortion by the police who do not accept it as a legitimate form of I.D. For unregistered workers, as immigration clamp-downs became increasingly severe, life became much more difficult.

According to Altsean, in order to prevent a "flood" of new arrivals from Burma, security at border checkpoints was heightened with 300 soldiers posted in Tak. It is estimated that 200 crossed into Thailand daily (without returning) in the lead up to the August 31st registration deadline, and numbers increased as the deadline was extended to October 13th. Burmese authorities also attempted to stem the flow of migration to Thailand by imposing fines and prison sentences, enacted October 5th as follows:

1. Persons under 35 years, resident in Kawthuang: 18 month sentence/ 15,000 kyat fine.

2. Persons over 35 years, resident in Kawthaung: 2 year sentence /20,000 kyat fine.

3. All Burmese nationals living outside Kawthaung: 3 year sentence/30,000 kyat fine.

4. Residents of Kawthaung housing individuals planning to illegally enter Thailand: same as above.

5. Subsequently, movement will be restricted.

**Benefits of registration to the Royal Thai Government (RTG):**

1. They can have a 'legally' determined number of workers.

2. Registered workers can better access healthcare, making diseases easier to monitor.

3. RTG will use it as an impetus to repatriate 'illegals'; raids began immediately after the deadline with penalties for illegal work increasing (17,592 migrant workers (from all neighboring countries) were arrested in August 2001.

4. RTG earned in excess of 1.7 billion bhat.

5. The business community is appeased-the workers they needed could register.

Workers were slow to register and the 555,541 workers who registered (19,600 of whom were without work at the time, 'Labour without Employer') fell well below the government expected figure of 700,000.

**Reasons for non-registration include:**

1. High cost (3,250 bhat for the first 6 months)

2. There is uncertainty as to what will happen to migrant workers once Thailand decides it has no further use for them. Registration is only effectively a safegaurd for 6 months at a time.

3. All Thai laws and labour regulations are written Thai language only. It was up to NGOs to provide translation and explanations.

4. Concerned NGOs unable to gain adequate access to workers.

**Emerging problems regarding registration:**

1. Many employers pay 50% of the registration fees and hold registration cards. Workers are therefore still open to abuse by officials and often forced to pay 'fines' to the police. Body searches are often imposed upon women.

2. Long working hours are still demanded, often 7:00-24:00.

3. Children of registered workers cannot attend school or receive health care.

4. Protection is extremely limited and in most cases working conditions have not improved. Many workers are sacked or salaries withheld according to employers' whim.

5. Many workers are now indebted to employers for the cost of registration.

6. Workers must work for their registered employer for 12 months.

7. Movement of workers has been restricted . Employees are often forbidden to leave factory compounds. This severely limits contacts with families. (Source: Altsean)

**Situation in Samut Sakhon**

The Thai Action Committee for a Democratic Burma (TACDB) released its survey on conditions for 60,000 Burmese workers in Samut Sakhon, documenting their widespread mistreatment. Violence, physical punishment and fines are a common mechanism of workplace control. Workers are beaten for not following directions or when the pace of production is considered not fast enough. Health and safety conditions are non-existent, contributing to the spread of disease, and workplace

death and injury are common. Even if workers are sick or injured, fines are commonplace if workers fail to appear. Appalling conditions are coupled with the extreme reluctance of illegal workers to seek medical treatment for fear of repatriation. Women workers face additional problems with sexual assault by employers, senior workers and police. There were reports of women disappearing after being arrested by the police. Complaints and redress are virtually unknown for fear of job loss and repatriation. The survey even found that some employers had their employees arrested on the day before pay day. The report also noted that corruption within the Thai authorities was a serious problem for illegal workers. Arrests often involved beatings and demands for money. The amounts varied but were often substantially more than one month salary. Employers were also somewhat vulnerable with police demanding bribes for the release of workers. (Source: Altsean)

*# See to Appendix A Figure 1,2 & Map*

## APPENDIX A

Source: *Asian Development Bank, UNDP* (2000)

**Figure 1: Hot Spots of Population Mobility and HIV/AIDS Risk Situations in Burma**

| Hot Spots | Migrant/Mobile Population Groups | Population Size | HIV Risk Situations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tachileik | Transport workers, migrant workers, female sex workers, traders, tourists, uniformed officials, IDUs | ●●●● | ✕✕✕✕ |
| Keng Tung | Transport workers, female sex workers, traders, uniformed officials, construction workers, IDUs | ●●● | ✕✕✕ |
| Mong La | Transport workers, tourists, female sex workers, traders, IDUs | ●● | ✕✕ |
| Taunggyi / Aungban | Transport workers, female sex workers, traders, uniformed officials, construction workers, IDUs | ●●● | ✕✕✕ |
| Lashio | Transport workers, female sex workers, traders, IDUs, | ●●●● | ✕✕✕ |
| Mandalay | Transport workers, tourists, female sex workers, traders, businessmen, IDUs | ●●● | ✕✕ |
| Meiktila | Transport workers, tourists, female sex workers, traders, IDUs | ●● | ✕✕ |
| Monywa | Transport workers, female sex workers, traders, IDUs | ●● | ✕✕ |
| Tamu / Moreh | Transport workers, traders, IDUs | ● | ✕✕ |
| Rangoon | Transport workers, traders, female sex workers, state officials, tourists, IDUs | ●●●●● | ✕✕✕ |
| Bago | Transport workers, female sex workers, traders, construction workers | ●● | ✕✕ |
| Pa-an | Transport workers, female sex workers, traders, uniformed officials | ●●● | ✕✕ |
| Myawaddy | Migrant workers, traders, transport workers, female sex workers, tourists, IDUs | ●●● | ✕✕ |
| Phyathongsu | Migrant labourers, female sex workers, traders, uniformed officials, IDUs | ●● | ✕✕ |
| Dawei | Fishermen, female sex workers, traders, state & uniformed officials | ●● | ✕✕ |
| Myeik | Fishermen, female sex workers, traders, state officials, uniformed officials | ●● | ✕✕ |
| Kawthaung | Female sex workers, fishermen & seafarers, migrant labourers, traders, state & uniformed officials | ●●● | ✕✕✕✕ |

**Figure 2: Typology of Migrant & Mobile Population Groups & Assessment of their HIV Risk Situations, Burma**

| Migrant & Mobile Population Groups | Popn. Size | Geographical Locations | HIV Risk Situations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Road/rail construction workers | ●● | Tachileik-Kyaning Tong-Ruili roads, Ye-Dawei rails | ✕✕ |
| Hill Tribes & Ethnic Minorities | ●●●●● | Minority states, inc. Burma-Thai border areas & refugee camps | ✕✕ |
| Female sex workers (hospitality girls) | ●● | Large cities & border towns | ✕✕✕✕✕ |
| Traders | ●●● | Mostly in border towns | ✕✕ |
| Road transport workers | ●●● | Along major highways, especially in NE Burma | ✕✕✕ |
| Migrant workers | ●●●● | Rangoon & border towns | ✕✕ |
| Resettlement residents | ●● | Rangoon & Shan state | ✕✕ |
| Fishermen & Seafarers | ●●● | Dawei, Kawthaung, Myeik & other ports | ✕✕✕✕ |
| Uniformed Officials | ●●●● | Throughout Burma, especially in border areas | ✕✕ |
| Private sector / businessmen | ●● | Cities & border towns with Thailand & PRC | ✕✕ |
| Tourists & visitors | ●● | Border towns with Thailand & PRC | ✕✕ |

**Figure 3: Typology of Migrant & Mobile Population Groups & Assessment of their HIV risk Situations, outside Burma**

| Migrant & Mobile Population Groups | Population Size | Geographical Locations | HIV Risk Situations |
|---|---|---|---|
| Migrant labourers | ●●●● | Thailand (& Malaysia) | ✕✕✕ |
| Migrant fishermen | ●● | Thailand & elsewhere in Thai boats | ✕✕✕✕ |
| Migrant sex workers | ●● | Thailand & PRC | ✕✕✕✕✕ |
| Refugees | ●●● | Thailand & Bangladesh | ✕✕ |

● proportionately signifies population size ✕ proportionately signifies severity of risks situations

The Thailand - Burma (Myanmar) Border: Major Points of Interest

produced by the Asian Research Center for Migration
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok



# 16. Landmines in Burma

Landmines are weapons that kill and maim indiscriminately, whether it be civilians, soldiers, elderly people, women, children or animals. They cause injury and death long after the official end of a war. Contrary to trends in the rest of the world, rather than reduce or abolish the use of landmines, the SPDC has actually increased production of anti-personnel landmines and at least in the case of the Burma-Bangladesh border, is actively maintaining minefields. In Asia, Burma is currently second only to Afghanistan in the number of new landmine victims, surpassing even Cambodia. The SPDC has not signed the Mine Ban Treaty and abstained from the 1999 UN General Assembly vote on the treaty, saying, "A sweeping ban on landmines is unnecessary and unjustified. The problem is the indiscriminate use of mines, as well as the transfer of them." Although the SPDC is not known to export landmines, mines from China, Israel, Italy, Russia and the United States have been found planted inside Burma, indicating past or present importation of them. By their own admission, accepting transferred (imported) landmines makes them part of the problem.

As there is no centralized agency which collects data on landmines in Burma, there is no way to know the true number of landmine victims. Using various sources of data, the Landmine Monitor Report 2000 estimated that in 1999 alone there were 1,500 mine victims. There is also evidence that landmine casualties have been increasing in recent years. Statistics of landmine victims collected by Medicins Sans Frontieres were higher in 2000 than in the previous two years, and in April 2001 the Mae Tao clinic in Mae Sot, Thailand, reported an increase in mine victims arriving from the Dooplaya district of Karen State.

Of Burma's 14 states and divisions, 9 of them are affected by landmines. Evidence suggests that in Karen State there is one landmine victim everyday. Civilians become landmine victims in two ways. One way is their use as human minesweepers (see below), another is accidentally stepping on landmines planted in areas where civilians reside. In efforts to block supply routes for armed ethnic organizations, the SPDC plants mines on supply and escape routes used by villagers and refugees. Villages from which people have fled or have been forcibly relocated from are also mined to prevent the villagers from returning as well as to block access to food, supplies and intelligence to opposition groups. Landmines have also been planted along streams, paths, roads and passes that are used by civilians, including those fleeing Burma. It is estimated that there is one civilian death for every two military casualties associated with landmines. In a particularly troubling statement, the Myanmar Red Cross stated that "the problem [of landmines] is going away" and that resources should not be wasted on this issue.

**Human Minesweepers**

The use of landmines has taken an even uglier turn in Burma, as the SPDC has been known to use villagers, as well as animals, as live minesweepers. This specific targeting of civilians is contrary to the claims of the SPDC that landmine use has not been directed against civilian populations. Civilians conscripted for forced portering in conflict areas are sometimes sent ahead of the troops so that they will detonate mines. In 1999 and 2000 there were reports that human minesweepers were being used in Dooplaya District, Karen State, south of the Karen State capital Pa-an, during military assaults on SSA positions near Tachilek in Shan State and in operations against God's Army in the Tenasserim Division. A survey of refugees along the Thai-Burma border by a Danish medical group found that forced portering and forced minesweeping accounted for half of landmine casualties (Burma Debate, Winter 2000/2001).

**Situation in Border Areas**

The border states and divisions of Burma are the most heavily mined areas in the country due to the civil war being fought with ethnic groups living along the border. The border areas already have problems with security and adequate health care and mine pollution only compounds these problems. The presence of landmines means that ethnic people cannot engage in everyday activities, such as farming, gathering food or traveling without fear of being killed or losing limbs due to landmines. In addition, as previously mentioned, villagers who have been forcibly relocated cannot safely return to their original villages to collect property, food supplies or check on their homes.

It is thought that the majority of people injured by landmines die before they get medical treatment. Mine victims often have limited or no access to healthcare facilities and may have to walk for days to find medical care. Sometimes the security situation can mean that no treatment is available for a long period of time. In some cases landmine victims have been turned back by the SPDC before they could reach a hospital.

The 2001 Landmine Monitor Report stated that at least eleven ethnic armed groups in Burma are currently believed to use antipersonnel mines. These groups include: the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA); the Karenni Army (KA); the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF); Peoples Defense Forces (PDF); Myiek-Dawei United Front (MDUF); Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO); Shan State Army (SSA); Democratic Karen Buddhist Army; God's Army; the Chin National Army (CNA), and the United Wa State Army (UWSA). During the 1990s it is believed that many of these groups were able to obtain antipersonnel mines leftover from the Indochinese wars. By 2001, it was reported that these antipersonnel mines were becoming more difficult to obtain on the black market, but that a growing number of mines were being lifted or captured from SPDC military operations, and then re-deployed. (Source: *Landmine Monitor Report 2001*)

**Thailand-Burma Border**

Thailand has repeatedly accused the SPDC of laying mines inside Thailand. In February 2001 border tensions between the two nations flared up, and in the following months both Burmese troops and a proxy army of the Wa are alleged to have planted mines in a disputed piece of territory. A preliminary report on a Level One Impact Survey in Thailand contained the following information on the border region: "The majority of the mine threat is across the border in Myanmar where a considerable number of mine accidents are taking place. In the Camps for Displaced persons alone 83 mine victims are recorded and many more are evident from hospital records. 150 accidents have been reported in the last 2 years of a total of 541 victims including previous years. 213 reported danger areas, however, are recorded on the Thai side of the border." (Source: NPA/TMAC Impact Survey Final Presentation, Supporting Notes: Guy Rhodes NPA, May 2001)

Mines have also been laid between all military camps along a cross-state route in upper Karen State from Kyankkyi in the west to Hsawhta on the Salaween River at the Thai border, as part of an attempt to cut off the travel routes of insurgents. However, these mines have also effectively blocked refugees from using these routes to seek asylum in Thailand.

The *Landmine Monitor Report 2001* has noted a disturbing new development along the Thai/Burma border, with mines being planted by loggers and narcotics traffickers. Recently timber concessions believed to be owned by Thai military and political officials, have been opened in the border areas of Karen State south of the Thai town of Mae Sot. There are allegations that people living in the area have been hired by logging sub-contractors to plant landmines along the edges of these concessions to prevent trespassing and stealing of timber. Reports state that the loggers are also supplying the explosives and detonators for the construction of these mines, and that several people employed by these sub-contractors have become mine victims. There are also allegations that narcotics traffickers in the same area are now using landmines to secure their routes for transporting drugs, and to protect factories producing meta-amphetamines in both Karen and Karenni States. (Source: *Landmine Monitor Report 2001*)

**Bangladesh-Burma Border**

The Bangladesh-Burma border, 270 kilometers comprised of dense forests, hills and 60 kilometers of sea, is the longest minefield in the country, with mines running almost the entire length of the border north up to the Indian border. Mines have been laid since the 1991 mass exodus of 250,000 Rohingya Muslims from Arakan State. The SPDC has said that the minefields are necessary to stop cross-border movement by armed ethnic opposition groups. However they also prevent or make it extremely dangerous for refugees to cross the border and impede cross-border economic activities.

The landmines affect Burmese and Bangladeshi citizens, as well as animals. In

some cases mines are planted inside Bangladesh because of poor border demarcation and thick vegetation. In July of 2000, a Bangladeshi organization that works with handicapped people held a press conference in which they said that between 1995 and 1999 more than 500 Bangladeshi nationals been killed by landmines while cutting bamboo inside Arakan State in Burma. They also said that more than 120 Bangladeshis had been disabled between 1998 and 1999 due to landmines and that 24 people from Arakan state along with 26 wild elephants had been killed from landmine explosions. The government of Bangladesh has repeatedly asked the Burmese government to remove the landmines from along the border. However it is believed that SPDC military engineers are actively replacing old or exploded mines along the border.

There were reports that the Burmese Border Security force, the NaSaKa and regular SPDC troops have been actively laying mines along the border following the end of the rainy season in October 2001. On October 20th two landmines exploded on the border line, but no casualties were reported. As in past years the Bangladesh Border Security Force has issued warnings to its citizens living in the border area that they are in danger of mines being laid by the Burmese troops. (Source: Kaladan Press)

**Partial List of Incidents**

On 3 January 2001, 2 people from Ituklo village, Papun District, Karen State, stepped on 2 land mines that had been planted by SPDC troops and were wounded.

The same day, 2 people from Nawthehder village, in the same area stepped on land mines, also set by SPDC troops and both of them died on the spot. (Source: KIC)

On 14 January 2001, a resident of Lay Bay village, Mon Township, Nyaung Lebin District, Karen State, was injured by the explosion of a mine planted by the SPDC. The mine was detonated when he opened the gate of his garden and one of his legs was broken. On the same day there was another land mine explosion and a woman named Ma Yin Mya, age-25 died on the spot. She lives in Mone town, in section 5. (Source: KIC)

On 27 January 2001, the strategic commander Kyaw Zwa Min and IB-73 commander Min Oo forced Saw Ta Peh Poo, from Kler Lar villager, Toungoo District, Karen State to drive his car before them in order to clear the area of land mines. His truck detonated a mine in the area between Ploe Mu Der and Si Kheh Der villages. Saw Ta Peh Poo was seriously injured and his truck was damaged. (Source: KIC)

On 1 August 2001, a resident of Painchit village (name unknown), Karenni State, stepped on a landmine which had been laid by KNPLF troops located near the village. The explosion blew off one of his legs. ( Source: KNAHR)

On 11 August 2001, a porter from SPDC troop IB-26, column (1) named U Aung Bu, (48 years old, father's name U Nyunt) from In Gyin Thar section, Aung Chan Thar Township, Toungoo Division stepped on a land mine at Bu Hsa Khee area that had been planted by another group of SPDC troops based in Bu Hsa Khee village. The victim had both his legs broken. (Source: KIC)

On 16 August 2001 at 11:35am, a porter from troop of SPDC IB (26) column (1) named Saw Klo Htoo (alias Saw Poe U, age (32)) from Kler Lar (Baw Ga Li) village, stepped on a land mine set by SPDC troops and died on the spot. (Source:KIC)

On 29 September 2001, DKBA troops led by Moe Joe (alias) Pah Ni Tho planted land mines on the paths going to villagers' paddy fields at La-kyo-kho mountain and as a result La-kyo-kho villager saw Kaw Lar, (M, 23), son of Tee Tin Maung, was killed by stepping on a land mine. (Source:KIC)

On 14 October 2001, Baw-naw-kee villager, Saw Pah Mu Sah (M, 40) was seriously wounded by a landmine planted by Pah Nee Tho of DKBA in a paddy field at Baw-naw-kee, Karen State. ( Source: KIC)

On 15 October 2001, troops from SPDC IB 25, led by Lieutenant Colonel Win Htein planted land mines in Keh-pyu-chaung area in Ler-doh-soe township. Wa-sha-kho villager Saw Kaw Kaw, (M, 18), son of Saw Kyi Win, was maimed by one of the land mines. (Source:KIC)

In November, troops from SPDC battalions under LID 77 and DKBA troops planted land mines in paddy fields of villagers in the areas of Shwe-u, Mya-lay, Htee-hser-khee, Kaw-haem, Htee-si-baw, Khaw-po-plai, Su-khee, Ta-mai-hta, Klaw-hta, Nya-po-khee, Ta-ku-khee, Paw-khee, Kwee-lay-pu and Kwee-lay-pya villages, Tha-ton District, Karen State. Owing to this, villagers dared not harvest their crops, and as a result, all the crops were destroyed. Three buffaloes of villager Tee Moo Paw Pa of Kwee-lay-pya village were killed by these land mines. (Source:KIC)

On 5 November 2001, one Buddhist monk was killed and another lost a leg in a land mine explosion as they walked to a religious festival. The incident occurred 2 kilometers (1.3 miles) outside the monks' village of Mae Htaw Ta Lay in Karen State. The monks had been walking to a festival being held in a nearby village to mark the end of Buddhist Lent. They were traveling in spite of travel restrictions imposed on villagers by the SPDC because of guerrilla activity in the area. (Source: AP)

On 27 December 2001, at 9:40 am, Htee-moo-ta villager Saw Yin Aye (M, 28) of Kaw-ka-reik Township, Doo-pla-ya District, Karen State, lost a leg to a land mine planted by SPDC controlled DKBA Battalion 907. He did not get any compensation or treatment. (Source:KIC)

## # Photos




*Photo #G5 : Two SPDC landmines unearthed by KNLA soldiers in Papun District in March 2001. On the left is an American-made M76A1 mine, which the SPDC formerly used extensively until the Chinese government built mine production factories for them in Burma in the mid-1990's. On the right is a Burmese-made MM1 mine produced by these factories; the most common mines presently used by SPDC troops are the MM1 and MM2. In the photo, both mines have had their activation pins unscrewed from the top. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*







*Photos #G6, G7: SPDC landmines found by internally displaced villagers in southeastern Toungoo District. In May 2001, displaced villagers near Bu Sah Kee spotted an MM1 mine (Photo #G6, left) and an MM2 mine (Photo #G6, right) along a path they normally used, so they called in KNLA soldiers to dig them up. The mines were planted by SPDC Infantry Battalion #30, apparently with the displaced villagers as their targets. Photo #G7 shows three MM2 mines unearthed by displaced villagers in the same area in July 2001. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*







*Photos # G11, G12: A villager killed by a landmine in mid-April 2001 in Bu Tho township, eastern Papun District. This young man is an internally displaced villager. SPDC troops now routinely plant landmines around villages and crop fields they have destroyed and along paths they know are used by the internally displaced. Many of those who step on the mines bleed to death before they can be carried to any kind of medical help. Local villagers believed that this particular mine had been laid by DKBA soldiers; the DKBA receives most of its landmine supplies from the SPDC. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*







*Photos #G14, G16 : Saw H—, a 24 year old displaced villager from xxxx village in Shwegyin township, Nyaunglebin District, receiving treatment from a mobile medical team after stepping on an SPDC landmine on March 28th 2001. A rice farmer, Saw H— fled his village with the other villagers in early 2001 when SPDC troops based themselves nearby, and was living in hiding in the jungle. When they fled they had no chance to carry their rice supply, so on March 28th he and two friends headed back to their village to try to fetch some of the rice stored in their houses. Half an hour from the village, he stepped on a landmine. His right lower leg was blown off, and he suffered serious fragment wounds in his left leg and his face. [Photos: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #A56: Naw M—, an 18 year old villager from xxxx village in Toungoo District. In April 2001, she described to KHRG how she and others in her village are regularly forced to porter supplies for up to 10 days at a time to outlying SPDC Army camps at Naw Soe, K'Law Soe, Dta Kwih Soe, Kyauk Taung and Bu Sah Kee, all along the road from Kler Lah (Bawgali Gyi) to Bu Sah Kee. She says that she herself has been forced to do this regularly for 7 or 8 years already. She and the other porters are forced to walk in front of the troops in case of landmines, and she has witnessed several villagers killed by mines while portering; she also saw a new mother, forced to porter shortly after giving birth, die from the strain of the load. She says that since January 2001, 10 to 20 people from her village have to go every day to do forced labour clearing and maintaining the road route to Bu Sah Kee, and that 2 people must be sent every day for forced labour as messengers. Even when there is no work to be done, the people are forced to go and sit on standby at the Army camp, so they cannot work their fields anymore. Anyone who cannot go must pay fines of 400 to 5,000 Kyat, and if no one shows up for forced labour then the troops come and start beating up the villagers, including the elderly. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #G20: Saw P—, a 22 year old from Nyaunglebin District who stepped on a landmine at the beginning of rainy season in June 2000. Living among the internally displaced, he eventually joined a group of people fleeing toward the border with Thailand in March 2001. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*




*Photo #A11: Villagers of xxxx village in southern Papun District, gathering to go and do forced labour cutting and clearing the Papun - Ka Ma Maung vehicle road. Villagers in the area say that they have to cut wide 'killing grounds' along both sides of the road at least twice a year, and also have to fill potholes with rocks, build fences all along both sides of the road, stand sentry along the road on rotating shifts, and regularly sweep the road for landmines. At the same time they are also forced to do regular forced labour as porters and working at local Army camps, logging for the Army and supplying the Battalions with thatch roofing and other building materials. [Photo: KHRG researcher]*

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## Front Cover Photo

**A child and father head for a safe area in the jungle after SPDC troops burned down 120 homes in seven villages in Papun District, Karen State, in December 2001. During the incident the troops looted rice, cash, and personal belongings and left 685 people homeless forcing them to hide out in the jungle. They join the ranks of approximately two million Internally Displaced Persons in Burma. (Photo – KIC)**

## Back Cover Photos

**A Karen widow arrives in a safe area with her children after fleeing from SPDC troops. Her husband was one of two men executed in the presence of villagers after SPDC soldiers blamed the village for a skirmish with an ethnic armed unit that had taken place earlier. The incident took place in Kawkareik Township, Karen State, in October 2001. (Above)**

**Bodies of Karen villagers, including children, killed by SPDC troops in April 2002 for not relocating on time as ordered. SPDC Army's attack on Htee Law Bleh village, in Kya-in Seikkyi Township, Karen State, killed a total of 13 villagers, including 5 children and one infant, and wounded eight others. (Below)**



***"1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.***

***2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child."***

*Article 6 of "Convention on the Rights of the Child".*



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