

(VIII) TORTURE, AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT OR PUNISHMENT

8. 1. Background

In Burma torture, and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment has been widespread. Military intelligence, Police and Burma Army continue to torture political prisoners in detention centres or subjected them to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment. Such treatment are routinely practiced in the course of interrogation and forced the detainees to make confession or expose information or to give a lesson to the others and the victims themselves. Amnesty International has concluded that the problem of torture in Burma is pervasive, long term and endemic. Details of torture techniques well-documented by human rights organisations include beatings (with fists, combat boots, or rifle butts) of prisoners severe enough to cause permanent injury, shackling (both in the cells and in work camps), cigarette burns, the application of electric shocks to the genitals, finger tips, toes, ear lobes and else where, suffocation, stabbing, rubbing of salt and chemicals in open wounds, forcing to stand in abnormal position for long hour (e.g. forcing to "ride the motorcycle", standing with arms outstretched and legs bent for prolonged periods; the "helicopter", suspension by the wrists or feet from a ceiling fixture and then being spun around), deprivation of light and sleep, denial of medicine, food, exercise and water for washing, the "iron road (having iron or bamboo rods rolled up and down the shins until the skin is lacerated), solitary confinement in small cells for prolonged periods and psychological torture including threats of death.

Some prisoners had been forced to work as porters for the army, carrying ammunition and other supplies in front line areas. Of those victims, those managed to escape gave consistent accounts of extra-judicial execution, beatings, lack of food and medicines, and poor conditions. Most of these prisoners had only a few days left to serve of their sentences when they were taken to the front. Moreover, some prisoners were forced to work as unpaid labourers for the infrastructure development projects throughout Burma.

Porters who attempted to escape, those who could no longer carry heavy loads, and those who asked for some more food or water were subjected to torture, sometimes to death, and ill treatment, including gang rape mostly to ethnic women serving as porters, by the SLORC army.

Ethnic civilians in the remote areas were also not spared from being tortured when they were unable to provide porters, porter fees or other funds or failed to meet the demands by the SLORC troops. There were numerous cases of torture to the civilians by the SLORC Army under allegation of being supporters of rebels and their

sympathisers, harbouring rebels in their villages and establishing the administrative function.

[See also under "Personal Accounts", interview 1,3-15, 17-21, 24-26, 28, 30, 37-81, 84, 85, 88-91, 98, 100, 104, 106-111, 113-120, 127-129, 135-153, 155-158, 171, 174, 176, 182, 188, 190-193, 197-198, 200-203, 214-215, 217-218, 225, 231-232, 236, 239, 243-248, 250, 252, 255, 261-262, 264-265, 267-268, 270-275, 280-281, 284, 286-293, 299-300, 304-306, 309, 312-313]

8.2. List of Incidents

8.2.1. At 4:17 a.m. on 15 March 1994, a Burmese fishing boat carrying 1,000 tones of pawn from Kyein Ni Taung village was robbed by SLORC soldiers from No. 413 navy patrol boat near Ma Pu Taw (Dove), Tenasserim Division. A child, an elderly woman, two girls and 5 fishermen were kept in the scorching sun without giving anything for one day as a punishment. The owner of the fishing boat was fined 50,000 baht. [Source: KNU]

8.2.2. In September 1994, approximately 100 troops from IB 62 led by Col Ohn Myint penetrated Kotkataw and Line villages in Kyaikmaraw Township, Mon State, to search for Mon rebels. The SLORC soldiers arrested all men in the villages and tortured them to reveal who were rebels and supporters of rebels in their villages. Nai Phu, Nai Chit Palae, Nai Yu, Nai Hla Sein and Nai Hlein were severely tortured and detained for one week following the accusation of being supporters of Mon rebels. The SLORC troops also took some high-priced belongings such as video recorder and engines of a small rice mill from the villagers. [Source: HURFOM]

8.2.3. In the third week of November 1994, about 60 troops commanded by Capt Aye Min entered Kotkataw, Kawgo and Palaingkamort villages in Kyaikmaraw Township and arrested a number of villagers for portering. While the villagers were attempting to escape, the troops shot at them in Kawgo village, causing one villager, Nai Lon (25) to die on the spot. Some arrested villagers were accused of being supporters of the rebels and hiding arms for them, and the accused were subjected to severe torture as they tried to flee. SLORC troops also threatened the villagers that those who were not in the village would be considered as Mon rebels. [Source: HURFOM]

8.2.4. In last week of December 1994 and first week of January 1995, about 200 troops led by Col Ohn Myint penetrated Line, Palaingkamort, Kyaukapin and Kotkataw villages in Kyaikmaraw Township and arrested about 10 village headmen and many villagers. During the interrogation, the soldiers covered the victims' faces fixedly, poured water on their heads and engineered severe torture to force them to expose arsenal of the rebels and ordered the people to relocate the villages quickly. When the village headman replied it was impossible to relocate the villages, they were severely beaten by the troops. Since then, most village headmen

and the villagers fled into jungle and hid in a safer place. The administration of the villages became loose so that the villagers were no longer be able to tolerate staying in their villages. [Source: HURFOM]

8.2.5. Most people fled Klaw Hta village, two hours' walk west of the Salween River, in Papun District, Karen State, because SLORC troops advanced in January/February 1995. On 10 February, one man from the village returned to get some of his possessions. While he was there, SLORC troops suddenly surrounded and captured him. The soldiers tortured him and forced him to be a porter for three days before set him free. The villager's name was not provided, but the responsible SLORC commander was Coy Comdr Bo Chit Aung of IB 19. [Source: KHRG]

8.2.6. In March 1995, SLORC IB 62 entered those villages very often and ordered the villagers again and again to return to their villages and to relocate their whole community to another place. Because of the refusal of the villagers, on 10 March 1995, about 35 troops led by Col Than Hlaing arrested the village headmen from Kawjamalein and Pinekamar villages in Kyaikmaraw Township and severely tortured them under the allegation of having contacts with Mon rebel soldiers. On 11 March, SLORC troops further arrested the headmen Nai Seik (33) and Nai Chit (39) with the same allegation and tortured them. Other arrested village headmen in this area were chairman Nai Aung Khin (52) and secretary Nai Maung Chit of Kwannaeparae village. Moreover, village headmen from Kotkataw and Kawkyaik villages were also tortured by the same troops with allegation of supporting the Mon rebels. Then, many villagers fled into the jungle east of their villages and some villages were nearly and totally destroyed as no one wanted to nor were able to stay any longer in their villages. [Source: HURFOM]

8.2.7. On 16 March 1995, a company from SLORC IB 62 led by Capt Tin Soe arrested village headmen and villagers from the villages situated along and between the railway and motorway which connect Mudon and Thanbyuzayat. Most of the villagers there are local farmers who earn their household living by cultivating low-land rice and working on rubber plantations. On that day, the troops came into Yaungdaung village and arrested village chairman Nai Nee. Then they proceeded to Hneepadaw village and arrested village chairman Nai Boe Ni and secretary Nai Nu. Those village headmen were taken by the soldiers to their outpost in Klortsot village where the prisoner were severely tortured. The soldiers fixedly covered their faces with plastic bags and poured water on their head and beat them with rifle butts and combat boots. [Source: HURFOM]

8.2.8. On 17 March 1995, the same troops arrested Nai Myint, Doma village chairman; Nai Chein, Klortsot village Secretary; Nai Kwit, leader of Khapourhtaw village militia; Nai Pan Kar, leader of Kwankhabawe village militia; Nai Htuu, leader of Bae Dore village militia and Nai Maung Myint, Kmar-ai village chairman. They were brought to Klortsot Military Outpost and interrogated about the activities of Mon troops and members of the New Mon State Party in Mudon Township. The soldiers also accused those village headmen and militia leaders of constantly sup-

porting the Mon troops by harbouring them in their villages and establishing the administrative function of the New Mon State Party. The soldiers tortured them by using many atrocious means and detained them together with those headmen who were subjected to arrest on 16 March. According to the victims, they were questioned in detail by a team composed of personnel from Military Intelligence Unit and if they were dissatisfied, they ordered the soldiers to torture those arrested village leaders. After constant detention and torture for three to four days, the victims were released. Before their release, the soldiers warned them to cut off their contacts with Mon rebels or if such allegations are found, they will be punished more severely. Moreover, the troops also threatened them with relocating some villages presumed as bases of Mon rebels. No evidence was found that these accusations had any basis in meaning, however. [Source: HURFOM]

8.2.9. At 2:00 a.m. on 23 March 1995, the same troops from IB 62 [see 8.2.8. above] came into Kwankhabawe village in Mudon Township and arrested three villagers — Mi Say (43, female), Nai Jek (36, male) and Nai Khapue (35, male) by accusing them of being supporters of Mon troops. As soon as they were arrested, the soldiers forced the victims to confess the allegation made against them. The SLORC troops then fixedly covered the victims' faces with plastic bags for many minutes to make sure that they were suffocating and as a result were coercively forced to confess. Afterwards the soldiers continuously poured gallons of water onto the victims' heads and tortured them for one hour. Finally the military torturers tied up these villagers and brought them to Htonemine village. When they arrived there at about 5:00 a.m., the soldiers arrested other two villagers — Nai Saung (45, male) and Nai Gone (55, male) — under the same accusation. The new victims were subjected to the same torture as the first victims.

The soldiers tied up all of the victims and brought to their outpost in Klortsot village. There the tortured villagers were detained for four days and severely tortured in order to lead them "confess". The victims were also threatened that they must show the bases of the Mon troops and houses which harboured Mon soldiers. Moreover, while detained and tortured, the unscrupulous soldiers were demanded a ransom of 25,000 Ks per person. Therefore, the families of those victims had to sell their farmland, rubber plantation and other belongings to be able to pay the ransoms within a four-day deadline. They were released after their families paid the ransoms. [Source: HURFOM]

8.2.10. At 4:00 p.m. on 18 March 1995, twelve soldiers of SLORC LIB 359 raided Warn Ma Ka Ho Hkam of Tachilek Township, looking for porters. At the Tachilek-Taunggyi bus station they tried to catch five young men who were eating, but four of them managed to escape. Only one, who was a Thai citizen named Tsai Sarm Noi from Kor Saii, Mae Sai, did not escape. While he was being interrogated, they beat his head with a rifle butt and he had to receive 18 stitches at Mae Sai hospital.

In June 1995, in Sittwe (Arkyab) Township of Arakan State, a son of Col Htay Win, Deputy-Commander of Western Command, died at the Sittwe summer resort tower.

He and his friends lost consciousness and referred to the State hospital in Sittwe urgently. Col Htay Win arrested many young and tortured the people during interrogation about the case. He was angry when his son's friends regained consciousness and told him that they lost unconsciousness because of using morphine. As Col Htay Win with anger abandoned the body of his son at the hospital, the hospital authorities had to take responsibility for cremation. [Source: ABSDF]

8.2.11. From 20 March to 21 May 1995, following the attack of MTA against the SLORC troops in Tachilek, the Burmese army put up a barbed wire fence along the Nam Mae Sai Stream to prevent people from crossing. Out of those who were caught while trying to cross to buy goods, females were sent to the army camp on the hill, and then punished by being tied up flat on the ground and then left baking in the sun for three hours; males were sent to the jail for one night or sent to the front line as porters. Those who were able to pay the sum of 2,000 baht were released. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.12. When MTA attacked Tachilek on 20 March 1995, 2 innocent young men and 3 women were arrested by Maj Thein Han and Capt Pe Than of No. 24 Military Intelligence Unit. They were:

1. Sai Yee (29, son of Loong On; his right ear was cut off and both legs stabbed repeatedly with a bayonet.)
2. Sai Moun (23, son of Loong Hsam Noi from Ta-le Quarter of Namkham; his upper lip was cut off.)
3. Nang Han Ni (25, daughter of Oo Te Ni, Yan Shin Quarter, Murng Koo village-tract)
4. 2 other young women from Hong Lerk of Mong Hsat village.

No news of these captives has been heard since their arrest. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.13. On 21 March 1995, a villager, who returned to Ee Thu Kee village in Papun District, Karen State, to save some of his belongings, was captured and beaten by SLORC troops from IB 19 before being released. [Source: KHRG]

8.2.14. On 21 March 1995, SLORC troops from IB 19 reached Thee Klu Hta village, Papun District, Karen State, and caught one villager who was not aware of their coming. He was tied up and severely beaten before being released. [Source: KHRG]

8.2.15. During the second week of April, SLORC troops from IB 62 summoned the village heads of Kwankhabawe and Htonemine villages in Mudon Township and interrogated them about the Mon troops being harboured in their villages. The village heads admitted that although they were aware some officials from New Mon State Party had ever come into their village, they were unable to resist the rebels, who were armed with guns. The military was not satisfied with the answers and severely tortured them by using atrocious means. At the end, the military did not accept any reasonable complaint of the village headmen and the SLORC troops warned them for the second time that the village must be relocated if it continued to

harbour Mon rebels. The military also issued an order to the village heads saying that if Mon troops or Mon officials come to their villages, they must kill those rebels or if not, their villages must be relocated. [Source: HURFOM]

8.2.16. At midnight on 17 April 1995, about 30 SLORC troops led by Maj Lha Kyoo of LIB 248 from Mong Nai arrived at Nar Lin village and accused the villagers of stealing two of their guns. The soldiers then arrested all the men and women and beat them up during interrogation. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.17. On 5 May 1995, DKBA troops entered Bwa Der village, south of Papun, towards the confluence of the Salween and Moei Rivers, captured Wee Saw Aye, Saw Nu, Ser Nay Htoo, Thaw Htoo, Kya Hay and Pa La Kyay [all Karen men] and beat them severely. They burned a plastic bag and dripped the burning plastic on Thaw Htoo's chest. [Source: KHRG]

8.2.18. On 25 May 1995, SLORC troops from Panglong-based LIB 513 raided Worn Na-Law village, Kho Oot village-tract, Namsang Township, southern Shan State, and captured the headman Loong Karng Thoon and a villager, Parn Ta Ke. They were accused of being supporters of MTA and were beaten until they lost consciousness. [Source: SHRF]

8.2.19. On 29 June 1995, Maj Soe Hliang from Langkho-based SLORC IB 99 came to Nam Tong village, Nar Won village-tract, Mong Pan Township, southern Shan State. He beat the headman Zig Ta (58) 5 times. SLORC officer also beat Loong Pan and confiscated property including one horse, three beds, blankets, food and household utensils. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.20. On 9 July 1995, U Myint Naung (55), a convict from Mandalay Jail who lived next to No. 1 State High School of Myaukpyin Tavoy Quarter in Mandalay downtown, fell down while carrying a rice sack. Because of heavy load, his backbone was broken and he was beaten by SLORC soldiers from LIB 426. [Source: ABSDF]

8.2.21. On 10 July 1995, Capt Thein Myint, Coy Comdr of SLORC IB 97, went into Thein P'Lein village, Kawkareik District and ordered a village elder, Daw Ah Yaing, to get him porters. Daw Ah Yaing pleaded that she could not get the required porters as all villagers were away on their respective farms. Capt Thein Myint accused Daw Ah Yaing of being very stubborn. He and Sgt Htoo Bweh beat the victim with sticks, hit her with rifle butt, and kicked her with their boots. Daw Ah Yaing had her nose broken by the soldiers, and then she lost consciousness. The beatings were so severe that her three-month-old pregnancy ended up with a miscarriage.

Another two villagers — Maung Ohn Shwe and Maung Khin Aye — who tried to plead for Daw Ah Yaing were also beaten almost to death. Moreover, Capt Thein Myint demanded the villagers to pay him five goats, five chickens, and 10,000 Ks in cash for failing to provide porters. The villagers had to collect the money among

themselves to meet the demand. [Source: KNU]

8.2.22. On 13 July 1995, Nga Kyan, a Naga village in Somra Township, Sagaing Division, was raided by a SLORC platoon led by 2nd Lt Tun Tun Oo of IB 347. When the troops reached inside the small village, without any reason, they deliberately shot at the houses. Particularly two houses of U Tha Don and U Phon Mae was damaged of the shooting. Afterwards, the SLORC troops ordered the people from the houses to come down and they kicked U Tha Don. A village headman and six other villagers were also beaten up. The soldiers also took a village headman and another villager as hostages back to their military base. They were reportedly tortured by the SLORC soldiers for the whole night. The following day, the villagers were ordered to give one pig and 10,000 Ks in cash as ransom. When the villagers gave what they asked, the soldiers released the victims. [Source: ABSDF]

8.2.23. In the morning on 29 July 1995, four Pa-O shopkeepers who were arrested from Taunggyi and forced into portering by SLORC troops from LIB 249 were severely beaten by the soldiers while they were attempting to escape. They were beaten until they were very near to dying and then were left behind near the outskirts of Wan Yin Town, Hsi-hseng Township of southern Shan State. [Source: NLD-LA]

8.2.24. In July 1995, the following villagers from Thaton District were blindfolded, tortured, and forced to drink large amounts of water by a combined military column of SLORC IB 36 and DKBA.

Table 8. Torture in Thaton District, July 1995

No.	Name	Age	village
1.	Kyaw Moo		Kaw Htee Kee
2.	Saw Kwee Nee		Noh Keg
3.	Naw Peh Peh		" "
4.	Saw Po Kaw		" "
5.	Pah Keh		" "
6.	Thein Pe		" "
7.	Saw Pee Law		" "
8.	Saw Lay Day		Peh Wuh Hta
9.	Maung Lu Pyo		" "
10.	Maung Pyah		" "
11.	Saw Naw		" "
12.	Naw May		" "
13.	Naw Mu Lee		Htote Po Hta
14.	Saw Po Be		" "
15.	Saw Po La thin		" "
16.	Maung Tha Lone		" "
17.	Pu La Ber		Meh Naw Ther
18.	Saw Maw Keh		Kaw Htee Kee

19.	Saw Pwe Dah		“ “
20.	Saw Be Ko		“ “
21.	Saw Win Sein		“ “
22.	Maung Cho		Noh Keh
23.	Naw Ther Myaing		“ “
24.	Pu Ta Ku		Meh Naw Ther Kee
25.	Haah Kee		“ “
26.	Maung Mait		“ “
27.	Pah Eh Htoo		“ “
28.	Kyaw Khin		“ “
29.	Pu My	65	Maw Kee
30.	Hsa Der	38	“ “
31.	Than Nyo	40	“ “
32.	Htoe Po Tote	37	“ “
33.	Saw Keh	28	“ “
34.	Kwee Lah	51	Ee Su Kee
35.	Chit Po	30	“ “
36.	Than Ngwe	35	“ “
37.	Saw To Kya	32	“ “
38.	Saw Ohn Shwe	35	“ “
39.	Chaule Lone	35	“ “
40.	Saw Ta Ku	25	“ “
41.	Kwee Che	27	“ “
42.	Tee Tha Lee	50	“ “
43.	Tee Pa Doh	50	“ “

[Source: KNU]

8.2.25. On 16 August 1995, 20 SLORC soldiers from LIB 408 led by Coy Sgt Aye Hlaing and Sgt Hla Myint entered Zinba village in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division. As they asked money from the village headman, he had to collect the tributes — including porter fees, funds for forced labour and USDA — to be transferred to Chairman of Yebyu Township LORC. But, as the head of Zinba village refused to hand over the money, he was beaten by Sgt Aye Hlaing and a tribute of 28,500 Ks was seized. [Source: ABSDF]

8.2.26. On 25 August 1995, about 200 SLORC troops from LIB 520 led by Maj Kyi Lin came from Mong Pan to Ton Kwai village and proceeded to Nong Harn village in Wan Khook village-tract, Mong Pan Township, southern Shan State, where they asked for two bullock carts. Two men — the village headman Loong Phong (56, husband of Nai Yane and son of Loong Ku and Pa Nang) and Sai Tame (37, son of Loong Yan Na and Pa Nang) — had to drive the carts for them. When they arrived at Hui Pah Leng Stream between Nong Harn and Wan Larn villages, about 3 miles from Nong Harn, they clashed with MTA troops. Sai Tame ran away and escaped. Then the headman was beaten until he passed out. The soldiers dipped his head in the mud near the stream, washed it in water and then beat him again. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.27. On 9 September 1995, SLORC troops from LIB 332 led by Coy Comdr Capt Thein Han accused Sai Ne (37, son of Loong Sai and Pa Aung from the western quarter of Mong Pan Township) of having contacts with rebels and of involved in drug trafficking. The victim was arrested and beaten so badly during interrogation that one of his legs was broken. The victim was released only when his family brought 200,000 Ks as a ransom. His parents had to sell his house and land to obtain the money. The victim was then hospitalised and hard to walk properly again. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.28. At 4:00 p.m. on 9 September 1995, 200 SLORC troops, led by Capt Gyi Myint from LIB 332 stationed at Mong Pan, raided Kant Kan village, Wan Khook village-tract, Mong Pan Township, southern Shan State, and arrested more than 20 men. Some were released, but seven — Loong Phe (50, husband of Nai Sai and son of Loong Sai and Pa Yong), Sai Timan (38, husband of Nang War, 27, from Mong Kung), Loong Aung (56, son of Loong Phe and Pa U), Sai Aye (17, son of Loong Phe and Nai Sau), Sai Si Ha (32, from Nong Ler village) Sai Mong (38 son of Loong Lao and Pa Kham) and Loong Woon Na (47, husband of Pa Sar, 46, from Lai Hka) — were taken to the military barracks where they were beaten and interrogated about the rebels.

Sai Mong and Loong Woon Na were tortured to death. The others suffered several bruises on their heads, faces and bodies, and blood flow out of their mouths. As of 7 October 1995, they were still under detention. On the second day of their detention, Nai Sau, Sai Aye's mother, was told by the SLORC soldiers to bring 50,000 Ks for their release. But she was not able to find that much money. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.29. On 16 September 1995, about 200 SLORC troops from LIB 520 led by Maj Kyi Lin closed all the doors of "town fences" [The SLORC had forced the people of Mong Pan to build 3-4 lines of bamboo fences around the town several years ago. Spikes were laid along the fences and people have been forced to mend it every year.], ransacked every house and searched for rebel funds and walkie-talkies. [There are many quarters in Mong Pan Town]. The soldiers found a holster at the house of Sai Sang Or (39, son of Pu Leng and Pa Nyo) from Ho Phai Quarter and arrested him and all his family members. The soldiers later released the aged persons and children, but beat and interrogated Sai Sang Or. The perpetrators also found a toy walkie-talkie at the house of Sai Lu (23, son of Loong Kang Sar and Pa Lao) from Wan Mai Quarter. The victim was also beaten and interrogated. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.30. On 18 October 1995, Sai Kum (31, son of Loong Zing and Nang Leng from Wan Ping, Kengtung) went to buy a horse at Pang Nim village. On his way home, he met some troops from SLORC LIB 246 from Kunhing. The soldiers accused him of stealing an army horse, arrested him and beat him until he bled all over. The soldiers then took 12,000 Ks from him. The victim was released only when he had taken the soldiers to the man from whom he had bought the horse and explained the matter. But the money taken by the soldiers was not returned. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.31. On 18 October 1995, a company from IB 17 led by Sgt-Maj Toe Le arrived at Ko Sei Kwee village in Mergui District and arrested Saw Maung Poe (25, son of Saw Kyi Pai) and took him to Lo Kwen Doh for interrogation. Having suspicion of helping the rebels, the SLORC soldiers tortured him severely. In fact, Saw Maung Poe was an innocent farmer who was not involved in any organisation. [Source: KNU]

8.2.32. On 2 November 1995, Bn Comdr Han Tint and Coy 1 Comdr Thein Tun from SLORC LIB 20 together with DKBA troops captured a villager, Pa Yu Der, from Thaton District, tortured him severely, burned his paddy field and shot and ate two of his pigs. [Source: KHRG]

8.2.33. On 17 November 1995, SLORC troops from Lai Hka-based IB 64 penetrated into Kieng Kham village, Loi La village-tract, Mong Nai Township in southern Shan State, and conducted house-to-house search for walkie-talkies. They beat and forced the villagers to tell them who were parents of MTA soldiers, at which 12 women — Pa Wai (67), Pa La (58), Pa Nong (82), Pa Phan (59), Pa Thorn (41), Pa Mone (64), Nang Zarm (25), Nang Yoong (30), Nang Aung (17), Nang Mai (18), Pa Moe (43), and Pa Mart (66) — were victims. [Source: S.H.A.N]

8.2.34. On 18 December 1995, Saw Htoo Khae and 4 other men from Law Tai village, Yebyu Township in Tenasserim Division, were arrested by SLORC troops with the accusation of having contact with KNU. Of them, Saw Htoo Khae managed to escape on the same day after being taken to Kyauk Ka Din village, where IB 104 was stationed. But he stepped on a booby trap planted around the camp and received injuries. Although he was given a secret treatment at a hut outside the village, he did not able to cross the river of death three days later.

At 9:00 p.m. on the same day, U Saw Htoo Thar, four other men and ten women were also subjected to arrest by the SLORC troops commanded by Capt Myint Kyaw stationed at Kyauk Ka Din village under accusation of having contact with Dah Lay's group from the KNU. (In the area around, Kyauk Ka Din, Law Tai and Kwe Ta Lin village in Yebyu Township, there has been fighting between SLORC troops and Dah Lay-led KNU guerrillas. Since August 1995, Dah Lay and his troops had been attacking the SLORC position at Kyauk Ka Din village where one of the military's sergeant and one prisoner were wounded. Following the routine attacks in the area by KNU, the SLORC troops accused local people in Law Tai village, where all the inhabitants are Karens, of harbouring the KNU guerrillas and committed persecutions against the villagers.)

Then, they were threatened, tied up and tortured. All the villagers were forced to stand in the scorching sun all day long. The women were forced to strip off their clothes before standing in the sun and, standing naked, were interrogated for the entire day without being given any food nor water. Among them were two infants. As they were not given any food, the remaining villagers in the village had to cook and send them food. Three days later, they were untied and detained in the camp

again. On 20 December 1995, another seven men were arrested and subjected to torture in the same manner as the former group by order of Maj Htaung Yar Zar who was stationed in the same military camp. On 23 December, U Saw Htoo Thar was interrogated by Capt Myint Kyaw because the SLORC troops knew that two of his sons — Saw Maw Lee (30) and Saw Htoo Maw (16) — were with the KNU. Saw Htoo Thar was ordered to call his sons back and to ask them "to return legal-fold" by using the threat of their father's further arrest as well as torching all the houses in the village. On that day, they were released. In fear of continued living in the village, Saw Htoo Thar escaped to Payaw Refugee Camp. [Source: NLD-LA]

8.2.35. On 20 December 1995, SLORC troops from Column 1 of IB 55 (Western Command), led by Lt-Col Khin Maung Win, captured villagers from Paw Yer Lo village in Taungoo District while they were carrying their rice at Chaung Ma Kyi. Saw Tay Kay Nay (male, 18) and Saw Maung Thein Dar (male, 22) were severely tortured and it was unknown whether they survived. [Source: KHRG]

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Saw Hla Taw, 46 years, from Wun Aye village, Kyar Inn Seik Kyi Township, was beaten in the face, burned on the stomach and tortured during the interrogation after he was arrested on 24 October 1995. SLORC alleged him of having contacts with the rebels.

(IX) FREEDOM OF BELIEF: DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE RIGHT TO PRACTICE RELIGION, AND INTOLERANCE

9.1. Background

The population of Burma is predominantly Buddhist, the religion which is practised by the Burman majority as well as some other ethnic groups. Therefore, the military regime has historically associated itself with Buddhism, seeking to control it and to use it for its own political purposes. However, this has not always been possible.

In the popular uprisings of 1988, radical monks played an important part in publicly supporting students demonstrations early on. Consequently, numerous monks were forcibly disrobed, jailed, or killed by the troops. During 1990-91, SLORC dissolved many Buddhist orders, such as the All Burma Young Monks Union, leaving only the nine official Buddhist sects which are tightly controlled by SLORC.

The other religious groups in Burma have long suffered harassment at the hands of the military, who believe that non-Buddhist groups support the ethnic insurgency movements. The military's tradition of vicious and cynical treatment of Muslims, Christians, and other groups continues in today; the SLORC has only recently applied the same methods to Buddhists.

In Rangoon, the authorities recently issued an order to the Muslim community there that the government needed the burial grounds of Muslims in Rangoon for the development of a city project. SLORC has already confiscated Muslim graveyards, orphanages, and a residential building for aged Muslims, including a mosque, in Mandalay. Leading members of the Muslim community who were managing the trust properties were jailed when they protested.

Christians have also been heavily affected by the government's "buddhification" of the whole of Burma. Military officers have forced villagers, mainly in Chin State, to build pagodas on hill-tops, after removing crosses on churches. Most of the Chin villagers in these areas are Christian. This started about four years ago and is still going on.

The reason many villagers are fleeing the area is to escape the forced labour, as well as to keep their faith and customs despite the SLORC pressure to "buddhify". In all non-Buddhist, non-Burman areas, the military continues to define what is "Myanmar" by destroying places of religious worship, religious burial grounds (Buddhists usually burn the bodies of their dead), and forbidding or obstructing worship ceremonies.

Examples also show that any religious activities, however, whether Buddhist or not, are always secondary to SLORC rules and needs. Forced labour is demanded on even religious holidays; monks are forcibly disrobed, beaten, and shown disrespect by troops.

Recent tensions within KNU were exploited by SLORC, in order to create divisions within the leadership of a major ethnic resistance group. They successfully turned a Karen army leadership problem into an "internal religious conflict", setting the Buddhist Karen soldiers against their Christian brothers, a strategy which led to the fall of the Manerplaw headquarters of the democratic resistance movement in Burma.

SLORC was clearly in charge of this so-called "mutiny" by the Buddhists. Even Buddhist monks trying to mediate the situation were taken hostage by the SLORC-sponsored DKBA, and the Buddhist monk who preached agitation against Christians became the organiser and leader of military actions in the Manerplaw and Kawmoora regions. Clearly, SLORC has little respect for any religion, and manipulates or abuses the beliefs of all peoples to insure their own goal of keeping all Burmese people under their omnipotent and omniscient control.

9.2. Religious Conflict and the Rise of DKBA

Since 1992 there have been reports from villages, particularly in Thaton and Pa-an districts, that local SLORC commanders and Military Intelligence Units are actively spreading propaganda that the Karen National Union is anti-Buddhist, that the Karen Revolution is a Christian revolution and that Karen leaders have told their Christian supporters that as soon as the revolution succeed they will kill all the Buddhists.

[Note: Successive regimes in Burma has practised a "divide and rule" tactic not only in the field of politics but also in the course of religious freedoms to divert the attention of the common people from getting involved in politics or democratic movement. There had been experiences that once the dispute occurred between certain groups, the regime stepped in as pre-planned and cracked down all parties involved in the conflict. Sino-Burmese conflicts in 1967, Muslim-Buddhist conflicts in 1980s and in 1988 just before the 8-8-88 uprising, persecution on the Buddhist monks in the aftermath of 1988 uprising and May 1990 general elections, massive exodus of Muslims in Arakan State in 1991/92 to seek refuge in Bangladesh to avoid persecution of SLORC regime bear the concrete evidences of what has been happening in Burma.]

Villagers were told that SLORC troops did not really want to burn and loot their villages and execute people, but that they had to because KNU was around, so it was all KNU's fault. They were told not to co-operate with KNU and to pressure KNU into a cease-fire. Despite the villagers' fear and hatred of SLORC, over time this propaganda gradually began to have an effect for several reasons. Two main factors were the villagers' complete lack of education, and the truth to the accusation that Christians were promoted over Buddhists in KNU. But perhaps most significant was the fact that KNU had never tried to politically educate the villagers or get them politically involved in the revolution, so they did not even properly understand what KNU was fighting for; instead, they only knew they had to give rice to KNU forces, their sons to the KNU Army, and see their villages burned by SLORC in

retaliation to KNU's military operations. They were fed up. Then in 1993 some monks began offering them an alternative: refuse to help KNU, come and stay at "refuges" around monasteries, all your food and other needs will be provided and, best of all, SLORC will not bother you. People began moving to these "refuges", where they received food and other needs from the monks — who were in turn receiving it all from SLORC. As the villagers did not know where the food was coming from, they started believing the monks such as U Thuzana must have "magic powers". U Thuzana and the other leaders sent their strongest supporters back into the villages to bring the others and when most people did not want to leave their homes, they started launching a campaign of harassment and intimidation. In late 1994 the situation became more serious, as the monks and villagers were ordered by U Thuzana to disarm KNU soldiers in the villages. The movement became armed. In December, it occupied Thu Mwe Hta monastery at the confluence of Salween and Moei rivers. In 1993-94, a huge new monastery was built there and it was later discovered that a large arms cache had been placed under it — indicating the apparent level of pre-planning which had gone into this sequence of events. At Thu Mwe Hta the group cut off a KNU's main line of supply and called all KNU Buddhist soldiers and villagers to come and join them. Many KNU soldiers walked away from hilltop positions which they had been defending, underfed and under-supplied, for years. SLORC walked into these positions, including Mae Nyaw Khei ridge, from which they could easily mount an assault on Manerplaw.

The movement became violent. Some KNU soldiers and villagers who did not join them were killed in several villages. KNU sent negotiating teams, including Buddhist monks, to Thu Mwe Hta but they were arrested and held hostage. Their release was negotiated, and on 15 December 1994 an agreement was struck between KNU and the new group. Its leaders had already retreated on 12 December to Myaing Gyi Ngu (Karen name Khaw Taw), near Kamamaung, where they set up headquarters at a monastery with a great deal of weapons stored around it. These leaders tore up the Thu Mwe Hta Agreement and the group at Thu Mwe Hta once again put the river under siege. On 21 December the leaders declared the formation of the "Democratic Kayin Buddhist Organization" (DKBO) and the "Democratic Kayin Buddhist Army" (DKBA), and demanded that KNU hand over Manerplaw. Negotiations at Thu Mwe Hta broke down. SLORC Commander for Special Operations Command Lt-Gen Maung Hla promptly visited Myaing Gyi Ngu and promised DKBA all required weapons and uniforms. SLORC immediately began providing DKBA with uniforms, a badge, food and other supplies — and apparently even wrote several of the DKBA's political statements, in the opinion of experienced Burmese dissidents who read them. KNU set a deadline of midnight 31 December for the "mutineers" to "return to the fold". The deadline passed, and a couple of days later Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) began attacking Thu Mwe Hta, which fell within a few days (shortly after KNLA scored a direct hit on the ammunition cache under the monastery hall). The Thu Mwe Hta group withdrew to the Sleeping Dog Mountain area.

SLORC then took over complete control for the offensive. DKBA members were

divided up, a small handful assigned to each SLORC unit as guides, and the offensive began on 20 January 1995. By 23 January SLORC established a foothold on the Manerplaw side of the Salween. Using DKBA guides to indicate all the back pathways and KNLA positions, they advanced quickly. KNLA decided to limit its defence to delaying actions, and torched most of Manerplaw before withdrawing. SLORC arrived in Manerplaw on 27 January and raised the yellow DKBA flag. However, on the hill below Manerplaw's monastery there was a more realistic sign: SLORC soldiers made huge white letters on the ground, visible from the air, reading in Burmese "[(661) & (10)]" ["Tactical Operations Command 661 — Light Infantry Battalion 10"]; a battalion in SLORC's LID 66]. Observers on the Thai side of the river got photos of the lettering, which a few hours later had suddenly been rubbed out and replaced with the English lettering "DKBA". [Source: KHRG]

9.3. Christian Nagas Forced by SLORC to Adopt Buddhism

Lashi Township in Sagaing Division is a hilly area with difficulty for communications where ethnic Nagas are living. In October 1994, SLORC IB 229 led by Maj Khin Soe arrived in Lashi Township, told the people there that Burma is a Buddhist country and launched operations into Naga villages and forced the Christian Nagas to convert to Buddhism.

In December 1994, one platoon from IB 229 led by Lt Myat Kyaw arrived at Konkailon village and arrested the Christian evangelist U Maung Hlaing. A pistol was pointed at U Maung Hlaing and he was ordered to convert all the villagers from Christianity to Buddhism. It lasted all night long. The church at Konkailon village was replaced with a Buddhist Pagoda. The event happened on 20 December 1994.

A similar event was also happened in Kuki village. A platoon from IB 229 of SLORC came to Kuki village and arrested the Christian U Pa Khaw. He was released after being forced to sign at gun point that he would accept the Buddhism. Then, 85 villagers were queued up at gun point to sign on a paper stating that they would accept Buddhism. U Pa Kyaw was ordered not to get involved in any Christian missionary.

On 20 January 1995, a column of SLORC troops from IB 229 arrived at Pansat village, bringing a Buddhist monk from Pau Mai village, and ordered the Christian evangelist U Alan Paul to call all the villagers. When the villagers gathered, the military men took the Buddhist monk to the front of the gathering and forced the villagers to worship the monk who recited them sila (precepts). The villagers couldn't follow the Buddhist scripture language Pali very clearly and then all of them were beaten by the army personnel. The soldiers also destroyed the Cross for the Memorandum for the year 2000 at the entrance of the village.

During the first week of January 1995, the SLORC troops came to Konkailon, Kuki and Nurnitmumpi villages along with the Buddhist monks. They left a monk in

each village and forced the villagers to convert to Buddhism. The monks are staying in the churches of the villages and guarded by one section of army personnel in each village. The villagers have to send a pig or a chicken for the monk and the soldiers everyday.

Moreover, the villagers from Sumra, Phon Tharet, Leyon, Chatkaran, Ngakyan, Hinkut, Mitmumi and Pansan villages have been forced by the SLORC to convert to Buddhism. [Source: *Vum Son*]

9.4. Naga Baptist Council

Most of the Nagas who are members of the Naga Baptist Council (NBC) were also subjected to persecution by SLORC. In March 1995, when NBC called a meeting in Lashi, committee members of the council were detained in Lashi for two days. As a consequence, the meeting was only able to be held beginning on 15 March following the adjournment for eight days.

Moreover, all the government servants in these Naga villages in the Lashi Township were forced to convert to Buddhism. If they refused, they were forced to retire. [Source: *Vum Son*]

9.5. Religious Persecution of Christian Chins

Chin State is the only State where the people are of one ethnicity. While most of the people in the states and divisions profess Buddhism, Chin Hills is the exception. Even in Kachinland a substantial percent of the population are Buddhists. But not in the Chin State. Christianity and animists are the dominant religions with Buddhists counting to less than 0.01 percent. SLORC, therefore, is introducing its religious persecution. The number of soldiers stationed in Chin State have increased from about 100 soldiers in 1988 to some 7,000 today and there is a battalion in every major town.

The main purpose of the SLORC Army seems to be the "burmanisation" of the Chins. In the last two years Christian Crosses, which were placed as Chin landmarks, were torn down and replaced with Buddhist shrines. Moreover, SLORC has been attempting to divide them by coercing many to become Buddhists. Chin sources report that in Thantlang Township, 10 percent of the villagers have converted to Buddhism because the Buddhist villagers are never called for portering or labour. Buddhists can buy rice at a cheaper price: 300 Ks per pyi for Christians and 100 Ks for Buddhists. Sunday church services are not generally disturbed, but many villagers have been caught by SLORC and taken as porters upon leaving the church. As a result, many villagers are now afraid to go to church. In some villages, SLORC is using the church compound as an army camp. There have also been reports of SLORC using the promise of education to take Christian Chin children from their

families, then send them to monasteries and force them to become Buddhist novices. Government schoolbooks are sent to Buddhist monasteries instead of government schools. There are also reports that SLORC is resettling some Burman Buddhists from the Irrawaddy Delta into Chin areas in Tamu Township.

Christians from the northern Chin State send missionaries to the southern part, where most of the people profess animism, under the project of Chin Christianity in One Century (CCOC). The CCOC has been successful in converting the animists to Christianity until two years ago, when SLORC stopped the project. The SLORC Army then launched its religious persecution. They prohibit Christian missionaries and evangelists, including the CCOC from the northern Chin State, from going to the south. The SLORC then sent Buddhist monks to the southern Chin state. The SLORC soldiers on seeing the CCOC workers stripped them off their white uniforms. Some women missionaries had to walk to the next village wearing only their underwear as the Burman soldiers seized all their other clothing.

SLORC soldiers, who are posted in the Chin State, are promised promotions if they marry Chin women, and if they convert the women to Buddhism. The soldiers who are sent to the Chin Hills are young and single. Although these soldiers do not understand the Chin language, Churches in the Chin Hills are full of soldiers during the services. The soldiers attend the churches in order to come in contact with the girls. The same method of burmanisation was practised in the Shan State during the early 1950s, which was one of the reasons for the armed uprising of the Shan. It is possible the SLORC hope that through this kind of racial and religious manipulation, they could make the Chin angry enough to rise up against them.

The Chin people have not rebelled against the central government and the SLORC Army hasn't had any chance to destroy the independence attitude and life-style of the Chin Hills. Given the situation of having cease-fire arrangements with many resistance groups, the SLORC wants to show their dominance to the Chins. They have had to instigate and provoke the Chin to get angry. The instant the Chin show some resistant movement, SLORC is planning and prepared to strike. The mission of the SLORC authorities is to destroy cultural and religious differences inside Burma, and the Chin seem to be targeted. If the trend continues, a religious conflict is unavoidable. [Source: *Vum Son/KHRG*]

9.6. Religious Persecution and Conversion

Religious persecution seem to be one of the main targets of SLORC. As mentioned earlier the propagation of Buddhism is the main objective of stationing the SLORC Army in the Chin State. They look for clues to protect the interest of Buddhism thereby incriminating the Christian worshippers. Promotions in the SLORC Army or civilian departments were conditioned on conversion to Buddhism. High-ranking Chin officers had to convert to Buddhism before they were given promotion. Prominent among them were Col Van Kulh, Brig-Gen Tuang Za Khai and Col Pau

Khan Thang. Whereas they officially kneel and bow before the Buddhist statues, these high-ranking army officers pray in the name of Jesus at home. The SLORC clearly prefers Buddhism, claiming this as the national religion in Burma. [Source: *Vum Son*]

9.6.1. Pu Pum Khan Thang

In January 1995, an Assembly of God evangelist Pu Pum Khan Thang was arrested in Tiddim. The reason was the MIS confiscated a book at the Tiddim Bazaar and they traced the source of the book to the children of Pu Pum Khan Nang. The children had brought the book for sale at the bazaar. The pages of the could be used as wrapping paper. On the title page of the book, most likely printed in India, was a picture of Jesus on top of a Hindu clergy man in wrestling match. Pu Pum Khan Thang was arrested in Tiddim and bail was refused. He was transferred to Monywa jail, a noted MIS torture chamber, where the victim remains now.

9.6.2. Pastor Pauno

Pastor Pauno was an evangelist with no affiliation. He was free-lancing in the Naga-Hkamti areas. As he was very successful in converting the Nagas, it alarmed the SLORC authorities in the area. Thus the MIS sent out its agents and Buddhist monks in order to study how to counter his teaching. However in a short period of time Pastor Pauno converted the MIS agents and the Buddhist monks to Christianity.

The SLORC authorities therefore arrested him in Hkamti and transferred him to Monywa jail. Why Monywa jail? Because it has the MIS facilities of torture. This is the reason why these religious and political prisoners are sent to Monywa.

Pauno was in contact with jail mates U San Thein and U San Kyi Lwin, who were Christian evangelists from Arakan, and who were arrested in the Chin Hills (Falam) and also jailed in line with SLORC's religious persecution. U San Thein and U San Kyi Lwin were released at the beginning of 1995 after they served over a three years' term in Monywa jail.

Pastor Pauno was severely tortured that he has lost the will to live. He therefore requested U San Thein and U San Kyi Lwin to pray for his sooner death. [Source: *Vum Son*]

9.7. Observance of Religious Rites Forbidden for Forced Labourers

Most of local people from Ta Kar village in Mergui were forced to work for the construction of Mergui-Kawthaung Motorway seven days a week. They were not only denied the right to worship but also denied to be spared from working even on Sunday. [Source: KNU]

9.8. Religious Freedom of Expression and Censorship

SLORC has intensified a religious persecution by trying to change some words expressed in the Holy Bible. The Burmese version of Bible is normally printed in India and distributed in Burma. SLORC forced the inking over of the whole twenty-ninth chapter of Proverbs and has forbidden use of the word Toke Tan (the Burmese translation of Proverbs) which is the same meaning of cemetery. SLORC said that if the word Toke Tan could not be dropped, it should not be mentioned whenever preaching, as Buddhist cremate their dead.

Moreover, at a village in Irrawaddy Division, SLORC turned down a proposal for the construction of a Baptist Church with the reason that it could be connected with the political movement. After many appeals had been made by the religious persons who guaranteed that the Church would only be for the religious purpose, SLORC allowed the construction. But on every Sunday, the Church is responsible for advanced submission of the proposed sermon to be preached and numbers of persons supposed to show up. [Source: Inside Source]

U Wai Lin, a Muslim lawyer from Loikaw, Karenni State, was sentenced to five years imprisonment for holding a discussion over the issue of relocating a local Muslim cemetery after being ordered by Loikaw Township LORC. Loikaw-based No. 27 Military Intelligence Unit discovered the meeting of Muslims concerned over the issue and U Wai Lin was arrested. His five-year sentence, handed down in the third week of March 1995, was for violating the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act, which gives almost unlimited power to the administrative body to arrest and imprison anybody for security reasons. [Source: ABSDF]

9.9. Oppressive Measures on the Buddhist Monks

Of the 26 Buddhist monasteries with 250 monks in Kawthaung Township, Tenasserim Division, SLORC only recognises the existence of eight monasteries and the monks staying there were singled out for monsoon retreat. [The full moon of Waso is the beginning of the three-month Buddhist Lent, which is the first day to commemorate Buddha's first sermon 2500 years ago. During the Lent period, monks are restricted to their monasteries for a prolonged period of spiritual retreat.]

In accordance with the orders of SLORC, the Central Monks Body, on 8 July 1995, issued an announcement saying that the remaining 18 monasteries would be abolished before the monsoon retreat. The notification was issued only two days before the commencement of the Buddhist Lent.

All the monks staying in other monasteries which were listed for abolition called a meeting and submitted an appeal letter to the Central Monks Body and SLORC, asking for the suspension of the order. The monks requested them to allow their further stay in the monasteries for three months to be able to take part in the monsoon retreat. The SLORC, however, turned down the appeal and ordered the monks to comply with the order. "If they fail to do so, we have to enforce the order by the use of "force", said a military authority. *[Source: ABSDF]*

9.10. Insult on Religion

On 1 February 1995, 40 troops led by Capt Myo Kyaw Lwin and Lt Thein Lwin from SLORC IB 258 tore down the spirit house of Kar Ha village near Mong Nai Township, Southern Shan State, because they wanted firewood for cooking. The soldiers then set fire to the remains of the house. When they had gone some distance from the site, seven of them were suddenly stricken with cramp in their hands and feet. They were sent to Mong Nai Hospital, where they later died. The remaining 33 continued their journey, then clashed with troops from MTA. Capt Myo Kyaw Lwin stepped on a land mine and lost a leg while Lt Thein Lwin was hit in the forehead and died on the spot. *[Source: S.H.A.N.]*

9.11. Religious Persecution by SLORC / DKBA

At 2:00 p.m. on 29 December 1995, a combined column of SLORC IB 19 and DKBA entered Kheh Pa Hta village, burned houses, shot livestock, entered into the Church, destroyed the Bibles and hymn books and scattered them all around the building. They took their meals in the Church and scattered their rubbish all around. *[Source: KHRG]*

[See also under "Personal Accounts", interview 22-25, 31, 51-52, 78-81, 90-91, 96-97, 99, 102, 224, 251, 292-294]

(X) FREEDOM OF OPINION AND EXPRESSION

Everybody knows that the Burmese still cannot enjoy freedom of expression, although a free press existed before Ne Win's coup in 1962. SLORC censors the critical statements of poets, novelists, and short-story writers. SLORC, however, on occasions, allows criticism of corrupt civil servants and rising prices.

Seven years after the introduction of martial law by SLORC, the military junta is still holding absolute control over all means of expression of thought. Only the official media workers are authorised to read, listen to, or watch any outside publications: people caught reading underground newspapers are severely punished. Censorship laws require all publications, including movie scripts and song lyrics, to be reviewed by the government.

Minority languages are systematically blocked from print or media by these SLORC boards. Political thought is also suppressed. Those political parties which have not been "deregistered" by SLORC must have permission from the military to hold meetings, even in private.

Representatives attending the "National Convention" may not use any words that may 'damage' loyalty to the state, or 'disrupt' ethnic peoples. In addition, delegates can only discuss a SLORC-devised agenda and principals for the National Convention (547 out of 702 delegates were hand-picked by SLORC).

10.1. A Brief Background of SLORC-Controlled Media

State radio and television and the "Working People's Daily", official organ of SLORC, have an effective monopoly on information in Myanmar. Only one cosmetic change occurred in 1993: in April the "Working People's Daily" acquired a new look and was renamed "Myanma Alin" (The New Light of Myanmar).

The original "Myanma Alin", founded in 1914, was closed down by the junta in 1988 along with the rest of the country's newspapers except the "Working People's Daily". By reviving the old name the authorities hoped to give the daily a politically-neutral image, but in fact its editorial policy is still directly under SLORC management. Burma also has 100 or so non-government literary magazines which publish poems, drawings and many short stories recounting the details and problems of daily life; these magazines also have no freedom to publish what they choose. Officials of the state-run Press Scrutiny Board go through every item with a fine-tooth comb, especially the short stories.

Certain subjects cannot be mentioned, such as democracy, human rights, the events of 1988, and comments about the SLORC leaders, and there is a blacklist of authors

whose materials must not be used. Pressure is so strong that the magazine editors actually use self-censorship, rather than attract the attention of the government censorship workers.

Since mid-1991 another sort of publication has appeared in the country and has proven extremely popular. Magazines such as “Guide to Prosperity”, of poor technical quality but containing precious information from the outside world, offer a selection of carefully censored features from “Newsweek” and “Time” magazines, alongside the reports by local journalists.

“Myet-hkin-thit” publishes stories discrediting the opposition movements which operate in foreign countries, and gives vividly detailed accounts of crimes committed in countries that have criticised SLORC’s behavior.

10.2. Profile: The Voices The Regime Tried To Silence

As of December 1995, the following are some of the people who have been imprisoned for no reason other than the peaceful expression of their views.

U Win Tin, a former editor of “Hanthawati” newspaper, served as secretary of the executive council of the NLD, and vice-chairman of Sarpay Thamagga (the writers’ association). He was active in the pro-democracy demonstrations in 1988, and a key advisor to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. He was arrested on 4 July 1989, and sentenced in October 1989, to three years’ imprisonment with hard labour on charges of harbouring a woman who had had an abortion (abortion is illegal in Burma). However, his colleagues believe that the true reason for his arrest lies in his opposition activities. In September 1992, he reportedly was in poor health and denied medical attention. His sentence was reduced from eleven to ten years in a 1993 amnesty. But following the visit of Prof Yozo Yokota to Burma in October 1995, he was among the eight political prisoners who were kept incommunicado in “police dog cells under accusation of providing information on prison conditions to the UN Human Rights Special Rapporteur.

U Ohn Kyaing, also known as Aung Wint, was editor of “Bohtataung Daily”, He also worked with U Win Tin on “Hanthawati” before retiring in 1988 to become a member of the NLD’s Central Committee and a Member of Parliament for Mandalay South East. He was arrested on 6 September 1990, and, a month later, was sentenced to seven years’ hard labour for participating in demonstrations in Mandalay in August 1990. He is detained in Tharrawaddy Prison.

Nyi Pu Lay is a satirical writer and artist. He was arrested with six others on 25 December 1990, and was later sentenced to ten years’ imprisonment on charges of being in contact with illegal organisations. The sole evidence brought against him was the authorities’ allegation that, in 1984, he had once sold a ring that originally belonged to a member of the Burmese Communist Party. He was initially held in

Insein Prison in Rangoon, but, in December 1991, he was moved to Thayet-Prison in Central Burma.

Myo Myint Nyein is the publisher and editor of the banned cultural magazine "What's Happening?" which was critical of SLORC. He and his colleague Sein Hlaing were both arrested on 24 September 1990, and both were sentenced to seven year's imprisonment because of their publishing activities. "What's Happening?" featured articles about culture and short stories, and contained a poem by a well-known writer, Min Lu, which lamented the killing of innocent civilians and deplored the brutality of the military (Min Lu was also arrested but has subsequently been released). He is detained in Insein Prison.

Ma Thida is a doctor and a short-story writer. She was arrested with ten other opposition activists on 7 August 1993. After a closed trial the following October, she was sentenced to twenty years' imprisonment for "contact with illegal organisations, endangering public peace, and distributing banned literature to foreign-based opposition groups."

San San Nweh, her daughter, and a journalist name U Sein Hla Oo, were arrested around 5 August 1994. San San Nweh is the author of more than five hundred short stories, twelve novels, and over a hundred poems. She has also worked as a journalist on several national newspapers. She was a member of the NLD's Central Committee and was previously detained between July 1989 and April 1990.

10.3. Burmese Basket

The well-known Burmese comedian Zargana (meaning "Tweezer", a nick name to a dental surgeon Thura) wore dirty clothes and stood in front of a propaganda billboard that reads "Visit Myanmar Year 1996" showing some traditional Burmese baskets, woven with strips from the toddy-palm leaf stalk or bamboo. The Burmese expression for basket is Hpa, which in Burmese refers to prostitute. After that he arranged the baskets in front of him, in a manner of street-side hawker, with different prices ranging 2-5,000 Ks stuck on each of them. Although the prices were higher than the actual ones, they did match the current price of prostitute in Rangoon. Under the billboard, he raised a big Burmese banner which meant "Burmese Hpa have to be made famous all over the world." Zargana's message is that promotion of tourism has made lives harder and Burma is becoming a Hpa country like one of its neighbours.

Many people, who later formed a big gathering, were amused to see Zargana's quiet one-man-show. But military intelligence officers were angry at him and later took him away for interrogation and detained for one night. [Source: ABSDF/BIG]

10.4. Censorship on Jokes

There are about 15 local traditional Burmese dramatic troupe in Tenasserim Division and most are based in Tavoy Township. According to SLORC order, all of them are under the control of Division-level Traditional Art Council. A new regulation saying to get permission from the local authorities before their performance was recently imposed on the Burmese comedians. No political or forced labour or human rights situation related jokes in the region are allowed during the performance. They are not allowed to make jokes which have not been permitted by SLORC. In December 1995, two well-known local comedians; U O. K (from Thitsa Oo Troupe) and U Pan Pwint (from Shwe Tharapu Troupe) were strongly warned by the SLORC authorities for their jokes about forced labour on the Ye-Tavoy railway. The regulation seems less restricted in the rural area but more restricted in the urban area, according to one comedian from Palaw Township. [Source: ABSDF]

10.5. Inked Over; Ripped Out

10.5.1. The January 1996 issue of Thintbawa magazine was heavily censored by the Press Scrutiny Board (PSB). Approximately, 58 pages — from page 5 to 12, from 35 to 52, and from 133 to 160 — were ripped out by PSB officials. The cover story about Burma's education system was completely torn out and the cover itself was conspicuously blotted out with black ink.

The main reason was the January issue contained articles and news about the Rangoon University Diamond Jubilee with analysis and comparison of colonial and national education systems.

Thintbawa magazine is one of the most popular magazine in Burma and is closely watched and censored by PSB officials.

In fact, it is not new to Thintbawa. Under the SLORC, privately owned magazines have been facing official censorship. In spite of heavy censorship, approximately 100 magazines and journals in Burmese are publishing. Interestingly, many writers and intellectuals recently said they have been trying to test the water. Even though they dared not ask for freedom of expression they are privately criticising restrictions and censorship laws.

The ruling junta, on the other hand, encourages publishers and writers for less threatening business-related magazines and journals. However, even business magazines cannot escape from heavy-handed censorship laws.

10.5.2. One of the articles in the December (1995) issue of Myanmar Dana business magazine made officials mad. This article was about former South Korean strongman Roh Tae Woo who confessed he pocketed \$ 221 million as President from 1988 to 1993. Roh Tae Woo wasn't alone. His corrupt generals and government officials

were also brought up in the article calling them 'former generals' and 'former president'.

At least four paragraphs were blotted out with black ink. One caption reads: "Students demanding to punish former president Roh Tae Woo marched to his resident and were blocked by riot police." This line was inked out. Furthermore, former generals or former presidents were blotted out with black ink.

Observers and writers in Rangoon suggest this article remind the people in the capital of the former president, party chairman and dictator Gen Ne Win and his cronies.

"You can see they have cold feet," says a writer in Rangoon. Ne Win and his former generals do not really want to see a "Roh Tae Woo episode" in Burma of course. [*Inside Sources/ BIG*]

10.6. Everybody is Under Watch

10.6.1. After the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in July 1995, the SLORC re-selected the "in charges" of streets, "in charges" of every 10 households and inquired about their political outlook. Most of the new "in charges" are pro-military USDA members. [*Source: ABSDF*]

10.6.2. In September 1995, Col Than Tun directed Maj Nay Soe, the head of MI security guards at the gate in front of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house, to give a warning to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, saying students inside her compound were planning for a poster and pamphlet campaign against the government. [*Source: ABSDF*]

10.6.3. After Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her party NLD's statement on 22 November 1995 concerning the National Convention, students and youth inside Burma have launched their activities in public. In the first week of November, at St. Mary High School in downtown Rangoon, a young schoolboy painted a slogan across the school saying, "Military Dictatorship Get Out". [*Source: ABSDF*]

10.6.4. On 24 November 1995, a statement was issued by a group of 23 veteran politicians (called Dead Tiger). Some of them who signed the statement were: Bohmu Aung, Thakin Chit, Thakin Khin Aung (BCP), U Chit Maung and Thakin Lwin (ex-defence minister of Aung San). They asked the SLORC to move towards the national reconciliation and have dialogue with the democratic forces.

On 26 November 1995, the representatives of the SLORC — Deputy Home Minister Lt-Col Tin Hlaing, Deputy-director of Defence Service Intelligence Col Kyaw Win, People's Police Forces Director-general U Soe Win, Criminal Investigation Department Chief Col Ba Hein — summoned those 23 prominent politicians and

freedom fighters who signed the 24 November letter and tried to intimidate them. Those 23 were repeatedly accused by Col Tin Hlaing of having been influenced by the West and told that SLORC would not tolerate “stooges” meddling in state affairs. [*Source: Inside Source*]

10.6.5. On 28 November 1995, at 10:00 a.m. (the same time National Convention started), at Wailuwon monastery nearby University Avenue in Rangoon, a gathering of around 60 people came to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Rangoon University. Those represented were from the NLD, High School Students Union, and the University Students Union. The ceremony started with the arrival of the Sayadaw (Abbot) who prayed with the congregation. Then four students came to the front and started a ceremony. Statements from New Generation of the Students Union, and Democratic Association of Youth and Students (DAYS) were delivered to the crowd. Then they conferred to Aung San an award of historic honourable university student. Min Zeya (chairman of All Burma Federation of Student Union (Makatha), who was detained in August 1989 and released in July 1995) and Maung Maung Wan, also a leader of student union, who was detained in 1988 and released in 1994, were the organisers of this ceremony. Students then planned to have special activities during 1-5 December 1995 in Rangoon marking the Diamond Jubilee of Rangoon University, including a ceremony for the martyrs and heroes of Burma's struggle for independence and democracy. However, SLORC detained 20 student activists before the planned ceremony, and warned them not to hold it. Since the MIS proved a detailed knowledge of the planned ceremony, it had to be cancelled. [*Source: ABSDF*]

10.7. Diamond Jubilee under Tight Security

SLORC-sponsored celebrations marking Diamond Jubilee of Rangoon University took place on 1 December 1995 and security was tight in order to prevent anticipated student protests, with army troops stationed both inside and outside the university campus.

Although local journalists and various news agencies were invited to the ceremony, only a small number of foreign press representatives were allowed into the campus and all were prevented from taking photographs. Personnel of Military Intelligence Unit moved conspicuously around the assembled students to prevent occurrence of any protest.

A small number of students from ABFSU chanted anti-SLORC slogans and distributed protest leaflets throughout the ceremony, appearing briefly then disappearing into the crowds before security forces were able to take direct action.

Following the opening ceremony, troops withdrew from the campus, but maintained their presence on the streets outside, while MI officers remained inside. It was reported that the students seen at the opening ceremony looked more like forcibly

paraded prisoners of war than active celebrants.

On 5 December 1995, a small group of students gathered to read out protest statements near the site of the former student union building, destroyed by Ne Win's troops in the aftermath of coup d'etat in 1962. But SLORC troops dispersed the crowd. [Source: ABSDF]

10.8. POWER 54

In November 1995, POWER 54, the latest album by Burmese rock star Lay Phyu was released by producer Kyi Thaung. Lay Phyu rose to fame in 1993 with songs such as "Roaring of the Sea" (pinlae or than) and "Moon in the Desert" (kandaa ya la min). To advertise the new album, a large billboard was erected on the corner of 34th street (middle block) and Anawrahta road in Rangoon.

Before released, the new album was scrutinised by the Press Scrutiny Board (PSB) as usual for approval. When it was released, there has been whispering about the significant title of the album among the residents in Rangoon. 54 is of course the number of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house on University Avenue. At that point, that new album was confiscated from all shops, any people who belonged to even a single copy of it was forced through the loudspeakers to hand over to the authority for burning on a certain date, the producer and the rock star were summoned to show up at the PSB office for explanation while the IRON CROSS BAND was banned during the process. Only after being satisfied with the explanation from Lay Phyu who said that the title itself is nothing to do with Daw Suu's house as accused by the scrutiny board, just in memory of number of the songs played by IRON CROSS so far, and from the producer with a promise to ink over the 54, all the bans were lifted. The producer then put an advertisement in the SLORC-controlled Myanma Alin [The New Light of Myanmar] newspaper regarding the name of the new album.

As soon as the people saw the new advertisement in the newspaper, they figured out what was happening and were aware very much of SLORC's censorship regarding the album. Since then, the people were curious to know about the latest songs, which have blazed the album and the vocalist once again.

As a consequence, SLORC applied pressure on producer Kyi Thaung to stop distributing the tapes even in the name once they accepted: POWER, forced to change the name again, and all stuffs in the shops throughout Burma were confiscated. [Source: Inside source]

10.9. Forced Rally for USDA

According to SLORC media, about 4,5000 civilians from the four townships in

Mergui District rallied on 27 December 1995 to express unanimous support for the successful conclusion of the National Convention. The rally was chaired by Maj-Ge Ket Sein, Commander of Southeast Military Command and chairman of Mon State, Karen State and Tenasserim Division USDA (Union Solidarity and Development Association). The rally, mainly attended by members of the USDA, high school students and teachers, and civil servants, was held to show its support for a constitutional convention which has been boycotted by the National League for Democracy. But the people said most of participants at that rally were forced by SLORC.

“All the students from my school were forced to joined the USDA. We would not pass the exam if we do not join the organisation. I was in the rally but I had no idea what was the reason for the rally. But the authority ordered us to join this rally...”,

Naw Esther, a high school student from Palaw Township recalled her experience.

The USDA was formed on 15 September 1993 by SLORC as a social organisation which established at village tract, ward, township, district and division levels. Its central executive committee members are civilian but its high position in state and division levels are assigned to the high-ranking military officers. Although SLORC announced that USDA is only a social organisation and there is no political platform in its movement, people inside Burma believe that in the name of USDA, SLORC is strengthening its position in terms of grassroots mobilising to gain support for the military.

Ko Myint Oo, a high school teacher from Mergui said the USDA forced the people especially civil servants into supporting the military and National Convention. It is much worse than the BSPP's programme such as Lanzin youth (a BSPP youth wing during its time). People are threatened by dismissals from jobs and schools, or failure of examination in case of absence to participate the USDA rally. People in Mergui were ordered that one person from each household must attend the rally or pay 100 Ks if failed to do so.

Regard to USDA and forced participation, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi said in her weekly People Forum that people can be coerced and their support can be paid but their genuine love and goodwill cannot be paid and threatened. She said at one of her weekend public addresses outside her house that the public had been coerced into attending the mass rally. *[Source: ABSDF]*

[See also under "Personal Accounts", interview 289]

10.10. List of incidents

10.10.1. At the beginning of 1994 musicians had to attend a meeting. They were

told that they have to cut their hair short and that for their lyrics words as hell, heaven, kiss are forbidden. They also complain about all the festivals and ceremonies where they have to play. Although they do get paid for the performance they can not refuse the "offer". Crowd control is strict at concerts, location is outside town, no dancing, barbed wire and lots of armed soldiers, police and MI around tried to take our guide to question him while we were walking around and taking pictures at a concert near Mingaladon. [Source: *An Eyewitness who travelled inside Burma*]

10.10.2. According to a priest two NLD MPs — U Tin and Mahn Johnie — from Kyone Pyaw Township, Irrawaddy Division, were harassed after Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released 10 July 1995. They were visited and intimidated by the police in the night-time and their phone line and electricity were cut. [Source: *Inside Source*]

10.10.3. On 8 August 1995, a car carrying students from the Middle School at Wan Yin village to the High School in Hsi-hseng Township, southern Shan State, was stopped by the SLORC troops from LIB 413 who were looking for porters. The soldiers interrupted the students to enter the military quiz contest. The students became annoyed and expressed their antagonism towards the soldiers for forced portering by means of refusing to answer any single question asked by the military. [Source: *ABSDF*]

10.10.4. During the second week of October 1995, students from No. 1 State High School in Mergui, Tenasserim Division, staged a peaceful demonstration as they were dissatisfied with the education system, higher education fees, discrimination in the education sector and high prices of basic commodities.

Ko Sunny, a 10th standard student and also leader of the demonstration, and a number of students were arrested by MI 19 as soon as the protest occurred. That school was closed down for one week without any official announcement. [Source: *ABSDF*]

(XI) FREEDOM OF ASSEMBLY / ASSOCIATION

11.1. Still under Restriction

After the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 10 July 1995, the outside world might think that there has been freedom in terms of assembly and association. In reality, Martial Law announcement 2/88 which prohibits the outdoor assembly or gathering of more than five people still remains in force. The only gathering in Burma which is outside Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house every weekend since her release has been allowed by SLORC only for its public relation exercise and to save its tarnished image due to its abysmal human rights records. SLORC has allowed those gatherings in fear of being back-fired by the NLD since the military regime has organised so-called mass rallies of

USDA, to which thousands of people were forced to attend against their will. Mass rallies of USDA and its movements in support of SLORC-sponsored National Convention were much publicised in the SLORC-controlled media as a propaganda exercise with the aim to undermine the efforts doing by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi-led NLD.

There have been reports of arrests to the people who were at these weekend gatherings, also known as People's Forum. Members of the NLD from remote areas in Burma have been subjected to harassment and threats by the military and local SLORC authorities and been disturbed from travelling to Rangoon to see or discuss with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. There has been a couple of times Daw Aung San Suu Kyi herself was barred intentionally by the military from travelling to attend certain occasions. The reformation of NLD was not recognised by both the regime and its hand-picked puppet Election Commission.

Moreover, any pro-democracy party which wants to hold a meeting or discussion needs to inform the SLORC authorities in advance and must obtain permission, according to SLORC's written regulations/papers. In reality, measures taken by MIS and SLORC authorities have always been beyond those papers and much tighter. Unavoidable presence of MIS clearly reveals there is no atmosphere for freedom of expression.

11.2. Curfew Imposed

A curfew from 22:00 p.m. to 5:00 a.m. was imposed in North Okkalapa Township of Rangoon on 17 June 1995. All quarters in North Okkalapa (From Tatalay Junction to Mae La Mu Pagoda) were effected by that newly imposed curfew which includes a prohibition from gatherings of more than five people. The curfew was imposed because of two unusual crimes. The first one was a robbery which occurred at the house of a police officer from Shwe Pauk Kan Station where he was stabbed. Two criminals fled and hid at the house of a sergeant from the Fire Brigade. The army entered that area and surrounded the house. One criminal was wounded and arrested while the other escaped.

Not long after a police officer from North Okkalapa eye-witnessed a theft case while patrolling and arrested the thief at the market of No. 2 Quarter. The thief stabbed the policeman and then committed suicide by stabbing himself. In another development, a robbery case occurred near Hledan Junction, close to Rangoon University Campus in July 1995. These incidents were evident that people were unable to bear the SLORC-sponsored economic hardships and restrictive measures, resorting to any means for their survival. [Source: ABSDF]

(XII) FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

12.1. List of Incidents

12.1.1. On 13 December 1995, Strategic Commander Myo Hla from Western Command issued orders to Kaw Thay Der village in Taungoo District that the villagers are no longer allowed to go to Taungoo Town, and that people from Taungoo are no longer allowed to come to the village. Even the villagers from Kaw Thay Der who are currently staying in Taungoo are not allowed to go home. This measure cuts off all commodity supplies to the village. Myo Hla told the villagers that if any fighting occurs near their village, even harsher measures would be taken. [Source: KHRG]

12.1.2. On 26 December 1995, SLORC Strategic Commander Myo Hla of 1 MSC (under Western Command) gave orders that villagers from Kaw Thay Der and Bawgali who have trucks in Taungoo must come back to Bawgali by the end of December 1995. They will not be given permission to go to Taungoo any more. They can only go between Bawgali and Si Kheh Der, and only using the Naw Soh road. [This is most likely intended to make all vehicles available to be commandeered by Myo Hla's troops in the area.] [Source: KHRG]

[See also under "Personal Accounts", interview 3, 81-82, 242, 304]

oOo

Burmese women forced into prostitution at a brothel in Ranong cannot leave for fear of being arrested as illegal immigrants.



U D R H

2

Burmese workers find it easier to work illegally in Thailand than to face SLORC troops. Some of them were burned and hospitalised when a truck smuggling them caught fire on the way.



3

Victim of Civil War -- A Karen refugee woman died during an attack by SLORC and DKBA while she was moving to new camp along with other refugees.

ImagesAsia

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

4

SAIN

A woman weaves a bamboo sheath to build a hut at a new satellite town in Mandalay Division. Ten thousand households were relocated from Buffalo Point to the new satellite town where there is no electricity and running water -- December 1995.

SAIN

Grandmother forced to 'volunteer' on a road project in Pegu -- December 1995.

6

Wa woman with traditional ear rings sell opium openly in Pangsang, February 1995.

Images Asia

7

A woman dyes a woven cloth in Mandalay city. 'Economic development' that SLORC claims has yet to reach the masses.

SAIN

FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

8

ROSALIE T. MC KERNAN

Teenage workers -- young, woman with 'Thanakha', a traditional cosmetic paste, on their face pose for a photo during a break for meal--Mandalay, 1995.

9

ROSALIE T. MC KERNAN

A mother and child take refuge in a makeshift shelter at the Thai border.

(XIII) ABUSE OF WOMEN

13.1. Background

Burmese women have never had equal rights with men. Society and tradition in Burma tend to denigrate the role of women, as is also the case throughout much of the world. Under these circumstances, women in Burma have become one of the most vulnerable victims of abuse by SLORC. In Burma, women are treated equally to their fellow Burmese men. They too are subjected to summary execution, torture, arbitrary arrest, forced labour, forced portering, denial to participate in the political process, religious persecution and forced relocation. In addition, the women in Burma receive unique treatment from SLORC such as rape during military offensives, rape during portering and trafficking into prosecution.

In addition to their natural vulnerability, women face continual harassment if their husbands are suspected by SLORC. They are subjected to work the same forced labour as men, especially since it is the men who often run away from SLORC, leaving behind only women (even women who are pregnant or have children to care for) to face the soldiers' guns. All this in addition to the army's sexual violence.

Villagers have reported that when women come back from SLORC huts, "the married women openly tell if they've been raped, but the unmarried ones don't say anything. They don't dare, because they're too shy to reveal it. But we know they've been raped." In traditional Burmese society, a woman who has been raped is not desired by men for marriage. Rape and prostitution is not a common feature of Burmese society. The level of violence against women has dramatically increased since SLORC took charge, and rape seems to be encouraged and institutionalised by the military to keep control over the countryside and keep the low-paid, under-fed troops from getting restless and turning against their leaders.

Furthermore, women are now sometimes forced to marry soldiers, either by order of the commanders, or to hide a pregnancy that they got from being raped by the soldiers without their consent. The needs and wishes of the women are given no value by the military.

Although men are taken most frequently, children and women, including those who are pregnant or nursing their infants are arbitrarily seized. When SLORC troops enter a village, especially in liberated or conflict areas, they often find that all of the men have fled, either through fear of abuse or conscription, leaving the women with their children. Women have been sized much more frequently to act as porters and are subjected to the same human rights violations as men. However, in addition to beating and poor condition, women are risk of rape by troops during their detention as porters. SLORC soldiers then rape the women and/or conscript them to carry ammunitions and supplies to the front-line, serving as human mine detectors and shields for the troops. Sexual abuse continue during the time of forced porting of

the women. Women are forced to carry ammunitions and supplies in the day time and late at night, no time are give to them to take rest, but gang-raped. Women become to face all difficulties and for the unpaid labour while the breadwinner run the unjust orders but the military.

Woman in Burma also bear the brunt of SLORC's policies of forced relocation, where families are expelled from their homes to satellite towns which lack electricity, clean water, and access to transportation. Being the primary caretakers of families, women face great difficulties meeting the most basic needs of the household.

The number of HIV infected women has rapidly increased inside Burma recently. Without the special care or AIDS education programme for the women in Burma, the number of HIV infected women in Burma has significantly increased. The social, economic, education and political setback plaguing the country for so many years has left many Burmese girls and women with little choice but to enter the sex industry in Burma, Thailand or other neighbouring countries for their survival where they are subjected to constant humiliation and ill-treatment. They are lured or forced to work in the commercial sex industry in the foreign countries without any knowledge of health education. When their debt bondage period is over or repatriated back to Burma, most of them are infected with AIDS as they do not have the awareness for the deadly disease. Most of them returned back to the former occupation for the lack of education or rehabilitation programmes organised by the ruling regime. This become the only one alternative for them to survive for their future by working as sex worker. They has become the main source for the spread of HIV disease. The lack of power to say not have sex without condom to their partners or husbands is an another obstacle.

13.2. Repeated Gun-Point Rape by Soldier in City

At 8:00 p.m. on 20 December 1994, Capt Aung Zeya from Da-Ka-Sa (Regional Military Controlled Command) arrived at U Thu Reh and Daw Khaw Mo's house, located at Nar Nat Taw Quarter in Loikaw Township, to check the household registration list. As soon as he entered the house, he pulled out his pistol and raped their daughter, Ma Kye Myar, at gun point.

A court hearing on that case was scheduled on 30 March 1995. One day before the hearing, Capt Aung Zeya threatened the victim at gun point and forced her to close the case without giving any compensation.

Another victim, Ma Dah Mae, daughter of U Nyeh Reh and Daw Thoe Myar, was also threatened to close the rape case after being forced by Capt Aung Zeya to accept 2,000 Ks as compensation at Ba Wa Thit (New Life) tea-shop at Nyaung Yar (A) Quarter.

Regarding those rape cases, an innocent villager, Maung Bel Ni, who was living at

Htay Ta Ma Quarter in Loikaw, was used as a scapegoat by the perpetrator and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. There have already been 24 victims from Loikaw downtown and nearby villages raped by Capt Aung Zeya at gun point. [Source: NLD-LA]

13.3. Soldiers Rape at Will in Countryside

In Chin State, there were already two rape cases at the beginning of 1995. In Haka, while a young girl, 12 years old, was cutting firewood with her mother on the outskirts of the Haka town, a group of SLORC soldiers raped both of them. The young girl died at the hospital from internal bleeding. The mother could not identify the rapists because she was blindfolded. The SLORC authorities did not pursue the case because the mother could not identify the rapists.

In Matupi, a female porter was raped by SLORC soldiers. When the girl reported to the SLORC authorities, she was given 5,000 Ks and was asked to keep quiet. [Source: *Vum Son*]

13.4. Institutionalised Rape and Slavery by Military

In Kyauktaw and Mrauk U townships in Arakan State, young girls were forced to winnow the rice, to pick vegetables for SLORC battalions — LIBs 374, 375 and 376 — and to work in the army camps until nightfall. The girls were not only treated very rudely but also subjected to rape by SLORC troops and forced to shut their mouths by a threat of torture. They dared not reveal their plights or complain to any village head or high-ranking officer as all the tribunals were under the control of the military and the officers were using young girls for their sexual pleasure. [Source: ASC]

[See also under "Personal Accounts", interview 14, 24, 28, 32-33, 36, 43-44, 46, 49, 51-52, 64, 71-76, 83, 85-86, 89-90, 93, 106-107, 109, 111, 113-114, 117, 120, 138, 149, 152, -154, 190, 192-194, 196, 201-203, 208-209, 221-222, 227-228, 230, 233, 239, 240, 254, 255, 260-261, 264, 266, 268, 270-277, 280, 283, 288-293, 295-297, 299, 301, 307-308]

13.1.5. List of Incidents

13.5.1. Since the beginning of 1995, SLORC troops have been reinforced in the area of Tha Pyay Chaung village and Zalun village in Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division, to provide security for the gas pipe line being built there. LIB 267 and LIB 269 were recently deployed there as reinforcements for the previously deployed LIBs 401 and 402 and No. 957 Battlefield Engineering Corps. The presence of

numerous SLORC troops and increased movements of military columns have created problems for local people. Many women in the area who used to earn their living by working in the rubber plantations have been subjected to rape or sexual harassment at their work sites by SLORC troops. Women who were raped by the SLORC soldiers appealed to the Village LORC officials. But they turned a blind eye, leaving many women no longer to dare to work in the rubber plantations. [Source: KHRG/KNU]

13.5.2. On 29 February 1995, five soldiers from SLORC LIB 525 patrolling along the bank of Nam Yoom near Worn Tsa-larng, Worn Hart village-tract in Langhko Township, southern Shan State, saw an old lady Nai Sing (61) taking a bath. They captured her and gang-raped her until she lost consciousness. [Source: S.H.A.N]

13.5.3. During the last week of April 1995, SLORC troops from IB 67 arrived at Koon Mornng village, Mong Tom village-tract, Tanyan Township in northern Shan State and demanded a bullock cart. They forced Nang Khong (28, wife of Sai We, 3, and daughter of Loong Sarng Lern and Pa Say) to drive the cart for them.

They then forced Nang Yurng, (17, daughter of Khing Ywe Long and Pa Hurng) to accompany Nang Khong on the way. On arrival at the forest, a mile from Koon Mornng, they savagely dragged the women away to different directions. Nang Yurng was dragged to Peing Nam Hurn, between Na-Kor and Koong Mong, while Nang Khong was dragged to Surn Neu, which is located to the west of Pha-Laii. Each girl was raped by at least nine to ten soldiers before they were released, leading their sarongs soaked in blood. [Source: S.H.A.N]

13.5.4. Around midnight on 18 April 1995, about 30 SLORC troops led by Maj Lha Kyoo of LIB 248 from Mong Nai arrived at Nar Lin village and searched all the houses. Since all the men had left, they arrested Nang Tar Moi, wife of Sai Long, to sleep with their captain. [Source: S.H.A.N]

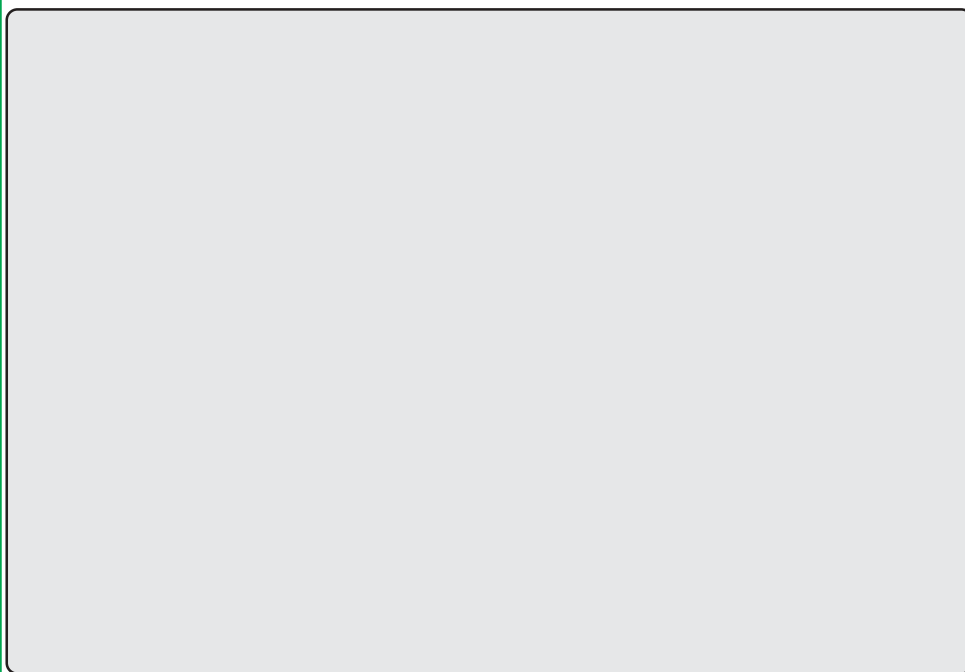
13.5.5. On 26 May 1995, a group of SLORC soldiers from Mong Yai-based IB 67 came into Kor Leng village, Mongtuan village-tract, Tanyan Township in northern Shan State, and raped Pa Li, aged 40. [Source: S.H.A.N]

13.5.6. On 10 July 1995, Capt Thein Myint, Coy Comdr of SLORC IB 97, went into Thein P'Lein village, Kawkareik District and ordered a village elder, Daw Ah Yaing, to get him porters. Daw Ah Yaing pleaded that she could not get the required porters as all the villagers were away on their respective farms. Capt Thein Myint accused Daw Ah Yaing of being very stubborn. He and Sgt Htoo Bweh beat the victim with sticks, hit her with rifle butt, and kicked her with their boots. Daw Ah Yaing had her nose broken by the soldiers, and then she lost consciousness. The beatings were so severe that her three-month-old pregnancy ended in a miscarriage. [Source: KNU]

13.5.7. At about 3:00 p.m. on 21 October 1995, Ma Thuzar Myint, a primary school teacher from Kaleinaung village in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division, was raped by 2nd Lt. Aunt Maung of SLORC LIB 409 when she came back from school. [Source: KNU]

13.5.8. On 23 October 1995, Warrant Officer Maung Gyi from IB 103 issued an order to local SLORC Chairman at Kyauk Taung Talai Tike village in Palaw Township, Tenasserim Division, asking him to send Ma San (35, married to Ko Win Kyaw with 3 children), who was in pregnant, to Tha Ya Bwin village in urgent as he needed to interrogate her. When Ma San arrived, she was forced to enter a house in the village and was subjected to rape. The following day, when that case became widespread throughout the entire village, Maung Gyi came to Ma San at night, accusing her of disseminating misinformation and beat her several times. Because of the rape and beatings, the victim collapsed and was hospitalised in Mergui hospital. [Source: ABSDF]

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Independent Human Rights Monitor

A sick girl who collapsed while fleeing the SLORC attack on the Karen New Year celebration, Wah Baw village, near Lamaing, 20 miles north of Ye Town in Mon State. (21 December 1995)