

FORCED LABOUR

1

Photo:
No. 1A5

ROSALIE T. Mc KERNAN

One of SLORC child soldiers during Armed Forces day Parade in Rangoon. (27 March 1995)

BAIRD

2

A child labourer working at a construction site in Okkalapa, Rangoon. He displays his labour ID which has been blacked out by the HRDU to hide his identity.

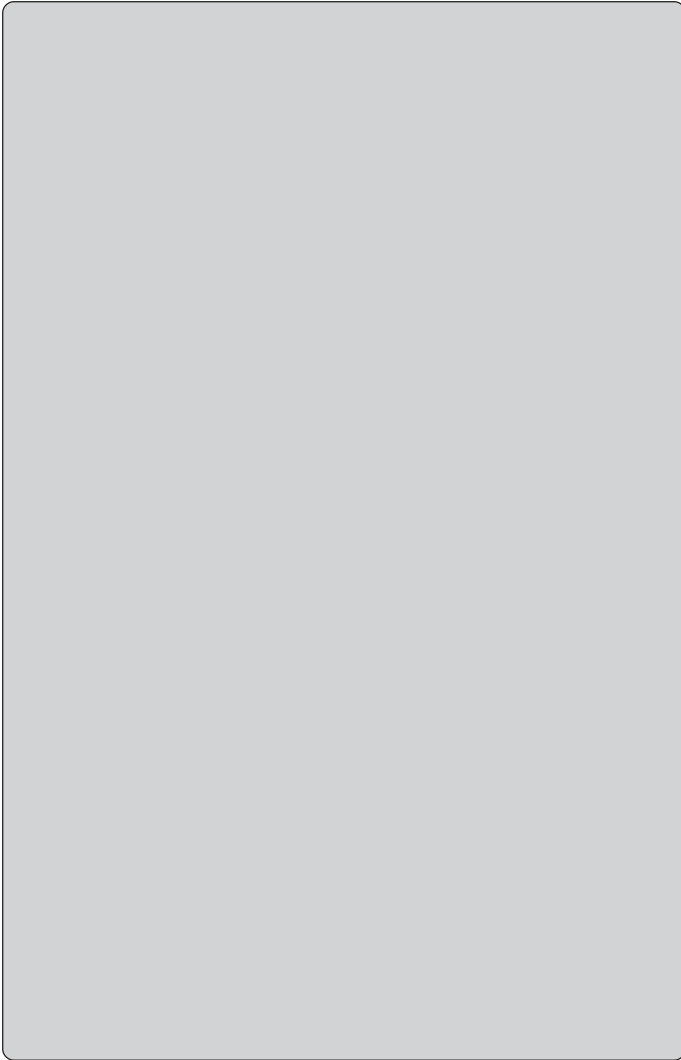
3

A child soldier belonging to the DKBA, barely taller than the weapon he wields.

Images Asia

FORCED LABOUR

ROSALIE T. MC KERNAN



Children supplement family income by hawking on the streets of Huai Kalok camp, December 1995.

4

SAIN

A family looks out from a newly built house at Yatanabon satellite town in Mandalay Division. Less fortunate families live in makeshift shelters.

5

SAIN

Children at work at force labour road repair camp in Pegu.

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HRDU

6

Despite their predicament, children refugees on the run smile for the camera. No stable place of abode, running away from SLORC troops and separation of families are already a way of life for these children.

BAIRD

7

A typical classroom for children. Decades-old desks, lack of text books and stationery are a everyday life for schoolchildren. Picture was taken at a Mandalay school. -- December 1995.

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Images Asia

Children asleep on makeshift 'bed' near Bornor. The Karen family fled to escape attacks from DKBA and SLORC troops.

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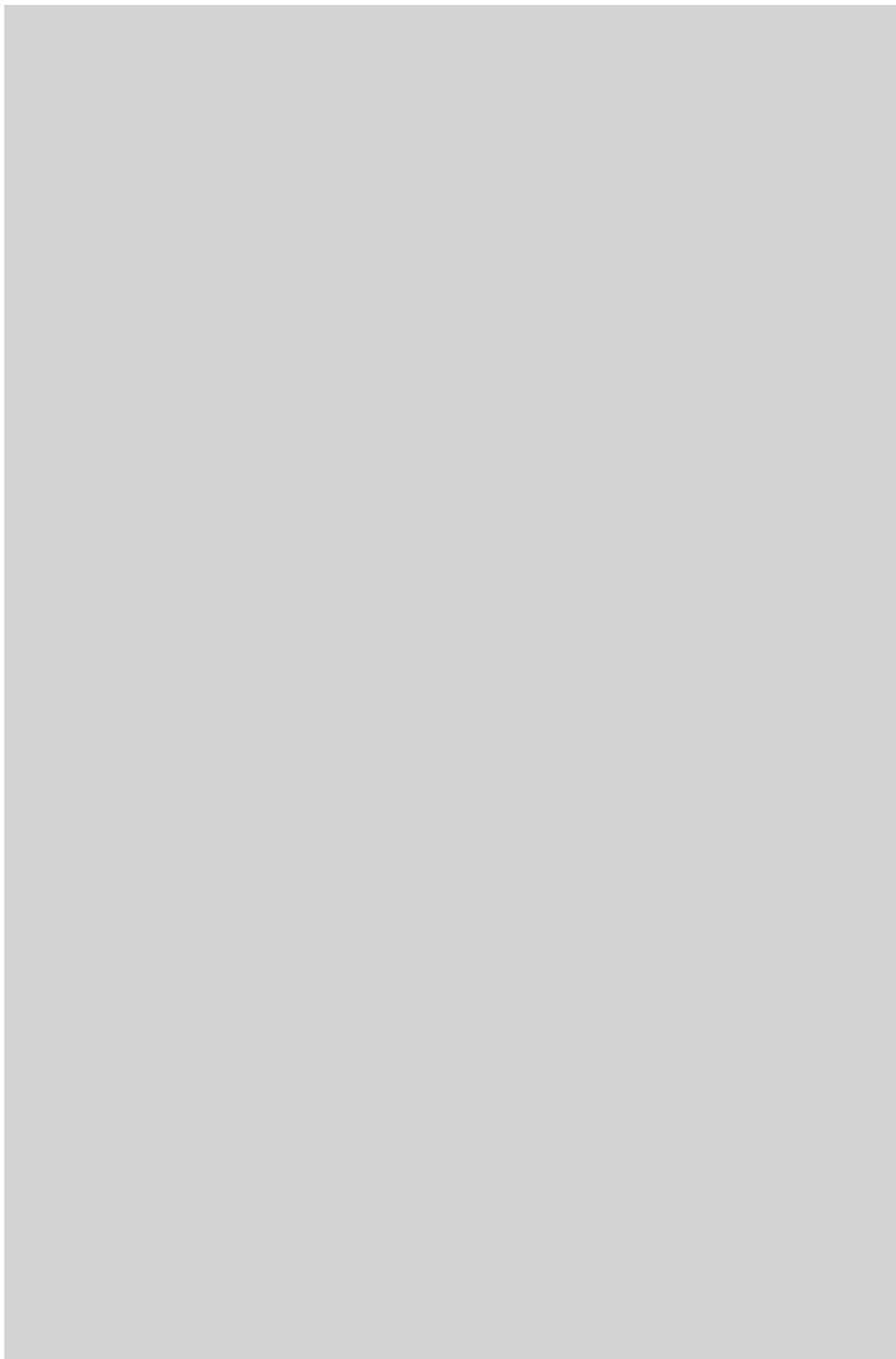
HRDU

Karenni children return to the Nai Soi refugee Camp after a bath at a nearby pond.

FORCED LABOUR

A bewildered
child amidst
the ruins of
what was,
until a recent
DKBA cross-
border
offensive, her
home.

Burma Relief Centre



11

Sadly the
refugee children
are becoming
accustomed to
homelessness
and desolation.

Burma Relief Centre

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(III) RIGHTS OF CHILD

"In the stone mines just outside Mandalay (called Thone Bo) , I saw girls of 10 and 12 years old working. They fill baskets with stones (I could hardly lift) and carry them down from the mine to a machine that selects the sizes, to the truck. They get 60 Ks for 8-9 hours work. They work every day and have never been to school. The stone are being used for road construction. Moreover, young girls who are as young as 13 have been working in silk factories, at lacquerware factory and in hotel construction, including the Plaza Hotel in Rangoon." [*An Eyewitness travelling inside Burma*]

3.1. Background

In Burma, the participation of children in the armed conflict has become routine, as the country has been at war for the majority of this century. Although international law forbids the use of children under the age of fifteen as soldier, almost all of the Burmese groups have child soldiers within their ranks, as does the Tatmadaw under the control of SLORC. Although all parties to the conflict in Burma use child soldiers, the treatment of them, recruitment methods and conditions of service, vary a great deal both between, and within, these armed groups. The treatment of child soldiers in the Tatmadaw is much more severe than that of other groups.

The widespread use of child soldiers has ensured that many thousands of children in Burma have suffered exceptional cruelty during the war; many child soldiers have been killed or wounded, or have witnessed terrible atrocities. Many children have taken part in these human rights abuses themselves. Some youngest SLORC child soldiers joined the military service at the age of 12.

The use of children as soldier in Burma results in serious human rights abuses. Children are killed, forcibly conscripted, unwillingly separated from their families, kidnapped, tortured during their service, forced to kill and torture, and due to the rampant corruption in the military, are underpaid, or are not paid at all.

Children in Burma suffer extreme poverty, with Burma being the seventh poorest nation in the world. Although children under five make up only 15% of the population, they account for half the country's annual death rate. According to UNDP 1994-1995 report, infant mortality is estimated at 146/1000, with 175,000 under five dying every year. UNICEF mentioned in its 1992 report that most of these deaths are due to the easily preventable or treatable diseases, including malaria. Moreover, 10% of children under three suffer from severe malnutrition. In the ethnic border areas the situation is worse.

Many Burmese children leave their homes for neighbouring countries to work, as the employment and economic situation inside Burma is so poor. According to

Asiawatch report in 1994, hundreds of thousands of these children are currently exploited in forced labour situation such as sweatshops, and in prostitution in Asian countries in the region such as Thailand. UNICEF estimate that over 40,000 Burmese children are working in Thailand's sex industry.

Although most of the warring factions in Burma have forcibly recruited some children, most of the children joined the ethnic armies voluntarily, usually because they saw no other way to survive. Children say that they joined for various reasons: to avenge the killings of family and friends, to protect their families and communities from the opposition army or armies, or to get food for themselves, and in some cases, for their families. Not infrequently, when the child's family had been killed, there was no one left to take care of them. They therefore took the only option that they thought open to them, to joined a military force, ethnic or Burman. Ethnic military leaders state that many child soldiers, both volunteers and recruits, are orphans. Some ethnic armies and the Tatmadaw are know to have institutions to train these orphans as child soldiers. Other claim that orphans often volunteer due to a lack of other options.

Since 1988 and the military's rapid growth, the Tatmadaw have begun recruiting boys at fourteen and below. UNICEF officials even found out that boys could be 'officially conscripted' into the military at fourteen. These boys are placed in training centres where they receive military style education. Designated the "Ye-Nyunt Youth," the boys are also said to receive political training, and are taught to be loyal to the government and the army. They are eventually assigned to serve in the army, in intelligence units, or as security for high-ranking officers. Most of these recruits tend to be orphans, street children, children captured from enemy positions or those abandoned in front-line villages. Anecdotal reports exist of such children being taken to other cities at some distance from their homes, before they are forced into armed service. UNICEF also identified at least one residential SLORC military camp, near Kengtung in Shan State, where children aged seven and above (believed to be orphans) were being trained for a future life with the military. Ethnic armies such as the Mong Tai Army (MTA) in Shan State, controlled by notorious drug warlord Khun Sa, had similar institutions.

Although all armed sides in the conflict use child soldiers in their forces, the differences between the children's recruitment reasons, treatment, duties, and post-service situations, with each side vary significantly. Not only are there differences from between child soldiers' experiences with each army, there are also variances from region to region, and command to command. It is, however, apparent in all the ethnic armed forces and the Tatmadaw, when an impending large-scale battle is approaching, more child soldiers are recruited and used in the front-lines as more man-power is required.

Children have played various other roles in the conflict: they have performed front-line/active combat duties, done cooking and other menial labour, stood sentry/check-

point duty, acted as body-guards (a feature common to the ethnic armies especially), served as porters carrying ammunition and supplies, and been used, as cannon fodder to draw the fire of their adversaries, and sometimes in human-wave attack tactics in which hundreds are usually killed. All child soldiers interviewed were familiar with and even adept in the use of a wide variety of automatic weapons, and even heavy weapons. Most of the child soldiers on all sides of the conflict are male.

Military training makes a poor replacement for civilian education, even in a country where most schooling is substandard. In Burma, education in government schools, where parents must supply all school materials, is a luxury. According to UNDP/ UNESCO Education Sector Study in 1992, an estimated 80% of students enrolling in primary school drop-out before completion. Some 35% of children never enrol in primary school and only 25% complete the five year cycle, said in the January 1995 report of UNICEF. Ethnic border regions are severely under-served. Even in areas where some groups operate schools independent of the central Burmese regime, education systems are routinely disrupted when villages are forced to relocate during combat. Many child soldiers come from poor families or are in fact orphans, and many have barely started their schooling before it is interrupted by military duty. Military training under the auspices of different armed groups varies in length and content, however it can be stated unequivocally that most child soldiers do not receive significant instruction to enhance literacy or vocational and occupational skills. Lack of educational opportunity for young recruits has significant ramifications for their post-military futures, and indeed, portends difficult prospects for the Burma's economic and social development.

Despite the fact that many children join the army seeking benefits for themselves or their families, almost all interviewed told of receiving inadequate food and clothing and few received benefits for their families. Most Tatmadaw soldiers also spoke of being regularly punished, and often of being beaten and abused by the their senior officers. In addition, while it is sometimes believed that children are less cognisant of atrocity and death, the interviewed child soldiers made frequent reference to the fear, despair, and horror they felt, especially when they were ordered to beat porters, witness rapes by their senior officers, or engage in combat situation. [*Source: Images Asia*]

3.2. Kidnap of Schoolchildren for SLORC Army Recruitment Drives

In the last week of January 1994, three 6th-standard students -- Maung Tun Tun (13), Maung Hla Myo (12) and Maung Aye Naing (12) from No. 1 State High School in Thingangyun -- were missing on their way home from school. When their parents reported this to the police station, a police sergeant said that they were definitely sold. As SLORC had to deployed more troops in important places in Rangoon in 1995, they needed recruits for the army and opened "recruit gathering centres" in Rangoon. Under this forced recruitment programme, those who can find a recruit will be given 300 Ks in cash and a bottle of Army Rum while those who

promise to find five recruits are given 1500 Ks and five bottles of Rum in advance.

The aforementioned three students were lured by unscrupulous means and sent to recruit gathering centre in Mingaladon. When their parents heard about their fate, they proceeded straight to Mingaladon gathering centre, bringing recommendation letters from headmasters and other needed letters. But they were not allowed to talk to their sons in person although they met their sons from a distance. On the following day, the number of the students mounted to approximately 200. The students who were in their school uniform — white shirt and green longyi (sarong) — were forcibly transported from Rangoon to Prome with massive deployment of armed soldiers to make sure that they would not escape.

The rich could afford for the release of their sons by giving a ransom to concerned SLORC officers and medical officers who later on managed to bring these students back to Mingaladon Military Hospital for medical check-up. Their parents could bring their sons home from Mingaladon Hospital. Even though their examinations were drawing near, SLORC considered the recruitment rather than their education.

[Source: *Inside source*]

3.3. Forced Recruitment of Ethnic Child

SLORC has been expanding their military strength from 18,000 in 1988 to an estimated 400,000 in 1995. Over half of national budget has been used in defence service. Many ethnic youth have been forcibly recruited into army without their consent. Particularly in Sagaing Division and Chin State, SLORC launched forced recruitment of the ethnic youth to the army. SLORC authorities took the ethnic children from their families with a promise of education opportunity in cities. Instead of sending to the school, ethnic Naga boys were directly sent to the military recruitment centres or training schools and forced to join the army.

SLORC authorities recruited 37 Naga boys from Sumra, Konkilon, Kuki, Phontharet, Nga Kyan and Nami Ubi villages in Sagaing Division with a promise of education opportunity in the cities. Among these children were Barry Saw (14, son of U Tha Don), Cara Phor (12, son of U Kyan Chi), Yin Shi, (12, son of U Nar Wor) and Saw Htee (son of U Raphan) from Nga Kyan village, Sumra Township, Sagaing Division.

These 37 Naga school boys were sent to an army training school in Monywa, Sagaing Division, instead of sending to school as they promised. They were later forced to enrol the military training for six months. Some boys had managed to escape from the training school. Barry Saw and Saw Htee are now in army service at Mawlaik, Sagaing Division.

3.4. Impact of Tourism

The impact of tourism on local communities in Mandalay, Sagaing, and Amarapura is now becoming apparent. Children wait for tour groups to arrive in places such as pagodas and other sites of interest. They follow tourists around begging for presents and money and at times perform for the tourists, smiling, holding their hands, etc. These children are earning up to 800 Ks a day which is four times what their parents are earning. According to conversations that members of SAIN had with some parents and other local sources at these sites, these children are now being sent to earn money for their families in this way and not going to school. There is great concern about the increase of this situation, especially for young girls who will, when older, be uneducated and unable to have a chance to enter what is already a competitive workplace. *[Source: SAIN]*

3.5. Child Slavery

Following account was revealed by an eyewitness who travelled inside Burma in December 1995.

"I met two former porters 16 and 18 years old. They were rounded up for portering from a video hall on 26 June 1995 together with 30 or 40 other men from the area of "Five mile village" (near Loikaw). The youngest in the group was 16, the oldest 45. The two boys had to work as porters for two months, but some of the others came back only in the middle of November. They worked from sunrise to sunset, carrying ammunition (weight "about half a bag of rice"). Once a day, they got a small bowl of rice-soup, no blankets. Anyone who could not keep up was beaten, including one of the boys. Two villagers died from disease (malaria they think) and starvation.

Another source said that until now there is still portering going on in Shadaw, 30 miles east of Loikaw, and in Bawlake, south eastern Karenni State, 15 miles from Loikaw."

[See also under "Personal Accounts", interview 3, 6-8, 12, 14-15, 18, 23-24, 33, 36, 42, 46, 52, 71, 77-78, 83, 90, 93, 99, 106, 113-116, 118, 120, 149-151, 179, 182, 192-193, 196, 202-203, 221, 233, 239-241, 258, 261, 265-266, 270-271, 275, 277-280, 288-292, 301]

3.6. List of Incidents

3.6.1. SLORC IB 54 and LIBs 256 and 261 forced the local people in Loikaw Township, Karenni State, into portering during their offensive against the KNPP, which started in June 1995. Among the victims, Maung Aung Thein (13), son of U Maung Doe and Daw Jo Wah Nar from Daw Tha Naw village, Loikaw Township, has disappeared and his whereabouts remain unknown. *[Source: NLD-LA]*

3.6.2. In February 1995, SLORC troops entered Ko Ra Hta village in Papun District, Karen State. All the villagers fled, but an 11-year-old boy (name not available) was left behind. The SLORC troops captured him, executed him with a knife and left his body behind in the village. [Source: KHRG]

3.6.3. On 20 April 1995, a SLORC military column from IB 101 led by Maj Thet Oo entered Wan Nar village in Tenasserim Township, Tenasserim Division, and arrested Daw Ohn Kyi (40) and her daughter Ma In Kyi (14) with the allegation that they were being supporters of ABSDF and informing the students. The two women were forced to enter a nearby mini video hall in the village. Daw Ohn Kyi was forced to stand in the sun for the whole day while Ma In Kyi was dragged into the video hall and repeatedly raped by the SLORC soldiers. [Source: KNU]

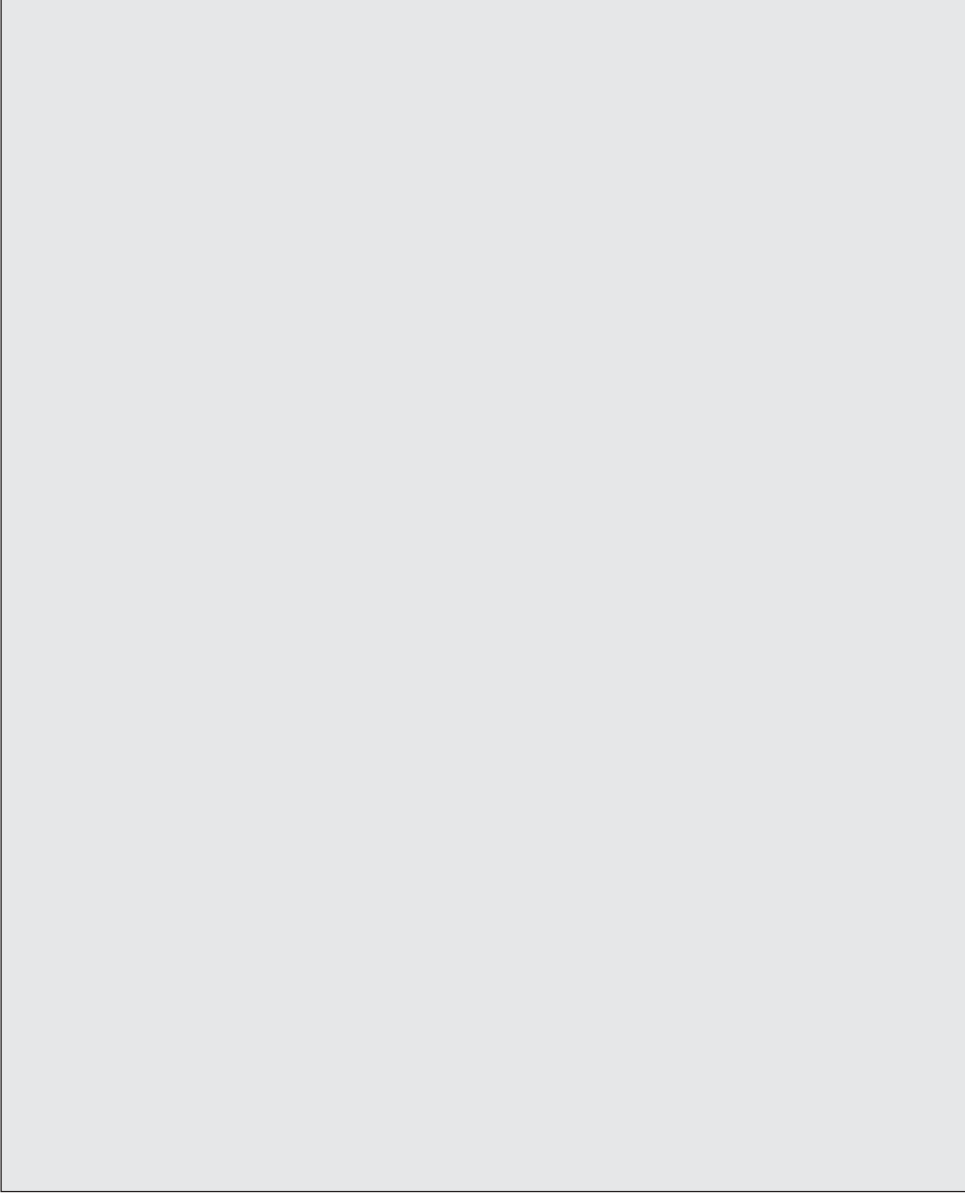
3.6.4. In Akyab, IB 20 has been recruiting young boys who are only 12 to 13 years old for the military service. When these young boys are asked why they joined the military, they replied, "We can have a regular meal if we join the military. We did it for hunger". The young boys also stated, "Outside the military compound, we are unable to enjoy regular meals", they said. [Source: ABSDF]

3.6.5. On 4 October 1995, SLORC troops under the command of Brig-Gen Comdr Kyi Aung from Taungoo-based Southern Command captured school girls and boys to carry ammunition and heavy loads for them. [Source: KNU]

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U Thuang, an escaped porter, who fled from the SLORC troops, shows the wounds he suffered from carrying 81-mm shells.

ImagesAsia



2

KHRG

Mon porters, under the watch of SLORC soldiers, carry food and military supplies. The practice continues even after SLORC promised not to porters as part of NMSP ceasefire deal. (August 1995 Mon State)

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3

Maung Khwee, conscripted as a porter to carry military supplies by the SLORC troops, shows the wounds he suffered from stepping on a mine when he escaped.

NLD-LA

BAIRD

4

Prisoners with tools ready, a wait work assignment from their military overseers.

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5

SAIN

Mandalay Hill. Prisoners work on upgrading the hill for
"Visit Myanmar Year"

SAIN

6

Yin Nyein quarry in Thaton Township. Prisoners break the rocks that are used by locals conscripted to repair and maintain roads in Burma.

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Prisoners in chains, take a meal break from work
in Myitkyina

6A

Ollly

Back to work -- Prisoners in chains line up, ready to leave
for their worksite after a meal break.

6B

Olly

FORCED LABOUR

7

BAIRD

Mandalay Palace wall being repaired by conscripted labour for
"Visit Myanmar Year"

8

SAIN

Prisoners working at Tooth Relic Pagoda Project in Mandalay.

9

BAIRD

Prisoners build road with bane hands in Mandalay.

10

BAIRD

A soldier keeping guard walks by as conscripted 'volunteers' work on a building.

FORCED LABOUR



11

BAIRD

Civilians, young and old alike, join prisoners in Tooth Relic Pagoda construction project as soldiers supervise the work.



12

BAIRD

13

SAIN

A disabled man living in Yatanabon Satellite Town, joins others to contribute unpaid labour for one day. The order to work on a compulsory basis was put up at the USDA office in that town one day ahead.

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14

People living in Yatanabon Satellite Town, regardless of sex or disability, were asked to contribute unpaid labour for one day on a compulsory basis. The order was put up at the USDA office in that town one day ahead.

SAIN

15

BAIRD

Women working on Road construction in Thazi

16

BAIRD

Construction between Thazi and Kalaw

FORCED LABOUR

BAIRD

17

Road to Kalaw

BAIRD

18

Near He Ho -teenagers working on the road in front of a military base.

19

SAIN

Thanbyuzayat. Forced labour is used to repair and maintain the railway that goes south to Ye.

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20

SAIN

Child labour in Pegu

21

SAIN

Forced labour in Pegu along the Rangoon-Pegu Expressway. Local people state that in Pegu locals have to pay 50 ks a fortnight per house to hire a steamroller. If you don't pay, you have to provide the labour instead.

(IV) FORCED PORTERING, SLAVERY AND FORCED LABOUR

The use of labourers in Myanmar has been practised since the time of colonial rule, during which time laws in connection with this were promulgated by the colonial rulers. Following independence, successive Governments have continued this practice according to the law

Recruitment and employment of civilian labourers are in accordance with the Village Act of 1908 and the Towns Act of 1907, and it is based on the following three criteria:

- (a) They must be unemployed;
- (b) They must be physically fit;
- (c) They must be paid a reasonable amount of wages, fixed and agreed upon beforehand.

The labourers must be paid from the time they leave their respective homes until they return, on completion of their duty. Apart from daily wages, they are entitled to receive rail and steamer travelling warrants or cash to cover the actual costs of transport between their homes and the operation area. The respective military unit has the responsibility of providing accommodation, messing and medical cover for the recruited labourers. Daily wages must be commensurate with those prevailing in the area. They are never required to accompany the troops to the actual scene of battle, nor are they exposed to danger. In the unlikely event of loss of life or limb, they or their families are compensated in accordance with the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1923.

- U Ohn Gyaw
- Myanmar Foreign Minister
- 50th Session of UN General Assembly

Forced portering has come to be known as one of the worst forms of human rights abuse by the Tatmadaw. Many people have heard the constant reports of civilians kidnapped, driven to the front-line like cattle under heavy loads of ammunition, forcibly starved and then killed as soon as they can no longer carry their loads. The following is a summary on types of forced portering, one of many constant abuses being faced by the peoples of Burma.

4.1. Background

Away from the central plains, Burma has rugged-steep mountainous terrain, with dense forests and no roads. However, transportation in the central plains is not

much as difficult as major roads are rudimentary. In the mountainous terrain covering most of the country, even such roads are non-existent. The rainy season makes even paths impassible throughout the country. People talk about the dry season from November to May as “fighting season”, because during rainy season large-scale military operations are almost impossible to mount. Even in “fighting season”, some means have to be found to transport ammunition and supplies over rough terrain. Ammunition and weapons are very bulky and heavy, and front-line soldiers also require a lot of food and other supplies. While guerrilla forces can live among the villagers, SLORC troops are hated by the populace and must bring in their supplies because they cannot pilfer everything they need from the sparse village populations.

The use of civilian porters was a common practice by the British Army during colonial days. Porters were men who were either hired for money or conscripted from a village and made to carry supplies to the next village, where they were sent home and the process was repeated. After Burmese independence, the Burma Army continued using similar practices. However, as the Burma Army degenerated into a strictly repressive force, particularly after Ne Win took over power in 1962, portering became forced and unpaid, more brutal and sadistic. Even before SLORC came to power in 1988, portering was already well-known among the people as a harsh form of slavery that must be escaped at any cost. Since then it has already driven untold numbers of refugees across the borders in search of safety and freedom from enslavement.

4.2. Types of Portering

SLORC has not only taken portering to new extremes of cruelty, but they have also used it as part of the Four Cuts policy which aims to cut off civilian support for opposition forces by terrorising the civilian population and making them destitute. In this context, villages are faced with such constant demands for porters and other forced labour that they can barely work to support themselves anymore. Villagers and townspeople alike must constantly face the threat of various types of portering, primarily the following:

4.2.1. Operations Porters

Operations portering is the type of portering which many people have read. These are porters who are kidnapped whenever SLORC needs a large number of porters immediately for a military offensive or other large-scale operation. Soldiers surround and sweep through villages, taking every healthy civilian regardless of age; police units and army trucks spread through the streets of towns and cities, encircle video halls, train stations, and even wedding ceremonies and religious festivals, or any other large gathering of people, and forcibly remove every able-bodied person. Soldiers storm every house in a neighbourhood at 3:00 a.m. Sometimes women,

children and the elderly are let go; sometimes not. The rest are piled into trucks and taken to army camps or prisons, where they are held pending further orders — some sit in jail cells for a week before the army comes to collect them. Apparently, Military Command receives porter demands from each Battalion or Strategic Command, then decides where the porters are to be rounded up and issues orders to the army or district officials in the area, who then use soldiers, police and even firemen to round up porters. The porters are often taken in towns, cities or villages hundreds of kilometres from the fighting area, sometimes because of a lack of sufficient local population but more commonly as a deliberate strategy to make the porters too frightened to attempt escape in a front-line area which is far from their home. Porters for operations in Karen State are sometimes brought from areas as far away as Rangoon, southern Mon or northern Shan states. Porters from different areas or ethnic backgrounds can easily be told things like “If you escape, the Karen will cut your throat!”.

Operations porters are kept for as long as the operation lasts, or even longer — often three months or more, or as some porters have said, “Until you either die or escape”. Over the course of a month or two, generally up to half of them will die and up to half of them will escape, so new porters must constantly be sent. Anyone caught trying to escape are either killed or savagely beaten and forced to continue until they die. Porters carry loads of ammunition or supplies of 30 to 40 kilos per man and 20 to 30 kilos per woman. They are generally fed one or two handfuls of rice per day with little salt or nothing else, and are often deprived of water because it would slow them down. They are generally not given any chance to bathe, and almost all are only wearing light clothing when they are captured near their homes. Porters have to sleep in the dirt, often inside pointed and guarded bamboo fences which they are forced to build themselves. Men are generally kept apart from women; women are often dragged off during the night to be gang-raped by officers and soldiers. When the people get sick, medicine is refused, and when they get too weak to keep up, they are beaten or prodded with bayonets. Those who can no longer continue are either left behind in the jungle to die, beaten and left where they collapse, kicked down the mountain side, tied up and thrown into a river, beaten to death with rifle butts, shot dead point -- blank on the spot and their bodies left to rot, have their throats slit open, or have met any number of other grisly ends with their remains left behind as evidence of the atrocities -- and as warning to others what will happen to them.

4.2.2. Permanent Porters:

Soldiers need supplies and ammunition whether or not they are out patrolling. Villages in all parts of Burma, whether they are near a fighting zone or not, receive written orders specifying the number of permanent porters they must provide to each nearby SLORC Army camp. This is the number of people from that village which must always be at the camp in order to be at the disposal of the soldiers as porters and messengers. Usually the number is based on size of the village; for

example, a village of 50 households may be required to provide 10 permanent porters to a nearby camp. These 10 people will have to go for a 5-, 7-, or 10-day shift, bringing all their own food and sleeping necessities to the camp, to do whatever is demanded of them by the soldiers (including rape). At the end of this time, their replacements for the next shift must arrive from the village or they will not be released. Treatment of permanent porters tends to be less brutal than operations porters and beatings are rare, partly because the people bring the food and clothing they require so they do not become too weak. They usually do not have to march as hard or as far as operations porters, and partly because they have come voluntarily. If a village fails to send permanent porters as requested, the whole area will be shelled or burned down, village leaders will be tortured or executed, or the soldiers will simply storm the village and take away more porters than they had demanded in the first place. If there are several army camps in the area, the village will usually be forced to send permanent porters to all of them independently. The villager appointed by SLORC as Village LORC Chairperson (usually against his/her will) receives the demands for the porters, and villagers have to take turns as he/she assigns. If the porters do not go, he/she will be the first target for torture.

4.2.3. Emergency Porters

In addition to permanent porter quotas, villages are constantly bombarded with SLORC written orders demanding certain numbers of porters or other short-term labourers to come to the army camp for emergencies — short-term jobs such as hauling the monthly rice supply to the local outposts. These people must take their own food and any required tools, and are generally not treated severely in the course of their labour; however, they are still kept under constant guard at gun point, and women are often called for such portering tasks and then raped repeatedly at night. These people also frequently run out of food because the written order calls them to come for one or two days but then they will be kept for up to three days to a week or longer. When SLORC wants operations porters, they often demand emergency porters for a day and then keep them and send them to the front-line. As with other demands, any village which fails to send the emergency porters as commanded faces being shelled or burned down and having its elders executed, or the soldiers will raid the village and remove an excessive number of porters than they had early ordered as punishment. Villagers are forced to go by turns as decided by the Village LORC Chairperson [see under Permanent Porters].

4.2.4. Porters of Opportunity

Upon seeing a few farmers or a family along the road or in the fields, SLORC troops on the move or patrolling will generally grab them, interrogate them roughly and often take them as porters, with the idea that you can never have too many porters. Sometimes such people will only be kept for a few hours, sometimes for several days or more. Quite often, SLORC troops will accuse them of being rebel

sympathisers because they were walking along the road or in the forest and will treat them brutally with extreme measures, often ending up by torturing them to death. Otherwise, they are treated similarly to operations porters.

4.2.5. Portering as Punishment

In urban or semi-urban areas, police or army units often raid houses at night for porters as punishment for minor infringements, such as failure to pay monthly porter fees or other protection money to SLORC authorities or army battalions, failure to register your guests (under SLORC law, any guest you have in your house must be registered with local authorities), or simply because some local official or military officer has a grudge against you. In these cases, the victims are usually sent to the police lockup, then handed over to the local army battalion, then often turned over to battalions which are on their way to the front-line. Many of these people end up as operations porters. House-to-house sweeps for infringements of the law are also sometimes used as an excuse during wider round-ups for operations porters — in such cases, people are often taken for failing to pay fees which they have already paid, or failing to register the guests they have in fact already properly registered.

4.2.6. Convict Porters

Hundreds of convicts are often taken from Burma's prisons, loaded onto cattle trucks and taken to front-line areas as operations porters. There they are treated at least as brutally as civilian operations porters, and are often kept at the front-line from one operation to the other indefinitely, until they die or escape. Many of them are taken from the prisons shortly before their sentences are about to expire, then kept at the front-line long after they were supposed to be released from prison. They are kept apart from civilian porters and under the same amount of guard, readily recognisable in their tattered prison clothes — shirts and longyis of rough burlap-type material, all dirty white or all blue. Most of the convicts are criminals — but most of those whom we have interviewed were imprisoned for crimes such as being out after curfew, throwing a stone at an army truck, or selling goods in the market without a SLORC licence.

4.2.7. Paid Porters

Although SLORC units always collect porter fees which are allegedly to hire porters, porters are never paid by SLORC. However, in villages which are constantly or occasionally faced with demands for permanent or emergency porters, villagers are usually too afraid to go and will avoid the labour any way they can. When it comes their turn to go, they will hire somebody else to go in their place if possible. Sometimes they can hire somebody else in the village to go in their place, but usu-

ally they hire itinerant migrant workers, usually of Indian descent, who are so poor that they are forced to do anything they can for a living. Some of these labourers have virtually made a profession out of hiring themselves out to go in place of villagers. Some of them become very adept at bribing the soldiers to get better food while portering and to avoid beatings and other mistreatment. Many of them escape from the soldiers as soon as they get the chance, although if they are going as a permanent porter replacement this will only cause the army unit to demand another villager from the village responsible. The hired porters often go as emergency or permanent porters only to find that SLORC is treating them too brutally or using them as operations porters, and then they try to escape.

4.2.8. Porters in Battle

Porters are often taken into front-line battle conditions, especially if they are carrying ammunition. Most of the front-line areas have no fixed line of demarcation, but consist of SLORC troops advancing through areas where they are subject to ambush at any time. In these areas, a column of porters is often forced to march ahead of the troops as human mine sweepers, and many have lost feet, legs or lives to mines. SLORC officers and non-commissioned officers in many units force porters to switch shirts with them, hoping that the porters will draw enemy fire while the officers will be seen as porters and spared. During an ambush or fight, porters naturally dive for whatever cover they can find. Sometimes the soldiers allow them to stay there, but other times they order porters to stand up and take ammunition to the advance unit. There are even recorded cases where SLORC soldiers have threatened to shoot porters if they do not get up and keep moving. Any porter who is killed is left to decompose among the jungles and footpaths; the seriously wounded are left to die. Those who are slightly wounded are usually forced to continue carrying supplies if they can. If they cannot, some units will abandon them or murder them outright, while others will send them back together with the wounded soldiers for treatment. The families of the dead are not compensated nor even notified. Whenever SLORC takes porters, they simply disappear — the family rarely knows what has happened to their loved ones. By the time some porters have escaped and have returned home, their families have already written them off as dead.

4.2.9. Women, Children and the Elderly

Most SLORC Battalions prefer men aged 18 to 40 as porters, because they can carry the heaviest loads. However, the army regularly take porters indiscriminately, including boys as young as 14 and men as old as 70. Usually the young boys and old men are forced to carry loads almost as heavy as the young men. When troops need a large number of porters, they take women aged 15 through 60 as well. Some battalions go out of their way to take women porters in order to rape them — the soldiers prefer young unmarried girls for this. The women are forced to carry loads

about three quarters as heavy as those carried by the men. They receive similar treatment in terms of food and sleeping conditions. They are usually beaten less often and less brutally than the men, but they are still subjected to beatings. Worst of all, during rest breaks and at night they are subjected to brutal gang-rape by soldiers and officers. Some die from the combined effects of rape, beatings and exhaustion. Others return home with permanent internal damage and no access to doctors or are too ashamed to seek treatment. Some return home to find they are pregnant with the child of a hated SLORC soldier. They secretly take desperate measures to rid themselves of the baby, and some die or inflict permanent damage on themselves in doing so. If the village finds out or if the rape victim bears the child, they face likely ostracism and may have great difficulty finding a husband.

4.2.10. Porter Fees and Bribes

SLORC officials and military units collect fees from every family in all villages and towns every month, normally several times a month. The amounts are usually calculated roughly to drain the local population of its entire disposable income, and then some. The money is simply stolen by the local military officials, with a percentage often remitted to a SLORC-monopolised company (Myanmar Economic Holdings Co. Ltd.) in Rangoon. One of the most common fees is porter fees or fees for salaries of government servants. These fees are allegedly to hire porters, but porters are never paid. However, if you fail to pay any of these fees you will probably be taken as a porter. During sweeps for operations porters, many people usually get free by paying large bribes to the military while they are still being held locally, before being sent to the front-line. These bribes average 1,000 to several thousand kyats. For example, if a military unit requires 1,000 porters then they will deliberately capture 3,000. They will then begin releasing those who can bribe them. Sometimes the amount is fixed as high as 5,000 Ks. Sometimes it starts lower, maybe 800 or 1,000 Ks, and then as the number of people still being held drops closer to the number of porters needed, the price goes up. Each person remained in the last group might have to pay as high as 10,000 Ks or more for their release. The people who are left to go to the front-line are always the poor — the farmers, trishaw drivers, labourers, etc.

4.2.11. Portering for Opposition Groups

Opposition forces also need people to carry their supplies and many of groups conscript porters. Khun Sa's Mong Tai Army has a bad reputation for conscription and treatment of its porters. However, other opposition groups tend to use something more akin to British Army methods, such as taking porters from one village to the next. It is crucial to recognise the difference between SLORC troops, who are hated by the population, and opposition troops, who are found among families in villages and who depend on the villagers for intelligence information and material support. Opposition groups also conscript porters for periods up to several weeks, and in

many areas the people are sick and tired of this labour. However, during their time as porters these villagers are fed and accommodated to the same standard as the soldiers, although it is relatively low and without comfort. Porters are not beaten or otherwise physically abused, and if they are sick or wounded they either receive treatment if it is available or are returned to their villages.

4.2.12. Institutionalising of Portering under SLORC

Many people, including escaped porters themselves, often ask just how SLORC soldiers can treat civilian porters so brutally. The answer lies in the statement we have heard from countless porters: "They just did not think of us as human beings." It appears that in SLORC's Officer Training School, officers are indoctrinated to think of civilians -- especially after they have been taken as porters -- as simple pack animals there to serve the military. SLORC officers and NCOs always talk to porters using the same lines, almost word for word: "Medicine? This is not your mother's house!" "You are not our relatives!" "It is your fate to carry like this." Burmese soldiers who hesitate to capture or beat porters are always yelled at with, "Are these people your fathers? Your brothers-in-law?" The Tatmadaw teaches its soldiers and officers that the army is their only true blood, their only true family, and that civilians are more inferior than human. In the field, officers enforce this attitude on the rank and file soldiers through a combination of fear and peer pressure — both of which are very strong factors when faced with a person who hates you and porters who want nothing more than to escape. [Source: KHRG]

4.3. Forced Portering

Thousands of porters were rounded up at the end of 1994 and in the beginning of 1995 from towns and villages stretching from Mudon and Moulmein in the south to Thaton in the north for the Manerplaw offensive. SLORC's tactics in rounding up these porters, such as surrounding video halls and capturing all the men or abducting people from their homes in the middle of the night, were reminiscent of their tactics in 1992, when they rounded up an estimated 20,000 civilians for their previous major Manerplaw offensive [for details on Manerplaw porters see under "Eyewitness Accounts", interview 4-18, 43-46, 226-237, 241-252]. Immediately after the seizure of Manerplaw, SLORC began setting up small camps in every kilometre or so along the river to the south of Manerplaw. Many porters were brought in from the hills surrounding Mae Tha Waw, SLORC supply base to the south, to carry supplies to these camps. Many of these porters were "say muh wah" — Karen girls, almost all teenagers, from remote hill villages who wear the traditional white dress before marriage. Witnesses on the Thai bank of the Moei River saw 100 or more of these girls being held under guard in fenced enclosures along the Moei riverbank every evening. The fences were still visible in photos taken weeks later, each of their sharpened bamboo stake with an empty milk-tin hanging on the top to make sure the girls could not get over the fence at night without making noise. None of them

are known to have escaped.

At the same time, SLORC completed a dirt road connecting Mae Tha Waw and Manerplaw within two weeks. When this was done, the “say muh wah” porters were sent back and SLORC trucks began moving supplies, though some men and women porters were still visible with SLORC troops along the road. According to observers on the Thai riverbank, it appeared that DKBA soldiers carried their own loads while SLORC troops carried only their guns and were always accompanied by porters carrying heavy loads. By 10 February 1995, the SLORC trucks were going up and down the road all day — empty on their way to Manerplaw and full of soldiers, equipment and pillaged goods on the way back to Mae Tha Waw.

At the same time, new battalions were sent through Papun for an offensive further north to secure the entire area west of the Salween River. SLORC troops pushed up the Salween river from Thu Mwe Hta (at the confluence of Moei river) and Dawn Gwin areas, and down the Salween from Saw Hta, in the far north just below the Karenni border. As combined SLORC and DKBA units appeared up and down the Salween riverbank, refugee camps and Thai Karen villages across the river began to flee. Even the bustling Thai trading village of Mae Sam Lap fled up a stream two or three kilometre into Thailand after SLORC and DKBA crossed the river into Mae Sam Lap several times. Thai traders could be seen selling their wares from bamboo shelters by the stream, looking like refugees, while the Thai Army had to occupy Mae Sam Lap to protect the border. SLORC troops coming from Papun also formed another line west-east from Papun to the Salween River at Kyauk Hnyat, and performed sweeping operations south of this line to drive out any KNU forces while wiping villagers out at the same time — as soon as they fled, DKBA was ready and waiting to take them to Myaing Gyi Ngu. [Source: KHRG]

4.4. Slavery in the South

Since the beginning of 1995, the SLORC Army has conscripted hundreds of innocent civilians from several ethnic Karen, Mon and Tavoyan villages in Yebyu, Thayetchaung, Launglon and Tavoy townships in Tenasserim Division and has used them as front-line labourers in its military operation against the Karen National Union's 4th Brigade and the small ethnic Tavoyan army, Meik-Dawei United Front (MDUF), operating in the region. The conscripted civilians reportedly suffered from various inhuman treatments and serious abuses by SLORC troops, including killing when porters were unable to carry the given heavy loads due to exhaustion or serious illness. Many of the army troops — including some commanding officers — reportedly also committed a series of rapes in the Karen and Tavoyan villages during their offensives.

The majority of civilians press-ganged into portering were from Taung Byauk, Winkapaw, Kywe Gyan, Kyauk Aing, Me Ke, Alezu, Byatwithar, Winwa, Sonzinpyar, Mindatt, Chaungwabyin, Gonnyinzeik and Nyaung Zin villages in

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Thayetchaung Township, Auk Yebyu and Thagyettaw villages in Launglon Township, Kudoh and Kahnaingda villages in Tavoy Township, as well as Maungme Shaung village in Yebyu Township. According to a central MDUF source, 500 SLORC troops from four battalions — LIBs 403, 404 and 405 and IB 25 — led by (Tactical Commander) Col Than Sein, moved into the MDUF-operating area in Thayetchaung Township on 1 June 1995, bringing the 1000 civilian porters along with them. That SLORC military column engaged with KNU's 4th Brigade in a series of skirmishes in Ban Chaung area during the month of June, using the 1000 civilians porters also as human shields and human mine-sweepers. SLORC troops recruited more porters and commenced looting and/or destroying the livestock, crops and any property belonging to inhabitants in the Karen and Tavoyan villages they reached during the military operation. During the offensive, the Burmese troops also burned down Karen and Tavoyan villages which they suspected of harbouring the KNU or MDUF guerrillas.

On 1 June 1995, the aforementioned Burmese troops and conscripted civilians arrived at Taung Byauk village in Thayetchaung Township and forcibly stayed in houses without the permission by the owners. Taung Byauk is a small village where there are 60 households and about 400 dwellers, most of them ethnic Karen. During their encampment in the village, SLORC troops forcibly ravaged Taung Byauk, eating up the livestock and foodstuffs of the villagers without permission or payment.

Some of the Burmese soldiers committed a series of rapes in certain Karen and Tavoyan villages they reached during the operation. During their stay in Taung Byauk village, on 8 June 1995, LIB 404 Bn Comdr Lt-Col Zaw Weit, Coy Comdr Capt Thant Zin, and Cpl Naing Tun, reportedly intoxicated at the time, beat and gang-raped a 42-year-old Karen woman Ma Aye Mya, who is the wife of the village's chairman U Aung Myaing.

Moreover, the SLORC officers forcibly took away the victim's husband U Aung Myaing as a porter for their troops. On that same day, Capt Myint Maung Win, a company commander of LIB 404, also attempted to rape the wife of the village secretary. Fortunately, this Karen woman successfully resisted the Burmese captain's sexual assault and managed to escape.

The conscripted civilians were subjected to all manner of inhuman treatment during their captivity and enslavement by the SLORC troops. Porters were forced to carry disproportionately heavy loads for several hours each day regardless of weather and for an indefinite period of time until they died or were able to escape. The porters were not provided with sufficient food; nor were they provided with minimum medical treatment when they were sick or when they were injured in the cross-fire between the SLORC troops and the Karen/Tavoyan guerrillas. The porters were not allowed to have adequate rest; they were tied up in pairs or in groups and were left to sleep as such without shelter, regardless of rains. The porters were also used as a human shield and human mine-sweepers by being forced to walk ahead of the

Burmese troops; as a result, many of them were killed on the spot or seriously injured once they stepped on the land mines planted by guerrillas.

Gravest and most horrendous of all, some of these civilian-turn-porters were shot, bayoneted or beaten to death by the Burmese troops when they were unable to carry their given loads because of serious sickness or exhaustion. Amongst those whom were executed by the SLORC troops were: Ko Win Aung from Thagyettaw village, Launglon Township; Ko Soe Hia, Ko Soe Than and U Hla Khin from Thabye Chaung village, Tavoy Township; Ko Htay Oo from Thayetchaung Town and Ko Hlaing Myint from Auk Yebyu village of Launglon Township. All the victims were Tavoyans. Ko Win Aung, Ko Soe Hia, Ko Soe Than and U Hla Khin were beaten to death as they were unable to porter their burdens due to serious sickness, while Ko Htay Oo and Ko Hlaing Myint were shot dead in their unsuccessful escape attempts.

Tens of these porters were estimated to have died by serious illness, from land-mine explosions, in the cross-fire between the SLORC troops and Karen guerrillas, or because of ruthless and cruel treatments by their captors, including extra-judicial execution. As a result, many villagers fled -- both before and during -- to escape the appalling conditions of portering. Since 9 June 1995, the increasing number of escapees significantly rose in refugee areas. [Source: CPPSM]

[See also under "Personal Accounts", interview 1-3, 23-26, 28-29, 37-42, 47-48, 52, 59-62, 65-71, 77-78, 81-86, 88-91, 93, 98, 101, 103-104, 106-109, 114-118, 121-123, 125, 127-131, 134-135, 140-142, 144-146, 148-149, 153-154, 156, 157-204, 211-212, 216, 218, 222-223, 225, 253-254, 261-267, 271, 274, 280-282, 285-293, 297, 299, 302, 308-313,

4.5. Infrastructure Project in Southern Burma

Since early 1994, local people in Tenasserim Division have been forced to contribute corvee labour at gun point for the construction of the Kawthaung-Mergui Road, Moetaung-Mergui Road and Tenasserim-Theindaw Diamond Mine. About 10,000 people were forced to contribute labour and each township in Mergui and Kawthaung districts — Palaw, Mergui, Kyun Su, Tenasserim, Boke Pyin and Kawthaung — were forced to send 1500 people each day.

Every time people went, labourers had to work at least 15 days, spending their own money for the trip and necessities. They also had to take self-responsibility for medical treatment. Nobody else wanted to go in another person's place even though payments were as high as 3000 Ks. Privileged people in general were civil servants, members of the USDA, fire brigade and SLORC/LORC, who were neither forced to contribute labour nor pay ransom to be exempt from being taken. Because of the construction, certain houses in Tha Kyet, Tha Yu, Tha La Bwin, Ban Pyi, Theindaw, Sin Pin, Nga We, Maw Tone, Nyaung Bin Kwin and Tha Baw Leik villages were

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forced to relocate while a number of farmlands were confiscated without compensation.

Anyone who failed to work were fined 100 Ks per day. In addition to these three major projects, all the roads and streets in downtown Mergui are being repaired by forced labourers. Another motorway project of Mergui-Kyel Ku is also underway with about 300 prison labourers.

The Division LORC in Tenasserim Division is in control of there various projects and nine Battalions — IBs 17, 101, 103 and 224, and LIBs 433, 442, 358 and 343 — are responsible for security.

On 28 June 1995, it was reported that Maj Tin Tun of SLORC IB 17, based in 6-mile village, Tha Kyet village-tract, had issued orders through the Tenasserim Township LORC to local people that one person from each household must be sent for military road-building. Assignments were to be completed before the onset of rainy season, the officer demanded.

Local people in Tenasserim Township had been forced to contribute labour for construction of this road at gun point in 1994.. Ironically, after that part of the road was finished, peasants had found themselves prohibited from using bullock carts on the newly-paved road, thus increasing the local people's hardships to transport food and materials on a road they had previously relied on.

The labourers were not only forced to contribute corvee labour from the break of dawn until sunset but they also had to bring their own food and working tools, covering all their own expenses. Maj Tin Tun and his troops were in control of the project and the labourers were under watch for the whole time to make sure that they would not escape. About 50 soldiers led by Capt Aung Swe had the responsibility for security of the road.

A peasant who was among the forced labourers said that all the peasants had to leave their farms unattended since they were forced to work on the road until the rainy season began. In addition, labourers had to use their farming tools at SLORC labour camps, instead of in their own fields. When SLORC officials ordered rocks to be used for the construction, labourers were forced to pay the transportation charges in order to finish the road in time. Cost for one truck-load of rocks is 2000 Ks.

In reality, despite the official propaganda, this road will not benefit the local people nor facilitate their transportation. All in all, that road's real aim is to benefit SLORC from coal and diamond mining projects carried out jointly with foreign companies, and for the rapid deployment of troops and smooth line of supplies in the course of military offensives. [Source: ABSDF]

Ye-Tavoy 1a

KHRG

KHRG

Ye-Tavoy railway labour, just before monsoon in 1995. Many women and children are among the conscripted workers.

4.6. Ye-Tavoy Rail Line Construction

"... [L]abour contribution camps [are] all equipped with medical and welfare facilities and amenities like TV shows and video shows. Work that was to be completed in a month's time was therefore completed in reality in a fortnight. Those who had contributed labour were reluctant to go home even after completion of the work."

-Maj-Gen Ket Sein

New Light of Myanmar on 15 September 1994

Since November 1993, a new 110-mile-long railway line, which runs roughly parallel to the Andaman Sea coast of southern Burma between Ye and Tavoy, has been constructed by over 1,500,000 labourers with the exception of the three month's respite at the height of the following rainy season from June to August 1994 and has been going on non-stop until presently although SLORC made a certain reduction in the numbers of forced labours and slowed down the construction work during the rainy season (from June to August) in 1995. SLORC reportedly plans to have completed construction of the whole railway before the end of 1996. SLORC needs quick completion of this strategic railway in order to be able to strengthen its control in the region for security of the billion-dollar gas pipeline project by Total of France and Unocal Corporation of the United States.

4.6.1. SLORC Conscripts Labourers

SLORC troops were moved into the area, sent orders to villages and rounded up tens of thousands of Mon, Karen, Tavoyan and Burman villagers. The civilians were forced by the military to clear the projected routes and build railway embankment. This was done on 15 day rotating shifts under gruelling conditions. For paving the way, 100-meter (328-foot) width of the ground had to be cleared. To build the main railway line, which is 15 feet wide and 16 feet high, a mound had to be piled up. At the construction site, the soldiers from SLORC LIBs 343, 402, 403, 407 and 410 closely watched the labourers and their works.

People had to bring their own food and were beaten for any lapse at work. As a result, many died of illness, beatings or landslides. The elderly, children as young as 10 and pregnant women were not spared from the labour quotas.

4.6.2. Displacement of Villages

Many villagers were displaced in the east of the Ye-Tavoy Motorway in fear of conscription by the military. The villagers who hid in the mountainous jungle area, located in the eastern part of the Ye-Tavoy Motorway, could cultivate rice in the rainy season [during 1994] and they survived with their families. But in the dry

2

SAIN

Villagers forced from their home in Kanbauk are brought to the village of Taungbon to work on the upgrading and repairing of the railway. They are not paid and have to bring their own food and tools. Many are children.

3

HURFOM

Forced Labourers in Ye-Tavoy Railway Construction.

season [of 1994] (the dry season in Burma lasts from October until May), because of the conscription of slave labours for the railway construction and collection of various kinds of taxation, many local inhabitants from the areas nearby the railway line had to head to the mountainous areas again, where they did not have enough food and faced numerous difficulties. When the civilians escaped from their villages, some of them were able to bring along food. But later on the SLORC troops in the area issued many orders to prevent the civilians from keeping rice in places they stayed. Moreover, those who were in the hideouts were re-arrested by the SLORC troops when military operations were launched, often on a continual basis.

Starting from November 1994, some commanders from SLORC LIB 410 issued an official order for the locality. [see *Order No. 78, dated 12 November 1994*]. A number of the same orders were also issued by local SLORC troops in Yebyu Township and Ye township. After those official orders being issued, SLORC made it the legal right of the military to confiscate rice from civilians who were found staying outside their villages.

4.6.3. Forced Labour Increases; Internment Camps, Convict Labour, Fines and Fees

In October 1994, SLORC resumed construction of the railway and thousands of local people were herded into labour camps during their labour internment. The main labour camps located between Tavoy and Yebyu townships in 1995 were at Maung May Shaung, Kyauk K'Nya, Hnint Twe, The Pyay Chaung, and Zahar. Each of these held several hundred to a thousand or more labourers at a time.

Conscription of forced labour has been introduced to every civilian regardless of age, gender, occupation, or health status; even the sick and pregnant women have been taken. All forced labourers have been denied any chance of resisting any order by local council personnel or the rank-and-file. Moreover, ransom must be paid if an individual or his or her family cannot afford to contribute labour. SLORC has constantly propagandised that they have taken responsibility for social welfare of the civilians. No personal items for labourers were provided except guards; civilians had to bring their own food, their own medicine and manual construction tools, as well build and maintain their own shelters.

Moreover, every family had to take responsibility for the cost of 100 cubic feet of stone for paving the way and supplying for the monthly railway fund from 200 to 500 Ks regularly. The people who were unable to work as porters were imposed a fine from 1,500 to 2,000 Ks.

Myo Win (Serial No. 922121), a private from 1st Platoon of Coy 1 under the command of LIB 401, exposed mistreatment of his commanders to the civilians:

4

KHRG

Ye-Tavoy railway labour, just before monsoon in 1995, including many women and children.

5

SAIN

Villagers brought from Kanbawk to Taungbon where they are forced to work without compensation on the railway line that links Moulmein and Ye. They live in makeshift shelters, and bring own food and tools. Children are not spared from the hard work.

FORCED LABOUR

Forced labourers from Heinda village, who were working at a railway construction site near Za Lun village, were severely beaten by Sgt Zaw Naing Maw from LIB 401 on 10 January 1995. They were later told that the labourers were not supposed to rest without their permission. Three labourers were injured seriously. The soldiers took them to a military camp and locked them up without giving medical care. These three were released a week later and then forced to work again.

In December 1994, about 100 troops led by Capt Maung Ohn from LIB 401 cowed the civilian from Ha Myie Gyi village in Tavoy Township into leaving their houses and robbed the properties from almost every household.

Capt Dang Ka-mehn from LIB 401 arrested seven civilians from Wah Zun Chaung village. The victims were told that they were arrested for failing to serve as porters needed to meet the demands of the local council and army. The seven were locked in Phaung Daw Mi Zat camp. A few days later, the victims were released after their fellow villagers paid a ransom of 1,000 Ks per person. This captain has ordered owners of vehicles from nearby villages to pay a tax of 1,000 Ks for each time passing by Phaungdaw.

U Maung Hla (42, a Burmese Muslim from Pein Daw Quarter, Tavoy) recalled a mournful story about his friends at Zinba construction site:

I was forced to contribute labour because I could not afford to pay a ransom, amounting to 500 Ks. At the construction site, every five labourers were forced to dig 100 cubic ft earthen pits. U Ba Maung (45) and U Myint Naing (50) were very exhausted and sick due to hard work in the scorching sun and the other labourers asked the soldiers to send them to the clinic. This request was denied with the reason that there was no vehicle. Finally, the two lost consciousness and soon died of heat exhaustion.

I also felt ill and was denied to medical care too. I had to manage on my own to get back home. The other labourers and I rented a truck with our own money. We had an accident on our way back home. Twenty labourers were severely injured and the other two died on the spot.

As SLORC focused on the completion of the southernmost section of the railway — 12 miles from Tavoy to Yebyu — in time for Visit Myanmar Year 1996, the demand of the labourers were higher than usual. To complete the construction work in time, SLORC authorities conscripted 2,500 people from Tavoy, Yebyu, Launglon and Thayetchaung townships in Tavoy District. Villagers were forced to contribute corvee labour once in every fifteen days, at their own expenses.

6

SAIN

Conscripted villagers prepave tar to pave road to move troops in Ye-Tavoy area. December 1995.

7

KHRG

Work in progress at the Ye-Tavoy railway line using forced labour.

FORCED LABOUR

Each member of local LORC from respective villages had to accompany the porters and acted as an in-charge at the work site to make sure that the porters would not escape. The completion of the Tavoy-Yebyu section of the railway was announced by SLORC and an opening ceremony was held on 30 May 1995.

SLORC balanced the decreased numbers of the local labourers with the increased amount of extortion money demanded to spare from the labour. But more and more convicts in chains from Moulmein, Insein and other prisons were brought into the area to work on the railway. Political prisoners were included, generally those sentenced to five years or less under Section 17/1 for associating with illegal or opposition organisations. At Zahar Camp of the construction site, between Tavoy and Yebyu Township, altogether 300 prisoners were confined and fettered in stocks and forced to work.

People in towns were no longer needed to provide labour anywhere along the route, but were forced to pay 500 Ks or more per family per month. In the villages, people were forced to provide one person and 500-1,500 Ks per month per family.

Following the on 30 May 1995 opening ceremony, SLORC started running a military train along the Tavoy-Yebyu section, while putting the rest of the route still under construction with the continued massive use of forced labour. Since June 1995, every 800 local people from Thayetchaung, Launglon, Tavoy and Yebyu townships in Tavoy District were conscripted by SLORC to construct the rest of the earthen embankment between Kyauk Kanyar and Zinba villages in Yebyu Township and/or for the construction of army buildings for local SLORC military during the height of the rainy season. They had to carry their own food while they were at the construction site.

The entire local ethnic Mon, Karen and Tavoyan communities have been suffering cumulative hardship in every aspect of life as a results of the consistent slave labour on this railway construction and a multiplicity of the accompanying or concurrent other abuses of human rights by local SLORC military — such as forced labour for the Burma Army including forced portering, forced displacement, regular and irregular porter fees and taxes, and so forth. They had to work from 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., sometimes under heavy rains. About 500 civilians in these labour camps suffered from malaria and other health problems due to harsh working condition and heavy rain.

During the 1995 rainy season, the Tavoy-Yebyu Railroad was badly damaged a number of times by water in many parts. SLORC, therefore put it under immediate repair and reconstruction by massive use of forced labour from several local villages for one more month starting from mid-August 1995. When it was completed, again SLORC has restarted running its military train on that section since the beginning of October 1995 — patrolling the area, deploying troops, transporting ammunition and food supplies, and so on. But SLORC has not run any single train in the area for the use of local civilians until the end of 1995. Despite the completion of

the Tavoy-Yebu Railway, SLORC doesn't allow the local people to have a respite from forced labour and forced taxation for the rest part of the construction. Main work were digging ditches: each of which is ten feet wide and one foot high, and building embankment for the railway tracks. One ex-labourer who recently arrived at the Thai-Burmese border after working a month at the labour camp said:

"Local people from Yebu, Tavoy, Launglon and Thetyetchaung township are conscripted to work for fifteen days every month. The works are hard labour without any pay. The military monitors the work site but do not provide anything. People get sick and ill frequently because of heavy rain. When they get sick, people have to buy medicine from the military. Anyone who fails to work is fined 2,000 Ks by the local authorities."

Convicted labourers from 30-Mile Labour Camp were forced to work for necessary stones and rocks for bridges along the railroad. Owners of private cars were forced by the SLORC Army to carry those stones and rocks.

As of August 1995, the estimate number of local people who were conscripted for the construction of railroad between Kyauk Kanyar and Zinba villages were 3,200, with close to 10% of the labourers suffering from malaria each day.

Table 2. Forced Labour on the Rail-Line between Kyauk Kanyar and Zinba

No.	Labour Camp	Number of labourers forced to work
1.	21-Mile Camp	1,000 local people (Approximately 100 were suffering from malaria every day. Absent labourers were punished by the SLORC soldiers.)
2.	30-Mile Camp	200 prisoners and 700 local people (Approximately 50 prisoners were suffering from malaria every day.)
3.	Nwe Lein Camp	700 local people (Approximately 70 were suffering from malaria every day.)
4.	Zinba Camp	300 prisoners and 800 local people (Approximately 80 local people were suffering from malaria everyday)

SLORC is now applying the same strategy of focusing on one stretch of the remaining portions of the line. SLORC has considerably increased its use of forced labour to speed up the construction process since the last quarter of 1995, trying to complete the approximately 35 miles' length from Yebu to Kaleinaung by the end of 1995. According to well-informed local sources, two thirds of construction work on the Yebu-Kaleinaung section had been completed by the end of November 1995. For example, on 20 November 1995, villagers in Ye Township were suddenly informed that they were to complete the entire 18-mile stretch from Ye to the

Tenasserim border within a deadline of 15 days — from 1 to 15 December. This led to much more intensive calls for labour — whole families instead of one member per family — occurring right at harvest time, when families who go for field work faced losing their entire year's harvest. SLORC reportedly required many villages in the northern part of Ye Township to provide a total of more than 20,000 laborers to work in the Yebyu-Kaleinaung section.

At the same time, SLORC conscripted another tens of thousands of labourers from Thanbyuzayat and Mudon Township and the adjacent areas including Bilukyun, the largest island town which is composed of as many as 70 villages and is located approximately 7 miles southwest of the Mon State's capital Moulmein. The people living in Moulmein, however, were required to contribute 1,500 to 2,500 Ks per household per month instead of having to contribute their own labour for the railway construction.

The other effect in 1995 is that the villagers often have to travel as far as 100-120 km. to their assigned work site instead of going to the nearest portion of the line. At least one-third to one-half of all the labourers are women and children, either because SLORC has demanded several people per family from their village, or because it takes the whole family to finish the work quota in the allotted 15 days, or because the father of the family stays at home to harvest the paddy.

4.6.4. Non-payment of Labourers by SLORC

Although SLORC claims that labourers on the railway line are paid, there is still no evidence to support this. Villagers must take all their own food and tools. Anyone who cannot go has to either pay 3,000-4,000 Ks to SLORC, or hire someone else to go in their place for 700-2,000 Ks. There are some itinerant day labourers, both in the villages and at the work sites, who are willing to be hired for this. Some families hire substitutes directly, while others give the money to the village headman and he does it. As a result, some people working on the railway are doing so for money, but this money comes from villagers, not from SLORC. Officials from the LORC Ministry for Rail Transport on the site have budgets which may have been intended to pay labourers, but Ministry officials simply hand over all the money to the army battalions in the area in return for guarding the workers and to keep them working. SLORC Secretary-1 Khin Nyunt has even gone so far as to claim that a "secret directive" has been issued to stop all use of forced labour in Burma. The testimonies below make it very clear that no such directive has been issued.

4.6.5. SLORC Orders

In October 1995, SLORC issued orders for the following numbers of forced labourers to come to labour camps from villages in the Ye-Tavoy area.

Table 3. SLORC Orders for Forced Labour in Ye-Tavoy Area

No.	Labour Camp	Workers ordered	Workers	Short of quota received	Convicts used
1.	T'Hlaing Ya	12,500	1,500	1,000	
2.	18-Mile	2,500	1,000	1,500	
3.	19-Mile	3,000	1,800	1,200	
4.	21-Mile	2,000	2,000	-	
5.	27-Mile	3,000	3,000	-	
6.	30-Mile	1,500	1,000	500	300
7.	36-Mile	1,500	1,400	100	
8.	Heinze	2,000	1,500	500	
9.	Nnan Kyeh	2,500	2,200	300	
10.	Ye Pone	3,000	1,500	1,500	
11.	Kyauk Shat	3,000	1,400	1,600	
12.	Nwe Lein	4,000	2,000	2,000	
13.	Zinba	1,500	800	700	200
14.	Yar Phoo	1,500	1,000	500	
15.	Kyauk Ka Din	1,500	1,200	300	
	TOTAL	35,000	23,300	11,700	500

Notes: All labourers demanded and supplied are civilian villagers with the exception of those listed as convicts. Many are women and children. The numbers supplied do not include those who paid 3,000 to 4,000 Ks to the army to avoid the labour. Orders were issued for village heads to send enough people immediately to fill any shortfall in the number of people demanded.

4.6.6. SLORC Prefers and Profits from "Free" Manual Labour

Most of the labour camps listed above had already been extended in September by Township LORC (Ma Wa Ta) and District LORC (Ka Wa Ta) authorities. At that time there were an estimated 6,800 civilian forced labourers being used in 21-Mile, 30-Mile, Heinze, Nan Kyeh, Nwe Lein, Zinba, Yar Phoo and Kyauk Ka Din camps, as well as about 500 convicts in 30-Mile camp and an additional 400 in Zinba camp.

There are seven bulldozers in Kyauk Ka Din camp, but the authorities never use them, preferring to use manual labour of conscripted villagers because it does not cost them money for fuel or maintenance. In September while heavy rains were continuing, villagers were still forced to work digging earthen pits, building embankments and filling depressions. About 80 to 100 people in each labour camp were ill at any given time, but the authorities provided no medicine. In some camps, people from nearby villages who own video players were forced to bring their equipment and show videos at their own expenses, while SLORC soldiers collected admission fees from labourers and kept the money.

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The working and living conditions were severely bad. Between June and October 1995, about 40 prison labourers died of harsh working condition. Other 30 prison labourers attempted to escape and at least five were gunned down and killed by the troops from LIB 406.

All villagers called for railway labour must arrange and pay for their own transportation to get to and from the work site on time. They must take their own food, and receive no pay for the work. Looting, extortion and other forms of forced labour also continue.

The military recruitment centre based in Tavoy District went to forced labour camps in its region and recruited the youth aged between 16 and 22 years whose term were almost finished to join the army. Six youths from 36-Mile Camp, eight youths from Nwe Lein Camp and 15 youths and inmates from 21-Mile Camp were forcibly conscripted.

Many villages in Yebyu Township, however, have consistently been required to provide all their people of between 18 and 60 years of ages as labourers to work on the railway construction since November 1995. The Mon human rights workers were able to interview some Mon people from Yebyu Township's Legyi and Mawgyi villages briefly in mid-November 1995. During the interview, one of the villagers from Mawgyi said as follows:

All the people in my village, except those under 18 and those over 60, are now required to contribute labour on the railway construction. This means that, for example, if your household has a total of five persons who are between 18 and 60 years, then all these five persons are put on the list of labourers to work on the railway construction. This is a new, but worse system for conscription of labour from my village. It is no longer on the basis of one labourer per household like before. The same that the labourers must work for 15 days to complete one turn (time) of their labour contribution duties.

According to well-informed local sources, the villages in other areas in Yebyu Township have all been required to send all men who are at and over the age of 16 and all women at and over the age of 18 for working on the railway construction since December 1995, regardless of the number of males and females in a household.

The practices of beating of the labourers by SLORC soldiers at the construction sites appears to have considerably decreased, if not completely ended. No such occurrences have ever been claimed by any of the escapees during the year 1995. This sort of relief has come to the labourers working on the railway construction due partly or wholly to that many construction sites have been relaxed from the direct control of the military and are instead administered and overseen by the (civilian) headmen of the respective villages, village-tracts and town quarters. Moreover, SLORC might also have learned the fact that relatively more labourers and

their families fled and sought new shelter on the Thai-Burmese border areas when the railway construction sites were put under extreme tough control of its military during the previous years.

Amongst the tens of thousands of labourers working daily on the railway construction, women and minors have normally outnumbered the men. SLORC may not necessarily instruct its regional and local levels authorities to include women and minors in their conscription of labourers for the railway construction. But, apparently SLORC has instructed its regional authorities of the time by which construction of this strategic railway must be completed without exception. In turn, under the instruction of regional authorities, it is the local (military and civil) authorities who have managed the entire construction work in the field and have directly conscripted and controlled the labourers. The relatively short time given for completion of the construction automatically has paved the way for local SLORC authorities to include or accept women and minors among the conscripted labourers wherever and whenever men are limited in number in respective areas. As SLORC is in a big hurry to complete the construction of this strategic railway, SLORC has deliberately turned a blind eye to its local authorities' consistent and massive use of women and minors as unpaid labourers on the project.

The local SLORC authorities in practical control of the labourers have invariably required the labourers to complete the set work within the set time. This has been the constant pressure that has spontaneously urged and made women and minors in numerous households to come and contribute compulsory free labour for the construction in the absence of and/or on behalf of the men in their own households to complete the works set for their own household within the deadline. Able-bodied men are mostly the breadwinners of their respective own families/households and must work hard to earn a living for their own families under the ever-escalating cost of existence and widespread unemployment in Burma. Understandably, the breadwinners cannot afford much of their time for working on the railway construction without payment. This has consistently made numerous women and minors in rural areas of the region to go and work on the railway construction on behalf of and/or together with their respective men/breadwinners in order for them to have more/full time in their work for family income.

At the same time, men in numerous households in urban and rural areas of the region are normally away in terms of seeking for better job opportunities in the neighbouring countries — Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. The absence of men in numerous households naturally leaves ample chance for a large number of women and minors in the inner rural areas to go and contribute compulsory unpaid labour for the railway construction.

SLORC has completely failed to protect the labourers working on the railway construction from being exploited by its regional and local levels authorities, military and civil. SLORC is solely interested in quick completion of the railway construction and has connived at any unofficial exploitation and abuse of the labourers by

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its regional and local levels authorities implementing the project. Obviously, the regional and local SLORC authorities have widely been involved in unscrupulously exploiting the labourers working on the railway construction and in misappropriating the money forcibly collected from the people as the labour dues for the railway construction. The rural people, particular the non-Burman ethnic villagers inhabiting in the so-called "Black Areas", have been relatively suffering far greater than the rest of population in the region in terms of both the official forced labour on the railway construction and the unofficial exploitation by the local SLORC authorities.

In the last quarter of 1995, local SLORC military personnel in control of or keeping guard over Nwe Lein work-site in Yebyu Township were said to show nightly videos to the labourers at the work-site free of charge. However, well-informed local sources have claimed that the video machine/machines were the ones forcibly taken from the nearby villages by the local SLORC military personnel without payment to their owners and that the people in the nearby villages were even required to pay to the local SLORC military personnel for all the costs of the video shows.

Eyewitnesses travelling through Burma in the December 1995 from the Southeast Asian Information Network by land from Moulmein to Ye have reported that resumption of forced labour on the Ye-Tavoy Railroad has been occurring. Thousands of people have been forced to labour on a new section of the railroad from Ye to Kanbawk. Villagers from Kaleinaung and Kanbawk in particular were suffering enormous hardships as a deadline was given for the embankments on either side of the railway to be finished by 15 December 1995.

The situation in the Ye-Tavoy area is again very serious. According to reliable sources in Rangoon, SLORC were told not to build the railroad along the route they have taken, that is west of the valley in Ye Township as there could be problems in rainy season with the earth possibly subsiding. The rainy season is now over and indeed the valley has completely subsided leaving the railway track suspended with very little support. So, a new route is now being used, from Ye to Kanbawk and reports of up to 50,000 people being forced to work on the railroad are being confirmed by those fleeing from the area to Thailand. Two foreign eyewitnesses have also confirmed that forced labour is being used along the railroad from Moulmein to Ye and have seen people living in makeshift tents supplied by SLORC from the Ye-Kanbawk railway. The big difference this time is that majority of the people being forced to work on the roads and railways at the moment are children, some as young as eight years old. It is harvest time in Burma and villagers are having to fulfil their increased paddy quotas. Thus men and women are fully engaged at work on the harvest. At the same time, orders come from SLORC demanding labour from the villages for work on the railroad. The only labour left in most villages is therefore children.

When refugees were asked why they fled, most responded that it was because of forced labour; 50 to 100 people from Tavoy, Yebyu, Launglon and Thayetchaung

townships escape to the Thai-Burmese border everyday. [Source: ABSDF, HURFOM, KNU, MIS]

4.6.7. Local Army Unit Pilfer from Government

The In-charges of Ye-Tavoy Railway construction from the Myanmar Railway Corporation (MRC) have regularly paid money, that is originally intended for the labourers, to local army units which take responsibility for security along the railroad construction route because they do not need to pay the labourers. The prices of an earthen pit (10 square feet) dug by the forced labourers was 100 Ks and each depression which was filled in was 150 Ks.

At 30-Mile Prison Camp, located along the Ye-Tavoy Railroad construction site, the MRC has been paying 200 Ks to the military for 16 square feet of rocks and stones. Conscripted labourers in Yebyu Township are now ordered to make bricks while the SLORC Army is selling them at 5 Ks per brick to local traders.

On 13 August 1995, when LIB 406 reported to MRC to come and inspect the completely dug 900 holes, officials from MRC in Tavoy refused to pay for 900 holes as claimed by the army because officials found upon arrival at the site that only 190 were actually finished.

On 24 August 1995, 900 conscripted local labourers from 21-Mile Camp were forced to dig 40 pits and fill 180 depressions by LIB 407 despite heavy rains. Those who were unable to work hard enough for the soldiers' liking were beaten by the soldiers all day long. According to one forced labourer who returned from the railroad construction site, that meant LIB 407 was due 31,000 Ks from the MRC in Tavoy. [Source: ABSDF/KNU]

4.7. Forced Labour for Security of Gas Pipeline

For the planned construction of a gas pipeline from Yadana natural gas field at the Gulf of Martaban in Burma to Ratchburi in Thailand, SLORC forced civilians from the villages on Heinzebok Island to work as volunteers. Heinzebok Island is 20 km in the southwestern part of Phaungdaw, a fishing village in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division. Heading east, the route will then cross Onpinkwin, Kanbauk, Kaleinaung, Kaungmu, Eindayaza and Michaung Hlaung villages. From there, following the Tavoy and Zinba river valleys, the pipe line will cross highlands of dense forest before entering Thailand at the Border crossing of Nat-Ei-Taung. Since March 1994, SLORC has used Heinzebok Island as a major camp for storing the equipment as well as for security for the gas pipeline. On that island, a helicopter landing-pad, mini-airfield, motor road, stores and military barracks are being built.

SLORC has forced 10 villagers from each village to work as "volunteers" on

Heinzebok Island for one month, bringing their own supply. As soon as the civilians arrived at the camp, the authorities seized all their supplies and provided only two condensed milk tins of rice per person per day. Despite hard labour under terrible weather, the labourers were not given enough food. Moreover, there was not sufficient medical supplies. Anyone who did not want to be a labourer and who could not afford to pay money had to hire somebody else to work in his or her place. According to a labourer, who returned back from the camp, he had to pay 8,000 to 10,000 Ks. Since the third week of June 1995, gardens and farmlands of local people have also been confiscated by SLORC without any compensation to cover the troops' welfare. Local people were ordered to cut the trees and saw them into pieces for building the military barracks and guest house for the officers from the pipeline project. They also have to build a helicopter landing-pad. Aside from local people, some prisoners were also conscripted to work there.

To provide security for the office of the sponsoring oil company, Total of France, LIBs 267 and 273 were to be stationed between Kanbawk and Onpinkwin villages in a "gas pipeline camp". Resulting from a shooting occurred during the work of gas pipeline, SLORC has managed to deploy an additional battalion in that area. Local people were also forced to work for the construction of military bases for LIBs 267 and 273. One person from each household had to work for cleaning the surface, digging the trenches and building up the military barracks.

Moreover, for the construction of a 5-km-long road which linked Kanbawk and Onpinkwin, one person from every household, has been reportedly conscripted as SLORC "volunteer" to work once a month. In addition to that forced labour, local people were levied numerous taxes such as fees and fund for porters, railway, Heinzebok Island, military and emergency porters, forcing many people to abandon their homes in Burma and leave for Thailand. [Source: ABSDF]

4.7.1. Facts about the Gas Pipeline

The following information was excerpted and translated from announcement No. 1 of the PTT Oil Company of Thailand, a partner in the gas pipeline exploitation, in Thai language.

1. Objectives: The reason for purchasing natural gas from the Union of Burma is to produce electricity to meet the energy demands of central and southern Thailand. PTT aims to fulfil the project in 1999 according to the contract.

2. Project: The project is to transport the natural gas from its Burmese source via the Ban I Taung (Nat-Ei-Taung) village on the Thai-Burmese border, then through Thong Pha Phung Town in Kanchanaburi Province and finally to a Ratchaburi electricity power station. The 36-inch-wide gas pipe and general materials have to cross about 300 Km. The maximum export of the gas is expected to be about 800 million cubic feet per day.

3. Time: From November 1994 to June 1996.

4. Amount of investment: Approximately 12,000 million bahts (US\$480 million)

5. Size of pipe: 36 inches in diameter. The thickness of the pipe is 17.5 mm.

6. Distance: From the Yadana Gas Field to Onpinkwin village = 354 Km
 From Onpinkwin village to Thai-Burmese border = 50 Km
 From the Border to Ratchburi Power Station = 296 Km

The time schedule for establishing of the gas pipe line:

1. Survey for the tracking of the gas pipe: From November 1994 to February 1995
2. The time for negotiation with the construction company of the gas pipe: From March 1995 to June 1995.
3. The time to approve the detailed map and tracking of the gas pipe: From July 1995 to December 1995.
4. The time to finish drawing the detailed map of the track: From July 1995 to December 1995.
5. The time to record and research the environmental condition: From August 1995 to December 1995.
6. The time to get approval from the ministry: From August 1995 to March 1996.
7. The time to construct and transport the required materials: From April 1996 to August 1997.
8. The time to choose the construction company previously: From January 1996 to June 1996.
9. The time for construction: From July 1996 to March 1998.
10. The time for the test transportation of the natural gas: From January 1998 to June 1998.

Since February 1995, officials and employees from Total and Unocal Oil Co. and from MOGE (Myanmar Oil and Gas Exploration Authority) started the survey.

Recruitment of the Employees

The local SLORC officials announced the recruitment of employees for the project in Yebyu Township and began conducting medical check-ups. As of March 1995, the local SLORC officials chose nearly 200 workers and then limited the number.

The difficulties, as reported by local people who were first-hand witnesses, for the local people in getting employment are:

- 1) Favourship of the member of the pro-SLORC USDA's membership.
- 2) Having to give bribery to the doctor for the medical check-up.
- 3) Having to give bribery to the members of the employment provision board.

Uniform of the employees: Yellow coloured plastic hat and blue-coloured uniform.

Payment to the employee: Witnesses said that Total and Unocal Co. give payment in US dollars up to \$30 per day but SLORC exchanged the payment into the official rate under which the salary remained only 200 Burmese kyats per day. The real exchange price was more than 3,500 Ks per day.

Survey and Construction

With the help of 200 chosen workers, Total and Unocal and MOGE employees have started survey work for mapping the route of the gas pipe in Phaungdaw, Daminzeik and Michaung villages (on the shore) since March 1995.

Aerial survey: The foreign oil companies based their office headquarters in Michaung Aing village and started daily aerial surveys with a white helicopter from nearby villages, Onpinkwin to Nat-Ei-Taung since the beginning of March 1995.

Local people said that helicopters flew daily. But they have not seen a collection of pipe or any construction materials so far.

Construction of the field HQ office of gas pipeline project: The field headquarters of the gas pipe project were built two miles from Michaung Aing village.

The information source said the officials from the oil exploration company stopped the ground surveys since 9 May 1995 and stopped the work of daily employees until October 1995.

Since February 1995, SLORC officials and Total have been constructing buildings for the company, including a small jetty, a small landing-pad and an army outpost at Ka Deik village, Yebyu Township. The army imposed a curfew on boats crossing in that area. A curfew was also imposed on passenger buses crossing Onpinkwin village so that they had to choose another route.

In March 1995, a ship docked carrying six trucks and materials for general purpose, excluding any pipes.

4.7.2. Militarisation in Tenasserim Division

Since the SLORC officials received the proposal for exploration for natural gas in the Adman Sea, the railway project from Ye to Tavoy Township has become part of the implementation of the gas project.

As the pipeline and railroad have to cross the area of the ethnic Mons and Karens, SLORC deployed more troops and constructed infrastructure for military purposes

by conscripting local people for forced labour and confiscating land from local villagers by force without compensation.

One of the Tha Pyay Chaung villagers who fled to the border area to avoid SLORC's self-imposed measures eye-witnessed the following events:

Tha Pyay Chaung village was a peaceful and self-sufficient village consisted of nearly 500 houses before the deployment of SLORC troops in 1991. After that, SLORC LIB 401 was positioned on the forcibly-conscripted land and farms belonged to the villagers, who received no compensation. Then the battalion forced the villagers to work for the building of army barracks. In the forthcoming years, the Battlefield Engineering Corps, No. 324 Heavy Artillery Corps and the Signal Corps were scheduled to be deployed in the area.

In February 1995, as SLORC LIB 267 was also deployed in Tha Pyay Chaung village, that small village gradually became a cantonment. Construction of barracks and army fortresses became daily tasks for the villagers. Moreover, construction of the railroad which crossed their villages worsened their living. For this crossing, some farmlands were confiscated and some houses were destroyed by order. As of May 1995, there were only 200 houses left and others had to move from the village.

SLORC troops deployed along Ye-Tavoy area for the protection of the proposed gas pipeline and railroad are:

No.	Battalion	Village/Town	Strength
1	LIB 401	Tha Pyay Chaung (Tavoy)	300
2	LIB 402	Za Lun	300
3	LIB 403	Thayetchaung	300
4	LIB 404	Thayetchaung	300
5	LIB 405	Thayetchaung	300
6	LIB 406	Dauk Lauk	300
7	LIB 407	Padauk Kone	300
8	LIB 408 (Yebyu)	No. 1 Rubber Plantation	300
9	LIB 409 (Yebyu)	"	300
10	LIB 410 (Yebyu)	Zinba Junction	300
11	IB 25	Tavoy Airport	350
12	IB 104	Taw She	350
13	LIB 267	Tha Pyay Chaung	300
14	LIB 269	Za Lun-Longlon	300
15		Pakari-Myay Khanti	
16		Bawdi Kon-Kaleinaung	
17		Hein Ze Boke Island	
18	B.E 957	Tha Pyay Chaung	
19	No. 342 Heavy Artillery Corps	"	
20	No. 5 Medical corps	Tavoy	

21	No. 515 Signal corps	Tavoy	
22	No. 19 Military Intelligence Unit	Tavoy	
23	IB 61	Ye	350
24	IB 106	Lamaing	350
25	LIB 343	Ye	300
			5300

The disadvantages for the villagers affected by the gas pipe and railroad construction project. (From October 1994 to March 1995)

Thayetchaung Township

According to a villager who escaped to the border area, local SLORC officials have collected money for the security and labour charges from the villagers.

For the construction of Ye-Tavoy railroad, each family had to pay a monthly quota as expressed below:

1) Single-parent family	570 Ks
2) Normal family	700-800 Ks
3) Owner of rubber plantation	1,000 Ks
4) Family who owns cow and cart	1,000 Ks
5) Owner of farm	1,000 Ks
6) Family who owns a grocery shop	1,000 Ks (as reported by the villagers)

Others tributes were also collected, such as porter fees and fire protection fees. Each family had to pay 100-150 Ks for porter fees and another 50 Ks for fire protection fees every month.

The villagers from that area had to go to the headquarters of LIBs 403, 404 and 405 by rotation for the construction work in the army compound. A villager failing to give the funds was forced to go to the work site on the Ye-Tavoy railroad. As of January 1995, 1 ft x 10 ft x 10 ft of crushed stones were sent for the construction of base layer of the railroad.

The local authority gave orders to the villagers, saying that the civilians should not fail to meet the demand, otherwise they could be punished with a maximum of eight years' imprisonment.

Longlon Township

Some local people who escaped to the border area reported details of the situation there. The local SLORC officials ordered that each family must pay 500 Ks per month in addition to providing 1 ft x 10 ft x 10 ft of crushed stones for the construc-

tion of the railroad. Moreover, each family had to pay a monthly porter fees of 100-200 Ks. If they failed to pay the fees, they had to report to the construction site for labour.

Tavoy Township

After the visit of Prof Yozo Yokota, the UN Special Rapporteur for Burma, the local authorities decreased forced conscription of civilians for the construction of railroad since the SLORC officials have been launching various campaigns for "Visit Myanmar Year 1996". Instead, they issued undeniable orders saying each family living in Tavoy municipality must pay a monthly labour charges of 500 Ks for the railroad construction. But for those who lived on the outskirts of Tavoy, each family had to send one family member for work at the construction site for 15 days. Anyone who failed to comply with this order could be punished with three-month terms. The headman or a member of the local authority was responsible for preventing the flight of potential labourers.

A local inhabitant from Zahar village reported in March 1995 that 300 chained prisoners were used for the construction of the railroad.

In every quarter of Tavoy, official collected 50-100 Ks from each family for army porters. Then the army arrested porters indiscriminately and the villagers had to pay a ransom of 3000 Ks to the army officials for the release of fellow villagers.

Yebyu Township

The local authority conscripted 30-100 porters from each village, depending on the size, every 15 days. Any rotated villager who failed to go to the work site was fined 1500-3000 Ks. Moreover, each family had to pay a monthly porter fee of 50-200 Ks plus 5-20 porters to the army headquarters.

When the number of porters routinely collected from the villages did not seem enough, the army further conscripted local people for their military operations. The villagers had to pay a ransom of 3,000 Ks to the army officers to be spared from being forced into portering. In fear of conscription and portering as well as inability to pay the bribes and various fees, 50-100 villagers escaped to the border daily.

SLORC Demands on Villagers

The following is a summary of some of the monthly demands imposed on the hundreds of villages in Tavoy District. The Village LORC chairman, generally a civilian in the village appointed (often against his will) by SLORC, is responsible for arranging forced labour, collecting all money and forwarding it to the local SLORC

military. The village LORC chairman is strictly under the military's orders, and he will be tortured if the SLORC demands are not met. None of the money, not even the village development fund, is put back into the village. Instead, the SLORC officers spend it on themselves, and send the bulk of it to their families in Rangoon and other cities, with a cut going to SLORC money-laundering corporations such as Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Co. Ltd. This is just a minuscule portion of the urban areas by pro-SLORC individuals and families.

Table 4. A summary of some of the monthly demands imposed on the hundreds of villages in Tavoy District

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Thayet- chaung	Winka Phaw	180	15(a)	1,500 Ks	50 Ks	5	4,000 Ks	
-	Moe Shwe Gone	60	6(a)	1,500 Ks	-	3	2,000 Ks	
	Moe Shwe Gu	200	27(a)	2,000 Ks	200 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	
<i>(Moreover the villagers also has to work at the army camp of LIBs 403, 404 and 405, bring their own good daily necessities.)</i>								
	Pyan Phyu Gyi	100	10 (a)	2,000 Ks	100 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	
	Kyat Sar Pyan	300	30(a)	2,000 Ks	50 Ks	15	3,000 Ks	
	Thayet Hnit Khwa	300	30(a)	1,500 Ks	150 Ks	7	7,000 Ks	
	Shwe Gu	200	27(a)	2,000 Ks	200 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	
<i>(In addition, the villagers also must send various numbers of people to LIBs 403, 404 and 405 when they are ordered.)</i>								
	Saw Phya	300	30(a)	2,000 Ks	200 Ks	4	6,000 Ks	
<i>(In addition, one company of LIB 403 is stationed in Saw Phya village and daily summons two villagers for digging trenches, cooking and collecting water in their camp. Anyone who fails to respond must pay a 150-kyats fine.)</i>								
	Son Sin	500	50(a)	1,500 Ks	150 Ks	10	4,000 Ks	
	Shin Pyu Pin	150	10(a)	1,500 Ks	150 Ks	4	7,000 Ks	
Tavoy	Heinda	450	40(a)	2,000 Ks	250 Ks	15	6,000 Ks	
<i>(In addition, one company of IB 25 is stationed in Heinda village and daily summons five villagers for two weeks for digging trenches, cooking and collecting water in their camp and for carrying military ammunition during operations. Anyone who fails to respond is fined 600 Ks. The villagers have to bring their own food other necessities.)</i>								
	Kyauk Yat	200	30(a)	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	5	4,000 Ks	
	Za Har	300	50(a)	1,000 Ks	200 Ks	5	4,000 Ks	
	Pa Khet	40	10(a)	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	
	Shan Ma Twin	400	40(a)	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	
	Bawa Gon	200	40(a)	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	20	5,000 Ks	
	Kyauk Me Taung	300	30(a)	2,000 Ks	150 Ks	30	5,000 Ks	

Khway Hlaung- Chaung	200	20(a)	1,500 Ks	250 Ks	10	5,000 Ks	
Har Myin Gyi	100	16(a)	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	5	4,000 Ks	
Maung Mae- shaung	1200	(a)	500 Ks	50 Ks	50	4,000 Ks	

(Anyone unable to pay is forced to go and work for 15 days at the railroad construction site.)

Taung Thone Lone	800	60(a)	1,500 Ks	150 Ks	10	6,000 Ks	
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(In addition, five villagers must work at the army camp near the village every day. Any villager who fails to go has to pay 150 Ks.)

Maung Pyo	100	10(a)	1,500 Ks	90 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	
Thit Khet Chaung	20	5(a)	1,500 Ks	215 Ks	3	4,000 Ks	
Pa Ka Ri	400	30(a)	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	

(In addition, one company of LIB 402 is based in this village and daily compels the villagers to send two porters to the post for day-to-day tasks.)

Ka Pya	200	20(a)	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	5	6,000 Ks	
Yo Moh	200	20(a)	1,500 Ks	200 Ks	5	6,000 Ks	

Tavoy Town - - 500 Ks 50 Ks 5 5,000 Ks 50
(A person who can not pay the fee is forced to work at the railroad construction site for two weeks.)

LonglonTaung Min- Byaung	300	50(a)	3,000 Ks	50 Ks	5	4,000 Ks	
Myo Haung	600	50(a)	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	5	7,000 Ks	50
Dawn Shaung	150	10(a)	3,000 Ks	50 Ks	5	3,000 Ks	
Ka Myaw Kin	200	10(a)	2,000 Ks	50 Ks	5	3,000 Ks	
Khan Taw	300	10(a)	2,000 Ks	50 Ks	5	3,000 Ks	
Thin Gan Tone	60	10(a)	1,500 Ks	150 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	
Maung Ma Gan	1500	100(a)	6,000 Ks	150 Ks	10	5,000 Ks	

(In addition, the IB 104 is based in this village and the villagers have to send one column of wood for fences.)

Sect B, Launglon Town	400	60	3,000 Ks	200 Ks	10	4,000 Ks	
Yebyu Pha Chaung	100	20(a)	2,000 Ks	100 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	
Chaung Sone	200	25(a)	1,500 Ks	200 Ks	10	5,000 Ks	50

(Every seven days, 15 villagers must go as labourers for LIBs 408 and 409. Anyone who cannot go on his turn has to pay 700 Ks to the village LORC and also has to go to jail, so they must go when their turn comes. As Chaung Sone village is close to a SLORC base, the troops often come to the village, and every time they take chickens, ducks, pigs and other things without asking permission.)

Ka Lone Hta	300	20(b)	3,000 Ks	-	4	5,000 Ks	
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(In addition, one company of LIB 407 is stationed in Ka Lone Hta village and daily summons six villagers for one week for digging trenches, cooking and fetching water in the camp and for carrying military ammunition during operations. Anyone who fails to co-operate is fined 1,500 Ks. The labourers have to bring their own food other necessities.)

Na Bu Leh	1,000	50(b)	3,000 Ks	200 Ks	10	4,000 Ks	50
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(They select the workers by drawing ballots. People who are not drawn are forced to pay 1,000 Ks. Each family is also ordered to provide five wooden sleepers for the railway, and any family which fails to provide these must pay 1,000 Ks. Since 1993 several other villages, such as Shin Tabi and Pyun Sa Leh, have also been herded into Na Bu Leh under SLORC forced relocation.)

Htein Gyi	400	30	2,500 Ks	100 Ks	10	4,500 Ks	
Le Shaung	600	50	2,500 Ks	200 Ks	10	4,500 Ks	
Pale Ku	100	45	3,000 Ks	200 Ks	5	6,000 Ks	
Min Dub	50	15	3,000 Ks	200 Ks	3	6,000 Ks	
Yin Haling	200	40(b)	3,000 Ks	300 Ks	6	7,000 Ks	
Ying Hlaing (2)	250	25(b)	3,000 Ks	300 Ks	10	6,000 Ks	
Tha Pyay Son	60	6	2,000 Ks	200 Ks	3	4,000 Ks	
Ta Line Ya	40	15(b)	3,000 Ks	200 Ks	2	6,000 Ks	
Pyat That	300	30(b)	3,000 Ks	150 Ks	5	5,000 Ks	50
Ka Nyin Inn	30	6	1,500 Ks	150 Ks	3	5,000 Ks	50
Ze Kya	200	20	1,500 Ks	100 Ks	5	4,000 Ks	50
Yebyu Town-(a)(b)(c)(d)	900	300	1,500 Ks	200 Ks	20	5,000 Ks	200

Ward

1. Township
2. Village
3. Households
4. No. of Labourers fixed
 - (a) 15 days
 - (b) monthly
5. Fine for substitution (per person)
6. Monthly Porter fees per household
7. No. of Monthly porters fixed
8. Fine for substitution (per person)
9. Monthly Fund for Village Development per household

As SLORC continues to send more military forces into the area, forced labour at army camps and extortion of money from villagers continues to increase. Many of the new battalions are being sent to secure the proposed natural gas pipeline from the Gulf of Martaban to Thailand that is being built by foreign oil companies -- Total and Unocal. Troops protecting the pipeline are now extorting "gas pipeline fees" from all villages in the area, including villages 15-20 km north of the proposed route. The price is 150 Ks per month per family, and villagers are threatened

that anyone who does not pay has to go for three days of forced labour on the pipeline survey work. [Source: KNU/KHRG]

4.8. Work for the State or Live in the Collective Villages

Apart from being press-ganged into long-term forced labour for the infrastructure development projects such as the constructions and repairs of rail and motorway in the regions, ethnic non-Burman communities inhabiting in the rural areas in Mon State, Karen State and Tenasserim Division are normally subjected to regular forced labour, forced portering and other compulsory taxes required by the local military of SLORC. Such a regular compulsory labour is collected from almost all the ethnic Mon, Karen and Tavoyan villages in the regions by respective local SLORC battalions. The regularly conscripted Mon, Karen and Tavoyan villagers are reportedly used on a large scale not only as front-line porters for its regular patrols in the areas where moments of ethnic guerrilla are active but also as slave labourers for any money-making businesses of the local SLORC military commanders remained in the rear.

“The people in Paukpinkwin village were normally required to pay 200 Ks per household per month to local SLORC military, namely LIB 406, as a regular porter fee. Aside from this, the village was also required to send 6-7 men or sometimes up to 15 men on a weekly basis to serve as porters for the SLORC troops on their regular patrols in the area. Any household which could not contribute its own labour, when so required by the authorities, must hire a substitute at the normal price of 3,000 Ks. Despite its regular collection of all kinds of porter fees and labours from the village, the local SLORC military at random arrested the people in the village and extorted money from them. Before I left the village, about 10 men in Paukpinkwin had been arrested at random by LIB 406 and each person had to pay 500 Ks to the local military authorities for release.”

“Some of the conscripted labourers from Paukpinkwin were required to cut trees in the forests and then saw them up into logs and boards for commanders of LIB 406. Then the commanders put the finished logs and boards up for sale at the nearby Natgyizin village and take all the money for their own benefit. But the labourers, who made the products, were not only not paid for their labour but they even had to provide their own food during the time they were having to do the work.”

[Nai Htoo revealed during an interview at a Mon refugee camp on 27 July 1995]

According to Nai Win, another Mon national from Paukpinkwin village, LIB 406 has been replaced by LIB 453 since the end of July 1995. Following up what Nai Htoo had said during the interview, Nai Win also gave some brief accounts of a more recent situation in the village:

FORCED LABOUR

"The newly-arrived LIB 453 has raised the monthly porter fees of 300 Ks (from 200 Ks previously) from each household in Paukpinkwin since its arrival. Moreover, under the instruction of LIB 453, the villagers in Paukpinkwin have also been required to contribute a 12 ft x 6 inch x 0.5 inch board of wood per household for the construction of a school at the nearby Natgyizin village."

Another Mon national, Nai Nu, also told what he had experienced concerning some local SLORC military commanders' consistent use of unpaid labour for their own private businesses contemporaneously in the construction of Ye-Tavoy railway line throughout the dry season (1994). Alongside 2,000 other local villagers, Nai Nu had to go and work for the railway construction at Gyar Naw — a work site nearby Mayan Chaung village in Yebyu Township — for several weeks during the dry season in 1994. Two thousand labourers at Gyar Naw work site was under the direct control of military personnel from SLORC LIB 407 led by Maj Soe Nwe, according to Nai Nu.

"A total of about 2,000 labourers from several local villages were officially required to work for the railway construction at Gyar Naw work site. But not all these 2,000 labourers were actually having to work for the railway construction itself. Because many of them were in advance singled out by Maj Soe Nwe to work for his private businesses — production of vegetables, firewood, thatch and so on. Maj Soe Nwe used some labourers to make a large vegetable garden nearby that work site for railway construction, while making other labourers to collect firewood and thatch in the forests. But, at last, Maj Soe Nwe made himself the single owner of the entire vegetable garden, fire-wood and thatch so produced; he sold these products to thousands of labourers working on the railway construction and thereby made money for himself and/or his battalion. However, none of these labourers, who did the gardening, who chopped the fire-wood and who collected the thatch, was paid for the labour. Instead, the labourers had to provide their own food and own tools for the works just like those who were working on the railway construction. It was even worse that all the labourers, who had to do the gardening at their own expenses, had to pay the same price for vegetables which they brought from the garden for their meals." [Source: CPPSM]

Thirteen battalions of SLORC troops based in Tavoy District forced local people from nearby villages to work in the military compound everyday. They were forced to construct barracks, to fence walls, to dig pitches and latrines, to watch cattle, to cultivate vegetables, to go on sentry duty and to massage the officers.

Those who failed to show up were forced into portering. Those who were absent because of sickness were forced to pay a ransom of 100 Ks per person per day. Moreover, each nearby village had to pay two pigs and 10 chickens to the troops every week. In addition to this, whenever a villager slaughtered livestock for meat

the army levied a 20% tax on the by-products.

All four townships in Tavoy District, Tenasserim Division -- Thayetchaung, Launglon, Tavoy, and Yebyu — were subject to forced labour. Among them, local people from Kyauk Hle Gar, Saw Phyu, Padat Chaung, Kyauk Phyu, Taung Zin villages in Thayetchaung Township suffered the worst. In October 1995, SLORC LIB 403 ordered that all villagers from all these villages were responsible for sending timber, bamboo posts and roofing thatch for the repair of buildings on LIB 403's base. In addition, 15 or 20 villagers from each village had to work for the construction of the railroad, bringing their own food and covering at their own expenses on a monthly basis. Anyone who wished to be spared from forced labour had to pay 2,500 Ks to LIB 403 through members of the village LORC.

SLORC also threatened that all the villages would be herded into the collective village near Saw Phar village, as occurred before, in case of failure to meet the army's demand. All these five villages were relocated to the collective village or detained in that concentration camp in 1991 after being accused of collaborating with armed resistance groups by the SLORC Army. In the beginning of 1995, all villages were allowed to move back to their home community. Now, the villagers are very much concerned about forced relocation again.

Moreover all the unmarried women who were at the age of 16 were forced to attend military training to "secure" the army base. Each battalion summoned 35 women for the training.

Similarly, local people in ten villages from Taung Pyauk village-tract, Thatyetchaung Township, were ordered to work for the construction of ground of military parade and training centre for LIBs 403, 404 and 405 near Than Chaung Gyi village. Since 4 September 1995, local people have to go and work once a week without pay. The main works are to cut the trees and bamboo, and to level the ground. [Source: ABSDF/KNU]

4.9. Forced Recruitment

According to the local information from each township in Tenasserim Division, the police have demanded recruits in their area. This was ordered in mid-June 1995 according to the police commander in Tenasserim Division, who was not satisfied about this order. As the police were not able to meet the demand, 50% of the police officers have become criminals. If they can fulfil the requirements as stated in the order, the officers would be rewarded by their superiors.

In September 1995, a SLORC army recruiting unit from Tavoy District went to several of the railway labour camps and took some young men by force to become soldiers. The young men taken were between 16 and 22 years old. The soldiers also removed a number of convicts who were nearly to be released. From 36-Mile

and Heinze camp, the SLORC unit kidnapped six villagers and convicts, from Nwe Lein Camp they forcibly brought eight villagers and from 21-Mile camp they took 15 villagers and convicts.

Between the months of June and November 1995, such an operation was repeated six times. In some areas, local people have been forcibly taken for recruitment into the police force itself. [Source: KNU]

Since November 1995, in Tavoy Township, all the wives of the soldiers from LIBs 401 and 410 who are over 16 years and do not have children were required to attend military training for the "security of the rear". [Source: KNU]

4.10. Forced Labour in the West

Since 1992, SLORC troops have been blocking Mongther Stream, Thaiktabo Stream, Ze Stream and Pazine Stream and constructing four dams in the area between Mahamuni Pagoda and the military bases of LIBs 374, 375 and 376 on the eastern bank of Kaladan River in the townships of Kyauktaw and Mrauk U in Arakan State. The height of each dam is 12m, the length is 80m, the foundation is 20m and the width is 3m. For the construction, each family in the area was forcibly assigned by the SLORC troops to dig 15 plots. Each plot is 200 ft long, 100 ft wide and 1 ft high. The soldiers also collected 100 Ks from each family. Those who could not afford the levy were threatened. During the monsoon in 1993, as the current of the streams were so fast, the dams were destroyed; the villagers were forced to construct the dams again during the dry season.

On 30 October 1994, SLORC Secretary-2 Lt-Gen Tin Oo arrived at Kyauktaw Township and gave instructions to complete the dams within three months. He also issued the order to the commanders of the said battalions to herd together in one place all villages in upper Paletwa Town, as the military was about to launch the dry season offensive against ALP. Under the harassment of the SLORC Army, the people were forced to work in summer — March and April — without receiving any compensation. Out of fear, the villagers were, in fact, enslaved.

In summer, using the water from the dams, the troops forced the villages to plough army-confiscated fields to produce rice supply for their battalions. Every year, each family must pay 50 Ks for fertiliser, 80 Ks for renting cows to plough, 15 Ks to buy the mats to dry the paddy, 80 Ks for the ploughing charges and 30 Ks for irrigation with Kuboda machines. Each family had to pay a total of 255 Ks per year to local SLORC authorities for this alone. Instead of using that money to pay the conscripted labourers, all the money went to the military officers. The villagers who refused to pay the tax were tortured by the SLORC troops. Moreover, SLORC troops also confiscated the paddy fields from the villagers without paying any compensation.

For the aforementioned SLORC battalions, the villagers were forced to grow peas, carrots, tomatoes, potatoes and many other seasonal vegetables without being any paid for their labour. The villagers dared not defy the orders under threat of physical punishment.

Local people were conscripted from Lammadaw, Nyaungbon Hla, Sanga-daung, Paungdoot, Alegyoan, Kyaukkazu, Shwepray, Thoonsaunzu, Myauktaung, Tunma, Kyaungan, Roamabron, Nyaung Choung, Tharata-bon, Kyauktaloon, Mahamuni, Thayagoon, Sabasipe, Pauktaw and Monthadaaung villages where there was a total of 10,000 houses per village. Over forty villages far from the dams also had to pay 500 Ks per family for labour charges. But, all the money went into the pockets of SLORC military officers. *[Source: ASC]*

The cross channel dam Project on the Aungdainty river of Sittwe were taken up in October 1994 by SLORC. The purpose has been to rear shrimp on commercial basis for the military.

For the completion of the project, every family of Sittwe Township has to offer one labourer at least three times in a year. The penalty in case of no-show is 350 Ks. While working, the people in town are subjected to rude behaviour of the soldiers. If by any chance anyone tries to move a little while eating for convenience, he or she is quickly given a kick on the head. Such instance of cruelty have made many people maimed, blinded, or seriously wounded. Although the work was temporarily stopped during the monsoon, it has been taken up as soon as the dry season comes. *[Source: ABYMU (Arakan)]*

4.11. Military Recruitment

For every construction work, especially in developing the ridiculously outdated infrastructure of Rakhine State, slave labour is in widespread use so that a large number of able villagers leave their homes in search of livelihood only to find a degrading occupation and a life of endless misery. Homes broken and hopes vanished, they find life contemptible. Utter poverty and desolation finally take the youth to the fold of the army. Stray youths as a last resort are compelled to join the army.

For recruitment, there are special military recruitment centres posted all across Rakhine. Take the example of the LIB 376 based in Kyauktaw Town. Through appointed brokers who are paid 200 Ks for each recruit, the battalion collect the would-be candidates and send them to Sittwe where they join with other candidates rounded up in 16 other townships.

On 30 April 1995, on their way back from the recruitment centre, drove up the Kaladan River, LIB 376 ordered all young girls of Tharaktabang and five nearby villages together to accord a formal welcome to the newly enlisted. The girls came

no doubt, but flatly refused to obey the orders. The military commander did not expect such a curt denial. So the village leaders and elders were given a sound dressing-down and warned of dire consequences for any "such" non-compliance in future. [Source: ABYMU (Arakan)]

4.12. Confiscation and Forced Labour

Between 20 and 28 April 1995, the army seized 3,000 acres of privately owned paddy fields from the villagers of Lanmadaw in Kyauktaw Township for a proposed artillery corps. The confiscation went without any compensation to the helpless villagers, who for generations had been working on the soil. As a part of the artillery corps project, a 120-foot wide and four-mile long highway across Lanmadaw-Tharaktabang road, running right to Khaung-dok village in the north, was built. More than 30,000 people, on a basis of one person from each household, were conscripted as slaves and forced to work there with their own food.

In April, the heat was scorching and the corporals' behaviour was disgusting. As the plains dried up during that month of summer, water was scarce. For the thousands parching in the fierce sun, consumption of undrinkable water from roadside pools and ditches was not only essential but also compulsory for survival. In a short time, therefore, there were outbreaks of enteric diseases. The immediate death toll was counted 280, while ten times more were caught the ailments and about one thousand or so are feared to have died from the after-effects.

SLORC did not stop there. On the illegally confiscated ground, common villagers and the previous owners were intimidated into cultivating paddy, harvesting and carrying it to the very silos made by timber, bamboo and labour supplied by the villagers.

In April 1992, an area of 1,800 acres of paddy field was seized from the villagers of Daung-daw-yo at Kyauktaw Township for LIB 376. The barracks and more than ninety living quarters for the battalion were made by utilising slave labour. Until the end of 1994, slave labour was used to procure timber and bamboo, and to fulfil their master plan.

Loss of paternal land meant loss of livelihood and a life in ruins for the villagers. But it also meant a great achievement of SLORC's part in materialising their concerted effort to wipe out the identity of the ethnic Rakhines by bringing them to begging. The battalion's greed did not stop there. Soon they confiscated all the ponds in the nearby villages. The villagers were forced to supply workers for the fisheries of the army. Until the catching and selling of fish, the villagers had to work from sunrise to sunset, without any wage to any of them. As the leftover small fishes could not be sold, the young girls were summoned to clean them and put them to dry. By the end of the day, those girls who had no husbands were detained

for the night.

Likewise in the dairy, livestock and poultry projects taken up for the families of the SLORC Army posted everywhere in the State, wholesale slave labour is used. All the nearby villagers are forced to supply quota of feeds and fodder by turn besides attending the chicken, pigs and cattle of the battalion. Village girls are forced to work there routinely and subjected to physical assault and gang rape.

Between April and June 1993, irrigation canal projects were implemented in Kyauktaw Township. In most of the projects, embankments of an average height of 15 ft had to be constructed to connect natural hills and hillocks for the purpose. But the embankments were of in different lengths; Gara Hill embankment runs 300 ft and Mintha Creek embankment is above 1,000 ft. To force to work harder, the corporals of LIB 376 acted like feudal taskmasters over the impressed, maiming and grievously injuring dozens of the helpless villagers. When the closing ceremony was to be held, the battalion arranged a grand gala. On the day when TV crew would come and the project would be opened, soldiers were engaged in a manner as if they had been working all along. The entire show was videotaped for a nation-wide broadcasting. The military officer in charge of the related department of irrigation in his address made it public that a total of 1.2 million Ks was spent to implement the entire project. Only on that very moment in April 1995, people were able to know the truth at the grand gala opening of the irrigation project arranged at Pajaing Chaung that, they had been had. By that time there was nothing left to air their grievances, not one little proof. No outlet of resentment would have been tolerated by the gun toting military demons, so silence was obviously the golden rule.

The same method of immensely notorious exploitation and oppression was used to build Kyatiktaw-Paletwa motorway between 1991 and 1994. Confiscation of one thousand acres of paddy fields and horticultural hills of Lanmadaw in Kyauktaw Township by LIB 374 also carries a similar story. Stationed at Kyauktaw sugar mill, this battalion is still applying oppressive and repressive measures on the local Rakhines.

Paving-stones for the aforementioned roads were quarried from sites at upriver of Lemro. The stones and boulders were then loaded on boats requisitioned from the public owners. The whole process was done by slave labour.

As the army taskmasters goad on to hurriedly load the stones, the wooden boats (mechanised and un-mechanised) are often cracked and damaged, causing great loss to the owners. To be careful at loading, the army commanders and the labourers are usually bribed. All the villages along the river had to supply the cost of labour and bear the conveyances. [Source: ABYMU (Arakan)]

4.13. Forced Farming in Arakan

Every year, the peasants making up 70% of the population in Arakan State are allowed only 40 days to take care of their own crops and for the rest of the time they were forced to work for the military projects such as construction of Rangoon-Minbu-Ann-Kyaukpyu-Mrauk Oo (Myohaung) Road.

Maung Tin Myint, 35, from Ywa Ma of Ma Yut village in Rambree Township died because of over-work ordered by the military authorities for the construction of Rangoon-Minbu-Ann-Kyaukpyu Road. On that day, as he was seriously ill, he slept and refused to go to the work site. But two soldiers from IB 34 forced him to go to the work site. He died while working at the work site. He was married to Ma Khin Nyunt with five children.

Since 1991, a big brick-field has been set up at Mahamuni. The poor Rakhine villages have been impressed to work there without pay and without food. The villagers are also forced to collect firewood for the purpose. [Source: ABSDF/ABYUM (Arakan)]

4.14. Pakokku-Gangaw-Kalemmyo Railway

Chin State

"Border Area Development" projects continue to create more and more forced labour. The Pakokku - Gangaw - Kalemmyo railway is mostly completed but labour is still continuing on it in some areas. There are also hydroelectric projects and road projects by using forced labour.

In the entire region, villagers are used as porters and human shields among the moving army columns. SLORC officers take many people as human shields around them to protect them. Throughout Chin State, there are only two all-season roads, from Hakha to Falam and Kalemmyo to Tiddim, and two dry-season roads, from Hakha to Matupi and Matupi towards the eastern plains. Everywhere else, SLORC troops always summon hundreds of porters at a time to carry their things. Every month, each village is ordered to bring pigs, chickens, and whatever the soldiers want to their camps. Relatives of CNA soldiers are under constant watch and suspicion. Their letters are opened and if SLORC finds a letter from their son they are arrested. In Hriphi village, Than Tlang Township, one army camp is to be built shortly [with forced labour on confiscated land]. In September/October 1995, there was a serious cholera outbreak in Leiled village, Falam Township, and at least 70 people died because no health care whatsoever is available.

Sagaing Division

Kalemyo (also called Kalay or spelled Kalaymyo) is in Sagaing Division just east of the Chin State border. SLORC has a major forced labour project building a railway to Kalemyo from Gangaw (120 km./ 75 miles to the south) in northern Magwe Division. This is part of the Chaung U-Pale-Yesagyo-Pakokku-Gangaw-Kalemyo railway project, a total length of 500 km (312 miles). There are plans to continue the line in future north from Kalemyo to Tamu, which is at the border with India's Manipur State. Chaung U is 80 km (50 miles) west of Mandalay and linked to Mandalay by rail, so this line would establish a rail link between Mandalay and the Indian border. However, SLORC plans to do the entire project with forced labour. So far only Chaung U-Pale and Kalemyo-Nat Chaung sections are in operation. However, much of the rest is finished but waiting for some major bridges to connect various sections.

Along the Gangaw-Kalemyo section, most of the forced labour has been done by Chin villagers. Work is still continuing toward the Gangaw end. The 22-mile (35 km.) segment from Kalemyo to Nat Chaung was officially opened on 3 May 1995. The opening ceremony at Kalemyo railway station cost 4,300,000 Ks, including 30,000 Ks just for the meal honouring SLORC Rail Transport Minister U Win Sein, despite the fact that none of the labourers on the entire stretch of railway was ever paid. SLORC responded to the November 1995 report of UN Special Rapporteur Yozo Yokota by claiming to have paid the workers as follows: "Chaung U-Ma Gyi Boke sector and Pakokku-Monywa sector: 8.29 million kyats; Pakokku-Gangaw-Kalay sector: 30 million kyats".

Construction on this line began in March 1990. As it crosses mostly flat farmland, paddy fields were destroyed without compensation. In all the villages of Kalemyo Township, one person per household had to contribute labour. They had to bring their own food and their own tools. Each group of 10-20 villagers were guarded by 3-4 soldiers. Each group had to build 1/8 falong [i.e. furlong, so 1/8 falong = 28 yards] length of embankment, up to 30 ft high and 20 ft wide. The villagers had to dig the ground within only 30 ft of the track, so sometimes they had to dig quite deeply and there are reports of some people who died of landslide. Each group has to complete 60 ft within one week. In Kalemyo Township, there are two bulldozers owned by the government. The people can sometimes use them, but only if they themselves provide the diesel.

If absent from the work, the fine was 1,200-1,500 Ks per person. The distance between the railroad and the villagers' homes was so far that the villagers had to stay and sleep at the work site. They could go back to their villages on Sundays to get food from their families for the following week. They had to be back in Monday mornings. Most families went to work 6-7 times on the railway over the past five years, each time it took 2-3 weeks to finish their assignment. Villagers were also ordered to prepare gravel for the track-bed in their homes. Each family had to

provide 10 ft x 10 ft x 10 ft of gravel.

Starting from 23 April 1995, the Kalemmyo-Nat Chaung line went into use, but only with a Hino TE21 truck being used as a railway engine (it is mounted on a special frame with railway wheels). It makes the return trip twice a day and can carry a maximum of about 60 passengers. One way fare is five kyats. In July 1995, some sections were damaged because of rains and the Kalemmyo-Nat Chaung service was interrupted. SLORC again ordered people from each household to prepare more gravel and to contribute labour for repairing these segments.

SLORC plans to commence construction on the Kalemmyo-Tamu section of railway (another 120 km/ 75 miles to the north) soon as they see this as an important trade link with India. In Tamu Town, people who live along the main road have been ordered to build brick houses or be evicted. They have been given three years to do so, possibly timed to coincide with the expected completion of the railway.

4.15. Hydro Power and Other Projects in Kalemmyo

SLORC is building the "Ye Chaung" Hydro electric power project near Ta Han village, 30 miles southwest of Kalemmyo in Kalemmyo Township. Villagers and about 500 prisoners are being used as labourers for the construction. It is a medium sized project, estimated cost at 70 million kyats, started in 1990 and scheduled for completion in March 1996.

Villagers from forty village-tracts have been forced to contribute labour: 37 on the railway and three on the power project. Also, villagers are being forced to break rocks on the road construction, upgrading and extending the existing dirt road from Kalemmyo to Gangaw, parallel to the railway line. The project is implemented only with manpower, no machinery. There are reports of two dead and five wounded by accidents on this project, with no compensation paid.

4.16. Forced Labour in Kuki Villages

In Tamu Township, Mawlaik District, Sagaing Division, Kuki villagers [Kuki is considered a subgroup of Chin] are regularly forced to contribute labour and their bullock-carts for "border area development" projects such as road construction. There have also been reports that some villagers have been forced to take their bullock-carts to help SLORC officers smuggle teak logs across from India. In one such incident on 24 January 1995, Lt-Col Win Kyi of IB 50 forced 28 villagers and bullock-carts from Nam Monta, Htan Ta Bin, and Man Maw villages to cross into India to retrieve teak logs. Indian forces caught and arrested the entire group. When the SLORC officer asked to be released, they released him and his soldiers but detained the villagers at Moreh in Manipur.

4.17. Forced Labour in the Name of Development

Local people living in the villages between Kalay and Tamu of Sagaing Division were forced to contribute labour everyday for the construction of a road that links Kalay and Tamu and to complete their assignment within the set deadline in summer 1995. Not only the villagers but also their cattle and carts were forced to send to the work site to carry rocks and sand. The daily compulsory labour led to hardships for their subsistence so that many of them living in the villages near the road escaped to other areas, and Indo-Burmese border. [Source: *Inside Source*]

In the name of the "Kalay-Kabaw Area Development Programme", local people living at Naung Ngu, Pan Thar and Nan Nwe villages in Kalay Township, Sagaing Division, located at the foot of Mwe Taung, had been consecutively forced to contribute labour by digging 80 fishponds owned by the military. In Nan Nwe village, about two miles from Kalay, there were 15 fishponds measuring 15 acre wide, owned by IB 10 of SLORC. Local people there were forced to contribute labour on compulsory basis, spending their own money for transportation and other charges. [Source: *Inside Source*]

4.18. Construction of Artillery Corps and Dam in Monywa

Four miles away from Monywa, there is construction of a heavy artillery corps and about 500 acres of farmland have been confiscated. A 13-mile-long road is being constructed with forced labour from Monywa to Ah Myint village, the native village of SLORC Trade Minister Lt-Gen Tun Kyi. Between November 1994 and February 1995, the Thay dam in Monywa Township was expanded. Every family in the area had to go for two months of forced labour. Only one adult per family was allowed to stay at home. [Source: *KHRG*]

Since the construction of Thazi-Monywa Dam has been started on 14 November 1994, 1275 local peasants living at Thazi, Ah Nout Su, Inn Taing, north & south Nau Pin, east & west The Gyi Gone, Dan Pin Hte, Ywathit, Ywama, Man Gyi Gone, Koe Pin, and Ywa Thar Lay villages in Thargi village-tracts, 550 people living at Kyang Gone, Ywathit, Baw Gar, Tharketa, Pha Lan Kyin, Thar Yar Su in Kyaung Gone village-tracts and 600 people from Kyaung Twa, An Pya, Lay Gone, Sone Gone and Ywa Taw villages in Twin Kyaung village-tracts -- altogether 2425 people -- were forced to contribute corvee labour. Villagers had to bring their own mattocks, chopping hoes, pickaxes and cane baskets, while covering their own expenses. All the labourers were ordered to be ready at the work site at 4:00 a.m. every day and a group of labourers was assigned to dig a 10-ft-wide and 8-ft deep earthen pit and carry loose soil from the bottom to the surface of the dam. On the surface of the dam, they have to dig a drain (gutter) which is 3 ft wide and 8 ft deep. Those who were not able to finish their assignments were not allowed to go home on each day and guarded by armed soldiers.

As of April 1995, five labours died from snake bites, being crushed by falling trees and other injuries. Those wounded were never received treatment. Each person who were not able to go for work had to hire somebody else at the rate of 75 Ks in cash per day plus additional costs for provisions of food.

Daily problems occurred between the exhausted labourers and intoxicated soldiers. The villagers were routinely subjected to torture. A woman from Ywathit village was stoned by a drunk soldier, crushing her head. When the soldier asked whether she was pleased with his treatment, in fear of further beatings, she said "Yes".
[Source: *Inside Source*]

4.19. Reservoir in Seikphyu

In Seikphyu Township, Magwe Division, the villagers were also ordered to dig the ground for a reservoir project. Each village was ordered to contribute corvee labour to complete an assignment of 150-ft long, 6-ft-wide and 4-ft high earthen pit. Moreover, the villagers were also forced to work on the construction of the railroad which linked Pakokku and Myaing. Each family was ordered to send a person to work for one month or that family would be/was fined 1,000 Ks. In that area, daily wage for a hard labourer is only 15 Ks and, due to drought in 1994, there is widespread poverty and starvation. [Source: *ABSDF*]

4.20. Irrigation in Central Burma

According to a priest and a foreign journalist, pressure on the farmers in the Delta is high. The double cropping is a burden, quota are impossibly high and there is a lot of forced labour on irrigation canals. Sometimes even at night.

According to another priest, there is similar forced labour on an irrigation projects near the Mu river, near Shwebo. Each family has to dig a stretch of 20-ft-long and 20-ft- deep through a rocky ground. They have to bring their own food and equipment and sometimes they have to hire some. The work started around January 1995. [An Eyewitness; in the beginning of December 1995]

4.21. Forced Recruitment in Chin State

In Leshi and Lahe townships in Sagaing Division, SLORC has reportedly been continuously forcing villages to provide recruits for the Army. Any village which fails to provide the specified number of recruits must pay 20,000 Ks per recruit. Since 1993, SLORC has encouraged people to enrol their children in a youth organisation called Ye Nyunt by promising that all members will have access to basic and higher education. All those who enrol are then taken away and forced to join

the Army.

Forced labour of villagers and convicts is being used to build roads from Homalin to Tamanthi and from Tamanthi to Leshi. Soldiers have also reportedly been forcing Christian Nagas to build monasteries and pagodas in every town and village in the Naga Hills. SLORC troops patrolling Naga areas force villagers to provide all their food. When they want pork, they force the villagers to hand over their pigs and pay only one tenth of the price. Village heads are often left having to pay the difference to the owners of the animals.

SLORC had been forcibly recruiting soldiers in Hkamti, Homalin, Leshi, Lahe and Namyung Township by the order of Lt-Col Maung Oo, commander of Hkamti Strategic Cantonment.

On 30 September 1995, the party led by operations commander of IB 347 arrived at Sumra village and demanded recruits for the SLORC Army from Leshi Township. Moreover, villagers were ordered to send recruits to a Kuki village by the deadline of 6 October 1995. If the villagers failed to send any, the troops gave them two choices; not to stay in the village, or the village will be set ablaze if SLORC found that villagers continued to stay in their homes.

Table 5. Number of Villagers Demanded for Recruits in Leshi township

1. Sumra village	10 persons
2. Poun Ta Yek village	4 persons
3. Leyon village	3 persons
4. Pansup village	10 persons
5. Ngacham village	10 persons
6. Koung Kailou village	7 persons
7. Namee Yupee village	5 persons
8. Yehtaung village	1 person
9. Kuki village	10 persons

The following youths from Sumra village were forcibly taken;

(1) Maung Yan Soe	18 yrs; son of U Yar Htaung
(2) Maung Athwin pot	24 yrs; son of U Yar Pot
(3) Maung Ye San	20 yrs; son of U Yar Pot
(4) Maung Kan Phore	17 yrs; son of U Htan Po

Moreover, Maung Saw Htin (23, son of U Ye Pan), a villager from Surma who was on his way home from Leshi, was also conscripted for recruitment. [Source: ABSDF/KHRG]

4.22. Forced Labour in the North

"I saw a group of about twenty prisoners in chains building a new marketplace in downtown Myitkyina.

The old wooden stalls were torn down and shopkeepers have to buy themselves to get a place in the new building. No compensation was paid for their lost shop. Most of them cannot afford the new place (5-10 leks plus a monthly rent of 450 Ks) and building is already partly occupied by rich Chinese and Indians.

By the end of the afternoon I saw approximately 130 prisoners taking a bath in the river. They were all wearing shackles. According to people in Myitkyina, they were confirmed that in remote areas of Kachin State, political prisoners were also doing forced labour: At Chying Hlerang Rum (waterfall) — hydroelectric dam and at Sumpra Bum — road."

[An Eyewitness; in the beginning of December 1995]

4.23. Forced Labour for Construction of Naval Base

Since the end of 1992, SLORC officials have been forcibly conscripted local people from about 50 nearby villages for the construction of a Naval Base on Hai Gyi Island. Each household has been assigned to send one family member to work at the construction site every week. They have to dig bunkers and trenches, and make fences and construct roads at the base. The villagers are not provided with shelter, food or medical care. Each family has to pay 400 Ks per week in case of failing to meet the SLORC demands. *[Source: ABSDF]*

4.24. Aung Ban-Loikaw Railway

About one million villagers in Shan State were forced to build the 106-km-long Aung Ban-Loikaw Railway Line in 1992 and it was officially opened in 1993. About 70 villages along the route were also forced to relocate in order to provide the way to build the railway line. Last than one year after the line was opened, a passenger train was derailed, killing hundreds of people on the train and destroying parts of the line. Since the villagers were conscripted and forced to contribute labour, they did not think about the safety and quality of the railway line, instead they considered about how to finish the line as soon as possible.

Since May 1995, LIBs 336 and 421, in collaboration with Immigration officers, local SLORC authorities and members of USDA (Union Solidarity and Development Association), forced local people in Hpe Khon and Pinlaung townships, southern Shan State, to contribute labour for the repair of part of Aung Ban-Loikaw Railway Line which was destroyed by train accident in 1994 and scheduled to be re-opened

on 16 June 1995. Each household in these townships was responsible for sending one family member to contribute labour for 15 days regardless of their gender or age. There were over 10,000 households in southern Pinlaung Township and eastern Hpe Khon Township. Only those who could pay a ransom to SLORC authorities were spared from contributing labour.

They had to work from 7:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. with a break of 10 minutes for every hour. They had to carry their own food, covering their own expenses in order to finish in time and be able to return home to do their usual jobs. Because of the excruciating work, they were so exhausted that they had to spend the night on the slope without any shelter. Shortage of water for cooking was also another problem for the civilians. Unable to bear these hardships and with the aim to concentrate on their own jobs, some of the villagers returned home within four to five days. The authorities were constantly watching the labourers to make sure that the latter would not escape.

Ko Hpa Rein, who was living in Hpe Khon, and his neighbours also attempted to return home. As soon as they were on the motorway, the authorities (composed of military, immigration officers, local SLORC authorities and members of USDA) saw them and told them to come back. Ko Hpa Rein was beaten with a cane. Others who were in fear and looking at what was happening to Ko Hpa Rein were asked by their pursuers whether they were going to contribute labour for one more day or be subjected to beating like Ko Hpa Rein. The authorities forced them to work by threatening that any man who attempted to escape would be beaten five times and woman would be beaten three times. The people did not find any alternative solutions and had to carry out the work as ordered. Because of severe beatings, Ko Hpa Rein's condition was fatal.

The areas where local people were forced to contribute labour were around Naung Woe hillside, Lo Kho, Par Pon, Daw Paw Pale, Lin Khan, Par Pa Lan and Ka Ya villages. According to one eye-witness, many villagers were taken as porters for the military patrol unit in Shan State after assignments were finished.

In the second week of June, each household was forced to pay 700 Ks and in the third week of the same month it had to pay another 500 Ks to the SLORC authorities for the expenses of sleepers, stones and bridges along the over five-mile-long railway that required repairs. *[Source: NLD-LA]*

4.25. Shwenyaung-Namsang Railway

Construction of the Shwenyaung-Namsang railway began on 6 January 1993, after completion of surveying on 8 May 1992. The News Light of Myanmar reported that the completed railway would stretch 140 miles and cost 800 million kyats. Construction is currently underway in the districts of Taunggyi and Loilem.

4.25.1. Construction in Wan Yin

The distance from Shwenyaung to Taunggyi is about 80 miles. At present local people are being ordered to clear the part of the railway and lay the earth foundation. The earthwork between Shwenyaung and Wan Yin has been completed, and now the ground is being cleared in Hsaikao village-tract, three miles east of Wan Yin.

Local people are being forced to provide unpaid labour under the following condition:

1. Each household must send one member for the construction work.
2. Transportation, food, temporary shelter and even working tools must be provided by the people themselves.
3. The duration of one shift of work is five days. A rotation system operates, under which each household member must work for at least six shifts, i.e. 30 days.
4. There are two systems of work at the construction site:
 - a. Ordinary work starts at 7:00 a.m. and ends at 4:30 p.m. with a temporary recess in-between.
 - b. A particular task is allotted to a group of people and the task must be finished within that day. For example, a particular village may be ordered to dig an area of earth which is 30 ft long, 10 ft wide and 28 ft deep.
5. Some people can hire others to work for them if they can pay 150 Ks per head per day, which costs 750 Ks plus two meals of rice per shift. For five shifts, each household has to spend at least 4,250 Ks.
6. If any part of the railway foundation becomes damaged, the people who have worked on that part of track must repair it again.

A Chinese temple situated near Wan Yin was demolished without compensation because it lays along the part of the railway construction.

4.25.2. Construction in Namsang

Railway construction has started from Namsang to the southern part of Mong Nai Township. At present, it is continuing in Hai Phark village, 16 miles south of Namsang.

The work conditions are the same as in Wan Yin. SLORC's Rail Transport Ministry is able to carry out construction in two sites simultaneously because the Ministry does not have to spend a single kyat on labour charges.

In Namsang Township, at the start of railway construction, local authorities arranged stage-shows, traditional performances and a variety of open-to-all gambling booths, which lasted for ten days and nights.

That part of railroad which was built with the sweat, tears, and lives of the people was opened by U Win Sein on 1 May 1995. Before the opening celebration, each family was forced to contribute free labour for three days, bringing their own food and other necessities. If they refused, they were fined 150 Ks for one day. All citizens were ordered to attend the opening ceremony, leaving only one person behind to look after their house. After the ceremony, SLORC forced the people to build many tiny huts along the railroad and each family to take responsibility of guarding the railroad for five days. This guarding duty has been continuing until now. Anyone who refused to guard was fined at 500 Ks. [Source: S.H.A.N/SHRF]

Prisoners from prisons throughout Burma have been forced together with the people from Mong Nai to build the railway which links Mong Nai and Namsang. Although the prisoners were told they would be released when the construction was finished, they have been forced to continue in a different direction — from Mong Nai through Mawkmai, Ho Nam-Hsaikhao to Shwenyaung.

SLORC Secretary-1 Khin Nyunt warned that if the railway was not completed in September [1995], the prisoners would be imprisoned “again”. One prisoner reported that three of his fellow prisoners died during the construction. [Source: S.H.A.N]

4.26. Bawgali-Bu Sah Kee Road Construction

On 25 March 1995 SLORC ordered forced labour from 13 villages to begin the construction of a road from Bawgali to Bu Sah Kee [Bosar Khee] via Kaw Thay Der. They stopped during rainy season, then started again in Ye Tho Gyi area on 14 October 1995. Number of labourers needed to be provided were 165 for Bawgali Gyi, 80 for Kaw Thu Der, 22 for Kaw Mu Der, 40 for Yin Tho Lay, 50 for Kaw Soe Ko, 12 for Wah Tho Ko, 20 for Ku Lu Der, 30 for Der Doh, 5 for Ler Ko, 15 for Maw Pa Der, 6 for Maw Ko Der, 20 for Ku Plaw Der and 40 for Beh Khaw Der. The villagers had to cut trees, clear scrub and lay gravel for the new road. They were given daily assignment which they had to complete on each day. They received no food, money or medicine from the soldiers. Orchards and betel-nut plantations have been destroyed for this road without compensation, especially between Kaw Thu Der and Ku Lu Der. On 18 October 1995, SLORC announced on radio that they have provided 42 million kyats to build this road for the villagers in the area, but no villagers received anything. As of December 1995, the road had reached up to Naw Soh village. [Source: KHRG]

“I saw a few hundred people including women and children digging sand at the historical moat in Taungoo. A source told me families from the town were given quota to dig out the moat and rebuild the embankment, otherwise they had to pay 450 Ks. He thought the work was done in preparation for the Visit Myanmar Year. Households along the railway line

and the main road were given orders to rebuild their houses into two-storey stone buildings, otherwise they had to move. I saw several houses in these locations under construction. Atmosphere in Taungoo was very tense. I was immediately followed and harassed by MI and had no chance to find out more details." *[An eyewitness on 15 December 1994]*

4.27. Forced Labour in Pegu

Other eyewitness accounts stated that there has been forced labour being used in repairing and widening the highway in Pegu Township. Local sources stated that each household has been ordered to pay 50 Ks per member in the house every two weeks for the construction of this highway. The money is not going to those who are being forced to work but towards the use of steamrollers and machinery for making tar. The jobs that people do range from sorting out stones that come from a quarry, carrying the stones from one point to another, sifting gravel through bamboo sieves, and mixing and laying down the tar. The eyewitnesses stated that conditions were very bad, head and dust being the major factors of hardship, especially for the children. The quarry has been worked on by prisoners, some of whom were extremely young, and all were in chains.

Other areas where confirmed reports from eyewitnesses existed about the use of forced labour were in Bilin, Thaton Township and periodically on the car road to Moulmein. *[Source: SAIN]*

[See also under "Personal Accounts", interview 9, 11, 13, 16, 24, 69-74, 78, 90, 92, 96-98, 100-101, 103, 105-115, 117-125, 127, 130-131, 133-136, 139-141, 153-154, 200, 205-207, 210-217, 219-221, 223, 225-227, 246, 253, 261-263, 269-270, 275, 284, 286, 288-292, 294-296, 299-304, 308]

4.28. List of Incidents

4.28.1. In October 1994, about 150 troops from IBs 31 and 62 led by Deputy Comdr Lt-Col Than Win, Capt Aung Lwin and Capt Aye Min launched offensives in Kyaikmaraw Township and arrested many villagers for portering. On the way, when the porters tried to escape, the troops shot at them. Moreover, the villagers were subjected to various kinds of taxation and forced contribution of rice to SLORC troops. *[Source: HURFOM]*

4.28.2. In October 1994, Ma Win Win Than (27, six months in pregnancy), from Pong Kyun Quarter, Tavoy Town, was forced to contribute labour at the Zinba construction site. Local SLORC authorities ordered them to send either Ko Myint Naing, husband of Ma Win Win Than, or to pay a ransom of 500 Ks. The wife asked to spare her husband because he was sick at that time. The local authorities did not

accept this, instead they ordered the wife to go herself. She was assigned to dig an earthen pit at the construction site. She had seen other pregnant women who were forced to contribute labour as they could neither pay a ransom nor find a substitute person. According to Ma Win Win Than, some women ended up with miscarriages. She had seen many women who formed almost half of the labourers, aged from 15 to 65 years old.

In November, she and her ill husband were spared from forced labour because they were able to borrow 500 Ks to pay for ransom. Unfortunately, in December, the then eight-month pregnant Ma Win Win Than was called again by the local authorities and forced to cook for about 40 troops. Ma Win Win Than, Ko Myint Naing, and their three children finally decided to seek refuge on the Thai-Burmese border. [Source: ABSDF]

4.28.3. Since November 1994, SLORC IB 29 has confiscated farmland in Maw Hpaung village, Wine Maw Township, Kachin State, for their military base and for the plantation of sugarcane and paddy to make money for the battalion. One Gurkha family lost 20 acres of their own farmland. Not only did that family not receive any compensation, but they also were forced to contribute unpaid labour on that confiscated farmland. Being farmers, they did not have other skills to earn their living. Facing malnutrition, the husband and wife who were both at the age of 45, died one after another within five days. Their son, who was 18, escaped to Thailand. [Source: Inside source]

4.28.4. From 1 December 1994 to 15 April 1995, commander of SLORC IB 99 from Langhko, southern Shan State, ordered the people of Warn Hart village-tract in Langhko to come and work as slave labourers on the 22-mile-long road construction from Na Kong to Tsa-Lorng. Labour was allotted according to the size of the village: the smallest had to construct at least three miles of road, the smaller four miles, and so on. After the road had been constructed, the people, their carts and cattle were not allowed to set foot on it; only army trucks loaded with their rations were seen passing to and fro. [Source: S.H.A.N]

4.28.5. In the beginning of 1995, Sai Eu (23, son of Por Zern and Ba Kham from Wan Won village of Mong Yawng Township in eastern Shan State) escaped from being a porter for Tachilek-based SLORC LIB 529. He was forced to work at the SLORC military camp in Pak Tu Murng. He had to carry rice sacks weighing 5 kg for five days, and then had to carry two 120 mm mortar shells for 15 nights. The porters were forced by SLORC to pound paddy for five days, and later they were tied up together and were warned by SLORC troops that anybody who tried to run away would be killed. [Source: S.H.A.N]

4.28.6. In January 1995, before the SLORC launched a military offensive against the KNU bases in Karen State, its local battalions arrested Mon civilians for portering in Mudon and Thanbyuzayat townships in Mon State and Kyar Inn Seik Gyi Township in Karen State. During the third week of January, combined troops of IB 62 and

LIB 209 arrested nearly 600 men in Mudon Township. During the Kyauk Ta Lone festival in Mudon Township alone, approximately 220 men were arrested. IB 62 also took responsibilities for arresting hundreds of civilians in Thanbyuzayat Township. Those civilians were subjected to arrest from several places like on the streets, on the train, at the railway station and in the markets. In the second week of March, in Kyar Inn Seik Gyi Township alone, nearly 1,000 men were arrested by LIBs 207 and 208. [Source: HURFOM]

4.28.7. For the construction of Pegu Dam, each household in Waw Township, Pegu Division, was forced to send one family member on a compulsory basis. Each person who wanted to be spared from contributing labour has to pay a ransom of 400 Ks. As the truck carrying the labourers was over-crowded, Aung Myo from Pan Nyo Su village, Tala Non village-tract of Waw Township, fell from the truck beyond Waw Township on 2 January 1995 and died. [Source: NLD-LA]

4.28.8. Since the beginning of 1995, SLORC regime has been using about 1,000 prisoners from various towns to work on the project of widening and lengthening the Namsang airfield, southern Shan State. The prisoners have been provided with insufficient food and medical care. Some have committed suicide by deliberately stepping on mines. Others have died of malnutrition and diseases. [Source: S.H.A.N]

4.28.9. On 4 January 1995, IB 349 arrested 40 people from Zalote Gyi village, Shwegyin Township, Pegu Division, and forced them into portering. On 5 January, the same troops arrested 25 more people from Kwin Seik village. Each victim who wanted to be released had to pay 2,000 Ks as a ransom. [Source: NLD-LA]

4.28.10. From the first week of January 1995 to 21 May 1995, the commander of SLORC IB 99 forced the people living in Warn Hart village-tract, Langhko Township, southern Shan State, to come and work as slave labourers on road construction from Nam Yoom to Tsa-Larng, and down to Ta Soup Teing (*the mouth of Teing River*). There are 18 villages and every household had to contribute labour twice a month. Those who could not go had to pay a fine of 2000 Ks. People who were working on the construction were often captured as porters by the SLORC troops. Following is list of the households in that village-tract.

1. Warn Hart	130 households
2. Warn Ho-Koon	90
3. Warn Song Ke	65
4. Warn Tein	160
5. Warn Loi Sur	200
6. Warn Nam Murn	20
7. Warn Hona	100
8. Warn Nam Saii	300
9. Warn Toor Neu	200
10. Warn Na Kong	300

11. Warn Koon Kharn	130
12. Warn Khoom Oat	50
13. Warn Harn Lon Mong	20
14. Warn Eoon	30
15. Warn Mark Pin Worn	30
16. Warn Hart Saii Long	25
17. Warn Mang	20
18. Warn Mark Eoon Lao	100
Total	1,943

[Source: S.H.A.N]

4.28.11. On 12 January 1995, SLORC troops from LIB 360 raided the area of Mong Ping Township, eastern Shan State in search of porters. Unluckily Tsai Sarm Noi (30) and five others from Warn Peing Saii were captured and sent to the front line as porters to attack Pa-ke camp in Mong Tom village-tract in Mong Hsart Township. When SLORC troops did not provide the porters with enough food, Tsai Sarm Noi resorted to escape by killing one SLORC guard. He then joined the MTA. He reported that he had seen some SLORC soldiers laying down their weapons and deserting in the front line. [Source: S.H.A.N]

4.28.12. From 16 January to 27 April 1995, 150 men from SLORC LIB 518 led by Maj Aung Kyaw, illegally forced the people of Mong Nai to construct the railroad which linked Mong Nai and Namsang. On 15 May 1995, after their assignments at the railroad construction site were completed, they were forced to build barracks at the entrances of Napon bridge, Nam Gay Zak Dor of Pang Oo bridge, Maihai bridge, Ken Dor bridge, and Nao Khan bridge respectively.

It was reported that entire families in Nao Kham, Pang O, Won Yey, Nao Lin, Kyong Kone, Kone Kor, Maihai villages in Nao Khan village-tract, Mong Nai Township, had to contribute labour. Each village had to provide 80 pieces of bamboo posts, 80 poles, and 500 pieces of thatch. During the construction period for every five days, the people had to pay 3,000 Ks to hire a labourer, and five Toelagyi (small trucks) had to wait at the camps to fetch water for the soldiers' bathing. [Source: S.H.A.N]

4.28.13. According to a Chin human rights activist who interviewed people from 5-20 March 1995 who have gone to work on rail road construction many times, over 100,000 Chin people were forced to work for the construction of Kalay-Gangaw railroad. Many farmer's fields where the rail line passes through were destroyed without any compensation. Local people had to work for this railroad construction twice a month as it was scheduled to be completed in 1996. Each shift of labour lasted for six days. Each household which failed to send the labourers had to pay 100 Ks per day to local SLORC authorities. The labourers were not provided with any food or medicine by SLORC. Many people died and were injured because of landslides and illnesses. [Source: Independent Chin Report]

FORCED LABOUR

4.28.14. On 2 February 1995, the commander of SLORC LIB 515 stationed at Mong Kung ordered the people of Nam Kut village, Tung Lao village-tract in Murng Kung Township, to work for them. Each member of every household had to contribute labour such as digging bunkers, collecting firewood, fetching water, making huts and etc. Those who refused were threatened with heavy fines. [Source: S.H.A.N.]

4.28.15. Since 18 February 1995, local inhabitants from villages near the railway line in Thaton Township have been ordered to go and work for the SLORC. One person from each family was ordered to go. The villagers have to work between Kyaikkaw and Daw Gyi. If a person fails to go he/she has to pay 500 kyats. [Source: KHRG]

4.28.16. Since March 1995, SLORC soldiers have been seizing passengers on vehicles at checkpoints on the roads around Loilem, Namsang, Kholam, Kunhing, Takaw, Mong Ping, Kengtung, Mong Hpayak and Talur to use them as porters. As a consequence, the passengers have been getting out before reaching the checkpoints and walking through the jungle to avoid from being arrested. Later on, SLORC troops started guarding the jungle to catch the escapees. Anyone who was caught had to pay 100,000-15,000 Ks to avoid from being forced into portering. As a result, the number of passengers who used to travel between Loilem and Kengtung dropped by two-thirds. [Source: S.H.A.N.]

4.28.17. In March 1995, five civilians — Ar Hsoo (64 from Mong Pan), Kyar Hpa (45 from Nam Muh, Mong Pan), Kyar Hey (25 from Peng Hsan, Mong Pan), Ai Mong (18 from Hwe Hsai, Namsang) and Nun Dor (17 from Hwe Hsai, Namsang) were taken by SLORC as porters for two months as each of them could not afford to pay 60,000 Ks. [Source: S.H.A.N.]

4.28.18. From March to April 1995, SLORC conscripted over 180 civilians from Mong Yang in eastern Shan State as porters. Each quarter was also ordered to provide a mule or else pay a fine of 30 rupees (the old English coins — one rupee is worth 75 bath at the current rate.) As none of the porters returned by May 1995, their relatives thought they were dead. Their relatives have been offering alms for their missing kin at local temples. [Source: S.H.A.N.]

4.28.19. Since 7 March 1995 SLORC troops stationed on Dta Raw Meh hill have ordered villagers from Kya Ka Chaung village in Thaton Township to send five people everyday to go and cut bamboo for the army camp. Men have to cut 150 bamboo posts per day while women are assigned to cut 100 per day. After the villagers cut the bamboo, the soldiers make them go and sell the bamboo in Bilin Town. The SLORC soldiers take all the money made from sale of the bamboo. [Source: KHRG]

4.28.20. Following the attack on Tachilek by MTA on 20 March 1995, SLORC ordered all the civilians in the town to make a 5km-long concrete barrier along the bank of Mae Sai River. Each household in the township was ordered to donate

1,700 baht for this construction. [Source: *S.H.A.N*]

4.28.21. In April 1995, SLORC IB 93 went into Peh La Nuh village in Bilin Township and ordered that every five people have to come and work daily at their camp. They also demanded 100 sheets of roofing thatch and 100 bamboo posts. [Source: *KHRG*]

4.28.22. On 17 May 1995, SLORC troops led by Maj Sa Thun from Mong Nai-based LIB 518 arrived at Worn Loong Mung village, Worn Norng village-tract, Namsang Township in southern Shan State, and captured six women — Nang Leng, Nang Ong, Nang Ying, Nang Nang, Nang Hurn, Nang Ing — as porters to carry their loads for two days. [Source: *SHRF*]

4.28.23. For the 1995 rainy season offensive against the 4th Brigade area of KNU which started in June, military units under the command of 1st MSC of Southeastern Command arrested at least 1,000 local people in Thayetchaung, Launglon, Tavoy and Yebyu townships and forced them into portering. [Source: *KHRG*]

4.28.24. In June, 50 people were conscripted from Kanbauk village in Yebyu Township, where there were 8,000 houses, to contribute labour for the construction of Ye-Tavoy Railway Line. They were then forced to get on an army truck and were taken away. Instead of stopping at the railway labour camp, the truck went straight to the base of LIB 404 in Thayetchaung and the civilians were forced into portering. [Source: *KHRG*]

4.28.25. On 8 June 1995, SLORC troops from LIB 244 guided by Loong Sai, a villager from Yang Kha village, left Kengtung for Mung Puk village-tract in the same township and ordered the people in the area to saw 200 tons of (6 x 8) and (3 x 5) (12ft long) timber from them. All able-bodied men had to put aside their own works and work for them. Each family who had no men, or was unable to go because of illness, was fined 3,000 Ks. All the timbers had to be floated downstream to Yorngh Kha village. Later the water dried up and 10 pieces of timber were stranded. The SLORC troops and Loong Sai forced the villagers to buy the timber and filled their own pockets. [Source: *S.H.A.N*]

4.28.26. From 26 June 1995 onwards, with an aim to use civilians as military porters, SLORC troops conscripted about 1,500 villagers from nearby villages in Loikaw Township, Karenni State. On 27 July 1995, an 18-year-old student who was caught by the SLORC soldiers on the way to his grandparents, died of hunger at the work site. There were four females among the porters who were forced in portering, according to the escapees. According to them, porters were fed only boiled rice twice a day; this only amounted to one condensed milk tin at one time while soldiers themselves enjoyed daily meals (rice and curry). Due to illness, walking "too slow" and inability to work, many porters were beaten, scolded and forced to carry extra loads by the soldiers. Moreover, porters were provided with no blankets nor rain coats while sleeping in the rain and no medicines when they suffered from malaria,

dysentery and the like. As a consequence, many porters died every day.

Moreover, SLORC troops have been confiscating horses in Loikaw for military transportation purposes. Normally these horses are used for pulling horse-carts. Orders were also sent to nearby villages to provide more horses or human beings for portering. Some 60 private vehicles were also confiscated for the transportation of food, arms and ammunition. On 28 June 1995, five truck-loaded porters left Demoso along with other military convoys for the area controlled by KNPP. According to an eye witness, women and students were among the porters. [Source: ABSDF]

4.28.27. Since the third week of June 1995, SLORC troops approximately 1,000 strong from five battalions — Tavoy- and Thayetchaung-based LIBs 401, 403, 404, 405 and 409, all under Southeastern Command — renewed a series of offensives under the code name of “Spiritual King”, which started in January 1995 in the area controlled by the 4th Brigade of KNLA, the armed wing of KNU. It was reportedly known that there were 1,500 porters along with these SLORC troops. [Source: ABSDF]

4.28.28. In June and July 1995, a number of porters escaped to border areas. Among them were Maung Thant Zaw (23, farmer from Pegu), Maung Win Zaw (22, worker in wrought iron factory in Pegu), Maung Htain Lin (18, ex-soldier from Burma Army, Northern Okkalapa, Rangoon), Maung Than Soe (22, farmer from Daik-U, Pegu Division), Ko Tin Oo (49, worker from cooking-oil factory in Waw, Pegu Division), Maung Soe Thein (18, unemployed, from Paung, Mon State) and Maung Khin Maung Soe (25, farmer from Pauk Taw village in Paungde Township, Pegu Division).

All of them were forced to serve as porters under the control of IB 73. They were forced to carry food supplies and ammunitions from rear bases to the front-line outposts several times. Maung Khin Maung Soe and Maung Soe Thein witnessed the execution of two porters by a soldier as they refused to follow the troops due to exhaustion. [Source: ABSDF]

4.28.29. In the first week of July 1995, SLORC LIB 429 arrested two elderly villagers who were 50 years old and four women from Daw Law Khu village, Shadaw Township, Karenni State, and forced them into portering. [Source: NLD-LA]

4.28.30. On 7 July 1995, SLORC troops from LIB 244 guided by Loong Sai, a villager from Yang Kha village, asked people in Mong Puk area to cut wood to make 270 lamp posts for which they would be paid 250 Ks for each. The posts had to be floated downstream to Lahu village on the main road 30 miles away. Instead of paying what they had promised, they even fined each family, who had no men to represent, at the rate of 2,000 Ks each. [Source: S.H.A.N]

4.28.31. On 28 July 1995, about 100 SLORC troops from LIB 520 led by Deputy

Bn Comdr Maj Nyan Lwin came to Pung Kur village and asked for a guide. Sai Nar Ga Sing not only had to go with them but also had to carry their things. He was released only after giving a ransom of 5,000 Ks to the troops. *[Source: S.H.A.N]*

4.28.32. At noon on 12 August 1995, SLORC LIB 424 apprehended local people in Hsi-hseng Township, southern Shan State, to use them as porters during their military operations against KNPP and MTA. Only civil servants were spared from arrest. From 12 to 20 August, about 500 local people were subjected to arrest.

In order to escape from forced portering, local people entered the monkhood or spent the night on the farms or in the hide-outs in the jungle. Due to this situation, the price of robes in Hsi-hseng Town skyrocketed. When the troops did not find any males, they arrested women and children and exchanged them with the men or demanded 30,000 Ks per person for his/her release. *[Source: NLD-LA]*

4.28.33. In fear of forced portering by SLORC troops, all the males in Loi Lem Township and other townships in southern Shan State, dared not sleep at their homes at night. They had to leave their homes at about 6:00 p.m. and spend the night on the farms or in the hide-outs in the jungle. *[Source: NLD-LA]*

4.28.34. On 16 August 1995, SLORC LIB 423 demanded 300,000 Ks from each village in Naung Kyaw village-tract, Wein Kaung village, Kauk Sein village, Law Ka Leh village, Htaung Kae village, Pwan Ran village, Htee Net village (located at the east of Hsi-hseng Township), and Pan Kae village, Pan Ma Kaw village in west of Hsi-hseng Township, and Sike Khoung village, Wan Yin village, Naung Wan village and Loi Put village in Hsi-hseng Township. Moreover, villagers were also subjected to arrest and forced into portering. SLORC troops issued an ultimatum saying that the numbers of porters as fixed by SLORC and 300,000 Ks in cash from each village should be sent on 20 August by the latest. *[Source: NLD-LA]*

4.28.35. On 18 August 1995, over 50 troops from Tanyan-based SLORC IB 33 which patrolled from Worn Kart village-tract to Worn Falum village, Mong Keng village-tract of Tanyan in northern Shan State, surrounded the villages and looked for porters. Since all the men had fled away, 50 women between the age of 17 and 40 were captured and forced into portering. They were forced to carry loads to Na Kha village, Mong Maa village-tract and then detained in the camp of Worn Parng, Veng Hin village-tract, for three days, before being released.

On the same day, the same troops also captured villagers from Na-Song village (Worn Kart village-tract), and Nam Look and Na Loo villages (both in Mong Keng village-tract) and forced them into portering. They had to carry loads from Worn Kart to Worn Parng, a 30-mile journey, and all of them were detained at the camp of Worn Parng. *[Source: S.H.A.N]*

4.28.36. On 23 August 1995, an explosion occurred at 30-Mile Labour Camp where prisoners were breaking rocks into small pieces for the construction of the railroad

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in Yebyu Township. Rocks fell on the prisoners at a mining service in the camp, killing two inmates and seriously injuring three others. Those injured were sent to Tavoy Hospital. *[Source: ABSDF]*

4.28.37. On 4 September 1995, SLORC IB 48 took porters including Saw Bee Ta Chaung from Ye Tho Gyi village. On 6 September, he and a SLORC private were both wounded by a land-mine near Si Kheh Der village. The soldiers carried the private to their camp for treatment but left Saw Bee Ta Chaung outside without any treatment, and they even made him pay for the rice basket which was damaged in the explosion while carrying . He died from a lack of treatment on 9 September. This is a routine occurrence in Taungoo District. *[Source: KHRG]*

4.28.38. From 16 to 21 September 1995, 300 local people each from Hsi-hseng and Ho-pong townships, southern Shan State, were arrested and forced into portering by SLORC troops every day. *[Source: NLD-LA]*

4.28.39. On 22 September 1995, two labourers out of three who were assigned to contribute labour at the Heinze Camp of the Ye-Tavoy Railway Line, were forced to swim across the Heinze River by SLORC troops from LIB 408 as a punishment after alleging them of taking rest at the work site without permission. Both of the labourers drowned in Heinze River while they tried to swim across. *[Source: KNU]*

4.28.40. On 4 October 1995, SLORC troops under the command of Bri-Gen Comdr Kyi Aung from Taungoo-based Southern Command captured school girls and boys to carry ammunition and heavy loads for them. *[Source: KNU]*

4.28.41. On 4 October 1995, Bn Comdr Maj Aung Kyi Shein of LIB 440 entered Bawgali, Taungoo District, captured men and women and forced them to carry supplies and ammunition to Bu Sah Kee. *[Source: KHRG]*

4.28.42. On 9 October 1995, two forced labourers among the 80 sick labourers in 36-Mile Camp died of malaria and one was killed by a poisonous snake. However, LIB 410, the authority of that camp, did not expand necessary clinics and wards for patients there. *[Source: KNU]*

4.28.43. Since the beginning of October 1995, local villagers in Palaw Township in Mergui District and Thayetchaung Township in Tavoy District have been arrested and forced into portering for SLORC's dry season offensive against the Karen armed ethnic group and students from ABSDF. *[Source: KNU]*

4.28.44. Since October 1995, every villager from four townships in Tavoy district — Thayetchaung, Longlon, Tavoy and Yebyu townships — has been summoned by the SLORC authorities for the construction of the Ye-Tavoy Railroad. Each township has to provide about 2,500-3,000 labourers on a compulsory basis. *[Source: KNU]*

4.28.45. The use of forced labour is also widespread for the construction of a motorway connecting Mergui-Moe Taung-Kawthaung (Victoria Point). SLORC LIB 358 and IBs 224 and 103 have been rounding up the villagers in the area for use in the construction. Each family in the area is required to dig 10 x 70 ft for the road. SLORC ordered the villagers to bring their own food and tools to the work site where there is no proper medical care. As a consequence, a number of local people in the area have fled their villages since October 1995. *[Source: ABSDF]*

4.28.46. On 21 October 1995, four prison labourers from 30-Mile Camp fled from the camp. One of them was gunned down and three escaped. *[Source: ABSDF]*

4.28.47. On 21 October 1995, local conscripted labourers returned from the railroad construction site said some labourers who did not work well because of illness during their turn in the camp were not allowed to go back home. Instead, the weak had been forced to work again for the SLORC Army, making bamboo baskets for carrying ammunition, chopping logs and fencing animal farms of army. *[Source: KNU]*

4.28.48. On 22 October 1995, 27 conscripted labourers from Heinze Camp who were sent to Tavoy to carry equipment for the construction of railroad went back to their villages when they got to Tavoy. SLORC Col Myint Oo ordered the responsible persons from the villages to send them back to 30-Mile camp as all these labourers had been charged for six months' punishment with hard labour for their escape. *[Source: KNU]*

4.28.49. On 23 October 1995, nearly 100 Karen students from Kha Layar and Kaw Thae Dae Guin villages in Taungoo District were arrested by SLORC troops from IB 233 commanded by Lt-Col Aung Naing Tun, Comdr of 2nd MSC under Western Command, for portering, "sweeping" land mines and building new roads. On 24 October, all the arrested villagers were forced to carry supplies and ammunition to Si Kheh Der, and were sent ahead of the troops to clear the mines along the way. The same day, three bulldozers were sent to Kaw Thae Dae village to build a new road from Kaw Thae Dae to Bu Sar Khee village. *[Source: KNU/KHRG]*

4.28.50. In October 1995, SLORC LIB 405 instructed that each villager from Thae Chaung Gyi village, Thayetchaung Township, had to come to their outpost for daily tasks such as cooking, washing clothes, cleaning the compound and more. Anyone who failed to serve these kinds of work had to pay 100 Ks for their turn through member of the village LORC. At the same time, a villager who slaughtered cattle for sale had to pay at least 6kg of meat to LIB 405 and if he failed to do so, he must pay three chickens as fine. *[Source: KNU]*

4.28.51. On 3 November 1995, about 60 SLORC troops from Mong Kung-based LIB 514 arrested 11 women Wan Hui village, 11 from Kung Kaw village and another 11 from Wan Long village in Mong Kung area and forced them into portering. The victims were taken away for two nights and two days before their release. *[Source: S.H.A.N.]*

4.28.52. On 5 November 1995, SLORC troops from LIB 440 forced men, women and children from Bawgali, Kaw Soe Ko, Wah Tho Ko, Kaw Thay Der, and Kleh Soe Kee villages in Taungoo District to carry food and ammunition from Kaw Thay Der to Bu Sah Kee army camp. When they reached their destination the villagers were still not released, instead they were forced to cut bamboo and rebuild bunkers. [Source: KHRG]

4.28.53. On 8 November 1995, villagers from Bawga Li, Kaw Soe Kho, War Tho Kho, Kaw Thae Dae, and Kalae Soe Kho, Taungoo District, were forced to carry ammunition and food supplies to the Bo Sar area for SLORC IB 440. As of 11 November 1995, none of them were allowed to return to their villages and forced to serve the army for military construction work. [Source: KNU]

4.28.54. On 9 November 1995, 60 male porters and 40 female porters were conscripted by Papun-based LIB 340 for military operation in Kyauk Hnyat area of Karen State. During their time as porters, female porters were forced to carry 10 pyi of rice (about 13 kg). Four male porters and ten female porters from that column escaped while they took a rest at Perhike Camp. Naw Htoo Chel (a) Ma Aye Aye Cho (16, a schoolgirl of eight standard), was one of the escapees. Her brother is a medic from DKBO and currently staying in the monastery compound of Myaing Gyi Ngu abbot who is a leader of DKBO. She said that she was caught by LIB 340 on her trip despite she had a travelling document issued by DKBO. Five men and fifteen women were also arrested along with her and conscripted as the porter for the military column. [Source: ABSDF]

4.28.55. On 10 November 1995, SLORC troops from Coy 4 of LIB 525 which was stationed at Zalong village, Wan Hard village-tract, Langhko Township, (38 miles south of Langhko, 25 mile south of Wan Hard), forced people from Zalong and surrounding small villages (about 200 houses with a population of 1,230) to build a wooden bridge on Nam Yome (Yome River) about one mile southeast of Zalong. The bridge was 12ft wide and 35ft long, and to be finished within five days. To be able to finish it in time, all the villagers including women and children had to work on the site, leaving only elders to look after their houses.

Part of the road from Wan Hard to Zalong had been completed more than one year ago. The part that goes southeast towards Salween River at the mouth of Nam Teng tributary is roughly finished and almost reached the Salween. Due to the heavy currents during the last rainy season, many trees have fallen and many places and bridges have been destroyed by erosion. People in the areas of Wan Hard, Langhko, Mawksmai were forced to repair the damage at their own expenses. The bridge near Zalong was one of the damaged parts that the people, including woman and children, of Zalong were forced to repair. [Source: S.H.A.N]

4.28.56. On 11 November 1995, SLORC troops from IB 55 took people as porters and went to Zayatkyi in order to start military activities in Taungoo District. [Source: KHRG]

4.28.57. Since 13 November 1995, SLORC troops from LIB 440 has been taking villagers as forced labour to work in clearing bushes and building roads around Kaw Thay Der, Si Kheh Der and Plaw Mu Der in Taungoo District. Villagers have to go every day, bringing their own food. [Source: KHRG]

4.28.58. On 30 November 1995, SLORC troops from 1st MSC led by Comdr Myo Hla of the Western Military Command surrounded Kaw Thay Dae and Khalelar villages in Taungoo District and abducted 100 villagers to use as human mine sweepers and to carry war supplies. One of the villagers, Saw Pya Reh (30, a father of five from Kaw Thay De village), who was forced to carry military supplies and walk ahead of the troops, stepped on a land mine at Palo Mude village on the same day and lost a leg. Moreover, a villager from Baw So Kho village lost both of his legs and an arm when he stepped on another land mine in Bu Sar Htar Field on 2 December 1995. As of 4 December 1995, the villagers were still being forced to serve as porters and human mine sweepers. [Source: KNU]

4.28.59. On 1 December 1995, Saw Sar Mi (32) from Taungoo District who was forced into portering for military operation by SLORC troops, stepped on a land mine near Palaw Mu De village, Taungoo District, and died on the spot. [Source: KNU]

4.28.60. On 27 December 1995, Strategic Commander Myo Hla and Intelligence Officer Tin Myo ordered villages around Bawgali to send over 500 porters to Bawgali immediately. They demanded 190 from Bawgali, 100 from Kaw Thay Der, 70 from Pah Thaw Der, 60 from Kaw Soe Ko, 30 from Der Doh, 10 from Ler Ko, 10 from Wah Tho Po, 20 from Maw Pa Der, 20 from Nya Plaw Der, and 20 from Maw Ko Der. They also demanded one truck from Bawgali and another one from Ler Ko. [Source: KHRG]

4.28.61. Within one year, 108 out of 530 prison inmates who were sent to Boke Pyin Prison Labour Camp in 1994 have died at that camp in Tenasserim Division. The statistics for 1995 showed that 108 people have died of hunger, a lack of proper medical care, worsening living conditions and the severity of work load. An increased attempts to escape by prisoners has also caused the increasing death toll as the army opened fired on the escapees. As of December 1995, 80 out of the remaining prisoners were being used as porters. [Source: ABSDF]