

HUMAN RIGHTS YEARBOOK 2002-2003



BURMA

HUMAN RIGHTS YEARBOOK

(2002-03)

BURMA

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

First Edition: 500 copies, October 2003

Published by Human Rights Documentation Unit (HRDU)

**Printed at Government Printing Office
National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma
(NCGUB)**

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**By H.E. Dr. Sein Win
Prime Minister
National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma**

Concerted Global Action Needed to End Human Rights Violations

Human rights violations, a regular feature of the military regime that goes by the name of State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), have shown little sign of easing in Burma. The violations connected particularly to politics have shown a marked increase in Burma proper. The noticeable increase in abuses, harassments, and coercion relating to politics started since the leader of democracy movement, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who is also the general secretary of the National League for Democracy, began touring different regions in the country. Thousands of people thronged the streets to welcome her despite the threats and blatant obstructions by the military and its affiliated associations.

Frustrated by the situation, the generals in the SPDC ordered an attack on the supporters and the NLD to stop the growing mass support for Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Thus, on 30 May, the worst kind of overt state-sponsored massacre of innocent people took place near Tabayin in Upper Burma.

As Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her entourage were continuing their travel after a tumultuous welcome by the people in Monywa, the military and its affiliated thugs launched a brutal attack on the supporters and members of NLD in a remote location near Kyi village. Scores of supporters and NLD members were killed when, according to official figures, "5,000" soldiers and hired hands using iron rods, bamboo stakes, wooden clubs, and catapults set upon unsuspecting innocent people.

The SPDC arrested all NLD leaders, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, closed down all NLD offices, and blamed the NLD for the "clash between NLD and anti-NLD supporters." The international community, including ASEAN countries, has condemned the attack and called for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. But, the generals after committing the worst crime in Burmese political history to eliminate political opposition are not giving up their plan easily. They reshuffled the leadership positions and announced a "roadmap" to "disciplined democracy" — a plot to consolidate military domination in the political future of Burma.

With that backdrop in mind, it becomes apparent that ad hoc and random international actions are not helping the efforts to end human rights abuses in Burma. A concerted international action is urgently needed to pressure the generals into ending human rights violations in Burma. The suffering of the people in Burma can only end when there is global resolve to do so.

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Map of Burma



Historical Background

Constitutional Period (1947-62)

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

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

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

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

General Ne Win's caretaker government, comprising senior military officers, was short-lived, lasting only 16 months. When the promised elections were held, an U Nu-led faction won. After he resumed leadership U Nu called a meeting for February 1962 where he planned to discuss with all ethnic leaders a way to find a solution to their grievances through peaceful and frank discussions. However before U Nu could announce his own recommendations for peace the military led by General Ne Win seized power on March 2, 1962. General Ne Win established a Revolutionary Council comprised of 17 senior officers, effectively ending the constitutional period.

Military Rule (1962-74)

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

Military Rule (1974-1988)

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

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

In March 1988 students and local people were involved in a fracas at a tea shop and a major brawl ensued. The intervention of riot police led to the death of a student from the Rangoon Institute of Technology (RIT). RIT students began protesting daily. The protest spread to other universities. After twelve days of violent clashes with police that caused many deaths, the government closed the universities and promised to investigate the student deaths. When the students returned to the universities in June they demanded an account of the still-missing students and called for the arrest of those responsible for student deaths and injuries. Again the police and military responded to the student protests with force, killing at least 20 students and arresting hundreds of others. And once again the universities were closed. The wave of social unrest spread. The resistance movement became stronger as the people called for political change. The military declared martial law.

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

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

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

SLORC's Military Rule (1988-1997)

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

Within months parties began to register with the advent of a new election law. The National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, daughter of the national hero General Aung San quickly emerged as the leading opposition party. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi traveled widely and attracted large crowds, despite the SLORC decrees that public gatherings be limited to four persons. As she gained an ever wider following the military tried to discredit her for not having "pure" motives, being the wife of a foreigner, by implication therefore a traitor. SLORC announced that she was being manipulated by Communists in her party and that she considered herself above the law when she called meetings in violation of the SLORC decree against public gatherings. Indeed, in July 1989, SLORC placed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest and disqualified her from participating in the elections. In spite of these tactics the NLD achieved a stunning victory in the elections held on May 27, 1990, winning 392 of the 485 seats contested. The SLORC backed National Unity Party (NUP) won 10 seats.



Burma at a Glance: Facts and Figures

Country name:	Union of Burma (1948), Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma (1974), Union of Myanmar (1989)
Government:	State Peace and Development Council
System of Government:	Military Dictatorship
Area:	261,228 sq miles or 678,500 sq kilometres
Coastline:	1,760 miles
Population:	50 million (app)
Population growth rate:	0.56%
Refugees from Burma:	Approximately 300,000 in Thailand, 12,000 in China and India, 20,000 in Bangladesh
Internally displaced people:	approximately two million people
Birth rate:	19.65 births/1,000 population
Death rate:	12.25 deaths/1,000 population
Life expectancy:	53.85 yrs for males, 57.07 yrs for females
No. of TV's per 1,000 people:	7
No. of doctors per 10,000 people:	2.96
Languages:	Arakanese, Burmese, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, Shan, Wa, English and more than 100 minority dialects
Religions:	Buddhist (89.3%), Animist (0.2%), Christian (5.6%), Muslim (3.8%), Hindu (0.5%)
Burmese Border Refugees:	Karenni camps- 20,091 (December 2001) Karen camps - 125,118 Mon-Resettlement Sites- 138,117 Maneelay Student Centre- 1,767
Inflation CPI:	11.5%
GDP spending:	3.1 % on military (non-SPDC figures: over 50%) 2.2% education, 0.8% health.
LDC status:	Since 1987
Natural resources:	Tin, plutonium, zinc, copper, cobalt, gold, rubies, jade, limestone, lead, coal, tungsten, teak (80% of world's reserves), fish (704 metric ton/year), gas, oil, rice, sesame, groundnuts
Agriculture:	68% of workforce employed in agriculture; 15% of arable land; less than 50% of potentially productive land under cultivation
Opium production:	1,300 tons (1988), 2,800 tons (1997), 1,800 tons (1998) (70% of US market)
Administrative areas:	Seven States (Arakan, Chin, Mon, Shan, Kachin, Karen, Kayah), Seven Divisions (Irrawaddy, Magwe, Mandalay, Pegu, Rangoon, Sagaing, Tenasserim)
Last election:	May 27, 1990. NLD won 392 of the 485 seats contested

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



Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	
AAPP	Association for Assistance of Political Prisoners
AASYC	All Arakanese Students and Youth Congress
ABSDF	All Burma Students' Democratic Front
ABSDF/WB	All Burma Students' Democratic Front - Western Burma
ABFSU	All Burma Federation of Students Union
ABFSU/FA	All Burma Federation of Students Union (Foreign Affairs)
ABSL	All Burma Students' League
ABYMU	All Burma Young Monks Union
ALTSEAN	Alternative Asean Network on Burma
aka	Also known as
ALP	Arakan Liberation Party
Approx.	Approximately
ASC	Arakanese Students' Congress
BAD	Border Area Development Program
B.E.	Burmese Era
Brig.	Brigadier
BI	Burma Issues
BIG	Burma Information Group
BPP	Border Patrol Police (Thailand)
BRC	Burmese Relief Center
BSPP	Burma Socialist Program Party
Capt.	Captain
CEC	Central Executive Committee
CHRO	Chin Human Rights Organization
CNF	Chin National Front
Comdr.	Commander
Col.	Colonel
Cpl.	Corporal
CPPSM	Campaign for the Publicity of the People's Struggle in Monland
CRPP	The Committee Representing the People's Parliament
DDSI	Directorate of Defense Services Intelligence
DKBA	Democratic Kayin (Karen) Buddhist Army
DKBO	Democratic Kayin Buddhist Organization
DPA	Democratic Patriotic Army
DPNS	Democratic Party for New Society
DVB	Democratic Voice of Burma
ENSCC	Ethnic Nationalities Solidarity & Co-operation Committee
FEC	Foreign Exchange Certificate (See "Measurements")
ft.	Feet
FTUB	Federation of Trade Unions, Burma
Gen.	General
HRDU	Human Rights Documentation Unit
HRV	Human Rights Violations
HURFOM	Human Rights Foundation of Monland
IA	Images Asia
IB	Infantry Battalion
IDC	Immigration Detention Center (Thailand)
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
ILO	International Labor Organization
Ind.	Independent
Lt.	Lieutenant
kg	Kilogram

km	Kilometer
KHRG	Karen Human Rights Group
KIA	Kachin Independence Army
KIC	Karen Information Center
KIO	Kachin Independence Organization
KNAHR	Karenni News Agency for Human Rights
KNDA	Karenni National Democratic Army
KNLA	Karen National Liberation Army
KNPLF	Karenni Nationality Peoples' Liberation Front
KNPP	Karenni National Progressive Party
KNU	Karen National Union
KTWG	Karen Teacher Working Group
LDC	Least Developed Country
LIB	Light Infantry Battalion
LID	Light Infantry Division
MAMD	Mon Army, Mergui District
Maj.	Major
Ma Wa Ta	Township-level SLORC authorities
MI	Military Intelligence
MICB	Muslim Information Center of Burma
MIS	Military Intelligence Services (aka DDSI)
MIS	Mon Information Service
m	Meter
mm	Millimetre
MNRC	Mon National Relief Committee
MOGE	Myanmar Oil & Gas Enterprise
MOI	Ministry of Interior (Thailand)
MPs	Members of Parliament
MSC	Military Strategic Command
MTA	Mong Tai Army
n.a.	Not available
Na Wa Ta	State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)
NBC	Norwegian Burma Council
NCGUB	National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma
NCUB	National Council of the Union of Burma
NCO	Non-commissioned officer
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NLD	National League for Democracy
NLD (LA)	National League for Democracy (Liberated Area)
NLM	The New Light of Myanmar (SPDC-controlled newspaper)
NMSP	New Mon State Party
PDC	Peace and Development Council
PSB	Press Scrutiny Broad
RFA	Radio Free Asia
SAIN	Southeast Asia Information Network
Sd.	Signed with signature
Sgt.	Sergeant
SHRF	Shan Human Rights Foundation
S.H.A.N.	Shan Herald Agency for News
SLORC	State Law and Order Restoration Council
SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
sq	Square
SSA	Shan State Army
SSIA	Shan State Independence Army
SUA	Shan United Army
SURA	Shan United Revolutionary Army
SWAN	Shan Women's Action Network

TOC	Tactical Operations Command
THRF	Tavoyan Human Rights Foundation
UN	United Nations
UNA	United Nationalities Association
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
USDA	Union Solidarity and Development Association
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Social, and Cultural Organization

TERMS

Baht	Monetary unit of Thailand (See "Measurements")
Bo	Military commander
Daw	An honorific used to address an adult female
Kawthoolei	Karen name for the Karen nation
Khun	Polite form of address in the Thai language
Ko	Burmese form of address to a young male
Kyat	Monetary unit in Burma
Longyi	Burmese word for sarong
Ma	Burmese form of address to a young female
Mahn	Burmese form of address to a Karen male
Maung	Burmese form of address to a young male
Mehm/Min	Form of address to a young Mon male
Mi	Form of address to a Mon female
Nai	Burmese form of address to an adult Mon male
Naw	Burmese form of address to a Karen female
Plah	Karen measurement of distance, from elbow to fingertip (1 plah is under 2 feet)
Pya	100 pyas = 1 kyats
Pyi	Eight-condensed-milk tin
Sai	Burmese form of address to a young Shan male
Sangha	Buddhist order of monks
Sao	Male of Shan royal descent
Saw	Form of address to a Karen male
Sayadaw	Presiding monk of a Buddhist monastery
Shwedagon	The Great Pagoda in Rangoon
Tatmadaw	Burmese Army
Thakin	Master; lord (used to address the British colonial rulers; later politicized by the Burmese independence movement in the 1930s)
Tract (village)	Area consisting of 4-6 villages
U	An honorific used to address an adult male in Burma

MEASUREMENTS

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

Note about Spellings:

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

In order to avoid confusion and politicization, this report will restrict its use of language to the established and more widely-accepted anglicized spellings, since this report is written in English. A list of alternative spellings from various sources are provided as follows:

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



1. Forced Labor

"... While Order No. 1/99, as supplemented, has been widely publicized and may for the time being have affected certain civil infrastructure projects, by itself the order has not stopped the exaction of forced labor, in particular by the military. There is no indication that the necessary specific and concrete instructions and budgetary provisions have been adopted or even prepared with a view to effectively replacing forced labor by offering decent wages and employment conditions to freely attract any workers needed. Finally, there is no indication that any person responsible for the exaction of forced labor and often concomitant crimes was sentenced or even prosecuted under section 374 of the Penal Code or any other provision, in conformity with Article 25 of the Convention..."

International Labor Office

CEACR 2001: Observations Concerning ILO Convention No. 29, Forced Labor. March 2002

"When the heads of villages requested to stop these abuses, they showed the order that has been issued by the SPDC, reading that no citizen of Burma shall be subject to forced labour or any form of such kind. But this attempt only ended with a scolding and beating from the military officers. They even said that those people who issued that order never come to the frontline, let alone carry the loads."

ABSDF, 2002.

1.1 Background

In 2002, the SPDC continued using forced labor in Burma; particularly forced portering for military operations; forced labor for military bases and income generating projects for the military and building and maintenance of roads. Despite the release of Aung San Suu Kyi in May, little changed for Burma's ethnic minority groups, particularly the Karen, Karenni and Shan, living in rural areas where forced labor is regularly conscripted for portering, infrastructure projects and military support activities. The use of forced labor in these areas is often perpetrated under the guise of "Government Development Programs." Although the issue of forced labor in Burma has received much recent attention internationally, there has been little corresponding action by SPDC to eradicate it despite an order banning the use of forced labor which was promulgated in 2000 (see below).

Two trends that continued in 2002 were the use of prison labor for portering during military operations and the collection of porter fees. Porter fees take on two forms; in one, each household in a village is required to pay a certain amount each month in order to compensate the conscripted porters. In the other, villagers are forced to pay a fee so that they are not conscripted as porters. Porter fees are a burden on villagers that should not be underestimated as it affects their livelihood in almost the same way that portering does. Villagers who cannot afford to take time away from their livelihood to porter also cannot afford to pay money to avoid portering. Both the increase in the use of prisoner portering and porter fees can be attributed to SPDC's desire to improve its image in the international community. The use of prisoner porters lessens the number of civilian porters that need to be conscripted and when porters are paid with funds forcibly collected from villagers, the Burmese military can claim that the porters are paid laborers.

1.2 International Labor Organization (ILO) Visit to Burma

In November 2000, the ILO urged its 175 member governments to impose sanctions on and review their relationships with Burma as a means to ensure that Burma was not engaging in the use of forced labor. This was an unprecedented move on the part of the ILO and as a result, the SPDC promised to eliminate forced labor. In February 2002, the ILO sent a high-level mission to Burma which the SPDC prevented from seeing Aung San Suu Kyi. Despite this, in March 2002, the ILO and the SPDC agreed that the ILO would appoint a liaison officer to Burma. On September 9, 2002, Ms. Perret-Nguyen was appointed to this position (source: World Report 2003, Human Rights Watch, 2003). On March 11, 2003 Ms. Perret-Nguyen commented, "My impression is that there is probably less use of forced labor in the central part of Myanmar [Burma], but the situation in the border areas—on the Thailand border and the Bangladeshi border in northern Rakhine [Arakan State] is still very serious". (Source: *The Irrawaddy*)

1.3 Law Suits

Both the European and American corporations, which are partners in the Yanada gas pipeline project, came under heavy criticism for contributing to human rights abuses in Burma, particularly forced labor. As a result, both corporations were taken to court in 2002. The Belgium-based human rights group 'Actions Birmanie' filed charges against the French gas giant Total Fina Elf in a Brussels court on 25 April 2002. Actions Birmanie accused Total Fina Elf of crimes against humanity stemming from the company's involvement in the construction of the Yadana natural gas pipeline in southern Burma during the mid-1990's. The suit is based on the Belgian "law of universal competence". This allows for legal action to be taken for actions committed anywhere in the world regardless of the nationality of the parties involved. Previously, this law was used as a legal instrument to persecute war crimes. (Source: *The Irrawaddy*.)

In a precedent setting decision, a US superior court judge ordered that the Unocal Corporation could be taken to court for human rights abuses related to the Yanada gas pipeline. As Unocal had hired the SPDC, the court saw fit that the corporation could be held accountable for human rights abuses committed by the military regime in the construction of the pipeline. The court also accepted evidence of human rights abuses occurring in conjunction with the pipeline, which therefore can no longer be disputed by the Unocal Corporation's legal council. Human rights abuses committed in the construction of the pipeline included mass land confiscation and forced relocation resulting in deprivation of livelihood. In addition, there was widespread use of forced labor, including forced portering, extra judicial killings and rape. Disturbingly, many such abuses in the area continued throughout 2002 as the Tatmadaw increased efforts to conscript the local population to provide security for the pipeline.

The suit, "John Doe et al versus Unocoal Corporation", was filed by the NGO 'Earth Rights International' and is based on the Alien Tort Claims Act of 1789. This act allows for US citizens to be held accountable for offences committed outside the US against foreign nationals. Recently the Alien Tort Claims Act has become a prominent and powerful

instrument in policing the behavior of US corporations in countries like Burma where the rule of law does not adequately protect the population. (Source: ERI)

1.4 Prison Labor

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

Convicts are regularly used for unpaid labor as porters, on major infrastructure projects and at rock quarries. They are generally treated much more brutally than civilians and are routinely used in very dangerous or inhuman work, such as blowing up rock faces, digging at cliff-sites, plowing fields in the place of animals and carrying loads far too heavy in the front lines. Prison labor has also been used on numerous infrastructure and tourism projects.

‘Won Saung’ or Military Porter Recruitment Camps

Formerly, prisoners were taken out of prison and handed directly to the Army units. Since 1996, the SLORC/SPDC has created the ‘Won Saung’ to formalize and institutionalize this process.

Sometimes translated into English as ‘porter battalions’ or ‘service camps’, ‘Won Saung’ actually translates more closely as ‘carrying service’. The Won Saung come under the Prison Authority and function as holding centers for the convicts before they are taken to porter at the frontline by the Army. The prisoners are drawn from various prisons around Burma. According to the testimonies of many prisoners, each prison must provide a quota of prisoners to the Won Saung Camps on a regular basis. To fill these quotas the prison authorities lie to the prisoners by telling them that their sentences will be reduced or that they will be released after a brief shift of portering. The authorities also send elderly and disabled prisoners, those under treatment in the prison hospital, and those whose sentences are about to end. The convicts are usually given loads much heavier than what civilian porters are forced to carry. Sometimes the loads are so heavy that they cannot get to their feet without help from the soldiers. While portering for the Army, the porters are constantly subjected to verbal and physical abuse from the soldiers when they have difficulty carrying their loads. Porters who fall out of line from exhaustion are beaten and kicked until they rejoin the column. When porters are unable to continue, they are left behind and sometimes kicked down the mountainside to an almost certain death. The straps from the baskets that the porters carry cut into their shoulders and backs and result in painful wounds.

Despite their requests for medicine, the porters are never given any, even when they have seen the medics treating the soldiers. The porter’s diet generally consists of rice and fish

paste, while the soldiers eat dried shrimp, chicken and vegetables. The food and belongings which soldiers loot from villages are thrown on top of the porters' loads, as are the soldiers' personal packs and boots. In many cases civilian porters are taken along with convict porters. The porters are forced to walk between the soldiers, partly to prevent them running away and partly in the hope that resistance groups won't ambush the column if they see civilians. Contrary to claims made internationally by the SPDC, the use of convict porters in military operations and in the frontline camps in no way lessens the forced labor burden of regular villagers. Rather than being seen as an alternative to civilian forced labor, the use of convicts for portering and other forced labor in Burma should be seen for what it is: an additional, unnecessary, and particularly brutal form of human rights abuse. (Source: KHRG)

According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), the three Won Saung camps known are located in the southeastern military regional command: in Hpa-an, capital of the Karen State; Myaine Ka lay township, Karen State; and Loikaw, capital of Karenni State. (See interviews at end of chapter)

1.5 Forced Portering

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

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

In addition to portering for military operations, villagers are often conscripted to porter supplies between military camps. Portering assignments to carry supplies between military camps usually last a few days to a week and villagers have to take their own food. Portering takes villagers away from their work and families and there is always the risk of being beaten

or killed, so people try to pay instead of going if they can. Doing work for the military not only prevents people from being able to work for their livelihood but it also puts them in harm's way. The villagers doing forced labor are routinely beaten if they haven't finished their work, are caught taking a short rest or simply don't do a "good enough" job. If villagers are found hiding in the jungle, they're often forced to work and porter for the military as well, and people caught in this manner are treated particularly brutally. Porters, drawn both from the relocation sites and the jungle, are expendable to the military.

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

Women and Children Used as Porters

In some areas, when the troops are unable to conscript any men, women are often arrested and forced to be porters instead. No adjustments or alterations are made to the labor they must perform or the weight of the loads they must carry. According to the Human Rights Forum of Monland, the use of female porters is concentrated in isolated rural areas, where the village headmen are unable to provide male porters for the Burmese Army. In such villages, the village headmen are also often accused of being rebel-supporters. Like most adult males, they often flee when the Burmese Army arrive in their village. In the same way, children are often utilized as porters to compensate for the shortfall in adult male porter numbers. Like adult male porters, women and children porters are subject to employment as human shields and land mine sweepers. (Source: HURFOM)

1.6 Forced Labor for Military Bases

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

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

Each village has to send several people on rotating shifts of three to five days to each military camp in their area for miscellaneous forced labor, which is sometimes referred to as 'patrol'. This labor routinely includes clearing scrub and grass in and around the camp, maintaining barracks, digging and maintaining trenches and bunkers, building fences and man-traps, cutting firewood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning, and delivering messages to other military camps and order letters to local villages.

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

1.7 Porters Injured or Killed

(See also Extra-judicial killing and Summary Execution chapter)

Shan State

On 8 August 2002, one 26-year-old defector reported that he spent five years in the army as a private and that while battalions were provided prisoner porters, more were recruited in villages. Village headmen, he said, would be told how many porters were needed, even though no one suitable might be left in the village. If a family refused the village headman would be beaten. In his five years, he said he saw porters die of exhaustion or malaria and said the practice seems common in the army. Malaria is common among soldiers, he said. Other illnesses both soldiers and porters are susceptible to include stomach problems and dysentery.

A 19-year-old defector who left the army in May described continuing human rights abuses in the army as well as support for opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi among the lower ranks. He said he saw human porters being used, although he said the practice has been reduced. He said when he freed three porters, two sergeants beat him with rifle butts and their fists. Each battalion of about 150 to 200 men is allocated between 70 and 80 porters, he said. He also described forced recruitment, saying one method involves soldiers recruiting male villagers before going to front lines. Villagers who refuse can be beaten, he said, although he said some of these practices have declined because of negative publicity.

A 20-year-old defector also reported human rights abuses in his unit, which carried supplies and letters to the front. His unit recruited porters to carry equipment and other tasks, he said. If a porter was too slow, he said, he would be kicked. In addition, he said sergeants took

money from civilians until a captain made them return it. His unit subsequently became attached to a unit notorious for forcing porters to act as human minesweepers. This defector said he deserted because the captain and sergeant hit and beat soldiers and because soldiers, who were not allowed to rest, were always exhausted from carrying supplies.

According to the report's description of an interview with a Shan porter who escaped from the army, he traveled 30 miles the first day as a porter. Officers and soldiers ate first and only if there was any food left were the porters allowed to eat. The porter reportedly said he often ate less than a handful of rice daily and reported beatings for such reasons as asking for food or water. When three porters were captured after an escape attempt, they were all killed as punishment, according to the report. The Shan, later given a choice between joining the army or jail, joined the army. According to the report, he said that the soldiers had little food or water. There were apparently no toilet facilities and when they went to the jungle to relieve themselves they were forced to remove all of their clothing to ensure they would not escape. According to the report, one trainee tried to escape and officers forced the 200 trainees to beat the escapee, who is described as having then needed two weeks of hospitalization. Trainees who refused were beaten themselves, according to the report, and the escapee was forced to pay for his medical treatment.

According to one diplomatic source, human rights abuses have not been limited to the ethnic areas. This source said there has been a resumption of press-ganging for portering, despite a recent lull in the practice. This source cited new reports in recent months of people being picked up in Rangoon and elsewhere in the country. He said he was not sure if the reports were a temporary blip or not. He said, though, that in Rangoon men were being warned not to be out late at night. (Source: UN Wire, August 8, 2002)

On 6 January 2002, Aa Li (m), aged 26 and Aa Ming (m), aged 29, 2 Akha villagers from Ho Naa village in Murng-Phyak township, were on the way near their village as they were returning from their farm when they were seized by a passing column of about 60 SPDC troops from IB221. They were then forced to carry military things with the other 18-19 civilians already serving as porters. After a couple of days, on 8 February, there was a battle between SPDC troops and SSA-S (Shan State Army - South) troops in which one of the SPDC troops' stronghold manned by IB244 at Me Zok village in Murng Tum tract, Murng-Sart township, was overrun by the latter.

On hearing the news, the IB221 column which was at that moment resting at Murng Kok immediately started off again. In order to be in time to help the IB244 troops take back the stronghold, the IB221 troops marched towards Murng Tum as fast as they could, day and night, forcing the porters to go fast and scolding and beating those who lagged behind. When they reached a place between Kawng Mon and Phaktu Murng villages in the evening at dusk, Aa Li and Aa Ming collapsed from exhaustion and dehydration. The SPDC troops ordered them to get up, but they could not, and the troops pulled them up by the hands, but they fell down again and lay on the ground as if they were dead.

The troops then kicked the 2 Akha men with their boots and beat them with their rifle butts repeatedly on their heads, necks and waists for about 15 minutes until they were both soaked in blood, and finally pushed them down the side of the road and continued to march towards Murng-Sart. When the 2 Akha men were later found by villagers from Kawng Mon, the closest village to the site of the incident, both of them were already dead. Their bodies were then buried by the Kawng Mon villagers. (Source: SHRF)

On 7 January 2002, SPDC troops from Murng-Paeng-based IB43 came to Murng-Ton township and conscripted 140 civilians in the area to serve as porters for the military. The civilian porters were put on trucks and taken to Murng-Sart township and were forced to carry heavy loads of military rations and ammunition to the Loi Laang area close to the border with Thailand. At one point, a porter named Lung Phong, male, aged 53, stumbled and rolled down a mountain slope together with his load. Some SPDC troops then ran after him, seized him and, accusing him of trying to run away, beat him severely several times until he lost consciousness. The troops left the unconscious porter in the jungle and continued their journey. It is not yet known whether Lung Phong has returned home, and whether he is dead or still alive. (Source: SHRF)

On 11 January 2002, a patrol of 40-45 SPDC troops from IB246 that was patrolling the rural areas of Kun-Hing town came upon a remote farm on the bank of the Nam Pang river and found the following people hiding in the farm;

1. Lung La (m), aged 65
2. Zaai Zarm Nyunt (m), " 28
3. Naang Nyo (f), " 21
4. Zaai Thun Nae (m), " 14
5. Naang Keng (f), " 11
6. Naang Num (f), " 8
7. Zaai Leng (m), " 4
8. Naang Kaeng Kham (f), " 1

This family had been hiding in the jungle since 1997 when their village, Kun Pu, in Kun Pu village tract, was forced to relocate by Burmese army troops, and had managed to survive by secretly growing small amounts of rice and gathering wild vegetables in the jungle until the SPDC troops came upon them on 11 January 2002.

The SPDC troops took all they found at the farm, including rice, other food items, chicken and pigs etc. They also conscripted Zaai Zarm Nyunt and Naang Nyo to serve as porters. Just before they left, the troops told Lung La to take the children and go to either Kun-Hing town or Ka Li village and stay there and not to come back to the farm. When there was still no sign of Zaai Zarm Nyunt and Naang Nyo after Lung La had gone to Ka Li village with the children and had waited for them for 15-16 days, with the help of some village leaders of Ka Li village, he went to the IB246 base to enquire about them. They went to the IB246 base 3-4 times but each time they got there they were not able to find anyone with authority to answer their questions.

Some time later, Zaai Phe (not his real name) who had been forced to serve the military in the same patrol told Lung La that during his 21-day forced labour service, the SPDC troops had killed 8 men and that included Zaai Zarm Nyunt, and although Naang Nyo was still alive when he was released, he overheard the troops say that they intended to kill him sometime later. According to Zaai Phe, each time the troops killed a man, they tried to justify their actions by saying that if they did not kill him, he would later only become a Shan soldier and fight them back. So when there is any excuse, however slight it may be, they should kill as many Shan men as possible. (Source: SHRF)

On 28 February 2002, SPDC troops from IB66 under the command of the commander of Company No.3, Capt. Htun Myint, that were stationed at Kho Lam village in Nam-Zarng township, forcibly conscripted 18 civilian porters from among the displaced villagers who

had been forced to relocate to Kho Lam village relocation site in 1997-1998 by the Burmese army troops. Among the forcibly conscripted porters was one Lung Awng Thun, male, aged 48, who had just recovered from a 5-6-day illness when he was taken to serve as a porter. The porters were forced to carry heavy loads of military items and to go with the said military column towards Kun-Hing and Murng-Nai townships. After several hours of having to walk quickly with heavy loads and without rest, Lung Awng Thun became too exhausted to go on and asked for permission to rest for a few minutes. But the troops did not allow him to rest and forced him to go on with the other porters. Lung Awng Thun, however, kept asking for permission to rest after every few steps until one of the troops became angry and kicked him, and he staggered off the road and fell down. One of the porters who saw the incident was Lung Awng Thun's nephew, Zaa Kam, male, aged 20. As he saw Lung Awng Thun fall down, Zaa Kam put down his load and ran to his uncle and tried to help him up. As Zaa Kam was holding his uncle in his lap, the SPDC troops beat both of them to death with big heavy sticks, at a place about 30 yards from the edge of Kot Pung village, a deserted village in Kaeng Kham tract which had been forced to move to the outskirts of Kun-Hing town in 1996-1997 by the Burmese army troops. (Source: SHRF)

On 7 June 2002, a column of SPDC troops from Kaeng-Tung-based LIB314 conscripted over 130 people from Wan Kaad, Wan Lao, Nawng Pun, Pa Waai, Murng Lung, Murng Kok Tai and Murng Kok Nur villages in Murng Kok village tract, Murng-Sart township. The troops conscripted the villagers on their way from Kaeng-Tung to the Loi Taw Kham area in Ta-Khi-Laek township where SPDC troops and Shan resistance troops were engaging in fierce fighting. The conscripted porters were gathered at a Buddhist temple in Murng Lung village and from there were forced to carry military rations and ammunition and set out by way of Phaktu Murng village tract, Thalang village tract, Murng Kaan village tract in Murng-Sart township and into the area of Loi Taw Kham village tract in Ta-Khi-Laek township.

In Loi Taw Kham area, the SPDC troops, with the 130 civilian porters, stopped in the jungle and camped at a place not very far from Loi Lam hill and also not very far from the site where the fighting between SPDC troops and Shan resistance troops was taking place. The porters were forced to stay at that jungle camp and frequently take food and ammunition to the SPDC soldiers fighting at the front line. After a few days many porters became weak and ill, mainly due to the cold caused by getting wet in the rains, insufficient food, inadequate rest and sleep. In addition, there was nothing to protect them from the jungle mosquitos. About a week later, starting from 14 June, the porters started to die one after another. When the porters were released on 20-June, at least 7 porters had already died of weakness and fever. Among those who died were:

1. Lung Saam Kham (m), aged 49, from Murng Kok Tai village, Murng Kok village tract, Murng-Sart township
2. Zaa Zaen Seng (m), aged 36, from Nawng Pun village, Murng Kok village tract, Murng-Sart township

During the to-and-fro trips between the camp and the front line, several porters were kicked and beaten because they could not go fast enough or unable to carry much. Among those who were beaten were:

1. Ai Pan (m), aged 26, from Murng Lung village, Murng Lung village tract, Murng-Sart township
2. Zaa Kam (m), aged 26, from Wan Kaad village, Murng Lung village tract, Murng-Sart township

3. Lung La (m), aged 50, from Wan Kaad village, Murng Lung village tract, Murng-Sart township. (Source: SHRF)

Mon State

On 12 January 2002, when fighting broke out between SPDC troops from IB No. 201 and KNLA troops in Three Pagoda Pass area, two Karen porters from Lay-poe village were killed, said an escaped porter. IB No. 201 and LIB No. 550 have operated military operations along Three Pagoda Pass - Thanbyuzayat motor road in launching their military offensives against KNLA and the Mon splinter group, MRA. During this offensive, about 60 troops of IB No. 201 led by Lt. Col. Myo Aung, arrested some villagers along the road and in villages where they went and brought them to carry ammunition and food supplies. The soldiers also arrested about 10 porters on 11 January, when they went into Lay-poe village. When the troops moved to Taung-zon area, fighting broke out on the road. The two porters died from serious injuries after the fighting. The porters were used to walk in advance of the troops and that is why they were shot. Trucks that were along the road were forced to carry some of the soldiers and the injured porters to Three Pagoda Pass hospital for treatment. (Source: HURFOM)

Karen State

On 28 June 2002, a porter looted a gun and opened fire on the soldiers of the column No.1 led by Regiment Commander Major Myint Lwin under the control of Brigade No. 88. The result was the death of seven soldiers including an officer. He then committed suicide. The porter did this because of being asked to carry an excessive load, of being tortured, of receiving insufficient food, of being forced to work beyond the required period, and of being scolded based on a bias against Karen people. According to a recent report, the house that belonged to this porter was burnt down on the directive of the Head Quarters of Brigade No.88. (ABSDF)

On 4 August 2002 at 5:30 pm, troops from SPDC LIB 588, led by battalion commander, major Myo Hlaing took village head Saw My Than, (M, 34) son of U Kyaw Hta in Win-yae Township as a guide and shot him to death beside the Kho-tu-ta-lo road. (Source: KIC)

1.8 Forced Labor - partial list of incidents 2002

Portering

Mon State

On 4 February 2002, 40 troops of LIB No. 299 led by Maj. Ngwe Oo, in the southern part of Ye Township, took about 15 villagers as porters on a 5 day long operation. On that day, the LIB 299 commander asked 5 porters each from three Mon villages, Hangan, Kaw-hlaing and Singu, which are situated in Ye Township. They instructed the village headmen to send the villagers to their headquarters near Hangan village. According to a porter who arrived back to the village after 5 days, the soldiers forced the porters to climb many mountains with heavy load on their backs. The soldiers also shouted at the porters to walk quickly like soldiers. He,

a porter from Hangan village, also added that he met a 60 year old porter from Singu village who could not walk fast because he was old and weak.

Because that porter could not manage to walk fast Maj. Ngwe Oo kicked the man three times and then released him by giving him 200 kyat. According to another villager from Hangan, the village has frequently provided porters to LIB No. 299 since January 2002. He said, the village headman has provided 2 trucks for the army battalion HQ and 5 porters to work on their base. This conscription of villagers has been on a daily basis. Every household in Hangan village had to pay porter fees even when the LIB No. 299 had no military activity. When they launched an operation in the area, they asked both porters to carry their food supplies and ammunition and pay porters fee for their expenses. The porter fee was 500 kyat from every house. (Source: HURFOM)

Since early April 2002, SPDC's Engineering Regiment from Southeast Command based in Moulmein, the capital of Mon State, started building a motor road. Two military battalions from Ye Township have been responsible for the security of the road. "When the soldiers from IB No. 106, that are based in Morkanin village of Ye Township went into our village, there were about 40 porters together with them to carry ammunition and food supplies. When they were taking a rest in our village, I also talked with one porter and he said he was arrested from the southern part of Ye Township," said an eye-witness from a Mon village near the border. The soldiers brought these porters along with them without release. They were forced to be in porter service in appalling conditions for over one-month. The witness added that they were not fed enough food. (Source: HURFOM)

On 25 June 2002, when the troops of LIB No. 586, which is under the command of MOMC No. 19, launched an offensive in the southern part of Ye Township, the Burmese soldiers arrested many porters from Yin-ye village and demanded porter fees. They arrested all the villagers and farmers who they saw in the village and used them as porters to carry ammunition and food supplies. They arrested nearly 20 villagers and used them as porters. When they arrived in the village, the commander called the village headmen and asked them to pay porter fees if the villagers would not like to be porters. The soldiers asked the village headmen to pay them 2,000 kyat from every household immediately.

The commander also complained to the village headmen, "you are also collecting funds for rebels. We are defending your security, why don't you pay us?" The headmen had no choice and had to collect for them. The village has about 400 households and most of them are poor fishermen. The commander and his troops also waited for one night until they got the complete amount of money from the villagers. The next day, after receiving money, the troops took 20 porters along with them and returned to their base. They decided to not launch an operation because it was not good to carry a lot of money to the frontline. (Source: HURFOM)

On 9 November 2002, when Burmese Army troops entered Khaw-za village, in the southern part of Ye Township, Mon State, they tried to arrest some men to use as porters. Instead, they arrested about 30 women and forced them to carry their food supplies and used them to walk in advance as human-shields. The Burmese troops thought that it was too dangerous to walk alone along the road to Ying-ye village they could be attacked. Khaw-za and Ying-ye village were over 10 miles apart, so they walked for several hours. To prevent attack and to avoid casualties to the troops, the SPDC soldiers made the women walk in advance. (Source: HURFOM)

On 7 December 2002, troops from LIB 506 arrested about 50 porters in the area outside of Three Pagoda Pass border town. When they arrived near Kyaw-palu village, in the southern part of the Town, they also arrested a 16 year old Mon boy named Mehm Krat Khakao. The boy was a high school student who attended a Mon national school. He stayed in a village under NMSP control where the Burmese Army does not arrest porters. When he was arrested he explained that he was a student but the soldiers did not release him. They said that he needed to carry ammunition for them regardless of whether he was a student or a villager. They put 5 motor shells on his back and made him carry for one day. The weight of the 5 motor shells was about 40 Kilograms and very heavy for a young boy. Although he asked to take a rest, the soldiers did not allow him to do so. After the village headmen found out that the student was arrested, they petitioned the commanders to release him, which the soldiers agreed to do. (Source: HURFOM)

Karenni State

Two Military Porters Escape

On 1 February 2002, two Burmese military porters escaped to the Karenni Army (KA), according to reports by a KA source. The two escapees were Thein Shwe, 32, from Pyaw Bew, Yamethin Province, and Htun Wei, 37, from Myaukywafoh, Ngazon Township. They were both taken from Myinchan prison to work as porters for LIB No. 84. Thein Shwe's prison number was 6068 and Htun Wei's number was 6058. They managed to escape while they were carrying military rations at May Yuu Stream, early on 16 February.

They had both been sentenced to two years in prison for a crime they committed on 28 December 2001. They saw around 300 prisoners from Mandalay, Meithilar, Yamethin and Myinchan. On 18 January 2002 they were brought along with 48 other prisoners to Loikaw by LIB No. 84 in order to serve as military porters. Before going to the frontline, they were divided into two groups. Each group consisted of 25 prisoners. One group went with LIB No. 84 column 1 to Mae Se and the second group with LIB No. 84 column 2 to the eastern part of the Salween River. Each porter was forced to carry 1½ baskets of rice and shells. The troops only provided one milk-tin of rice for two porters per day, and the porters gradually became weaker and weaker. Some were beaten and kicked by the troops when they were unable to walk any more.

The two men reported that four of them made their escape but the other two had run off in different directions. Thein Shwe added that only the two of them were lucky enough to have been found by the Karenni forces on the Salween riverbank, thus, saving their lives. (Source: KNAHR)

On 24 April 2002, a unit of Burmese troops from IB No. 261 arrived at Wam Ngaw village. They were looking for three of their troops who had recently deserted. The troops ordered all villagers to search for the deserters nearby and took 30 villagers to carry their military rations and ammunition to the Ron River. (Source: KNAHR)

Shan State

On 14 February 2002, SPDC troops of IB65 of Murng-Ton led by commander Han Sein conscripted 150 villagers from the following village tracts in Murng-Ton township to serve as porters for the military.

1. Mae Ken village tract had to provide 50 villagers
2. Murng Haang village tract had to provide 50 villagers
3. Pung Pa Khem village tract had to provide 50 villagers

Altogether 150 villagers were trucked to the UWSA (United Wa State Army) base at Huay Nam Hoo Khun village and were forced to serve as unpaid porters to transport military things from there to an SPDC stronghold at Paa Khee near the border with Thailand. The villagers had to carry heavy loads of rice, all sorts of food stuff and military rations, ammunition and artillery shells from the Wa base at Nam Hoo Khun up to the Paa Khee SPDC stronghold every day starting from 16 February. (Source: SHRF)

On 25 February 2002, 600 Burmese troops arrived at Nakawngmu, opposite Chiangdao District, Chiangmai Province, in 30 Chinese six-wheeled lorries and collected more than a hundred porters including women. Another group of 150 porters (50 each from Maeken, Mongharn and Poongpakhem tracts) who were captured around 15 February were engaged in carrying supplies from Namhukhun, east of Poongpakhem, to Pakhee outpost. (Source: S.H.A.N.)

On 27 February 2002, people in Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township, including many women who were mothers of small children, were conscripted by a column of SPDC troops from LIB519 to serve the military as unpaid porters for 9 consecutive days, during which the women were raped at night by the troops. A column of SPDC troops from Murng-Ton-based LIB519, led by Capt. Zaw Win, were patrolling the rural areas of Kun-Hing and Murng-Nai township. On the day of the incident, the troops came to Kaeng-Tawng area in Murng-Nai township and conscripted more civilian porters.

These SPDC troops did not even notify the village and village tract leaders about their conscripting of civilian porters in the area. It was late in the morning and most men had gone to work elsewhere and were not to be found in their houses. The troops took the women who could not go to work with their men because they had small children. The civilian porters were forced to carry military rations, ammunition and clothes etc., starting from Ton Hung village relocation site in Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township, to Murng-Pan town in Murng-Pan township. The journey took about 9 days from 27 February to 7 March 2002. During the journey, they stopped to rest at night either in the jungle or deserted villages. During every night, all the women were said to have been raped by the SPDC troops.

The following are some of the known civilian porters conscripted from Kaeng-Tawng area on that occasion:

1. Naang Kham (f) (not her real name), aged 32, had a 10-month-old baby
2. Naang Mya (f) (not her real name), aged 43, had a 1-year-old child
3. Naang U (f) (not her real name), aged 27, had a 7-month-old baby
4. Naang Myint (f) (not her real name), aged 28, had a 2-year-old child
5. Naang Paang (f) (not her real name), aged 36, had a 2-year-old child
6. Naang Zaam (f) (not her real name), aged 31, had a 3-year-old child
7. Naang Yong (f) (not her real name), aged 46, had a 3-year-old child

8. Naang Zern (f) (not her real name), aged 28, had a 1-year-old child
9. Naang Tong (f) (not her real name), aged 19, had a 7-month-old baby
10. Zaai Mawng Nyunt (m), aged 17
11. Zaai Mung (m), aged 19
12. Zaai Taan (m), aged 18
13. Lung Awng Sa (m), aged 51
14. Lung Kham Leng (m), aged 53 (Source: SHRF)

On 24 May 2002, SPDC troops from LIB514, acting on the order of Commander Hla Myint, forcibly rounded up 83 civilian porters in Murng-Kerng town, Murng-Kerng township, to be used in military operations. The porters were immediately put on trucks and set off via Lai-Kha, Nam-Zarng, Murng-Nai and Murng-Pan townships to Murng-Ton township, and through Murng Kyawt area to Murng Taw, Murng Thaa and Huay Yaa areas near the border with Thailand's Chiangmai province where SPDC troops and Shan resistance troops were engaging in fierce battles. At the time of this report, in early August, only 51 out of the 83 civilian porters had returned home intact. 12 were wounded during the porter service and were treated at Nam-Zarng town hospital, and some of them are said to be still being treated at the hospital after undergoing limb amputations. The rest, 20 of them, are missing. They have not returned home and they are not among the wounded; they have disappeared. Most of the porters who have returned believed that the missing 20 would not return and consoled their relatives not to expect them, because they had most probably all died while serving as porters.

According to some witnesses, the conditions of the wounded were not good and many of them would become disabled for life and would be difficult to work to support themselves. The SPDC troops have not mentioned anything about the missing porters and, when asked by their relatives, said that it was other groups of SPDC troops that had taken them away. Not only did the relatives of the dead receive no consolation, let alone compensation, from the military, the wounded also received no additional help except for simply being dumped at the hospital in Nam-Zarng town. (Source: SHRF)

On 15 June 2002, about 300 prisoners from the prison in Kaeng-Tung town were taken by the SPDC troops from IB244 and IB245 and transported to Murng-Sart by 11-12 trucks which had no roofs nor covers so that the prisoners had to bear the rain and sun the whole way. Since the prisoners were forced to wear leg shackles, it was very difficult for them to move around and get up and down from the trucks.

On 16 June 2002, they were then trucked to the Murng Kaan area in Murng-Sart township, where about 400-500 prisoners from other prisons were already gathered ahead of them.

On 17 June 2002, the prisoners were forced to carry heavy loads of rations and ammunition and marched towards Loi Taw Kham area in Ta-Khi-Laek township where fierce battles between SPDC troops and Shan resistance troops were taking place. The prisoners had to work in the rain and sun without enough food and rest, and with their shackles on, causing many to get sick and exhausted. Many were said to have died of illness during the porter service, while some died and were wounded at the battle front. (Source: SHRF)

On 7 June 2002, SPDC troops from LIB529 forcibly conscripted 41 villagers in Paang Kiu village tract in Kaeng-Tung township and forced them to serve as unpaid porters for 7 days.

The porters were from Laao Kai Nur, Laao Kai Tai, Paang Kai, Tong Waa Nur, Tong Waa Tai and Paang Hai villages in Paang Kiu village tract. Once they were gathered at a camp in Paang Kiu village tract, each of the porters was given things for them to carry, including foodstuff, ammunition and other logistics, and were ordered to make poles and ropes and arrange the things so that they could be carried on shoulder poles. The porters and their loads were then put on trucks and taken to the base of LIB529.

On 8 June 2002, a column of SPDC troops, with the 41 civilian porters and their loads, set out on foot towards Murng-Sart township. They marched through Murng Sen and Murng Ing village tracts in Kaeng-Tung township, and through Murng Kok, Murng Lung, Phaktu Murng and Thalaang village tracts in Murng-Sart township. They finally stopped at Me Zok village in Murng Kaan village tract, Murng-Sart township. The journey took 5 days to get to Me Zok where they rested for 2 days, after which the civilian porters were released. During the 5-day journey, they marched all day and stopped at a village each night. The SPDC troops ordered the villagers of the village where they stopped for the night to kill pigs and chickens and cook food for them. The civilian porters, however, were given 2 meals per day with only salt and boiled beans. (Source: SHRF)

On 14 July 2002, SPDC troops from LIB514, under the command of Commander Hla Myint, surrounded the market place in Murng-Kerng town and rounded up 57 civilian men to be used as porters. On 15 July, the SPDC troops divided into 3 columns and set out in different directions to patrol the rural areas in Murng-Kerng township. In one of the military columns, there were Lung Wan, aged 53 and Lung Su, aged 50, among the civilian porters. After several days of strenuous labour without enough rest and food, Lung Wan and Lung Su became too weak and tired to continue carrying their heavy loads.

On 20 July 2002, at one point while the military column was marching, Lung Wan and Lung Su became too tired to go on and stopped to rest, putting down their loads on the ground. The SPDC troops thought that they were trying to run away and 3-4 soldiers surrounded each of them and beat and kicked them until they lost consciousness. They were left lying unconsciousness alone in the jungle. Wan and Lung Su managed to get back home after 2 days, walking slowly through the jungle. Even after some days of rest at their homes, the 2 men were said to be still suffering from the beating and exhaustion and could not go out to work. (Source: SHRF)

Karen State

On 4 September 2002 Min Aung Naing, commander of SPDC LID 44, came to Ler-pah-payaw, and destroyed three houses and demanded 25 villagers from Ler Klaw village and 25 villagers from Ta Paw village as porters. (Source: KIC)

On 19 August 2002 troops from SPDC IB 75 column 1, led by battalion commander Nyi Nyi Thein Zan, forcibly gathered 30 Klaw-mi-doe villagers, 12 Ler-kla-doe villagers and 8 Humu-doe villagers, including 15 women, to carry food supplies from Pet-let-wa to Klaw-mee-doe. (Source: KIC)

On 20 June 2002, IB No. 77 troops led by Lt. Col. Myo Lwin and Maj. Kyaw Kyaw Oo arrested about 40 porters to use in military offensives against the KNLA from Wet-nan and Wet-sadon villages of Kya-inn-seikyi Township. The troops went into these two villages, which are close each other and are in a 'free-fire zone', and arrested about 40 villagers

including some women. The soldiers forced them to carry ammunitions and food supplies for 7 days and the commanders said they would release them after that period. While the soldiers had these porters, they launched offensives in 'Kyaik-done' area in the middle part of the township area. After 7 days of offensives, the troops returned to those two villages again. And, when they tried to get another 40 villagers to replace the old porters, they could not because many men and other villagers had fled. So, they used the same porters for another weeks.

One woman porter said that they forced her to carry 4 mortar shells and she was also beaten when she could not climb the mountains like other men porters. She said she also saw the soldiers kill some Karen villagers in some rural villages in Kyaik-done area.

On 2 July 2002, the troops also entered Taung-bauk village and arrested 10 villagers as porters including Nai Halae, who was used as a guide. When he showed a wrong way to to get to a Mon village, he was severely beaten. (Source: HURFOM)

Taungoo District

In January, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit, led by captain Htun Nay Win, based at Than-daung, demanded one person from each of the villages, in the western part of Day-lor area and forced them to go with the army column. The troops told the villagers that any village failing to meet the demand must pay 30,000 kyat. (Source: KIC)

In March 2002, Thet Oo, commander of No. 3 Tactical Command Headquarters seized 282 villagers from Baw-ga-li, Kaw-thay-doe, Peh-kaw-doe, Plaw-doe, Der-do, Ler-kho, Maw-pah-doe and Klay-soe-khee villages to carry 240 sacks of rice from Baw-ga-li to Bu-sa-khee. (Source: KIC)

On 1 March 2002, combined troops of SPDC IB 35, IB 264 and a SPDC guerrilla unit took 24 villagers from Kler-der-ka and 18 from Kler-pa-hti, in the west of Day-lor area to carry food supplies. Soldiers from the guerrilla unit beat up 2 Kler-der-ka villagers, Saw Lee Kwee and Naw Sheh Way. (Source: KIC)

On 6 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 53 demanded 7 villagers from Kler-doe-kha village and 6 villagers from Kler-pa-hti village as porters to carry food supplies for the army to Than-daung Town. Naw Khar Gaw, 33, a pregnant woman, was injured by a truck, which hit her while she was carrying army food supplies for Day-thaw camp. (Source: KIC)

On 7 March 2002, troops from SPDC IB 26, demanded 3 villagers from each village of Kama-po-li, Ma-sa-kaw, Ler-ka-po, Maw-khee and Mae-ka-po-lu villages in Thauk-ye-khat area to carry rice from Htee-tha-saw to Thauk-ye-khat. (Source: KIC)

On 11 March 2002, No.3 Tactical Command commander Thet Oo from the SPDC Southern Command Headquarters demanded villagers' trucks in Baw-ga-li area to haul rice sacks. On 11 April the villager's trucks were forced to carry 240 rice sacks, on 12 March, 240 rice sacks and on 13 March, 540 rice sacks for. Moreover, these troops forced the following villagers to carry food supplies from Baw-ga-li to Bu-sa-khee; 172 villagers from Baw-ga-li village, 42 from Kaw-soe-kho village, 16 from Wa-tho-kho village, 16 from Lar-kho village and 18 from Kley-soe-khee village. On 12 March, these troops demanded 15 more villagers from Kaw-thay doe village and on 13 March they demanded 44 more villagers from the same village to carry food supplies. (Source: KIC)

On 12 March 2002, troops from SPDC IB 264 forced 90 villagers from Peh-kaw-doe, 45 from Maw-ko-doe and 30 from Maw-pa-doe to carry food supplies from Baw-ga-li to Tha-aye-hta village. (Source: KIC)

On 12 March 2002, No.3 Tactical Command commander Thet Oo from the SPDC Southern Command Headquarters demanded villagers to carry rice sacks from Baw-ga-li to Bu-sa-khee. The quota specified for the villages were; Maw-pa-doh 30 sacks, Pwe-kaw-doe 30 sacks, Der-do 30 sacks, Maw-ko-doe 15 sacks, Kaw-thay-khee 30 sacks, Ler-ko 15 sacks and Wah-tho-kho 15 sacks. Moreover, the army forced villagers' trucks in Baw-ga-li and Kaw-thay-doe to carry food supplies for the army to Bu-sa-khee every day. The villagers had to take their own food with them. (Source: KIC)

On 18 March 2002, Thet Naing of southern command forced; 86 Baw-ga-li villagers, 51 Kaw-thay-doe villagers, 10 Ku-plaw-doe villagers, 10 Ler-ko villagers and 40 Kaw-soe-ko villagers to carry military supplies to Bu-sa-khee camp. On 20 March, they forced 32 Wah-tho-ko villagers to carry military supplies to Bu-sa-khee camp again. (Source: KIC)

On 23 March 2002, Thet Oo of southern command forced 7 trucks from Baw-ga-li and Kaw-thay-doe villages to take military supplies to Bu-sa-khee camp. (Source: KIC)

On 30 March 2002, column commander Hla Zaw Oo of SPDC IB 48, forced 21 people from Kaw-thay-doe village to clear roads from Ta-kot-thay-day to Kaw-thay-doe camp. All but one of the villagers were female, and two were under the age of 18. (Source: KIC)

On 1 April 2002, SPDC troops led by No. 3 Operation Command Commander Kyin Maung Htun, G-2 Thet Oo and G-3 Lin Zaw Oo, under the SPDC Southern Command, locked up truck owner Naw Ma Mar of Kaw-thay-doe village in a detention cell at 3 Operation Command. The reason for the detention was failing to transport military supplies with her truck to Bu-hsa-khee. The No. 3 Operation Command Commander Kyin Maung Htun ordered Baw-ga-li and Bu-hsa-khee villagers to complete transporting military supplies to Bu-hsa-khee within a few days. Troops led by captain Tin Ko Ko forced villagers to transport supplies for the army both day and night. Troops from SPDC IB 92 came to Klaw-mee-doe village and took 6 villagers as porters and 2 villagers as runners. Moreover, the troops also demanded 300 kyat as runner fees from each villager making a total of 74,400 kyat per month. Column 2 of SPDC IB 92 ordered 40 to 50 villagers twice per month to carry food supplies for the army from Pa-let-wa to Klaw-me-doe and as a result villagers had no time to do their own work. (Source: KIC)

On 16 May 2002, Battalion Commander Tin Maung Shwe and battalion second in command Kyaw Soe of SPDC IB 26 forcibly took 3 villagers from Kler-doe-ka, 6 from Kler-pa-hti, 6 from Tha-ba-per and 11 from Ka-thwee-dee villages and forced them to carry military supplies to their camp at Than-daung. (Source: KIC)

On 20 May 2002, troops from SPDC IB 39 led by battalion commander Soe Win Naing ordered Kaw-thay-doe villagers to carry food supplies to Naw-soe military camp. The villagers were the following: Naw Sheh Ree Kee 20, daughter of Saw Hsa Moo Loo; Naw Bazaw Paw 23, daughter of Saw Maung Koo; Naw Peh Koo Loo 30, daughter of Saw Makung Loo; Naw Bo Say 20, daughter of Saw Doo Maung; Naw Ka Meh 35, daughter of Saw Maung Than; Naw Ta Lu Lu 16, daughter of Saw Ta Mlar; Naw Sha Shu 18, daughter of Saw Ta Kleh; Saw Khaw Hu 43, son of saw Whoh Lah; Naw Lu Lu 30, daughter of Saw

Kah Pa Ta; Saw Ta Klee Kla 38, son of Saw Beh Ber; Naw Hla Cho 35, daughter of Saw Hai Per; Naw Ah May 40, daughter of Saw Moo Bay; Naw Nay Nay 19, daughter of Saw Eh Mwee; and Naw Koo Ku 39, daughter of Saw Pa Pee Pi. (Source: KIC)

On 2 June 2002, troops from SPDC IB 75 led by company commander Than Taik Soe and Aung Soe forced 40 Klaw-mee-doe villagers, 20 Ler-kla-doe villagers and 20 Plo-mu-doe villagers to carry food supplies to Pa-let-wa village. (Source: KIC)

On 1 July 2002, Kyaw Zaw Han of a SPDC guerrilla unit forced 15 villagers from Ler-hgi-kho village and 80 villagers from Kler-doe-kah area to carry food supplies from Than-daung township to Day-lo bridge. (Source: KIC)

On 5 July 2002, troops from SPDC IB-39 led by Bo Myint Aung force 21 villagers from Gor-thay-doe village to carry food supplies from Gor-thay-doe to Bu-hsa-khee. (Source: KIC)

On 19 August 2002, troops from SPDC IB 75 column 1 led by Battalion Commander Nyi Nyi Thein Zan forcibly gathered 30 Klaw-mi-doe villagers, 12 Ler-kla-doe villagers and 8 Hu-mu-doe villagers, including 15 women, to carry food supplies from Pet-let-wa to Klaw-mee-doe. (Source: KIC)

On 27 August 2002, Bo Kyaw Oo of SPDC LIB 73 forced Kaw-thay-doe villagers to carry food supplies from Naw-soe to Bu-has-khee. The villages forced to porter were the following: Maung Oo (M, 33), son of Saw Leh Der; Naw Tin Kyi (F, 32), daughter of Saw Maung Toe; Naw Hla Shwe (F, 45), daughter of Saw Maung Toe; Saw Keh Htoe (M, 39), son of Saw Pah Doo; Naw Noh Noe, daughter of Saw Aye Htun; and Naw Tah Noo (F, 29) daughter of Ta Peh Pa. (Source: KIC)

On 6 September 2002, troops from SPDC battalions, IB 53, 39 and 73 based at Naw-soe area seized Kaw-thay-doe villagers and forced them to carry military food supplies to Naw Soe camp. The villagers seized were the following: Naw Heh Kreet (F, 30) daughter of Saw Koo Noo; Naw Hsa Paw (F, 25), daughter of Saw Meh Kay; Naw Ray (F, 53), daughter of Saw Ray Day; Naw Paw (F, 43) daughter of Saw Ta Kler Ler; Saw Pa Oo (M, 20), son of Saw Ta Po Nyet; Saw Toe Reh (M, 40) son of Saw Htoo Say; Saw Ta Koo Ku (M, 30) son of Saw Ta Moe Toe; and Saw Gay Moo (M, 34) son of Saw Pah Doo. (Source: KIC)

On 11 September 2002, troops from SPDC IB 73, led by Bo Hla Saw Oo seized the following Kaw-thay-doe villagers to carry food supplies to Naw-soe camp:

1. Saw Tay Kaw Day, 42, son of Saw Ko Maung,
2. Ngwe Win, 35, son of Saw Ko Lah,
3. Saw Tak Loo Klu, 26, son of Saw Bu Gaw,
4. Saw Ah Win, 33, son of Toe Moo,
5. Naw Ta Eh, 28, daughter of Saw Maung Ba,
6. Naw Esther, 40, daughter of Saw Ngwe Mya,
7. Saw Htoo Paw, 25, son of Saw Maung Loo,
8. Saw Klu Wah, 15, son of Saw Ta Koo Ka,
9. Naw Ka Sha, 28, daughter of Saw Mya Loe,
10. Saw Po Heh, 28, son of Saw Po Htoo,
11. Saw Eh Htoo Gay, 21, son of Saw Kay,
12. Saw Koo Nu, 28, son of Saw Kah Mata,
13. Naw Say Heh, 22, daughter of Saw Johnny,

14. Saw Hai Pwe, 26, son of Saw Ta Star,
15. Saw Po Wah, 41, son of Saw Ta Wah Lah,
16. Naw Mah, 34, daughter of Saw Maung,
17. Saw Po Kwah, 38, son of Saw Say Hai,
18. Saw Wah Wah, 35, son of Saw Moe Toe,
19. Naw Krit Ma, 28, daughter of Saw Ta Pah,
20. Naw Shai Ree Moo, 25, daughter of Saw Ko Dway,
21. Saw Meh, 48, son of Saw Kray Kray, and
22. Naw Say Say, daughter of Saw Pwe Kaw. (Source: KIC)

From 23 to 29 September 2002, SPDC battalion IB 124 forced 80 villagers from Khone-htaing village tract, 80 from Leik-pya-gyi village tract, 80 from Leik-pya-galay village tract and 80 from Ta-wah-lor-khee village tract to carry military food supplies from Than-daung to Day-lor bridge. The army took a total of 320 villagers from Than-daung Township. (Source: KIC)

On 13 October 2002, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit, led by Si Thu Lwin, forced 10 villagers of Sa-ta-lo-khe village and 10 from Kaw-law-kah village in Than-daung Township to carry military supplies from Twenty-mile village to Htee-ta-pu village. (Source: KNU)

On 14 October 2002, SPDC troops in Tan-ta-bin Township forced Kaw-thay-doe villagers to carry military food supplies to Naw-soe camp. The victims were the following: Naw Meh (39) daughter of Saw Maung Dah; Saw Ta Loo Lu (15), son of Saw Maung Wah; Naw Boe Say, (22) daughter of Saw Doo Maung; Naw Lah Lar (38), daughter of Saw Ta Kaw Raw; Saw Maung Oo (32), son of Saw Let Ter; Naw Peh Leh Lor (39), daughter of Saw Ta Wi Lah; Saw Ta Kroo Kru (32), son of Saw Bu Gay; Naw Saw Say (40), daughter of Saw Pweh Kaw; and Naw Jully (45), daughter of Saw Moh Pler. (Source: KIC)

On 17 October 2002, troops from SPDC IB 53, seized Kaw-thay-doe villagers of Tan-da-bin township to carry rations to Naw-soe military camp. The villagers were:

1. Saw Jakob, 37, son of Saw Pa Doo,
2. Naw Aw Kray 25, daughter of Saw Ta Per,
3. Naw Wah Wa 35, daughter of Saw Moe Day and
4. Naw Noe Kree 45, daughter of Saw Kray. (Source: KIC)

On 21 October 2002, troops from a SPDC guerrilla unit led by Naung Naung forced 10 villagers from Htee-ta-pu village, Than-daung township, to carry military rations from Pet-let-wa to Ka-thaw-pwe. (Source: KIC)

On 28 October 2002, company commander Win Tin of SPDC IB 53, forced 25 villagers of Kaw-thay-doe village, Tan-da-bin township, to carry military ration from Kaw-thay-doe to Naw-soe. On their way back from Naw-soe to Kaw-thay-doe village, these villagers were forced to carry military supplies. The villagers who were forced to carry supplies were:

1. Saw Moo Gay 30, son of Saw Pa Doo,
2. Saw Ta Koo Ky 43, son of Saw Ta Moe Toe,
3. Naw Pya Pya 23, daughter of Saw Po Nyeh,
4. Naw Heh Kru 30, daughter of Saw Htoo Meh,
5. Naw Hah Nay Blut 21, daughter of Saw Htoo Si,
6. Saw Toe Reh 35, son of Saw Htoo Si,
7. Saw Taw Ter 28, son of Saw Sway Taw,
8. Naw Say Ler Pao 43, daughter of Saw Ta Kreh Neh,

9. Naw Ka Ree 38, daughter of Saw Mya Tin,
10. Saw Ta Blut Blut 29, son of Saw Thauk Kya,
11. Naw Tee Mee 21, daughter of Saw Teh Ter,
12. Saw Man Kya 26, son of Saw Ho Peh,
13. Saw Ta Kraw Kror 30, son of Saw Ho Peh,
14. Saw Htoo Pler 22, son of Saw Lah Lar,
15. Naw Kuu Ku 23, daughter of Saw Htoo Doh,
16. Naw Sa Ya 28, daughter of Saw Karenni,
17. Saw Nay Po 30, son of Saw Ah Mi,
18. Saw Ta She 32, son of Saw Pa Ler.
19. Naw Si Na 25, daughter of Saw Ta Brownny.
20. Naw Lu Dee 23, daughter of Saw Lo Say.
21. Naw Aw Koo 20, daughter of Saw Ta Koo Loo,
22. Naw Ka Sha 28, daughter of Saw Mya Po.
23. Saw Lay Htoo 30, son of Saw Po Toe,
24. Naw Koo Ku 38, daughter of Saw Doe Mar and
25. Saw Maung Win 39, son of Saw Kaw Kaw. (Source: KIC)

On 14 November 2002, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit led by Si Thu demanded 10 villagers each from Kaw-law-ka village, Sa-ba-lor-khee village and Ler-gi-kho village in Than-daung township for carrying food supplies from Than-daung to Ler-gu-kho-doe-ka. (Source: KIC)

Tha-ton District

On 22 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 108 led by battalion commander Myint Aung came to Ta-u-khee village of Belin Township and looted 30,000 kyats from Ti Po Klaw and also demanded rice from other villagers. In addition, they demanded 10 villagers as porters to go along with the army column. (Source: KIC)

On 25 May 2002, a column of SPDC LIB 1 demanded 10 villagers from Paw-khee village as porters and took them to Nan-gyi village. (Source: KIC)

On 28 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 1 led by Bo Mya Thaung came to Paw-khee area and extorted from the villagers. They tied up Paw-khee villager Saw Khin Say with a rope, suspended him upside down and tortured him by cutting his throat with a knife until it bled without reason. After that, they demanded 6 Paw-khee villagers as porters and proceeded to Ta-eu-khee village. At Ta-eu-khee village, they demanded 4 more porters. The 10 porters have not been released up to the time of this report. At present, troops from SPDC LIB 44 were committing human rights violations and seizing porters constantly and furiously in Tha-ton District. (See also chapter on torture) (Source: KIC)

On 18 July 2002, Column 2 Commander Mya Thaung of SPDC LIB 1 ordered 40 villagers from Ta-eu-khee village and 20 villagers from Paw-khee village in Bi-lin Township to carry 374 sacks of rice, the military ration, from Mae-pu-ha village to Mae-plu village. (Source: KIC)

On 3 September 2002, Min Aung Naing, commander of SPDC LIB 44, demanded 25 villagers from Ler Klaw village and 25 villagers from Ta Paw village as porters. (Source: KIC)

On 14 September 2002, Column commander Myo Thet of SPDC LIB 104, forced 25 Ta-roikhee villagers of Tha-ton Township to carry food supplies for the army to Ta-maw-daw camp. (Source: KIC)

On 7 October 2002, Column 2 Commander Aung Soe of SPDC LIB 2 demanded 8 villagers as porters and 2 villagers as guides from Ta-eu-khee village of Be-lin Township. (Source: KIC)

On 30 October 2002, Company Commander Kyaw Mya Thaung of SPDC LIB 9 ordered Win-yaw, Noh-pa-leh and Kaw-sa-theh villages to weave 5 porter baskets each for porters to carry military supplies. (Source: KIC)

On 4 November 2002, SPDC LIB 2 troops led by Column 2 Commander Aung Soe seized 8 Dah-nay villagers for portage and took them to Kwee-lay village. (Source: KIC)

Doo-pla-ya District

On 4 May 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78 led by Captain Win Zaw Oo seized and tortured Noh-klo-tae villager Pah Doo Hai of Kya-in Township. The troops took him as porter for 7 days. The villagers had to pay a ransom of 30,000 kyats for his release. (See also torture chapter) (Source: KIC)

On 12 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 led by Column 1 Commander Min Din and Column Second Commander Than Oo looted from Kya-in Township, Kun-thit-ta villagers. They also seized the following Kun-thit-ta villagers as porters:

1. Neh Hla - 52-, son of Pu Ah Tone,
2. Saw Eh Paw - 25-, son of U Thaung Sein,
3. Saw Paw - 20-, son of Saw Tin Hlaing,
4. Saw Ah Pein - 35-, son of Saw Aye Rein,
5. U Hmway - 55-, son of U Note Kham Mwe,
6. Saw Po Kyote - 32-, son of U Hmway,
7. Yan Shin - 34-, son of U Pein,
8. Saw Mya Thein - 35-, son of U Thaung Pe,
9. Saw Taw Tha - 30-, son of U Chank Pe,
10. Saw Mon Lwe - 25-, son of Saw Maung Ha,
11. Maung Lu byo - 23-, son of Saw Maung Ha,
12. Saw Ta Paw Kwa - 45-, son of U Toke,
13. Saw Hla Win - 25-, son of U Pan Aye,
14. Saw Win Tin - 25-, son of Aung Mya Kyi,
15. Saw Cho Cho - 20- son of Saw Khin La,
16. Maung Thaung Pyo - 25-, son of U Kin,
17. Thaung Pe - 35-, son of U Kyin Ta,
18. Ta Bay - 37- son of Aung Min,
19. Ah Kyo - 33-, son of Kyaw Thaung,
20. U Khaik Pone Lone - 42-, son of U Pan Aye,
21. Paw Nu Shwe - 35-, son of Neh Paw,
22. Saw Paw Baw - 21-, son of Kaw law Po and
23. Saw Ah Thwin, son of U Po Day. (Source: KIC)

On 17 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 extorted from Ko-du-kwe villagers. These troops also seized the following villagers as porters; Maung Soe Lay 25, son of U Let Ma, U Ohn Myin 35, son of U Hla Po, Maung Shwe Nyo 35, son of U Tha Cin, Ah Htun 40, son of U Ah Khin, Maung Tin Tun 20, son of U Ba Htan, Maung Shwe Mya 19, son of Maung Win Tin, Maung Thein Shwe 27, son of Shwe Yi, Maung Sein 25, son of U Ba Ohn, Ah Htun 45, son of U Tun Tin and Lah Bwe Po 50, son of U Kyaw Myaing. (Source: KIC)

On 21 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 led by Battalion Commander Min Din and battalion second in command Than Oo looted from the Paw-ner-moo village head. Moreover, they seized and took away some villagers as porters. The victims were: U Tha Lun, Saw Kyi Win, Maung Thein Aung, Maung Win Kying, Pah Yu, Tin Aung Win, Saw Kyaw Kwa, Saw Nga Ah and Maung win Shwe. (Source: KIC)

On 20 June 2002, Min Din, Commander of SPDC LIB 301 based at Paya-ngote-toe, Kya-in Township summoned village heads and demanded 11 villagers as porters from east of the Zamee river and 11 from west of the river, a total of 22 villagers. The village community could provide only 10. The army kept these porters at Paya-ngote-toe camp for work in the camp. The villagers had to provide food for these 10 porters. (Source: KIC)

On 28 June 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78, under LID 88 led by Column 1 Commander Myo Htun Hlaing seized six villagers from Kyone-sein village as porters. When the column arrived at No-pa-na village, it was overdue for the porters to be released. One of the porters looted a weapon and escaped with two others. The troops started shooting the escaping porters, and as a result, one porter was killed and two were wounded. (Source: KIC)

On 1 July 2002, troops from IB 34 under Operation Command 3 under SPDC Western Command led by Column Commander Moe Aung seized villagers of Win-ka-na village, Win-yae Township. The following villagers were taken to Anan-gwin military camp to be porters; Pah Day Thu, (M, 25), Saw Tay Toe Wah, (M, 23), Maung Pan Myaing, (M, 23), Saw Taw Klaw, (M, 30) and Pah Bwe Kyai, (M, 31). The following villagers were sent to Pan-aung village with the military column to be porters; Pah Ker Nyo (M, 36), Saw Maung Ngwe (M, 40), Kah Ka Mu (M, 22), Pah Kher Htoo (M, 32), Saw Ba Theh, (M, 35), Maung Pi Wah (F,36), Maung Po Thein (M, 35), Saw Win Win (M, 35), Maung Nyunt Tin (M, 50) and Ta Kleh Po, (M, 33). On 12 July, the troops released 13 out of the 15 porters.

On 20 September 2002, SPDC LIB 354 troops, led by Major Kyaw Soe, demanded 60 villagers from villages in Win-yae Township to work for them. They forced some of the 60 Win-ka-na villagers to carry rice sacks. They were: U Nyunt Tin, 48, Pah Kyaw Heh, 27, Maung Ngwe 45, Tha Jah Min, 30, Shan Galay, 30, Ta Kaw Htoo, 25, Noe Si Boo, 40, Peh Jan, 18, Saw Kyaw Htwe, 48, Maung Plo, 26, Saw Nay Moo, 18, Saw Lah Doe, 16, Saw Lay Ku, 26, Saw Tho, 35, Saw Hsa Ku, and Saw Boe Htoo, 31. (Source: KIC)

On 21 September 2002, about 30 troops from SPDC IB 20, led by column commander Major Aung Moe Lin, came to Win-ka-na village in Win-yae Township and seized the following villagers to be porters: Saw Dee Doh (45), Saw Hmyaw Heh 25, Saw Pah Ler Nyunt, (36),Saw Paw Naw, (21), Saw May Neh, 28 and Saw Mya Yin for portage. (Source: KIC)

Pa-an District

On 29 March 2002, troops from SPDC LID 206 Column 1 under LID 22, led by acting battalion commander Lieutenant Colonel Aye Lin, forced 9 Wah-mee-kla villagers in Hlaing-bwe Township, to serve as porters to carry baskets weighing 30 Viss each. These troops forced 5 more Wah-mee-kla villagers to serve as porters. (Source: KIC)

On 25 June 2002, Maung Pet of DKBA Battalion 999 demanded that the villages of Khaw-thoo-khee, Htee-moe-khee, Htee-pah-reh and Wa-me-kla villages each provide two villagers as porters and 2 Viss of chicken. Moreover, he shot and killed a pig worth 30,000 kyat from Htee-mor-khee village and threatened to kill and burn down the villages if a clash broke out. (Source: KIC)

On 10 October 2002, column 2 commander Major Sit Aung of SPDC IB 24 forced 50 villagers to carry food supplies from Kler-day to Paw-pa-hta camp. The group included children and had to bring their own food. The villagers were taken from the following villages; Kler-day, Htee-ler-doe, Kler-kho, Ta-krai-ni and Htee-ma-su-khee villages in Hlain-bwe Township (Source: KIC)

On 12 November 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 204 under LID 22 led by Lieutenant Colonel Kyi Win came to Kya-gon village and looted from villagers and took 14 villagers as porters. (Source: KIC)

Pa-pun District

On 2 January 2002 at 6:00 pm, Company Commander Hla Win of SPDC LIB 534 demanded from Mae-nyunt-ta village 1,000 pieces of roofing leaves, 2 villagers to serve as porters and 2 villagers to serve as sentinels. (Source: KIC)

On 9 January 2002, SPDC troops demanded from Mae-nyunt-ta village 500 pieces of roofing leaves, 1000 pieces of bamboo and 4 villagers to serve as porters. (Source: KIC)

On 28 February 2002, SPDC troops based in Baw-ga-li village ordered Kaw-thay-doe and Klay-soe-khee villagers to cut bamboo and to buy water proof plastic sheets for Naw-soe camp. On that day, these troops demanded trucks from Kaw-thay-doe villagers Naw Ah Ree, Naw Mah Ma, Saw Min Min and Naw Noe No to carry food and other supplies to Bu-sa-khee camp for the army two times a day. The truck owners were told that they had to pay for anything lost and had to repair their own truck if it broke down. (Source: KIC)

On 8 March 2002, troops from SPDC IB 38 demanded five villagers from Mae-ku-hta village and ten from Mae-nyu-hta village as porters. Both villages are in Bu-tho township. These troops also took eight village elders to go along with the column. (Source: KIC)

On 11 March 2002 at 3:00 PM, troops from SPDC LIB 207 seized two villagers from Wa-me-day village, two from Kler-woe-doe village and 3 from Maw-ta-kaw-doe village and took them to Hkeh-pa-hta and Tu-lu-hta villages. They were not released up to the day of this report. On the same day, battalion commander Maung Tin of SPDC LIB 308 demanded 4 villagers from Htee-doh-hta village, 4 from Toe-mu-doe village, as porters. (Source: KIC)

On 11 March 2002 at 3:00 PM, troops from SPDC LIB 20 came and burned down Hkeh-pa-hta and Too-ta-loo villages. These troops took 2 villagers from Wah-me-day, 2 from Kler-doh-doe and 3 from Maw-ta-kaw-doe villages and they were not released up to this day. On the same day, battalion commander, Tin Maung of SPDC LIB 308 took four villagers from Htee-pa-doh-ta and four from Toh-ma villages as porters and forced them to carry supplies for the army. (Source: KIC)

From 1 to 5 May 2002, the DKBA Maung Thu Nu, District chairman Kyaw Hai, Ka Saw Wah battalion commander Pah Too Loo and Bo Ba Yo demanded a person monthly from each village of Mee-nyo-hta, Mae-ku-hta, Mae-ku-khee and To-mu to carry supplies for them or to pay 18,000 kyat if they failed to go. They also ordered people of the villages in the vicinity to go to Mae-ku-hta to serve as watchmen for a period of 2 days per person. (Source: KIC)

On 15 October 2002, Camp commander Bo Than Aung of Ma-htaw camp from SPDC battalion 534 of South-West Command headquarters summoned one person from each household in the villages of Ma-htaw village tract in Dweh-lo Township to do voluntary work (forced labour). People were called from the following villages; Thwa-kho-lo, Ta-hu-lor, Noh-pa-doh, Khaw-kla, Ta-dwee-kho, Po-baw-kho, Koo-seik, Ma-htaw and Tha-pa-su-lor villages. They had to carry bags of gravel from 7am until evening from Htee-gi-lor-klo, Ma-taw village to Koo-seik village. (Source: KIC)

On 25 October 2002, the commander of SPDC LIB 349 Southern Command Headquarters demanded one villager from To-kot-kyaw-khee, one villager from Toe-meh-khee, one villager from Ler-wah-kho, one villager from Mae-kaw-lor, one villager from Mae-waing, one villager from Wah-tho-lor, one villager from Day-law-pu and two villagers from Klo-khee to be porters. Their job was to carry military food supplies from Mae-waing village to Maw-thay-ha village. (Source: KIC)

Nyaung-lay-bin District.

On 3 June 2002, Column 2 commander Htun Win and intelligence officer Aung Kyaw Oo of SPDC IB 92 ordered villages in Tha-bye-nyunt village tract to send 10 villagers per village with saws, hoes and machetes to construct the Hsaw-wah-doe bridge. Similarly, the SPDC LIB 599 demanded 400 porters from Toe-taw village tract to do the same. (Source: KIC)

Tha-ton District

On 4 May 2002 troops from SPDC LIB 1 column (2) led by Bo Khin Maung Oo seized Htee-pa-doh-hta villagers Saw Hsa Loo and Saw Maung Taung while they were on their way to Church at Toh-teh-khee and demanded from them 5,000 Kyat. Moreover, these troops forcibly used Htee-pa-doh-hta villager Saw Ka Ka Lay to carry supplies to Mae-pi-khe, Kwee-lay-pya, Klaw-hta and Toe-teh-khee and he was not released up to the day of this report. (Source: KIC)

On 19 May 2002, Sergeant Thein Mya of SPDC LIB 9 demanded 8 bullock carts from Noh-pa-leh and Kaw-sa-theh villages, Tha-ton District, for sending supplies to Win-yaw camp. Moreover, he ordered a person from each household to go and work with their own food supplies in the army camp. (Source: KIC)

On 16 June 2002, Column 1 of SPDC LIB 1, led by battalion commander Khin Zaw Win, came to Baw-naw-khee village and destroyed two hill rice fields of Ta-meh-khee villagers, Pah Kyaw Htoo and Pah Maung Shwe, and 4 hill rice fields of Ka-wa-hta village. They also looted all the villagers' possessions they found. The troops seized 8 villagers each from Baw-naw-khee village and Ka-wa-hta village and forced them to serve as porters for one month. (Source: KIC)

Mergui-Tavoy

On 12 January 2002 SPDC troops demanded 10 villagers from Paw-klo village and 15 from Wai-pa village to carry food supplies. The villagers were ordered to arrive at Pa-lauk on 2 January. (Source: KIC)

On 13 January 2002, about 50 troops from SPDC IB-17 column 1 led by Bo Soe Myint summoned headmen of nearby villages in Tennesarim township and ordered them to send one person from each house to carry food supplies to Ler-ker army camp. (Source: KIC)

On 22 March 2002, SPDC No. 8 military operation command Commander Win Htay and Bo Soe Thet based in Myitta village demanded 300 villagers as porters in Ler-doe-soe township to carry food supplies to Thu-ka gate which was on the border. They said that any villager who could not go had to pay 1,500 kyat. They also demanded elephant owners in Poe-klo area to provide them with 2 elephants and 2 chain saws 3 times in one month to construct a motor road between Myitta village and Kwee-waw-wa village. On the same day, Sergeant Kyaw Thein and Sergeant Major Maung Ngwe from SPDC LIB 403 demand Saw-pya villagers to cut wood 2 times a month to make charcoal. Battalion Commander Thein Htun of SPDC LIB 403 ordered each village in Tha-yet-chaung Township to provide 300,000 Kyat as porters' fees once every six months. (Source: KIC)

On 28 May 2002, Han Thu commander of SPDC LIB 345 demanded 30 villagers from Bu-thaw-plaw village as porters and forced them to carry military supplies from Bu-thaw-plaw village to Plaw-kleh-mu village. (Source: KIC)

On 16 June 2002, Camp Commander Kyaw Than Yu of SPDC LIB-406 based in Ka-ser-doh township demanded 20 boats from Paw-taw village in Tu-ler area and forced them to transport military supplies to Mae-tha-me-hta. (Source: KIC)

On 23 June 2002, Soe Thein, commander of SPDC LIB-403, demanded 3 boats and 4 villagers as porters from Kaw-tee village at Myint-moe-let-kat to serve the military column going on a patrol. (Source: KIC)

On 29 July 2002, troops from SPDC IB 73 led by Bo Myint Aung Kyaw forced Kaw-they-doe villagers:

1. Naw Ler Lur (F, 27), daughter of Saw Eh Mwe,
2. Naw Meh Ler (F, 26), daughter of Saw Ah Paw,
3. Saw Bwe Htoo (M, 43), son of Saw Shwe Soe,
4. Naw Peh Leh Lu (F, 26), daughter of Saw Ta Wah Law,
5. Naw Pay Ka Na (F, 30), daughter of Saw Maung Lu,
6. Saw Lay Thoo (M, 32), daughter of Saw Paw Htun,
7. Saw Bwee Htoo (M, 26), son of Saw Nay Kaw and
8. Saw Koo Too (M, 44), son of Saw May

... to carry military supplies to Naw-soe. The villagers had to take their own food supplies for the trip. (Source: KIC)

On 27 August 2002 Bo Kyaw Oo of SPDC LIB 73 forced Kaw-thay-doe villagers to carry food supplies from Naw-soe to Bu-hsa-khee. The villagers were the following;

1. Maung Oo (M, 33), son of Saw Leh Der,
2. Naw Tin Kyi (F, 32), daughter of Saw Maung Toe,
3. Naw Hla Shwe (F, 45), daughter of Saw Maung Toe,
4. Saw Keh Htoe (M, 39), son of Saw Pah Doo,
5. Naw Noh Noe, daughter of Saw Aye Htun and
6. Naw Tah Noo (F, 29) daughter of Ta Peh Pa. (Source: KIC)

On 30 December 2002, LIB No. 538 military column led by battalion commander Lt. Col. Zaw Tun asked 16 villagers from Win-thaung village to be porters to carry their ammunition and food supplies. On 1 January 2002, the same military column asked 16 villagers from Phar-da-yal village to carry ammunition and food supplies. (Source: HURFOM)

Throughout 2002, villagers from Lae Soe and To Khe villages have been constantly abused by LIB No. 3, LIB No. 102, and LIB No. 207 which are under the command of Brigade No. 44. The troops have abused the villagers by conscripting forced porters, forced military guides, collecting unlawful taxes. The heads of villages have requested that these abuses stop and have shown the SPDC issued order which reads that no citizen of Burma shall be subject to forced labour of any form. These attempts have only ended with scolding and beatings from the military officers. They said that the people who issued that order never come to the frontline, let alone to carry the loads. (Source: *ABSDF*)

Forced Labour for Road and Bridge Construction and Infrastructure Projects

Chin State

Beginning 5 January 2000, ten villages in remote areas of Chin State were forced to construct a 20-mile motor road linking Vuangtu and Ngaphaipi villages. Section 2 Commander of Burmese Army Light Infantry Battalion LIB 269 stationed at Vuangtu village issued an order requiring 10 villages located in the surrounding areas of Vuangtu to contribute unpaid labor for the road construction. Headmen of the ten villages were summoned to Vuangtu army base where they were told to carry out the order. The villages include Lailen, Lau, Khuapilu, Phal Tlang, Lung Cawite, Ngaiphaite, Zephai (A), Zephai (B), Ngalang, and Ngaiphai pi.

In addition, 235 people from Khuabung village were ordered to participate in the forced labor. Not only were the villagers ordered to bring with them their own tools and rations during their work period but also were ordered to bring an additional one tin (about 8 Kgs) of rice and other needs for the army guards who supervised the forced labor. The road construction is part of the Border Area Development Project and extensive forced labor has been used in the process. Although the army claimed that the project is for the development of the area, the roads have been used only to ease movements and communication of the Burmese troops around the area. (Source: CHRO)

Karenni State

In the area of the Shan Nationalities People Liberation Front (SNPLF), a group that has a cease-fire agreement with the SPDC, the SPDC has continued to use forced labor. In 1998, the SPDC began to construct a 30-mile stretch of road from the SNPLF area to Seisai town in Shan State. The plan was to complete the project by 2002, but as of April 2002, the work had still not been completed. In February 2002, people living near Naung Htaw town were forced to work on this road construction project. The SPDC ordered groups to work in turn. Anyone who did not take his or her turn was forced to pay 300 kyat. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 28 February 2002, a forest fire burned down the Yekyaw Bridge on the main Loikaw-Shadaw road, over the Pon River. This is the only communication line and therefore, a crucial one for transporting SPDC military supplies. The next day, SPDC battalion Commander Tin Win from LIB No. 412 ordered residents of Suplong village in Shadaw Township to cut logs and to repair the bridge as soon as possible. (Source: *KNAHR*)

A Burmese troop at the Loilin Lay base is now under schedule to build a new 3-mile long road between Loilin Lay and Konna-Daw Tahe. The construction will begin in September and is scheduled to be completed in October. Villagers were ordered by the troop commander to provide security for tractors and to provide labor during the road construction period. (Source: *KNAHR*)

Mon State

Digging Water Canal in Kyamayaw Township

During the period from 5 July until 20 July 2002, by the instruction of Township PDC authorities, the village tract Chairman of Tarana village tract, Nai Poe Sein, forced the villagers from four Mon villages to dig a water canal along the motor road from Tarana to Ah-like village. The four Mon villages were Tanara, Kyun-chaung; Kaw-gyi; and Kaw-swe villages.

The road was about four miles long and the four Mon villages were close to the motor road. After the village tract PDC issued their order, the village headmen were responsible for sending the requested number of villagers. They sent about 20 villagers from each village every day to the work sites. The villagers were requisitioned by village PDC authorities on a rotation basis to contribute their unpaid labour. There were about 80-120 villagers every day working on digging the water canal.

The villagers left for work early morning on foot and started digging the canal at about 7:00 a.m. The canal was about 3 ft deep and 1.5 ft wide. They brought their own tools from home for the work. They dug canals along both sides of the road and carried all the earth from the road to a nearby place. They had to carry their own food to the work sites that were far from their villages. Sometimes, if the work site was close to their village, they could have lunch at home. They could return to their homes at about 5:00 p.m.

These four Mon villages have about 2000 households. When the authorities made a requisition, at least one family member from every household, including some women, went and worked at the work site. According to the instructions, every household needed to work. Even the widow or women-headed families were forced work.

July was the beginning of rainy season and the authorities worried that the rain water would destroy the embankment of the road, and therefore, they ordered the villagers to dig water canals to bring rain water away from them. (Source: HURFOM)

Labor for Town Beautification in Ye Town

On 7 July 2002, Ye Township PDC authorities ordered 50 civilians from each town ward to contribute their labor in clearing bushes, water canals, small streams, pools and dikes in town. The requisition of this labor continued for 7 days and civilians from all 10 town wards had to go and work in there. Everyday about 500 civilians in various parts of Ye Town were forced to do various types of beautification activities.

The Town Ward PDC authorities were responsible for sending the civilians to do pieces of work in town. They sent civilians from every household on a rotation basis. The civilians were forced to clear bushes, create gardens, level grounds, and do other work in various compounds of government offices, such as Township's General Administration Office, Township Police Station, Township Fire Brigade, Telecommunication Office and other places even Township Municipal Office. The villagers were not happy with this work because they paid taxes to the Township Municipal Office every month for the purpose of beautifying the town. Yet, the authorities never hired proper labor for that purpose. (Source: HURFOM)

Road Repairs in Kyaikmayaw Township

SPDC's Kyamayaw Township's authorities have been building a road from Kyaikmayaw town to Kyun-ywa, a village in that township, since early 2001. Since then the authorities and Burmese Army have requisitioned hundreds of villagers to contribute their labor. However, the road was only roughly built and not really completed. The villagers were forced to fill small pieces of stone earth along the embankment. During this road construction, the authorities collected funds from the civilians to buy gasoline for trucks to carry stones and other construction materials. The poor quality of the road means that it can be easily ruined every year in rainy season. In order to repair the road, the authorities force villagers to carry small stones and fill the embankment.

Since 9 July 2002, the authorities have forced villagers from Myaing-gone, Chan-gone, Shanygi, Shan-lay, Moe-hote, Kaw-kalat, Oo-daing-chone and other villages to find one type of small red stones and to fill them in the embankment of the road. The villagers had to find that type of stone in the forests nearby. They dug the stones and carried them with oxen-carts to reach the road, where they filled them in the embankment.

The villagers had to do this work for over one month and therefore, the village headmen from above-mentioned villages had to send villagers on a rotation basis. They also had to find oxen-carts to send with the villagers. (Source: HURFOM)

Forced Labour in Ye-Tavoy Motor Road Repairs

From 8 to 25 October 2002, a local military battalion in Yebyu Township, LIB No. 282 forced many hundreds of Mon and Karen people in Ye-Tavoy to repair the motor road that connects Ye Town in Mon State and Tavoy Town in Tenasserim Division. The road is over 100 miles long. The road repairs were done after rainy season (rainy season ends in September),

because flood and rain water destroyed some parts of the road and water canals alongside the road were filled with mud.

LIB No. 282 commander, Lt. Col. Maung Aung led in the conscription of forced labour from local villages, which situates along the motor road. The villagers from over 15 villages under Yapu, Aleskan, Kalein-aung and Pauk-pin-gwin village tracts of Yebyu Township were forced to do the road repairs. To do this work, they had to lay stone for tarring, dig water canals alongside the road, clear bushes and grass alongside the road, and repairs bridges. They were instructed to bring their own food and walk to the worksite everyday if they lived close. If they lived far, they had to travel by ferry which cost 700-1,400 kyat and usually slept in the army barracks until their work was completed. Upon the instruction of the army commander, the village headmen sent one villager from each household to contribute their labor. One person from every family was required to go and work. If the father of the house was out in the fields, the women and children (under 18 years old) had to go instead. If no one in the house could go, they had to hire a substitute by paying 5,000 kyat for 7 days of work. The village headmen sent villagers on a rotation basis. If they failed, they would be punished by the Burmese Army. Each villager was responsible for the aforementioned duties for 1 furlong of road. According to one Aleskan villager, they were ordered to work for 7 days on the worksite in order to complete their duties. The road repairs were completed on October 25.

During the repairs of this motor road, the village PDC authorities, who led the requisition of forced labor never paid any compensation costs for those who received serious injury. On 20 October the village headmen of Kye-ta-lin village, which is located on the motor road, ordered 4 villagers in his village to repair a bridge on the motor road, while many other villagers were busy with many other tasks along the motor road. The headman ordered 4 households, including one widow headed household who sent her 22 year old son Mehm Anae to work. First, the laborers had to find wooden building materials like poles and lumber. They went to the forest to cut trees for these materials. The young man had no experience cutting trees and the branch of a falling tree hit him and broke his right leg. He was treated by a local herbal doctor for over one month and his mother had to pay about 50,000 kyat for the treatment. The authorities did not provide any compensation or cover any of the medical costs. (Source: HURFOM)

On 24 April 2002, LIB No. 299 troops arrived into Mi-htaw-hla-gyi, a Mon village in the southern part of Ye Township and called a meeting with all the villagers. The unidentified commander instructed the villagers to clear trees, tall grasses and others obstacles along the route in their village area, which is about one mile long. After clearing the route, they needed to build a bridge.

"The commander said that we must build a strong bridge for army trucks to pass. The army did not provide the villagers with any materials. We had to find lumber and wooden poles. We also had to buy many other materials, such as nails and screws for this bridge. The people had to spend one week to get all lumber and wooden poles. The village Chairman also had to collect money to buy some materials from Ye Town. To complete the building of a 25 meter long bridge would take another two weeks", explained a villager, who fled from Mi-htaw-hla-gyi village.

Soldiers also forced the villagers from Mi-htaw-hla-kalay, Magyi and Danikar village to clear the route for the road and to build bridges. The soldiers guarded the villagers while they worked. Strangely, some soldiers also worked in the construction, but they received payment from the government. An escaped villager indicated that it is likely that they took had a contract for this construction. (Source: KIC)

On 11 June 2002, the commander of LIB No. 586, Col. Ngwe Soe, forced 200 villagers from Palaing-kee, Sin-pyan and Tharyar-gone villages in the southern part of Ye Township, Mon State to clear tall grass and small trees along one part of the Kanbauk-Myaingkalay gas pipeline.

"The soldiers forced us to work many hours," said a woman from Palaing-kee village, who worked for the commander. He forced the villagers to work continuously from 8:00 a.m to 10:00 p.m and gave them about half an hour each to take lunch and dinner. The reason for this was that the commander needed to complete the work in only one day because a high rank commander from the Southeast Command in Moulmein, the capital of Mon State, would come the next day. That senior officer came to the northern part of the Township with the purpose of checking the security of the gas pipeline. As the LIB No. 586's commander had only one-day, he forced the local villagers to work many hours without payment. They had to clear bushes and small trees about 20 ft away from either side of the pipeline for 14 hours. They had to clear along 4 miles of the pipeline.

As per the authorities' instructions, the village headmen told the villagers that each house had to send one of their family members. If one family or one house failed to go and work, that family had to pay a 1,000 kyat as fine. As most families in these three villages were poor, most of them went to the work sites to avoid paying the fine. About one company of LIB No. 586 (about 50-60 troops) guarded the villagers in many places of the gas pipeline while they were working. (Source: HURFOM)

Since mid-December 2002, when the local township authority of Morkanin village, Ye Township, decided to build a dyke, the villagers from Morkanin village have been forced to contribute their labour on a daily basis. The authorities planned to build this dyke 80 feet in length, 14 feet in height and 10 feet width to keep water above the embankment and to distribute it to the farms. Although the authorities from IB No. 106 and the Township Construction Department received about a 10 million kyat budget to build this dyke, they did not hire laborers. They forced the villagers to work instead. After the dyke's construction is completed, many fruit plantations in the area above the embankment will be destroyed by flood. (Source: HURFOM)

Tenasserim Division

New Road Construction in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division

In mid-July 2002, Yebyu Township authorities from the construction department led by U Maung Maung planned to build a new road that connects Mu-doo village and Htein-gyi village. As a result, they requisitioned the villagers from the area nearby to contribute their labor for the construction. The road was only 5 miles, but the authorities and Burmese Army planned to have communication between these villages for the security of the whole area. After the Township PDC gave the order, a military commander from LIB No. 407, Warrant Officer Zat Boe was responsible for conscripting the villagers.

On 17 July 2002, the Commander went into Htein-gyi village and informed the village headmen that they needed labor for the construction. In their initial plan, they wanted to build a rough road by clearing some bushes along the route and filling the area with some small stones. The total process was to clear the area, lay sand as a bottom layer, find stones from another area, crush the stones into small pieces, and lay them on the 12 ft wide embankment. The Commander ordered that each household must build 10 feet of the motor road. There were about 500 households in that village and therefore they had to complete 5000 feet of the road. Every household was ordered to be involved in the construction of this road. The commander also went to Napalae and Mu-doo villages and forced the villagers to do the same work as the Htein-gyi villagers.

One villager reported that they had to go to other places in order to get the sand and stone. They had to hire oxen-carts and trucks to bring the materials to the work site, which cost 1,200-3,000 kyat per half ton of sand or stone. The prices depended on distance. For every 10 feet of road, each household had to fill about half ton of sand and two tons of stones. They also had to crush the stones into small pieces before they could lay them on the embankment. It took one able-bodied person at least three days to complete the work. If the villagers had to carry stones from far places, they needed about seven days to complete the construction. Each family had to spend 5,000-10,000 kyat for the construction and at the same time, they lost the chance to go to their farms or to do their own work for daily income. The daily income for one man in this area is only 500-800 kyat if they engaged in hard work. The construction of the road and the additional transportation cost made the villagers face greater difficulties in their survival. (Source: HURFOM)

Regional Development Program in Yebyu township.

As the rainy season had almost gone by, Yebyu Township Peace and Development Council instructed all the village tracts under its control to repair all the bullock-cart tracks so that they could be traveled by motor vehicles. According to a villager from Natkyizin village in the northern area of Yebyu township, the villagers were ordered by the VPDC (Village Peace and Development Council) to build a car-road between Natkyizin and Da Ni Chang (a village on the sea beach) along the bullock-cart track. The distance is 4 miles and the villagers had to build the road at their own expense. The government calls this '*Ko Htu Ko Htaat Saint*', which means self supporting system. One person from each household had to work on the road and had to bring their own tools and food, including drinking water.

On 23 November 2002, Pa Ti Tah Preh, the leader of *Pyithusit* (People militia also known as *Thakasapa* -Anti Insurgency Group, which was formed and backed by Burmese troops) from Kaw Paw village forced villagers of Wahsuhko (Seikpyone) and Kawpaw (Myinkanbaw) to build a monastery in Pawpaw village, about 35 kilometers to the east of Tavoy. Three villagers from each section had to go and work. There are six sections in Wahsuhko village and 12 sections in Kawpaw village.

On 3 November 2002, the Burmese troops ordered the villagers from Noh Pah Doh (Inmmagyi, in Theyetchang township, Tavoy district, Tenasserim division) to plant beans for the military. The villagers were ordered to clear the land and plant the beans on at least four acres. According to the local villagers, every Karen village in the southern part of Theyetchang township was ordered to grow beans for the army. There are 29 Karen villages in the southern part of Theyetchang township.

On 23 November 2002, troops from SPDC IB104, based in Kawpaw village and led by Battalion Commander Zan De, forced the villagers from Wahsuhko to transport chainsaws and food supplies. Two bullock-carts from Wahsuhko were ordered to transport the troops' food supplies and chainsaws to the east of the village, where the Burmese troops were building a road with bulldozers. The chainsaws were confiscated from the villagers by the Burmese troops and then forced them to cut down the trees and to clear the forest for the bulldozers. According to the villagers, the bulldozers could not bulldoze some hard trees.

On 24 November 2002, the same troops from SPDC IB104 forced the villagers from Wahsuhko to transport their food supplies and oil. Ten bullock-carts from Wahsuhko were ordered to transport food supplies and diesel to the east of the village where the Burmese troops were constructing a road to the Burma-Thai border with bulldozers. (Source: HURFOM)

Repairs to Damaged Bridges and Roads near the Thai-Burma Border

In the beginning of October 2002, the Burmese troops taking security in the east of Tavoy forced the local villagers in Kamoethway and Paw Klo areas to reconstruct the damaged bridges on the military transporting route to the Burma-Thai border. Two villagers accompanied every elephant or chainsaw owner to cut down trees for the construction. The construction went from October to the beginning of December. According to a local villager, there were about 30 elephants and 30 chainsaws total. The Burmese troops threatened that any villager who failed to work would be restricted from going outside the relocation site. After every rainy season since 1997, local villagers from Paw Klo and Kamoethway areas have been forced to construct two bridges for the Burmese troops. Those bridges are damaged by flood every year.

The Burmese troops forced local villagers to transport their supplies by bullock carts to the construction site near the Thai border in the east of Tavoy, Tenasserim division. Starting from 5 November 2002, the Burmese troops were constructing a car road from Kaw Paw village to the Thai-Burma border at Thuka. Although they used two bulldozers for the construction, local villagers were still forced to labor on the road by transporting fuel, other materials and food supplies for the bulldozers and the troops guarding the bulldozers. The villagers' chainsaws were confiscated for the road construction. According to a local villager, three bullock carts from Kler Hpu (Nyaung Don), Kaw Paw (Myinkanbaw) and Wahsuhko (Seikpyone) were forced to transport construction supplies.

On 4 December 2002, Officer Thura Thazin from SPDC LIB 401, based in Thinbaw Na village in the east of Mergui, Tenasserim division, summoned ten villagers from Kaw Maw Praw (Kawmabyin), five villagers from Thinbaw Na, five villagers from Hin Lah, and five villagers from Kawut Hta for forced portering. The villagers were forced to carry military supplies from Thinbaw Na to Ta Rut Hkee.

On 2 December 2002, Officer Soe Than from SPDC LIB 403, based in Aye Bya village in Theyetchaung township Tavoy district Tenasserim division, demanded 96 loads of firewood from the local villagers in Htee Pah Doh and Saw Kay. The villagers were ordered to collect 96 bullock cart loads of firewood and transport it to the military base. It was unknown how the fire wood would be used. Previously, the Burmese troops had demanded firewood to make charcoal and to sell for themselves.

On 7 December 2002, Officer Thein La Htwin from Company No.2 SPDC LIB 104, based in Pawdaw village in east Tavoy in Tenasserim Division, demanded all of the villagers' engine boats in Paw Daw village to transport their military supplies to an unknown destination. The Burmese troops ordered the village headmen to accompany the engine boats.

On 20 December 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 402 led by officer Than Kyi demanded ten villagers to carry their supplies while they were patrolling in Ta Poe area to the east of Mergui, Tenasserim division.

On 21 December 2002, troops from SPDC IB104, based in Pawdaw in the east of Tavoy, Tenasserim division, demanded four engine boats from Kanekaw village, ten engine boats from Katawni village, ten engine boats from Kawhtee (Thabyuchaung) and seven engine boats from Htuler (Kyaukhtu) to report to the No.1 Strategic Commanding Office in Myitta. The boats were to transport military supplies to the south of the Tenasserim river where their troops were stationed.

On 23 December 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 410, based in Htuler village in the east of Thayetchaung township, Tavoy district, forced local villagers in Htu Ler village to construct a building in their military camp. The villagers were ordered to collect materials such as wood, bamboo and roofing leaf. After collecting the materials, the villagers were forced to build the building within one day. Each person from every household was forced to participate in the construction of the building. (Source: HURFOM)



Villagers in forced relocation site gather for forced labour on the road

On 4 November 2002, the Burmese troops who were taking security in southern Theyetchaung township, Tavoy district, ordered local villagers in southern Theyetchaung township to collect and pile up at least 50 *zin* of stones beside the Tavoy-Mergui car road, which passed through their village. (1 *zin*, a pile of stones, which is 10 feet long, 10 feet wide and 1 foot high). According to the local villagers, the villages with small populations had to pile up at least 50 *zins* of stone and the villages of large population have to pile up more than 50 *zins*. The village that could not perform the task had to pay 500,000 kyats to the army or had to perform forced labor for the construction of Tamoak bridge. The villagers had to bring along their own food. (Source: HURFOM)

Shan State

On 12 May 2002, the Burmese military authorities in Kaesi township forced the people of Wan Mong Nim to cut down and clear trees on both sides of the motor road from Kyong Loi Paw to Pang Pok. An 85-men-strong conscripted work force had to cut and clear trees and bushes for seven days. They were ordered to clear 50 wahs (100 yards) on each side of the 4-mile-long motor road. In the rainy season these bushes and shrubs are frequently cleared from the motor road again. The villagers face great difficulties as they do not have much time to do their farming work. (Source: Freedom, May 2002)

Arakan State

On 10 August 2002, the townspeople of Sittwe, the capital Arakan State, were ordered to construct sidewalks in front of their respective houses. The order required the house owners to build 3 ft wide and 2 ft deep sidewalks extending the entire length of their respective houses with their own money and manpower. The official order further stated that house owners would be jailed for no less than three years and face eviction for non-compliance. Most of the drains, roads and lanes in the state capital have deteriorated beyond repair due to incessant rain during the monsoon months. Every Saturday the townspeople have to offer 'voluntary labor', a euphemism for forced labor for digging ditches and drains, holding cleanliness drives and constructing sidewalks. (Source: Narinjara News)

Karen State

On 25 January 2002, Battalion commander Myint Aung and Column 2 Commander Zaw Hlaing Soe of SPDC LIB 118, demanded 20 villagers from Htee-si-baw village and 20 villagers from Kaw-po-pleh village to clear the road. They villagers were also ordered to bring along with them one Pyi of rice as their own food supply. (Source: KIC)

On 2 February 2002 troops from SPDC LID 88, led by divisional commander Ohn Myint and Thu Mu Heh of the so-called Peace Unit ordered villages in Kya-in township to reconstruct bridges that had burned down along the motor road. The villages subjected to this order were Dar-li, Mae-ka-taw, Pi-ta-ka, Pah-wah-klo, Mae-ta-la and Lay-taw villages. The villagers reconstructed the following bridges; Mae-ka-taw river bridge, Dar-li river bridge, Ta-ku-wah-lor river bridge of Pi-ta-ka, Pah-wah-klo river bridge of Ma-ta-raw and three bridges between Mae-ta-lah and Lay-taw-hta. If the villages failed to rebuild the bridges, they had to relocate to places near the motor road. (Source: KIC)

On 4 February 2002, LID-88 Commander Ohn Myint ordered villages near the military access road linking Pa-ya-daung village and Kyon-doe in Kya-in Township to clear bushes to 100 yards from both sides of the road. The villages subjected to this order were Kya-in, Ta-gay, Mae-ka-taw, Pi-ta-ka, Pah-wah-klo, Mae-ta-leh, Lay-taw-hta, Noh-taw-pla, and Kote-kwa villages. The army did not pay any wages and the villagers had to bring their own food supplies to work for 15 days. (Source: KIC)

On 17 February 2002, SPDC LIB 88 commander, Lieutenant Colonel Ohn Myint, and Column 2 Commander Myint Thein Htun of IB 83 came to Shwe-doe village in Kya-in Township and seized 32 villagers who were attending a church service. The villagers were then forced to clear the motor road linking Kya-in and Htee-po-than without any wages for three days with their own food supplies. (Source: KIC)

On 20 February 2002, troops from SPDC LIB-103, led by Major Sein Tin summoned village heads of Kya-cut-chaung-wa, Kyun-waing, Nat-chaung, Nat-chaung-pya and Tada-oo villages and ordered them to undertake security for a motor road linking Kya-in-Three pagoda pass to Hsin-boat-in village. The troops also threaten the villagers with a fine of 50 million Kyat, if their bulldozer was damaged. (Source: KIC)

On the same day, SPDC IB No. 231 arrested two villagers from Yawr Tan Shawe village, six villagers from Ta Like village, and one bullock cart was confiscated. Other porters were arrested in other areas to construct a road from Kawt Ka Yate to Kyiat Don, which is believed to be used for military operations. (Source: ABSDF)

On 24 February 2002 at 7:00 am, SPDC LIB 103 troops ordered and threatened Tha-min-let, Htee-po-lay-waw, Htee-po-pet, Nat-chaung, Ta-da-oo and Kyun-waing villages to send one person per household without delay to dig drainage ditches on both sides of the military operation road. All of the villages are in Kya-in Township. On the same day, the troops ordered one person from each house in Kru-si, Mae-ta-kret, Paw-ner-moo, and Kru-ma-khee to work on road construction. The villagers had to dig drainage ditches on both sides of the road. Then the troops forced the villagers to lie down in the ditches and took photographs of them. (Source: KIC)

On 26 February 2002, Column 2 Commander Sein Tin of SPDC LIB 103, ordered one person from every household in Ta-da-oo and Kyun-waing villages in Kya-in township to bring a hoe to construct a motor road. These troops took Kyone-sein village head U Ko Gyi, Christian Evangelist Saya Kyi Than and Ka-sa villager Sein Hla Win as hostages and they were not released up to the time of this report. (Source: KIC)

On 1 March 2002, SPDC Tactical Commander Ohn Myint demanded 200 to 500 Kyat from each household in the villages situated along Kyaik-don-Mae-thraw-hta road, to build a school. (Source: KIC)

On 3 March 2002, Operation commander Aung Than Win of SPDC LIB 88 ordered nearby villages to clear to a distance of 100 yards on both sides of A-zin-Pung-krung (Thai border) motor road and bridges. (Source: KIC)

On 7 March 2002, Lt. Colonel Aung Than Win of Brigade No. 88 ordered the villages near the road construction site the length of nine miles from A-Zin village, Kyar Inn Sate Gyi Township. That road is intended to reach the Thai-Burma border. The villagers were told to bring their own equipment and food to work on building small bridges and clearing both side of the road for one hundred yards. (Source: ABSDF)

On 11 March 2002, the Township authorities led by TPDC General Secretary U Aung Lin ordered villagers from Paya-gyi and Kaw-htit villages to dig a half-mile long water canal between the two villages. According to the order, each house from each village needed to dig about 1 *kyin* of earth (*one kyin of earth is about 100 cubic feet in volume and the Measurements 10 feet square and 1 feet depth*). The villagers from both villages had to come and dig the canal. Some families could complete the work within one day if two men came to do the work. Many families needed two or three days to complete their work. Later the authorities also planned to build a half-mile long rock laid road from Kaw-bein to Paya-gyi village. They forced villagers from Kaw-bein, Min-ywa and Paya-gyi villages to contribute their labour in finding stones, crashing the stones into small pieces, and laying the stones on

the embankment. According to the order, the authorities forced the villagers to contribute labor on a rotation basis. Each two wards from one village had to go and contribute their labour. There were about 50-70 villagers working on the construction and the authorities instructed one villager from each house of the two wards in the villages to work. Many women and children under 18 years old were involved in the construction. About 50% of the total villagers on the worksites were women and children. According to the villagers, the authorities never ordered for women and children not to work. (Source: HURFOM)

On 9 May 2002, Bo Ko Ko Hla from SPDC LIB 8 forcibly collected 7,000 kyat from Shwe Yaung Pya village and 5,000 kyat from Ka-law-kher village for holding a boxing match in Belin Town. On that day, Bo Aung Lwin from SPDC LIB 9 demanded one person from each household of Win-yaw and Kaw-sa-theh villages to construct Win Yaw motor road every day. (Source: KIC)

On 12 March 2002 troops from SPDC LIB 103, led by column 2 commander Soe Tin took 30 villagers from Aleh-ywa and Kyun-waing villages in Kya-inn township and forced them to clear bushes for road reconstruction. (Source: KIC)

On 24 March 2002, SPDC LIB 206 under LID 22 led by column 2 commander Major Thet Naing forced 20 villagers from Htee-pah-reh village, 20 villagers from Wah-mee-klah village and 20 villagers from Ta-ree-po-kweeh village of Hlaing-bwe Township to cut and clear both sides of a motor road from Wah-mee-klah to Ta-ree-po-kweeh. The road was one and a half miles long and 40 feet wide. The villagers had to bring their own food and worked for 2 days. (Source: KIC)

In April 2002, LIB 549 based in Nabu camp in the lowland areas of Ta Nay Cha Township wrote an order to the village tract leaders to construct a car road in the area. One village tract had to send 376 laborers to dig for gravel one kilometer away from the car road. This took three days. During that time, the villagers had to bring their own food and equipment. Another village was required to dig gravel for 200 holes within three days. The holes were 10 square feet. The army paid the villagers 500 kyat for each hole just to make people see that it was not forced labor. The village people did not want to do this but did so because they were afraid of the army. Following the completion of the road construction the Burmese army said that the gravel that the village brought was not good quality. They ordered the villagers to come back and work again. This affected the livelihood of the villagers who also had to work in their paddy fields to provide their food. (Source: Burma Issues)

On 10 April 2002, Min Aung Hlaing commander of SPDC LID 44, based at Lay-kay camp demanded 300 kyat from each household in the villages of Lay-kay, Ler-klaw, Ta-paw and Ka-meh to construct a road in Pa-new-kla. As the villagers could not pay, a person from each house of the four villages had to work, as forced laborers, on the construction everyday. (Source: KIC)

On 11 April 2002, Bo Maung Win and his troops from SPDC LIB 2 under LID 44, came to Htee-gaw-hta village in Na-ko-khee village tract and destroyed by burning many baskets of rice. Beginning from 4 April to the end of May, these troops demanded 3 baskets of gravel to construct a motor road linking Ku-seik and Pa-pun from each household in the following villages; Noh-law-su, Htee-ber-kha-hta, Day-law-pu, Ta-ri-per-kho and Kler-kho. (Source: KIC)

On 16 May 2002, troops from SPDC IB 77 under LID 88 led by column 2 commander Khin Maung Hla ordered one person from each household of the nearby villages to construct a motor road from Ta-ku-khee to Kyaik-don and the villagers had to bring their own food supplies. (Source: KIC)

On 3 June 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 led by major Than Htun ordered one person from each house in the villages of Mae-thraw-hta, Kwee-kler, Po-chimu, Azin (Kyaw-hta), Kyaw-khee, Ka-ma-kler and Mae-ta-ler to clear to a distance of 40 feet on both sides of the motor road in Kaw-kareik Township. They threatened to use anyone who failed to obey the order as a porter. The sections of motor road to be cleared were Mae-thraw-hta to Kwee-kler, Ohn-jan to Po-chi-mu, Azin (Kyaw-hta) to Ka-ma-kler, Mae-ta-ler to Po-chi-mu, Po-chi-mu to Kyaw-khee and Azin (Kyaw-hta) to Po-chi-mu. (Source: KIC)

On 9 June 2002, the commander of In-pya camp of SPDC LIB 403 demanded 15 wooden poles with an 8 ft girth from Saw Kay village and Htee Pa Doh Hta village in Ka-zer-doh Township. The villagers were required to send the poles to Shwe-Gu bridge by the date of 16 June. (Source: KIC)

On 16 June 2002, Camp Commander Kyaw Aye of SPDC LIB 403 based at Tu-ler ordered Kaw-tee and Ga-taw-nee villagers to clear the Kaw-tee-Ga-taw-nee road. Moreover, they forced the villagers to construct a bridge at Klee-klo for the convenience of the army in travelling. (Source: KIC)

On 11 July 2002, the commander of SPDC LID 44 demanded 20 logs from Noh-toe-day village, Maung-lay village and Htee-po-they-yeh village in Tha-ton Township to construct Kwee-lay and Lah-kho bridges. They ordered Maung-lay, Neh-po-hta, Ta-maw-daw and Way-raw villages, all situated along the road, to finish the construction by the end of July. (Source: KIC)

Starting in August 2002, according to the local villagers in Kamoethway area the Burmese troops forced the villagers to rebuild the road from Taungtholon to Wahsuhko (Seikpyone) village (about 30 kilometers to the east of Tavoy). There are eleven villages in Kamoethway area. Each village had to build the road as assigned to them. One person from each household had to go and work on the road every Saturday. They had to compile or lay stones, level the road, and clean up the bushes beside the road. (Source: KIC)

On 3 September 2002, Min Aung Naing, commander of SPDC LID 44, demanded one person from each household of Lay-kay village to cut two logs of soft wood having a girth of four and a half ft and a length of 11 cubits and two logs of wood having a girth of four ft and a length of 10 ft to construct five bridges between Lay-kay and Pa-nwe-kla villages. He ordered Lay-kay villagers to finish the bridges by the end of October. (Source: KIC)

On 23 September 2002, Commander Aung Mya Soe of SPDC No. 441 Tactical Command, demanded sawn timber from Naung-ka-dok village and Ta-roi-wah village. He also demanded 36 Viss of nails from each village of Ta-maw-daw village tract, to construct bridges across Mae-pu-klo river, Maw-klo river, Wah-pra-klo river and Lah-eh-oh-klo river between Pa-nwe-kla village and Lah-kho village in Tha-ton Township. (Source: KIC)

On 1 October 2002, Commander Min Aung Hlaing of SPDC LID 44 ordered battalion commander Myint Aung of SPDC LIB 118 and Ta-paw Camp Commander Yeh Win, who were under his control, to clear the motor road. As a result, each village near the motor road was ordered to clear an area of 4 furlongs in length. Moreover, these troops demanded sawn timber from the villages as follows;

1. Maew-theh village and Pwo village, 10 tons,
2. Noh-au-lar, Ha-ta-ret and Ka-meh villages, 12 tons,
3. Pwa-gaw, Noh-kha-day and Ta-thoo-khee villages, 12 tons and
4. Kru-see and Lah-kho villages 12 tons. (Source: KIC)

On 5 October 2002, combined SPDC LIB 440 and DKBA troops forced villagers of Toe-thay-poo, Ta-kot-daw-moe-pah and Kaw-tha-say villages in Kyauk-kyi Township to complete the construction of Shwe-gyin motor road between Tha-yet-chaung and Paw-kah in 8 days. (Source: KIC)

On 14 October 2002, Company Second in Command Tin Maung Shwe of SPDC IB 8 demanded 70 poles of bamboo from Ma-eu-sa villagers in Tha-ton Township. Moreover, these troops demanded a person from each house of Ka-ma-saing and Sa-yo-kyo villages to repair the motor road. (Source: KIC)

In the second week of October 2002, Burmese Army No.8 Operation Command HQ, based in Myitta village about 35 kilometers to the east of Tavoy, demanded elephants from the local villagers in Kamoethway area to work on two bridge construction projects on the Tenasserim river. According to a local villager, three elephants from Kler Pu, Kaw Paw and Wah Su Ko villages had to work on the construction sites without any wages. The elephants had to work for one month. The bridges are used by the Burmese troops to transport ammunition and food supplies to their troops stationed along the Thai-Burma border and along the Tenasserim river. (Source: KIC)

On 26 October 2002 the commander of SPDC IB 98, South West Command headquarters, demanded 10 villagers from each village in the Ma-htaw area. The villages subjected to the demand were Paw-baw-kho, Ta-dwee-kho, Baw-kla, Tha-pa-sa-lor, Ta-hu-lor, Noh-po-doe, Thwa-kho-lor, Ma-htaw and Koo-seik. The villagers were forced to clear bushes on both sides of the Pa-pun motor road, to a distance of 150 yards. In addition, the villagers were forced erect 3 tiers of fences on each side of the motor road from Htwee-thee-eu village to Koo-seik village. (Source: KIC)

Since 16 November 2002, the villagers staying along the motor road from Pa-pun to Kamamaung in Karen State have been forced to build 9 miles of the road. The demand for labor for the construction of this road has been ongoing for many years. The villages were forced to build roads from Ka-daing-ti to Pwe-hta, from Pa-pun to Ku-seik, and from Pa-pun to Ta-gone-daing. There are about 80 to 100 civilians involved in each road construction project every day. If the villagers fail to fulfill their tasks or are absent from their work requested by SPDC officials, the village leaders are severely punished, tortured or fined. The village leaders have to fulfill the demands and send the number of workers as requested every day. Not only men and women are being forced to engage in the road construction, but also old people and children. The villagers do not receive any wages or pay for their work. Instead, they have to bring their own food and tools needed for the construction. Tactical commander Khin Kyu from Southeastern command is responsible for supervising road construction. Khin Kyu gave responsibility of looking after the road construction and workers to Major Mint

Win Aung. Khin Kyu receives a large amount of financial assistance- approximately 500 million kyats for the road construction project.

In December 2002, Southeastern command, Commander General Tin Aye came to inspect the construction of Kamamaung -Pa-pun road. He met with Major Mint Win Aung and his troops who took responsibility of the road construction. At that time, there were 70 army personnel present at the construction site, but only few village workers appeared at work. Major Mint Win Aung had asked the other village workers to hide in the forest during the visit of General Tin Aye.

General Tin Aye had a discussion with Major Mint Win Aung about the road construction and said he would arrange more soldiers for the construction if Major Mint Win Aung needed more workers. More over, he asked Major Mint Win Aung about how much the wages were paid to the village workers. Major Mint Win Aung said that a worker was paid 50 kyats per day. In reality, the village workers received no money from Mint Win Aung and had to bring their own food and equipment. The village workers said that they believed Col Khin Kyu and Maj Mint Win Aung took all the money that was supposed to be paid to the workers for the road construction project. There were about 5,943 villagers forced to work on the road construction site in Pa-Pun area during 16 November 2002 to 28 February 2002.

No	Village	Village Track	Start from	End to	People per Day	leave for rest	Workers		Total	Description
							female	Male		
1	Klor Hta	Mae Nyu	1-Jan-03	28-2-03	6 pers	5	199	131	330	clear road, laying gravel
2	No Lor Su	Mae Klor	27-12-02	28-2-03	4 pers	9	205	119	324	road construction
3	Klor Lo Klo Hta	=	18-11-02	28-2-03	6 pers	12	173	183	354	dig drain, lay gravel
4	Htee Ber Hka Hta	=	18-11-02	28-2-03	10 pers	7	375	265	640	dig drain, lay gravel
5	Day Law Pu	=	16-11-02	28-2-03	12 pers	11	592	364	756	dig drain, lay gravel
6	Klaw Hta	=	25-12-02	28-2-03	2 pers	15	47	53	100	dig drain, lay gravel
7	Oo Ree Hkee	Ma Taung	16-11-02	28-2-03	10 pers	7	220	450	670	dig drain, lay gravel
8	Boo Baw Hko	=	18-11-02	28-2-03	4 pers	5	108	152	260	dig drain, lay gravel
9	Ta Dwee Hko	=	18-11-02	28-2-03	4 pers	3	120	156	276	dig drain, lay gravel
10	Wai Mo Wai Hsar	=	16-11-02	28-2-03	10 pers	10	325	315	640	dig drain, lay gravel
11	Kut Seint	=	27-12-02	28-2-03	5 pers	10	105	160	265	dig drain, lay gravel
12	Nya Eain Su	=	16-11-02	28-2-03	5 pers	7	127	208	335	dig drain, lay gravel
13	Baut Hta	Mae Klor	16-11-02	Dig drain for both side of road – 900 yds			30	42	72	road-10ft wide, drain 3ft deep, 3ft wide
14	Klor Day	=	16-11-02	Dig drain – 800 yds			31	34	65	cut bamboo, wood
15	Kler Hko	=	16-11-02	Dig drain – 1000 yds			37	53	90	cut bamboo, wood
16	Kyaunt Kleet lo	=	16-11-02	Dig drain – 600 yds			21	34	55	
17	Nay Pu Ka	=	16-11-02	Dig drain – 600 yds			33	25	58	
18	Ta Ku Htan	=	16-11-02	Dig drain – 1200 yds			62	40	102	
19	Pa-pun	=	16-11-02	Dig drain – 2000 yds			116	99	215	
20	Mae Ta Row/ Baut Hta/ Klor Day	=	15-12-02	15-12-02	6 pers		0	336	336	
							2,926	3,219	5,943	

Forced Labor for Army Camps, Incoming Generating Projects for the Military

Shan state

On 16 June 2002, the Burmese military commander of IB 248 ordered villagers in Hsai Phae tract and Nar Kham tract to build fences around their garrison. For the construction, the villagers had to cut and carry bamboo. The troops ordered 7 layers of fences to be constructed. The quota was 3 layers for Hsai Phae and 4 layers for Nar Kham tract. The villagers had 10 days to complete the fences or face severe punishment. The villagers stopped all their work and rushed to the construction site for fear of punishment. (Source: *Freedom*, SHAN, June 2002)

On 26 August 2002, Burmese military authorities from LIB 520 forced the villagers of Wan Ho Phai Long, Murng Pan township to work for them in the paddy fields which they had confiscated from the people at Tong Kwai south village. The order was to do all work from ploughing up to transporting of seedlings using 64 baskets of paddy as seeds. Those who did not obey were threatened with severe punishment. The villagers had no choice but to work for free, while leaving their own work which was essential to feed their families. (Source: *Freedom*, SHAN, 2002)

Since the first week of September 2002, Burmese military authorities in Kesi township have forced the local people to work for them without any payment. The excavation site lies between Wan Suon Mong and Wan Phueng in Kesi township. Local villagers were forced to work in the construction of the Burmese garrisons, cutting wood and bamboo for construction of barracks, digging trenches and constructing bamboo fences. The rest were ordered to dig coal which started from 5 September 2002 up to the present day. As these villagers were mostly farmers, this forced labor has caused great suffering. Even the old and weak were forced to work, with beating as their only compensation for this work. (Source: *Freedom*, SHAN, 2002)

Mon State

On 12 June 2002, a commander of IB No. 31 Maj. Naing Win ordered the village headmen of Kwan-hlar village, which is close to the army base, to send 6 trucks and 15 men to construct a road in their headquarters. IB No. 31 headquarters is situated in Thanbyuzayat Town and Kwan-hlar village situated in the southernmost part of Mudon Township in Mon State, IB No. 31 also used forced labour from that village. After requisition of forced labour, the village headmen sent 6 loading trucks and 15 men from his village. The commander used the trucks to carry stones from the streams and used the villagers to crush the stones into small pieces and to lay them on the embankment of rough road. The villagers, the drivers and their trucks were forced to work for two days. They had to carry their own food and tools. (Source: HURFOM)

Karenni State

At the beginning of 2002, commanders of the Dee Maw Soe based SPDC LIB No. 427, IB No. 102 and the KNPLF (Karenni Nationalities People's Liberation Front, an SPDC-backed cease-fire armed group) demanded that one member of each family from the villages located in Loinam Pah village tract, report for work. Villagers from Thesoleh, Daw Labaw, Myaleh, Daw She Ei, Kone Thar, Daw Tawku and Daw Plawdu were forced to clear land for military farms with their own buffaloes and all without compensation. (Source: *KNAHR*)

At the beginning of 2002, the Burmese commander from LIB No. 413 at the Shadaw base, under the command of Regional Operation Command No. 6, ordered families living in Shadaw town and relocation camp not to use torchlights at night. The Burmese commander also ordered them not to bring hunting guns nor air guns when they go outside the town or camp. In addition, people were ordered to transport military rations by bullock-cart to the Salween Riverbank base of Tartamaw without payment. They were told by the troops that they must pay compensation if along the way Karenni forces took the rations away. (Source: *KNAHR*)

In March 2002, SPDC LIB No. 412 under Central Regional Military Command No. 6 ordered residents of Shadaw town to take military rations by bullock-cart from Shadaw to the military base at Tartamaw, and from Shadaw to Daw Tama. The Burmese soldiers stated that they did not have enough petrol to take the rations by military truck. They threatened the villagers with imprisonment and fines if they failed in this task - for example, if the Karenni Army destroyed the rations. (Source: *KNAHR*)

Since the first week of June 2002, in accordance with the "City Unification Project", family members in Loikaw have been ordered by Loikaw Province Chairman Lt. Colonel Tin Htun to report to the Township and Provincial officers for work assignments. All civil servants were also ordered to clear land for a new plantation project aimed at generating income for civil departments. (Source: *KNAHR*)

A Burmese troop from IB No. 530 at Hteesakah base was setting up a new camp four furlong away from its main base. On August 15, 2002, the troop commander Major Myint Soe ordered the Hteesakah and Loilin Lay village chiefs to send 40 villagers to work on the new military camp, all without payment. In addition, Major Myint Soe demanded that each family from these villages pay 1,200 kyat for purchasing bamboo and roof thatch. On 18 August, the Burmese commander again ordered Hteesakah and Teelon villagers to work on the new military camp. (Source: *KNAHR*)

Tennasserim Division

On 17 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 401 put under duress Klet-ti villagers to search for resistance forces. On the same day, troops from SPDC IB 101 captured 11 villagers who hid to the jungle at Htee-thu-day, brought them to Pa-wah-mee-laing-kwin and demand 100,000 kyat from them. In addition, they forced the villagers to carry stones for constructing a pagoda at the foot of Eein-daw-ya hill. Instead of releasing the 11 villagers to return to Pa-wah Htee-thu-day, they kept them in a concentration camp at Mee-law-kwehn to work for then at all the time. (Source: *KIC*)

On 8 April 2002, SPDC militia leader, Nyan Lin based in Waing village, demanded villagers from Ler-say-hta, Et-et, Kyaw-ta-kwa, Si-pa-leh, Noh-ni and Pra-ka-ni villages in Tha-yet-chaung Township to build an army camp at the top of Pa-aw mountain. They forced the villagers to cut bamboo for the construction at the foot of the mountain 3 miles away from the top. In addition, they ordered 500 villagers to complete the camp construction within a day. On that day, militia leader Aung Ngwe demanded 5,000 kyat for the salary of his men from each Hla-baw, Ta-lay-kho and Kwa-khaing villages. Moreover, when the militia men came into the village, the villagers had to provide them with rice, salt, fish paste and other materials. The militia troops demanded 100,000 kyat from each Et-et and Htee-su-kwee villages. Militia leader Nyein Lin demanded one villager to serve as a militia man from each of the following villages in Waning Village Tract; Waing, Hsa-ma-toe, Pi-ta-kha, Wain-khee, Htee-oh-oh, Ta-kho-hta, Loe-kwee-doe, Ko-si-kwee and Si-pa-leh villages. Militia men based in Kyauk-taung demanded 200 baskets of paddy and 5,000 kyat as their salary from each village and the items had to be sent to Waing camp. (Source: KIC)

On 4 May 2002, Camp Commander Sergeant Major Maung Ngwe of SPDC LIB 403 based in In-bya village ordered each house in Saw-kay and Htee-pa-doh villages to cut one cart-full of firewood. He also threatened to take action against the villagers who failed to go. (Source: KIC)

On 22 May 2002 Tin Naing Thein, the second in command of SPDC No.15 Local Military Operation Command 15, demanded 5 villagers from each village in Htee-moe-pwa area to attend a peoples' militia training. The villages subject to this order were Bu-thaw-plaw, Ta-yaw-hta, Ta-moo, Da-baw-kho, Ka-weh-hta, Pa-htoo-klo and Ler-pa-doh villages, altogether 7 villages. The villagers demanded were sent to Ler-pa-doh village on 25 May 2002. (Source: KIC)

On 16 June 2002, Zaw Thu Tin of SPDC LIB 565 under No. 3 Tactical Command based at Naw-ter village in Ler-mu-lah Township forced villagers to construct four store houses, measuring 30 cubit by 9 cubit each to store 100,000 sacks of rice rations. These troops also seized powered boats between Naw-ter and Ta-po-hta villages and banned villagers from going to work outside the village. (Source: KIC)

On 17 June 2002, the Camp Commander of In-bya ordered one person per household in Saw Kay and Htee-pa-doh villages to cut firewood for In-bya camp. (Source: KIC)

On 26 November 2002, Operation Commander Soe Thet from Burmese army's No.1 Strategic Command, based in Myitta village about 37 kilometers in the east of Tavoy forced local villagers in Myitta forced relocation site to work on a military rice farm. Villagers from Myitta, Seiku, and Hsa Mu Htaw had to work on the rice farm beside Myitta village. 50 people from each village had to go and work for the whole day until everything was finished. The villagers had to level the ground on a mountain to make terrace rice fields. Those who did not want to go had to pay 1,500 kyat per day for a substitute. According to sources, some poor families were facing many difficulties because they did not have time to work for their own survival. They did not have enough money to pay for a substitute and they had to go by themselves. Many poor families earn their living in relocation sites by making charcoal, collecting *Hker-mee-te* (some kind of wild yam) and selling it. (Source: KIC)

Karen State***Papun District***

On 15 October 2002, troops from SPDC battalion 349 of Southern Command headquarters ordered the villagers Toe-kot-sot-khee, Toh-meh-khee, Klo-khee, Mae-waing, Wah-tho-lor and Day-lor-pu villages in Mae-waing village tract of Dweh-lo Township to each cut 20 poles of giant bamboo. (Source: KIC)

On 16 October 2002, troops from SPDC battalion 349 of Southern Command headquarters ordered both Toh-meh-khee and Toe-kot-sot-khee villagers to saw firewood. Moreover, they forced Wah-tho-lor villagers to carry military food supplies to Maw-thay-hta. (Source: KIC)

On 25 October 2002 the commander of SPDC LIB 349, Southern Command headquarters, demanded from villages in Dweh-lo township giant bamboo poles: Toe-kot-kyaw-khee village, 30 poles; Toh-meh-khee, 15 poles; Ler-wah-kho, 15 poles; Mae-waing, 15 poles; Mae-kor-lor, 15 poles; Klo-khee, 30 poles; Wa-tho-loo, 15 poles; Day-law-pu, 15 poles; and Wa-tho-kho, 30 poles. A total of 180 giant bamboo poles for constructing their army camp. (Source: KIC)

Toung-oo District

On 23 March 2002, Military Operation Commander Thet Oo of SPDC Southern Command forced seven trucks of Baw-ga-li and Kaw-thay-doe villages to load military supplies to Busa-khee camp. On 26 March, they forced seven Kaw-thay-doe villagers to cut bamboo to construct their camp. (Source: KIC)

From April to July 2002, Battalion Commander Win Thein of SPDC IB 53 based at Haw-ka-la and Column Commander Ko Lay, the dam security commander based at 20-mile camp, forced 15 villagers of 20-mile village to construct the army camp. The villagers had to bring their own food supplies. Twenty-mile camp Commander Thet Ko Oo forced 20-mile villagers to stay at his camp and serve as runners. He demanded 2,000 kyat from each villager who could not go. (Source: KIC)

On 2 May 2002, troops from SPDC IB 26 led by Bo Yan Naing Soe, based at Ka-thwee-dee ordered one person from each house of Kler-der-kah village to construct a fence for their army camp. (Source: KIC)

Tha-ton District

On 20 January 2002, SPDC LIB 8, under the control of LID 44, demanded from Kaw-po-pleh village, Bee-lin township, 200 poles of "Kya-thaung" bamboo. (Source: KIC)

On 10 February 2002, Win Aung from SPDC LIB 2 forced one villager per house from Kyaw-kay-khee, Tar-thu-khee, Pwa-hgaw, Noe-auk-la, Noe-law-plaw, Htee-pa-doe-khee, Noe-ka-day, Kru-si, Ha-ta-ret, Ka-ma and Ta-pauk villages of Pa-an District to fence the Ta-pauk military camp and a 3 acre area of land. The work was to be finished in one day. The villagers had to bring their own food to work. He threatened to severely punish any villager who failed to come. (Source: KIC)

On 30 April 2002, Company Second in-Command Saw Myo Htun of SPDC IB 96 ordered each of Htee-wah-klu-khee, Hsaw-thoo-khee and Maw-paw-ler villages to cut 5 tons of timber for him. (Source: KIC)

On 6 May 2002, DKBA troops led by Saw Pah Too and Tin Win came to Ler-klaw village and took away 4 buffaloes by force from villager Saw Maung Win without reason. Moreover, they also brutally beat up Ler-klaw villagers Saw Da Baw and Saw Tan Ta Nyet. On that day Column Commander Myint Aung of SPDC LIB 118 demanded villagers from Ler-klaw, Ta-paw and Ka-meh villages to carry gravel. Moreover, on 8 May, they forced 4 villagers each from Kaw-hai and Shwe-oh villages to go and work at Lay-kay army camp. (Source: KIC)

On 8 May 2002, Bo Kyaw Zay Lat of SPDC LIB 2 based at Ta-paw camp, ordered each village of Noh-aw-lar, Pwa-gaw, Kyaw-kay-khee, Kru-khe, Noh-law-plaw, Ha-ta-rai and Pwo to cut timber poles measuring 7 cubits in length and 18 inches in girth and 10 poles of bamboo and also each house had to bring a bag (Source: KIC)

On 25 May 2002, Ta Paw Camp Commander Thein Dan Oo of SPDC LIB 2 ordered Ta Paw village of 100 households to buy him a bullock cart and a pair of bullocks per every 5 households. He planned to use the bullocks for his travels. On the same day, he ordered Ta-paw villagers to cut bamboo and erect fences on both sides of the Ta-paw motor road and 10 villagers were ordered to fence the military camp. As a result, villagers had no time to do their own work and faced great difficulty. (Source: KIC)

On 11 July 2002, Column (2) Commander Hla Win and Nat-gyi Camp Commander Tin Maung Win of SPDC IB 46 demanded the following from different villages in Bi-lin Township: Po Klaw village, 150 bamboo poles; Thet-pawhta village, 150 bamboo poles; Kho-po village, 100 bamboo poles; Po-thwe-day village, 100 bamboo poles; Po-si-day village, 100 bamboo poles; Pi-tee-khee village, 100 bamboo poles; and Ta-kot-po village 100 bamboo poles for the army camp. (Source: KIC)

On 12 July 2002, Yo-kla camp commander Kyaw Myint Htwe of SPDC LIB 20 under LID 44 ordered Htee-pa-doh-ha village in Bi-lin Township to cut 400 poles of bamboo to fence the army camp. (Source: KIC)

On 15 August 2002, Sergeant Major Thein Myint of SPDC LIB 9 demanded one person from each house of Win-yaw village, Noh-pa-leh village and Kaw-sa-theh village to construct the army camp at Win-yaw. (Source: KIC)

On 13 September 2002, Sergeant Major Thein Myint of SPDC troops based at Win-yaw camp demanded from Noh-pa-leh village 10-cart loads of wooden poles, one person from each household and 25 persons from Kaw-sa-theh village of Tha-ton township to work until the construction of an army camp was completed in one day. (Source: KIC)

On 23 September 2002, Bo Nyo Shwe of SPDC IB 8 based at Baw-di-gon, Ywa-thit-ma-dan, Aleh-sa-karn ordered each household of Shwe-yaung-pya, Lah-aw-kher and Kya-ta-raw villages, in Bi-lin Township, to provide one person, 25 poles of bamboo and a wooden pole having a girth of 18 inches and length of 7 feet and 6 inches, for the construction of his military camp. (Source: KIC)

On 18 October 2002 Yo-kla camp commander Thet Oo Shwe, of SPDC LIB 102 ordered each of the following villages to provide 250 poles of bamboo; Htaw-hlaw-hta, Lay-kaw-hti, Htee-pa-doh-hta, Yo-kla, Lay-kay and Htee-pa-doh-hta. (Source: KIC)

On 23 October 2002, troops from SPDC IB 96 based at Kyait-htee-yo pagoda, led by Company Commander Min Aung, demanded one person from each household of the villages in Kyaik-toh township. The villages were Reh-Thaw-khee, Ta-ya-day, Htee-pa-doh, Mae-praw-hta and Blay-blaw-kyo village. The people demanded from the villages were forced to provide labor for the construction of an army camp at Aung-thein-hti pagoda. The troops threatened to take action against villagers in the surrounding of Kyaik-Htee-yo, if they were found in the hill rice fields. (Source: KIC)

Doo-pla-ya District

On 26 February 2002, Commander Ye Kaung of Htee-hu-than military camp of SPDC IB 83 forced villagers from villages in Kyone-doe Township to cut wood in the forest between Htee-po-than and Kru-ma-tee to construct a road and bridges between Htee-po-than and Win-ka village. The villages subject to this order were Win-tha-lweh, Win-bote, Ka-yin, Lah-la-pa, Ta-da-gyi, Htee-po-than, Kroo-ma-tee and Win-ka. Moreover, he ordered 15 bullock carts from Tha-min-dote and Ku-ni villages and 15 from Win-ka village to haul the wood cut. (Source: KIC)

On 2 March 2002, Operation Commander of SPDC LID 88 Aung Than Win demanded 5 roofing iron sheets from each village and 200 Kyat from each household of the following villages; Azin, Ma-kwee-ni, Maw-ta-ya, Htaw-ta-naw-khee, Mae-ka-ti, Htee-mae-baw, Kyaw-khee, Ka-ser-po-kler, Kret-maw-law, Po-si-mu, Mae-ta-ler, Kwee-kler, Htaw-wah-lor, Mae-naw-da-hta. He made the same demands of Mae-thraw-hta and Mae-naw-da-khee in Kwee-lay. They-bay-pwa-hta villagers were forced to roof the store of the army camp in Azin. (Source: KIC)

Beginning from 22 April 2002, combined troops of SPDC IB 77 and IB 78 column 1 and 2, LIB 301 column 1 and 2 and LIB 416 column 1 and 2 under LID 88 harassed and forced villagers in Mae-ku area in Kya-in Township to work for the army. (Source: KIC)

On 15 June 2002, Maung Htun, Camp Commander of SPDC IB-77 based at Htee-wa-tha camp in Kyon-doe township forced villagers to construct their army camp even on religiously sacred days. The following Ler-taw villagers were forced to work: Saw Saw Moo, 38; Saw Thet Kyay, 41; Saw Pet Let, 44; Saw Naw Paw, 37; Saw Han, 35; Saw Pah Ho, 28; Saw Hnin Sein, 12. The following Tha-byu villagers were also forced to work: Saw Gay Wah, 19; Po Lay Heh, 20; Naw Kaw Wah, 15; Naw Mu Teh Po, 40; Naw Win Kyi, 40; Naw Win Khin, 14; Naw Mu Po, 17; Naw Mu, 16; Naw Heh Seh, 30; and Naw Paw La Ki, 23. (Source: KIC)

On 17 June 2002, Camp Commander Zaw Htut of SPDC IB 77 under LID 88 and based at Htee-hu-thaw village in Kyone-doe Township seized Klot-chaw villagers in Kya-in Township for forced labour to construct a military camp. The seized villagers were the following: Tee-pah-kloo, (M, 50); Paw law, (M, 47); Kyaw Kwet, (M, 28); Kyaw Kher, (M, 36); Kaw Lar (M, 38); Dah Bu, (M, 40); Saw Law Wah, (M, 26); Naw May Khin, (F, 20); Naw Di Baw, (F, 29); Ta Pa Di, (M, 33); U Nyein Than, (M, 60); and Kyaw Ler Hay, (M, 36). (Source: KIC)

On 18 June 2002, troops again seized Tha-byu villagers in Kya-in Township for forced labor. The villagers were: Naw Mu (F, 23), Ta Thoo (M, 23), Ma Chit Thein (F, 45), Naw Ma (F, 30), Naw Bu Gay (F, 16), Naw Nwet Kyi (F, 41), Naw Met (F, 18), Naw Ka Htee Paw (F, 18) and Naw Tu (F, 20). (Source: KIC)

On 19 June 2002, troops again seized villagers in Kya-in Township for forced labor. The villagers were Pah Ta Kee (M, 50), Saw Pah Chaw (M, 35), Saw Pah Nyunt (M, 45), Naw Kot Kyi (F, 40), Naw Kher (F, 18), Naw Mu Taler (F, 18), Naw Mu Law Plu (F, 37), Naw Thanay Po (F, 10), Naw Thein Yi (F, 45), Naw Wah (F, 10), Saw Baw Waw (M, 45), Naw Hsa Pi Aye (F, 30), Saw Kyaw Thoo (M, 15), Saw Pah Di Thoo (M, 15), Naw Mu Kya Yin (F, 40), Saw Pa Yo (M, 13), Saw Pah Toe (M, 17), Naw Thuza (F, 15), Naw Taw Naw Kyi (F, 28) and Naw Twee Thoo (F, 45). (Source: KIC)

On 24 June 2002, the camp commander of SPDC IB 79 seized Kwee-ka-neh villagers in Kya-in Township for forced labour. The villagers were Naw Htaw (F, 41), Naw Kah Pah (F, 35), Naw Mu Gay (F, 35), Naw Pla, (F, 23), Naw Pree Moo (F, 25), Naw Mu (F, 22), Naw Ta Thwee (F, 20) and Naw Ku Paw (F, 20). (Source: KIC)

On 25 June 2002, Kyaw Win, Camp commander of SPDC IB 78 based at the Per-kler intersection in Kaw-ka-reik Township demanded forced labour from Taung-ga-lay village to clear his army camp. The villagers who had to work were: Saw Hai Htoo (M, 28), Pah Thu (M, 25), Saw Ah Si (M, 32), Saw Moh Ler (M, 21), Saw Htoo Moo Hai (M, 45), Maung Hla Thwin (M, 33), Saw Htun Lwin (M, 35), Maung Lwin Ohn (M, 42) and Naw Kyay Kya (F, 22). (Source: KIC)

On 23 October 2002, Commander Nyunt Aye of SPDC LIB 415 ordered Da-none, Sin-gong and Si-sone villages of Kya-in Township to cut 1,000 bamboo poles and to send them to the army camp. (Source: KIC)

On 31 October 2002, Commander Nyunt Aye of SPDC LIB 415 demanded 1,000 bamboo poles from Kyone-sein village and 800 bamboo poles from Ka-sa village, which had to be sent to the army camp by 1 November 2002. He threatened to drive away the villages that failed to obey the order. (Source: KIC)

Arakan State

Beginning 25 July 2002, forced labour was extensively used to build a new Nasaka Security Forces Camp at Khamaung-hseik village in the northern part of Maungdaw. Until 4 August, the number of forced laborers used stood at 135 men and women. Similarly, at Kathay model village under Nasaka Area #2 of Maungdaw Township 703 people were engaged in forced labor between 1 and 28 July for the construction of the new model village. When the UNHCR inquired about the extensive use of forced labor, the Nasaka security forces stated that they paid each worker 100 kyat per day. Yet, the UNHCR found that the labor was unpaid. The Burmese Army is making use of extensive forced labour in Buthidaung, Rathedaung, Kyauktaw, Mrauk-u and Minbra Townships for cultivating military owned agricultural fields. They are also pressing the Rakhine farmers into forced labour by making use of their cattle without providing wages or food for them. (Source: Narinjara News)

From 22 to 27 October 2002, the villagers of Nanragoon and Quandaung village tracts of Buthidaung township of Arakan State had to reap the paddy crop of the Commander of

Military Operation Command 15 (MOC-15). They also had to do other work such as threshing, carrying, storing the grains in his granary and putting the paddy into heat, etc. The Commander previously seized 10 acres of farmland from Rohingya villages adjacent to the MOC-15 headquarters and started growing paddy with forced labor. According to the order, the Village Peace and Development Council called one person per family from both village tracts. Afterwards, 100 villagers were picked up and sent to the MOC-15 headquarters for forced labor and the rest were set free after paying 300 kyats per person. After 6 days of continuous forced labor, the villagers were freed and paid 300 kyats each to the MOC-15 Commander. The labor fee outside would have been 1,000 kyats per day. (Source: Kaladan News)

On 1 December 2002, the Commander of the Military Operation Command (MOC)-15 of Buthidaung Township, Arakan State ordered the Chairmen of the Nanragon and Quandaung village tracts Peace and Development Councils (VPDCs) to provide 200 laborers daily for the cultivation of seasonal crops like chili, tomato, egg plant, potato, cabbage, pea and cauliflower. About six acres of farmland had already been confiscated from nearby villagers for seasonal cultivation. The villagers of the two village tracts were also asked to complete the cultivation of six acres of land by 15 December for growing vegetables.

At the time of this report, there were a total of 1,490 houses in these village tracts. The two Chairmen of the village tracts had collected an amount of 387,000 kyat from 1,290 households at the rate of 300 kyats per house. The rest of the 200 houses had to supply forced labor, one person per house for 15 days for which they were paid 200 kyats from the money collected from the villagers. Normally the daily wage of an ordinary laborer is 800 to 1,000 kyat. (Source: Kaladan News)

Forced Labour for Security Duties

Karenni State

Since completion of the Loikaw-Aungban railway in 1993, all villages in the vicinity have been ordered by the regional SPDC authorities to work as security guards on the line. The security guards are paid a very small amount for their work. To pay them, the SPDC authorities collected 150 kyat per family from all wards of Loikaw City, and from the residents of the villages of Bardo and Htjengalyah. In addition, the SPDC forced people from Chit Keh village and the people who lived near the electricity pylons and lampposts between Lawpita and Shan State to guard the pylons. They received no payment for their work. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 16 September 2002, LIB No. 428 Camp Commander Myint Thein of Markrawshe base gave a verbal command to all villagers living in Markrawshe village tract to go to his military camp without fail. They were instructed by the Burmese commander to give him information about the Karenni troops or pay a fine. (Source: *KNAHR*)

Karen State

On 18 April 2002, Commander Thet Oo from SPDC No. 3 Local Operation Command forced Christian Pastor Saw Tha Say who was sick to go to Sho-ser, Wah-soe area to persuade the resistance group in the area to surrender. On 24 April 2002, his troops looted money and household items from the houses of the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 28 June 2002, DKBA troops demanded Mae-nyo-hta, Mae-ku-hta, Mae-khee, Htee-doh-hta and Toe-mu villages in Dweh-lo Township each to pay 15,000 kyat as porter fees. Since 5 May 2002, one villager from each of these villages had to go to Mae-ku-hta military camp and serves as a sentinel for two days at a time. (Source: KIC)

On 27 August 2002, Bo Thu Mu Heh, leader of the Karen Peace Force ordered three Shwe-doe villagers daily to construct his army camp in Shwe-doe village, Kya-in Township. Moreover, he ordered one villager each of Ta-ku-khee, Mae-ka-taw and Kyaw-kay-kho villages to come and report to him at his army camp daily about the situation of the area and forced the villagers with threats to collect without fail 20 new recruits. (Source: KIC)

On 2 September 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 599, led by battalion second in command Aung Myo Htet, demanded one villager of Ko-ni village and two villagers of Ta-kot-pwa village in Mone Township to serve as new recruits. The villages who could not provide new recruits had to pay 10,000 kyat for each new recruit. The villagers had to send the money to Village Chairperson Khin Thein by 22 September 2002. (Source: KIC)

On 21 October 2002, troops from a SPDC guerrilla unit led by Naung Naung forced Kathaw-pwe villagers of Than-daung township to buy them a camera and a cassette tape recorder. Moreover, they demanded two villagers per day to serve as runners. Later, they extorted 5 chickens from village head Saw Heh Wee. (Source: KIC)

On 9 November 2002, the Burmese troops ordered local villagers in Pe Hkee area in Theyetchaung township, Mergui district, to serve as *Pyithusit* (People militia formed and backed by Burmese troops). The villages under the instruction are Pe Hkee, Petakah, Htee Oo Ooo (Panbyoke), Lukwedoh, Takohhta, and Kosekwee. One person from each village had to serve one month in term. Anybody who failed to serve his term would be fined 15,000 kyats. (Source: KHRG)

Shan State

On 15 April 2002, Major Nyi Zaw of SPDC IB 286 formed a fire brigade of 60 men conscripted from 4 quarters of Murng Nong town. By day they had to practice drills and fire fighting. By night they had to stand guard duty in turn or search every house in their assigned areas. They receive no payment and did not have time to work for their living. (Source: Freedom, SHAN, July 2002)

Since 20 September 2002, SPDC troops from Lai-Kha based IB64 who were assigned to security duties at quarter-2 of Murng-Su town, Murng-Su township, have been forcing villagers in the area to stand guard from dusk to dawn in front of their camp. Each night, from 6 pm to 5 am, 3 villagers with muskets were required to keep guard at about 100 yards in front of the military security camp at the entrance of Murng-Su town. Villagers in quarter-2 had to take turns to do guard duty, replacing one another every 7 days, up to the present. These villagers are often forced to serve as guides and porters whenever the troops go out to patrol the area. (Source SHRF)

Since late May until July 2002, villagers in 5 village tracts in Ta-Khi-Laek township were forced to stand guard day and night around their villages by SPDC troops of LIB316 based in Ta Lur village tract. The 5 village tracts mentioned above were Ta Lur, East Murng Laen, West Murng Laen and Nam Kherm village tracts. Each village was required to provide 5

persons to guard their respective villages around the clock and to report any unusual activities to the military authorities at LIB316 or LIB521 immediately. The SPDC troops temporarily replaced village headmen whom they did not trust with their own men to make sure the villagers did as ordered. The SPDC troops also randomly searched the houses in the villages every night to check identities of the villagers. According to the local villagers, the most fearful thing for them was that when the SPDC troops wanted to search a house, they would accuse the owners of keeping illegal weapons and would come at any time, and would take what they wanted while searching, including money and valuable things. (Source SHRF)

Since March 2002, villagers of Wan Mai Paang Peng village in Wan Pung village tract, Lai-Kha township, have been forced to guard the Lai-Kha-to-Loi-Lem main road, and since September 2002, have also been forced to grow sesame by SPDC troops stationed at Nam Tawng bridge in Wan Pung village tract, Lai-Kha township. Villagers of Wan Mai Paang Peng village, which has more than 30 houses, have to build 2 tents some distance from each other along the road between Lai-Kha and Loi-Lem and take turns to guard the road. Each tent has to be manned by 3 villagers for 3 days at a time, to watch out for the Shan soldiers in case they come that way to cross the road.

Since September 2002, villagers of Wan Mai Paang Peng village have also been forced to cultivate Japanese sesame for the SPDC troops. Each household has been given 1 'pyi' of sesame seeds, told to find land on which to grow them, and must take care of them up until the harvest time. (Source: SHRF)

Tenasserim Division

On 1 January 2002, LIB No. 282 of Burmese Army based in Yebyu township, Tenasserim Division ordered the villagers from 4 Mon and one Karen village on the motor road to create a militia force from their own villages for security on a rotation basis. LIB No. 282 provided 10 rifles to the four Mon villages, Aleskan, Kyaukadin, Kwetalin and Yapu; and the one Karen village Law-thaing. The troops ordered that all villagers must serve as militiamen (village security personnel) on a rotation basis to protect their own villages. These 10 rifles were extra arms for each village although each village already has a group of militia force. The village headmen was responsible for recruiting 10 villagers every week to be temporary militiamen. If one villager was unable to be a militiaman for one week, he needed to pay 4,500 kyat to the headmen as a fine. LIB No. 282 also ordered the village militiamen to launch a military patrol in the areas surrounding their villages. They were responsible for shooting rebel soldiers if they came close to their villages.

Many farmers did not like to hold guns and were upset about having to be militiamen. They were afraid of being shot by the rebel soldiers if they held the guns while they were patrolling the area surrounding their village. However, they could not pay the weekly fine to avoid being recruited by the village headmen. Similarly to Yebyu township, Ye Township based MOC No. 19 also instructed the villagers in the whole Ye township to increase the number of militiamen in every village to protect their own villages.

On 8 January 2002, the commander of MOC No. 19 Brigadier Ye Win called a meeting with headmen from all villages to increase the number of village militiamen in every village. The village chairmen were to become the leaders of the militia force. On that day, he also formed a military force for a Mon village, Abor, with 20 villagers as militiamen. He ordered this militia force to take responsibility for the security of the village and the villagers needed to

pay the salary of the militiamen. He instructed every household to provide 1000 kyat each month.

In Ye town, he asked the town ward leaders to provide 3 militiamen from each ward for the security of their ward and the headquarters of MOC No. 19 and IB No. 61, based in town. In Ye town, there are about 10 wards and he appointed about 30 militiamen to take security. Unlike in Yebyu township, MOC No. 19 appointed these militiamen permanently and equipped them with arms. The village headmen were responsible for recruitment. He said the villagers needed to pay 10,000 kyat for each man in the militia each month. The headmen in Abor village, which has 20 militiamen, had to collect 200,000 kyat every month. He added that the town militia had less responsibility and less danger when compared to the village militia force. Therefore, the town residents had to provide only 7,000 kyat salary to each militiaman. MOC No. 19 is also recruiting civilians in the town and villages to be firemen for the township Fire Bridge for which they must attend basic arms equipment training to use as paramilitary troops.

On 18 January 2002, MOC No. 19's Brigadier Ye Win called a meeting with all the firemen in the township and instructed them that all firemen must attend basic arms equipment training for some weeks and they must be involved in the military if there is any danger posed to the country. In Ye township, there are about 100 firemen from the Township Fire Brigade and all were ordered to attend the training. The township civilians had to pay for the travel and training costs. Town ward leaders and village headmen collected 500 kyat from each household in both the towns and villages to cover the costs of the firemen during their training. (Source: *HURFOM*)

In 2002, young villagers in Tenasserim Township were forced to attend military training sessions with Battalion 561. After the training, three villagers from each village were forced to join the army while villages had to provide 4,000 kyat for each villager who joined the army. Families of those who joined the army were exempt from providing financial support. The training course lasted six months. School teachers, anti-insurgent associations and members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) also had to attend the training, but were not required to join the army. In August alone, nearly three-dozen villagers, ranging from ages 13 and up, fled to the Thai-Burma border to escape the training. Included in this group were three high school girls and two junior high school girls. If caught by the authorities, escaping villagers will receive jail sentences of about four years. (Source: Irrawaddy/ ABSDF)

Mon State

On 14 May 2002, the local military battalions ordered the villagers along Kanbauk - Myaingkalay gas-pipeline to assume responsibility for the security of the pipeline. "On May 14, Thanbyuzayat Town's IB No. 31 commander ordered our village chairman, Nai Than Aung, to built three huts along the gas pipeline in the part of our village. The commander ordered 9 villagers to take care of security for the pipeline for 24 hours. After that, they would be replaced with another 9 villagers. 3 villagers had to stay in one hut and there are 3 huts. They need 9 villagers every day." explained a Kwan-hlar villager. Kwan-hlar village is in southern part of the township and is close Thanbyazayat Town where IB No. 32 is based. (Source: *HURFOM*)

In July and August 2002, LIB No. 282 forced the villagers from Aleskan village tract in Yebyu village tract to attend basic military training for one week so that all the villagers in the area could serve in their local militias. According to the villagers, LIB No. 282 registered all men between 18 years and 50 years old and women between 18 years and 40 years old. They planned to provide basic arm equipment and military training in early July. The trainers from LIB No. 282 would provide them 7 days of many rounds of short trainings. Each household which had no paddy farms or fruit plantations needed to provide 2,000 kyat to the trainers or battalion for the expenditures during the 7 days training. Farming households, which had paddy farms or plantations, had to provide 4,000 kyat as a special payment to the trainers.

After training, the villagers would be forced to be militiamen or militia-women on a rotation basis even though most do not want to join the Burmese Army. They would be conscripted to work at least 7 days each time. If one household failed to provide when rotation arrived to them, they would have to pay a fine of 4,500 kyat. Aleskan village tract has four villages and about 500 households. The majority of villagers are Mon people. SPDC LIB No. 273 and LIB No. 282 launched military activities in this area. The Mon splinter armed group also launched military activities in the area mainly fighting armed rebel forces. These two battalions formed in 2000 to prevent villagers from cooperating with the rebel forces. In the beginning, militiamen were given salaries but many became afraid as they had to fight the rebels and resigned. Therefore, the new system of training all villagers and forcing them serve in the militia on a rotation basis was implemented. (Source: HURFOM)

On 29 July 2002, SPDC LIB No. 31 commander Maj. Lu Aye called a meeting with headmen from 30 villages in the southern part of Mudon Township and most villages in Thanbyuzayat Township at his base in Thanbyuzayat Town. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the security of the gas pipeline as the commander was worried about an attack that could cause energy shortages for the cement factory and major loss of income. Most village headmen in the meeting came from the villages that were close to the gas pipeline route. The paddy farmers were to be responsible for guarding the pipeline as it was their duty as "good citizens". If they found strangers, suspected rebel soldiers, or noticed strange things near the pipeline, they had to inform the village headmen who would inform the nearest military outpost. If they delayed to inform or if the gas pipeline was damaged, the farmers nearby would face punishment. The commander did not have any written orders so that there is no evidence of forced labor. They usually try to cover their actions as much as possible, which is why the meeting with the headmen was held secretly.

In some areas, the village headmen are told to send villagers as forced labor in areas vulnerable to attack on a regular basis. About 10 kilometers from the southern part of Thanbyuzayat Town, there is one place where the rebel soldiers use the motor road and could attack the gas pipeline. This place was far from the army base. Therefore, the commander of IB No. 31 from Thanbyuzayat Town ordered the village headmen close to the pipeline to send two men every day to walk back and forth along the pipeline. The walking villagers needed to watch for strangers, rebel soldiers and explosive substances along the route. Sometimes, SPDC troops arrived in the area but most of the time the villagers were responsible for the security. Since May 2002, villagers from Sakan, Sot-palaung and Wae-kami villages were forced to walk along the pipeline route. Each village had to provide two villagers and were ordered to bring knives. If they found something they suspected of being demolition charges they had to dig with their knives.

Sometimes, when the SPDC troops wanted to cover their requisition of forced labor, they conscripted the villagers in the evening and night time to do work. They would suddenly call a meeting with the village headmen and then ordered them to send some villagers urgently. Normally, they conscripted labor in large numbers and tried to complete all the work in one day.

After rainy season in October 2002, some parts of the gas pipeline embankment were destroyed because of rain and water flood. In the third week of October 2002, the Burmese Army's joint forces of LIB No. 586 and IB No. 61, based in the northeast part of Ye Township forced the villagers from Kyone-paw and Sin-gyi villages to contribute their labor. The soldiers ordered one village from each house must go and work. They had to do work along the pipeline and outside of the pipeline route because the soldiers believed that the rebels could easily hide in those places and attack the gas pipeline. According to a village headman from the area, besides a huge number of villagers were forced to work for a few days, a smaller number of villagers were also forced to guard on a regular basis. At least two villagers at a time from both Sin-gyi and Kyone-paw have constantly been forced to guard the pipeline route since October 2002. (Source: HURFOM)

Since September 2002, SPDC LIB No. 586 and IB No. 61 have used villagers in the northern part of Ye Township to guard the Kanbauk-Myaingkalay gas pipeline day and night and sometimes forced them to repair the pipeline embankment. Due to floods in the last rainy season, the earth was worn away in some areas of the pipeline route. The army ordered the villagers to refill the earth over the pipeline. In September, many villagers were forced to do this work and to guard the pipeline.

In early October, LIB No. 586 commanders instructed villagers to guard the pipeline both day and night as it would be their responsibility if the pipeline were sabotaged. According to a 50 year old woman from Kyone-por village, the army commander ordered every household to guard the pipeline and if an explosion occurred near their guarding place, they would be punished. She added that the army threatened that they would face imprisonment for life. If the gas pipeline was sabotaged near a village, the villagers from that village had to pay 10 million kyat. Because of this order, many villagers wanted to move from their villages. However the villagers were not allowed to move because the headmen worried that there wouldn't be any villagers left in the village. (Source: HUFOM)

Forced Labor for Mine Clearance

(see also Landmine chapter.)

From the beginning of January 2002 up to the time of this report, the SPDC Southern Military Commander Aung Min and No. 1 Operation Commander Soe Thein ordered battalions IB 39 and IB 53, which were under their control, to seize villagers of Kaw-soe-ko, Ler-ko, Wah-tho-ko, Baw-ga-li and other villages near the motor road. These troops forced the villagers to cut bushes, dig earth and clear landmines for a distance of 2 yards on both sides of Kaw-thay-doe and Bu-hsa-khee motor roads. Any family that could not give labor had to pay 10,000 kyat. (Source: KIC)

On 10 November 2002, in Pa-pun District, Kyaw Myint Than commander of SPDC IB 98 of South West Command summoned the village heads of Noh-lah, Htee-saw-meh, Pway-htaw-ro, Noh-gaw, Po-khay, Bler-per, Thwa-kho-lor, Ma-htaw, Khaw-kla and Ta-dwee-kho villages and instructed them to have each of their villages build a hut along the bank of Yunza-lin river. They had to send two villagers from each village to stand sentinel, both day and night, for the security of the motor road from Htee-saw-meh to Koo-seik villages. He also instructed them to get a bullock cart, fully loaded with logs to drive back and forth on the road for clearance of land mines every morning. (Source: KIC)

On 12 November 2002, in Pa-pun District, Company Commander Aung Than of SPDC IB 98 ordered Thwa-kho-lor the village head and villagers to search and clear land mines on the motor roads from 7 AM to 10 AM, each day, using 10 villagers with two hoes. (Source: KIC)

1.9 Documents and Sample Forced Labor Orders

Order Supplementing Order No. 1/99
The Government of the Union of Myanmar,
The Ministry of Home Affairs,
Yangon, 1st Waxing of Tazaungmon 1362, M.E.
(27 October 2000)
Order supplementing Order No. 1/99

The Ministry of Home Affairs of the Government of the Union of Myanmar, under the direction of the State Peace and Development Council, hereby directs that the following amendment shall be made to Order No. 1/99 dated 14 May 1999 as requisition of forced labour is illegal and is an offence under the existing laws of the Union of Myanmar.

1. 1. Clause 5 of the said Order 1/99 shall be substituted with the following;
 - (a) (a) Responsible persons including members of the local authorities, members of the armed forces, members of the police force, and public service personnel shall not requisition work or service notwithstanding anything contained in sections 7 (1) and 9 (b) of the Towns Act, 1907, and sections 8(1) and 11(d) of the Village Act, 1907.
 - (b) (b) The above clause (a) shall not apply to the requisition of work or service when an emergency arises due to fire, flood, storm, earthquake, epidemic disease, war, famine and epizootic disease that poses an imminent danger to the general public and the community.
2. 2. When the responsible persons have to requisition work or service for purposes mentioned in clause 1(b) of this Supplementary Order the following shall be complied;
 - (a) (a) The work or service shall not lay too heavy a burden upon the present population of the region.
 - (b) (b) The work or service shall not entail the removal of workers from their place of habitual residence.
 - (c) (c) The work or service shall be important and of direct interest for the community. It shall not be for the benefit of private individuals, companies or associations.
 - (d) (d) It shall be in circumstances where it is impossible to obtain labour by the offer of usual rates of wages. In such circumstances, the people of the area who are participating shall be paid rates of wages not less favourable than those prevailing in the area.
 - (e) (e) Schoolteachers and pupils shall be exempted from requisition of work or service.
 - (f) (f) In the case of adult able-bodied men who are the main supporters of the necessitation food, clothing and shelter for the family and indispensable for social life, requisition shall not be made except only in unavoidable circumstances.
 - (g) (g) The work or service shall be carried out during the normal working hours. The hours worked in excess of the normal working hours shall be remunerated at prevailing overtime rates.

- (h) (h) In case of accident, sickness or disability arising at the place of work, benefits shall be granted in accordance with the Workmen's Compensation Act.
 - (i) (i) The work or service shall not be used for work underground in mines.
- 3. 3. When the responsible persons have to requisition work or service for purposes mentioned in clause 1(b) of this Supplementary Order, they shall do so only with the permission of the Deputy Commissioner of the General Administration Department who is also a member of the relevant District Peace and Development Council.
- 4. 4. The State or Divisional Commissioner of the General Administration Department who is also a member of the relevant State or Divisional Peace and Development Council shall supervise the responsible to abide by the Order No. 1/99 and this Supplementary Order.
- 5. 5. The phrase "Any person who fails to abide by this Order shall have action taken against him under the existing law" contained in clause 6 of the said Order No. 1/99 means that any person including local authorities, members of the armed forces, members of the police force and other public service personnel shall have action taken against him under section 374 of the Penal Code or any other existing law.

(Signed) Col. Tin Hlaing,
Minister, Ministry of Home Affairs

(Source: HURFOM)

SPDC Orders from Kawkareik Area

Translated by the Federation of Trade Unions-Burma (FTUB)

Order 1

Stamp

Light Infantry Battalion 548

No.....

Date.....

Battalion Office

To

Chairperson / Village Head

_____ Village

Subject: To attend the meeting

Gentlemen, regarding the above subject, this is to inform you that you must come and discuss on (7-11-2001) *Thidinkyut waxing date 6* at (10:00) without fail.

Place. NaBu – Taung Nar

Date. (17-12-2000). (Sd)

(for) Battalion Commander

(Source: FTUB)

Order 2To **Stamp:**

Light Infantry Battalion No. (547)

No.

Date.

Battalion Headquarters

Chairperson / Village Head

xxxxxxx village Date. 21-1-2002.

Regarding to the above subject, the Township Paddy Purchasing Team would like to discuss the required matters and thus, it is informed (you) to come to Nabu Monastery on 2002 January (22) at (7) o'clock in the morning.

(Sd.)

(for) Intelligence Officer

Note: The army heavily involved in paddy (rice) purchasing by demanding more purchase quota by paying unfair price, forcing people to work in paddy fields, confiscating fields and confiscating paddy from villagers. Then Union of Myanmar Economic Holding (UMEH), the military operated business sector exported rice to other countries, especially some countries from Africa. As a result, in 2001, ports from Burma were busy with transferring rice bags to cargo ships and on the other hand, local farmers getting poorer and many decided to leave Burma. (Source: FTUB)

SPDC Orders from Kya Inn Seik Gyi Area, (Karen State)

Translated by the Federation of Trade Unions-Burma (FTUB)

Order 1

To

Xxxx villager, it is from F.L. 88 messenger. To send servants once for the column. Send villager. It is voluntary team.

F.L. 88

Sd.

(illegible) company

Note: As many of the orders, this order has no date and stamp. Hand writing is also bad and meaning is not so clear.

(Source: FTUB)

Order 2

To

Chairperson

_____Xxxxxx_____ village Date: 5 - 3-2 - 2002

Subject: Matter to come to the battalion headquarters

Regarding to the above subject, village chairpersons yourselves should come to the Battalion Headquarters Office, Infantry Battalion No. (284) at (10) o'clock in the morning on (7 - 2 - 2002) without fail. Will discuss village security matters with village chairpersons thus come without fail. For villages of those (chairpersons) who fail (to attend the meeting), if column arrives, there will be no responsibility and solution.

Stamp:

Infantry Battalion No. (284)

No..... (Sd:)

Date..... Intelligence Department

Column (2) Headquarters Infantry Battalion No. (284)

(Source: FTUB)

Order 3

To
Xxx Chairperson

4 - 3 - 2001 (Actually 2002)

To inform that the responsible person should come and report (daily) if there is any strange matter, and if there is not any strange matter, just sent a letter. If (you) fails to do so, it is chairperson's responsibility.

(Sd.)

Pai Kler Camp

(Source: FTUB)

Order 4

Stamp:

Township Peace and Development Council

No.....

Date.....

Kya Inn-Seik Gyi Town Township Peace and Development Council

Kya Inn Seik Gyi Township,

Kya Inn Seik Gyi Town

Letter No. 2 / 3 - 6 / Oo 1 (0325)

Date: 2002 March 11

To

Chairperson and village leaders

_____ village

Kyar Inn Seik Gyi Town

Subject: The matter of rebuilding the bridges destroyed by terrorist insurgents

1. According to the decision of the negotiation discussion of the Tactical Commander (Tactical Group Station) and U Saw Thu Moo Heh and village leaders at the hall of Infantry Battalion No. (32) at (06:00) hours on (22 - 2 - 2002), the following burned and destroyed bridges will be built on (22 - 3 - 2002) with the following assignments:-

No. Name of the bridge Responsible village / group Remarks

1. Deli stream bridge No. (1) Deli village
2. Deli Yegyaw bridge No. (2) Bisakat village
3. Meh Tha Raw stream bridge Yathay and Meh Tha Raw villages 2-villages
4. Peinneah stream bridge Tagay village
5. Shwe Don bridge Shwe Don village
6. Macka Taw bridge Maka Taw village
7. Noe Tamar stream bridge Peace force

2. Thus, the above villages have to build the responsible bridges and be finished on (22 - 3 - 2002). To not be destroyed in the future, arrange (3) persons for daytime sentry and (3) persons for nighttime sentry and then cut down and clear trees and bushes to (1) mile away from the respective bridge. (You) are informed to report the implementation situation.

(Sd.)

Chairperson

(Thet Naing Oo, Pa/3642)

Copies-

Tactical Group (Station), Kya Inn-Seik Gyi Town

Office

Note: Similar orders of the previous report "SPDC Orders from Kya Inn-Seik Gyi Area, (Karen State)" dated 19 May 2002, but from different village.

(Source: FTUB)

Order 5

16 . 3 . 2002

To
Chairperson

Xxx

(You) are informed that (70) people from your village should come to Kyaik Done tomorrow (17 . 3 . 2002). If (you) fail to come, villages will be relocated and effective action will be taken. (You are) also informed to come together with Mipanya villagers(40).

(Sd.)
IB (83)

(Source: FTUB)

Order 6

7 . 1 . 2002

To
Chairperson

xxxxxx village

Chairperson yourself should come and bring with (3) voluntary workers before 8.1.2002, in the afternoon. No need to bring supplies.

(Sd.)
Camp Commander

(Source: FTUB)

Order 7

To
Chairperson

xxxxxx

Gentleman's villagers should be sent to repair the road and to fill the ground destroyed by rain, between Xxxx and Yxxx on (21-5-2002) in the morning, where cars can not go. Village chairperson and secretary are informed to come to Koh Kwar camp tomorrow morning at half past seven without fail.

Stamp:

Infantry Battalion No.(78)

No. _____

Date. _____

No.(blank) company

Date: 20-5-2002 (Sd.)

Koh Kwar army camp

Place: Koh Kwar

(Source: FTUB)

Order 8

Releasing dutiful servant

Date 28.5.2002

1. The Frontline Infantry Battalion No. (77) has released Yxx, from Xxxxxx village who dutifully served as a servant with column (1) to his home. It is recommended that he is returning to his home and not to ask him to ask as servant again.

Stamp:

Front line Infantry Battalion No. (77)

Date. _____

No. _____

Column (1)

(Sd)

(for) Column Commander

Front line Infantry Battalion No.(77)

(Source: FTUB)

Order 9

Chairperson

xxxxxx village 30.5.2002

- (1) Kyaik Don called voluntary servants but they have not arrived until today.
(2) They must arrive to Kyaik Don on (30.5.2002) today and your implementation report (to us).
(3) If (you) fail to send voluntary servants, (your village) will be specified as insurgent's village and must be relocated.*

Stamp:

Front line Infantry Battalion No.(77)

Date. _____

No. _____

Column No.(2)

(Sd.)

Column Commander

(Source: FTUB)

Order 10

To

9/6/02

Chairperson

xxxxxx

To contribute voluntary work at the Checkpoint Camp, each person should bring sword/back-hole and come tomorrow (10/6/02).

(Sd.)

Checkpoint Camp

(Source: FTUB)

Order 11

To
Chairperson 9/6/02
xxxxx

To contribute voluntary work at the Checkpoint Camp, one person from each family with swords should come tomorrow on (10/6/02) together with (100) bamboo poles.

(Sd.)
heckpoint Camp

(Source: FTUB)

Order 12

Stamp:
Arms and Peace Troops
No.
Date.
Azin Region

To
Chairperson, Secretary

*Respectfully informing the gentlemen that your village has to send one person from each family to come and bring hoes, crowbar, etc. on (18 / 3 / 02) at 7 o'clock in the morning.
Note: Come to the Tactical Command's Hill at 7 o'clock in the morning.
U Mahn Thaung*

(Azin)

(Source: FTUB)

1.10 Interviews

Prisoner Porter Interview 1



Name: Kyaw Win Than

Age: 24

Nationality: Burmese

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Day Labourer

Education: Nil

Address: Kone DounVillage, Pwint Pyu Township, Magwe Division

Crime: Theft

Charge: Article 380

Date of the sentence: 10 June 2002

Prisoner No: 2643 C

Prison Name: Thayet prison

Date of interview : 1 October 2002

"On the first week of July, 85 of the prisoners from Thayet jail, were selected and sent to Pa-an Service Camp. I was one of them. Two days later, soldiers from the LIB 205 called us to serve as porters. We traveled 15 days on the plain. Then, we had to climb mountains. We had to carry about 20 viss¹ of weight including land mines, ammunition, and rice. I had to carry 4 mortar bombs and rifle ammunition. We saw four old prison porters on the way who had badly injured faces and torn mouths. We also saw a porter who had managed to escape but was recaptured by SPDC soldiers. He was badly tortured.

Our group included Maung Than Min, San Shwe Myint(Kyauk Nanran Village), Maung Aye (also from Kyauk Nanran Village), Chin Ma from Min Bu, Kalargyi and myself. We did not get enough food nor any rest while it was raining. If we became sick, no medicine was provided. Soldiers usually hit or beat us. They hit the faces of the elderly porters and hit and smashed on the backs and shoulders of the younger porters. For the duration of the trip, every night, we had to make new huts for soldiers to sleep in. The soldiers beat the porters who could not cut bamboo or carry bamboo posts. On 18 July 2002, at midnight, Maung Than Min and I fled from the column, because we were too weak to work." (Source: FTUB)

Prisoner Porter Interview 2



Name: Maung Than Min

Age: 23

Nationality: Burmese

Religion: Buddhist

Occupation: Day Labourer

Education: -

Address: Kone Doun village, Pwint Pyu Township,
Magwe Division

Case: Theft

Charge: Article 380

Sentence: 2 years in prison

Date of sentence: 10 June 2002

Prisoner No.: 4644 C

Prison Name: Thayet prison

"In the first week of July, 85 prisoners from Thayet Prison including me were sent to Myaingalay (Pa-an Service Camp). Then soldiers from Division 22 came and took us. We traveled on the plain for two weeks with a column from LIB 205. The column had 35 soldiers led by the battalion commander himself. The prisoner porters were also 35 persons. After two weeks, the column turned towards the east and started climbing into the mountains. There many porters became exhausted because of the heavy loads. Most of our slippers issued by prison authorities were torn off. I was ordered to carry 10, 60mm mortar bombs.

When porters were unable to move, soldiers beat them. Many prisoner porters became sick because of the tough trip, heavy loads, and rain. But the sick did not receive any treatment. Instead, soldiers beat, hit and kicked them. When the column decided to rest for a day, we were ordered to prepare shelters. While barefoot, we had to find leaves and bamboo on the thorny ground. During the trip, we received insufficient food. Two soldiers got a hankawful of rice but five of us could get only a hankawful of rice. We were concerned that we would die and so decided to escape."

Prisoner Porter Interview 3



Name: Myint Oo

Age: 23

Nationality: Indian

Religion: Moslem

Education: Grade 2

Address: Aung Yundandar 2 Street, Gen. Aung San Ward, Oakkan, Rangoon Division

Case: Assault

Charge: Article 326

Sentence: 3 years in prison

Prisoner No.: 2116 C

Prison name: Tharyawaddy

"On 4th August 2001, I was caught in Letpatan town and I was sent to a police cell for 4 months. I was then sentenced to 3 years in prison and was sent to Tharyawaddy prison. Four months later, 75 prisoners were sent to Karen State of which I was one. Most of us were recently sentenced to prison and even detained for 4 months were included. The Tharyawaddy prison sent prisoners to work camps(crushing stones, growing rice, etc.) and service camps (army porters). If a prisoner does not want to go to work camps or be an army porter, he has to pay 20,000 Kyat per year to the prison chief.

I remember some of the transfers in 2002. They were:-

- 250 prisoners were sent to Taung Sunn Stone Crushing Camp, Mon State.
- 230 prisoners were sent to Eu To Bawa Agriculture Camp.
- 150 prisoners were sent to be used by the army as porters (prisoners had to wear blue clothes and were sent away at 2 a.m.)
- 180 prisoners were sent to Thaton Service Camp.

I did not remember where the other three transfers were sent.

We reached Myaingalay Service Camp and spent a night there. On the next day, soldiers from Division 22 took 100 prisoners. Seventy five from Tharyawaddy and twenty five from other prisons. I had to carry a basket included 12 RPG rockets, some clothes, and soldier's back packs. It weighed about 50 viss. It was so heavy that I could not stand up with the basket and had to get somebody to assist me. The others also had to carry heavy baskets. Some prisoners had to carry 16 tins² of rice and three backpacks.

The trip was three days long. All prisoners were exhausted and tired. Many were badly beaten. Soldiers scolded and hit those who could not walk. Four elderly prisoners and six youths were so badly beaten that the soldiers reduced their loads and tied them all with ropes and dragged them up the mountains. Three days later, we reached a camp stationed by LIB 205 column 1 and thirteen prisoners including me were handed over to the column. The column sent out patrols of 20 soldiers and thirteen prisoners. We had to carry food supplies and ammunition. When we returned from patrols, we were ordered to collect bamboo shoots.

If there were no patrols, we were ordered to cut down bamboo, to repair camp fences and to carry water. Each of us had to cut 100 bamboo poles per day, and if a prisoner failed to bring back his 100 bamboo poles, he was ordered to lie down on the ground while soldiers beat his back. The bamboo and bamboo shoots were sold to traders from town and in return traders sold meat to the soldiers. We were not given money nor meat curry. The rice quota to the prisoners was far from sufficient.

The duty to carrying water was also very hard. To get a 30 liter tin of water, a prisoner had to go down to the slope of the mountain and climb back up to the top, it took about 40 minutes. Ten of the prisoners had to carry water with 30 liter tins for 8 to 9 times a day. The water was for bathing and drinking for the all the soldiers of the column. Some sick and weak prisoners could not carry the water and so the soldiers severely beat them. They said that orders should be fulfilled, they did not want to see any failure. They mentioned many times that if we died, it would be nothing to the battalion, just a report of one or two sentences to the command HQ. I was able to escape, but I am still worried about some of my comrades, which I worked with. They were-

- 1. Kyaw Toe (Illegal lottery case) Sentenced to one year imprisonment. (Latpadan)
- 2. Moe Gyi (Theft) Sentenced to one and half years imprisonment.(Hmawbe)
- 3. Kyi Lwin (Detained) Sentenced to four months imprisonment. (Latpadan)
- 4. Yan Lin Aung (Unknown) Sentenced to two years imprisonment. (Latpadan)
- 5. Yakut (Theft) Sentenced to seven years imprisonment (Rangoon)
- 6. Babu (Theft) two years in prison (Latpadan)

It would be great to see some international monitoring of prison labour perhaps from organizations such as the ICRC as many prisoners are being mistreated and some are dying as a result." (Source: FTUB)

1.11 Personal Accounts

Terms used: Bomu/Bo Kyi: Military leader

Coolie: Forced labourer

Lon Htein: Anti-riot police, but often used in Arakan State to refer to the police

Magh: Derogatory term used by Rohingya to refer to a Rakhaing Buddhist

MaYaKa: Township Peace and Development Council

MI: Military Intelligence

NaTaLa: Department setting up new settlers' village (belonging to new settlers)

RaYaKa: Village Tract Peace and Development Council (lower level of administrative authorities)

RSO: Rohingya Solidarity Organisation, one of the Rohingya armed opposition groups

Seingoung: Leader of a group of houses who collects labour and taxes and reports to the RaYaKa

Ethnicity: Rohingya,

Religion: Muslim

Age: about 35,

Sex: male

Family situation: Married, 4 children

Occupation: Farmer

From: xxx village, Maungdaw Township, Arakan State

Date of Interview: 24-2-02

"I arrived here 15 days ago. Forced labour has increased over the last two months. Just before this, it was less because the MaYaKa and the RaYaKa received an order from the government not to recruit coolies, even if the NaSaKa request it. But the NaSaKa has weapons and the RaYaKa cannot do anything. Now again, they are recruiting coolies very openly. Recently, the NaSaKa and the military confiscated land to establish tree nurseries and we must cover the saplings. There are now four nurseries in my village with teak saplings for reforestation. 20 labourers have to work there every day without pay. This is new: it just started 2 months ago.

In my village, 80 people must do sentry duty every night. There used to be 10 sentry posts in my village but over the last 2 or 3 months, it increased to 20. The duty is the same but the quota is more. Our village has about 1,000 households. The sentry duty is now for 4 nights at a time. We have 20 sentry posts and in each post, four men must do sentry duty. Each sentry post is different. For the 5 posts located near the NaTaLa village and near the NaSaKa camp, the sentries must guard until 10 a.m. In the other posts, they can leave earlier. The sentries also have to do other odd jobs such as fetching water, etc. The NaSaKa ordered the sentries posted along the beach to inform them if any big boat approaches. The sentries posted in the hills must inform them if anyone is moving at night, coming or going. This started in 1994 since the RSO launched an attack.

I have never worked as a sentry but I pay between 500 and 700 Kyats to hire a man to replace me. The Seingoung collects the sentries. I always try to hire a man to replace me, because if I give money to the Seingoung he will keep this money and share it with the RaYaKa. Then an innocent man will have to do the work without pay. The MaYaKa sent mustard seeds to the RaYaKa who ordered us to cultivate mustard seeds on our land. When we complained that

our land is not good for this crop, they compelled us to cultivate it. If someone fails, he must pay a tax of 2,000 to 7,000 Kyats. This is now taking place on our paddy land situated on both sides of the road towards the jetty to Akyab, not inside our village. This has been happening for the last 3 years. This land is not fertile enough to grow mustard seeds. The production is thus very low and we must give the whole crop to the NaSaKa. We must cultivate it and harvest it. We are not allowed to keep anything for ourselves.

During this dry season, the NaTaLa villagers who grow peanuts can do this for themselves. They can sell their whole crop to Akyab. But we, the Muslim villagers, are compelled to sell these to the oil-press of the NaSaKa and their business partners. We must bring our peanuts to the oil-press and the NaSaKa collect labourers to shell them. This is forced labour. The NaSaKa has 12 kani [about 5 acres] of paddy land for their camp in Sitapurika [Kyauk Pun Du]. Last year, they rented it out but this year the cultivation and harvesting are done by forced labour. We have to do forced labour for two NaSaKa camps in Andang [Inn Din] and Sitapurika [Kyauk Pun Du] and for one MI camp in Andang [Inn Din]. When a family has no available man, a child is sent. I have seen 8 year old children carrying small bundles of firewood and kindling. Child labour is also widely used for sentry duty. In each sentry post you can find at least one child." (Source: Forum Asia)



2. Extra-judicial Killing, Summary or Arbitrary Execution

"Sometimes, when the BA commanders ordered the villagers to relocate from their villages, which were suspected as rebel base, if the villagers delayed to relocate, they were punished or killed for their refusal. " (Source: KIC)

2.1 Background

During 2002, there continued to be reports of arbitrary and summary executions, rape, torture and physical assault committed against civilians by SPDC troops and their allies. The military, members of the SPDC endorsed people's militias ("pyi thu sit"), and other SPDC officials including Military Intelligence (MI) and Police were the perpetrators of these crimes. These acts of violence were largely committed against ethnic minority members living in armed conflict areas. According to Human Rights Watch, "Life in conflict affected areas, where the Burmese army sought to deny ethnic minority insurgents all sources of support, remained particularly grim" (source: World Report 2003, Human Rights Watch, 2003). Extra judicial killings were largely committed against people suspected of being members or sympathizers of armed ethnic opposition groups and villagers enduring forced labor and portering duties. Summary killings also took place in the course of capturing villagers for the purpose of forced labor and portering. Women are commonly killed by soldiers after being raped for fear of leaving evidence of their crimes. Troops regularly commit these crimes with impunity and, in many cases, complaints made by the victim or victim's families are met with indifference, reprisals or threats of reprisals.

Many arbitrary executions are carried out in line with the SPDC's "Four-Cuts" policy, which is practiced in the areas of armed ethnic conflict against the ethnic minority villagers. According to this policy, the SPDC army has aimed to cut support to the opposition through mass relocations of villagers to areas under army control. They detain, torture and execute villagers, village elders and leaders who are considered to have any contact with the opposition. Villagers found outside of SPDC controlled areas, including villagers in hiding from the army and villagers outside of forced relocation sites, are often assumed to be rebels or rebel supporters. Indeed, accusing a villager of being a rebel soldier, a relative of a rebel soldier, or helping rebel soldiers in any way is an accusation punishable by death. Villagers in resistance areas fear traveling outside their village, especially to tend their hill fields in the jungle, because they risk discovery by SPDC troops on patrol and the inevitable accusation of rebel activity. Villagers seen outside of SPDC controlled areas or villages are often shot on sight by patrolling troops without any kind of warning. As accusations of rebel association do not require proof, this system can be used to execute almost anyone; for example, women found in a village without their husbands are often accused of being 'married to a rebel soldier'. Villagers can also be executed for simply carrying food in areas outside SPDC control, as the army assumes that the food is to supply rebel troops.

One aspect of the SPDC's campaign to secure military control over areas of armed ethnic opposition is the expansion of *Sa Thon Lon* operations into the mountains of Toungoo District, Karen State. The *Sa Thon Lon*, or *Dam Byan Byaut Kya* [*'Guerrilla Retaliation'*], are execution squads that were created in 1998 under Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt's Directorate of

Defence Services Intelligence (DDSI). The squads operate as small 8-10 men specially trained units tasked with finding and executing villagers who are suspected of having current or past contact with opposition groups. Villagers call them the *Baw Bi Doh* ('Short Pants'), a reference to their mixture of civilian and Army clothing. Villagers are terrified of them because their execution methods are particularly brutal and they execute people for 'crimes' as minor as supplying rice to Karen soldiers or carrying loads for them. Villagers are executed even if the alleged crime occurred long ago. Almost every villager in ethnic minority areas has had some form of 'contact' with opposition groups. As a result, most villagers live in fear of execution in the presence of the Baw Bi Doh, especially current and former village headmen. (Source: KHRG)

According to reports, the occurrence of arbitrary and summary executions in Karen State did not abate in 2002. The continued existence of the opposition Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) provoked ongoing human rights abuses committed by the SPDC and cease fire groups such as the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) and the Haungthayaw Peace Organization (HPO). The cease fire groups operate with the support of the SPDC. According to news sources, the release of pro-democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had no effect on the occurrence of killings. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest on 6 May 2002. Only 4 days later on 10 May, it was reported that 3 villagers were killed by SPDC troops in Ye-mu-palaw, Thae-kho-se-de and Htee-se-gaw-khi villages. (Source: "Human rights violations in Karen State by SPDC continue unabated", *Mizzima*, 28 June 2002)

The situation in Shan State was reportedly similar throughout 2002 particularly in relocation areas. Extra-judicial killings have occurred in Shan State habitually since 1996-97 when the State Law and Order Restoration Council initiated large scale forced relocations in central Shan State. According the Shan Human Rights Foundation, the rate of killings increased as a result of fighting from the end of May to the end of June. Many Shan felt that the killings would subside as the fighting ended. Unfortunately, reports indicated that this was not the case and the killings continued at the heightened rate. (Source: SHRF)

2.2 Extra-judicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions – partial list of incidents 2002

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

Death in Prison

In November 2002, political prisoner U Maung Ko, aged over 50, died of a heart attack while in detention at Tharawaddy Prison in central Burma. He was arrested in 1996 under charge 5(J) of Burma's Emergency Provision Act 1950. Authorities accused him of sympathizing with the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) and was sentenced to seven years in prison. According to the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), U Maung Ko is the 82nd political prisoner to die while in custody since 1988. U Maung Ko was the fourth political prisoner to die in 2002. Others were: Mai Aik Pan, leader of Palaung State Liberation Front; U Aung May Thu, also held inside Tharawaddy Prison; and U Sai Phat, a National League for Democracy (NLD) leader from Shan State. (Source: *The Irrawaddy*)

In March 2002, seven prisoners, who were members of Thailand-based Mergui-Tavoy United Front (MDUF), were taken from Mergui prison in Tenasserim Division while in poor health. The prisoners were taken to an undisclosed location and their whereabouts remains unknown, but the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) has unconfirmed reports that suggest the seven were executed on Done Island, off Burma's southern coast. Another two prisoners, arrested in early 2002 from the Thayetchaung branch of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) in Tenasserim Division were also missing.

Some of the missing prisoners had been arrested on Thai soil and disappeared while being deported to Burma. Four missing prisoners disappeared from a prison on Lam Pake Island, also in Tenasserim Division. Three of the four prisoners were members of an opposition group, and were previously held at a prison in Kawthaung. They were arrested by Thai police while traveling by boat to Ranong, on the border opposite Kawthaung. The fate of another two missing prisoners from Mergui, who were farmers charged for having contact with opposition groups, also remains unknown. (Source: *The Irrawaddy*)

Karen State

On 28 April 2002, a group of villagers fleeing from Division 88 reached Htee Law Bleh village and spent a night at Naw Pi Lay's house. At night, SPDC soldiers from IB 78 arrived and sprayed bullets at the two houses where the group was residing. Thus, the following villagers were killed on 28 April;

1. Saw Hto Paw (56 y.o.) Noe Ta Shu villager
2. Naw Hsar Kay (51 y.o.) Noe Ta Shu villager
3. Naw Kri Htoo (12 y.o.) Noe Ta Shu villager
4. Naw Ble Po (5 y.o.) Noe Ta Shu villager
5. Daw Htwe Ye (50 y.o.) Meh Ka Taw villager
6. Naw Mu Tha (40 y.o.) Meh Ka Taw villager
7. Mu Pwat Pwat (7 y.o.) Htee Law Bleh villager
8. Saw Ka Pru Moo (14 y.o.) Htee Law Bleh villager
9. Naw Plah (5 y.o.) Htee Law Bleh villager
10. Naw Dah Baw (2 y.o.) Htee Law Bleh villager

Nine other villagers were wounded by gunshots and they were not provided with medical treatment. During that incident, a pregnant woman and house owner, Naw Pi Lay (aged 45 years and a mother of 5 children, from Htee Law Bleh village) was shot at by SPDC soldiers and a bullet hit her breast. On that day, she gave birth to a dead baby. She lost two other children during the incident. She and her family hid in the forest and on 10 May she died. During the night of 28 May, gunfire was heard and a Karen guerrilla whose family was near that group worried about his family. He went to the place where the shooting occurred and fired at the IB 78 soldiers. One soldier and two others were injured and the Karen guerrilla was killed. In the morning, IB 78 took pictures of the dead villagers and the Karen soldier. (The IB 78 would probably create a story saying a Karen soldier sprayed bullets at the villagers.) (Source: FTUB)

On 28 April 2002, troops from LIB 548 with the Karen Haungthayaw Peace Organization (HPO), led by Maj. Ah Nyunt and Maj. Taw Taw, went into Koe-du-kwe, a village on the Zami river. The soldiers arrested one man, who they believed to be a KNLA soldier. They interrogated and tortured him after which they shot and killed him. Then, the Burmese and HPO soldiers arrested some men and women who they believed to be relatives of KNLA soldiers. They arrested about 10 villagers, including one 50 year old woman and two children, ages 7 and 9. As the Karen HPO soldiers knew these villagers well they could arrest those villagers whose family members are in the KNLA. The villagers were brought to Pha-ya-nyote-to village for one week where LIB No. 548 was based. Although the village headmen tried to get them back by bribing the commanders, no one was released. After 7 days, they heard news from the old woman, who escaped, that 7 villagers had been killed. One commander sympathized with the old woman and released her. The two children were also released before the other villagers were killed after a 200,000 kyat ransom was received from the relatives of the children. (Source: HURFOM)

On 12 May 2002, the Burmese Army troops from IB No. 77 led by Maj. Myint Lwin went to Taung-bauk village, Kya-inn-seikyi Township, Karen State and opened fire on a group of villagers. Two villagers died and three were seriously injured. Both Nai Lao (31 years old) and Nai Lone (30 years) were killed. Mi Than Aye (17 years old) Nai Kun Oo (52 years old) and Nai Tun Tin were wounded. Villagers fled and hid. In response SPDC leaders said the soldiers made a mistake and had not known the area was an NMSP ceasefire zone. They also arrested some NMSP members in the area and took them for several days.

The IB No. 77 was a new military regiment, which was brought from other areas (not from Mon State and Karen State) and didn't know about NMSP-SPDC ceasefire very well, according to the senior commanders of Burmese Army in Rangoon when they were interviewed by the BBC. Therefore, they committed rampant shooting as they thought the group of villagers was a gathering of KNLA soldiers. The NMSP complained about shooting and officially filed a criminal case to the Burmese Army higher commander. On 17 May, the military intelligence also inquired about the cases and IB No. 32, which is based in Kya-inn-seikyi town, called many village leaders and Buddhist monks from all of the monasteries in the village to ask about the incidents. The villager leaders and monks complained that there were no KNLA or Karen soldiers in their village. They insisted that all villagers were pure Mon people and that the shooting of the innocent group of villagers was wrong. At the end of May, the senior commanders still had not given any sort of punishment to their men. (Source: HURFOM)

On 13 August 2002, the Burmese troops from Light Infantry Battalion 557 led by Captain Win Kyaw entered Sa Kaw Lor village and arrested a 19-year-old villager named Saw Keh (son of Saw Ta Rot and Naw Ma Kyaw). The troops accused him of possessing a gun and took him away. The next day, he was killed by the Burmese troops at Ta Ha, in the outer areas of Sa Kaw Lor village. (Source: KHRG)

On 25 October 2002, LIB 588 troops were on patrol and shot at Nai Lae (40 years old) from Morkanin village. He was treated at the hospital. However, the commanders of that battalion did not pay any hospital costs. When the troops from the battalions under the command of MOMC.19 patrolled the forests and fruit plantations in the eastern part of the motor road, they often mistook villagers for rebel soldiers and shot at them. (Source: HURFOM)

On 29 October 2002, police beat and killed a Mon man in Mudon Police Station during an investigation for which they accused him of robbing an actress on 4 November in Mudon Township. Nai Mya Han, 45, a villager from Ma Pa Rang [Kuan Brot] village of Kya Inn Seik Kyi Township was arrested and accused of robbing and attacking Nan Dar Hlaing, a popular actress from Mon State, during her trip to Let Tet village on 25 October.

Mr Han was beaten several times in Mudon Police station during questioning and he was unconscious for many hours before he died in his cell, a close relative said. The police arrested him and a hundred other villagers who had a history of crime [robbery] including thirty people from Kyeik Roy village who were questioned in the past. He was accused of robbing the actress at the main entrance to Kyiek Roy village of Mudon Township, in Mon Township. Miss Hlaing was travelling with Rev Kesara, a chief monk of Kyeik Ta Lone Hill who managed the opening festival of a newly constructed pagoda. The local armed gang arrested the actress and released the monks but the armed gang took all her personal belongings. She was then released after the monk. There is no clear evidence as to whether or not Mr Han was a robber in this attack because the armed gang used modern guns during the attack. (Source: HURFOM)

Nyaung-lay-bin District

On 29 January 2002, at 14:15 hours, combined troops from SPDC LIB 350 and DKBA shot at Kwee-da-ma Mae-ko village, wounding villagers Saw Htee Heh, his son Saw Lay Taw, 4 years old, and Saw Ba Blut, 2 years old, and Naw Bway Tha, 50 years old. (Source: KIC)

On 26 February 2002, at 4:30 P.M., troops from SPDC LIB-361 went to Per-po-khee village and shot indiscriminately at the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 14 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 364 under No.10 Local Military Operation command went to Lo-khee village in Shwe-gyin township and burned down 25 houses and a school. Moreover, these troops shot and killed villager Saw Maung Bi Htoo, M-45, son of Saw Baw Mu Gay, without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On 27 March 2002, Column 2 commander Thet Khaing and company commander Win Lwin of SPDC LIB 350 killed the following 5 Shan villagers without reason:

1. Saw Thein Shwe (33) son of Saw Maung Di,
2. Saw Hla Ko (46) son of Saw Kyaw Maung,
3. Saw Kyaw Win (47) son of Saw Hla Maung
4. Saw Ka Thoo (35) son of Saw U Toe and
5. Saw Keh Moo (36) grandson of U Toe. (Source: KIC)

On 30 March 2002, Column commander Zaw Win of SPDC LIB 589 arrested Saw Oo Toe and executed him without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 2 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 369 went to Htee-ler-gaw-khee area and shot and killed two villagers: (1) Saw Tha Than, age 25, son of Saw Ko and (2) Saw Kyaw, age 35, without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 28 September 2002, at 16:30 hours, troops from SPDC LIB 363, 365, 366 and 368 under Tactical Command 1-of No. 10 Local Military Operation Command headquarters, led by Bo Myo Aung, went to Ma-li-khee village, Kyauk-kyi Township, and fired on the villagers killing Naw Ma Leh, age 25, and her five-month old baby. The troops cut off the ears of Naw Ma Leh for her earrings. Moreover, they mutilated her body by cutting off her breast, legs and arms. They also wounded the following;

1. Saw Way Moo (M, 25),
2. Saw Klaw Htoo (M, 22),
3. Saw Kaw Kah (M, 30) and
4. Naw Cha (F, 20). (Source: KIC)

On 29 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 589, went to Mae-yeh-khee village, Shwe-gyin township and fired at a paddy field hut, without reason, wounding Naw Hsa Shee, daughter of Saw Aye Lwin. Later, these troops took Saw Aye Lwin, wife Naw Say Lar, son Saw Po Kyaw and grand-mother Pee Aye Tin, a total of 4 persons to Shwe-gyin town. (Source: KIC)

On 30 October 2002, SPDC LIB 235 fired heavy weapons and small arms at villagers in the Ler Mu Plaw area, Lu Thaw township, Mu Traw (Papun) district, North east Karen State, Burma. They were harvesting their farm (the place is called Yu Au Lar Hta). Saw Ri Ba Wah (male) age 35 was killed and others 5 were wounded. They were;

1. Saw Thay Bay Wah (male) age 40,
2. Saw Sri Nay Moo (male) age 17,
3. Saw Ti Tu (male) age 17,
4. Naw Ler Per (female) age 14 and
5. Naw Moo Day Wah (female) age 8.

Naw Moo Day Wah was wounded with a splinter in the right side of her body. After 6 days a group of medics found her. She needed to go to hospital but there is neither a hospital nor clinic. After 10 days on 9 November, she died. Naw Ler Per was wounded in her arm and her arm may need to be amputated. (Source: KIC)

Toungoo District

On 23 February 2002, at 3:00 pm, about 40 troops from SPDC IB-92 led by San Aung Kyaw came from Klaw-mee-doe village to Day-yay-khee area. They shot and killed Taw-gon villager Maung Than Kyi 36, husband of Naw Htoo Si Paw, in a betel nut plantation without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 24 April 2002, at 3:57 pm, troops from SPDC IB 30, led by battalion commander, Mya Ko Ko shot at Thay-ku-doe villager Saw Ta Ni Haw 41, son of Maung Hai Gay, near his paddy field and he has been missing up to this day. (Source: KIC)

On 13 October 2002, at 1:30 am, troops from SPDC IB 48, led by Bo Thein Htun Oo shot and killed Kaw-soe-kho villager, Saw Way Way Lay, son of Saw Ka Koo, without reason. (Source: KIC)

Pa-pun District

On 16 March 2002, at 2:30 PM, troops from SPDC Southern Command Headquarters battalions 101 and 252 went to Thay-tha-mu-doe village and shot and killed villager Saw Kyaw Htoo, without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On 10 May 2002, troops from SPDC battalions LIB 368, 370, 366 and 367 under Tactical Command 2 and 3 of Local Military Command No. 10 went to Yeh-mu-plaw, Thay-kho-hser-doe and Htee-hser-gaw-khee and shot and killed 3 villagers namely:

1. Naw Ree Htoo (F) 50,
2. Saw Pwe (M) 20 and
3. Naw Dah Lay (F) 18, (Source: KIC)

Tha-ton District

On 27 March 2002, combined troops of SPDC LIB 202 and an anti-insurgent group, led by battalion second in command Maung Htun Sein went to Noh-hkah village, looted a basket of rice from Saw Ngaw Ngaw and then shot him to death. (Source: KIC)

On 8 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 1 went to Ka-wa-hta and Kwee-lay-tha-waw-pya, arrested and interrogated villager Maung Thwee. On 11 April, they shot and killed him near the village of Ta-eu-khee. (Source: KIC)

On 11 August 2002, troops from SPDC IB 2, led by company commander, Zaw Min shot and killed Noh-pa-leh villager Saw Shwe Hla's son Saw Htoo Ler, age 5 without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 24 August 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 1 column 1, led by Min Chit Oo, went to Baw Naw village, arrested and killed without reason villager Saw Pwe Htoo (M, 40) son of Pah Di Tha. (Source: KIC)

On 16 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 8, led by battalion commander, Kyaw Thura, went to villagers' hill paddy fields at Lay-kay in Be-lin Township and fired their heavy weapons and small arms at the villagers severely wounding Naw Nya Pla Moe. (Source: KIC)

On 1 November 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 2, led by column 2 commander Aung Soe fired both heavy weapons and small arms on villagers reaping paddy on Htee-mu-say-khee hill. They seized and killed Saw Htun Myaing Po's son Saw Klo Meh, aged 21, without reason. In Ee-su-khee area these troops seized 6 Dah-nay villagers to be porters. (Source: KIC)

Doo-pla-ya District

On 21 February 2002, troops from SPDC IB-284, went to Wah-bo-gon village at night, arrested, and shot and killed villager, U Lu Pu, (M, 60) and village secretary U Soe Win, (M, 40) without any reason. (Source: KIC)

On 26 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 416 under LID 88, led by column 1 commander Tin Shwe went to Htee-pa-nwe village in Kya-in Township and indiscriminately shot at villagers, severely wounding Saw Wah Paw (M, 46) and killing Saw Tin Htoo, (M, 48). In addition, they tortured Maung Tha Klu (M, 25) and extorted money from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 28 April 2002 troops from SPDC LIB 301 shot at villagers of Hte-law-bleh in Kya-in Township and as a result 10 villagers were killed and 9 were wounded. Naw Pee Leh (F, 45) who was pregnant, was wounded in the chest. Fifteen minutes after she was wounded, she gave birth, but her child was not alive. Due to shortage of medicine, Naw Pee Leh died on 10 May. (Source: KIC)

On 28 April 2002, at 12:00 pm, troops from SPDC IB 78 shot at villagers in Ta-ray-khee village and nearby villages without reason killing Noh-ta-shu villagers:

1. Saw Toe Paw (M, 56),
2. Naw Hsa kay (F, 51),
3. Naw Kree Htoo (F, 12),
4. Naw Bleh Po (F, 5),

- and Mae-ka-taw villagers:

1. Ma Htwe Yi (F, 50) and
2. Naw Mu Tha (F, 40),

- Htee-law-bler villagers:

1. Mu Paw Paw (F, 7),
2. Saw Ka Pru Moo (M, 14),
3. Naw Pla (F, 5) and
4. Naw Da Baw.

Wounded Htee-law-bler villagers were:

1. Naw Baw Mu Ta (F, 15),
2. Saw Ta Ku (M, 14),
3. Naw Pee Leh (F, 15),
4. Naw Hay Hser (F, 33),
5. Naw Kya Paw (F, 4),
6. Ta Bo Mu (M, 33)
7. Saw Heh Nay (M, 6),
8. Saw Wilbert Htoo (M, 9) and
9. a young child. (Source: KIC)

On 17 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 under LID 88, led by Column 1 commander Min Din shelled a group of people at a place between Doo-kwe village and Htee-khay village in Kya-in Township with heavy weapons. As a result, they wounded the left knee of villager Saw Pah Cha 30, son of Saw Theh Paw. As there was excessive bleeding, he died in two-and-a-half hours. On the same day, the troops asked Htee-khay villager Saw Sunday whether he had seen any Karen resistance groups. When he said that he had not seen any, they beat him up until his left eye came out. They took him to the army camp and he had not yet been released at the time of this report. (Source: KIC) (Please see the chapter on torture for more information)

On 22 May 2002 at 1:00 pm, Bo Pyo Way Oo of SPDC LIB 344 shot and killed Naw Htoo Ku Say aged 7, daughter of U Ah Pyu and Naw Pa Leh Htoo in her shop in Taung-zun village, Win-yae Township without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 5 June 2002 at 10:00 am, troops from SPDC LIB 301 shot at Paw-ner-moo villagers Saw Hay Law 38 and Saw Bwe Htoo 37 near Noh-ka-law in Kya-in Township. The two had to run for their lives. (Source: KIC)

On 3 July 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 546 led by battalion commander, Kyaw Win went to Tari-ta-kaw village in Kya-in Township and, on the accusation of sending 4 deserters from SPDC IB 312 of Artillery Division (606) to the KNLA, arrested villagers U Win (M, 48), U Kyaw Tin, (M, 51) and U Chit Hla (M, 57). On 4 July, at about 3:00 pm, on the trumped up charge of trying to loot the gun of Sergeant Kyaw Moe Lwin of LIB 546, they shot the three villagers dead. (Source: KIC)

On 4 July 2002, about 80 troops from SPDC LIB 546 led by battalion commander Kyaw Aye, battalion second in command Khin Maung Yi and sergeant Moe Lwin went to Ta-ri-ta-kaw village and accused Pah Tee Aye, 49, Saw Kyaw Tin, 52, and Saw Tin Hla, 46, of having contact with the KNU. The soldiers arrested and took them away. On that day at 7:00 pm, they shot and killed the three villagers between La-ta-kaw and Laung-kaing village in Kyone-doe township. (Source: KIC)

On 4 August 2002, at 5:30 pm, troops from SPDC LIB 588, led by battalion commander, Major Myo Hlaing took Kleik-toke village head Saw Mya Than, (M, 34) son of U Kyaw Hta of Win-yae Township as a guide and shot him to death beside Kho-tu-ta-lo road. (Source: KIC)

On 19 August 2002 at 6:00 pm, troops from SPDC LIB 538 column one shot and killed Saw Naw Klan (M, 40) head of Pa-ya village of Win-yae Township beside the road. (Source: KIC)

On 23 August 2002 at 3:00 pm, troops from SPDC IB 20 under Western Command headquarters, led by battalion commander, Aung Moe Lin, fired at shops on rafts from Mae-ta-mwee village, located near the bank of the Zami river, using both heavy weapons and small arms without reason. They severely wounded;

1. Mu Kone Lone (F, 20), daughter of Maung Nay Htun and
2. Ma Khin Pyone (F, 12), daughter of Maung Ohn Kyi. (Source: KIC)

Pa-an District

On 10 March 2002, troops from DKBA battalion 3 under 999 brigade went to Htee-ka-lay village of Na-bu Township and arrested village head Pu Kaw Lah. They then killed him near the village. (Source: KIC)

On 16 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 434, led by battalion second in command Thet Htun shot and killed Bo-baw-kho villager, Saw Sa Theh Baw without reason (Source: KIC)

On 7 December 2002, late in the night, Saw Wah Sih, about 36 years old, was shot dead by a group of Burmese soldiers from Infantry Battalion 104, who were patrolling in the village. Saw Wah Sih had been returning from his rice plantation late at night. When he was almost at his house, a group of Burmese soldiers opened fire on him without any warning and he died on the spot. He left three children and a pregnant wife. Kaw Htee Lor is a forcibly relocated village to the east of Tavoy, Tenasserim Division, Southern Burma. The villagers are restricted from traveling outside of the relocation site at night and they are not allowed to use torchlight while walking in the village. They are only allowed to use candles or lamps. The Burmese troops used to patrol secretly in the village at night to spy on the villagers. (Source: *KHRG*)

Mergui/Tavoy Division

On 2 January 2002, troops from SPDC LIB402 shot and killed Htee-loh villager Saw Hser Wah (M, 27), son of Pah Eh Na, in Ler-loh-soe township and looted from him 30,000 baht. (Source: KIC)

On 18 January 2002, troops from SPDC LIB551 went to Pa-wa area and shot and killed Mee-lun-gwin villager Saw Wa Loe (M, 19) without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 23 January 2002 at 9:00 am, troops from SPDC IB104 shot and killed Kler-pu villager Saw Doh Kho Po (M, 21), son of Saw Yan Aung, at Htee-kler-ta in Ler-doh-soe township. (Source: KIC)

On 13 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 409 arrested Kho-seik villager, Saw Moslem (M, 23), son of U Maung Kya, and shot him to death on 16 March. (Source: KIC)

On 18 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 409 shot and killed Saw Wah Ko Lo aged 20 at Khaw-po village, son of Kho-seik village head Yan Aung,. (Source: KIC)

On 25 March 2002, SPDC troops went from Ka-pyaw to Hto-thoo-khee village and shot and killed, Saw Thay Po, aged 18 at Hto-thoo-khee, son of Pah Ti Kyaw,. (Source: KIC)

On 30 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB-559 led by Lieutenant Colonel Kyaw Hlaing went to Mu-kwa village in Tanenssarim Township and shot to death without reason and without a word, Christian Pastor Rev. Saw Hla Maung and Mu-kwa Village Peace and Development Committee Chairman, Saw Ta Bi, together with another 8 villagers. The victims were:

1. Pastor Rev. Saw Hla Maung,
2. Saw Ti Bi, VPD chairman of Mu-kwa village,
3. Saw Htun,
4. Saw Pa Theh,

5. Saw Toe Nor,
6. Saw Hein Hut,
7. Saw Paw Htoo,
8. Saw Theh Han,
9. Saw Kyaw Win and
10. Saw Thi Ha. (Source: KIC)

On 13 June 2002, at 11:00 am, troops from SPDC LIB-101 went to Pa-wah-htee-thoo-day village in Tanessarim Township and shot and killed villager Naw Aye Myint (21) daughter of Saw Paw Kya and Naw Thein May without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 26 June 2002, at 2:40 pm, troops from SPDC IB 101 Column 1 led by column commander Major Kyaw Lwin went to Kyan-chaung-khee village and shot dead Saw Myint Lwin aged (39), son of Saw Nga Kyi and Naw Kah Naw, in his paddy field hut without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 29 June 2002, troops from the SPDC Training Batch No-12 shot and killed some villagers from Ler-mu-lah area at Nya-po-baw-khee. (Source: KIC)

Tenasserim Division

On 28 August 2002, the Burmese troops from Light Infantry Battalion 345 led by Battalion Commander Ha Du arrived at Haw Ter Hkee village to search for hiding villagers. They discovered a group of villagers and opened fire on them. Four villagers were shot dead. Three others were wounded but escaped. The victims were;

1. Saw Lu Ka (28 years old, son of Saw Wah),
2. Saw Tawt Ni (17 years old, son of Saw Wah from Ka Ge Hkee village),
3. Saw Be Bay (28 years old, son of Saw Pe from Peh Taw Hkee) and
4. Naw Mu Taw (18 years old, daughter of Saw Poe Deh from Taw Ko Ke Hkee).

The wounded victims were;

1. Naw Htee Mu (40 years old, daughter of Saw Sa),
2. Saw Lah Tin (40 years old, son of Saw Kod), and
3. Saw Pah Dih (15 year old, son of Saw Ku La from Peh Htaw Hkee). (Source: KHRG)

On 13 August 2002, the Burmese troops from Light Infantry Battalion 557 led by Captain Win Kyaw entered Sa Kaw Lor village and arrested a 19-year-old villager, Saw Keh, son of Saw Ta Rot and Naw Ma Kyaw. The troops accused him of possessing a gun and took him away. The next day, he was killed by the Burmese troops at Ta Ha, in the outer areas of Sa Kaw Lor village. (Source: KHRG)

In August 2002, Burmese troops shot at internally displaced Karen villagers when they were carrying out a search-and-kill operation. Four villagers died and three were wounded. The villagers were hiding from the Burmese troops in the jungle to the east of Palaw township, Mergui district, Tenasserim division. (Source: KHRG.)

Mon State

Shooting at a Mon Woman (Ye Township, Mon State)

On January 16, when LIB No. 587 troops led by Maj. Soe Min Htun, were taking patrol in Thaung-pyin village, Ye Township, one of their soldiers suddenly shot at a 50 year old woman, Mi Sae, whilst she was going to the monastery for food donation. She got serious injuries and was sent to Ye hospital. However, the commander of LIB No. 587 still said that their man was not the person who shot at the woman when the village leaders inquired about the case. They also refused to pay for the hospital cost. As the monks from the monastery saw the shooting during the incident, in the end, they could not refuse, and paid some hospital cost.

On October 25, when the troops of LIB No. 588 operated a military patrol in eastern part of the Township, they also shot at Nai Lae (40 years old) from Morkanin village and he was treated at hospital. However, the commanders of that battalion did not pay any hospital cost. In many cases, when the troops from the battalions under the command of MOMC. No. 19 went around in the forests and fruit plantations on the eastern part of the motor road, they often made mistakes shooting villagers as they thought the rebel soldiers were taking bases in forests or plantations. Some were also killed, because of mistakes shooting against farmers. (Source: *HURFOM*)

On 15 August 2002, a drunk Sergeant and his two soldiers from LIB 343, which is based in the northeastern part of Ye Township, shot at two villagers. One villager sustained serious injuries. The shooting occurred while two young Mon men from Son-nyit-tha village in the northern part of Ye Township were fishing on a farm and the Sergeant shot at them at about 15:30 hours. The 20 year old Mehm Pha Lot was hit by two bullets while his friend was not hit. The Sergeant and his two soldiers shot three bullets at them. One bullet hit the young man's neck and another hit his leg. The remaining bullet did not hit anyone. The soldiers shot from 300 meters away. One young man believed that the soldiers shot at them because they were drunk and had already had a conflict when they were trying to extort money from a motor car.

The villagers brought the injured young man to the Ye Township hospital and the headmen informed commander of LIB No. 343, No. 5 Military Intelligence Office and Township authorities of the incident. The authorities and military officers were afraid of news spreading. They forced the injured young man to be treated at home and promised they would provide for his treatment everyday. They also ordered the young man's parents not to inform the higher authorities about the incident. They provided 5000 Kyat to his parents for medication costs. No. 5 MI officers and LIB 343 commanders also promised they would punish the soldiers involved in the shooting. The villagers travel was restricted outside the relocation site at night, and they were not allowed to use torchlights while walking in the village. They were only allowed to use a candle or a lamp. The Burmese troops used to patrol secretly in the village at night to spy on the villagers. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Shan State

On 27 January 2002, a combined patrol of Burmese troops from IB 381 and IB 382 captured 2 innocent villagers who were protecting their newly harvested paddy from predators, near Wan Nong village, Wan Nong tract. Loong Hsaw, male, from Wan Nong village, was detained and tortured. As of 30 January 2002, he had not yet been released. Ta Naw, male, from Wan Ho Ter village, Koong Keng tract, was shot dead near Wan Lin Leng village. (Source: Freedom, Jan & Feb 2002)

On 26 May 2002, a 15-men-strong Burmese patrol from SPDC LIB 524 called a villager from the 3rd quarter, Kun Hing town to guide them along the way. On reaching the deserted village side of Loi Long (about 1 mile from Kun Hing), the guide was executed by the Burmese soldiers for unknown reasons. The victim was Sai Or Ta, male, age 25 years, a native Shan. Son of Loong Phaw Ka and Pa Noan, a villager of Wan Toun Moan, 3rd quarter, Kun Hing township. (Source: Freedom, May 2002)

On 27 May 2002, 3 villagers who were driving their water buffaloes to sell in the market were murdered by SPDC troops near Kun Hing. These 3 villagers, from the village of Wan Lao, Kun Hing township were trying to sell their water buffaloes in Kun Hing. On their way to town, they met with an about 25-men-strong Burmese patrol from SPDC LIB 524, who seized them and confiscated their buffaloes without any question. The 3 victims were dragged along with the patrol. Near Wan Nam Lin village, Huay Hok village tract, the innocent villagers were murdered by the Burmese patrol. The names of the victims were;

1. Sai Veet, male, age 28, ethnic Shan, son of long Or and Nai Lu from Wan Hsai Khao, Wan Lao tract.
2. Ai Sway, male, age 17, a Shan, son of Loong Karng Sigta and Nai Nang, from Wan Naa Moan, Wan Lao tract.
3. Loong Phaw Ka, male, age 50, a Shan, son of Loong Pan Oung and Pa Nang from Wan Hsai Khao, Wan Lao tract. (Source: Freedom, May 2002)

On 18 June 2002, 3 Burmese soldiers from Parng Hok went to Huany Yao to the house of Sai Mae Htar and demanded 200 baht in cash. As Sai Mae Htar was a poor cripple he could pay them only 15 baht. Regarding it as an insult, the Burmese soldiers shot and killed him on the spot. They dragged the corpse to drop it in a nearby stream, but on the way changed their minds. Instead, they dropped the corpse into a rubbish dump and covered it with dirt. The victim had a wife named "Nang Yuong" and 3 children, who have fled since and are now living at Htar Noi, a village near Kiu Zarng Kap. She is waiting for a chance to run across the border with her children away from the fighting between SSA and Burmese troops in Pang Mai Soog – Pang Kam Kaw areas. (Source: Freedom, June 2002)

On 25 June 2002, Burmese soldiers from LIB 387, led by Major Zaw Ti Ka captured and executed 3 innocent villagers of Wan Pha Sont, Kho Lam tract, Nam Zarng Township. (Major Zaw Ti Ka was not his real name, whenever he came to the village, he kept asking for a villager named Zaw Ti Ka and that's why he was known to the villagers as Major Zaw Ti Ka). The 3 victims were Saw Nan Ta, Nanta Lai, and Phaw Ka. The reason for their execution was, "They had hunted barking deer with their muskets, without permission". (Source: Freedom, June 2002)

On the night of 14 October 2002, two Burmese Army shells killed 70 people observing Buddhist Lent in the southern town of Mongnai, 92 miles southeast of Taunggyi. The shells,

believed to be fired from the LIB 518 command post, at 11:00 pm, also destroyed part of the Sala Kao-hawng (9 room-pavilion) at Pawmong Quarter, Mongnai's northernmost suburb and wounded 21 others. The shelling coincided with the 8th Waxing Moon of the 11th Lunar Month, a traditional day of religious observance.

The dead included 6 men and 64 women in addition 2 men and 19 women were injured. So far, S.H.A.N. could only obtain three names: Zarng Mawng, 62, headman; Heng Yong, 56 and Awng Pay, 36. No one knew why the incident occurred and no action has been taken on the part of the authorities. There are two Burmese battalions in Mongnai: IB 248, located north of the town and LIB 518 located to the south. The towns people confirmed that the shells came from the direction of LIB 518. "They left a hole 2 cubits (1meter) deep and 3 cubits (1 1/2 meters) wide," said one. (Source: SHAN)

On 17 December 2002, SPDC troops from LIB 601 shot dead two villagers as they were working on their farms. The victims were Sai Yar Zing, age 27 and Sai Nanti, age 25. (Source: Freedom, Vol.3, No.1, January 2003)

6 Displaced Shans Robbed and Shot Dead near Thai-Border in Murng-Ton.

On 30 January 2002, 6 internally displaced Shans from Murng-Kerng township who were trying to enter Thailand were robbed and shot dead by SPDC troops from IB281 near the Thai border at a place about 2 1/2 kilometres east of BP-1 border checkpoint, in Murng-Ton township. They had left Murng-Kerng town relocation site on 21 January, heading for Thailand. They reached BP-1 on 29 January 2002 and stayed overnight at an empty house which had been confiscated from the people by the SPDC troops. During the night they were told by some traders that they needed to change money, so they exchanged their money into Thai currency from one of the traders. It was said that they got 36,000 Baht from the money exchange. The next day, 30 January 2002, they hired a guide who would take them to Nong Ook village in Thailand by a route that evaded the Thai checkpoint, but when they had gone only about 2-3 kilometres to the east of BP-1 and were still some kilometres from the border, they were stopped and robbed of all their money and valuables by 5 Burmese soldiers from IB281 who eventually shot the 6 of them dead. The 6 victims were:

1. Lung Kawn (m), aged 56
2. Zaai Aw-Ta (m), aged 38
3. Zaai Nyunt (m), aged 34
4. Pa Pan (f), aged 43
5. Naang Leng (f), aged 27
6. Naang Naang (f), only 4 months old (Source: *SHRF*)

Displaced Pig Farmer Shot Dead in Kun-Hing.

On 7 February 2002, a displaced pig farmer was shot dead by a group of 4 SPDC troops from IB246, led by Sgt. Hla Hpe, while he was feeding his pigs in a relocation site in the outskirts of Kun-Hing town. The victim, Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma, male, aged 18, was the only son of Lung In-Ta and Pa Yo, who were originally from Mai Saang Kham village in Wan Lao village tract, Kun-Hing township, that had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Kun-Hing town in 1996. In the relocation site, Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma raised some pigs to earn a living and also support his parents. He was shot dead in his pig sty at about 10:00 am while he was feeding his pigs. After shooting Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma, the SPDC troops also shot 1 pig and took it away.

After that, the SPDC troops went to the village headman and took him to the killing site, told him that they had shot dead a Shan rebel and showed him Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma's body, which was lying over the fence of his pig sty. When the village headman saw the body and recognized it was Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma, he bluntly told the SPDC troops that they had killed an innocent villager who earned an honest living to support his parents. On hearing that, the troops became angry and slapped the headman several times until his face and eyes were badly swollen. Later, the SPDC troops came back and took the village headman and Lung In-Ta, the victim's father, to the military base and detained them for 4 hours before releasing them. On 11 February, after they had conducted a funeral for Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma, Lung In-Ta and the village headman, together with the village tract headman and some other village elders and leaders, filed a complaint against the killers at the criminal court in Kun-Hing town.

Strangely enough, the court summoned the soldiers and the villagers and conducted a trial, during which the soldiers tried to prove that Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma was a Shan soldier by producing an old pistol and a hand-grenade supposedly belonging to him. When the village tract headman, asked the soldiers where they got those exhibits, they said they found them in Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma's house. However, Lung In-Ta testified that the soldiers had not come to the house, but took the pig and left after they had shot his son and the pig in the pig sty. The court officers then dismissed all of them, saying that they needed time to further consider the case and would summon them again some time later. But so far, there have not been any developments. (Source: *SHRF*)

7 Lahu Villagers Shot Dead in Murng-Sart.

On 10 February 2002, 7 Lahu villagers of Pu Na To village in Murng Tum village tract, Murng-Sart township, were shot dead by SPDC troops from Kaeng-Tung-based IB244 at Pu Na To village. On that day, a column of about 60 SPDC troops from Kaeng-Tung-based IB244 came from the direction of Murng Tum village and surrounded Pu Na To village. While surrounding the village, some SPDC troops went into it and randomly shot at the villagers, killing 7 and wounding many in the process. It was not certain what were the reasons behind the shooting. According to the local people, it could have been vengeance taken on the Lahu villagers by the SPDC troops because some time ago they had had a quarrel with some Lahu militia from Pu Na To village. (Source: *SHRF*)

2 Displaced Villagers Shot Dead While Climbing for Fruit in Lai-Kha.

On 11 February 2002, 2 displaced villagers who were climbing a jackfruit tree at a deserted village, Maak Laang, in Ton Hung village tract, Lai-Kha township, were shot down from the tree by a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB 519. The 2 victims, Lung Saang Awng, male, aged 47 and Zaai Saang Wi, male, aged 35, were originally from Maak Laang village, where the incident took place, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Lai-Kha town with many other villages in Ton Hung tract in 1997 by the Burmese army troops. The 2 villagers went to gather wild vegetables around Maak Laang deserted village which was not so far from Nam Wan village where they had been relocated to. On the same day, a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB519 which was passing by told the villagers at Nam Wan that they had shot dead 2 robbers at the foot of a jackfruit tree at an old village, pointed towards Maak Laang village and told them to go and bury the bodies. Only when the villagers saw their bodies did they learn they were Lung Saang Awng and Zaai Saang Wi from their village and not robbers as claimed by the SPDC troops. According to the villagers, the 2 men might have been shot

down from the tree because there were some jackfruits scattered around and some traces on the bodies and the tree. (Source: *SHRF*)

Fleeing Refugees Shot Dead near the Thai Border in Murng-Ton.

On 20 February 2002, a patrol of SPDC troops from IB281 shot at a group of refugees who were heading for Thailand, instantly killing one and wounding two of them, east of BP-1 (Border Point - 1), 1-1/2 miles from the border in Murng-Ton township. On the day of the incident, a group of about 50 refugees, mostly displaced Shans from central Shan State where their villages had been forcibly relocated by Burmese army troops a few years ago, were walking towards the Thai border, taking a shortcut route about 1-1/2 miles to the east of BP-1 checkpoint in an attempt to evade it.

At one point, the refugees ran into a group of about 5-6 SPDC troops from IB281, led by a Sergeant, who shot at them, killing 1 on the spot and wounding 2, and causing them to flee to different directions. The one who died on the spot was a displaced farmer, Zaai Wa-Ya-Ma, male, aged 27, originally from Ton Hung village in Naa Poi village tract, Lai-Kha township. The wounded two managed to escape to a village in the area and were still secretly treating their wounds by early March. They were:

1. Zaai Kan-Na, male, aged 48, originally from Ter Leng village in Naa Mang village tract, Lai-Kha township
2. Naang Kham Thun, female, aged 51, originally from Naa Khaw village in Wan Khem village tract, Kae-See township. (Source: *SHRF*)

Displaced Farmers Stabbed to Death in Lai-Kha.

On 27 February 2002, 3 displaced farmers from Paang Phon village relocation site in Murng Yaai village tract, Lai-Kha township, were stabbed to death by SPDC troops from LIB 515 at a rice field some distance from the relocation site. The 3 victims were:

1. Naang Yaen (f), aged 39
2. Zaai Taw (m), aged 19
3. Naang Non (f), aged 18

These people were originally from Naa Loi village in Paang Saang village tract, Lai-Kha township, which had been forcibly relocated to Paang Phon village relocation site in 1997 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. While staying at Paang Phon relocation site, they had been secretly cultivating their original rice fields near their deserted village, Naa Loi, which was about 5 miles from Paang Phon. It was during the rice harvest time and people from Paang Phon village were busy threshing and transporting their rice by ox-carts from their remote rice fields and farms to the relocation site. On the day of the incident, the 3 victims happened to be at their rice fields when a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB515 came and took them into a bush on the edge of the fields and killed them. Their necks were slashed and their chests were stabbed with a knife. (Source: *SHRF*)

Farmer Shot Dead in front of His Two Sisters in Nam-Zarng.

On 11 April 2002, a patrol of SPDC troops from a military camp at Kho Lam village relocation site, in Nam-Zarng township, shot dead a farmer in front of his 2 sisters at a remote farm 3 miles east of Phaa Sawnt village in Wan Phui tract, Nam-Zarng township. A patrol of about 50 SPDC troops from Kho Lam village camp went to patrol the area where Zaai Zin-Da, aged 32, and his 2 sisters from Phaa Sawnt village were staying in a hut to clear a plot of

land for rice farming. When the troops saw the hut, they went and surrounded it and when they knew there were people inside, they ordered them to come out. Zaai Zin-Da came out of the stilted hut and climbed down the ladder. When he was only halfway down the ladder, the SPDC troops shot at him without giving any warning. A bullet hit him directly in the chest and he fell down the ladder, dead.

When the troops came close to the hut, they saw the dead body of Zaai Zin-Da at the foot of the ladder and his 2 sisters who were clinging together in the hut, trembling with fear. The commander of the troops then told the women that they had shot Zaai Zin-Da because they thought he was a rebel and, giving them 1,000 kyat, told them to go back to their village and tell the villagers to come and bury him. Saying that, the troops left the place, heading back towards Kho Lam. (Source: *SHRF*)

Forest Gatherers Shot Dead and Others Fatally Wounded in Nam-Zarng.

On 15 April 2002, a patrol of SPDC troops from a military camp at Kho Lam village relocation site, in Nam-Zarng township, shot at 2 forest gatherers, wounding one of them, who later died after being taken to the hospital in Nam-Zarng town. On that day, Zaai Lu, male, aged 21 and his 10-year-old brother, Ai Zaai, went to gather resin and wild orchid flowers in the forest some distance from their village, Phaa Sawnt, in Wan Phui tract, Nam-Zarng township. On the same day, a column of about 45 SPDC troops from Kho Lam went to patrol the area in which the 2 brothers were.

While the 2 brothers were gathering resin and orchid flowers using long poles and going from tree to tree in the forest, one of the SPDC troops fired 3 shots at them from behind a tree about 40 yards away. One of the bullets hit Zaai Lu right in the waist and he fell down and cried out in pain, causing his 10-year-old brother to also scream and cry in fear.

When they heard the screams of the child, the troops stopped shooting and went to look at the 2 brothers. Zaai Lu then explained to them that he and his child brother were from Phaa Sawnt village and that they had come into the forest only to gather resin and orchid flowers. The SPDC troops ordered the civilian guides they had with them to carry Zaai Lu to a jungle road used by logging trucks and waited there until a truck came that way. The troops then put Zaai Lu and his brother on the truck and told the driver to take them to the hospital in Nam-Zarng town. Although Zaai Lu reached the hospital that evening, his wound was so severe that he died the same night at the hospital. (Source: *SHRF*)

Displaced Farmer Killed in Kun-Hing, Ox Stolen.

On 20 April 2002, a displaced farmer who was gathering rice was beaten to death and his draught oxen were stolen by a patrol of SPDC troops from IB246 at a remote farm in Kaeng Lom village tract, Kun-Hing township. The victim Zaai Hung, male, aged 18, was originally from Naa Sae village in Kaeng Lom tract which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Kun-Hing town some years ago. Zaai Hung and his parents had managed to survive years of hardship at the relocation site by growing rice at a remote farm some distance from the town.

On the day of the incident, Zaai Hung was preparing to take home some of his rice on an ox-cart and was feeding his 2 oxen with hay at his remote farm when a patrol of about 75 SPDC troops from Kun-Hing-based IB246 went by the farm. When the troops saw Zaai Hung, they

came straight through the farm to him and arrested him, tied him up with a rope, dragged him to the edge of the farm and beat him to death. The troops then left the farm, dragging away with them Zaaï Hung's 2 draught oxen. When he had not come home, Zaaï Hung's parents became worried and came after him, only to find his dead body at the edge of his farm, and signs of looting and footprints of Burmese soldiers all over the place. (Source: *SHRF*)

Displaced Villager Beaten to Death in Murng_Kerng.

On 1 June 2002, a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB514 beat to death a displaced villager at Loi Leng village in Loi Leng village tract, Murng-Kerng township, without giving any reason for the killing. A patrol of about 30-35 SPDC troops from Co.3 of LIB 514, led by Capt. Thein Htun, went to Loi Leng village relocation site on that day and called out to a man in a house to come out to them. The man was Aw-Zin-Na, aged 27, son of Lung Thun and Pa Oong, who had been forcibly relocated to Loi Leng village relocation site from Long Yawn village since 1997 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. Aw-Zin-Na was somewhat hard of hearing and did not understand Burmese. When the SPDC troops called him, he might not have heard or understood them because he did not come to them but stood and gazed at them. Some of the troops then came and dragged him by the hand out of the house and took him to a hut where cattle were kept. As Aw-Zin-Na was about to enter the hut, one of the SPDC troops struck him on the back of the neck with a rifle butt. The blow was so severe that it knocked him to the ground and killed him instantly. (Source: *SHRF*)

12 Palaung and Shan Villagers Shot Dead in Group in Murng-Kerng.

On 8 June 2002, a patrol of about 30 SPDC troops from Company No.4 of LIB514, led by commander Kyaw Hlaing, arrested 13 farmers, interrogated them and eventually shot 12 of them dead in a group at a remote farm in Murng-Kerng township. The victims — 7 Shan villagers from Saam Poon village and 6 Palaung villagers from Nawng Tao village, altogether 13 including men and women — were taking turns in helping one another weed their farms, and happened to be together at a farm when the said SPDC patrol came upon them.

The SPDC troops arrested all the 13 farmers, tied them up with ropes and interrogated them about Shan soldiers in the area. The troops wanted to know how many Shan soldiers were in the area, where they were, and who their leaders were, etc., but all the farmers said they did not know. Commander Kyaw Hlaing then singled out Lung Maan Seng, aged 60, a Palaung man who was the oldest in the group, and said to him, "You are the oldest in your group. You must return and tell all the villagers not to help and support the Shan soldiers. From now on we will shoot to death all those who do not listen to us".

The SPDC troops then shot and killed the other 12 the group. Lung Maan Seng, however, was detained for 2 days before being released, and he duly related the incident to the villagers in the area, especially the relatives of the 12 who had been shot in front of him. (Source: *SHRF*)

2 Villagers Shot Dead in Tachilek

On 10 June 2002, 2 villagers from Nam Lao village in Pa Leo village tract, Ta-Khi-Laek township, were shot dead by SPDC troops from LIB316 on the bank of Nam Lao stream outside their village. On that day, the 2 victims, Ai En (m), aged 21 and Ai Yeng (m), aged 20, were returning from Kaeng Laab village, where they had gone on a business trip, when they ran into a group of 7 SPDC troops near the Nam Lao stream outside their village. The SPDC troops stopped them and asked questions about their identities and what they were doing. After they had answered the questions, the troops shot at them without pointing out their faults or giving any reason whatsoever. They just fired shots at each of them and left towards Kaeng Laab village.

Zaai Yeng was hit in the chest and died instantly. But Zaai En was hit in the side of his stomach and did not die immediately and, after the troops left, managed to stagger into the village and told the villagers about the incident. Zaai En, however, died of his wound and loss of blood some hours later after the villagers failed to find transport in time to take him to the hospital in Ta-Khi-Laek town. The villagers dared not report the incident to any SPDC authorities and quietly conducted a funeral for the dead in accordance with their tradition. (Source: *SHRF*)

4 Displaced Farmers Shot Dead in Kun-Hing

On 14 June 2002, 4 displaced farmers who were taking their buffaloes home after working in the rice fields were shot dead by SPDC troops from IB246 on the way between Wan Lao village and Kun-Hing town, Kun-Hing township. The displaced farmers were originally from Wan Lao village in Wan Lao village tract, Kun-Hing township. They had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Kun-Hing town in 1997 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. For some years now, the villagers of Wan Lao had been allowed by local SPDC troops to go and cultivate their original farm lands in the area of their old village, but not allowed to resettle at the village.

On the day of the incident, the 4 victims, each pulling a buffalo, were returning to Kun-Hing town relocation site after working at the rice fields near their old village, Wan Lao, when they ran into a group of 16 SPDC troops from IB246, led by commander San Win. The SPDC troops then shot and killed all 4 of them and took away all their buffaloes. When they got back to their military base, the troops said they got the buffaloes from some cattle traders and killed them for meat, which was to be eaten as well as sold in Kun-Hing town. The 4 victims were:

1. Saang Weet (m), aged 28, originally from Wan Lao village, Wan Lao tract, Kun-Hing township
2. Zaai Thun Suay (m), aged 19, originally from Wan Lao, Wan Lao tract, Kun-Hing township
3. Pi Phaw-Ka (m), aged 49, originally from Wan Lao, Wan Lao tract, Kun-Hing township
4. Pi Zaai (m), aged 44, originally from Wan Lao, Wan Lao tract, Kun-Hing township
5. Although community leaders of the original villagers of Wan Lao and others in Kun-Hing town knew of the incident after their relatives had found the bodies of the dead, no one dared to talk about it in public, let alone take any action. (Source: *SHRF*)

10 Displaced Farmers Shot Dead in a Group, Woman Raped and Her Husband Beaten to Death in Lai-Kha.

In mid-June 2002, a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB515 surrounded a group of 11 displaced farmers, shot dead 10 of them and forced 1 to serve as a guide, at a remote farm some 7 miles west of Lai-Kha town. A few days later they raped a woman and beat her husband to death at a remote farm some 11 miles north of the town. The 11 displaced farmers belonged to the same extended family originally from Nawng Zem village in Haai Seng village tract, Lai-Kha township, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Lai-Kha town in 1997 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. They managed to survive the hard years at the relocation site by secretly growing rice at remote farms and working as day labourers.

On 11 June 2002, a patrol of about 35 SPDC troops from LIB515, led by Capt. Maung Win of Company No.4, went to a remote farm about 7 miles west of Lai-Kha town and rounded up the said 11 farmers, including 10 young men and women and a middle-aged man, Lung Puk, aged 57, who was the head of the family. The SPDC troops accused the farmers of supporting Shan soldiers with rice and food and shot 10 of them dead, leaving only Lung Puk to be used as a guide. The SPDC troops then told Lung Puk that they had killed the farmers because they had given help to the Shan soldiers who were fighting against them and forced him to guide them in searching the area for 3 days before releasing him.

On 15 June 2002, after releasing Lung Puk, the SPDC troops continued to search the area and went to another remote farm about 11 miles north of Lai-Kha town, where a young couple of displaced farmers had been working. The couple ran into the SPDC troops at the edge of the farm as they came to it. The couple, Zaai Taan Nyunt and Naang Mo (not her real name), from (——) village (name withheld to protect the rape survivor) in Naa Mang village tract, Lai-Kha township, were going to their farm when they ran into the said SPDC troops at the edge of the farm. The couple were seized by the troops and taken to different places. The officer, a Sergeant Major or a Second Lieutenant, who took away Naang Mo raped her, and then let 10 of his troops rape her until she lost consciousness. Zaai Taan Nyunt was beaten to death some distance north of the farm.

When Naang Mo regained consciousness, it was around 4 o'clock in the afternoon and she was alone in a forest some distance away from her farm. She tried to find her husband in and around the farm for a while but could not find him, so she returned to the village and related her plight to her relatives and fellow villagers, but they could do nothing that evening because it was getting dark. The next day, about 20 villagers went in search of Zaai Taan Nyunt and found his dead body where he was beaten to death north of the farm. The villagers then buried his body properly where it was found and on the 7th day of his death conducted a funeral for him at a Buddhist temple according to their tradition. Naang Mo was said to have been suffering from sickness and weakness since her ordeal up to the time this report was received. (Source: *SHRF*)

3 Akha Villagers Shot Dead in Murng-Phyak.

On 19 June 2002, 3 Akha villagers were shot dead by a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB329 on the bank of Nam Paang stream near Sop Paang village in Wan Lom village tract, Murng-Phyak township. The victims, Aa Li (m), aged 18, Aa Jo (m), aged 25 and Aa Laa (m), aged 25, were all from Sop Paang village and on the day of the incident had gone to hunt and gather bamboo shoots to sell and support their families.

While they were gathering bamboo shoots, the 3 Akha men were spotted by a patrol of about 60 SPDC troops from LIB329 who called out to the Akha men to come to them. The Akha men, however, were too afraid of the Burmese soldiers to go to them and tried to run away, and the SPDC troops opened fire, killing all 3 of them. The SPDC troops then continued their patrolling and when they reached Wan Lom village they told the villagers that they had killed 3 Shan rebels on the way, and ordered the villagers to go and bury them.

When villagers of Wan Lom saw the bodies of those whom the SPDC had accused of being Shan rebels, they knew instantly that they were just ordinary Akha villagers of Sop Paang village who had gone to gather and hunt for food in the forest. So they went and informed their relatives at Sop Paang village about the incident. On hearing about the incident, the relatives and fellow villagers of the 3 victims retrieved their bodies and conducted a funeral for them according to their Akha tradition. Although they all knew who had killed the 3 Akha men, no one knew why, and no one dared to report the incident to the SPDC authorities in the area. (Source: *SHRF*)

Displaced Villagers Shot Dead, Their Cattle Stolen in Murng-Nai.

On 19 June 2002, 3 displaced villagers who had gone to gather bamboo with an ox-cart were shot dead and their oxen stolen by SPDC troops of LIB518, in the forest some miles north of Murng-Nai town. The 3 victims, Zaai Ung (m), aged 24, Zaai Thun (m), aged 29 and Naang Pun (f), aged 22, were originally from Haai Kur village in Mai Hai village tract, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Murng-Nai town in 1997 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops.

On the day of the incident, the 3 villagers went with an ox-cart to the forest north of the town to gather bamboo for repairing the fences of their house and garden. When they did not return after 2 days, and their 2 draft-oxen were seen in the base of LIB 518 by some villagers, their relatives went in search for them and found their dead bodies in the bamboo forest north of the town.

On 25 June 2002, SPDC troops from the same battalion, LIB518, beat to death a displaced villager, Lung Nya (m), aged 51, and took away his cow and its calf, at a place some distance outside Murng-Nai town. Lung Nya was originally from Wan Pong village in Naa Khaan village tract, Murng-Nai township, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Murng-Nai town in 1997 by SLORC troops. He had bought a cow with a small calf and had been taking them to graze in a meadow outside the town nearly every day for about 3 months when he was killed and his cows were stolen by the said SPDC troops. (Source: *SHRF*)

2 Akha Villagers Shot Dead in Murng-Phyak

On 21 June 2002, 2 Akha villagers from Ja-Nu village in Nam Naang village tract, Murng-Phyak township, who were returning from their farm were shot dead by a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB329 in the forest between Ja-Nu village and their farm. On the day of the incident, the said 2 Akha villagers, La-Pa (m), aged 19 and Ja-Her (m), aged 21, were returning from their rice farm when they ran into a patrol of about 30 SPDC troops from Murng-Phyak-based LIB329. La-Pa and Ja-Her were so frightened by the sudden encounter with the much feared SPDC troops that they tried to run away. However, before they could make a move, both were gunned down by the troops and died instantly on the way to their farm.

After killing the 2 Akha villagers, the SPDC troops continued their patrol and as they were passing through Pa Yaao village, a neighbouring village with Ja-Nu village in the same village tract, they told the villagers that they had shot dead 2 men who were returning from taking food to the Shan rebels, in the forest near Ja-Nu village. When villagers of Pa Yaao found the bodies, they knew who they were and informed the villagers of Ja-Nu and relatives of the dead about the incident. The bodies were then properly buried and a funeral conducted in accordance with their traditions. According to their relatives, the 2 victims were just returning home from their rice farm which was some distance from their village when they were shot dead. (Source: *SHRF*)

Mushroom Gatherers Shot Dead in Lai-Kha.

On 7 July 2002, 3 out of 5 displaced villagers who were gathering mushrooms in the forest were shot dead by a patrol of SPDC troops in the forest 4-5 miles west of Lai-Kha town. The said 5 villagers were originally from Nawng Mai village in Wan Saang village tract, Lai-Kha township, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Lai-Kha town in 1996 by the then SLORC troops. The villagers were:

1. Lung Taan Lu (m), aged 58
2. Lung Kham Maw Tawng (m), aged 55
3. Zaai Zaam Seng (m), aged 37
4. Zaai Kaw (m), aged 31
5. Naang Seng Hurng (f), aged 27

On the day of the incident, the villagers went together to gather mushrooms in the forest west of Lai-Kha town. When they were roaming around in the forest, a group of SPDC soldiers appeared from somewhere and called out to them to come to them. Some of the villagers ran as they heard the soldiers, but 2 of them, Naang Seng Hurng (not her real name) and Lung Taan Lu (not his real name), were so close to the soldiers that they dared not move.

The SPDC troops shot at those who ran, killing all of them, although some did not die immediately. The commander of the troops said to Lung Taan Lu and Naan Seng, "They must be Shan rebels, that was why they ran away from us". Lung Taan Lu then said to the commander, "Had they known it was you 'Bo Gyi' (Commander), they would not have run. They might have thought you were Shan rebels so they ran, because our community leaders always warned us to keep away from them to avoid being kidnapped or forced to join them. That was why they had tried to run".

When the SPDC troops heard that, they let Lung Taan Lu and Naang Seng go, warning them not to tell anyone about the incident, but to say they heard shots of gunfire and ran back to their village. The troops also threatened to come and kill them if they told people that it was SPDC soldiers who shot those villagers dead. (Source: *SHRF*)

10 Displaced Elderly Villagers Shot Dead While Observing Buddhist Sabbath, 25 Others Disappeared After Arrest in Nam-Zarng.

On 21 September 2002, 10 displaced elderly villagers who were observing Buddhist sabbath were arrested from a monastery and shot dead in a group by SPDC troops from IB246, led by Capt. Pyi Pyo Wei, in Kho Lam village tract in Nam-Zarng township. Around noon of that day, some insurgent soldiers attacked the base of IB246 of the SPDC in Kho Lam, leaving one SPDC soldier dead and one rifle lost. That night, a patrol of 40 SPDC troops, led by Capt. Pyi Pyo Wei, from the commando unit under the direct command of Tactical Command commander, San Htun, based in Kun-Hing town, came to Kho Lam area.

The day of the incident was full-moon day of the 10th month of the Shan lunar calendar and many elderly people were observing Buddhist sabbath when around midnight the said SPDC patrol of commandoes went via Wan Luk Pung Nam Kheo to Wan Phui village in Kho Lam village tract. The SPDC troops arrested 7 elderly Shan men from Wan Phui village monastery and 3 other younger villagers they found at the monastery and took them to a place known as Kung Nawng Kai, some distance from the monastery, and shot all 10 of them dead in a group.

The next morning, some other SPDC troops from Nam-Zarng-based IB66 went to Wan Phui village and gave the villagers 10 sacks of rice to conduct a funeral for the dead they found at Kung Nawng Kai, whom they claimed must have been killed by the rebels. The 10 persons killed were:

1. Lung Wan-Na (m), aged 70, from Luk Nam Kheo village, Nam- Zarng township
2. Lung Saam (m), aged 80, Originally from Nam Waan village, Naa Poi tract, Nam-Zarng township
3. Lung Su (m), aged 30, Originally from Wan Luk village, Naa Poi tract, Nam-Zarng township
4. Lung Zarae Su (m), aged 70, Originally from Wan Luk village, Naa Poi tract, Nam-Zarng township
5. Pu Mu Ling (m), aged 80, Originally from Wan Luk village, Naa Poi tract, Nam-Zarng township
6. Lung Thi Seng (m), aged 50, Originally from Loi Waeng village, Naa Poi tract, Nam-Zarng township
7. Lung Za-Ling (m), aged 50, Originally from Loi Waeng village, Naa Poi tract, Nam-Zarng township
8. Ka-Win-Da (m), aged 25, Originally from Wan Hai village, Naa Poi tract, Nam-Zarng township
9. Zaa Ti (m), aged 30, Originally from Ter Zarng village, Naa Poi tract, Nam-Zarng township
10. Zaa Lu (m), aged 16, Originally from Nawng Kwaai village, Ton Hung tract, Nam-Zarng township

These people were displaced farmers who had been forcibly relocated to Kho Lam relocation site from their original villages during the mass forced relocation in 1996 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. (Source: *SHRF*)

8 Displaced Farmers Raped and Killed in a Group in Murng-Pan.

On 24 September 2002, 8 displaced farmers, including 5 men and 3 women, were beaten and shot to death, the women raped before being killed, by a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB502, led by Capt. Soe Naing, at Tawng Kwaai Tai village (deserted) in Tawng Kwaai village tract, Murng-Pan township. The said 8 displaced farmers were originally from Tawng Kwaai Tai village which had been forcibly moved to Ho Phaai Long village tract by the Burmese army troops some years ago. These farmers had managed to get permission from the SPDC authorities of Murng-Pan township and, with a pass given by the township office, had been going to work at their original rice fields at their old village since May 2002.

On the day of the incident, however, the said patrol of 40-45 SPDC troops from LIB502, led by Capt. Soe Naing, went and rounded up the said farmers who were working in the fields. The farmers were kept for one night, during which the 3 women were raped by the SPDC troops, and were all killed on the next day. The victims were:

1. Lung Kaw-Ya (m), aged 48
2. Lung Kan-Ta-Ma (m), aged 47
3. Zaai Wan-Na (m), aged 45
4. Zaai Pae-Ti (m), aged 36
5. Zaai Kat-Ti-Ya (m), aged 32
6. Naang Lu (f), aged 31
7. Naang Thun Nae (f), aged 29
8. Naang Zing Nyunt (f), aged 25

Where their bodies were found, the women's were lying separately about 20-25 yards from one another with no clothes on whatsoever and there were signs of severe beating and rape on all of them. The men's bodies were lying together but only one had bullet holes; the others had bruises and wounds all over, apparently beaten to death. The women were also beaten to death. (Source: *SHRF*)

Rape and Killing of 10 Displaced Farmers in Kun-Hing and Nam-Zarng.

On 2 October 2002, 10 displaced farmers, including 6 men and 4 women, from Kun-Hing relocation site were beaten to death, the women raped before being killed, by a patrol of SPDC troops from IB66, near Nam Wo village (deserted) in Nam-Zarng township. The said 10 displaced farmers were originally from Nam Wo village in Haai Laai village tract, Nam-Zarng township, which had been forcibly relocated to Kun-Hing township at the relocation site on the outskirts of Kun-Hing town in 1996 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. These farmers had been given permission by the local SPDC military authorities of Kun-Hing-based IB246 to go and cultivate their farms at their original old village, Nam Wo. On the day of the incident, while the farmers were working at their farms a patrol of SPDC troops from Nam-Zarng-based IB66 went and arrested them. All the 10 farmers were later beaten to death by the SPDC troops; the women were raped before being killed. Their bodies were scattered in and on the edge of a farm near Nam Wo village. The 10 victims were:

1. Lung Zan-Da Lam (m), aged 48
2. Zaai Taw-Ling (m), aged 28
3. Zaai Phaw-Ka (m), aged 35
4. Zaai Long (m), aged 31
5. Zaai Mu-Lung (m), aged 28

6. Zaai Maad (m), aged 27
7. Naang Seng (f), aged 26
8. Naang Zing Lu (f), aged 24
9. Naang Nae (f), aged 22
10. Naang Thuay (f), aged 20 (Source: *SHRF*)

2 Displaced Farmers Shot Dead an Ox Stolen in Murng-Kerng.

On 27 October 2002, 2 displaced farmers who were leading an ox were shot dead and the ox was stolen by a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB 514, led by commander Aung Nyunt, near a main road some distance outside of Murng-Kerng town. The 2 displaced farmers, Lung Wan, aged 51 and Zaai Khat-Ti-Ya, aged 31, were originally from Haai Ngern village in Yaang Loi village tract, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Murng-Kerng town in 1997. At the time of the incident, they managed to get permission from the local SPDC military authorities to cultivate their rice fields. As the 2 farmers went to irrigate their rice fields that day, they found an ox grazing in one of their fields and they helped each other catch it. As they knew the ox belonged to one of their fellow villagers, they took it with them on their return to give back to its owner. As the 2 farmers approached a main road some distance from the town, they ran into a patrol of 15-16 SPDC troops from Co.3 of LIB514, led by commander Aung Nyunt, who shot at them without warning. Lung Wan was killed instantly. Khat-Ti-Ya was hit in the thigh and dropped to the ground, holding the rope that tied the ox in his hands. One of the SPDC troops then went to Khat-Ti-Ya and took the rope from his hands, pulled the ox away from him, and shot him dead. (Source: *SHRF*)

A Fisherman Beaten to Death His Fish Stolen in Murng-Nai.

On 27 October 2002, 5 villagers who had caught fish together were robbed of their fish and one of them was severely beaten up, causing death later, by 3 SPDC troops from LIB 518, led by Sgt. Aung Soe, in Saai Phe village tract, Murng-Nai township.

The said 5 villagers were from Saai Phe village in Saai Phe village tract and had gone to catch fish together in the area. When they were returning with their catch, they were stopped by 3 SPDC soldiers from Co.4 of LIB 518, led by Sgt. Aung Soe.

The SPDC troops forcibly took some fish from the villagers' catch, saying "These are for our battalion commander; these are for our major and these are for our captain, etc.", deliberately choosing the big and beautiful ones and leaving only the small and ugly ones for the villagers.

One of the villagers, Lung Man, aged 53, who was the oldest and a kind of leader of the group, begged the SPDC troops to take also the small ones and leave some of the big ones for the villagers because they needed to sell them to buy rice to support their families, and they would not be able to get enough money to buy rice by selling only small fish. The SPDC Sergeant then said to the villagers that it was not his concern whether the villagers had any fish or not, but they must have a lot of fish. Lung Man then became angry and retorted, "Why don't you go and catch for yourselves if you want a lot".

The Sergeant then hit Lung Man on the back of his neck with a rifle butt, and Lung Man fell to the ground. After a moment Lung Man managed to get up and the SPDC troops kicked him down again and continued to kick his stomach and his body several times. They then left the place taking the fish with them. The other 4 villagers had to carry Lung Man back to their

village and sent him to Murg-Nai town hospital on an ox-cart. Lung Man, however, suffered from the beating all night and died at dawn on the next day at the hospital. No one has so far dared to complain about the incident.

The 5 villagers were (1) Lung Man (m) aged 53, (2) Zaai Lu (m) aged 29, (3) Zaai Laek (m) aged 19, (4) Naang Ung (f) aged 12 and (5) Zaai Mu (m) aged 21. (Source: *SHRF*)

Karenni State

On 12 February 2002, two Shodawkoh villagers, Saw Phapayaw and Naw Chris Say Wah (the seven year old daughter of Naw Khu Say), were arrested by Burmese troops from LIB No. 306, led by temporary commander Major Myint Than. They were then buried alive at the Pwadoh bridge site. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 21 February 2002 at 4:00 pm, a villager named Htay Reh, 42, from Hsotasha was killed by SPDC troops from IB No. 72. This happened near the Thai-Karenni border post 9 while he was looking for fish. Hunters found his dead body that evening. (Source: *KNAHR*)

In March 2002, the SPDC troops buried an eight-year old Karenni girl alive as a human sacrifice for a river bridge they were constructing. The troops had encountered great difficulties in building the bridge in the Tongu district of Karenni State. This is an ancient practice of Burma's kings which enslaves the ghost of the victim as a guardian spirit. Doh Say Bani of the Karenni Refugee Committee said, "Our people are still being killed. Our people are still being forced to work. All our people in Burma are living in fear." (Source: *CSW*)

On 5 March 2002, a Burmese military unit from IB No. 72, which is camped at Hteekyet Kerd Hill, made a 5km incursion into Thailand. On that day, at about 10:00 am, Nga Reh, 54, a Karenni originally from Hsotasha, met these SPDC troops in the rice fields and was killed near Tapraleh, a Thai village. The next day, the villagers found his body, which had a grenade laid underneath it. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 28 March 2002, Saw Saku (son of Saw Takel), 35, from Gabawhtar village was killed at 13:30 by SPDC troops from LIB No. 304, led by Commander of Operations Myint Than and Captain Kyaw Myint. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 18 May 2002, about 80 Burmese troops from LIB No. 261 at Thone Mile base and local militias went to Namsohn Kuay village, Teelon village tract. They arrested village chief U San Kam, 50, without reason. The troops stayed for three nights in the village and interrogated him about the movements of the Karenni forces. They tortured him when he could not give them any information. Finally, the troops killed him on 31 May at 5:00 am on a bridge just outside the village. Namsohn Kuay village is located in the northern part of Loikaw, the capital, and a distance of 7 miles from Loilin Lay. In 1999, a former village chief and the Secretary of Namsohn Kuay were arrested and taken away by Burmese troops from IB No. 54 led by Captain Aung Kyi. They are still missing to this day. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 19 June 2002, a group from KNPLF (Karenni Nationalities People's Liberation Front, an SPDC-backed cease-fire armed group), led by Lwi Zei and Ye Win, killed Hteeduku villager, Jowahni, while he was on his way home from Pruso without giving a reason. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 25 June 2002, about 20 Burmese troops led by Captain Kyit Shwe from LIB No. 530 went to Bulyah village and asked the villagers for information on Karenni forces. The troops threatened to kill the villagers when they said there were no Karenni troops in the village. When they left, the Burmese troops took the village chief to be their guide for three days. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 26 November 2002 at 10:45, a combined column of Burmese troops from LIB No. 411 and KNPLF (SPDC-backed cease-fire armed group) opened fire on a group of 20 Shadaw camp residents near Hteetalaw Leh without provocation. Daw Tama villager Noe Reh, 37, was killed. 15 were captured by the troops and 4 others managed to escape. (Source: *KNAHR*)



3 Arbitrary Detention and Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances

“No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.”

- Article 9 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

3.1 Background

“If people are going to be arrested for expressing their opinions, their political opinions, then how can we say that there is a hope for political freedom in Burma, and without political freedom, how can there be democracy?”

- Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, General Secretary of the NLD, August 2002

“There are no political prisoners. ”

SPDC Colonel Tin Hlaing, Burma's Minister of Home Affairs and chairperson for the National Human Rights Committee in Burma, at a 19 May 2002 ASEAN meeting on counter-terrorism in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

The SPDC maintains an extensive network of Military Intelligence agents, police, and government officials ready to detain anyone suspected of holding or expressing anti-government opinions in Burma. The military in Burma has established and enforced stringent laws curtailing civil and political freedoms, enabling the junta to crush any political opposition. The SPDC's laws and regulations criminalize freedom of thought, the dissemination of information, and the right of association and assembly. The most commonly employed laws banning the demonstration of civil and political rights have been the 1923 Government's Official Secrets Act, the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act, the 1957 Unlawful Associations Act, the 1962 Printers' and Publishers' Registration Law, the 1975 State Protection Law, and Law No. 5/96. These laws and orders have restricted the civil and political rights of Burmese citizens for years. Now, with technological advances in communication available across the globe, new laws have been enacted in order to provide the SPDC authorities additional legal bases to curtail freedom of expression and the exchange of information. For more information on these laws, please refer to the chapters on the freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly and association.

Throughout 2002, SPDC personnel continued to arbitrarily detain persons across Burma for illegal association with groups seen as anti-government. In the aftermath of the 'global war on terror,' the SPDC began to structure its anti-opposition activity within the framework of countering terrorist organizations. In areas of ethnic insurgency, these detentions were common and in most cases individuals suspected of such illegal association were seized, detained, interrogated, and sometimes tortured and killed without warrant or evidence against them. In 2002, there were also numerous reports of individuals who disappeared following arrest and detention, many of whom are feared dead. Human rights organizations, such as the Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), have argued that the current definition of 'political prisoner' used in the context of Burma is too narrow and excludes the thousands of ethnic

minority villagers who are routinely arrested, tortured, and imprisoned under Articles 17/1 (contact with illegal organizations) and Article 17/2 (rising against the State).

In addition to individuals arrested for political reasons, SPDC officials continued to arbitrarily arrest and detain people for "crimes" such as failure to pay army taxes or to sell the required crop quota to the government purchasing centers. Many farmers were arrested in the year 2002 under such circumstances. These farmers were detained, without trial, until the required quota was met. The SPDC also arrested religious minorities, including Muslims and Christians, for various reasons. Many people arbitrarily detained were released following payment of fines set by the official who arrested them, exemplifying the extent to which corruption exists within Burma. Indeed, SPDC troops and officials often arrest people for no other reason than to extort money from them. Many Burmese citizens deported by Thai authorities in 2002 were arrested and forced to pay high fees for "illegally leaving the country," or else faced imprisonment or forced labor. Thai authorities also arrested several Burmese political activists working in Thailand in 2002 and deported them into the waiting hands of the SPDC, reflecting a new Thai government policy thought to appease the Burmese government by ending its tolerance for Burmese activists working within Thai borders.

Throughout 2002, the SPDC periodically released political prisoners. By the end of the year approximately 300 prisoners had been freed, the majority of whom were NLD members, including members of parliament-elect, who had been detained without charge or trial, some since July 1998. (Source: AAPP) NLD Party leader Aung San Suu Kyi was released on 6 May 2002 after spending 18 months under house arrest. These releases were apparent goodwill gestures by the regime, which occurred in conjunction with their ongoing talks with Aung San Suu Kyi. The releases have also been linked to recent visits by Razali Ismail, the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to Burma and Professor Paulo Pinheiro, the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Burma. Many of those released in 2002 had already finished their prison sentences. Others had been held without being charged for months or even years. The release of political prisoners has long been a prerequisite of opposition groups and international governments and agencies for dialogue towards reconciliation in the country. In an August 2002 statement, Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of the NLD, stated "we repeat, again and again, we reiterate, the release of political prisoners is the most important thing for all those who truly wish to bring about change in Burma."

Former political prisoner and activist Bo Kyi of AAPP called the prisoner release issue a "political pawn" played by the SPDC to garner international aid and quell criticism of its human rights record. Many have accused the SPDC of holding the political prisoners hostage in the ongoing political dialogue between the military junta and opposition groups.

Despite the releases, Amnesty International estimates that over 1,300 political prisoners remain in jail (the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) estimated this number at 1,390 for the end of 2002). In a speech before the UN General Assembly in November 2001, the Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma stated that these individuals had been detained "for having peacefully expressed their views, verbally, through participation in peaceful demonstrations, or activities in political parties, for having written about human rights or political issues in the country, or for possessing prohibited writings." Among those who remain incarcerated are 1988 student leader Min Ko Naing and NLD political strategist U Win Tin. More than 25 current political prisoners have already completed their sentences but continue to be detained under article 10(a) of the penal code, which gives the SPDC broad discretion to extend their prison periods. Prisoners have

received extended sentences for allegedly trying to send information to the UN about prison conditions and for attempting to circulate news and written materials inside prisons. The SPDC continues to officially deny that there are any political prisoners in Burma. Those prisoners who have been released continue to have their freedom of expression and association restricted and many were made to sign pledges that they would not engage in politics. Additionally, freed political prisoners are regularly subject to harassment by government officials and have difficulty finding work and continuing their education.

In 2002, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma were allowed to visit prisons and political prisoners when they received permission from the SPDC. While ICRC access is a positive sign, there were mixed reports as to whether there has been any real improvement in prison conditions. Information gathered by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP) from recently released prisoners indicates that the behavior of prison authorities and military intelligence towards both political and non-political prisoners remains brutal. At least 83 political prisoners have died in Burma's prisons since 1988. Five political prisoners died while in custody during 2002³⁴ Mai Aik Pan, Aung May Thu, Ko Win Than, U Sai Pha, and U Maung Ko. Fifteen other prisoners held in prisons in southern Burma were reported missing and are believed to have been killed by the SPDC. (Source: AAPP)

3.2 Denial of a Fair and Public Trial

Although remnants of the British-era legal system are formally in place in Burma, the court system and its operation remain seriously flawed, particularly in the handling of political cases. In 1975 the State Protection Act was passed by the Burma Socialist Party Programme in order to protect the state from potentially destructive elements. Article 10(a) of this act allows for an individual to be detained for up to three years without a trial. This means that political prisoners in detainment are denied the rights given to sentenced prisoners and are therefore often subjected to extraordinarily repressive measures. For example, under article 10(a) a detainee can be denied visiting privileges and may be put into solitary confinement. If the military regime believes a prisoner to be a threat to the state, after that prisoner has served his/her sentence under article 10(a) he/she can be immediately re-detained.

Throughout 2002, the SPDC continued to rule by decree and was not bound by any constitutional provision providing for fair trials or any other rights. Not only have the people charged under the various law and military decrees been consistently denied fair trials and the due process of law, but also the judicial system itself has been emasculated over the years. The SPDC appoints the Judges of the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court selects judges for the lower courts, but requires the approval of SPDC authorities. The Supreme Court is further in charge of supervising the lower courts. The Judiciary Law does not contain any provisions on the security of tenure for judges and their protection from arbitrary removal, thus leaving such issues entirely in the hands of the SPDC and, what is worse, without any guarantees provided by law by which the SPDC is bound.

In addition to the SPDC's unrestricted power in the appointment of judges, the courts are powerless to protect the rights of victims of oppression. This is so because a great number of decrees have been promulgated by the SPDC for the purpose of repressing political activity and the freedoms of thought, expression, association and movement, among others. In

addition, emergency laws are still resorted to. The courts have no jurisdiction to challenge or to discard this repressive legal arsenal.

Unprofessional behavior by some court officials, the use of overly broad laws including the Emergency provisions Act of 1950, the Unlawful Associations Act, the Habitual Offenders Act, and the Law on Safeguarding the State from the danger of Destructionists, and the manipulation of the courts for political ends continue to deprive citizens of the right to a fair trial and the rule of law.

Some basic due process rights, including the right to a public trial and to be represented by a defense attorney are generally respected, except in political cases that the authorities deem especially sensitive. Without the permission of the intelligence organs, judges cannot even let the family and counsel of the accused know what sentence has been passed. In many cases, the accused is kept in ignorance of the section of law under which he is charged. There have been reported instances where Military Intelligence has passed sentences orally at the time of arrest, before any trial had taken place. More often than not trials are held on camera. Defendants with political charges are given little chance to speak during the trial, let alone present a proper defense. Even where they manage to make a statement, the judges pay no heed to it. Prior to being charged, detainees rarely have access to legal counsel or their families, and political detainees have no opportunity to obtain release on bail. In most political cases, trials are held in courtrooms on prison compounds and are not open to the public. In these instances, defense counsel appears to serve no purpose other than to provide moral support, since reliable reports indicate that verdicts are dictated by higher authorities.

Political detainees are held incommunicado for long periods. Even after being charged, detainees rarely have benefit of counsel. In one case, Comedian Par Par Lay, Lu Zaw and two other members of their performance group were arrested on January 10, 1996 after giving a performance at NLD headquarters. On the day of their trial in March 1996, they were sentenced to 7 years' imprisonment and no one, including their lawyers, was allowed in court. NLD leaders Kyi Maung, Tin Oo, Aung San Suu Kyi and Win Htein were prevented from traveling to Mandalay to appear as witnesses for the defense.

3.3 Life of Prisoners

There are 39 prisons in Burma, and 20 of them detain political prisoners. All prisons have been places of numerous violations of human dignity and brutal harassment. Conditions of detention in prison remain deplorable, and fall far short of international standards such as the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners and the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons Under Any forms of Detention or Imprisonment. In fact, conditions of detention fall short of even established laws in Burma. Under the current conditions of the military junta, political prisoners have been denied the rights entitled to them by the Union of Myanmar Prison Manual. Furthermore, these prisoners are often subjected to extra prohibitive and repressive measures not mentioned in the prison manual. For example, on paper every prisoner has the right to parole. Chapter 11, article 59[5] of the Union of Myanmar Prison Manual states: 'A prisoner who has acted in accordance with prison regulation has the right to parole at least 60, 70 or 90 days a year.' In reality, however, political prisoners are almost always denied this right.

In May 1999, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) announced that it had begun to visit prisons in Burma. In March 2000, the ICRC also began visiting labor camps where prisoners have been held in extremely poor conditions. In addition, the ICRC has reported that they have been able to visit prisoners held in government guesthouses, where NLD members have been detained without charge or trial since the party's announcement in September 1998 that they would convene parliament unilaterally. Yet despite this international monitoring of conditions in Burmese prisons, maltreatment of prisoners continued to be reported in the year 2002. These abuses include torture, prolonged shackling, lack of proper medical care, and insufficient food. (For more information on torture of prisoners, see relevant chapter on torture.)

Prisoners were also subjected to severe overcrowding, conditions that by themselves constitute cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment in other parts of the world. It is standard in prisons throughout Burma for three or four prisoners to be held in small cells measuring 8 by 12 feet (2.6 by 3 meters) for more than 20 hours a day. They are fed an inadequate diet of a thin bean soup or vegetables, sometimes supplemented with a small piece of fish only once a week. In Thayet prison, Magwe Division, where there are approximately 100 political prisoners, three persons are placed in cells measuring 12' x 8' where they sleep, eat, and defecate. These conditions are inhumane and are a danger to the health of the prisoners, frequently causing sickness and sometimes death.

Medical treatment is rarely provided and then only when a prisoner's illness has reached a severe stage. The most common diseases among the prisoners are: gastrointestinal diseases (amoebic dysentery, bacillary dysentery and diarrhea), jaundice (viral and amoebic hepatitis), AIDS, tuberculosis, and skin diseases. Conditions in prison allow for the easy transmission of these diseases due to poor sanitation, unclean and semi-cooked food, dirty kitchens, polluted surroundings, and lack of personal hygiene (particularly because of poor water supplies).

In April 2003, the ICRC's chief delegate in Burma, Michel Ducraux, stated that "there has been a marked improvement in the physical, material, and psychological conditions of those jailed since Red Cross visits to prisons began in 1999." In 2002, the Red Cross claimed its workers visited 3,000 prisoners in 44 places of detention (AAPP estimates that there are 100,000 prisoners in 39 prisons, over 70 labor camps, and numerous detention centers.) However, numerous prisoner testimonies report that conditions in prisons remained deplorable in 2002, but did improve temporarily while international organizations visited prisons (see "Personal Accounts" section 3.16 at the end of this chapter for an interview with a political prisoner released in 2002). As the authorities are given prior notice before visits of international inspection teams, they are able to prepare for these visits and conditions do not reflect the real state of the prisons.

Political prisoners who protest the abuse and ill treatment of the prison officials are frequently given both severe punishments and additional prison terms. Political prisoners are not allowed to communicate with one another. In addition, they are only allowed to meet with their families after they have been sentenced and even then sometimes months later. Apart from the political prisoners who are put in solitary confinement, an unknown number are forced to perform hard labor in their respective prisons on a daily basis.

While Burmese law states that prisoners should be allowed to have access to reading material, and should be allowed to receive and write letters, prisoners are largely denied these rights. In recent years restrictions on books have been slightly relaxed and since 1999, some prisons

have allowed prisoners to read religious books and magazines. However authorities usually hold any books for 30 days prior to giving it to a prisoner in order to censor it. In addition, political prisoners are frequently prohibited from writing letters to their families. In many cases, prisoners caught with paper or pens are brutally beaten or put in solitary confinement for many days. Thus, for most prisoners, the only times they have written contact with their families are on those occasions when the ICRC visits the prisons, and they can send and receive letters through them.

Prisoners are extremely dependent on their families to supplement the poor food and almost non-existent medical care received in prison. Some political prisoners have died from the lack of essential assistance such as medicine and nutritious food. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma, Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, reported in a December 2002 statement that "several areas where further attention would be required include the quality of food...access to qualified medical attention and treatment, especially in cases of emergency. Since July 2002, four political prisoners have died in detention (Mai Aik Pan, U Aung May Thu, U Sai Pa and U Maung Ko). These deaths were allegedly due to delays in getting clearance from authorities regarding access to urgent medical assistance."

The SPDC intentionally tries to break the spirit of political prisoners by sending them to remote prisons far away from their families. Meanwhile the Military Intelligence and local authorities of the SPDC regularly intimidate and persecute the family members of political prisoners. Sometimes their belongings are confiscated and in many cases family members of prisoners lose their jobs, so that in the end they find it very hard to provide regular support for their imprisoned family member.

Even after their release, political prisoners continue to be subjected to harassment and discrimination. MI agents often warn potential employers not to hire former political prisoners, making it difficult for them to earn a living. During politically sensitive periods, such as opposition and national anniversary dates, former political prisoners are often detained and interrogated without reason. In addition to this type of harassment, students who are released from prison are not allowed to rejoin universities. Ex-prisoners are refused a passport when they want to go abroad for education or business. By severely limiting their educational and economic opportunities, the SPDC works to marginalize political prisoners from society.

Reports from Prisons in Burma

Buthidaung Prison

In July 2002, a riot between prisoners and prison guards broke out in Buthidaung Prison in Arakan State, northwestern Burma. The riot broke out when prisoners believed they were going to be used as porters in Shan State in the SPDC's fight against the rebel Shan State Army. Prisons guards told prisoners they were to be brought to labor camps in Arakan State.

Previously in June, one hundred Buthidaung prisoners thought to have been taken to labor camps were instead sent to Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State to act as porters, according to a Shan trader who had seen Rakhine prisoners from the Arakan prison performing portering duties for the SPDC. Relatives of the prisoners believed to have been sent to Shan State asked the prison authorities about their whereabouts but were told nothing. The one hundred

prisoners continue to be 'missing.' Portering in conflict areas in Burma carries a high mortality rate, as porters are killed by SPDC troops or die of physical exhaustion and illness.

Thus, when prison guards began rounding up prisoners for 'labor camps,' the prisoners revolted. No specific details are available about the prison riot (source: Narinjara).

Toungoo Prison

Prison conditions in Toungoo Prison are deplorable, particularly in the realms of medical care and food and nutrition. Additionally, Toungoo Prison is frequently utilized as a recruitment and deployment center for porters used in the military's campaign against rebel forces in Karen State.

Toungoo Prison Hospital has only one doctor, two inexperienced orderlies, and several prisoner staff. The orderlies and prisoner staff routinely take bribes from patients, often refusing them help if they are unable to provide a bribe. Prisoners suffering from colds, aches and pains due to forced hard labor, and diseases such as malaria or dysentery are regularly refused treatment at the prison hospital. Treatment, when provided, is often nothing more than the dispensing of improper medicines by a medically unknowledgeable staff. Meals provided in hospital are also sorely lacking, though prison guidelines state prisoners warded in hospital must be provided with milk, bread, meat or eggs, and sugar on a daily basis.

Regular prison life is worse. Prisoners in Toungoo Prison are fed rice with a thin chickpea gruel in the morning and boiled vegetable soup in the evening. Occasionally, meat sinew and viscera are also served. Prison clothing, bedding, and basic toiletries, once standard before 1999, are no longer issued.

Toungoo prisoners are regularly used as forced labor in a quarry four miles from prison and at Yebet Camp, a military airfield construction site. Toungoo Prison is also a deployment center for porters used in Karen State. On 10 January 2002, 300 prisoners from 10 prisons across Burma were gathered at Toungoo Prison and then sent to be used as military porters. Only 75 prisoners returned to Toungoo Prison, telling of hunger, burdensome loads, malaria and other diseases, lack of medical care, being used as human minesweepers, and outright killings by the SPDC and battle fatalities, resulting in 150 deaths, 50 maim victims, and 25 deserters. In August 2002, a total of 500 prisoners (50 from Toungoo Prison) were once again sent to the frontlines as porters.

The above information was taken from a written account of a Toungoo political prisoner arrested in October 1988 who remains incarcerated. The account was smuggled out of prison in 2003 (source: Nonviolence International Southeast Asia).

Myingan Prison

Myingan Prison in Mandalay Division is one of the most feared prisons in Burma. Living conditions are appalling. Food is dirty, substandard, and provided in inadequate portions. Myingan Prison is also considered among the worst in Burma in terms of medical services and treatment of prisoners. Disease is rampant in the prison, spread by unsanitary living conditions and poor nutrition. Torture of political prisoners is common and usually perpetrated by common criminal prisoners ordered to do so by prison authorities. Shackling of prisoners and other forms of punishment are common. Solitary confinement is regularly

imposed on prisoners, often for several months at a time. Three prisoners are usually imprisoned together in cells measuring ten by twelve feet. A number of Myingan political prisoners have died as a result of severe torture, insufficient food, and lack of medical treatment. Some improvements have been instigated in Myingan Prison by ICRC visits, but these are usually short-lived and temporary. For more information on prison conditions in Myingan Prison, please see interview with a prisoner released from Myingan Prison in October 2002 at the end of this chapter (section 3.16: Personal Accounts).

Pegu Prison

In Pegu prison, located 80 km from Rangoon, prisoners have to work all day wrapping plastic labels around ‘Gyo-thein’ brand cheroots. They are each responsible for producing 3,500 cheroots per day, with elderly prisoners responsible for producing 2,500. When there is any mistake in the work, they are beaten by the prison authorities and made to sit in the hot sun. The only way that the prisoners can avoid this work is to bribe the authorities. Thus the prison authorities get money regularly from both prisoners and U Sint Han, the owner of the Gyo-thein cheroot factory (source: AAPP)

3.4 Political Prisoners in Poor Health

The following are accounts of prisoners who suffered health problems during their imprisonment in 2002. Please see Appendix 1, section 3.17 at the end of this chapter for a full list of political prisoners suffering health problems in Burma.

Professor’s Health Suffered in Prison



Dr. Salai Tun Than, a 74-year old Christian rector and retired agriculture professor, suffered from various health problems during his imprisonment in 2002. Dr. Salai Tun Than was arrested on 29 November 2001 while staging a one-man peaceful protest in front of Rangoon City Hall demanding political reform and renewed general multiparty elections. Dr. Salai Tun Than was subsequently detained in Insein Prison. On 8 February 2002, a special court held inside Insein Prison sentenced Dr. Salai Tun Than to seven years imprisonment under Article 5 (j) of the 1950 State Emergencies Act.

From 29 July 2002, the retired professor was held in Insein Prison Hospital where he was treated for eye problems. Prison doctors said he needed to be operated on, but no eye operation facilities existed in the prison. At the end of 2002, he received the operation. Dr. Salai Tun Than was released in May 2003.

Dr. Salai Tun Than, a Christian and a member of the Chin ethnic group, earned a Ph.D. in Agronomy from the University of Wisconsin and had served as rector at the Yezin University of Agriculture in Pyinmana until 1990 (source: AAPP).

Aging Journalist Win Tin's Health Deteriorates in Prison



Seventy-three-year-old Win Tin's health further deteriorated while imprisoned in 2002. Win Tin is a prominent writer and journalist and a Central Executive Committee member of the NLD. In 2002, it was reported that Win Tin was suffering from benign prostatic hypertrophy, bleeding pile, and hemorrhoids. In June 2002, Win Tin, co-founder of the NLD, was sent to Rangoon General Hospital, where he was placed in a Guard Ward. Doctors at the hospital informed military authorities that Win Tin would need to be operated upon. However, the authorities refused to permit the operation.

During his imprisonment, U Win Tin has consistently suffered from poor health. Some of his pre-existing health conditions have been aggravated by the ill treatment he has received and the poor living conditions in the prison. U Win Tin suffers from a heart condition and spondylitis (inflammation of the vertebrae), a painful condition that requires a special diet. In 1992 it was reported that he needed surgery, but that the SPDC refused to transfer him to a hospital. In 1994, a US Congressman who was permitted to visit him in prison reported that Win Tin was in need of dental treatment and appeared to have problems with his vision. He was also wearing a neck brace that did not fit him properly and was causing him discomfort. During that time U Win Tin was being held in solitary confinement. In September 1997 he was admitted to Rangoon General Hospital due to heart problems.

Win Tin was arrested on 4 July 1989 as part of a widespread crackdown by the SPDC on political opposition groups. Win Tin received a twenty-year prison sentence. Currently U Win Tin is the only remaining senior member of the NLD, among those arrested in June and July 1989, who has not yet been released. In 1996, Win Tin received another seven-year sentence, following his participation in a report sent to the UN about human rights violations in Insein Prison (source: AAPP and AI).

U Thar Ban

U Thar Ban has been suffering from deteriorating eyesight and requires medical attention. U Thar Ban, 62, is a United Nationalities Democratic Party activist and former writer, currently detained in Insein Prison. He is serving a seven-year prison sentence. He was sentenced in 1998, with Ko Aung Htun, for the preparation and distribution of a history of the student political movement in Burma. U Thar Ban is serving his second prison sentence for his involvement in opposition activities (source: AI).

Ko Aung Htun,

Ko Aung Htun, 39, reportedly has growths on his feet requiring investigation, is unable to walk, and suffers from asthma. Ko Aung Htun was arrested in 1998 and is serving a 17-year prison sentence. He was arrested, with U Thar Ban, in connection with the distribution of articles and a history he wrote of the student movement after leaving prison. Ko Aung Htun is a former student activist and member of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions. He is believed to have been badly tortured during interrogation. This is his second period of imprisonment for his political activities. He is detained in Tharawaddy Prison, Bago Division (source: AI).

Dr. Zaw Min



Dr. Zaw Min, a 42-year old medical doctor, has been suffering from psychological problems exacerbated by his treatment in detention, including being held for long periods of time in solitary confinement.

Dr. Zaw Min was arrested in 1989 and sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. His prison term was extended in 2000 for up to six years on the order of the Minister for Home Affairs when the original term had expired. Dr. Zaw Min was released in November 2002, three years after his original release date. He continues to suffer from mental health problems received in prison. He was detained in Mandalay Prison, Mandalay Division (source: AI and AAPP).

Htway Myint

Htway Myint, Vice-Chairman of the Democracy Party, has been suffering from a serious heart condition and Parkinson's disease. He is also unable to walk. On 27 July 2002, he was transferred to Rangoon General Hospital, where he was put in a Guard Ward. Several months later, on 9 September, Htway Myint was returned to Insein Prison, reportedly with no improvement to his health. Htway Myint completed a seven-year prison sentence on 3 July, but remains in custody. Military authorities extended Htway Myint's sentence by six months citing State Protection Law Article 10 (a) (source: AAPP and DVB).

NLD MPs Suffering Health Problems in Prison:

Naing Naing

Naing Naing, an NLD Member of Parliament serving a prison sentence in Insein Prison, has been suffering from serious hernia complications. In October 2002, prison authorities denied Naing Naing's request for medical treatment. Naing Naing, 60, is serving a 21-year prison sentence after being arrested in 2000 for involvement in opposition activities. This is Naing Naing's second imprisonment by the SPDC.

After the 1988 uprising, Naing Naing became Chairperson of the Pazundaung Township NLD. In the 1990 elections, Naing Naing was elected Member of Parliament from the Pazundaung constituency. On 25 October 1990, Naing Naing was arrested and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. He served the next nine years in Insein (Rangoon) and Thayet (Magwe Division) Prisons. Upon his release in 1999, Naing Naing rejoined the NLD and soon became a leading member of the Supporting Committee to NLD Youth. Naing Naing was rearrested in 13 September 2000 under acts 5(j), 17(20), and 17(1) (source: AAPP).

Aye Tha Aung

Rakhine opposition politician Aye Tha Aung suffered from lung cancer while imprisoned in 2002. On 16 August 2002, bowing to pressure from rights groups, Aye Tha Aung was released from prison on "humanitarian grounds," said government spokesperson Colonel Hla Min. The BBC reported that Aye Tha Aung was operated upon at Rangoon General Hospital on 19 August 2002, days after his release.

Dr. Aye Tha Aung is a member of a number of pro-democracy organizations and is Secretary of the Committee Representing the Peoples Parliament (CRPP). Aye Tha Aung was arrested in April 2000 and given a 21-year prison sentence for his role with the CRPP. From April 2000 until his release, he was detained in Myingyang Prison, Mandalay Division (source: AAPP, AI, and BBC).

Do Htaung

Do Thaung, an ethnic Chin, is a NLD representative for Kale Township constituency. While imprisoned in Mandalay Prison, he suffered from hypertension, coronary arteriosclerosis, and a hearing impairment. U Ohn Myint, vice chairman of NLD Humanitarian Assistance Committee, reported Do Htaung as "in severe health condition." Do Htaung was arrested in May 1996 and sentenced for long-term imprisonment. Do Htaung was released in May 2003. (source: DVB).

Dr. Than Nyein

Dr. Thain Nyein, a 65-year old MP, has been suffering from heart disease, hypertension, and cirrhosis of the liver. After a four-year wait, Dr. Than Nyein was sent to Rangoon General Hospital on 7 April 2002. He was operated upon immediately. Doctors later informed Than Nyein's family that he was suffering from gastroenteritis.

Dr. Than Nyein is a medical doctor and NLD MP from Kyauktan Township, Rangoon Division. He is serving a six-year sentence following an arrest in October 1997. Dr. Than Nyein was arrested after coordinating a meeting between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, NLD party leaders, and the NLD Youth in MaRangoone Township, Rangoon. A few months prior to his arrest, SPDC authorities accused Dr. Than Nyein of opening a clinic without permission and revoked his medical license. This is the second time the doctor has been detained by the SPDC (source: AI and DVB).

U Tin Ngwe

U Tin Ngwe, a Member of Parliament from Kale Township, has been suffering from hypertension.

U Soe Aung

U Soe Aung, MP from Mandalay, has been suffering from tuberculosis.

Dr. Myint Naing

Ko Myint Naing, MP from Pegu, has been suffering from a hearing impairment.

Tin Aye

Rangoon MP Ko Tin Aye has been suffering from arthritis.

MPs Suffering from Depression:

Members of Parliament Ko Win Naing (Kale), Ko Tin Myint (Mandalay), Ko Naing Myint (Rangoon), U Soe Thein, and Ko Soe Min Naing all have been suffering from depression (source: DVB).

3.5 Death in Custody

As of November 2002, at least 82 political prisoners have died during their imprisonment since the 1988 crackdown, according to prisoner rights advocacy group AAPP. In 2002, five political prisoner deaths were confirmed, several under disputed circumstances. In addition, 15 political prisoners were reported missing and feared dead.

Palaung leader Mai Aik Pan

Mai Aik Pan, aka Ko Mya Maung, died in late July 2002 under unknown circumstances while serving a seven-year prison sentence in Moulmein Prison. Mai Aik Pan, a leader of the Palaung State Liberation Organization, was 40 years old.

Mai Aik Pan was arrested in October 2001 in Myawaddy opposite Mae Sot, Thailand on charges of unlawful association, Article 17 (1), often used by the SPDC to detain those suspected of having links with insurgent groups or banned political groups.

Prison officials at Moulmein Prison said Mai Aik Pan died from dropsy, a relatively easy infection to cure with basic medicines. In June, Mai Aik Pan was reported to be in healthy condition, leaving many to question the Palaung leader's demise (source: Irrawaddy and AAPP).

Aung May Thu

Political prisoner Aung May Thu died, aged 62, at Rangoon General Hospital on 17 September 2002. Aung May Thu was chairman for Min Hla NLD, Pegu Division. He was arrested 6 November 1989 and given a ten-year prison sentence. Aung May Thu completed his sentence in 1999, but was kept in custody under Article 10(A).

On 16 September 2002, Aung May Thu was transferred from Tharyawaddy prison to Rangoon General Hospital. He died of perforation of the colon following an operation on September 17, said sources. In a government-issued statement, the SPDC said Aung May Thu had suffered from peritonitis and died after an eight-hour operation to treat the ailment. Aung

May Thu's family, who reportedly visited him the day before he died, said they had found him in good spirits and not suffering from any illness.

Aung May Thu had been arrested and imprisoned several times, including detainment at the notorious Coco Islands during the 1960s reign of the Burma Socialist Party Programme (source: DVB and AAPP).

U Sai Pha

U Sai Pha, Vice-Chairperson of the National League for Democracy of Shan State and a Central Committee member, died at Keng Tung Prison in Shan State on 9 October 2002. U Sai Pha, 61, died under disputed circumstances; opposition sources indicated that he might not have received adequate medical treatment. The SPDC stated that the Shan ethnic leader died of cerebral malaria.

U Sai Pha was arrested on 13 September 2002, only one month prior to his death, under section 5 (j) of the State Protection Law. He had been organizing local NLD activities in Shan State. Military authorities also accused U Sai Pha of instigating farmers to refuse to pay a rice tax to the government (source: AI and AAPP).

U Maung Ko

U Maung Ko died of a heart attack in Tharawaddy Prison on 15 November 2002. U Maung Ko, in his 50s when he died, was reportedly not offered any medical care. The political activist was arrested in 1996 in his native Kyauk Padaung Township, Mandalay Division. He had been accused of being a communist sympathizer by SPDC authorities and was charged and sentenced under section 5 (j) of the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act. U Maung Ko was reportedly tortured for two weeks following his arrest. In May 1997, he was moved to Tharawaddy Prison from an unknown location. U Maung Ko was to be released in December 2002, a month after his death, the second political prisoner death in Tharawaddy Prison in 2002 (source: AAPP).

Ko Win Than

Political prisoner and opposition activist Ko Win Than died, aged 33, on 9 August 2002 in Taungoo Prison Hospital after serving fourteen years in prison. The cause of death is reported to be negligence by prison authorities.

Ko Win Than was arrested in September 1988 and detained in Insein Prison after taking part in the Four Eights Uprising in Dallah, Rangoon Division. On 10 October 1989, Ko Win Than was sentenced to death under section 30 (j) by a military court. Awaiting his sentence in Insein Prison, Ko Win Than continued his opposition to the military junta by calling for immediate transfer of state power to the newly formed NLD and the release of all political prisoners. In January 1993, by SLORC declaration, Ko Win Than's sentence was commuted from a death sentence to 20 years imprisonment. He was then transferred to Taungoo Prison, Pegu Division, where he was no longer able to receive family visits.

On 6 August 2002, Ko Win Than was admitted to Taungoo Prison Hospital suffering from dizziness, vomiting, loss of appetite and jaundice. The doctor in charge instructed medical orderlies to give Ko Win Than an intravenous CQ drip. He then became dizzy and went into a

coma, though no medical personnel came to examine him. The following day Ko Win Than regained consciousness, his blood pressure at 115/45. The doctor instructed the treatment to be continued and Ko Win Than once again lapsed into a coma. Fellow prisoners alerted the authorities, but Ko Win Than went unattended. Later that day, at 4:45 pm, Ko Win Than died. Prison authorities prepared to transport his body in a polyethylene bag, but prisoners protested to prison head Thein Zaw, demanding the dead be interred in a coffin. The prison authorities eventually complied, though a week later they demanded payment in excess of 4,000 kyat from the prisoners who had requested a coffin for Ko Win Than. The above account is from a prisoner's testimony smuggled out of Toungoo Prison (source: Nonviolence International Southeast Asia).

Presumed Dead: 15 Political Prisoners "Disappear" in 2002

An unsettling trend of political prisoner disappearances marred 2002. Fifteen political prisoners are feared dead after they "disappeared" from prison while serving sentences related to opposition activities. The fifteen "disappeared" were all detained in prisons in Tenasserim Division, southern Burma, where monitoring of conditions and prisoners by international NGOs is difficult and restricted. The following three incidents were reported by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (AAPP), an activist group based in Thailand. AAPP has received information on nearly one hundred unconfirmed cases of political prisoner disappearances.

Seven Feared Executed

On March 25, 2002, seven political prisoners, all members of the opposition group Myeik-Dawei United Front (MDUF), were removed from Mergui Prison in Tenasserim Division, southern Burma, and taken to an undisclosed location on Done Kyun Island in Kyun Su Township. The whereabouts and condition of the seven prisoners is unknown. However, AAPP received unconfirmed reports that the seven were executed on arrival at the ominously nicknamed 'Done Island.'

The seven prisoners were all arrested in November 1992, along with two others later released in April 2001. Nine members of the Thai-Burma border group Myeik-Dawei United Front were arrested attempting to enter southern Burma to collect information and organize opposition efforts among local residents. The nine were arrested in Bokeyyin Township, Tenasserim Division by Burma Army Light Infantry Division (LID) 432. Following their arrest, the prisoners were interrogated and tortured at LID military base 432. Subsequently, the detainees were imprisoned in Mergui Prison, where they were subjected to further torture and mistreatment. In the eight years that followed, the nine prisoners were never formally charged with a crime or placed on trial, nor were they given access to their families or representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

The seven prisoners assumed killed in March 2002 are: Ko Khin Maung Cho, Ko Shwe Baw, Ko Tin San, Ko Naing Oo (alias Aung Naing), Ko Kyaw Naing (alias Kyaw Lwin), Ko Than Zaw, and Onh Lwin (source: AAPP).

Two Disappear from Kawthaung Prison

In February 2002, seven members of the Thayetchaung branch of the National League for Democracy were arrested for engaging in opposition activities. The arrests took place in Ngapyaw Or Village on Zadadkyi Island Navy base, Tenasserim Division. The seven NLD members were reportedly subject to severe torture before being detained in Kawthaung Prison.

In early July 2002, two of the seven detainees, NLD member Cho Lwin (female, alias Ma Lwin) and Kyaw Aye were removed from Kawthaung Prison and taken to Ngapgyaw Or Village by soldiers from LIF 262 and LIF 267, led by Captain Tin Maung Win, where they were killed by the military, according to unconfirmed reports (source: AAPP).

Four Deportees among the Disappeared

On September 17, 2002, four political prisoners detained in Kawthaung Prison were brought to Makyonkalit Village, Lam Pake Island, Tenasserim Division, where it is believed they were killed, according to information obtained by AAPP.

Sergeant Thein Myint, commander of Light Infantry Divisions 224 and 262, reportedly escorted the four prisoners to Lam Pake Island.

Three of the missing prisoners, Tin Tun, Kyaw Lwin and Maung Swe (alias Bike Pu), were arrested in February 2002 in Thailand by Thai police while traveling by boat to Ranong, a western coast port city near the Burma border. After their arrest, Thai authorities deported them back to Burma, where they were immediately detained by Light Infantry Division 262 of the Burmese army. The three, all members of political opposition groups, were arrested and imprisoned in Kawthaung Prison.

Kyaw Naing Soe, also among the missing, was arrested with San Lwin by Thai police in a similar incident in early 2002. The two opposition group members were initially detained for six days in a police detention center in Ranong. Thai authorities then directly handed the two men over to Sergeant Tin Saw of Light Infantry Division 262. Both men were imprisoned in Kawthaung Prison. San Lwin (alias San Naing) was later transferred to Insein Prison, Rangoon Division.

No contact, including by family members, has been made with the four missing political prisoners since they disappeared from Kawthaung Prison in September 2002.

The deportation of Burmese activists working along the Thai-Burma border is in accordance with a new Thai government policy of no longer tolerating opposition activities that have long operated in a "grey zone" of unofficial freedom along the border (source: AAPP and South China Morning Post).

3.6 Prolonged Detention

Since 1998, authorities in Burma have extended prisoners' detentions under Article 10 (a) of the 1975 State Protection Act, which allows prisoners terms to be extended by one-year intervals for up to five years by order of the Ministry of Home Affairs. State Protection Law 10 (a) also allows officials to detain a person for up to three years without trial for "security reasons."

In prisons around Burma, the authorities have re-arrested and extended the detention of more than 45 political prisoners who did nothing to violate this article. When their prison terms were finished many of these prisoners were taken to the prison gates as if to be released, and then told that they were being detained again. They were temporally denied family visiting rights under Article 10 (a) and many have suffered from mental illness after experiencing systematic psychological torture.

In 2002, a significant number of political prisoners released by the SPDC had already completed their prison terms and were being detained under extensions of their original sentences. As of the end of 2002, at least 26 political prisoners remained imprisoned after having completed their sentences.

Student Leader Min Ko Naing 's Sentence Increased



Student democracy leader Min Ko Naing had his prison sentence extended in January 2002. Already imprisoned for 13 years, Min Ko Naing's sentence was increased by one year under State Protection Law 10 (a). According to the SPDC's State Protection Law 10 (a), any prisoner's term can be extended by one-year intervals for up to five years by order of the Ministry of Home Affairs. This was the third extension of the student leader's sentence since he completed his original 10-year prison sentence in 1999.

Min Ko Naing, alias Paw U Tun, Chairman of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU), was arrested on March 24, 1989. He was sentenced to 20 years imprisonment (later commuted to 10 years under a general amnesty) for opposition activities. He was initially detained in solitary confinement in Insein Prison in Rangoon but has been regularly moved from one prison to another. In June 2001, he was reportedly moved from Sittwe Prison to Bu Thi Taung Prison, both in Arakan state and near the Bangladesh border. This move has made it harder for international organizations to monitor his condition.

According to Amnesty International, Min Ko Naing was reportedly severely tortured and ill treated during the early stages of his detention and his health has suffered as a consequence. In 1993, a United States Congressman visited him in Insein Prison and said that he was in poor health and appeared disoriented. In November 1994 the Special Rapporteur on Burma was also allowed to visit him briefly in Insein Prison, and described him as being nervous and thin. On October 25, 2001, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (WGAD), declared that the SPDC's detention of Min Ko Naing is contrary to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and they have directed the regime to take the

necessary steps to remedy the situation. To date the regime has ignored the ruling (source: Mizzima and the Irrawaddy).

Political Prisoners Who Have Completed Their Sentences But Remain Imprisoned as of the End of 2002:

Name	Prison
1. Aung Than	Bassein Prison
2. Bala Gyi (aka Than Htut)	Taungoo Prison
3. Bo Bo Han	Thayet Prison
4. Htwe Aung	Insein Prison
5. Htay Kywe	Thayawaddy Prison
6. Khin Maung Ye (aka Tin Aye)	Mandalay Prison
7. Ko Ko Gyi	Thayet Prison
8. Kyaw Mya	Myaungmya Prison
9. Min Ko Naing (aka Paw Oo Ton)	Sittwe Prison
10. Myat San	Taungoo Prison
11. Naing Myint (aka Myint Soe)	Mandalay Prison
12. Soe Myint	Mandalay Prison
13. Than Swe	Insein Prison
14. Thet Khaine (aka Ko Latt)	Insein Prison
15. Thet Tun (aka Tin Htut)	Myingyan Prison
16. Tin Aung	Kale Prison
17. Tin Aye Kyu (aka Hming Lwin)	Mandalay Prison
18. Tin Htay	Mandalay Prison
19. Tin Myint	Mandalay Prison
20. Tin Tun	Insein Prison
21. Ye Nyunt	Mandalay Prison
22. Zaw Min	Thayet Prison
23. Zay Ya	Insein Prison

3.7 Release of Political Prisoners

“The release of all political prisoners is one of the criterion by which the seriousness of the process of political transition and national reconciliation will be measured. At the current rate of an average of 27 releases per month, it will take about four years to release the remaining prisoners.”

- Paolo Pinheiro, Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Burma, (annual report to the UN, 27 December 2002)

In 2002, the Assistance Association of Political Prisoners Burma (AAPPB) estimated that approximately 300 political prisoners were released from prison. These releases, coupled with the release from house arrest of NLD General Secretary Aung San Suu Kyi on 6 May, were seen by many as signs of major progress by the SPDC towards reconciliation in the country. However, over 1,300 political prisoners remained in jail by the end of 2002. Moreover, the vast majority of prisoner "releases" were conditional suspensions of sentences, not true releases. Prisoners released before their full sentences are served must sign under section 401 (a) of the Criminal Procedure Code for the suspension of their sentence to the extent that they agree to not engage in political activities. If arrested again or found to be participating in politics, these "released" prisoners automatically resume their sentences. In 1990, NLD MPs Khin Maung Swe and U Sein Hla Oo were arrested and sentenced to twenty years in prison. Two years later, the two were released after signing under section 401 (a). In 1994, the two were once again arrested for their involvement in opposition activities and given seven-year jail terms each. The two MPs completed these sentences in 2001. However, they continued to be detained by the SPDC, serving out the completion of their original 1990 sentences that were renewed when the two were found to have broken section 401 (a).

In addition, many of those released in 2002 had already completed their original sentences, some being detained under article 10 (a), which allows for the extension of prison terms. On 11 November 2002, the SPDC claimed to release 115 political prisoners to much fanfare from the international community. However, many of those released are now suspected of not being political prisoners. AAPP estimates that only 70 of those released on 11 November were political prisoners. Overall, prisoner releases remain a highly contentious political issue.

3.8 Political Prisoners — a few profiles



Name: Khin Khin Lei Alias Rose

Occupation: Elementary School Teacher

Date of Birth: 1965

Address: Pegu Township

Law Violation: Emergency Provision Act 5(j), Unlawful Organization Act 17(1)

Sentence: Life Imprisonment

Current Location: unknown

In 1995, Khin Khin Lei married 1988 student activist Kyaw Wanna who had already served a four year prison term. Kyaw Wanna was heavily involved in the pro-democracy movement in Burma, Khin Khin Lei only an elementary school teacher in a village near Pegu. In 1999, she transferred to another school in the same district.

On 19 July 1999, Kyaw Wanna was involved in a peaceful Martyrs' Day protest march. A few days later, Military Intelligence came to arrest him for his participation in the march. However, Kyaw Wanna had already fled to the Thai-Burma border. Military Intelligence took both Khin Khin Lei and her three-year-old daughter Thaint Wanna Khin into custody for further interrogation, as they wanted information concerning her husband's activities. Burma had detained the world's youngest prisoner of conscience.

Five days later, MI released Khin Khin Lei's daughter but continued to hold Khin Khin Lei, torturing her to find out the whereabouts of her husband. On 3 December 1999, at a special court in Insein Prison, Khin Khin Lei was charged under the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act and the 1908 Unlawful Associations Act and sentenced to life imprisonment. The following month, January 2000, she was transferred to an unknown location. She has been suffering from lung problems, though it is not known whether she has received medical treatment. Her husband, Kyaw Wanna, remains in exile.



Name: Soe Tun

Occupation: Student

Address: Hle-dan, Kamaryut Township

Law Violation: Emergency Provision Act 5 (j)

Sentence: 7 Years

Current Location: Thayawaddy Prison

Soe Tun was a student at the Rangoon Institute of Technology when the 1996 student demonstrations erupted in Burma. An electrical engineering student and an executive member of a Buddhist religious organization, Soe Tun was popular among students on campus.

In October 1996, together with his fellow students, Soe Tun participated in protests against the junta's barbarous police treatment of students. These protests evolved into more extensive students' demonstrations in December and he became one of the prominent leaders. More than two thousand students were arrested during the 1996 demonstrations. Soe Tun had been arrested but was released from an interrogation center after students had called for his release in a strike.

After the junta closed all the universities in Burma, Soe Tun and student colleagues established a private library club with the purpose to promote the education of students motivated to learn independently. The club was forced to work under the strict surveillance of Military Intelligence and Soe Tun was detained for interrogations several times.

When a fellow student, Ma (Miss) Aung Mi Khine, died in a car accident and authorities refused to prosecute the driver, a member of the junta-allied Wa organization, the club demanded the government publicly reveal the truth about the death. Military Intelligence subsequently arrested Soe Tun and seven other students on 27 August 1997. On 10 October 1997, the junta sentenced him to seven years imprisonment with hard labor in Thayawaddy Prison, under Article 5 (j) of the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act.

Soe Tun received head injuries during his arrest and has developed a skin disease while in prison.



Name: Thet Win Aung
Alias: Moe Naing
Occupation: Student
Address: Tamwe Township, Rangoon Division
Date of Birth: 27 August 1971
Section: Emergency Provision Act 5(J)
Sentence: 59 Years
Current Location: Khamtee Prison

In 1988, Thet Win Aung was a high school student at Tamwe Township, Rangoon Division. He took part in the 1988 nationwide pro-democracy movement as one of the leading members of his high school student union. In May 1989, Thet Win Aung attended a secretly held nationwide conference for high school students and was elected Vice-General Secretary of the Basic Education Student Union (BESU).

In 1991, Thet Win Aung was dismissed from his school for his involvement in student demonstrations. He was detained and jailed for nine months for helping to organize student unions. Upon his release, he was chosen to be one of the leading members of the (secretly organized) All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU).

In July 1994, Military Intelligence attempted to arrest him for publishing ABFSU pamphlets and organizing student demonstrations to commemorate the 32nd anniversary of the July 7th 1962 bombing of the student union building at Rangoon University which killed hundreds of students. Thet Win Aung was able to escape and survived hiding in basements, attics, and Buddhist monasteries for the next two years. While he was in hiding, his home was searched frequently his family harassed incessantly.

Thet Win Aung again took part in student demonstrations in December 1996 and, in 1998, helped to organize student protests to bring attention to the poor quality of education in Burma and students' rights.

Thet Win Aung was finally arrested in October 1998. In January 1999, he was sentenced to 52 years imprisonment, which was increased to 59 years after further interrogation. He was detained in Kalay Prison, Sagaing Division. In October 2002, following his participation in a hunger strike, Thet Win Aung was transferred to Khamtee Prison in remote northern Burma (source: AAPP and DVB).

3.9 Ethnic Minority Political Prisoners

In Burma a large number of people who are victims of politically motivated detentions remain unrecognized by the international community as political prisoners. Ethnic minority villagers living in conflict zones are routinely accused of having contact with opposition groups, and are arrested, tortured and killed by the SPDC. In August 2003 Altsean-Burma and Burma Issues released a report, *Uncounted: Burma's Political Prisoners in the Conflict Zones*. The report argues that ethnic minority villagers arrested on political charges should be recognized and counted as political prisoners. The authors state that: "People in Burma's conflict zones are especially vulnerable to accusations and detentions that fall outside legal jurisdictions. This is due in part to the militarisation of the conflict zones that allows the Burmese military to act under its' own legal authority. It is also due to the isolation of Burma's ethnic areas from international scrutiny and independent monitoring."

The report documents 45 arrests of villagers that conform to the UN definitions of political detentions. The people arrested were accused of offering food and accommodation to opposition forces; having knowledge of troop movements; and/or belonging to or having family members which belong to these groups. Of those cases included in the report, 91% of those arrested were detained arbitrarily. In none of the arrests were any legal or judicial procedures used, and the accused did not receive a fair trial. This is consistent with the SPDC's policy of placing these areas under military administration, leaving the tatmawdaw in charge of all judicial and police activities. Of the 45 arrests, 51% of those detained were tortured, and 22% were victims of extra-judicial killing. The report finds that arbitrary arrests and ensuing violence are part of the SPDC's general campaign to terrorize ethnic minority members in order to weaken ethnic opposition groups.

Sample Incidents of Politically Motivated Detention of Ethnic Minority Villagers

(For more information see section on arbitrary arrests of villagers)

Karen State

On August 3, 2002, troops from IB 280 detained Saw Tu Prut, a village headman, and Reverend Si Bwat from Ler Pah Doh village, Thayetchaung Township, Mergui-Tavoy District, Karen State. The two men were accused them of collaborating with Karen resistance groups. The men were detained at IB 280's military camp under orders from the base commander. (Source: KIC)

Shan State

On 27 March 2002 a patrol of SPDC troops from Keng Tung arrived at Phaa Sawnt village, Shan State. In the past, the residents of this village had been forced to live in a relocation site, however, one year ago they had been given permission by the SPDC to move back to their village. When the soldiers met with the villagers they demanded to know who had given them permission to move back to their village, and then accused them of harboring Shan rebels. The soldiers then interrogated the village headman, Lung Haeng Zit-Ta, demanding to know where the Shan rebels were. When the headman said that he had not seen any Shan rebels, the SPDC troops accused the headman himself of being a rebel, and ordered him to hand over his

pistol and walkie-talkie. When the headman said that he did not have any pistol or walkie-talkie the soldiers proceeded to beat his head and body with a stick until he was soaked in blood and lost consciousness.

The troops then ordered one of the logging trucks to take him to their base in Keng Tung area, where he was locked him up for 10 days. When villagers from Phaa Sawnt and other community leaders went to the army base to ask about Lung Haeng Zit-Ta, the soldiers told the villagers that they were holding the headman, but not to worry because they would not harm him further. Some time later, the SPDC sent the headman to lower Burma for one month with a logging company. Villagers believe that they did this so the headman would not be able to report these abuses to other authorities. When Lung Haeng Zit-Ta returned to the village, residents reported that he looked and acted strangely, and believe that the beatings and mistreatment he received caused some brain injury (source: SHRF).

On 16 April 2002, thirty troops from Column 3 of IB 225, led by commander Lun Maung, arrested Saw Nyunt in Mae Ken village, Murng-Ton Township. Saw Nyunt was bound, beaten, and dragged from his home and taken to a military camp where he was detained in a lockup. Later, he was accused of providing rice to the Shan State Army (SSA) and tortured. SPDC soldiers beat him and covered his face with plastic bags asphyxiating him until he lost consciousness. This torture was repeated several times.

Two days later, on 18 April 2002, 35 SPDC soldiers, led by commander Kyaw Win, returned to Mae Ken village and searched Saw Nyunt's house. Troops claimed to discover 30 methamphetamine tablets and accused Saw Nyunt of dealing drugs. On the same day, after searching Saw Nyunt's house, soldiers arrested widow Naang Khawng, accusing her of being married to a SSA soldier. The soldiers also took 57, 000 kyat and some gold ornaments from the mother of three. She was taken to Murng-Ton and detained. The condition and whereabouts of Saw Nyunt and Naang Khawng remain unknown (source: SHRF).

On 6 July 2002, Pu Haeng Taeng Haan, the headman of Me Ken village tract in Murng-Ton Township was summoned by troops of IB 65, led by Captain Han Sein of Company No.1, to their military base. When they arrived at the military base, a corporal and some troops arrested Pu Haeng Taeng Haan. The troops then tied him up and interrogated him, forcing him to tell them how many SSA (Shan State Army) soldiers were in his area, who their leaders were and who provided them with food. During the interrogations, soldiers beat and tortured the headman. Unable to provide his interrogators with information, Pu Haeng Taeng Haan was beaten until his face was swollen and his skull was fractured. He was detained until 27 July 2002, when he was released only after a leader of the Lahu people's militia in the area guaranteed his innocence (source: SHRF).

On 4 August 2002, approximately forty troops from LIB 520, led by Captain San Win, arrested seven villagers returning from weeding a rice farm in Naa Ing, Murng-Pan Township. Soldiers accused the seven of providing food for the SSA and took them to LIB 520's army base. Community leaders from Naa Ing guaranteed the villagers' innocence, but the seven were released only after paying 10,000 kyat each to the authorities (source: SHRF).

Mon State

On 28 January 2002, after an armed conflict between the Burmese Army and a Mon splinter group, the Monland Restoration Army (MRA), LIB 550 arrested and then disrobed Nai Galae, a 45-year old Buddhist Mon monk, in Kyon-kwee village, Three Pagoda Pass Township, fifteen miles from the Thai border. The monk was arrested under suspicion of being a Mon rebel fighter. After his arrest, Nai Galae was tortured for an hour, soldiers beating him and dunking his head under water. His whereabouts and condition are unknown.

Prior to this incident, LIB 550 also arrested two village headmen near the Three Pagodas Pass Town. The men, Nai Tun, chairman of Kyaw-palu village, and villager Nai Tin Hlaing, were accused of supporting MRA troops in their attacks against the Burmese Army. The MRA, a Mon splinter group, have been launching offensives against the Burmese Army in the Three Pagoda Pass Township since late 2001 (source: HURFOM).

On 29 December 2002, soldiers from IB 61, led by Major Tin Aung Khaing, tortured and arrested two Mon village headmen from The-Khone village in southern Ye Township. Nai Kyaw and Nai Ong Myint were arrested in Ywa-thit village on their way to Ye Town on suspicion of being Mon soldiers.

Acting on information that a Mon rebel group led by guerilla leader Nai Bin had been in Ywa-thit village, soldiers from IB 61 arrived in Ywa-thit village and arrested Nai Ong Myint, who was wearing army trousers, and headman Nai Kyaw. Despite their pleas of innocence and the fact that they were from The-Khone village, the men were blindfolded and taken to the infantry battalion's detention center in Ye Town. There, soldiers tortured the men, severely beating them, for information about Mon rebel activity in the area.

Later, the two villagers' families arrived at the detention center to explain that they were not rebel soldiers and to discuss their release. They found the men seriously injured. Major Tin Aung Khaing agreed to their release at the cost of 500,000 kyat each. Several days later, after the 1 million kyat had been collected and paid, the men were released and taken to Ye Town Hospital (source: HURFOM).

Karenni State

On 17 August 2002, a unit of Burmese troops from LIB 302 arrested Shadaw relocation camp resident, Wei Reh, 28, accusing him of violating Act 17/1 (contact with rebels). His release date is unknown. (Source: KNAHR)

Ethnic Minority Political Activists and MP-elects

Currently there are many ethnic minority prisoners being held in Burmese prisons and detention centers because of their involvement in the democracy and human rights movements. Some members of ethnic minority groups took part in the 1990 general election sponsored by the military authorities. Eight years after the elections, when the military authorities still refused to accept the results, some of the ethnic political parties, together with National League for Democracy, founded the Committee Representing the People's Parliament (CRPP). However, the authorities responded harshly, and gave long prison sentences to all of those who participated in non-violent political activities such as the CRPP. Aye Tha Aung, an Arakanese activist and secretary of CRPP, was given 21 years in prison

for meeting with ethnic minority groups to discuss plans for the future and cooperation between these activists and military regime. He was released on 19 August 2002.

Some of the jailed ethnic minority activists are currently very old. ALD and ZNC are founding parties of the CRPP. Although the authorities said that these individuals were put in government guesthouses, they are in fact currently in the Ye Mon military camp, a place with very harsh living conditions, including poisonous reptiles and insects.

Name: Do Htaung

Sex: Male

Prison: Kalay

Ethnicity: Chin

Do Htaung, NLD MP-elect, was held detention in Kalay Prison. MI personnel arrested him at midnight on May 21, 1996 while he was preparing to attend the sixth anniversary of the founding of the NLD at Aung San Suu Kyi's residence. After he was released on May 27, 1996, he was arrested again by the MI and was tortured the entire night. His sons, Dr Rodain and Dr Lawn Thaung fled from Burma after the MI attempted to arrest them as well. Some 19 other NLD members, including Ba Min, Tin Cho and Wing Naing were arrested and charged along with Do Htaung under Articles 5(j) of the 1950 Emergency Provision Act. He was released on 3 June 2003.

Do Htaung, 61, is the son of Hlanon and Htanman, and was born in Bo Kyone Village, Falam Township, Chin State. He passed Medic Training in 1962 with the highest marks in the country and from 1963-1989 he worked as a Medic in Tatalan, Kanpalat, Kale, Molite and Homalin Townships. In 1971, he was detained in Myingyan Prison for two years. He participated in the 1988 democracy uprising and became a local NLD leader. In the 1990 elections, he was elected to represent Kale Constituency (1), Sagaing Division.



Name: Min Soe Lin, Dr

Sex: Male

Prison: Moulmien Prison

Ethnicity: Mon

The authorities first arrested Dr. Min Soe Lin in Mudon, Mon State, on November 6, 1997. He was charged under Article 5 (j) of the 1950 Emergency Provision Act and was released from detention a few weeks. The reason for his arrest was his role in organizing celebrations for the 50th Mon National Day on 23 February 1997. He joined the Mon National Democratic Front (MNDF) when it was formed after the 1988 uprising and was the General Secretary of the party. In 1990 elections, he was elected from Ye Constituency (1), Mon State. For his activities in MNDF, he was sentenced to 7-year imprisonment in 1998 (source: AAPP).

3.10 Partial List of Politicians, Including NLD MP-elects and NLD Members Who Remain Incarcerated in 2002*

No	Name	States/division	Constituency	Party
1	U Saw Ooreh	Kayah	Hpru-so Township	NLD
2	U Kyaw San	Sagaing	Tanze Township	NLD
3	U Doe Htaung	Sagaing	Kalay Township (1)	NLD
4	Dr. Myint Naing	Sagaing	Kantbulu (2)	NLD
5	U Toe Po	Tenasserim	Yebyu Township	NLD
6	U Ohn Maung	Pegu	Nyaung Lay Bin Township (1)	NLD
7	Dr. Zaw Myint Maung	Mandalay	Amarapura Township	NLD
8	U Ohn Kyaing	Mandalay	Southeast Township	NLD
9	U Soe Myint	Magwe	Minbu Township (1)	NLD
10	U Kyaw Khin	Shan	Taunggyi Township (1)	NLD
11	U Khin Maung Swe	Rangoon	Sanchaung Township	NLD
12	U Sein Hla Oo	Rangoon	Insein Township (2)	NLD
13	Dr. Than Nyein	Rangoon	Kyauktan Township	NLD
14	Dr. May Win Myint	Rangoon	MaRangoon Township (2)	NLD
15	U Naing Naing	Rangoon	Pazundaung Township	NLD
16	U Yaw Hsi	Kachin	Putao	NLD
17	Khun Myint Htun	Mon	Thaton Township	NLD
18	Dr. Min Soe Lin	Mon	Ye (1)	MNDF
19	Dr. Min Kyi Win	Mon	Mudon	MNDF

* Source: NCGUB

3.11 Partial List of Activists and Opposition Forces Arrested in 2002

An estimated 70 to 100 political activists and SPDC opposition forces were arbitrarily arrested and detained in 2002, according to political prisoner advocacy group AAPP. However, information about the majority of arrests is minimal and difficult to obtain. The following accounts of arrests and detentions in 2002 are all from confirmed reports and/or reliable sources.

Arrested for Providing Information to Foreign Media

On 12 February 2002, Ko Tin Saw, a Burmese man returning from Ranong, Thailand, was arrested by SPDC authorities on charges of providing information to foreign radio stations. The arrest took place at Bayintnaung market in Kawthaung, Burma. Ko Tin Saw, alias Tharkan, was caught with a mobile phone and a copy of opposition newspaper Khit Pyaing, published in Thailand. Following the arrest, Ko Tin Saw was interrogated and tortured at Military Intelligence Base No. 3 in Kawthaung. It is reported that in a confession, he revealed the identities of five other Burmese providing information to the media in Thailand.

In January 2002, Kawthaung Border Committee sought the assistance of Ranong Border Committee (Thailand) in the arrest and deportation of opposition forces working in Thailand (source: DVB and RSF).

Youths Arrested for Possession of Opposition Publications

Aung Thein and Kyaw Naing Oo, both NLD Youth members, were arrested in July 2002 for possessing opposition publications, including copies of *Khit Pyaing* (New Era) published in Thailand. The two youths were reportedly severely beaten during interrogation. They were sentenced in September 2002 to seven years' imprisonment (source: RSF and AI).

Students Arrested for Rangoon City Hall Protest

Law student Thet Naung Soe was arrested on 18 August 2002, after staging a peaceful protest in front of Rangoon City Hall calling for the release of political prisoners and resumption of negotiations between the NLD and SPDC. Minutes after the protest began, City Hall security personnel arrested the law student and detained him inside the government building. Khin Maung Win, a second-year law student, and Thoun Htite, a fourth-year student at Rangoon Technology University (YTU), were arrested at the same time. It is not clear whether the latter two had joined the protest or were onlookers. Thet Naung Soe was subsequently given a 14-year prison sentence. Khin Maung Win received a 7-year sentence.

On August 17, five other students were arrested at their homes by Military Intelligence: Thaw Thaw Myo Han, a fourth-year YTU student, Nyunt Win, a third-year YTU student, Htoo Kyaw Win, a third-year architecture student at YTU, Kyaw Swa, a fourth-year YTU student, and Kyaw Zin Oo, also a fourth-year YTU student. They were later released. It is believed they were arrested for their involvement in the City Hall protest (source: DVB and AI).

Ill Shan Politician Sentenced to Seven Years

On 13 September 2002, U Saw Nan Di, 67, was arrested with U Sai Pha, Vice-Chairperson of the Shan State NLD, under section 5 (j) for their active participation in opposition activities. U Saw Nan Di, chairman of the organizing committee of the NLD in Shan State, was sentenced to seven years imprisonment on 22 October 2002, only two weeks after fellow detainee U Sai Pha died while in custody in Keng Tung Prison (see "Death in Custody" section above). U Saw Nan Di was also given a six-month sentence under section 33 of the Drug Special Act in Keng Tung, Shan State, according to sources.

Prior to being sentenced in court, U Saw Nan Di had been sent from Keng Tung Prison to a local hospital suffering from dizziness. Doctors diagnosed the Shan politician with liver and kidney diseases (source: Irrawaddy).

Arrested for Possession of Media Contraband

Between September 25 and October 2, 2002, about thirty activists, almost all former political prisoners, were arrested and interrogated by intelligence services for possessing opposition publications, notably *Khit Pyaing* (New Era), a newspaper published in exile in Thailand. Irrawaddy magazine (based in Thailand) described the arrests as an intimidation strategy by the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) aimed at preventing opponents from gaining access to banned publications.

Those arrested include: Aye Kyaw Zwa, (Ko Hla Htut Soe, Maung Maung Aye) (aka Ko Baydar), San Shwe Maung (a monk), U Aung or Maung Htay (a lawyer), U Khin Maung Lay, U Win Swe (a civil engineer), U Zaw Win, brothers Ko Nay Win and Ko Yin Maung, Ko Htay (a lawyer), Chit Hsaung Oo, Dr. Khin Tun (former member of the New Generation Youth League), Lay Ko Tin (aka Tin Maung Win, author), U Cho, U Kyi Myint (a teacher and former general secretary of Burma United Democratic Party (BUDP)), U Zaw Pe Win (a teacher and former chair of the BUDP), and U Soe Tint (source: AI).

NLD Member Arrested for Making a Sculpture

On 7 November 2002, the SPDC arrested Ko Shwe Maung, an NLD member, in Mandalay for molding and displaying a bronze statue of a 'Khamauk' (bamboo hat), the symbol of the NLD.

Ko Shwe Maung, of Myat Yeik Nanda Tun Tone District, and children and youths of Tun Tone planned to display the gilded bronze statue to commemorate the NLD. The project was started following Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's visit to Mandalay. On 6 November, local people were fed with rice and chicken soup to celebrate the completion of the statue. The next day, Ko Shwe Maung was arrested by Military Intelligence. Ko Shwe Maung was reportedly charged under section 5 (j) and sent to Mandalay Prison (source: DVB).

3.12 Partial List of Civilians Arbitrarily Arrested in 2002

SPDC Forces Raid Residential Neighborhood

On 5 April 2002, a thousand-strong force of combined army soldiers, riot police, and local police raided a residential neighborhood in Rangoon's Kamaryut Township, arresting and detaining residents. The raid followed a refusal by residents to obey an order by Colonel Yan Naing Oo to evacuate and move their homes by 5 April. According to eyewitness reports, government forces demolished seven homes and detained residents and their children, later separating the children and adults to be sent to different detention centers. It is not known how many residents were apprehended in the raid. Officials ordered the remaining residents to vacate their homes by 7 April (source: DVB).

Junta Arrests Two Chin Christian Ministers

On 5 April 2002, two prominent ethnic Chin Christian ministers were arrested by local SPDC officials at 49th Dagon North in the outskirts of Rangoon. Government officials also arrested eight extended family members of the two ministers, Reverend Htat Gyi and his son-in-law Pastor Lian Za Dal.

The ethnic Chins were arrested after Rev. Htat Gyi returned home from the Block Peace and Development Council office to file guest registration for his daughter and son-in-law who were visiting him. The local PDC branch reportedly refused the Reverend's petition for guest registration saying the matter needed to be reviewed. Later that night, around midnight, authorities raided Rev. Htat Gyi's home, arresting everyone in the house. Although local officials gave the cause of the arrests as "failure to file guest report," Rev. That Gyi was reportedly asked to stop holding religious services during his interrogation at Dagon North

police station. Rev. Htat Gyi and Pastor Lian Za Dal were brought to Insein Prison on 8 April 2002, where they remain. The whereabouts of the other detainees is unknown.

An ethnic Chin, Rev. That Gyi worked as a middle school headmaster and with the United Nations Development Program before joining the Myanmar Evangelical Gospel School of Theology where he earned a Masters in Divinity (CHRO).

Junta Razes Neighborhood, Arrests Residents and Their Children

On 11 June 2002, the SPDC arrested 13 residents, including three children, in Rangoon's Shwe Leikpyar quarter, for remaining in their homes after an order to vacate the previous day. On 10 June, an estimated 30 men from the military, local police and the junta's Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) entered the neighborhood notifying residents to move all their belongings within 24 hours or face arrest. No explanation was given, according to residents. The following day, authorities raided the Kyee Myin Daing Township neighborhood and arrested 13 people still in their homes. Authorities later demolished dozens of houses in the neighborhood to make room for a new apartment complex, according to residents of the neighborhood.

In an interview with Radio Free Asia, NLD (LA) secretary U Nay Win said the residents and their children were being held in Insein Prison and the Htaung Kyant interrogation center in Rangoon. He said they had been charged under an obscure 1962 housing law.

Forced relocations in urban areas have become commonplace in Burma. The relocations are often times ordered to eradicate what the government sees as subversive cells or because of business interests. Residents normally receive no compensation from the government (source: Irrawaddy).

More Than 200 Villagers Arrested, Detained in Arakan State

From 11 to 15 October 2002, police arrested 231 men and four women in Baggona village, two miles south of Maungdaw, Arakan State. On 10 October 2002, Maung Lun, Chairman of the Rwa Thaya Village Peace and Development Council, invited five young men from nearby Baggona village to watch a local theatrical drama being staged in the village. During the performance, Maung Lun ordered local police to arrest the five men for the rape of two local village girls. Four of the men were arrested and one, Mohamed Yunus, escaped. The following day, the 11th of October, a police team from Maungdaw arrived in Rwa Thaya village on the pretext of looking for Mohamed Yunus. The police team arrested fifteen men who were put in Maungdaw police custody. The next day, police arrested sixteen more men, sending them to Maungdaw. On 15 October, following a visit by Western Commander Brigadier General Maung Oo, the Maungdaw inspector of police dispatched a team of twelve policemen and 20 hired thugs to round up youths in the village. A total of 200 villagers, including four young women, were arrested and detained in Maungdaw police custody. On 17 October, 69 detainees were released on payment of 100,000 kyat each. The remaining 166 villagers remained in police custody. Their current whereabouts are unknown (source: Kaladan Press).

3.13 Arbitrary Seizure of Villagers

(See also section on ethnic minority political prisoners)

Pegu Division

On 29 October 2002, troops from LIB 589 fired into a paddy field hut in Mae-yeh-khee village, Shwe-gyin Township, wounding Naw Hsa Shee, daughter of Saw Aye Lwin. Troops then seized Saw Aye Lwin, his wife Naw Sar Lar, son Saw Po Kyaw, and mother Pee Aye Tin and took them to Shwe-gyin Town.

Karen State

The following accounts of arbitrary seizure and detainment of villagers were reported, unless otherwise noted, in press releases filed by the Karen Information Center (KIC).

Doo-pla-ya District

On 26 February 2002, SPDC Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) 103, led by commander Sein Tin, took three villagers hostage in Doo-pla-ya District. The men (Kyone-sein village head U Ko Gyi, Christian Evangelist Saya Kyi Than and Ka-sa villager Sein Hla Win) have not been released.

From 21 to 27 April 2002, combined troops from Column (1) & (2) of LIB (301), column (1) from LIB (416), and column (1) and (2) from IB (78) carried out operations in Htee-tha-blu village areas in Kya-inn township. The combining troops entered Htee-tha-blu village and then looted the villagers' belongings. Pah Khaw Suu, 36 yrs old, was stabbed in the neck leather and tortured by the soldiers. Kwe Lay Lo, 40 yrs old, was tied up with the rope and beaten by the soldiers who then took him away and have not yet released him. The village preacher, Si Pa Tran, (51) yrs old, was captured and tortured by the LIB (301) column on 24th April 2002. Then he was handed over to IB (78) battalion and he has not yet been released. Gay Nay Htoo Moe, 49 yrs old was arrested and beaten after she was unable to give the soldiers walkie-talkies that they demanded. Gay Nay Htoo has not yet been released. Saw Paw Eh, 45 yrs old, was arrested by the battalion from LIB (301) and being severely tortured. He has also not yet been released. The battalion from LIB (416) arrested Pah Kyaw Po, 25 yrs old, and and tortured him severely. Pha Kyaw Po has not been released yet. The troops then burned down all the other buildings left in the village. Now, the villagers are facing great difficulties in trying to survive without food, shelter, or medical supplies. (Source: ABSDF)

On 22 April 2002, LIB (317) arrived in Baw-ta-lo-khee area, Kya-Inn township, and burned down the houses of (1) Saw Ta Tay No, (2) Saw Tae Mo Klo, (3) Pah Ta Ret, and (4) Pah Wee Poe houses. Then the troops arrested and took away three women: Naw Keh Eh, age (20), Naw Dah Lay, age (28), and the wife of Saw Ta Tay, age (17). The troops destroyed every thing at the house before they left and they have yet to release the three women who they kidnapped. (Source: ABSDF)

On 23 April 2002, columns (1 & 2) from LIB (301) arrived in Khaw-kha village, Kya-Inn township at 4:00 pm. The soldiers arrested and tied up the preacher, Hai Pay Htoo, age (44), and village residents, U Tha Wa, age (45), and Maung Kyi Hlaing, age (54). The soldiers then tortured the three men. These men have not yet been released. (Source: ABSDF)

On 24 April 2002, Troops from IB 75 looted and burned down the houses of villagers in Lay-ta-ri village, Kya-in Township. These troops also took women and children from Lay-ta-ri village to their army camp and threatened to burn down the whole village.

On 24 April 2002 IB (78), Column (2) led by commander Myo Hlaing Oo arrived at Mae Kaw Khee village, Kya-Inn township. The soldiers arrested and took away 50 of the village residents. (Source: ABSDF)

On 28 April 2002 at about 6 pm, the IB (78) column (2) commander with his unit burnt down a church and 2 religious halls in Kaw Keh village, Kya-Inn township. These buildings had been destroyed 4 days before by SPDC LIB (301) troops. In addition, the troops also tortured village residents and looted their money and belongings. Maung Pauk Kyaine, age (40), and two other villagers were arrested and taken away with the soldiers. Naw Cherry Pan and U Kyi Lin were both tortured severely. (Source: ABSDF)

On 13 May 2002, the SPDC LIB (301) Column (1) led by Min Din who arrived at Kwun-thit-ta village and summoned the villagers including children, to the religious community hall. The troops forced the villagers to stay inside the community hall for 3 days, without giving them any food. Many of the children cried every day because they were hungry. (Source: ABSDF)

On 25 May 2002, Ni Than, camp commander of LIB 301, summoned the chairpersons and secretaries of the villages of Tha-ya-gon, Ye-leh-gyi, Ye-leh-ywa-thit, Khun-thee-chan, Ahja, Ta-da-pyat and Leik-pyaw villages, in Win-yae Township, and the villages of Ka-yan-taung, Ka-sat, Kyone-sein and Mae-tet-klet villages in Kya-in Township to attend a meeting. Troops detained these village elders upon arrival at Paw-ner-moo camp.

On 5 June 2002, LIB 301 arrested Paw-ner-moo villager Saw Pay Ray, 38, near Theh-pyu-chaung village in Kya-in Township, extorted 35,000 kyat from him, and detained him in their military camp. He has not been released.

On 6 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 415, led by commander Nyunt Aye, detained and assaulted sixteen-year old Saw Ah Paw in Baw-klo area, Kya-in Township. No reason was given for his detainment. Two days later the youth was given 500 kyat and released.

On 26 October 2002, Bo Kyaw Htoo Lwin, of SPDC No. 2 Tactical Command of Western Command headquarters, arrested village head Saw Min Naung. Saw Min Naung had previously been arrested and beaten on 14 October 2002. Village elders were able to secure the village head's release on 30 October 2002. However, Bo Kyaw Htoo Lwin warned the villagers that the next time another such incident happened, one hundred thousand kyat would be needed to secure release.

Mergui-Tavoy District

On 17 December 2001, troops from IB 25, led by Hla Win, arrested and assaulted Wa-shu-kho village heads Sai-bya, 40, and U Neh Pay, 50. Troops later demanded 600,000 kyat from them. Unable to pay, the two village heads have not been released.

On 6 February 2002, Infantry Battalion 280, led by Khin Maung Aye, demanded 90,000 to 100,000 kyat from cashew-nut plantation owners. Those who failed to pay were put in the detention cell at the IB 280 camp.

On 9 March 2002, Troops from LIB 402 detained Klet-ti village head Saw Tay Tay at Kaw-paw village and put him into wooden holding-stocks for two hours.

On 14 March 2002, troops from LIB 566, led by commander Soe Tarn, apprehended villagers at Si-thwee-khee and brought them to Pay-cha concentration camp. Captured villagers Pah Ti Kweh, Ti Ka Sah Taw and Saw Maung Kyaw were released after they gave up their guns to the troops. However, Saw Ka Lu Po and his son remained in custody having no guns to hand over to the troops.

Pa-pun District

On 13 April 2002, Bo Pa Kay and Bo Pa Ki from the junta-sponsored Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) Ka Hsaw Wah Battalion demanded 800 pieces of roofing thatch from the villages of Ta-per-pah, Wah-moe-loe, Kler-si-kho and Wah-klu-kho. As the villagers did not provide the thatching in time, the village's headmen were put in detention for two nights.

Toungoo District

On 21 February 2002, SPDC troops arrested three villagers in Kaw-thay-doe village, Naw Ler, Naw Meh Ler and Saw Ku Wah. The remaining villagers were forced to feed the three during their detention.

On 23 February 2002, in Wa-me-per-kho village, SPDC troops looted household items from villager Maung Hsan and seized his 13-year old son, Saw Lah Hser.

On 1 April 2002, SPDC troops, led by commander Kyin Maung Htun, G-2 Thet Oo and G-3 Lin Zaw Oo, under SPDC Southern Command, locked up truck owner Naw Ma Mar of Kaw-thay-doe village in the detention cell of No. 3 Operation Command for failing to transport military supplies with her truck to Bu-hsa-khee. The No. 3 Operation commander Kyin Maung Htun ordered Baw-ga-li and Bu-hsa-khee villagers to complete transporting military supplies to Bu-hsa-khee within a few days.

Pa-an District

On 16 March 2002, Kawkareik Township General Secretary U Aung Lin and four SPDC policemen arrested 17 farmers in Kaw-bein village and forced them to sell their remaining paddies to the village paddy-buying center run by the government. The 17 farmers had previously provided the local authorities with false information about the acreage of their land (source: HURFOM).

On 10 November 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 209, led by Lieutenant Colonel Tin Maung Shwe, arrested Ta-ku-kraw villager Saw Plo Wah and stole 12 of his goats.

Thaton District

On 1 May 2002, troops from LIB 1, led by Bo Khin Maung, seized ten Ta-u-khee villagers and looted the Belin Township village.

On 2 May 2002, troops from LIB 1 column, led by Bo Khin Maung Oo, seized and took away three Klaw-hta villagers, three Kwee-lay villagers and two Toe-teh-khee villagers.

Shan State

Border Villagers Arrested and Tortured

On 18 June 2002, Burmese army troops killed, tortured, and arrested Shan villagers living in the border area across from Thailand's Wianghaeng District of Chiang Mai. According to escapee eyewitness reports, army troops entered border village Hwe Yao and proceeded to kill two villagers³⁴ Mayhtar, 36, who could not pay the 200 baht demanded of him by soldiers, and Zigta, apparently for wearing a faded, green military shirt without insignias. Burmese army soldiers also looted the village taking livestock, motor vehicles, and other valuables.

Thirteen other villagers were bound and taken outside the village where they were tortured and interrogated about Shan State Army (SSA) activities in the area. One man, Yazing, a former SSA fighter, was hanged on a tamarind tree, beaten and bayoneted, and had scalding water poured on his head.

All thirteen were later taken in a truck to Hwe Aw, 30 miles north of Chiang Mai's Chiangdao District border. The whereabouts and condition of the detained villagers' remains unknown, though it is believed they have been executed.

Most of those living in the border area were ex-resistance fighters and their families. The following are the thirteen villagers captured and detained by the Burmese army: Hsengfon, 48, Poong-nya, 23, Zai Yone, 28, Hsengharn, 25, Ti Lern, 23, Hsaikhong, 30, Yazing, 43, Zai Noong, 43, Zai Htarg, 25, King Jaw, 45, Zai Aw, 25, Ta Mawng, 24, Zai Long, 25 (source: S.H.A.N.).

Villager Disappears in Murng-Ton

On 22 August 2002, three soldiers from LIB 333 apprehended Zaai Thun as he was returning home from gathering vegetables near Naa Kawng Mu village, Murng-Ton Township. Zaai Thun, 38, and his family of three had to move to Naa Kawng Mu village after being forcibly relocated six years ago by SLORC troops from their home in Kaeng Lom village, Kun-Hing Township.

Zaai Thun's whereabouts are unknown. Village leaders reported the arrest to the local SPDC authorities who denied any knowledge of the incident (source:SHRF).

Farmers Arrested and Extorted by SPDC

In October 2002, fourteen rice farmers were arrested and detained in jail in Keng Tung Township by SPDC authorities after challenging the method of rice procurement by the military. The military requires rice farmers to sell 12 baskets of rice per acre of cultivated land, no matter the crop yield. The military set the price at 300 kyat per basket, while the market price stood at 4,200 kyat per basket. Many farmers faced substantial losses and some were not able to meet the military's rice quota.

Fourteen farmers suggested a method of rice procurement whereby the military would pay market rate for seven of the twelve baskets or, alternatively, farmers would give three baskets per acre for free. The SPDC arrested the fourteen and they remain in jail (source: SHRF).

Headman Arrested, Disappeared After Challenging Opium Production

On 2 October 2002, relocated Long Kawng village headman Lung Kun-Na was arrested by troops from LIB 518 in Murng-Nai Township. Previously, on 28 September 2002, Lung Kun-Na, 58, told his relatives and fellow villagers, all relocated to Nam-Zarng town, that he did not want them to grow opium as requested by SPDC authorities.

Lung Kun-Na told them he believed the Shan were being used in the middle of a propaganda campaign; the SPDC publicly claimed to be eradicating opium production, but continued to encourage villagers to cultivate the narcotic. The village headman said he believed the Shan people would be made scapegoats and be blamed by the SPDC for the country's drug problems.

Several days later, on 2 October 2002, Lung Kun-Na was taken by truck from Nam-Zarng by SPDC troops. When relatives went to enquire about Lung Kun-Na at LIB 518's base, they were told no troops had left Murng-Nai in seven months and added that they had never seen the village headman. The SPDC suggested that other armed groups disguised as SPDC troops might have been behind the headman's disappearance. The whereabouts of Lung Kun-Na remain unknown (source: SHRF).

3.14 Arrest and Detention of Foreigners

Thai villagers Arrested on Charges of Illegal Logging

On 6 December 2001, seven Thai villagers were arrested in Burma on charges of illegally cutting trees. The Thais, including a pregnant woman, were sentenced to 5 years in jail by a Myanmar court. In March 2002, Myanmar authorities told a Thai delegation of the incident while attending a Thai-Myanmar border committee. The villagers were arrested at a military base opposite Thailand's Prachuapkirikhan province, 280 kilometers from Bangkok (source: Xinhua News Agency).

Thai Businessman Arrested

A Thai businessman in Burma was put under house arrest in July 2002 for unknown reasons. The businessman was not granted bail and the Thai embassy was refused permission to pay a consular visit to the man. A group of Thai businessman alerted the Thai embassy of the arrest and said that the man was arrested after running into business problems (source: the Nation).

Thai Workers Detained on Burmese Island

In early June 2002, Burmese soldiers detained a group of 17 Thai workers on Burma's Koo Island. The Thais were contracted to do an interior decoration job at a resort hotel on the island. Three of them were identified as Narong Hongspathan, Surachai Parnprommin and Manop Yorsaeng. Following the arrest, the Thai Third Fleet dispatched a vessel to patrol Kra Buri river bordering Thailand and Burma (source: Bangkok Post).

3.15 Personal Accounts

Interview with Myo Min Naing

Myo Min Naing fled Burma in mid-2003 crossing into Thailand. He served two prison sentences in Burma for his role in opposition and student activities, spending a total of ten years in three different prisons around Burma. Myo Min Naing is currently seeking political refuge in Thailand, where he daily risks deportation back to Burma. A prisoner in Burma, Myo Min Naing is once again essentially a prisoner in a safe house on the Thai border. The following interview was conducted by an HRDU researcher in June 2003.

Interviewer: When were you first arrested?

Myo Min Naing: I was first arrested on 14 August 1990 in Rangoon for my involvement in the student protests and democratic campaigns. I was sent to Insein Prison and then I was transferred to Tharawaddy Prison.

I: How long did you spend in prison?

M: Over three years. I was released in January 1994; I don't know the exact date.

I: When you were released, did you become involved in opposition activities again?

M: Yes, I helped prepare for other activities. Before the 1996 student uprising I worked with eight other people to help prepare protests. But we were all arrested in December 1996. I was arrested on 15 December 1996. All of us received the same sentences, seven years in prison, under section 5 (j) of the law. We were accused of arranging the uprising.

I: When were the 1996 student uprisings?

M: 2 December, 6 December, and 13 December. Three separate occasions.

I: Where were you arrested?

M: I was arrested in Rangoon and sent to Insein Prison, but later I was transferred to Myingyan Prison in central Burma.

I: Please tell me about daily life in prison.

M: There are so many things to talk about, so many things to say. When I first arrived at Myingan Prison, I stayed with 200 other prisoners in one compound.

I: Were they all political prisoners?

M: Most were political prisoners, but some were criminal prisoners. We had to stay together with them. The criminal prisoners were the servants of the prison.

I: Where were you staying in Myingan Prison? What kind of cell?

M: When I first arrived in Myingan Prison, I was put in solitary confinement. I could not talk with other people. There were no conversations. No contact.

I: How long were you in solitary confinement?

M: Seven months and fourteen days, when I first arrived. I had to stay alone in my cell.

I: How big was your cell?

M: Ten by twelve feet.

I: And you were brought food?

M: Yes, they brought food, but very, very little. It was not enough.

I: What did they give you to eat?

M: Rice, vegetable soup, and very dirty fish paste. But you have to understand, house animals, dogs, they would not eat the food. Even pigs wouldn't want to eat it. It was very dirty, terrible.

I: How often were you fed?

M: Twice a day.

I: And what about washing and bathing?

M: Two criminal prisoners would bring me to the bathing area. I was given 15 plates of water to wash with. Once a day.

I: When you were in solitary confinement, the only contact you had was with the criminal prisoners you took you to your bath?

M: Yes, the only contact. But we weren't allowed to talk with them. We had to keep our heads bowed. And I was in shackles. For my first three and a half months in Myingan Prison, I was kept in shackles. This was common, not unusual.

I: What changed when you were taken out of solitary confinement?

M: I was put in a cell with two other people, political prisoners, for two months. Then I was placed with one political prisoner and one criminal prisoner for one and a half years. And then only with political prisoners again. But at least twice, I was put back into solitary confinement.

I: What was life like out of solitary confinement?

M: I could speak with the prisoners in my cell. But I could not have contact with any other prisoners. This was not allowed. But if I did make contact with other prisoners, they punished me heavily.

I: Were you allowed family visits?

M: Eight months after I arrived in Myingan Prison, I was allowed family visits. They could visit once every two months.

I: How long were the visits?

M: I could talk with my family for only ten minutes. But sometimes less, maybe only six or seven minutes.

I: Were you allowed to be given things from your family?

M: Some things, but there were many rules. Many things were forbidden. Certain foods.

I: What was your health like in prison?

M: I fell seriously ill a few times. There was not enough medical care. I rarely met with the prison doctor. I can't even remember his face. I had a stomach disease. And I was beaten many times. Some of bones were very hurt.

I: Why did the authorities beat you?

M: There are many, many reasons. But sometimes I would share my food with my comrades, the other prisoners. And if they caught me I was beaten heavily. I was beaten for many reasons. Sometimes, if they found pieces of plastic paper or pieces of cheroot (Burmese cigarettes) paper, I would be beaten by criminal prisoners. There were no limitations to the punishments.

I: The criminal prisoners beat you, not the prison guards?

M: Yes, usually the criminal prisoners beat us. The prison authorities made the criminal prisoners beat us. Sometimes, a prison guard would watch, but not always.

I: How were you beaten?

M: With wooden rods. Very thick wooden rods. We were beaten like animals.

I: Do you think prison conditions have improved since you were first imprisoned?

M: No. There has been no improvement in the prisons. But when the ICRC visited prisons, things improved a little. The ICRC visited me maybe four times. I was interviewed about Myingan Prison.

I: Did the ICRC visits improve conditions in the prison?

M: There was a little improvement. For example, before the ICRC visited, there were no sports and you couldn't walk around. But when they visited you could walk around a little. For maybe 15 minutes. Cell by cell, we were allowed to walk around. Also, the ICRC requested to the authorities that they allow political prisoners to play cane ball. But the improvements would always disappear after the ICRC left the prison. Yes, gradually, all the improvements, the sports and the walking, would disappear. We often requested permission to play cane ball, but we were always refused. But during my last year in prison we were allowed to play cane ball, a little every day.

I: How long would the ICRC spend at the prison during their visits?

M: Maybe three or four days. They visited Myingan Prison four times, I think, while I was there.

I: Did the prison authorities ever question you after being interviewed by the ICRC?

M: Yes, they asked me some questions, but not officially.

I: When were you released?

M: I was released on 14 October 2002 with eight other prisoners. I spent six years in prison during that sentence.

I: How is your health now?

M: Not so good. I am still suffering stomach pain.

I: When you were released where did you do?

M: I was brought to my family's home in Rangoon by Military Intelligence agents.

I: Were you harassed by the military government after your release?

M: Not so much. But I was always being watched. But I don't know by whom.

I: Was it difficult to get a job after you were released?

M: There were many difficulties. I couldn't work in many places. I wasn't allowed to work in business. And I couldn't continue my education. The authorities treated us like the opposition.

I: Why did you come to Thailand?

M: An important question. I wasn't allowed to participate in politics in Burma as the authorities made me sign under section 401 [see 3.8 Release of political prisoners]. And I still want to change things in Burma. The SPDC also has a history sheet on me. Life was very difficult. I had no chances in Burma after prison. We suffer so much in Burma. It is hard to explain how brutal the situation is for former political prisoners in Burma.

I: How old were you when you first went to prison?

M: Twenty years old.

I: And how old were when you were released the second time?

M: Thirty-two years old. I spent a decade in prison. Ten years of my life.

Personal History of a Former Political Prisoner

Nay Yein Kyaw is a former political prisoner who spent eight years in prison from 1992 to 2000. In September 2002, he left Burma for Thailand. He is currently seeking political refuge, having applied for refugee status with the UNHCR. Nay Yein Kyaw is a member of Thailand-based rights group AAPP.

Eight Years On The Concrete Floor

My name is Nay Yein Kyaw and I'm a former political prisoner from Burma. Why was I imprisoned? Burma has been under a military dictatorship since 1962. We have no democracy, no peace, and no human rights. Our people are oppressed and our national economy has been run into the ground. Most people are desperately poor. A number of opposition movements continue to struggle against the military government, and in some areas there is open civil war between the regime and the people. Students have founded a number of these opposition movements, as it is a tradition in my country for students to be active in demanding political change.

In 1988, thousands of people throughout Burma took to the streets to demand that the country be returned to civilian rule and democracy. At the time I was eighteen years old and a high school student. On August 8, 1988 I joined thousands of other people in Rangoon in a peaceful demonstration against the government. While we were marching through the city, soldiers opened fire. I watched as people in front of me were killed, arrested, and tortured by the army troops. Luckily I was able to escape.

Shortly after this, I joined a number of other high school and university students in forming the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU). ABFSU was led by two university students, Min Ko Naing and Moe Thee Zun. I worked as a member of the central organizing committee, helping to organize political demonstrations, write articles, and distribute food and other assistance to poor people in the city.

On September 18, 1988, the military regime announced that they would implement a multi-party democratic system in Burma. I soon joined a new political party, the Democratic Party for New Society (DPNS), formed by ABFSU leader Moe Thee Zun and his colleagues. Our aim was to continue to organize the students who had scattered after the brutal crackdown of the pro-democracy uprising. As a DPNS member, I traveled to many areas of the country to talk to ordinary people about the problems they faced living under military rule. Later we were able to send this information about human rights violations to the media, foreign embassies, the UN and other international organizations.

On April 1989, I was walking on the road with Moe Thee Zun and other friends from DPNS when we were stopped by members of the military intelligence (MI). Moe Thee Zun was able to get away, however the three of us were taken for questioning. We were released three hours later. On March 23, 1989 the other leader of ABFSU, Ko Min Ko Naing was arrested and sentenced to ten years in prison. He has yet to be released.

Throughout 1989 and 1990 I continued to support and work with ABFSU. In May 1990 the military regime decided to allow democratic elections to be held. We were overjoyed when the National League for Democracy led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi won 82% of the seats in parliament. However, shortly after the election results were announced the regime responded by throwing many of those elected into prison while many others were forced to flee the country. Prior to the elections Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was placed under house arrest, where she would remain until her release in 1995.

In January 1991 my friend Zaw Tun and I were once again arrested by MI agents. They took us to the interrogation center, and for the next two weeks we were subjected to many forms of torture. I remember the interrogation center was like what I imagined hell would be a place

where I was frequently blindfolded then beaten and kicked. During these beatings I suffered a number of severe blows to my head and back. For the first three days I was at the interrogation center I was not given any water or food. I was questioned all day and all night by different people using different forms of torture. Finally they sent me to Insein prison. After seven weeks I was released from prison. My friends had not betrayed me under interrogation, and so the authorities couldn't sentence me. After I came back to my family, the authorities continued to watch me all the time. I kept thinking: what do I do? Where do I go? But I was still strongly committed to fighting for freedom and democracy so I continued my political organizing.

In December 1991 Daw Aung San Su Kyi was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Many students held demonstrations to support her and were subsequently arrested. At this time an MI captain came to my house to arrest me, but luckily I was away in another city. In April 1992, the regime announced plans to meet with some of the members of parliament elected in 1990. I worked with ABFSU to write and distribute a list of demands for this meeting. These were as follows:

1. Immediate release of all political prisoners
2. Abolish oppressive laws
3. Address the basic problems of the people
4. Ensure that any dialogue includes Daw Aung San Su Kyi, student leader Min Ko Naing, the leaders of ethnic nationality groups, and all elected MPs.

In June 1992 one of the ABFSU members was arrested and during interrogation he identified me. As a result, I was arrested at midnight on 8 June 1992, along with 8 other people. I felt that I had been sent back again to hell. When we arrived at the interrogation center they tortured us all very brutally. The methods of torture were much worse than the first time I was arrested, as they used not only physical but also psychological torture.

Upon arrival at the interrogation center I was separated from my friends and sent to a dimly lit dirty room where I was handcuffed and ordered to stand in front of a table. The MI asked me many questions. When they were not satisfied with my answers, they would force me to continuously squat and stand. When I tried to stop, they kicked and punched me many times and hit my knees with a bamboo rod. When I fell down on to the concrete floor, they grabbed me by the arm and pulled me upright. For another type of torture, I was put on a hollow chair and electric wires were attached to my arm so that they could give me electric shocks. I had no chance to sleep or rest for nearly three days and during this time I was given no water or food. I was so thirsty that I asked to go to the toilet hoping that I could take some water from there. However the guards watched me the entire time and when I attempted to drink some water from pot by the toilet they hit me. I was also kept blindfolded for the entire two weeks that I was at the interrogation center. I would like to explain in more detail about my experiences there, but it is very difficult for me to think about that time.

Finally after two weeks I was forced to sign a paper and then I was sent back to Insein prison along with the other 8 people who were arrested with me. What were our lives like in prison? Life in prison is worse than the lives of the poorest members of society outside. The prisoners are all pale and thin. Their faces are sullen and they look more dead than alive. We were not allowed to read, write, or study. The prison authorities did not intervene when some of the criminal prisoners we were mixed with took drugs or raped other prisoners.

Everyday we received two meals. In the morning we were given rice that was dirty and often contained sand and tiny stones. We were also given a small amount of bean soup made without any oil or spices, and some fish paste. In the evening, we got rice and fish paste along with a vegetable soup that was only water with a few vegetables. The fish paste was very salty and as a result of this diet many prisoners suffered from high blood pressure. The rest of the food was difficult to digest and lacked nutrients. In addition, as the drinking water was not clean, and sometime the food given to us was spoiled, we often suffered from diarrhea. We never received any treatment for this.

The medical care at Insein was very poor. There were only four doctors in the entire prison who were responsible for treating 9000 to 10,000 inmates. The doctors used criminal prisoners who were drug addicts to work as medical assistants. A number of prisoners contracted HIV/AIDS or other communicable diseases during medical treatment because the same syringe was frequently used for four or five people. In February 1996 one of the eight people who had been arrested with me, U Tun Sein died as a result of torture and insufficient food and medical treatment. U Tun Sein was a labor activist had been arrested four times beginning in 1963.

After I had stayed in Insein prison for six years, I was transferred along with a number of other political prisoners to Myingyan prison in upper Burma. Myingyan prison was the worst prison I stayed in. When we first arrived, the prison guards put sarongs over our heads, and dragged us in shackles from the main gate into the cell. Along the way they beat us repeatedly. The weather in Myingyan was hot during the day and cold at night, like in a desert. They only allowed us one blanket.

When we arrived, the other political prisoners and I were put in solitary confinement for one year. We were not able to communicate with each other. We were not able to share food or medicine that our families had sent us. When one prisoner walked down the cellblock to take a shower, each person had to sit with his back to the corridor so they could not make eye contact. During this time we were forced to perform meaningless tasks, such as polishing the iron bars of the cells to make them as bright as stainless steel, polishing the ground until it was as smooth as concrete, and catching flies.

I would like to tell you about some of my friends in Myingyan prison. One man who had been arrested with me in Rangoon got his thumb caught in the iron door of the cell. The prison doctor did not give him any treatment and eventually his thumb had to be amputated. Three of my other friends began to suffer from mental disorders as a result of the solitary confinement and daily threats and beatings from the guards. These guards were criminal inmates who had been put in charge of us. One of my friends was beaten severely by a guard when a person in the cell next door tried to pass him some extra food. Every night the entire prison was dark because they cut the electric current. That was very difficult for the people suffering from mental illnesses. Everything was silent and dark, and we could not get any support from our fellow prisoners. During the rainy season, the rain would come through the roof until everything in our cells became wet.

It was difficult to avoid missing my family and becoming depressed. To raise my spirits, I would often sing and sometimes write poems on the walls of my cell or on a plastic bag using a sharp needle. Before I was arrested I loved to go sailing, and while I was in prison I would often stare at the sky and imagine that it was an ocean. At night I was able to look out at the stars.

I spent two years and two months at Myingyan prison. In July 2000 I was released along with two other friends who had been arrested at the same time as me. We had spent over eight years in prison. Many of my friends are still there. Now I that I have been released from my nightmare, I am able to continue to work for my dream. But I know that I will have to face many more struggles in order to achieve democracy and peace in my country.

3.16 Appendix 1

List of Political Prisoners Currently in Need of Medical Care (Source: AAPP)

Name	Sentence	Illness	Prison
Aung Aung	24	stroke (cannot walk)	Myaungmya
Aung Khine	14	Hypertension	Myitkyinar
Aung Kyaw Oo	14	Depression	Myitkyinar
Aung Kyaw Oo	10+7	Mental Disorder	Thayawaddy
Aung Kyaw Soe	7	Stroke, Monoplegia	Myaung Mya
Aung Myint	21	Gastric Ulcer, Hypertension	Insein
Aung Myo Tint	12	Heart disease	Myaungmya
Aung Myo Tint	12+7	Heart disease	Myaung Mya
Aung Naing	7	Depression	Myingyan
Aung Naing	20	Hypertension	Thayet
Aung Naing Oo	14	Breast pain	Patheingyi
Aung Pwint (Journalist)	21	Gastric Ulcer	Insein
Aung San	7	Depression	Myingyan
Aung Saw Oo	7	Malaria, Dysentery	Kalay
Aung Than Nyunt	14	Paralysis	Insein
Aung Thu	20	Arthritis	Myingyan
Aung Zin	7	Heart disease	Insein
Aung Zin Min	7	Gastric and Depression	Thayet
Aye Aung	45	Malarial, Typhoid	Kalay
Aye Kyu	21	Hypertension, Gastritis	Thayawaddy
Aye Myint Than	21	Arthritis, Heart disease	Myaung Mya
Aye Than	7	Hypertension	Insein
Ba Htoo Say	7	Tuberculosis	Thayet
Ba Min	7	Anemia	Myitkyinar
Chit Ko Ko	7	Mental Trauma	Mandalay
Doh Daung,U(NLD-MP)	7	Chest-pain, Hyper-tension	Mandalay
Dr May Win Myint	7	Heart disease, Coronary insufficiency	Insein
Dr Min Kyi Win (Mon-M.P)	7	Heart disease, Depression	Maw-la-mying
Dr Min Soe Lin(Mon-M.P)	7	Hernia	Maw-la-mying
Dr Saline Tun Than	7	Eye disease	Insein Prison Hospital
Dr Than Nyain	7	Liver disease, Heart disease	Insein Prison Hospital
Dr. Myint Naing (MP)	25+5	Sinusitis, Otitis Media	Thayet
Han Nyunt	7	Depression, Hallucination	Myaungmya
Han Tin (NLD)	7	Throat Cancer	Myaung-mya
Hla Hla Win	7	Heart Disease	Insein
Hla Shwe	7	Cardiac Disease	Thayet
Hla Win	15	Piles	Maw-la-mying
Hlaing Win Swe	7	Eye-sight Failure	Myaung-mya

Htay Nyunt	20+4	Depression	Mandalay
Htay Thein	20	Depression	Mandalay
Htay Win Aung	7+7	Cataract, Migraine	Insein
Htein Linn	7	Gastric Ulcer	Myitkyinar
Htwe Khine	7	Heart Disease	Thayawaddy
Htwe Myint	7	Neurological failure	Rangoon general Hospital
Khaing Soe (Araken)	Life	Heart & kidney problem	Insein
Khin Cho Myint	7	Arthritis	Mawlymine
Khin Khin Leh	Life	Rheumatoid Arthritic	Insein
Khin Mar Yee	7	Osteoarthritis	Insein
Khin Moe Aye	7	Hypertension	Insein
Khin Zaw	20	Cataract, Migraine	Thayawaddy
Khin Zaw Win, Dr	15	Hypertension, Piles bleeding	Myitkyinar
Ko Ko Gyi	20	Limpoma chest and back	Thayet
Ko Ko Htwe	7	Neuropathy, Cataract	Myaungmya
Ko Ko Zaw	7	Hypertension and Heart disease	Maw-la-mying
Kyaing Tun	7	Glaucoma	Maw-la-mying
Kyaw Khaing @ Phoe La Pyaye	7	Arthritis	Pathein
Kyaw Kyaw Tun	7	Hernia, Piles bleeding	Myaungmya
Kyaw Min Tun	7	Mental disorder	Insein
Kyaw Mya(C.P.B)	20	Gastric Ulcer	Pathein
Kyaw Nyunt (NLD)	14	Ear disease(total deafness)	Mandalay
Kyaw Oo	7	Severe Asthma, Migraine	Myaungmya
Kyaw Wai Soe	12	Gastric Pain	Pathein
Kyaw Zin Htwe	21	Convulsion	Pathein
Kyi Kyi Win (N.L.D)	14	Arthritis	Mandalay
Kyi Thaug	7	Eye-sight Failure	Myaungmya
Kyi Tin Oo (author)	7	Heart disease	Insein
Kyu Kyu Mar	21	Arthritis	Insein
Leh Leh	7	Rheumatism	Insein
Letyar Win (Poet)	7	Anemia	Pathein
Lwin Nyein NLD	7	Hernia, Hepatitis	Myaungmya
Mann Maung Wah	7	General Break-down	Myaungmya
MannPhu Lone	7	Seriously Sick	Myaungmya
Mar Mar Oo	14	Rheumatoid Arthritis, Urtecara	Insein
Maung Maung	10+6	Depression, Anorexia	Mandalay
Maung Maung Lay	7	Chest pain	Myaungmya
Maung Maung Oo	10	Anemia	Mandalay
Maung Oo	7	Hernia	Myaungmya
Maung Tin	12	General weakness and Anemia	Maw-la-mying
Min Thu	7	Coronary Heart Disease	Insein
Min Tin	7	Chest pain	Myaungmya
Min Zaw	14	Depression	Insein
Min Zaw Oo	7	Heart vessel disease	Myaungmya
Mon Ngwe Thein	7	Fistula in Anus, Urinary Track Infection	Maw-la-mying
Mya Sabai Moe	21	Convulsion, Paralysis of limbs	Shwebo
Myat San (N.L.D)	20	Gastric Ulcer, Tuberculosis	Insein
Myo Aung	14	Gastric Ulcer	Insein
Myo Htun	7	Arthritis, Tonsillitis Abscess	Shwebo
Myo Min Htaik	52	Heart, Lung disease, Pile	Pathein

Myo Min Lwin	7	Eye disease	Myaungmya
Myo Min Thein	7	Heart Disease	Myaungmya
Myo Min Zaw	52	Gastric Pain	Pathein
Myo Myint	7	Coronary Heart Disease	Thayet
Myo Myint	7	Heart disease	Tharwaddy
Myo Naing	7	Gout	Myaungmya
Myo Thein	7	Gout	Myaungmya
Naine Naine	21	Hernia, Heart vessel disease	Insein
Naing Aung Mon	7	Gastric Ulcer	Myaungmya
Naing Aung Than	Death	Gastric	Maw-la-mying
Naing Myint	20	Depression	Mandalay
Naing Ngwe Thein	7	Urinary Track Infection	Maw-la-mying
Nay Lin Soe	14	Eye disease	Kalay
Nay Tin Myint	20	Gastric Ulcer	Insein
Ne Zar Phyo	7	Mental Trauma, Gastric	Maw-la-mying
Ngwe Lin	7	Bleeding pre Rectum	Thayawaddy
Nyi Nyi (Myo San)	7	Sinusitis, Oitis Media	Myaungmya
Nyunt Yin, Daw	Death	Anemia, Hypertension	Insein
Ohn Kyaing	7	Liver disease	Insein Prison Hostipal
Ohn Maung	7	Anemia	Insein
Pado Than Hla	10+7	Bleeding Piles	Taung-oo
Pe Ko Oo	Life	Tuberculosis	Thayet
Phone Thet Paing	7	Heart disease	Myin-gyan
Sa Saw Htoo	14	Spondylitis	Myaungmya
San Hla Baw	25	Glaucomam	Maw-la-mying
San Nu	10	Stroke and Renal Failure	Myaungmya
Sanny Thein	7	General Break-down	Myaungmya
Saw Benson	20	Heart disease and Bronchitis	Thayawaddy
Saw Nay Dun	Life	TB and Gastric Ulcer	Thayet
Saw Tha Way	Life	TB and Gastric Ulcer	Thayet
Sein Hla Oo	7	Serious skin infection	Tharwaddy
Sein Lin	7	Hernia, Hypertension	Myitkyinar
Sein Win	10	Heart Disease, Chest-pain	Mandalay
Shwe Maung	7	Gastric Ulcer	Myingyan
Soe Moe Naing	10+7	Arthritis	Pa-thein
Soe Myint	7	Typhoid	Kalay
Soe Myint	7	Stroke	Thayawaddy
Soe Myint	7	Hypertension, Diabetes	Insein
Soe Win	24	Mental Trauma	Mandalay
Tha Lin Htin	7	Heart Disease	Kalay
Than Hteik br	7	Heart Disease	Myaungmya
Than Lwin	7	Malarial and Arthritis	Maw-la-mying
Than Maung	14	Chest infection, Neuropathy	Myaungmya
Than Naing	20+7	Suicidal tendency 3 times	Maw-la-mying
Than Than Htay	7	Rheumatoid Arthritis	Myaungmya
Thar Ban	7	Severe Eczema	Myaungmya
Thaung Kyi	14	Neuropathy (Family can't visit)	Myaungmya
Thawda Tun	7	Rheumatoid Arthritis, Tonsillitis	Insein
Thein Htay	7	Gastric Ulcer	Pathein
Thein Htwe	7	Tuberculosis	Pathein
Thein Tan	10+7	Heart Disease (Age:73)	Thayet
Thet Htun	10	Paraplegia	Myin-gyan
Thet Htun Oo	7	Malaria	Myaungmya
Thet Naing	7	Neuropathy	Myitkyinar

Thet Win Aung	59	Malarial	Kham-ti
Thi Thi Aung	7	Renal failure, Edema	Thayawaddy
Thida Htwe	7	Steel-rod in broken arm, overdue; Low B.P.	Insein
Thu Wai	7	Chronic Bronchitis, Urithritis	Insein
Thura	14	Anamia	Insein
Thura Kyaw Zin	7	Hypertension, Gastric	Myaungmya
Thwe Khaing		Heart disease	Insein
Tin Aung	20	Hypertension, Diabetes	Kalay
Tin Aye	7	Skin infection, severe stress	Taungoo
Tin Aye Kyu	20	Hypertension, Depression	Mandalay
Tin Cho	7	Hypertension	Mandalay
Tin Hoe	7	Kidney Disease	Myaungmya
Tin Myint	10	Depression	Mandalay
Tin Soe	7	Hernia, Piles	Myaungmya
Tin Thauang		Blurred vision	Myaungmya
Tin Tun	20	Heart disease & Hypertension	Rangoon GH
Tin Win	7	Stroke	Thayet
Toe Po	7	Hypertension, Piles	Insein Prison Hostipal
Toe Toe	7	Severe Eczema	Myaungmya
Tun Aung Kyaw	7	Tuberculosis	Mandalay
Tun Aye	7	Tuberculosis	Thayet
Tun Myint	7	Hypertension	Mandalay
Tun Myint	21	Cataract , Hypertension	Insein
Tun Tun Oo	20	Gastric Ulcer	Insein
Win Aung	7+7	Hypertension, Depression	Maw-la-mying
Win Kywe	10	Stroke and Mental Trauma	Maw-la-mying
Win Naing	14	Heart disease	Maw-la-mying
Win Tin	59	Heart disease, Lung disease, U.T.I	Kandy
Winn Naing	7	heart problem, chest pain	Maw-la-mying
Wunna Maung	7	Heart disease	Mandalay
Yan Gyi Aung	20	Ulcer	Maw-la-mying
Yan Naing Min	20	Hernia, Hallucination	Mandalay
Ye Maw Htoo	10	Elephantiasis	Insein
Ye Min Naing	7	Sore eyes	Myaungmya
Ye Mon Kyaw	14	Gastric Ulcer	Myaungmya
Yi Mo	7	Rheumatoid Arthritis, Tonsillitis	Myaungmya
Yin Mon	7	Heart problem, chest pain	Myitkyinar
Zaw Hmaing Wai	7	General weakness	Mandalay
Zaw Htoo	Life	Gastric , Hypertension	Myaungmya
Zaw Min	10	Mental illness, Gastric	Thayet
Zaw Min Htun	7	Cardiac Disorder	Myaungmya
Zaw Naing	7	Tuberculosis	Thayet
Zaw Than Htike	14	Gastric Ulcer	Pathein
Zaw Tun	7+7	Mental Trauma , Anemia	Thayawaddy
Ze-ya	15	Pile	Thayawaddy
Zin Bo	7	Malaria	Myaungmya

4. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment

"That police can torture a farmer as punishment for a poor crop speaks to how utterly perverted 'law enforcement' becomes in the hands of an authoritarian government."

(Source: Asian Human Rights Commission, May, 2003.)

4.1 Background

Torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment in Burma has been used by the military government in Burma for more than 40 years and has been particularly documented since the 1988 pro-democracy uprising when the use of torture increased. Although articles 330 and 331 of the Burmese Penal Code (1957) prohibit torture and ill-treatment during interrogation it is personnel associated with the regime that are given the power to torture during interrogation with impunity.

Members of the army, Military Intelligence (MI), police, Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) and armed groups aligned with the SPDC such as the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) routinely use torture to punish and degrade (break) those who have been detained on suspicion of anti-government activities, including political prisoners and villagers living in areas where there is ongoing armed conflict. Torture has the dual purpose of being a method used to obtain information on anti-government and rebel activities, as well as a way of putting terror in the hearts of the population to thwart participation in anti-government activities. In addition, torture is used to extort money, as well as to give punishment for failure to obey orders, failure to pay fees and taxes, as a result of prejudice or a combination of these factors.

4.2 Torture during Detention

Political activists in opposition to the government often face torture while in detention. Torture is used to punish them and to compel them to cooperate with interrogators. Political prisoners face both physical and emotional torture, often during prolonged periods of detention after the initial arrest while they are isolated from public scrutiny. Many of these prisoners are forced to sign false confessions admitting to anti-SPDC activities or implicating colleagues or friends in such activities. Some are forced to sign documents stating that they have been well-treated during interrogation and in jail. Others say that they have been held incommunicado following torture to allow time for the physical signs of torture to heal before they are seen by anyone.

At least six departments of the SPDC's security forces have been implicated in torture and ill treatment by former detainees, including political prisoners. The six departments are as follows:

1. SPDC's army of Phythu Tatmadaw (People's Defense Forces);
2. The People's Police Forces;
3. the Directorate of Defense Services Intelligence (DDSI);
4. the Special Investigations Department (SID);
5. the Criminal Investigation Department (CID); and
6. the Bureau of Special Investigations (BSI).

The activities of DDSI, SID, CID and BSI are coordinated by the National Intelligence Bureau (NIB), under the direct control of the SPDC. The DDSI is also commonly known as the MIS or Military Intelligence Service and is the agency most frequently identified as inflicting torture during interrogation. Since 1988, the units under its control (MI-1, MIS-1, MI-3, etc.) have nearly doubled from 14 in 1989 to 23 in 1991. Lt-Gen. Khin Nyunt, Secretary of the SPDC, is the head of the DDSI.

4.3 Torture in Prison

The MI personnel systematically interrogate detainees in order to get information and false confessions. The abuse and torture include, among other things: electrocution, sleep denial, forcing people to stand or squat in uncomfortable positions, such as if one were sitting on a motorcycle, for long periods of time, rolling iron or wood rods along a person's shins, pouring water over a person's head covered in plastic, forcing them to kneel on sharp stones or pieces of glass, hanging them by the arms and feet and putting bullets or pencils between the fingers and then squeezing them together. In addition, some women also suffer from sexual abuse, such as having some or all of their clothes removed during interrogation. The MI personnel use both physical and psychological methods of torture. When the activists or suspected persons arrive at an interrogation center, the MI first breaks down their confidence and morale... They are kept in the interrogation center for one to three weeks during which there is non-stop interrogation by rotating teams of MI. Most are not allowed to sleep and usually not fed or given any water. When they are sent to prison, they are beaten at the prison gate by the prison staff. They can face punishment in prison if they complain about the lack of water and poor quality of food, stage a hunger strike or are found holding small amounts of paper. Moreover, they are kept in iron shackles and kept in tiny cells for months and are not allowed to bathe, have family visits etc. The interim report to the Fifty-fifth Session of the General Assembly, the UN Special Rapporteur on Burma said: "Torture or other forms of inhuman treatment of political detainees are believed to be routine, especially during initial interrogation. Convicted prisoners are also reported to be subjected to torture and other forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment for breaches of prison regulations. " (Source: AAPPB, found at <http://www.aappb.org/report3.html>)

Beatings

SPDC uses many forms of beating to intimidate and torture prisoners and detainees. Soldiers use their fists, combat boots, rifle butts, leather-coated pipes, wooden sticks, sticks made from three interlaced pieces of cane, solid bamboo sticks about three feet in length, and hard plastic water pipes to beat their victims.

Beating are designed to physically harm and humiliate victims. The following are a few typical types of beatings: the prisoner is beaten while he/she stands and embraces a post and both hands are held firmly by another person; the prisoner is beaten while laying prone on the ground; the prisoner is beaten while being forced to stand with both legs chained; the prisoner is beaten while being forced to crawl along the ground; the prisoner is shackled, a long iron bar is placed in between their legs, and they are forced to crawl while being beaten; and prisoners are beaten while being forced to do continuous squat-jumps. Authorities do not hold back and they strike victims in the face, chest, abdomen, and back. They also jump on the backs of prisoners while they are being forced to crawl on the ground. Prisoners routinely receive serious injuries from beatings, including fractured skulls, broken bones and paralysis.

Solitary Confinement

An iron rod, about 1 1/2 to 2 feet long is often placed horizontally between the shackled legs of prisoners in solitary confinement, forcing them to stand or lay with their legs astride. Prisoners are locked in tiny cells during their confinement. Normally, small chamber pots are placed in each cell. The pots are never emptied, so the smell becomes unbearable and the cell damp and wet. In the worst case of solitary confinement, prisoners are forced to stand with both arms tied above their head; they are forced to urinate and defecate while standing. Small daily food rations of soup made from rice are slid through the iron bars from outside of cell. No blankets or mats are provided; prisoners are forced to sleep on the concrete floor. Most days, prisoners are taken out of the cells, forced to stand in the standard position, with their legs splayed apart, and beaten. Solitary confinement usually lasts for at least one month and may continue to three months. In some cases, political prisoners are forced to remain in solitary confinement indefinitely.

4.4 Torture During Forced Portering and Forced Labor

Throughout 2002, civilians continued to be conscripted or arbitrarily seized as porters to carry heavy loads for SPDC army battalions. Porters are rarely given enough food, rest or medical attention for illness or injury. Porters that complain about exhaustion or ill-treatment, or who cannot keep up, are regularly verbally and physically abused. Porters who are too sick or exhausted to continue are sometimes beaten or shot and then left in the jungle for dead.

At forced labor sites across the country, such as for the construction of roads or army camps, villagers are routinely mistreated by SPDC personnel supervising them. In addition to long hours and not enough food or rest, those who are not thought to be working hard enough face physical abuse, such as beatings with bamboo sticks or hands. Verbal abuse is a common complaint of those who have experienced forced labor. As a result of ILO pressure on Burma, the recent trend has been to increase the number of prisoner laborers and prisoner porters to

take the place of civilian forced porters. See the chapter on forced labor for more information about forced portering and forced labor conditions.

4.5 Torture of Villagers in Areas of Ethnic Armed Conflict

Torture, beatings and other forms of cruel and degrading treatment are commonplace in areas of ethnic armed insurgency. Villagers are routinely detained, interrogated, beaten and tortured arbitrarily on suspicion of contact with opposition groups. Torture and beating of villagers often goes hand in hand with other human rights abuses, such as extortion, looting and destruction of property. The fear of physical injury deprives villagers of their livelihood as they are kept from traveling in areas where SPDC soldiers are present. In conflict zones SPDC soldiers are able to confiscate farmland and put curfews and other restrictions on the movements of villagers. Villagers caught breaking curfew or traveling in areas they have been restricted from can be accused of helping rebel groups and tortured, beaten or killed.

4.6 Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment – partial list of incidents 2002

Chin State

On 18 January 2002, a seriously ill, elderly woman was arrested in Thantlang, Chin State after the Burmese army accused her of having had contact with her son who is a member of the Chin National Front (CNF). Taken into custody with the woman were three other local men who were present at the woman's house when the Burmese army raided it. The incident took place when the Burmese army surrounded the woman's house on information they had received that an active member of the Chin National Front was visiting his dying mother. The raid did not result in the arrest of the man they were looking for, instead they took all the people present at the house into custody.

The elderly woman was seriously ill and was dying but the army made no exception in arresting her. Mr. Bawi Hmung, Mr. Lal Nuai, and Mr. Ni Thang were arrested along with the woman. Due to the seriousness of her illness, the elderly woman was later allowed to be replaced by her daughter, Ms Sung Nawn who volunteered herself to be taken into custody in place of her mother. All of the arrested were later sent to the 266 Light Infantry Battalion army base in Haka, where they were detained and interrogated. They were charged under the Unlawful Association Act. (Source: CHRO)

Karen State

On 13 January 2002, about 20 soldiers from DKBA Battalion No. 906 entered into a Mon village, Kanni in Kawkareik Township at night and robbed about 5 houses. They took some money and gold totaling about 1 million kyat from the houses. After the robbery, one of the DKBA soldiers sold some of the stolen gold in town to a relative of a Kanni villager who was robbed. A Mon woman, Mi Nyunt, claimed her gold was in a shop. DKBA soldiers heard about that and arrested her. They brought her to their base in Kyone-doe village, tortured her and ordered her not to speak out about the robbery. She was detained for one night. Before

release, they also threatened that if she continued speaking about the robbery, she would be killed. (Source: *HURFOM*)

On 7 March 2002 Major Thet Naing, a commander of the column of LIB No. 206 of Brigade No.22 went to Htee Ta Pha Yu Tha village and Lae Ka Moo village in Hlaing Bawe Township and fired six times with a 60mm. mortar. He then proceeded to beat the following villagers; Po Thu Kaut (32 years old), Phar Kaut Thu (35 years old), Phar Moe Zae (42 years old) and Maung Tin Shwe (35 years old) with the butt of his MA 3 rifle. (Source: ABSDF)

On 21 June 2002 Column No.1, led by Major Win Naing, of Brigade No. 44 opened fire on two shacks of U Saw Kuku and Naw Pupu who were ordinary people and peacefully living on their traditional hill-side farm. Naw Pupu was seriously wounded in the arm and taken as a guide for this column. U Saw Kuku was severely beaten and taken away too. (Source: ABSDF)

Doooplaya District

On 12 February 2002, troops from SPDC LID 88 led by commander Ohn Myint, Column Commander Major Thet Tin and Company Commander Aung Moe Htet went to Lay-po village in Kya-in township and tortured the villagers:

1. Maung Chu Lu;
2. Kyaw Lin;
3. Saw Ler Wah;
4. Saw Htoo La;
5. Ta Naw Si;
6. Ta Naw No;
7. Saw Htoo Hsa; and
8. Saw Htee Bu.

The troops also looted from these villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 12 February 2002, a group of DKBA soldiers led by Nga Kywe, went into Tagundaing village and beat a Muslim farmer, U Ra Dhi (50 years) who stayed outside of the village. Because of the severe beating, he was sent to the hospital in town for treatment. This man was innocent and not a Muslim leader. Most of the members of the DKBA are Buddhists and hate Muslims. (Source: *HURFOM*)

On 27 February 2002, a group of DKBA soldiers led by Lt. Maung Hla Nge went into Port-gyi-gone village and arrested a Mon woman, Mi Kun Hale (60 years old) and tortured her. The DKBA soldiers arrested her accusing her son of being a trafficker of migrant workers into Thailand. They claimed that he had failed to send some Karen migrant workers, who were relatives of the DKBA soldiers. She did not know whether her son was a trafficker or not as he been gone from home for several months. The soldiers accused her son of taking money from Karen migrant workers but not taking them to the designated work places in Thailand. They claimed that he took their money but failed to complete his duty. Then the soldiers severely tortured her. The soldiers ordered her to give them 700,000 kyat for her release. After her relatives paid that amount, she was released. (Source: *HURFOM*)

On 7 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 103 column 1 led by column commander Tin Maung Win went to Htee-law-beh villge in Kya-inn Township and tortured villagers U Maung Lee, (M-40) and Naw Peh Koo, (F-46), without any reason. As a result of torture one of Naw Peh Koo's ribs was broken. (Source: KIC)

In the middle of April 2002, during the Water Festival, three Karen guerrillas (KNLA) planned to visit their homes. On the way, SPDC soldiers from Division 88 arrested them. The three of them were severely tortured, forced to show their camps, hideouts and the homes and villages of their relatives and friends that they had passed through. Their ears were cut off, their faces and body had sores and holes made in them and their ankles were tied with ropes. As a result the three guerrillas showed their houses, villages and guerrilla hideouts. However they could not think clearly and their confessions were inaccurate so many innocent villagers were in trouble. (Source: FTUB)(See also IDP chapter)

On 23 April 2002 troops from SPDC LIB 301 column 1 and 2 came to Kaw-kher village in Kya-in Township and arrested, tied up with rope and tortured:

1. Christian pastor Saw Heh Pay Htoo M, 44,
2. U Tha Wa, M, 45 and
3. Maung Kyi Hlaing 54. (Source: KIC)

On 24 April 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78, led by column 1 commander came to Htee-tha-blu village in Kya-in Township and severely tortured Christian pastor Si Pa Trer and threatened to kill two female villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 26 April 2002, troops from SPDC IB 77, led by battalion commander Myint Lwin extorted money from Mae Pra villagers in Kya-in Township and brutally tortured Mae Pra villagers, Saw Ka Done and U Tin Win. (Source: KIC)

On 30 April 2002, LIB No. 548 and Karen surrender group HPO went into Kun-tit-tar (a Karen village) and arrested two men who were suspected as rebels. During the interrogation, the soldiers beat their legs and hands until they were broken and useless. (Source: HURFOM)

On 8 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 column 1 led by Min Din burnt down some houses. At 2:00 PM, these troops shot at Htee-pa-nwe village head Maung Pan Aye (M, 46), wounding him in the thigh and then cut his thighs with a knife. (Source: KIC)

On 12 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 led by Column 1 commander Min Din and column second commander Than Oo looted from Kya-in Township, Kun-thit-ta villagers. These troops took Khun-thit-ta villagers namely,

1. Saw kyaw Hla (M, 52),
2. Mahn Tin Lay (M, 25),
3. Saw Win Kyate (M, 45),
4. Saw Mya Thein (M, 35),
5. Hla Win Tin (M, 25),
6. Saw Thaung Pyo (M, 25) and
7. Pa Yo (M, 22)

to Pa-ya-ngote-toe and tortured them. (Source: KIC)

On 13 May 2002, in the evening SPDC LIB 301 troops led by column commander Min Din came to Khun-thit-ta village, Kya-in Township, and gathered the elderly people, women and children in the assembly hall of the village temple and starved them until 19 May. (Source: KIC)

On 14 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 103 Column 2 shelled Mae-ta-lah village with heavy weapons killing villager Ta Po Nyaw. These troops also brutally tortured Paw Law Eh villager Hseh Bya. (Source: KIC)

On 17 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301, under LID 88, led by Column 1 commander, Min Din shelled with heavy weapons at a group of persons at a place between Doo-kwe village and Htee-khay village in Kya-in Township killing one villager. On that day these troops asked Htee-khay villager Saw Sunday whether he saw the Karen resistance groups. When he said that he did not see any, they beat him up until his left eye came out. They took him to the army camp. He was still not yet released at to the time this report was published. (Source: KIC)

On 30 May 2002, troops from SPDC IB 77 Column 1 under LID 88 led by the battalion commander went into Kyo-waing, Wah-ma and Ta-dah-oo villages in Kya-in Township. These troops arrested and brutally tortured Kyo-waing villagers:

1. Saw Kyaw Thu 17, son of Saw Pa Lu Tha,
2. Saw Be Loo 17, son of Saw Hla Shwe,
3. Saw Aye Shay 17, son of Saw Aung Htun Paw,
4. Saw Paw Gay, 14, son of Saw Pa Shwe, and
5. Saw Than Win, 25, son of Saw Kyaw Lwin (village secretary)

Wali-ma villagers:

1. Ko Nyein Maung 31, son of U Aye Mya,
2. Ko Ba Hlaing 30, son of U Khweh and
3. U Than Htun 42, son of U Tun Sein –

and Ta-dah-oo villagers:

- a. Saw Hla Shwe 40 and
- b. U Shwe Khin 38, son of U Kyaw Htoo. (Source: KIC)

On 28 June 2002, about 80 troops from SPDC LIB 546 led by battalion commander Kyaw Win came to Tari-ta-kaung village in Kya-in Township and brutally beat up villagers for no apparent reason. The victims were:

1. U Kyaw Thaung (M, 62),
2. U Htay Nyunt (M, 56),
3. Zaw Htay (M, 38),
4. Ba Win Sein (M, 36),
5. Hsa Tu Gaw (M, 40),
6. Ma Chit Hla (F, 47),
7. Maung Khing Win (M, 38),
8. U Kyaw Sein (M, 56) and
9. U Ba Khet (M, 68). (Source: KIC)

On 28 June 2002, a column of SPDC LIB 34, came to Ma-u village in Win-yae Township and brutally beat up villagers. The victims were:

1. Pah Wah (M, 40),
2. Saw Pah Klo, (M, 42),
3. Saw Pah Hser (M, 42) and
4. Saw Li Baw (M, 40).

Moreover, these troops looted from Saw Li Baw a camera and 10,000 kyat. The troops also demanded 10 porters and one basket of rice from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 29 June 2002 at about 1:00 pm, about 30 troops from SPDC LIB 591 led by battalion second in command Myo Kyaw Zwa came to Pa-yaung-chaung-wa village in Win-yae Township and seized some villagers and used them as human shields. The troops beat up villager U Kya Na, aged 43, and looted a camera and a pair of shoes from him. (Source: KIC)

On 13 September 2002 at 7:00 PM, troops from Thu Mu Heh's Karen Peace Unit led by Bo Tint Win, arrested Dar-lie villagers, in Kya-in Township, Saw Ler Taw, aged 36 and Saw Pah Eh, aged 29 who were respectively beaten six and two times. (Source: KIC)

On 6 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 415 under LID 88 led by Column 1 commander Nyunt Aye went to Baw-klo area, Kya-in Township, and beat up Saw Ah Paw, aged 16, without reason. After 2 days he was given 500 kyat and released. (Source: KIC)

On 14 October 2002, at 11:45 am, Bo Kyaw Htoo Win from SPDC No. 2 Tactical Command of Western Command headquarters hit Saw Min Naung, 34 of Anan-gwin village, Win-yae Township on the head for no apparent reason. He had to have 6 stitches for his wound. (Source: KIC)

Pa-pun District

On 5 February 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 38 led by company commander Hla Chit came to Htee-doh-ta village and looted 500,000 kyat from Saw Maw Klat. These troops also tortured villager Saw Win Naing. In addition, these troops shot at Htee-doh-ta village without any reason, using various kinds of weapons including heavy ones. As a result a child, Pah Tu Lu (M, 8), and Naw Peh (F, 65) were wounded. (Source: KIC)

On 3 March 2002, SPDC troops came to Wa-mee-lu village, looted from villagers and brutally tortured Pa Kyaw Thein. (Source: KIC)

On 5 June 2002, Win Naing, commander of SPDC LIB 308, came to Hte-theh-lay village and arrested for no apparent reason villager, Saw Aung Myaing and tortured him until his face bled. (Source: KIC)

On 5 July 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 1, under LID 44, led by battalion commander, Min Chit came to Wah-tho-kla village and arrested village head Saw Pah Ki, aged 50, without reason and brutally tortured him. (Source: KIC)

Pa-an District

On 18 March 2002, troops from SPD LIB 206 under LID 22 led by column 2 commander Major Thet Naing and DKBA Lay Pyo with about 100 soldiers went to

1. Kweeh-lay,
2. Mae-ta-moo,
3. Ka-ma-ta,
4. Kyaw-ta-lay-ko,
5. Pauk-baw-khee and
6. Htee-tha-bluh-ta villages

of Laing-bwe Township and issued an order to burn down all the hill farms. They tortured Htee-tha-bluh-ta villager Saw Pah Reh (M, 20) by striking and kicking him without apparent reason. In addition, on 23 March, they looted one basket each of rice from Wah-mee-klah and Htee-moe-khee village. (Source: KIC)

On 23 June 2002, commander Pah Day of DKBA Myeing-gyi-ngu Special Battalion summoned Kler-kat village head Saw Kya Maung to come to their camp at 12:00 pm and accused him of not informing them of the movements of KNU. Saya Than Zaw Oo struck at his chin with the butt of a M 79 grenade launcher and hit him many times on his back and in the chest with a rifle butt. Commander Pah Day then ordered Kler-kat village and Htee-baw-khee village to relocate either to Klar-day or Mae-ta-poo village. He threatened to drive them out from their village himself if the villagers did not go. (Source: KIC)

On 12 September 2002, a combined column of troops from SPDC LIB 209 under Tactical Command 221 led by column 2 commander Captain Kyaw Than Oo and DKBA battalion 555 troops led by Daw Bo burnt down 26 houses of Mae-tha-moo-ha, 11 houses of Waw-taw village and 24 houses of Kyuy-pu-lu villages. Moreover they arrested and tortured Mae-tha-moo-ha village head Pah Yo Heh. (Source: KIC)

On 14 November 2002, Bo Tin Kyi from SPDC IB 2 arrested and tortured Saw Pah Ba Yaw, aged 40, and Saw Pah Maung, aged 20, of Lay-kaw-hti village, Dweh-lo Township. He accused them of signalling to Karen resistance troops by blowing on traditional Karen buffalo horns. (Source: KIC)

Thaton District

On 3 March 2002 at 04:00 hours, Maung Too from a SPDC anti-insurgent group went to Kho-po village, arrested and severely beat up villagers, Maung Soe and Pa Ngeh. (Source: KIC)

On 7 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 1 column 2 led by major Khin Maung Oo went to Pa-nwe-po-khee village and beat up and tortured Saw Than Aung Thein (44), son of Tee Hti Kwee and Saw Pah Htoo (24), son of Saw Aung Than. (Source: KIC)

On 8 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 1 led by Bo Naing Oo Lay came to west Htee-pa-doh-ha village and interrogated and tortured villager Pah Ta Kee. At 11:00 pm, the troops shot and killed him without reason. (Source: KIC)

On 27 April 2002, company commander Min Aung of SPDC IB 96 came to Hsaw-thoo-khee village in Kyaik-to Township and brutally beat up villagers, Saw Maung Htein, (M, 35) and Saw Saw Pu, (M, 37). (Source: KIC)

On 28 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB1 led by Bo Mya Thaung came to Paw-khee area and extorted from villagers. They tied up Paw-khee villager Saw Khin Say without apparent reason, suspended him upside down and tortured him by cutting his throat with a knife until it bled. After that, they demanded 6 Paw-khee villagers as porters and proceeded to Ta-eu-khee village where they demanded 4 more porters. (Source: KIC)

On 21 June 2002, Battalion commander Soe Kyaw Oo and company commander Kyaw Naing of SPDC LIB 2 accused Ta-maw-taw village head Saw Kyaw Lah Moo, son of Saw Htun Ngwe, of hiding the resistance forces and buried his whole body underground up to his neck for one hour. (Source: KIC)

On 9 August 2002, Myint Soe, commander of SPDC IB 2, arrested without apparent reason and brutally tortured Ta-maw-daw villagers;

1. Saw Tin Win (M, 20) son of Tee Bo Bo,
2. Saw Hla Shwe (M, 35) son of Tee Htun Aye and
3. Saw Than Oo (M, 33) son of Tee Tha Bi.

Moreover, they struck the head of village head Naw Nyunt (F) who spoke in defence of the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 16 August 2002, Company commander Thet Oo Shwe of SPDC LIB 102 went to Ta-roi-khee village, tortured Saw Pah Keh and looted a pig and a chicken. (Source: KIC)

On 13 September 2002, Column 1 of SPDC LIB 2 led by battalion commander Aung Zaw Win arrested, tied up and brutally tortured Ta-eu-ni villagers Saw Tan Ye, aged 34, and Saw Tee Naw, aged 50, of Bi-lin Township. (Source: KIC)

On 2 November 2002, SPDC IB 8 column 2 troops led by Myint Naing came to Ler-ka-ter village and seized 3 villagers to be porters and took them to Pa-yaw-raw. Moreover they arrested and tortured without apparent reason the following villagers:

1. Saw San Myint, 37,
2. Pa Da Ya, 29,
3. Pa Twe, 47, and
4. Saw Shwe Kyaw, 39. (Source: KIC)

Toung-oo District

On 3 January 2002, as a firefight broke out at Ta-kaw-day in Kaw-thay-doe area Sergeant Win Naing of SPDC IB 39, based in Kaw-thay-doe village, accused Kaw-thay-doe village head Saw Ta Ku and villager Saw Ah U of being lax in their duties. He then beat them up violently, breaking some of their teeth. (Source: KIC)

On 1 February 2002, three SPDC Guerilla Unit troops had a quarrel with youths of Ba-na-pu village in Than-daung Township. On 2 February, the SPDC troops beat up Thraw-bu villagers who came to Than-daung Town, thinking that they were Ba-na-bu villagers. The beating seriously injured 20 Thraw-bu villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 22 April 2002, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit led by Yeh Kha demanded 3 Viss of chicken from Kaw-law-kah villagers. On that day, Maung Tin of SPDC IB 124 tortured Kaw-law-ka villagers whom they brought as porters namely:

1. Saw Po Sheh
2. Saw Kay Nay, son of Saw Baw Ku
3. Saw Peh Gyi, son of Saw Po Dah
4. Naw Eh Di Htoo, daughter of Maung Gaw Raw
5. Naw Seet Blut, daughter of Saw Maung Kleh
6. Naw Moo Sa, daughter of Saw Sha Moe Aye La
7. Naw Thay Ku, daughter of Saw Tu Meh. (Source: KIC)

On 24 April 2002, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit led by Yeh Kah went to Kaw-law-ka village and demanded from villagers meat and beat up villagers Saw Pi Ti, (M, 20) and Saw Keh Leh (M, 18). (Source: KIC)

On 23 October 2002, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit led by Si Thu extorted 2 Viss of chicken from Kaw-law-ka village of Than-daung township. These troops came to Ku-thay-doe village, Tan-ta-bin township, and demanded chickens and as they were not given, they beat up two village elders Saw Kwa Lar and Saw La Tin. (Source: KIC)

Nyaung-lay-bin District

On 1 January 2002, the second in command of SPDC LIB 350 demanded 10,000 kyat each from Toe-ta-tar, Ma-u-bin, Kaw-tha-say, Pa-det-kaw and Hin-tha-wang villages. In addition, these troops tortured Toe-ta-tar villagers Saw Kwa Toe and Saw Aung Kyi and demanded 10,000 kyat from them. (Source: KIC)

On 5 January 2002, a firefight broke out between KNLA and SPDC troops at Tha-yaw-baw-lu of Mon Township. One SPDC sergeant was wounded. For that, the SPDC troops arrested the Ma-la-daw village head and tortured him brutally. (Source: KIC)

On 31 August 2002, Sergeants Myint Kyaw and Myint Shwe of SPDC LIB 599 tortured by keeping under water for two hours and administering three beatings with a cudgel, villagers of Haw-ha-plaw of Mone Township, who were:

1. Saw Ywa Mu Heh
2. Saw Dah Weh
3. Saw Di Wah
4. Saw Na Klo
5. Saw Maung Weh
6. Saw Woh Kho
7. Saw Aung Htoo
8. Saw Aung Tun
9. Saw Ler Nya
10. Saw Ko Di
11. Saw Hi
12. Saw Po Ka Done
13. Saw Ka Paw Htoo
14. Saw Ah Htoo
15. Saw Thitta
16. Saw Yu Lah Htoo

17. Saw Thi Htoo
18. Saw Na Kya Htoo.

Moreover, these troops destroyed property in Haw-hta-plaw village. (See deprivation of livelihood chapter) (Source: KIC)

On 1 September 2002, Sergeants Myint Kyaw and Myint Shwe of SPDC LIB 599 brutally beat up villagers of Wah-doh-kla village, Mone Township, without apparent reason. The victims were:

1. Saw Kachin
2. Saw Ret Shwe
3. Saw Maung Dah
4. Saw Keh Say.

Moreover, these troops cut down 12 coconut trees. (Source: KIC)

Mergui-Tavoy Division

On 19 January 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 402 led by battalion commander Nay Myo Aung beat to death Khaw-paw villager Saw Kwa Ner (M, 34) in Ler-Doh-soe township, without apparent reason. (Source: KIC)

On 3 March 2002, SPDC troops arrested and tortured May-ta villager, Ti Ta Nay Tha of Ler-doh-soe Township and demanded 100,000 kyat and a fire arm from him. (Source: KIC)

On 9 April 2002, SPDC LIB 409 troops accused Ger-gaw village head, Yu May, of having connections with a resistance group and tortured him. (Source: KIC)

On 6 April 2002 at 16:00 hours, troops from SPDC LIB 409, led by Lieutenant Colonel Thet Min seized and took Hein-dah-pyin village heads Par Ti Pa Lay and Par Po Lay, and Ler-ta-pu villager Pah Ti Dah Sit. The troops tortured and demanded 200,000 kyat from each of them. They were released on 21 April. (Source: KIC)

On 10 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 409 beat up Ler-pu villager Ko-kway, Pati Dah Sit and his 13 year old son Paw Lay. Moreover, they arrested and tortured village heads and demanded three fire arms from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 12 April 2002, Myint Thein, commander of SPDC LIB 409, tortured She-bu villagers Saw Tha Lay Kwe, Saw Lah Bwe and Saw Toe Pler. The troops accused them of hiding people from the resistance group and demanded three fire arms. (Source: KIC)

On 18 June 2002 a group of SPDC troops accused Pay-cha-maw villager Saw Tu That of belonging to a resistance group and tortured him. (Source: KIC)

Mon State

On 28 January 2002, after an armed conflict between the Burmese Army and the Monland Restoration Army (MRA), the Burmese Army's LIB No. 550 disrobed a Mon monk in Kyon-kwee village, Three Pagoda Pass township with the accusation that he was a rebel. When the 63 troops of LIB No. 550 were on patrol against the MRA and KNLA, they were attacked by MRA soldiers near Kyon-kwee village which is about 15 Kilometers far from Three Pagoda Pass town, a well know border point with Thailand.

After the attack, LIB No. 550 commander Lt. Col. Tin Maung Lwin was angered by the attack and arrested the monk, Nai Galae (about 45 years old). He received incorrect information from other villages that that monk was involved in the recent fighting against them when he was a layman. After the arrest and before the soldiers disrobed him, the soldiers tortured him for over one hour during their interrogation. The soldiers used various types of torture during the interrogation. They beat and put his head into a bowl of water for some minutes until he told them something. They also punched in his stomach and kicked him.

According to villagers who knew him, he was not involved in the recent fighting. But when a group of Mon soldiers from the MRA came into the village, they ordered him to buy some food supplies and liquor from other villages near Three Pagoda Pass. The ambush attack occurred near a village on the main road to Three Pagoda Pass and the Burmese Army believed that he was an informer to MRA and involved in the fighting. As he was afraid of being suspected of being a rebel, he became a monk with the help of the Kyon-kwee monastery. But he was unexpectedly arrested and disrobed by soldiers. After disrobing him, they arrested him.

Before this incident, the same battalion also arrested some village headmen in the area near Three Pagoda Pass town on suspicion of being rebel-supporters. The soldiers arrested the chairman of Kyaw-palu village, Nai Tun and villager Nai Tin Hlaing, with the accusation they were supporting MRA troops during their attack against the Burmese Army. The headmen said they planned to go Ye Town and were village headmen of The-khone, a nearby fishing village. The Burmese soldiers did not believe him and tied them up. They blindfolded them with clothes and brought them to Ye Town. They detained them in the battalion detention center and the soldiers tortured them to make them admit they were Mon soldiers or the supporters of Mon rebels. The soldiers beat them mostly on their faces and on other parts of their bodies.

When their families arrived at the detention center to explain that they were not rebel soldiers, they found both men were seriously beaten. Their faces and some body parts had injuries. The families of the men asked the commander for the release of the men. Maj. Tin Aung Khaing agreed and said if they could pay 500,000 kyat for each, they would release them. The men's families returned to their homes and tried to collect 1 million kyat. After they collected the money, they paid the commander and he released the two men. They were brought to Ye town hospital for treatment for a few days. (Source: *HURFOM*)

On 17 July 2002, SPDC troops from LIB No. 343 led by Maj. Lin Oo tortured a 40 year old Mon farmer on his fruit plantation until he lost consciousness near Khawza village, Ye Township. The torture occurred when Maj. Lin Oo and his troops launched an offensive in the area against the MRA. When the soldiers arrived at his plantation, they arrested Nai Nyunt Maung and interrogated him to give them information about the activities of rebel leader Nai Bin. The man replied he just heard about this rebel leader and said the Mon soldiers did not come to his plantation.

Maj. Lin Oo did not believe him and accused all farmers of supporting the rebels by providing them with food and shelter. After the soldiers could not get any answers from the man, they brought him along with them and ordered him to show them the bases of the rebels. As the man didn't know he could not show them. For three days he was used by the soldiers to walk in advance as a human-shield. During those three days, the soldiers beat him

everyday. Although his family members and village leaders tried to get information about him they did not know of his fate.

On the third day, the commander was very angry with the man and ordered his men to beat him. About five soldiers beat him with their fists, sticks and rifle-butts. They beat his whole body and his face. Because of the cruel beating to his face, most of his teeth broke and in the end, he lost consciousness. The Burmese Army left him behind at a plantation of another farmer. Farmers near the area found him and brought him back to Khawza village. After he arrived back home, his family knew that he had been beaten by LIB No. 343 soldiers. They did not dare to take him to Ye town hospital, as they would face another threat from the commander. They had to treat him in the village with a traditional herbal doctor. (Source: *HURFOM*)

On 16 October 2002, SPDC soldiers from LIB No. 528 entered a Mon village, Magyi, and gathered all the villagers including women and children in the middle of the village and threatened that they would be killed if they supported the Mon army. At the same time, the soldiers climbed on to every house and took villagers' property claiming that had to search for evidence of how the rebel soldiers had stayed in the village. After an interrogation, the soldiers tortured Nai Ein in front of other villagers and beat him. Then they brought him with them on the suspicion that he was a rebel-supporter. After 4 days of cruel torture, the soldiers killed him in a small forest near the sea. According to other villagers, he was innocent. (Source: *HURFOM*)

On 6 November 2002, a Burmese Army column arrived near Cha-ha-ke village and arrested one villager in a plantation. Maj. Lin Oo interrogated him about the activities of the Mon army. During the interrogation, he cut the villager's body parts and tortured him. In the end, when the villager could not give a satisfactory answer, he stabbed and killed him. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Shan State

Beating of Villagers in Kaeng-Tung.

On 10 February 2002, 5 villagers from Wan Wo village in Murng Laang village tract who were returning from the town market were beaten with a cane by an SPDC soldier from LIB 314 at the airfield in Kaeng-Tung town. These villagers were from Wan Wo village from which the route to the town market passed through the airfield just outside Kaeng-Tung town. Many villagers usually crossed the airfield when they went to the town market on foot because to go around the airfield meant walking several more kilometres and taking much more time.

When they went in the morning to the town market, the villagers went across the airfield but there was no problem and no one stopped them. But when they returned in the afternoon, they were stopped by a group of 7 SPDC troops from LIB 314 who were on security duty at the airfield. The villagers were forced to stand in line in the hot sun in front of the guardhouse.

After some time the commander of the security troops, Sein Win, came to them holding a cane and asked whether they knew crossing the airfield was prohibited during the landing and takeoff of an airplane. One of the villagers, Zaai Laa, said they did not know and no one said anything to them when they came by the same way in the morning. The SPDC commander

then struck Zaai Laa on the head with the cane 3 times and continued to beat the other villagers on their thighs 3 times each. "This is just as a reminder, you will get much more next time", said the commander after the beating. (Source: *SHRF*)

Village Tract Headman Detained and Beaten in Murng-Ton.

On 6 July 2002, the headman of Me Ken village tract in Murng-Ton township was summoned by SPDC troops of IB 65 to the military base and interrogated. He was tortured and beaten during the interrogation. On that day, a patrol of 25 SPDC troops from IB 65, led by Capt. Han Sein of Company No.1, came to Me Ken village and told the village tract headman Pu Haeng Taeng Haan that the Tactical Commander wanted to see him about a very important matter and ordered him to come immediately with them to the military base.

When they got to the military base, a Corporal and some troops came up and arrested Pu Haeng Taeng Haan. The troops tied him up and interrogated him, forcing him to tell them how many SSA (Shan State Army) soldiers were in his area, who their leaders were and who provided them with food. During the interrogations, the SPDC troops beat and tortured the headman to squeeze out the information they wanted. As he could not answer their questions because he simply did not know, they beat him until his face was swollen all over and his head was fractured. He was detained until 27 July and was released only after a leader of the Lahu people's militia in the area guaranteed his innocence. (Source: *SHRF*)

Beating and Detention of Community Leader in Nam-Zarng and Murng Nai.

On 27 March 2002, SPDC troops from one of the units in Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township arrested and severely beat up a community leader at Phaa Sawnt village in Loi La tract, Nam-Zarng township. They later detained him at their camp in Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township for 10 days. The community leader or village tract headman, Lung Haeng Zit-Ta, was newly appointed by the SPDC troops stationed at Kho Lam village relocation site in Nam-Zarng township and was told, together with the original villagers of Phaa Sawnt, to go back to their old village, over a year ago.

On the day of the incident, a patrol of SPDC troops from Kaeng Tawng had come that way and when they saw people in Phaa Sawnt village they asked who had allowed them to come back, accused them of harbouring Shan rebels in the village and asked to see their headman. When they found the headman Lung Haeng Zit-Ta, the SPDC troops arrested him, took him into the compound of the village temple and interrogated him. They forced him to tell them where the Shan rebels were. When the headman said he had not seen any Shan rebels, the SPDC troops accused him of being a Shan rebel and ordered him to hand over his pistol and walkie-talkie.

When he said he did not have anything like that, the troops beat his head and his body with a stick until he was soaked in blood and lost consciousness. The troops then ordered one of the logging trucks to take him to their base in Kaeng Tawng area and locked him up for 10 days. Finally when villagers of Phaa Sawnt and other community leaders came to ask about him, the troops told them that he was with them and not to worry about him. They said that they already knew about him and would not do any more harm to him.

Some time later, the SPDC troops put the headman under the care of a logging company and sent him on a pilgrimage to lower Burma for one month, so that he could forget his terrible

experience and not report it to any authorities. For Lung Haeng Zit-Ta, however, the one-month pilgrimage could not cure him completely. Even some time after his return home, Lung Haeng Zit-Ta still looked and acted strangely as if mentally retarded. (Source: *SHRF*)

Mentally Retarded Villager Beaten in Murng-Ton.

On 27 June 2002, a mentally retarded villager of Naa Kawng Mu village in Murng-Ton township was severely beaten up by SPDC troops from IB 225 until he was soaked in blood and lost consciousness for about 2 hours, at his house in Naa Kawng Mu village. On 29 May, a column of SPDC troops from IB 225 from Murng-Ton, were passing through Naa Kawng Mu village on trucks and saw Zaa Zit-Ta, male, aged 40, gathering wild vegetables to feed his pigs outside the village. The soldiers forced him to get on one of the trucks and go with them.

The troops were going to the Murng-Kyawt area and when they were camping at Murng-Kyawt, Zaa Zit-Ta secretly escaped. The troops were angry and on their way back they stopped at Naa Kawng Mu village and enquired about Zaa Zit-Ta. When the SPDC troops found Zaa Zit-Ta in his house, they seized him, tied him up, and beat him until he was bleeding all over and finally lost consciousness. As the troops seized and beat Zaa Zit-Ta, some villagers who saw it ran and told the community leader about it.

The community leader or village tract headman, Lung Haeng La Mawng, then came to the scene and asked the SPDC troops what Zaa Zit-Ta had done wrong to deserve the beating. The troops said that they were teaching him a lesson because he ran away when they took him to serve as a porter. The headman then said that the troops should tell him when they needed porters and should not seize anyone they found on their way because they could be physically and mentally disabled. As for Zaa Zit-Ta, he was mentally retarded and would often do abnormal things, and sometimes he would go away from his family for 1-2 months without any apparent reasons. Although the troops stopped torturing him, released him, and apologized to the headman for their mistake, Zaa Zit-Ta had already suffered more than he could endure. He was bruised and bleeding all over and lost consciousness for 2 hours. (Source: *SHRF*)

Guide Tortured to Death in Kun-Hing.

On 18 June 2002, a secretary of the community leader of No.3 quarter of Kun-Hing town was tortured to death by SPDC troops from IB 246 while serving as a guide near a place called Loi Kong some distance south of Kun-Hing town, Kun-Hing township.

On the day of the incident, a patrol of about 20 SPDC troops from IB 246, led by Capt. Zaw Thein of Company No.2 came to No.3 quarter of Kun-Hing town and ordered Zaa Saw-Ta, male, aged 27, who was serving as a secretary to the community leader of No.3 quarter, to go with them as a guide. The SPDC troops told Zaa Saw-Ta that they wanted to patrol the area around Loi Kong, some distance south of the town, and ordered him to guide them. Zaa Saw-Ta then led them out of the town towards Loi Kong area.

In the evening of that day, some farmers who were returning home from their farms in Loi Kong area found the dead body of Zaa Saw-Ta in a pit near a foot-path on Loi Kong hill. He was apparently tortured to death. His throat was slit, his body bruised all over and there were marks on his wrists and legs showing that he had been tightly tied with ropes for some time.

When they heard about the incident from the farmers, Zaai Saw-Ta's relatives went and buried his body and reported it to the SPDC authorities in Kun-Hing town. Since it was on the same day that Zaai Saw-Ta was taken as a guide and there were foot prints of Burmese soldiers leading back to the town from where the body of Zaai Saw-Ta was found. It was clear enough who did it. However, when Kun-Hing town SPDC authorities relayed the message to the authorities at IB246, they bluntly denied it and casually said that it might be the rebels who killed Zaai Saw-Ta. (Source: *SHRF*)

Torture and Arbitrary Arrest in Murng-Ton.

In mid April 2002, a man was arrested from his village, brought to Murng-Ton town and detained, and continually tortured by the SPDC troops of IB 225, causing him to lose consciousness several times. On 16 April, a group of 30 SPDC troops led by commander Lun Maung, from Co.3 of IB225, came to Mae Ken village in Mae Ken village tract, Murng-Ton township, and arrested a man named Saw Nyunt from his house. The SPDC troops tied Saw Nyunt up as they arrested him, beat him and dragged him away like a dead body. Saw Nyunt was taken to Murng-Ton and detained in a lockup at a military camp. Every few hours, he was taken out of the jail and interrogated. The troops accused him of providing rice to the SSA (Shan State Army) and tortured him. They beat him and covered his face with plastic bags and stifled him until he lost consciousness. The process was then repeated a few hours after he was put back in the lockup and had regained consciousness.

On 18 April 2002, about 35 SPDC troops from Co.4 of IB225, led by commander Kyaw Win, came back to Mae Ken village and searched Saw Nyunt's house in his absence. The troops claimed they found 30 tablets of metamphetamine in Saw Nyunt's house and accused him of also dealing in illicit drugs in addition to being a supporter of the SSA. On the same day, after searching Saw Nyunt's house, the SPDC troops continued to search the house of a widow, Naang Khawng. Naang Khawng was a widow with 3 children and she used to peddle small consumer goods among Lahu villages of Pung Phaa - Pung Tawng during the opium harvest 2-3 months earlier. The SPDC troops accused Naang Khawng of being the wife of a Shan soldier, arrested her, and took her to Murng-Ton to be locked up. The troops also took 57,000 kyat and 2 baht weight of gold ornaments from Naang Khawng's house. No further information about Saw Nyunt and Naang Khawng has been received since then. (Source: *SHRF*)

Fatal Beating for Failing to Grow Opium in Murng-Kerng.

On 21 January 2002, 1 man of 29 villagers, who were detained and beaten by SPDC troops of LIB514 in Murng-Kerng township for failing to grow opium, died of the beating and the rest were ordered to carry his remains back to his village to conduct a funeral. Later money was extorted from them. It was said that on 4 October 2001, SPDC military authorities in Murng-Kerng township issued an instruction requiring every household in the villages to grow opium. On 20 January 2002, after they had checked and found that there were 29 houses that had not grown any opium as instructed, the SPDC troops summoned 1 person from each house to come to the military base.

At the base, the 29 villagers were scolded for defying orders and beaten 10 times each with sticks by the SPDC troops and were locked up at the base during the night. The next day, the villagers were taken out of jail, forced to squat in a line and beaten again, this time 15 times each. As the beating was about to be over, 1 of the villagers, Paw Thao Mung, male, aged 61,

fell down and fainted and could not get up. The troops then kicked at him and beat him several more times. When they stopped to look at him, he was already dead. The troops then ordered the remaining 28 villagers to carry the dead body of Paw Thao Mung back to his village and conduct a funeral for him.

On 27 January 2002, the remaining 28 villagers were called to the military base once more and scolded again for not obeying the military commander's orders and were accused of rebelling against the military government. The villagers were told to choose between 3 years' imprisonment or a fine of 150,000 kyat each. As all the villagers chose to pay the fine, they were given 20 days to complete paying it and were threatened with death if they broke their promise. It was reported that some who were not able to find the needed amount of money in time fled to different places as far away as they could. (Source: *SHRF*)

Beating and Extortion in Murng-Paeng.

On 2 May 2002, the headman of Ta Long village in Murng Pu Long village tract, Murng-Paeng township, was beaten by SPDC troops from IB43 so severely that his skull was fractured, his body soaked in blood, and he lost consciousness several times during the beating. In March 2002, Capt. Soe Maung Oo, the commander of the SPDC troops from Co.3 of Murng-Paeng-based IB43 and stationed at an outpost camp in Murng Pu Long tract, ordered the village headman of Ta Long village, Nan-Daa, to collect money from any new arrivals from other places who came to settle down in Ta Long village area. He instructed that 5,000 kyat should be collected from each household.

On the day of the incident, the SPDC commander and his troops came to Ta Long village to inspect the situation and found that there were 11 new houses in the village since the last time that they had come. The commander asked the village headman for the money he had told him to collect from the new settlers. Headman Nan-Daa explained that he could not collect any money from the newcomers because they were destitute displaced farmers and each household did not even have 500 kyat, let alone 5,000 kyat.

The SPDC commander did not believe the headman and accused him of trying to steal the money for himself and struck him on the head with his pistol, fracturing his head, and kicked him to the ground, causing him to lose consciousness for some time. When the headman regained consciousness, the commander beat and kicked him again and again until he was soaked in blood and lost consciousness 2-3 times. After he had beaten the headman to his satisfaction, the SPDC commander ordered the headman to find 30,000 kyat for him within 15 days and left the village, taking away with him a pig weighing over 30 kg from the headman's house. (Source: *SHRF*)

Civilian Driver Beaten with Rifle Butt in Ta-Khi-Laek.

On 10 January 2002, an SPDC soldier from LIB331 beat up a civilian driver with a rifle butt in the forehead, causing a big wound that needed to be treated with 6 stitches at a hospital. The reason for the beating was that the man questioned the activities of the SPDC troops, in Ta-Khi-Laek. Since 1 January, SPDC authorities in Ta-Khi-Laek had put up a surprise checkpoint on the main road in the centre of Ta-Khi-Laek town. They stopped trucks and cars that had dark stickers or plastic sheets on their windshield and window glasses, and tore them away by cutting and peeling them off with knives

The force that manned the checkpoint was a mixed lot coming from different SPDC departments such as administration, military, police and people's militia. As one of the security measures for the "Myanmar-Thai Friendship Trade Fair 2002", they tore off dark shading sheets from every truck and car, except for those of the military and some of the officers of the UWSA (United Wa State Army). When the security officers at the checkpoint tore off the dark stickers from one of the cars coming from Kaeng-Tung, out of curiosity the driver asked, "Why did you do that? I think civilians are not terrorists".

On hearing that, one of the security persons, a soldier from LIB331, struck the driver right on the forehead with his G-3 rifle butt, sending him to the ground with blood gushing out from the wound in his forehead. Zaai Wun Pan, male, aged 39, the victim, was from Nawng Phaa village in Kaeng-Tung township. After the beating, he went to a hospital in the Thai border town of Mae Sai for treatment of his wound. He received some medicine and 7 stitches on his forehead, which cost him 600 Baht. (Source: *SHRF*)

On 6 March 2002, a patrol from SPDC IB99 based at Larng Khur arrived at the village of Wan Morn La, where they seized and tortured villager Loong Sarng La. Accusing him of having connections with Shan resistance groups, the victim was beaten and tortured until he lost his consciousness. After they were satisfied they could get nothing, the soldiers released him before they left the village. (Source: Freedom, March & April 2002)

On 20 March 2002, more than 20 soldiers arrived at the village of Wan Morn La. To feed their pack ponies, they demanded 2 bowls (about 6 litres) of unhusked paddy from each family in the village. Later they searched and robbed every house for chicken, rice, cooking oil and other provisions. Those who were too poor and had nothing were beaten for not being cooperative. (Source: Freedom, March & April 2002)

On 5 April 2002, an 80-men-strong Burmese patrol from IB 247 based in Nam Zarng captured "Loong Sigta", the headman of Keng Kham village tract. Accused of being an informer of the Shan resistance group, he was detained and tortured continuously for 3 days. Food and water were not given. His hair was pulled out until his head was almost bare. The soldiers had demanded a confession about something he knew nothing. The soldiers also demanded a pistol and a communication set from the victim. After 3 days, the victim was mis-shapen and could not be recognized anymore.

When the Burmese troops continued their patrol to Naa Law village, the victim was last seen being dragged along by the Burmese soldiers. But after the Burmese patrol returned from Naa Law, "Loong Sigta" was not found among them. After the Burmese patrol left on 11 April 2002, the villagers went to search for their beloved headman, but not even a trace was found. "Loong Sigta" was presumed dead, murdered by the Burmese patrol from SPDC IB 247. (Source: Freedom, March & April 2002)

On 5 April 2002, an 80-men-strong Burmese patrol from IB 247, based in Nam Zarng, captured "Saray Pan Sigta", age 37, a villager of Wan Pha Sont, Loi La tract, Kho Lam. Accused of supporting the Shan resistance, the victim was tied and forced to lie down on the ground. The soldiers then jumped on his chest and abdomen, until he could barely move. Then he was forced to stand up again and again, followed by interrogation and beating, until he became unconscious.

During the torturing of "Saray Pan Sigta", his younger sister, "Nang Nu" came to his rescue. With her fluent Burmese, she managed to negotiate for her brother's life. Liquor, meat and food were served to all the Burmese troops in the camp for several days and she finally gave 15,000 kyats for the Burmese commander to sign his release. The liquor and food cost her about 130,000 kyats to save the life of "Saray Pan Sigta". (Source: Freedom, March & April 2002)

On 6 November 2002, Burmese troops based at Kali arrested the following innocent villagers: Sai Kai, age 18, Sai Phi, age 6, Teacher Mya Awng, age 30, Nang Peng, age 45, Sai Ter, age 15, Nang Oo, age 18. The innocent arrested villages were beaten and tortured. The Burmese troops did not even spare the children. Sai Kai lost one of his eyes as a result of the beating and Teacher Mya Awng was pregnant but after she was beaten up severely she was taken to the hospital by the villagers. (Source: Freedom, January 2003)

On Saturday, 12 January 2002, Captain Than Maung, Commander of Company 3, Battalion 281, summoned villagers farming around the village of Nakawngmu, halfway between Mongton and Border Pass 1, and interrogated them as to why he was not informed in advance about the movements of the Shan State Army in the area. "11 of them who had farms along the Harnng river became unconscious 2-3 times through the beatings," he said. The Harnng flows near the village. (Source: SHAN)

Karenni State

On 10 January 2002 soldiers from LIB No. 530 led by Kyaw Soe went to Daw Takleh village, Kelya Township (Pruso). The village chief and nine other villagers were arrested, interrogated and tortured by the SPDC troops. They were accused of having hosted and supported Karenni forces, which had been operating in the area. The SPDC troops claimed that because of their support, the Karenni troops had been able to ambush them. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 24 June 2002 troops from IB No. 17 at Naung Htaung base, led by Captain Khin Maung Myint, came to Tar Wah village, Loikaw Township,. They arrested three Tar Wah villagers in their rice field without giving a reason. The villagers were interrogated and tortured by the troops with regards to Karenni forces activities. They were continuously tortured for three days and finally released on 26 June. Due to the mistreatment by the troops, they were all injured. One of them is no longer able to walk. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 5 August 2002, a column of Burmese troops from LIB No. 302, under the command of Maung Maung Ko, arrested three Shadaw relocation camp residents, Kay Reh, 30, Pray Reh, 50, and Kyaw Than, 45, without giving a reason. They were tortured by the troops and detained at a military base for 7 days. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 1 September 2002, about 90 Burmese troops from LIB No. 84 and 171, commanded by Major Myint Naing, arrested 8 farmers from Teelon village in their paddy fields and tortured them. They were accused of having contact with KNPP forces. (Source: *KNAHR*)

4.7 Interviews

Interview with an Ex-DKBA Torturer.

Name: Ka Tone Gyi

Age: 22 years.

Race/Religion: Karen / Buddhist

Address: Kar Inn Sake Kyi township, Karen State

Sex: Male

DKBA *Thaw Thi Wah* (Elite Security Force for Myaing Gyi Ngu) - BC/07081

Rank: Sergeant

"In 1996, I was so confused about the situation, especially the split among Karen nationalities. An officer of KNU noticed what was on my mind. One day, he said to me that, "If you want to join DKBA, you can join, but do not forget to stand for our people." Then I left and joined DKBA. As a DKBA member, I had to sustain the following:

1. To protect our race and religion.
2. To respect and be loyal our race.
3. To respect the elders.
4. To sustain moral ethics.

However, DKBA members never follow the four principles. If they follow only one principle, many people will support them. I was unhappy with them so I decided to join the KNLA, bringing five rifles from DKBA. In 2001, while I went back to my village to help my parent's harvest, I was arrested by DKBA soldiers. I could be easily recognized because on my face a tattoo is written, "I Love You." Then DKBA soldiers decided that I should be executed, but a DKBA officer intervened and saved my life.

I stayed with DKBA soldiers and that time I realized that many of them became addicts of amphetamine. Thus, to achieve trust from DKBA members, I also tried to be rude and brutal. I hit and punched three villagers who were charged as being KNU supporters. SPDC and DKBA officers liked my interrogation style and started trusting me. Two months later I was sent to the Elite Security Force. I was assigned as a machine gunner. When my platoon captain signaled me to prepare for the escape, I tried my best and at last we reached to a KNU base. (Source: KIC)

Interview with Prison Torture Victim: January 2002

[CHRO Note: Ms. Ni Cia, a 23-year-old Chin woman and a former political prisoner in Burma, is currently seeking asylum in Malaysia under the United Nations' auspices. While awaiting her status to be determined by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Office in Kuala Lumpur, she faces precarious situations there. She has been arrested on more than one occasion by Malaysian police on immigration charges, a typical and daily experience encountered by most Chin refugees from Burma in Malaysia, who lack international legal protection.]

Before fleeing Burma, Ni Cia was arrested in 1998 and convicted to two years in jail under Section 17(a) of Unlawful Association Act, for having associated with activities of the Chin

National Front, an armed opposition group fighting against the Burmese military regime. After serving out her sentence in Kalay prison, she fled to Malaysia in July 2001.

In the following interview conducted by Chin Human Rights Organization, Ni Cia recounted how she endured the systematic method of torture employed by Burmese military regime on suspected members of oppositions as well as her experience in Burma's prison. Currently more than a dozen Chin women are serving political sentence in Kalay jail under similar conditions.]

CHRO: When and where were you arrested?

Ms. Ni Cia: I was arrested on December 4th 1998, Friday at Cong Thia village, Thantlang Township, Chin State.

CHRO: What was the reason for your arrest?

Ms. Ni Cia: I was arrested because the Burmese troops learnt about my contacts with members of the Chin National Front, CNF. My friend, (Ms) Men Thluai and I have been helping the activities of the Chin National Front by giving them information about the movements of the Burmese troops around our village as well as in many other types of activity of CNF. We were responsible for carrying out rural development projects put forward by the CNF as well as shopping necessary goods and commodities for CNF activists, which are only available in larger towns.

I was a private teacher at a middle school. I was visiting a friend when a group of Burmese soldiers accompanied by a local village council member who would identify me appeared at the door out of nowhere and arrested me.

CHRO: What happened after your arrest?

Ms. Ni Cia: The Burmese soldiers immediately escorted me to Thantlang town on foot. Shortly after we departed our village it started to get dark. My hands were tied to my back. They wouldn't shed flashlights to my way and I would stumble several times along the journey. Whenever I stumbled and fell down, they would call me a bitch, and spit on me and call me by all kinds of abusive languages.

We arrived Thantlang town at 6:00 in the morning after traveling on foot overnight. After two days of detention in Thantlang, military intelligence personnel came up to me in the morning and tied my hands up and loaded me into an army truck. I was seated on the floor of an army truck surrounded by 30 armed men. I was being taken to Haka. Since the road was unpaved and rough, I would fall to the floor whenever the truck shook. Since my hands were tied up, I was unable to get up easily after being thrown to the floor by the movement of the truck. I injured my rib from this and it hurt a lot. Sometimes my sarong (Skirts) got unfastened and I became half naked in front of 30 men surrounding me. They would lift my skirts up with their gun barrel and ask me how many times I have sexually entertained members of the CNF or if I was a concubine of a CNF man.

Upon our arrival in Hakha, I was handed over to the local policewomen. I overheard them calling the 266 Army Infantry Battalion and soon afterwards I was blindfolded with my hands and feet tied up and being loaded into the waiting army truck. I did not have a clue as to where I was being taken. The next thing I remember was when my blindfold was removed and I found myself in a stone cell with no single hole or ventilation. It was in fact an army base in Rungtlang. (Rungtlang or mount Rung is located above Haka town) Then I started to

feel severe pain in my ribs. When I asked where I was, they responded me by saying that I was such a stupid person who thinks herself so brave as to rebel the government and that I was in a place of no return.

CHRO: What happened afterwards?

Ms. Ni Cia: They started torturing me in that cell. There were altogether seven people interrogating me. Each one of them used different technique of torture. While my hands remained tied up to my back, they put a plastic hood over my head and tightly secured around my neck and I began to suffocate. Only after I began to feel unconscious and fell to the ground did they poke a hole in the plastic hood around my nose with their cigarette lights. Afterwards they tied up my feet and my hands to the front, and they let me do sit-ups until I fell to the ground from exhaustion. Each time I fell down, they started grinding my toes and my fingertips with their military boots to the floor. The pain was agonizing.

Later, they gave me an electric shock. After that they beat me all over my body with a 3-inch thick wooden stick. There were bruises all over my body and I was soaked in blood. They kicked me and punched me all over my body.

They made me take a bath with icy water in the middle of the chilling December night. They even burned my cheeks with their cigarette lights. Afterwards, they threw me into a dark pit. It was chilling inside the pit after being soaked in water. The torture went on for 7 days and I was deprived of food and sleep during the whole week. I caught a fever on the seventh day and by that time my body was soaked with my vomits. When they try to start torturing me on the seventh day, I just fell unconscious from my weakness and pain. The next thing I knew was I had been transferred to the local Police station, which has no separate facility or cell for women. My interrogators and torturers were all men all along.

CHRO: When and how did you end up in Kalay Prison and what sentence did you get?

Ms. Ni Cia: It was on January 20, 1999 that the verdict was reached by the judge. I appeared in court nine times before being sentenced to 2 years in prison. I was convicted under so-called Section 17(a), which is something related to armed insurgency. This sentence landed me into Kalay Prison on February 2nd 1999.

CHRO: Did you feel that you were treated differently or discriminated against because of your being a Chin woman?

Ms. Ni Cia: Throughout the course of my interrogation and torture, as well as in the prison, what they always emphasized was "You Chin people are uncivilized beings who from your ancestors do not know how to dress up properly, and who shamelessly dare to oppose the army's authority". During one of my interrogation sessions, they made me strip naked and they let me mimic the way a traditional Chin man would dress in pre-colonial period.

In the prison, women prison guards on duty treated non-Burman ethnic women differently. Even Burman inmates would look down upon us and would always use abusive language to us. We weren't supposed to talk back to anything being said to us or we risked beatings and whipping.

CHRO: Did you have to work in the Kalay prison?

Ms. Ni Cia: We have to work all the time in Kalay prison. We work on sowing and harvesting crops. On those occasions, we were taken out to the fields. But most of the time, we work inside the prison compound. We took care of vegetable plantations; we cleaned the

prison facilities, cells and the like. Sometimes the women guards would make us wash their underwear and materials that they had used for their menstrual purposes. Until 9 p.m. at night we did knitting and embroidery works.

During the summer when the temperature got really hot, we were made to kill 500 flies (insects) per day per person. We were caned 20 times if we failed to meet the designated number of flies to be killed. The women political prisoners weren't usually let work outside of the prison but men inmates with similar cases have to labor in worksites other than the prison compound. Under the burning temperature, these men inmates are forced to work without rest and without proper meals. We often heard that 3 to 5 prisoners were dying everyday under those conditions. There might have been many Chin men prisoners. This thought just makes me heartbroken.

CHRO: What kind of food were you given in the prison?

Ms. Ni Cia: What can you expect? What a prisoner gets is the worst possible kind of food one can imagine. For breakfast meal we were given rice, which was the kind of rice we would normally feed pigs with, and a tiny bowl of watery pea soup. The rice is mingled with half unprocessed grains and small bits of stones. Before we could eat the rice we had to separate stones and unprocessed grains from the rice. What's left after doing that was just a tiny amount of rice. For dinner, they gave us the same sort of rice with sweet potato leaves cooked in a huge metal barrel. Sometimes they would give us rice soups for breakfast. The soup was so watery that it looked just like water that had been used for washing up the rice. It was too salty. We were fed twice a day.

CHRO: How was the medical care when you get sick in the prison?

Ms. Ni Cia: There is no proper medical attention at all. Only after we became seriously ill, would they give us some pills. It did not help at all because it was usually too late for the medicines to have any affect on us. Another problem was that we did not have enough water. We were allowed to use only ten small cups of water for bathing. This was only when we have enough water. But when water got scarce we are allowed to use only six cups of water. Due to this we contacted all kinds of skin diseases. When we got sick or caught a fever, there are no enough blankets to keep us warm. What we had was a sheet of blanket just enough to cover our body. We would cry and moan from sickness and the guard would scold us and accuse us of pretending sick just because we were too lazy to work.

CHRO: Apart from yourself, how many Chin women were or are still there in Kalay Prison. Could you please tell us their names, from which areas, town or district in Chin State they are originally?

Ms. Ni Cia: As far as my knowledge goes, there are approximately 25 Chin women inmates in Kalay prison. A few of them were released while I was there. I don't know about all of them but the following are people that I remember as far as my recollection goes.

- 1- Dawt Thluai Ling (Haka, Chin State)
- 2- Khuangzi (Loklung, Chin State)
- 3- Sai Cer (Tlangpi, Chin State)

(These three women are political prisoners arrested in connection with CNF)

- 4- Mah Sui (Tidim, Chin State)
- 5- Hoi Ngeih Dim (From Tidim, Chin State)
- 6- Sial Cing (Tidim, Chin State)
- 7- Nu Dim Alias Khun Nu (From Tidim, Chin State)
- 8- Man Suan Dim (From Tidim, Chin State)

- 9- Nu Ngeih (From Tidim, Chin State)
- 10- Ma Biak (From Tahan, Kalay township, Sagiand Division)
- 11- Nuam Cing (Tidim, Chin State)
- 12- U Hrang (Falam, Chin State)
- 13- Khun Nu (Falam, Chin State)
- 14- Sui Nawn Sung (Dong Va, Chin State)
- 15- Ni Zi (Lung Hnam, Chin State)
- 16- *Sai Sung (Bungkhua, Chin State)

*Ms. Sai Sung came in just before I was released. She has two children, 9 and 11 years old. Her husband was arrested before she was. Both of them were arrested for sympathizing and collaborating with the CNF. Their children are being taken care of by a very old couple in Thangtlang. At the time of Sai Sung's arrest, she was forced to take off her clothes and paraded naked in front of the Burmese soldiers. While was being escorted by the soldiers from her village to Thantlang town, she was forced to wear only her underwear all along the one-day journey on foot.

In addition to the names I just mentioned, there are several other women whose names and original places I cannot remember. Their sufferings are beyond anyone's comprehension. More or less their cases have to do with some kinds of political activity. The above 16 women are those that are facing particularly difficult situations. They have either no close relative to support them or no one to look after their children. Most of them are serving out prison terms ranging from a minimum 15 to 35 years. They have no hope for outliving their prison terms. They just want to die now than going through a slow and painful death. They are very weak and depressed because they all have children and family to think about. Most of them are suffering from high-blooded pressure from depression and vitamin deficiency. They have no access to medical attention and their sicknesses worsened due to lack of nutritious food. In fact, the foods they eat obviously make their sickness worse. It is really heartbreaking to even think about their conditions.

CHRO: How do you plan to move on?

Ms. Ni Cia: Without legal protection, I am vulnerable to arrest and all kinds of police harassment here in Malaysia. I am constantly in fear for my safety. I don't know how long I can hide before being arrested again and possibly sent back to Burma. (Source: *CHRO*)



5. Deprivation of Livelihood

"The right to food of people in the Union of Myanmar [Burma] continues to be denied by the military government in that country. During the last year the Asian Legal Resource Centre has increasingly received credible and disturbing reports of serious food shortages throughout Myanmar [Burma], both directly and indirectly linked to government practices implemented to ensure perpetuation of its undemocratic rule. "

(Source: Statements to the UN Commission on Human Rights regarding food insecurity in Burma, Asian Legal Resource Centre, 2003.)

"We can't even feed our own children. I don't like to say such things... I'm a man, but I can't even feed my children."

(Source: Asian Human Rights Commission, May, 2003.)

5.1 Background

Throughout 2002 the majority of people in Burma continued to be engaged in an increasingly desperate and constant struggle to meet basic needs as they watched their living standards steadily deteriorate. Due to misguided economic policies, rampant corruption, cronyism and a disproportionate amount of the budget spent on the army, Burma's economy has been in a state of decline since the 1962 military coup. At the time of independence Burma was known as 'the rice bowl of Asia,' but today one in three children is malnourished. There is a clear link between the misuse of government funds and power and the poor living standards of the population of Burma. According to a report released by the Asian Legal Resource Centre entitled *The Right to Food*, researcher Angela Wong comments on the following: "On the indivisibility of rights, Sen argues that "no substantial famine has ever occurred in any independent and democratic country with a relatively free press". There is a clear and unequivocal link between type of governance and famine." (Source: Wong, Angela, *The Right to Food*, Asian Legal Resource Centre, 2003.)

Independent data confirms that agriculture accounts for 60% of Burma's GDP, employing 66% of the workforce and providing the country with 51% of its export earnings. At present, there is little potential for future growth in this sector under the current system of weak land rights, strict procurement policies and restrictions on exports. In many areas farmers are forced to sell a significant portion of their crop to the government at prices two or three times below market value. This effectively impoverishes farmers and dries up any tax revenue for the state. While the government has intervened to prevent increases in the price of rice, some reports from Arakan State indicate that despite this, rising rice prices may have led to several cases of starvation.

During March and April 2003 the Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC), submitted a written statement to the UN Commission on Human Rights stating the following:

"While the causes for ongoing food insecurity may be partly attributed to poor weather conditions, the Government of Myanmar must bear primary responsibility. The Asian Legal Resource Centre has continued to receive reports of the manifold ways in which it violates

the right to food through denial of the right to work, pernicious taxation, confiscation of land and repeated demands for unpaid civilian labour. It prevents or inhibits people from working freely to achieve their food security. Farmers are not permitted to choose when, where and how to cultivate. In areas of armed conflict they are subject to unstable life-threatening conditions that prevent them from using their labour, land and natural resources to earn a living. In other parts of the country, farmers are the victims of policies that place their own wellbeing after the interests of the state. Regardless of economic circumstances, civilian communities are obliged to satisfy demands for goods and services from the military. Meanwhile, the government goes so far as to issue blanket denials of floods and natural disasters and deny responsibility for rising prices, claiming that such reports are fabrications spread by greedy rice merchants to drive up the market value of their product.

Paddy farmers, the largest occupational sector of the country, are subject to a compulsory paddy-purchase programme enforced by government agencies nationwide. The quota is based upon the land-holdings of each farmer and without regard to actual production. The implicit tax on paddy— arising when the government buys rice at lower than the market rate— has grown from around 10 per cent in the early 1990s to around 80 per cent during the past year. This rate is still escalating, as in January 2003 farmers around the capital are understood to have been ordered to sell paddy at 350 kyat per basket, when they could receive 1500 kyat for the same amount on the open market. Credible reports from across the country indicate that farmers are facing increasing hardship in meeting the government's demands, but fear arrest if they fail to meet the quota. Whereas the military has been involved in collection of quota paddy in outlying areas for many years, in an apparently unprecedented move the commander of the central Yangon Division has now ordered that platoons of troops accompany government buyers to ensure that the paddy quota be met there also.

The recent food shortages have led to an upsurge of social unrest and crime. Reliable reports from across the country, throughout both urban and rural areas, indicate that groups of citizens have attacked and looted warehouses where rice is kept for export. In other cases, starving villagers have reportedly held up passenger buses travelling between urban areas, demanding not cash but food from those on board, and growing numbers of people coming to beg in towns and cities have been arrested in special police operations to suppress rising social discontent. A wave of food-related violence has also gripped the major cities during the past few months, as people in many areas are reported to be surviving on meagre quantities of rice soup.

The Myanmar armed forces continue to be directly responsible for the most severe violations of the right to food. Counter-insurgency operations— especially in remote western and eastern regions— randomly destroy food stocks and crops, relocate civilian communities and expropriate cash and materials. In some areas military operations directly target rural food supplies and crops without distinction, displace people from villages, scatter them into hills and jungles or force them into relocation sites. Widespread dislocation is resulting in serious and long-term structural food scarcity, not mere seasonal hunger due to occasional military incursions. The Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar raised these concerns in his oral submission to the fifty-eighth session of the Commission, noting that "the bulk of those allegations appear to be credible indeed, in the face of which I cannot be silent". The Special Rapporteur on the right to food has also acknowledged reports of food scarcity in Myanmar due to military operations (E/ CN. 4/ 2002/ 58, para. 106)." (Source: Written statement: Food scarcity in Myanmar, The Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC) submitted

to the 59th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, held in Geneva during March and April 2003.)

5.2 Situation of Farmers in Burma

An estimated 66% of Burma's workforce is employed in the agricultural sector and rice, being the nation's staple food, is an integral part of this sector. The SPDC, which has retained central planning and control of food production in the nation, has made various attempts to boost the production of rice and other agricultural products, yet the methods which they have used have had disastrous results for the people who do the farming in Burma.

Right to Own Land

Cultivators in Burma have effectively lost the right to own land, as under sections 9-12 of the Agricultural Lands Act 1953 the right to transfer, partition or lease land can only occur with permission of the authorities. In the 1963 Tenancy Act, the State usurped the right of landowners to lease their land and the 1963 'Protection of the right to cultivation' Act stipulated that land would be protected from confiscation, except in the case of a) *non-payment of dues owing to the State*, and b) *disputes arising from inheritance cases or actions taken by the State for security reasons*. The State was further granted authority to confiscate land through Notification No. 4/78, which was enacted on September 18, 1978. This notification states that failure to sow the allotted land with the earmarked crops to obtain optimum results, or failure to sell the full crop quota to the government at the stipulated price, would result in confiscation of land. Currently village and township administrators have the power to confiscate land and the cultivators are compelled to follow their dictates with no means of protest.

Forced Sale of Crops to the Government

Farmers in Burma are required to sell a percentage of their crops to the government at discount prices. This regulation is, as a rule, enforced for rice crops, yet there are also instances where local officials demand farmers sell set portions of other harvests such as beans and fruit crops. This paddy procurement system is implemented by the Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trade (MAPT), a state agency which, along with other arms of the bureaucracy, inherited this mandate from its socialist predecessor. MAPT's national structure reaches down to the village, where it designates paddy land and collects a fixed quota based on land area. This quota rose steadily from 1988 until 1995, when it was fixed at 12 baskets per acre in high rice-producing areas such as Irrawaddy Division. This crop quota is essentially a crop tax, and is justified by the SPDC as a means of feeding the armed forces, supplying discounted rice to civil servants and exporting rice and other crops in order to gain foreign currency. Yet in practice, the system has failed to improve economic conditions in Burma and has denied food to the very people who grow it.

An inherent flaw in this system is that the government's quota calculation is based on arable land area rather than amount of rice actually planted or harvested. Farmers who work poor land, or due to poor weather or other conditions produce an imperfect crop, are not exempt from the quota. Instead they must make up the difference by supplying paddy bought on the

market. In these cases, the difference between the relatively high market price and the low government purchase rate results in a net loss for farmers.

Households that fail to fill the quota face a variety of consequences. For households unable to sell the earmarked quota to the government, the local authorities, with the help of the armed forces and police, often forcefully confiscate the household's entire supply of paddy including that used for consumption and seed paddy. If even after such confiscation the quota is still not achieved, the defaulting cultivators are arrested and their rights to cultivate are taken away. While arrests and beatings have been reported, more common is the confiscation of paddy land, for redistribution to other farmers, whom the authorities feel are more capable of producing the required quota. Farmers have also been sent to labor camps to work off their debt. Local military authorities are also said to have ordered the rice mills to close, preventing the milling of harvested rice for consumption or trade until entire villages have filled their quotas. Lastly, farmers have been threatened, berated and publicly abused by government rice procurers dissatisfied with their quota. In Mon State of Burma, as well as in other areas of Burma, the SPDC has implemented a new policy wherein farmers are forced to sign contracts agreeing to sell a certain portion of their crops upon harvest. This inherently unjust crop quota system has left numerous farmers across Burma impoverished and/or landless. Corrupt officials often pay less than the set government purchase price, and occasionally the farmers receive nothing at all.

For much of 2002 the situation in Arakan state was particularly bad. Near famine conditions were reported throughout the year, which stimulated large scale rice smuggling from Bangladesh into Arakan State. The SPDC exported large quantities of rice to raise revenue neglecting domestic need for survival. As a result, there was a steep hike in the cost of rice which made it unaffordable to most people. In an attempt to stabilize the situation, the SPDC distributed poor quality rice towards the end of the year.

Dry Season Paddy Crops

The SPDC has launched agricultural development schemes throughout the country, but especially in the Irrawaddy Delta area. The government's main agricultural program is the summer, or dry season, paddy program, in which the traditional single rice crop per year, sown in the rainy season and reaped in the cool season of October-December, is followed by another crop raised and reaped in the hot season. The summer paddy scheme has several elements: development of irrigation systems such as dams and canals, introduction of high yielding hot-season rice strains and use of new fertilizers, pesticides and machinery to cope with the technical complications of the new crop.

These tactics have created two new burdens for farmers. The first is the labor needed to build roads, small dams and irrigation ditches. State-directed, uncompensated labor is common practice in Burma. Farmers who work on these development projects have less time to tend their crops or other subsistence activities. Secondly, the chemical ingredients of the summer rice program are not distributed free to poor farmers, but are sold to them. Farmers who do not buy the necessary materials cannot participate in the program; their unproductive land, officially designated for double cropping, is reassigned to a more able household. Insufficiency of water added to the fact that inclement weather and unsuitability of crops to be cultivated on certain types of land, are proving to be real deterrents to the country's agricultural development. In some parts of Irrawaddy Division, farmers who could not meet the required quota had to pay the market price in cash for the shortfall to the authorities. In

some places floods prevented cultivation. There were some areas where crops failed all three times they were cultivated. These cultivators not only wasted their efforts and suffered losses but also because of their inability to fulfill their quota were arrested in their hundreds.

In some localities the cultivators who could not sow the dry season crop had to make payment at the rate of *kyat* 300 per acre to Township and village authorities who lined their pockets with these fines. Those farmers who do not have ready cash had to pawn or sell their cattle, carts, houses, etc., to pay the fines.

5.3 Situation of Labor in Burma

Aside from the agricultural sector, the majority of laborers in Burma are struggling for their livelihood under harsh conditions with inadequate pay and no process or system through which their grievances can be aired. Under the market economic system, which has been imposed during the period of SPDC governance, workers in foreign investment and joint venture projects and factories have had to suffer the following;

- a. According to job appointment rules, the employer has the right to dismiss any worker from employment without giving a month's advance notice, as outlined in existing labor laws. This grants excessive power for exploitation to the employer and prevents a stable workforce from forming at work sites.
- b. There is no process or system by which worker's grievances can be aired, no mechanisms for demanding labor rights, no trade unions permitted at workplaces and departments, no clear mechanisms for the resolution of cases where a worker was forced to resign (or rather, workers are afraid to complain) and no step by step appeal programs (for negotiations, interventions and plenary discussion) therefore, workers suffer considerably.
- c. Foreign employers and investors have established factories in Burma as well as in other countries throughout Southeast Asia. In Burma however, workers receive salaries from foreign employers that are much lower than other countries' minimum wages. Private employers are in fact prohibited from raising salaries any higher than those of workers in nationalized factories. Thus, they cannot raise wages even if they wish to and so the workers are unable to attain a fair income.
- d. According to Burma's "Leave and Holiday Act", shift workers must work a maximum 48 hour week, and for offices and service industries 42 hours per week. However staff and workers in supermarkets and factories, which have appeared as a result of the developing market economy, have to work about 10 hours a day in defiance of labor protection laws. Working on Saturday and over time duties are also required, but there is no appropriate recompense, instead employees are sometimes paid a small amount of money or given some food. Social welfare laws are also ignored. As long as wage rates remain unadjusted to the current pace of inflation, workers continue to be denied a living wage. For example, the Labor Compensation Act excludes by definition workers earning over 400 *kyat* per month, so employers can claim that their workers are not covered by the Compensation Act.

Existing labor affairs laws are outdated and ineffectual and minimum wage laws apply only to government employees and employees of a few traditional industries. The minimum monthly wage for salaried public employees is \$2.00 (600 kyats) for what is, in effect, a 6-hour workday. Various subsidies and allowances supplement this sum. Neither the minimum wage nor the higher wages earned even by senior government officials provide workers and their families with a decent standard of living. Low and falling real wages in the public sector have fostered widespread corruption. In the private sector, urban laborers earn about \$0.70 per day (200 kyat), while rural agricultural workers earn about half that. Some private sector workers earn substantially more; a skilled factory worker earns about \$15 per day (4,500 kyat). Surplus labor conditions, a dismal economy and lack of protection by the government continue to dictate substandard conditions for workers. The 1964 Law on Fundamental Workers Rights and the 1951 Factories Act regulate working conditions. There is a legally prescribed 5-day, 35-hour workweek for employees in the public sector and a 6-day, 44-hour workweek for private and state enterprise employees, with overtime paid for additional work. The law also allows for a 24-hour rest period per week, and workers have 21 days of paid holidays per year. However, in practice such provisions benefit only a small portion of the country's labor force, since most of the labor force is engaged in rural agriculture. Numerous health and safety regulations exist, but in practice the Government has not made the necessary resources available to enforce the regulations. Although workers may in principle remove themselves from hazardous conditions, in practice many workers cannot expect to retain their jobs if they do so.

Wages in Burma are simply not high enough for most people to live on. Even the pay raise of civil servants in April 2000 was unable to insulate them from the effects of inflation. This has led to high levels of corruption and migration to other countries, as people in all fields of work, attempt to find outside sources of income and chances to leave their jobs for better pay elsewhere.

Other Factors Contributing to the Deprivation of Livelihood

People in areas across Burma are subjected to numerous demands for their hard-earned currency and their hard-pressed time. As the government spends an estimated 50% of the national budget on building up of the armed forces, there is little money allotted for the needs of the nation. Indeed, even the armed forces are not adequately provided for. In 1998, the SPDC in Rangoon informed its field units that rations would be cut back significantly and that they would, in essence, have to 'fend for themselves,' by producing their own food or obtaining it from villagers in their areas of operation. Since that order, thousands of acres of land have been confiscated from civilians, without compensation, for army food production or factories. The ousted farmers and local villagers are then frequently made to act as serfs on their former land, planting and harvesting crops for the army battalions who took the land from them.

The SPDC has prided itself on undertaking efforts to improve the nation, such as the building of roads, bridges and railroads. Yet it has been at the expense of the people of Burma that these national infrastructure projects have been carried out. The projects, which often are for military benefit, are usually severely under funded, and the local people are required to pay for or get the supplies themselves, and then build the projects themselves, at their own time and expense, without pay.

At the township and village administrative levels, there also is a lack of government funding. Again local people are made to compensate for these deficiencies in the national budget. The people in areas of armed conflict suffer the above economic burdens, as well additional demands which are associated with the significant military presence the SPDC maintains in their regions. Villagers in areas of armed conflict are expected to fully support the army battalions located in their area. They are required to build the army barracks, supplying the materials themselves, and then send "servants" to work as slaves at these bases. They are also forced to give them food, and any other items that army personnel demand from them.

1) Official and Unofficial Taxes and Levies:

Through several officially sanctioned fees and taxes, as well as arbitrary demands for cash from corrupt officials and army personnel, the people of Burma are expected to pay for everything from road construction supplies to state sport ceremonies. The income of Burma's people is sapped by these constant petty fees and most households end up forced to pay several thousands of kyat per month in these types of levies. Many villagers are unable to pay and are often forced to flee their traditional homes to avoid punishment by the authorities. The most common types of taxes and levies are listed below:

- **Porter and Forced Labor Fees:** A common practice, especially in conflict areas, is for the villagers to pay a mandatory "porter fee" to the local army battalion. The funds collected from this fee are supposed to go towards hiring porters for army operations. Yet in most cases, these fees are kept by the battalion officers, who then proceed to demand that the villagers supply porters for the army, even after the fee has been paid. These fees are usually around 200-500 kyat per household, per month. In addition, villagers who are delinquent in providing their forced labor duty are made to pay fines of varying amounts to local government or army authorities.

- **Administration fees:** In several localities across Burma the local people are made to pay monthly fees for township or village level administration costs. These fees, and whether or not they are actually used for administrative purposes, vary from place to place.

- **Festival and Ceremony Fees:** Often the government does not provide enough money for their state-sanctioned festival and ceremonies, including religious and sport festivals and even anti-NLD rallies. Where the government falls short, the people are expected to contribute. Government officials, including USDA members commonly send letters or go door to door demanding money for such occasions. In some instances, after the people have given their money, the said occasion never occurs at all.

- **Taxes for Development Projects:** The social, education and health sectors in Burma are seriously neglected by the SPDC, thus suffer from an acute shortage of government funding. Local people are often required to pay for the construction of educational and health-care structures, as well as for the running of numerous training programs. In addition, although the SPDC has taken credit for the various national infrastructure projects, it is the local people who most often foot the bill for such projects. Government funding for such development projects is often insufficient or swindled by corrupt officials and the villagers are ordered to provide the money or the supplies necessary for the projects.

- **Taxes and Fees for Local Army Units:** Civilians are regularly required to pay for the needs of local army units. In addition to demands for food and supplies, they must meet demands

for other various expenses which come up, such as the need for army walkie-talkies. Villagers commonly cover the cost for the construction of army related buildings, or supply the necessary materials. In addition, villagers in conflict areas are often forced to pay for lost guns when soldiers desert the army, or pay for the upkeep of surrendered rebels.

- **Check points:** Travel in Burma involves negotiating passage through numerous checkpoints that are operated by various branches of the state such as the military, police and cease-fire groups. Most exit and entry points to towns have permanent checkpoints. In addition, numerous temporary checkpoints are set up at anytime. These checkpoints inevitably demand payment from those traveling. If cash can not be produced, the authorities demand other items instead. A truck may be required to relinquish farm produce or consumer items it is transporting as a form of payment. According to a woman trader who used to trade along Three Pagoda Pass – Thanbyuzayat motor road, "On this motor road, there are many check-points hold various armed groups. We have to pay every checkpoint after we leave Three Pagoda Pass (a border town with Thailand). At many other check-points have not made as many problems, but the DKBA always checks every good, takes some goods, and ask for a high tax. Even though they are familiar with our face as we travel regularly, they still refuse to let us go without any trouble. They never reduce the amount of tax and shout to us that if we do not want to pay, we can stop trading. They treat us really badly. Sometimes, they put us under the hot sun for over one hour until they complete checking our normal goods." (Source: HURFOM)

- **Arbitrary Fees, Fines and Taxes:** Army officers posted to remote conflict areas, as well as officials in central Burma all receive opportunities to extort money from local villagers with impunity. There are several army officers who have become rich as a result of the numerous schemes they come up with to acquire money. Therefore people are subjected to numerous 'unofficial' levies, fines and taxes. In some cases people are not even given an explanation as to what their money is going for, but are just told to hand over a certain amount. Officers and soldiers seeking money have been known to set up temporary roadblocks on highways or bridges to demand money from people passing through. Some of these arbitrary levies are associated with discrimination against religious or ethnic minorities, such as in the case of arbitrary taxes which exist only for Muslim Rohingya people in Arakan State. An example of this is the tree and roof taxes which the Rohingya must pay.

2) Forced Labor

The well-documented use of civilians as forced laborers has endowed Burma with a mass labor force with which to build up its army and national infrastructure (See chapter on forced labor). This labor is mandatory, unpaid and requires that villagers spend varying amounts of time away from their own work. In addition to the economic strain that time away from work brings, the people are also required to provide their own food and equipment for the duration of the forced labor duty. The demand of forced labor is often the proverbial last straw on the camel's back for the already over-burdened people of Burma. Most refugees and migrant workers cite forced labor requirements as one of the major reasons for fleeing.

3) Land Confiscation

As mentioned above, the government of Burma has taken the opportunity to deprive citizens of their land whenever they deem it necessary for "security reasons" or for failure to provide necessary crop quotas. In addition to land confiscated to make way for army battalions, the state often takes over land that is intended for development projects. People are rarely compensated for land that has been confiscated. In cases where compensation is given, the amount is usually well below the actual value of the land. The deprivation of land, which is the sole source of livelihood for many of Burma's people, is a major infringement upon their right to livelihood as well as their property rights.

4) Destruction of Property

Loss of property is an obvious hindrance to the livelihood of an individual and their family, yet the SPDC continues to engage in activities that result in the uncompensated destruction of property such as homes and fields. In areas of ethnic conflict this practice is carried out under the "*four-cuts*" policy, in which the army seeks to destroy any means by which rebel armies can survive. In part of this policy, known as the "*scorched earth*" campaign, SPDC troops relocate villages in known rebel areas, then burn and destroy everything in the area. Burning of villages is common following relocation or in campaigns to "*search and destroy*" rebel activity. Property is also destroyed by the army in other areas of Burma if it stands in the way of planned army or national infrastructure projects.

5) Looting and Expropriation of Food and Possessions

The army in Burma, which sees itself as being the "father of the nation", has long expected the support of the country's civilians. The various incarnations of the military regime have attempted to instill a mentality in the people in which aiding the armed forces is seen as a national and patriotic duty. Yet this "duty" has become close to unbearable for Burma's people. In the years since 1998, when the SPDC cut rations for the armed forces, the villagers have faced an extra burden in providing for the soldiers. Some units even detail officers whose main task is to organize this activity. This systematic foraging from the local population is a method (like many others which involve human rights abuses) directly inherited by the Tatmadaw from the Imperial Japanese Army of World War II.

The army personnel have always been underpaid, especially the lower level soldiers and privates, and this had led to their frequent looting of villager property in the past. Now this looting and expropriation of food and possessions is condoned by the State. Army units on patrol who pass through villages simply take what they wish of the villagers' food and possessions, or else send letters demanding that the villagers bring it to them. Some officers even send "shopping lists" to the local village heads, requesting such things as soap, oil, chicken, rice and cases of beer. The extorted items are rarely paid for. Villagers are even sometimes forced to provide money, food and other requirements for army personnel when they wish to make offerings at local Buddhist temples.

6) Restrictions on Trade, Travel and Cultivation

The restrictions on trade, travel and cultivation that the SPDC army has introduced, especially in areas of armed conflict have made things even more difficult for individuals attempting to make a living and survive. Many people living in areas under SPDC control are restricted from leaving their villages and must pay for passes from authorities in order to gain permission to leave. These passes are often only good for short periods, sometimes only from dawn to dusk. For villagers attempting to work in locations far away, it is nearly impossible to do what is necessary to make a living and then get back on time. The SPDC also has enforced special restrictions at times in which people are banned from leaving their villages altogether. In these cases, harvests are often destroyed or lost along with other work opportunities.

Trade restrictions imposed by the authorities also result in economic hardship for the people of Burma. Another factor which restricts breadwinners in the country is the existence of landmines, which limits the areas in which labor-seekers are able to move.

5.4 Situation in Chin State

Unfair Taxes and Levies

In May, June and July 2002, Captain Phu Taw of LIB 50 based at Vuangtu village ordered three dozen villages in the immediate areas of Vuangtu to pay for his military camp. Tluangram village alone paid a total of 320,00 kyats to the army—50,00 kyats for the month of May, 100,00 for June and another 170,00 for July respectively. In issuing the order, Captain Phu Taw warned that any village that failed to contribute the money would face severe punishment. "All of these villages had no choice other than pay the money because they were afraid of the repercussions," said one villager.

On 28 July 2002, Captain Phu Taw and his troops crossed into India and looted and beat villagers of Daldanle in Mizoram State. They sneaked back into Burma with their loot from Indian villagers. Until recently, all Burmese army battalions stationed in Chin State have used forced labor to repair army camps. However, since early 2002, they began collecting money from villagers instead of using human labor. The following is the list of villages from which Captain Phu Taw demanded money: La-U, LaiLen, FarTlang, KhuaLiPi, NgaPhaiPi, NgaPhaiTe, LawngTlang, LungCawiTe, LungCawiPi, KhuaBung(A), KhuaBung(B), HnaRing, Khua Hrang, ThangAw, FarTlang, SenTung, SurNgen, TiSen(A), TiSen(B), SurNgen, LeiTak(A), LeiTak(B), ZePi, HmawngTlang, PhaiKhua, CawngThia, KuhChah, VuangTu, ZaBung, HlamPhei, ZeiPhai(A), ZeiPhai(B), TluangRam(A), TluangRam(B), TlangRua, and HriPhi. (Source:CHRO)

Looting by the Army

On 29 July and 29 August 2002, it was reported that SPDC troops confiscated two mithans (cattle) and 100,000 kyat from cross-border businessmen en route to Mizoram on both occasions. The two victims of extortion, wishing to remain anonymous due to security reasons, are from Sumsem village of Matupi township. They said that they were on their way to India's Mizoram State to sell 5 mithuns when they were intercepted by Captain Myint Lwin from Light Infantry Battalion 50, then commander of Sabawngte army camp. The captain confiscated two of the five animals, and demanded 40,000 kyat from the two businessmen as a ransom for the three remaining mithuns. The same Captain confiscated cattle belonging to Salai Khai Kung and Salai Than Uk of Dar Ling village of Matupi township. The captain also demanded 50,000 kyat from his victims. (Source:CHRO)

5.5 Situation in Arakan State

Unfair Taxes and Levies

Troops Take Money Given to Poor by French NGO.

On 16 January 2002, a Canadian official Ms Erin, accompanied by three local staff of the French NGO, ACF (Action contre la Faim), went to Zidung-bedo village and Ngaraing-chhaung village by a speedboat and distributed some money to the poorest people in the area. As soon as they left, a platoon from SPDC LIB 551 stationed at Taung-bazar battalion headquarter, Buthidaung township, and the local village headman came and collected 500 Kyat from each recipient as money needed for giving security to the visiting ACF officials. ACF is working in northern part of Arakan State and is one of a number of international NGOs engaged in the region. Whenever NGO officials or SPDC officials visit the area, the villagers there are forced to pay tolls to the Burmese troops accompanying those persons on security grounds, on the plea of having to buy food and drink for themselves. (Source: Narinjara)

Military Checkpoint in Western Burma Collects Illegal Toll.

On 11 June 2002, a trader who was bringing shrimp, fish and crabs for transporting to Rangoon from Gwa via Thandwe had to pay 12,568 Kyat for 730 viss (1 viss=1.7 kg) of shrimp, 1,100 Kyat for 220 viss of fish, and 15,555 Kyat for 311 viss of dried fish at the Thandwe military gate. The tolls collected were neither customs nor excise duties for the government treasury but funds for the military to be paid to the guards at the military checkpoints. As the economy of Arakan is based on agriculture and sea resources, the rampant toll collection prevalent across the state has put the livelihood of the farmers and fishermen in jeopardy because of all the restrictions and illegal tolls they have to pay to various law enforcement agencies including the Burmese military along all roads and waterways.

"The SPDC has engaged all the members of the law enforcement agencies to raise funds for their own use. As a result the various law-enforcement agencies have been with impunity carrying out fund raising drives throughout the state in a competitive way," said a prominent lawyer of Sittwe who had recently travelled by road to Rangoon.

In another incident, a vegetable vendor from Kyauktaw reported that, along the main river of the state, the Kaladan, there are more than two-dozen military checkpoints between Kyauktaw and Sittwe, the state capital, where illegal tolls are regularly collected in the name of fund raising for the military. The exorbitant collection of tolls has rendered the transportation and sale of agricultural produce or fish most unprofitable and time-consuming. As a result, the growers in the state are deprived of the right price.

"It is not unusual to find the Burmese Military personnel demanding a share of the goods carried for their own consumption at the military checkpoints", yet another businessman from Sittwe said. He added that harassment for the payment of illegal tolls at these checkpoints is so widespread that people usually pay the illegal tolls to avoid facing bitter confrontations.

"In a state a little over fifteen-thousand square miles in size the deployment of about 60 battalions of the Burmese military and the collection of illegal tolls from its four million Arakanese has left the economy in shambles. Though Arakan has so far boasted of being a rice-producing region of Burma there are reports of pockets of famine especially in the northern part of the state because of the wholesale plunder by the Burmese military. And this is done with complete impunity on the part of the perpetrators," a concerned retired high-ranking government official said. (Source: Narinjara)

Primary Schools at Villager's Expense.

In the last week of July 2002, in a bid to spruce up the villages along the Sittwe Rangoon motor road, in the western part of Burma, the SPDC forced the villagers along the road to collect at least 55% of the funds required to construct hundreds of new primary schools. Western Commander Brigadier General Maung Oo, on a visit to the villages in Ponnagyun Township in the last week of July ordered all the schools to be completed by the end of Buddhist Lent in mid-October. The Sittwe Rangoon road meanders from Sittwe, the capital of Arakan State, through the townships of Ponnagyun, Kyauktaw, Mrauk-u, Min-bra, Mrebon, Ann, Taungup, and into Pyi district under Bago division, and finally to Rangoon.

The construction work was done by forced labour conscripted from the villagers, a school teacher in Sittwe said. The construction of each of the schools involves about 2 million kyat in expenses, while the Burmese junta offered only 900,000 kyat. The remaining 1.1 million kyat is taken from the villagers by force. On average, each of the village families are required to pay a toll of 5-10,000 kyat, an amount quite high for the jobless villagers. Many villagers who were unable to pay the toll were arrested and detained by the police. The situation has landed them into a dilemma of getting detained and paying the bribe money required to either get released or to continue the lawsuits, he said. While due to the recent price spiral, the price of rice, the staple food, has shot up. Many villagers who are basically dependent on agriculture are facing food shortage. Lack of work has also forced many villagers to face the constant threat of starvation.

Paying tolls to the Burmese junta's school construction fund and bribing the police for escaping legal actions due to no fault of their own have made the villagers the scapegoats of the whimsical lawlessness of the junta, the school teacher commented. Besides the money the villagers are forced to work on the construction sites of the schools by carrying bricks, mortar, steel rods, and wooden planks. They also dig trenches and do other manual work the whole day. Villages where the illegal toll collection and forced labour conscription occurs include;

1. Paung-dok,
2. Pibaung-raung,
3. Laungret-taung-maw,
4. Naingya,
5. Si-the-rwa,
6. Shan-taung,
7. Kung-baung in Mrauk-u Township.
8. Aung-pru-braung,
9. Tha-rek-cho,
10. Kran-khung,
11. Kyaung-talang,
12. Taung-na-rwa,
13. Yaw-mu,
14. Kyauk-cheik,
15. Padetha,
16. Phung-cho,
17. Kyaung-aung-gree,
18. Pan-neela in Ponnagyun Township.

The schoolteacher said that the beautification and 'development drives' are being done to show to future foreign tourists how the Burmese junta gives importance to the development of the education sector in the much neglected minority state of Arakan. (Source: Narinjara)

200 Million Kyat Collected for an SPDC Built Pagoda.

On 17 September 2002, it was reported that SPDC officials in the western state of Burma ordered their officials to forcefully collect tolls for the renovation of a controversial pagoda that they built in Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine State in the western part of the country. On a rainy night the upper terrace of the pagoda, known as Lawkananda, developed three circular cracks. Since the damage occurred, the SPDC has erected a large number of booths at various market places to collect money to renovate the Lawkananda pagoda. The pagoda is nicknamed by people as 'Dukkha-nanda' or 'Suffering-nanda' pagoda for the wide-scale use of forced labour to build this highly trumpeted pagoda which was completed in 1998. Rakhine people usually avoid the pagoda as they purely believe that eventhough the pagoda is a Buddhist edifice, it was erected as a stroke of black magic to 'prevent' the independence of Rakhine State.

Traders with reputation, owners of bus services, wholesalers and business houses all over Rakhine State have already been forced to pay 20,000 to 25,000 kyat each to the pagoda fund. Non-compliance of the order would mean doom to their trades and commerce. The Burmese junta officials estimate that a total of over 200 million kyat will be required to complete the renovation.

But the local business community has reasons to fear that the exact amount of tolls to be collected may not be known and it may far exceed the 200 million kyat target. At Ann, near Nasaka Tollgate #25, a Lawkananda "Donation Collection Committee" led by Ann Township PDC general secretary has been posted to collect 1,000 kyat for each vehicle passing through the gate. Among the 'Committee' are Zaw Naing Oo Township Religious Officer, Nyi Nyi Aung Fisheries Officer, Tun Oo Customs Officer, and Tun Shin kyi a TPDC member, all of whom are Burmese officials from Ann. Similar toll collection centres have also been set up in hundreds of places in the 17 townships all over the state. Many devout Buddhist residents of Sittwe believe that the development of circular cracks is an omen that cannot be neglected which reveals that the SPDC junta is doomed to perish. The three circular cracks indicate the inevitable fall of the trio of Burmese junta leaders! (Source: Narinjara)

Looting By the Army

Burmese Navy Loot Fishing Boat and Throw Crew Overboard.

On 21 April 2002, members of the Burmese Navy with seven Muslim villagers attacked a fishing boat off Maungdaw coast in the western part of Burma, throwing the crew members into the sea, according to one of the two surviving crew members of the boat. The three Burmese Navy personnel, one of whom was in uniform, came aboard a passenger boat owned by Fazlul Huq, 46 years old, from Thawang-chaung village of Maungdaw township and drew near to the fishing boat. The passenger boat which carried the navy personnel was registered with the number of Sa/141/Na Ma 8.

The navy personnel who had three guns and two radios with them stopped the fishing boat, registered Sa/18/Na Ma 7, owned by U Sayed Qasim (36) of Kanbu village of Maungdaw. Then they demanded the necessary official papers and conducted a thorough search in the boat. They claimed that the papers were fake and demanded 100,000 kyat as bribe. The owner of the boat realizing that they were not after the official papers after all, agreed to pay 50,000 kyat, which the members of the Burmese Navy flatly refused. The three Navy personnel instantly grabbed the money bag from the boat owner, Qasim, which contained about 200,000 kyat that he kept for buying shrimp from fishermen. Afterwards they put the six crew members into the ice boxes kept for preserving fish and threw them into the sea at about 21:30 hours.

On 23 April 2002, a fishing boat from Sittwe spotted two of the six crew members who were thrown into the sea floating in the waters off the coast of Sittwe. They were Syed Qasim and Zia Husein. The unnamed boat later left the survivors on the bank of the Surali creek near Thawangchaung-village under Maungdaw township. The fate of the other four fishermen is still unknown and they are believed to have drowned in the sea. The two survivors with the help of a Thawang-chaung Village Peace and Development Council (VPDC) member lodged a complaint with the Area No. 8 Nasaka Security forces headquarters at Mraunglwet in Maungdaw township.

Until today, no action has been taken regarding this incident. The three navy personnel are from the Thawangchaung navy outpost while the missing four fishermen are as follows:

1. Hashib Ullah (25) son of Muhammad Hussein of Kambu village of Maungdaw,
 2. Hali Ullah (45) son of Nazir Ahmed of Kambu village,
 3. Abu Taher (48) son of Abdus Salam of Kyaukpandu village of Maungdaw, and
 4. Abdul Mottalib (22) son of Abdus Salam of Thawangchaung village of Maungdaw.
- (Source: Narinjara)

Border Security Forces Loot Buffaloes from Farmers

On 9 June 2002, it was reported that the Area # 7 Nasaka Border Security Forces HQ north of Arakan State in Burma seized six buffaloes from five farmers. While patrolling near Rwathaik-kye village, Corporal Myo Myint from Goduthara Nasaka camp met five villagers bringing six buffaloes from a nearby village to use for tilling their land. As soon as the villagers came near the patrol party, the corporal ordered his men to shoot to frighten the villagers. On hearing the shots from the Nasaka rifles, the villagers became alarmed and left the spot.

Later, the Nasaka forces seized the buffaloes by claiming that the villagers were bringing them to smuggle to Bangladesh. They then took the buffaloes to Nasaka Area 7 HQ at Alaythan-gyaw under Maungdaw Township. During the rainy season, buffaloes and cattle are used to plough rice fields, as there is no mechanized cultivation in all of Arakan State. The farmers need to get written permission from the local administrative bodies including the Nasaka to move the cattle from one village to another. Rwathaik-kye village is part of the Goduthara village tract and the farmers already had permission for bringing the buffaloes. But on this occasion, the councillors of Goduthara helped the Nasaka forces to loot the buffaloes from the farmers.

"It is not uncommon for Nasaka troops to loot our possessions including cattle by one-sidedly alleging that our cattle are meant for smuggling to Bangladesh. While the real smugglers usually carry on their trade with the help of these Nasaka so-called border troops," said a local farmer. (Source: Narinjara)

Military Monopoly on Trade and Agriculture

Forced Purchase of Firewood for Military Owned Brickfields in Arakan State.

On 8 January 2002, villagers reported to a local UNHCR official that Burmese troops started collecting firewood for the military owned brickfields across Arakan State including that in Maungdaw township, a town close to Bangladesh border on the Naf river. At Alay-than-gyaw village tract in the southern part of the township, firewood was forcefully 'bought' at a deliberately reduced price from woodcutters of the area by security forces from the Nasaka headquarters No. 7 in the locality beginning from October 2001.

On receiving the complaint, U Than Maung, the UNHCR-in-charge for southern part of Maungdaw township and U Tun Lwin, Assistant Supervisor called on Bohmu (major) Min Swe Myint of the Nasaka headquarters No. 7. The major denied all the charges of forcing the firewood sellers to sell their firewood at deliberately reduced prices. The major also told him that, anyone not willing to sell below the market price would not be forced to sell their firewood.

Since that time, the firewood sellers have been forced to sell more firewood at reduced prices, and they have been disallowed to sell firewood to others in the area. The Burmese military has been running large-scale brick fields across the south western state of Myanmar by forceful collection of firewood from the villagers near the brick field areas. A number of large brick fields are controlled and run in the townships of Kyauktaw (operated by SPDC Battalion 539), Rathedaung (SPDC Battalion 536) and Buthidaung (SPDC Battalion 234) where forceful collection of firewood involves paying deliberately lowered prices in the northern part of Rakhine State. (Source: Narinjara)

Forced Closure of Shrimp Farms.

Shrimp farms in a number of townships in Western Burma have been destroyed by digging their raised banks, according to a shrimp farm owner who escaped to Teknaf in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh. The Rakhine SPDC have ordered its' troops to destroy many of the shrimp farms in the state alleging that the shrimp farms were constructed on rice paddies illegally so that the rice production of the state is being hampered. Many shrimp farms in the townships of Maungdaw, Rathedaung, Pauktaw, Minbra, Mrebon and Kyaukpriu were destroyed, said Maung Maung Tun, an owner of shrimp farm at Minbra.

While the Commander of the Western Command, Brigadier General Maung Oo was aboard the *Malikha*, a fast motor vessel, on a trip to Taungoup on 5 March 2002, he saw the shrimp farms at Pauktaw Township and inquired about the feasibility of the farms. When some of the officials of the Fisheries Department aboard the vessel told him how successful the farms were he got jealous about the huge income the farms were generating for the Rakhine shrimp farm owners. On his return to his headquarters at Ann, he issued orders to close down all the shrimp farms constructed on farmlands.

The shrimp farms were actually constructed on shallow dams built in saline areas that can never be used for growing rice, since rice grows only in fields irrigated by sweet water. In addition, the farms were constructed with permission from the Livestock and Fisheries Department and the Department of Land Affairs. The owners also had to pay huge bribes to get permission and the necessary licences. The shrimp farms helped Rakhine shrimp farmers earn a huge amount of foreign currency for themselves as well as the country. Now they are left puzzled about what to do with the whimsical order of the Burmese junta.

At least twelve shrimp farmers were arrested from Minbra Township in recent months. It is alleged that the shrimp farmers later bribed the Western Commander with a payment of 30 million kyat to get permission to restart the farms. From Pauktaw Township the shrimp farmers collected 50 million kyat and bribed Dr Khin Win Shwe, wife of SPDC Secretary 1, Khin Nyunt. In Maungdaw Township all the shrimp farms have been ordered to close down and dismantled. In all 17 townships of Arakan State the Burmese junta has erected big signboards declaring severe legal measures for whoever tries to 'build shrimp farms on rice paddies.' (Source: Narinjara News)

Famine in Pockets of Northern Arakan State

On 16 May 2002, the village councillors under the Nasaka Area Two at Aungju village under Maungdaw township attended an emergency meeting because there was famine in many pockets of the township. They also asked for permission from the Nasaka Border Security and Immigration Authority to bring rice from other areas of Arakan State where the price of rice is comparatively low, said a village councillor who attended the meeting. The meeting was held at a time when the Nasaka border security forces were being criticized and blamed for the scarcity of rice. They had been entrusted with the rice collection drive and 'controlling' of rice trade in the area which meant allowing rice smuggling for those who bribed them. In Aungju village tract, many emaciated people described how the scarcity of rice was due to the forced collection of rice, which left them with practically nothing to live on. The ban on rice trading by the general public also worsened the situation the villagers said.

Since September 2001, the Burmese junta imposed a ban on carrying, selling, and milling of rice in Arakan State. Though the ban was imposed on the general traders and growers of rice, large numbers of defence personnel including the military were engaged in buying, carrying, milling, and smuggling of rice across the border to Bangladesh. Besides that, the junta also forcefully collected large amounts of rice from the farmers of Arakan State, without taking into consideration the local needs, therefore leaving very little for the consumption of the people of Arakan State.

"The present famine-like situation all over Arakan State is a deliberate creation of the present Burmese junta, SPDC," said an unnamed retired government official. "The military junta procured so much rice from the farmers of Arakan State that they left practically nothing for the survival of the Arakanese people. The present famine as you can see in many pockets of rural Arakan is not because there was a crop failure due to natural disasters but because the ruling Burmese junta has deliberately created it through their administration at various levels." The government official who worked in the Trade Corporation One that was in charge of rice procurement continued that the defence personnel in charge of procuring rice forcefully collected rice from the villagers without taking into consideration the local consumption requirement and humanitarian factors. As a result, they forced the farmers whose crop failed to buy rice in the open market and 'pay up' the quota of rice to the rice collectors. (Source: Narinjara)

Advance Money for Rice

For the coming 2002-03 dry season, when the collection drive will be conducted, the Burmese junta officials have set the target amount of rice to be collected at ten *tinns* (1 *tinn* = 2.5 baskets or 30kgs) for each acre of rice paddy. The amount of money advanced is 225 kyat for each *tinn*, while the present price of the same in the market is 1,300 kyat. A target of a total of 7.3 million *tinn* of rice has been set for collection this year from Arakan State. The usual rice harvest for an acre of rice paddy is 30 *tinns*, a Muslim farmer in the area said, which accounts for the one third of the total production of rice forcefully "purchased" at deliberately reduced prices. The export price of one hundred *tinn* of rice to Bangladesh stands at 170,000 kyat a seven and half-fold increase than the procurement price.

According to a farmer from Maungdaw Township, the advance money was distributed beginning on 12 August 2002. Though the money is badly needed, the amount of money

given as an advance from the Burmese junta and the fixed price for the future harvest of rice that will be forcefully collected are both reminiscent of the practice of extortion by Indian Chettiya moneylenders during the British rule in Burma. Even under the Burmese socialism of Ne Win, the farmers were compelled to sell their rice harvest at throwaway prices to the state. Arakan State is the second largest rice growing state in Burma, but its farmers remain the most exploited and the poorest of all due to the yearly "rip-off" campaign in the name of rice collection drives conducted since the military took over power in 1962. (Source: Narinjara)

Daily Necessities from Burma

The SPDC's ban on transportation of goods to Rakhine State since 25 September 2002 in the western part of Burma caused skyrocketing prices of essential commodities. The ban on the transportation of such everyday commodities including onions, pulses, cooking oil, rice and red chillies, caused severe shortages of edibles in the western state bordering with Bangladesh. The price of a viss (1.6 kg) of onion was 80 kyat before the ban while afterwards it sold at 500 kyat. The price of cooking oil was at least 2,000 kyat. The price of rice in harvest season in Rakhine state did not go down as was usual in previous years. For a meal one needed to spend at least 500 kyat in a restaurant which is more than ten times the amount previously needed. Though the fish and all agricultural produce from Arakan State were allowed free passage to Burma proper, the daily necessities of Burma proper could not be brought to Rakhine State. "This is nothing but conducting of a systematic campaign of starvation against a whole people", said a retired civil servant, "we have been treated as enemy to the jingoist Burmese SPDC junta generals. It is plain racism at its worst." (Source: Narinjara)

Food Scarcity in Burma: Rice from Bangladesh.

A price hike in 2002 of rice in Arakan State in the western part of Burma spurred the smuggling of Bangladeshi rice. The imposition of restrictions in the supply of rice in the western state of Burma created a crisis, causing the price of a little over a kilo of rice to go up to 330 to 350 kyat. Out of the 18 points much of the rice has been smuggled through Rahmater-bil, Thaingkhali and Palongkhali areas which are controlled by the local Huq Bahini gang. This gang was also previously engaged in smuggling fertilizer. Local politicians of the ruling party, BNP, and youth leaders allege that the same Huq Bahini smuggle fertilizer, rice, diesel fuel and hard drugs from Burma into Bangladesh by misusing the name of the ruling party. The rest of the points are controlled by two other gangs.

"At present a widespread famine-like situation is already prevailing in the state. The Burmese junta may not be able to avert a widespread famine this season. People are already facing the threat of starvation and in many areas of rural Rakhine State villagers are now foraging wild tracts of land nearby for whatever is available for feeding their hungry mouths," he said.

Hordes of emaciated women, old people and children in the villages of the state only testified to the distressing reality. "Because of lack of communication and junta-imposed censorship on free flow of media, the number of deaths due to famine, and the scale of people's suffering will never come to the light", a veteran lawyer in the township commented while expressing his deep concerns for a looming humanitarian disaster. (Source: Narinjara)

Rice Price Steadily Goes Down in Western Burma

On 29 November 2002, it was reported that the price for a 50 kg bag of rice has been officially earmarked at 3,600 kyat. Severe rice shortages in late 2002 forced the military authorities to take steps in fear of wide discontent among the people. The monthly salary given to a high school teacher is not even enough to buy two bags of rice. The rice so rationed is of a boiled variety, strong smelling and musty due to long storage in substandard warehouses, a manager of the State Agricultural Department said. Many state employees sell the deteriorated price to private rice sellers who carry them to the Buthidaung – Maungdaw area where they fetch a better price.

The price of Pawsan-hmwe variety of fine rice has come down from 25,000 kyat to 18,000 kyat. The price of Ngasein variety of coarse rice has come down from 18,000 kyat to 13,000 kyat. Though the prices are still high, people can now at least afford to fill their stomachs, said a schoolteacher from Maungdaw. On October 22, an honest immigration officer Myint Thein died in Maungdaw from complications arising from ‘malnutrition’ and lack of medical treatment that he could not afford. The present rice crisis is being tackled by the interference of the Burmese junta officials, but due to crop failure in Burma proper because of this year’s flood, the price of rice may not be kept under control next year, said a rice merchant from Sittwe. (Source: Narinjara)

5.6 Situation in Shan State - Partial List of Incidents

Land Confiscation

Land Confiscated in Nam-Zarng.

On 1 January 2002, SPDC troops from IB66 confiscated about 600 acres of cultivated land from the villagers of Wan Paang, about 3-1/2 miles south of Nam-Zarng town, Nam-Zarng township. A group of 10 SPDC troops from IB66, led by commander Kyi Soe, came by a military truck to Wan Paang village and called the village headman to the village centre and told him that some land north of their village would be confiscated without compensation because a new military base was to be set up there. The land confiscated was about 600 acres of pineapple and banana gardens, as well as wet rice fields annually cultivated by the local villagers for generations. (Source: SHRF)

Land Confiscated in Kaeng-Tung.

In early January 2002, over 800 acres of cultivated land belonging to the villagers of Kaeng Ka, Wan Noi and Wan Hud villages in Kaeng-Tung township were confiscated by SPDC troops of the Tactical Command Post based at Kaeng Ka village. The area of the 3 villages - Kaeng Ka, Wan Noi and Wan Hud - has been designated to be developed into a model village by the SPDC authorities and several acres of cultivated lands have been forcibly taken from the local people. The owners of the lands were forced to take 50 kyat for each acre of their lands and sign sale agreements stating that they willingly sold their lands to the authorities at the stated price.

Previously, when SPDC authorities confiscated lands of sizeable measure, they sometimes gave a small plot of land just big enough to build a small house on, usually about 45-50 feet square, back to each owner. This time, however, not a piece of land in the designated area was left for the original owners because of a development program to make the area a model village by the SPDC authorities. Although they did not want to give up their lands, which had served as their main livelihood for generations, the local people dared not defy the order of the SPDC troops for fear of further abuses and grudgingly signed the sale agreements. (Source: SHRF)

Rice Fields Confiscated in Murng-Ton.

In August 2002, 55-1/2 acres of rice fields belonging to villagers of Me Ken village, Me Ken village tract in Murng-Ton township, were confiscated by SPDC troops from IB65 and given to Lahu people's militia in the area. The rice fields belonged to the following 2 villagers:

1. Lung Hing (m), aged 53, had 26-1/2 acres
2. Lung Kan-Ta-Ma (m), aged 57, had 29 acres

These 2 farmers had been cultivating these lands as a livelihood since long ago. However, during the rice planting season this year they were not able to cultivate their lands for growing rice because they did not have enough money to hire tractors for ploughing and workers for planting rice. The SPDC troops accused the 2 villagers of deliberately refraining from cultivating their fields because they did not want to sell the rice quotas to the military, and issued an order confiscating the lands. Although the owners, with the help of the community leaders in the area, tried several times to appeal to the military authorities to get back their lands, their appeals fell on deaf ears. The lands were eventually handed by the SPDC troops over to the head of the Lahu people's militia in the area to, as they put it, help him feed his men. (Source: SHRF)

Looting by the Army

Consumer Goods Traders Robbed in Murng-Phyak.

On 2 February 2002, 3 traders from Kaeng-Tung who were returning from buying consumer goods from Ta-Khi-Laek, a border town with Thailand in the south, were robbed of 10,000 kyat of money each at Sop Lao village in Murng-Phyak township by SPDC troops from LIB329. The traders were returning to Kaeng-Tung from Ta-Khi-Laek town by a van which they had hired to transport some consumer goods which they had purchased there. As they got to the bridge at Sop Lao village in Murng-Phyak township, SPDC troops from LIB329, who were on security duty, stopped them and searched their car.

When they found a small amount of seasoning powder, cooking oil, alcoholic drink and 'Coca-Cola' among the consumer goods, the SPDC troops said they were illegal and threatened to seize all the goods. The traders tried to explain to no avail that they had not bought the goods from Thailand but from the shops in Ta-Khi-Laek town which had already paid the proper taxes on the goods to the concerned authorities when they were imported from Thailand. Finally, each trader had to pay 10,000 kyat as a fine to the SPDC troops to settle the matter. At first the traders offered to pay 3,000 kyat each, but the troops asked for 30,000 kyat from each. After some talking and bargaining, both sides agreed to meet somewhere halfway. (Source: SHRF)

Confiscated Civillian Car Damaged and Compensation Refused in Kaeng-Tung.

On 7 February 2002, SPDC police ran a conscripted van into the concrete column of the Union Monument in Kaeng-Tung town, Kaeng-Tung township, partly damaging the monument and badly damaging the car. On the day before the incident, SPDC police in Kaeng-Tung, Sergeant Htay Naing and 4 of his subordinates, conscripted a civilian van car from one of the townspeople to be used for their own pleasure. In the evening, the police drove the car to a restaurant in town and started drinking.

The police drank until past midnight and drove the van back to the police station. But the drunken police could not control the car and on the way ran into the Union Monument, breaking off about 2-3 feet of one of the concrete corners and badly denting the front of the car so that the engine broke down. The police were frightened because Union Day was only a few days ahead, on 12 February. They immediately found a mason in the town and ordered him to quickly repair the monument, which was finished before daybreak at around 04:00 hrs. After that, the police conscripted another civilian car and ordered the driver to drag the damaged car back to its owner's house and left it there. Although later the owner of the damaged car tried to ask for some reparation from the police, they refused to pay. The repair costs were estimated to be about 500,000 kyat. (Source: SHRF)

Villagers Beaten, Their Goods Stolen in Ta-Khi-Laek.

On 16 August 2002, villagers from Ta-Khi-Laek township, who paid the SPDC security troops for permission to buy goods in Mae Sai town in Thailand, were beaten on their return and their goods confiscated by the same troops. This incident took place during the closure of the border crossing points between Burma and Thailand when consumer goods on the Burma side of the border had become so scarce that many locals tried in many different ways to buy goods from Thailand.

On that day, 7 villagers from Ta-Khi-Laek were forced to pay 400 baht each to the SPDC security guards at Ta Pur Waang border crossing point to go and buy goods in Thailand and pay another 400 baht each on their return. Although the villagers had paid 800 baht each to the SPDC security guards for their passage, they were not allowed to take their goods which were all confiscated by the guards. In addition, the villagers were forced to stand in line and beaten with sticks six times each by the guards. The following 4 persons were among the 7 victims:

1. Pa Kham Pan (f), Aged 46, Saai Murng village, Ta-Khi-Laek township
 2. Zaai Sai Pung (m), Aged 31, Me Khaao village, Ta-Khi-Laek township
 3. Zaai Su-Nan (m), Aged 40, Tawng Kaw village, Ta-Khi-Laek township
 4. Naang Aa Pe (f), Aged 36, an Akha woman, Pa Leng village, Ta-Khi-Laek township
- (Source: SHRF)

Unfair Levies and Taxes

Extortion for Failing to Sell Rice Quota in Lai-Kha.

In February 2002, SPDC troops of IB64 issued an order requiring farmers in Wan Thi village tract in Lai-Kha township to sell rice quotas to the military. However, virtually all the farmers in the whole Wan Thi village tract could not produce enough rice to fill the quotas as demanded by the SPDC troops. As a result, they all went to plead with the SPDC township officer in Lai-Kha town to spare them. But the SPDC township officer, Capt. Thaung Sein, said that they could not be spared and if they did not want to sell their rice to the military, they had to pay 400,000 kyat for Wan Thai village tract instead. The farmers had no choice but to collect the required money among themselves and give it to the SPDC authorities. (Source: SHRF)

Non-opium Growers Taxed in Murng-Paeng.

On 29 March 2002, the village secretary of Lawn Keo village in Murng Pu Long village tract, Murng-Paeng township, was ordered by SPDC troops to collect "taxes" from villagers who did not grow opium. Capt. Soe Maung Oo, commander of Co.3 of SPDC's Murng-Paeng-based IB43, stationed in Murng Pu Long village tract, asked the secretary of the village headman of Lawn Keo village for the number of villagers who did not grow opium and ordered him to collect 15,000 kyat in "taxes" from each household. If the village secretary, Zaai In Wong, failed to collect the "taxes", he would be fined 30,000 Kyat, and if any of the householders refused to pay, they would be put in jail for 3 years, said the SPDC commanders. The village secretary, however, did not want to give any more trouble to the already destitute farmers, and did not have the amount of money which the SPDC commander had threatened to impose on him as a fine. So he fled the place with his wife and children. (Source: SHRF)

Money Extorted for Building New Military Facilities in Kaeng-Tung.

In March 2002, SPDC military authorities in Kaeng-Tung township issued an order requiring every household in the whole township to provide 2,000 Kyat to the military. The order was issued to all the village and village tract leaders in Kaeng-Tung township requiring them to collect the money from the people in their respective areas and bring it to the SPDC township office in Kaeng-Tung town. The money was to be used to help build new military facilities to protect the country. Anyone who failed to give the demanded money would be fined double, said the order.

Local people thought that the money would most likely be used to pay the workers in building military facilities, so that the military would escape being criticized for using unpaid forced labour of the people. However, because the money was earned with the people's hard labour, it was tantamount to using the unpaid forced labour of the people. For the farmers in the area, it was even more difficult. They not only had to sell their rice at very low prices to the military authorities to feed their soldiers, but also had to give money for building military facilities. (Source: SHRF)

Food Extorted for Troops During the Visit of SPDC Secretary-1 in Kaeng-Tun. (See also freedom of movement, assembly and association chapter)

In early April 2002, people in Kaeng-Tung township were ordered by troops from LIB533 to provide food and water, including rice, cooking oil, salt, chilli and pickled soya bean, etc., for troops on security duty during the visit of Secretary-1 of the SPDC and his entourage.

On that occasion, the villagers of Yaang La, Yaang Khum Mu, Yaang Mon, Yaang Kwaai and Wan Sang villages in Murng Laang tract and the villagers of Saa Pet village in zone 3 of Kaeng-Tung town were affected. The villagers had to collect rice and the demanded food stuffs among themselves and bring it all to the places where the SPDC troops were on duty at different sides of the town. On the day of the Secretary-1's visit, villagers of Yaang Khum Mu and Yaang Kwaai villages were ordered to stay only within their villages' limits; anyone who failed to comply with the order would be shot on sight. (Source: SHRF)

People in Ta-Khi-Laek Forced to Buy Vehicles for Military.

On 5 June 2002, LIB331 issued an order requiring the people in Ta-Khi-Laek township to buy pickup trucks and motorcycles for the military to be used during military operations. Each village tract was to buy 1 truck and 1 motorcycle. There are 11-12 village tracts in Ta-Khi-Laek township and each was required to buy one 4-wheel-drive pickup truck and one Honda Dream motorcycle from Thailand. Although the order was issued by LIB331, each village tract was required to provide the vehicles to the military units in their areas. The people had to collect money among themselves to buy the vehicles, requiring each household to provide 200 to 400 baht in accordance with the size of the village tract. Many people who did not have ready cash had to sell their livestock and valuables. (Source: SHRF)

Arrest, Detention and Extortion in Murng-Pan.

On 4 August 2002, 7 villagers who were returning from weeding a rice farm were arrested, detained for 4 days and 3 nights and had money extorted from them for their release by troops of LIB520 in Murng-Pan township. The 7 villagers were from Naa Ing quarter of Murng-Pan town and on that day they had gone to help weed the rice farm of a fellow villager. As they were returning from the farm and had not yet reached the town, the villagers ran into a patrol of about 40-45 SPDC troops from LIB520, led by Capt. San Win. The SPDC troops accused the villagers of having gone to provide food for the Shan soldiers and arrested them. Although the villagers explained that they were just returning from weeding a farm, the troops took them to the base of LIB520 and detained them for 4 days and 3 nights. Meanwhile, community leaders were sent for to come and vouch for the villagers for their release. Even after the community leaders had guaranteed their innocence, the villagers still had to pay 10,000 kyat each as a fine to the SPDC troops before they were released. (Source: SHRF)

Farmers in Townships Bordering China in Northern Shan State Forced to Buy Rice Seeds at Double the Price.

On 22 April 2002, SPDC authorities in the area forced the farmers in Mu-Se and Nam-Kham townships to buy rice seeds from them at the price of 15 Chinese Yuan per kg while the farmers could get them from China themselves for only about 8 Chinese Yuan per kg. When the farmers refused to buy the seeds saying that they could themselves buy them from China at a much lower price, an SPDC Major, Ant Maw, threatened that they would destroy all the

rice plants in the fields grown from the seeds bought from anyone other than the SPDC. The foreign exchange rate at that time was 100 Kyat = 0.81 Yuan. (Source: SHRF)

Forced Sale of Crops

People Forced to Grow Rice for the Military in Nam-Kham.

On 6 February 2002, an SPDC officer in Nam-Kham township, Maj. Ant Maw, called a meeting of village and tract leaders of Tee Ma village tract in Nam-Kham township and ordered them to grow dry season rice for the Burmese army. When the villagers tried to refuse by explaining that the forced labour imposed on them was too much for them to bear, the SPDC commander pointed his gun at them and threatened to put them in jail if they did not comply with his order. Thus, the following 5 villages in Tee Ma village tract had to grow dry season rice for the military:

1. Wan Hai village
2. Naa Long village
3. Maan Zaang village
4. Kung Sa village
5. Tee Ma village (Source: SHRF)

Villagers Forced to Destroy Their Own Crops and Grow Rice for the Military in Kaeng-Tung.

In early May 2002 troops from LIB314 in Kaeng-Tung township forced several villages on the eastern side of Kaeng-Tung town to grow dry-season rice for them in the fields where the villagers had already grown soya bean. This caused great losses to the villagers. The villagers had to pull out all the soya bean plants, which had already grown to their fullest and were about to bear fruit, and cultivate rice for the SPDC troops. Those who dared to disobey would face severe punishment, said the order.

Initially, the villagers and their village and community leaders had tried to plead with the SPDC district and township authorities, as well as the authorities of the LIB 314, to spare the land that had already been planted with soya bean. But the SPDC troops refused to listen to them and even scolded and threatened them. Eventually, the villagers had no choice but to do as they were told to avoid further abuses. The villagers of the following villages lost several acres of soya bean:

1. Pok Tai village,
2. Pok Nur village,
3. Lur Law Tai village,
4. Lur Law Nur village,
5. Wan Ton village,
6. Pa Khaam village and
7. Lawng Tawng village. (Source: SHRF)

People in Murng-Nai Face Stricter Rules in Growing Rice for the Military.

On 1 July 2002, SPDC military authorities in Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township issued an order requiring farmers in the area to grow rice for the military at the same time as their own, working every other day in turns for themselves and for the military. Last year when SPDC troops of the new 4 battalions (set up 2 years ago) in Kaeng Tawng ordered the people in the area to grow rice for them, the farmers did it as a second crop, after they had harvested their own crop. Being the second crop, the yield and the quality of the rice were not as good as expected by the troops.

Therefore this year the SPDC troops issued an order requiring the farmers to grow rice at the same time as they grew theirs. If they tilled their rice fields one day, they would be required to till the military fields the next day and so on. Any farmers who failed to follow the order would be put in jail and their rice fields confiscated, said the order. Many farmers in the area were complaining that the conditions were too much for most of them and were asking whether the situation along the border with Thailand had improved enough so that they could get into Thailand to seek refuge. (Source: SHRF)

Farmers Forced to Harvest Their Unripe Rice for the Military in Mu-Se.

In late September 2002, farmers in Ze Laan tract in Mu-Se township were forced by SPDC township authorities to reap their rice far before the proper time and prepare the fields for growing another crop of rice for the military, causing losses to the farmers. In order to conduct a rice seed sowing demonstration in honour of Gen. Khin Nyunt, Secretary No.1 of the SPDC, who would be visiting during the end of Buddhist Lent, Capt. Ant Maw, head of Mu-Se Township Peace and Development Council, issued an order requiring farmers in Ze Laan sub-township to prepare their rice fields in time for that purpose. The rice fields were to be ready for sowing seeds by the time of Gen. Khin Nyunt's visit. The farmers had to reap their rice well before it was ripe, clear the fields and plough the earth using their own mini-tractors and fuel, so that they were ready for sowing when Khin Nyunt arrived.

From the time the order was issued up to the time the work was finished, which was more than 10 days, the SPDC authorities concerned and members of the township police force watched over the farmers every day to make sure they did as they were told and did it fast enough to be ready in time. About 250 villagers were conscripted each day from the villages in the area and forced to reap the rice and clear the rice fields. Anyone who failed to go would have to pay 1,000 kyat per day to hire someone else to go for them. Many mini-tractors of the local villagers were also conscripted and forced to till the ground without providing any fuel for their engines. Several acres of rice fields had been affected in this way and many farmers lost their crop. (Source: SHRF)

Farmers Arrested for Suggesting Changing the Unfair Practice of Rice Procurement in Kaeng-Tung.

In October 2002, during the time when the SPDC authorities were collecting rice from the farmers in Kaeng-Tung township, 14 farmers from various village tracts who made suggestions to change the unfair method of rice procurement by the military were arrested and put in jail. The farmers were required to sell their rice at the rate of 12 baskets per acre of cultivated land, no matter how the yields turned out to be. The price was to be 300 kyat per basket, while the current market price was 4,200 kyat per basket.

The method was so unfair that many farmers faced substantial losses and some were not able to meet the rice quotas required to sell to the military. Some 14 courageous farmers tried to make the following suggestions to the authorities in an attempt to ease their virtually unbearable burden. They suggested that the authorities take only 3 baskets of rice for each acre of land and they would happily give it to them for free. Or, if the authorities still wanted 12 baskets from each acre, they could pay their rate for 5 baskets, but for the remaining 7 baskets, they should pay according to the current market price. The SPDC authorities did not agree to any of the suggestions, but immediately arrested the 14 farmers and put them in jail. (Source: SHRF)

5.7 Situation in Karen State

Livelihood Deprived by the DKBA

From the last week of December 2001 to the second week of January 2002, the DKBA's LIB No. 906 opened gambling, especially card games, for 14 days in Thadar-oo village near their base and organized the villagers nearby to come and be involved in illegal gambling. The DKBA collected funds from that gambling. Many villagers lost their money and some villagers also sold their belongings at low prices. However, the DKBA received a lot of tax from the gambling. In Mon tradition, the community elders and Buddhist monks oppose gambling with die, but they have no power to stop the DKBA as it has full authority from the SPDC. They collected 3000-5000 kyat from one den each night and ran the gambling for 12 nights in total. According to a village headman from the area, the DKBA received about 2.5 million kyat in funds in total. (Source: HURFOM)

In the second week of May 2002, when farmer Nai Chit Maung in Kanni village, bought a space of paddy-growing farm from village chairman, Nai Kyaw Myint, they agreed on the price of 1.2 million kyat. When the DKBA commander in the area, Maj. Maung Ngwe, heard about this he went to the village chairman's house and asked him to pay tax. But the chairman refused. He advised the commander that he could collect tax from the farmer who bought the land. They went to farmer's house early in the morning on 15 May and asked Nai Chit Maung, to pay 200, 000 kyat as tax for buying land. The farmer was surprised as he had never heard of such a tax in his life. However, the commander and his soldiers came with guns and said that if he did not pay he would not be allowed to go to his farm. Because of this threat, the farmer had to pay 200,000 kyat to the DKBA commander. (Source: HURFOM)

In mid-September 2002, DKBA Battalion No. 4 based in Pa-an Township, Karen State, declared they would arrange a football competition between villages in the township and all villages should participate. The DKBA indicated that the competition was for health development. The village headmen from all 54 villages in the township were instructed to collect 100 kyat from each household to raise funds for the competition. The headmen did not avoid even women headed households and collected money from them as well. Although many villages paid the DKBA, only a few could be participate in the competition because of the difficulty in traveling to town football grounds. The DKBA received 1.5 million kyat and spent only 200, 000 kyat on the competition. (Source: HURFOM)

Situation in Kawkareik Township

In January 2002, the authorities in Kawkareik Township had about 20 acres of paddy farm in Kyone-doe village and planned to use it for the cultivation of dry season paddy crop. They do not have a water-pumping generator and found difficulties bringing water from the river to their farm. The authorities asked the villagers from Kyone-doe village tract to provide them with a water-pumping generator. Immediately, the villagers from Kaw-kator, Kaw-por, Kyone-doe and Daw-pyar village collected funds and bought a water-pumping generator. (Source: HURFOM)

In February 2002, when Kawkareik Township PDC authorities cultivated dry season paddy crop to show to the farmers, they collected funds from all village tracts for money to buy gasoline. For the cultivation of dry season crops, like paddy, they need to bring water from the river by pump-engine generators and those machines require a lot of gasoline. The authorities planed to grow 60 acres of dry season paddy crops by bringing water from the river so they asked for 25 gallons of gasoline from each village tract. In this township, there are about 35 village tracts. They also instructed the village headmen to pay them money equivalent to the cost of 25 gallons of gasoline. One gallon of gasoline is about 800 kyat and every village tract had to pay 20,000 kyat to the authorities. (Source: HURFOM)

On 10 February 2002, the Chairman of Kawkareik Township Col. Ko Ko Gyi arrived at Kaw-bein village and ordered the headmen to build a piece of model concrete road near the market, which they had to spend about 30,000 kyat to buy cement and other materials. The authorities' plan was to turn Kaw-bein into a 'model village'. As the cost was a small amount, it was not so difficult for the headmen to collect money. Later on March 14, the Township authorities came to the village again and held a meeting with the village headmen. In that meeting, he ordered all the roads in the village to be concrete roads. The headmen faced a very difficult situation to collect money from the villagers. However, Township Chairman, Col. Ko Ko Kyi ordered all construction to be completed no later than 24 March. The headmen had only ten days to complete the roads. The cost for the construction was about 2.5 million kyat and they managed to collect the funds from the civilians. The families who stay along the main road had to pay up to 30,000 kyat and the families who stay on small roads paid less. On 24 March, while the roads were nearly completed, the Township Chairman came and held an opening ceremony of the concrete roads in that village." (Source: HURFOM)

On 5 March 2002, Township PDC Chairman U Ko Ko Gyi went to Kaw-bein, the biggest Mon village in the area, and confiscated eight saw mills and lumber in the area. The saw mills and lumber were owned by;

1. Nai Zu,
2. Nai Pyu,
3. Nai Kwein,
4. Nai Than Tin,
5. Nai Khin Maung Zin,
6. Nai Maung Win,
7. Nai Aung Htoo, and
8. Nai Hamae.

The first four men are from Kaw-bein village and the fifth man is from Kaw-made village. The sixth and seventh men are from Pot-gyi-gone village and the last man is from Min-ywa village. These villagers lost nearly 3 million kyat for their mills, equipment and lumber. After

confiscation, they gathered in the Village PDC office for several days and then went back to Kawkareik Town on 13 March, according to the local source. (Source: HURFOM)

On 14 March 2002, the authorities from Kawkareik Township General Administration Department led by Col. Ko Ko Gyi, went into Kaw-bein with a plan to create a model village. When he arrived, he found the flag pole was old and he ordered the village chairman to replace it. He instructed it to be completed by the evening. But the headmen said he would complete it tomorrow because he could not find a good and strong wooden pole. The Township Chairman was angry with the village headman. He said the authorities provided licenses to many lumber traders and timber mills to produce lumber and asked why it was difficult to find a strong wooden pole.

He ordered the police and village militia force in the area to arrest all timber traders, timber mill owners and wooden lumber carrying boats. On the next day, the authorities arrested 8 timber traders from Kaw-pauk, Kaw-bein, Kaw-make, Phaya-gyi-gone and Min-yar and confiscated all their timber mills and the lumber in their mills' compounds. They authorities also accused them of illegally cutting trees, but they all had permits and paid taxes regularly. These villages are in Kaw-bein village tract. The arrested traders and mill owners are:

1. Nai Zu
2. Nai Pyuu
3. Nai Kween
4. Nai Than Tun
5. Nai Khin Maung Zin
6. Nai Maung Win
7. Nai Aung Htoo
8. Nai Hamae.

In the Township court, the judges sentenced the eight men with different prison terms according to the instructions of the authorities. Judges detained Nai Zuu and Nai Byuu with 1 year and 9 months imprisonment. They gave Nai Khin Maung Zin, Nai Maung Win, Nai Aung Htoo and Nai Hamae 6 months imprisonment. They fined Nai Gween and Nai Than Tun. (Source: HURFOM)

Situation in Kya-inn-seikyi Township

In January and February 2002, Cap. Thein Tun was detailed to find supplementary foods from the villages in the area surrounding Taung-dee village where LIB No. 354 and LIB No. 538 has bases. Various officers from these battalions have increasingly requested food supplies from the villages nearby especially different meats and fish. The commander requested food from 7 villages on a rotation basis. The villages that needed to send food are Khawon, Taung-dee, Wae-zot, Mee-pran, Win-yaw, Hlaing-ka-noy and Hla-kada villages. Normally the village headmen had to send at least 20 kilograms of chicken, pork or fish, said by one village headman. (Source: HURFOM)

On 3 February 2002, an officer from LIB 354 based in Taung-dee village, Kya-inn-seikyi Township sent an order to a village in Tagundaing village tract to sell their paddy as quickly as possible. In the order, he told the headmen that they must report the amount of paddy (in baskets) their villagers needed to sell to paddy-buying center in Tagun-daing village, the amounts of paddy they already sold and to immediately sell the remaining amount of paddy. He also asked the chairman of the village headmen to come and meet him on 5 February to report the progress of selling paddy crops. Similarly, on 20 January, Lt. Col.

Aung Kyaw Nyein from IB 31 and Township PDC Chairman, U Thet Naing Oo, went into Htee-paukhlo village, Kya-inn-seikyi Township and forced the farmers to sell 3,000 baskets of paddy to a paddy-buying center set in Kya-inn-seikyi Town. Then, they also went to Kyauk-pone village and forced the farmers to sell 1,650 baskets of paddy to the paddy-buying center. (Source: HURFOM)

On 6 April 2002, when a column of soldiers from LIB 354 arrived into Win-yaw-seikyi village in conjunction with a military operation launched in the first week of April in Kya-inn-seikyi Township. The soldiers arrested one saw (hand-saw) owner, Nai Myat (32 years old Mon man), and threatened to confiscate all lumber kept in his house. Although the Mon man explained that he got permission from the Township to saw wood and produce lumber they still tried to take his wood. After discussion with the headmen, they agreed to take 30,000 kyat as a bribe and did not take his lumber.

The next day, they found some lumber in a river bank (Zami river) and inquired about the owners of the lumber. When the owners did not show up, the soldiers confiscated the lumber and ordered ten oxen carts from Mi-Pran Village to carry it to Taung-dee Village, about 4 miles away. (Source: HURFOM)

On 26 August 2002, after fighting between KNLA and LIB No. 301 troops in an area near Chaung-wa village persisted for 20 minutes, the Burmese Army's soldiers rushed into the village and looted various types of villagers' belongings, including household materials, kitchen things and other valuable property. They combed every house and took what they found. During the 3 month period from June to August, there were 5 rounds of fighting. After each incident, while the villagers were scared and in hiding, the soldiers went into their village and looted their belongings. (Source: HURFOM)

On 1 December 2002, Zaw Htun of the SPDC Western Command called a meeting of villagers, the village chairman and the secretary of Anan-gwin village, Win-yay Township, by force and issued an order requiring owners of saw mills, rice mills and video cinema halls to pay a tax. As a result, sawmill owner U Han Shwe, rice mill owner Dah Ka Lok, video cinema hall owners U Kauk and Daw Lun Myaing and furniture shop owner U Hsan Shay, each had to pay 20,000 kyat as tax. In addition, each household of Anan-gwin, Khun-nit-wah, Than-bya and Ta-nyin villages have to pay 1,000 kyat as porter fees monthly to Taung-zun military camp. If any clashes break out near the villages, the SPDC army always comes to loot and beat up villagers or demand villagers to be porters. (Source: KIC)

Situation in Hlaing Bwe Township

On 4 March 2002 at 8 o'clock in the morning, soldiers from LIB 206 robbed 2 pigs, 2 goats, 30 chickens, 3 and a half baskets of rice from Htee Par Rah village by threatening the villagers with hand grenades. The soldiers then found a hut belonging to Naw Pa Leh and Pa Tu Leh in their rice field. They took all the villagers' possessions and burned down the hut.

On the same day, another column from LIB 206, Company 2, led by Capt. Thet Naing along with DKBA guides stole 15 chickens, one basket of rice, 3 packs of cheroots, 3 knives, 1 wrist watch and 1.5 kg of onions from Htee Mu Khee village. The DKBA members, together with LIB 206 threatened the village headman, charging him with conspiring with the KNU and demanded that he give them one goat. (Source: FTUB)

Situtation in Kaw-bein Village Tract

In February 2002, the manager of Karit-kyauk-tan paddy-buying center, U Kyaw Oo, came to Kawkha-taw village and instructed the village headmen that that village needed to sell paddy for 1,200 acres of land with rate of 5 baskets of rice per acre. The village headmen were surprised when they received the order and complained to the manager that their village had only 600 acres of land and did not know why the amount of lands has increased. The manager refused to listen and said he received the order from higher authorities and therefore the village headmen and the farmers needed to sell 6000 baskets of paddy. The order also instructed the farmers to sell 10 baskets of rice per acre to the paddy-buying center at a low price. The farmers were very disappointed because the quality of their land is not good and they could only produce 20-25 baskets of rice from one acre of land. After they sold the 10 baskets per acre to the center, they retained only a small amount of rice. If they did not complete selling the paddy, they would not get permission from the authorities to husk their paddy. (Source: HURFOM)

In Kaw-bein village tract, the authorities set up a paddy-buying center and tried to buy 35,000 baskets of paddy from the farmers in the villages nearby. They ordered the farmers to sell their paddy at the rate of 10 baskets for every acre of land that they farmed. Many farmers could not afford to sell this amount of paddy. At the end of February, the authorities received only 27,000 baskets and again ordered the farmers to quickly sell the set amount of paddy to the paddy-buying center. The Township PDC Chairman, Col. Ko Ko Gyi also warned the local farmers that they would face punishment if they failed to sell the paddy. The authorities bought the paddy at a low price and paid just 350 Kyat per basket. Usually one basket is about 1, 000 Kyat. If the farmers refused to sell the remaining paddy by the deadline, the authorities ordered the farmers with written or verbal orders. Sometimes, the authorities went to farmers' houses with militiamen and forced them to promise that they would sell their paddy to the paddy-buying center. (Source: HURFOM)

On 10 February 2002, as a self-help program, the township authorities ordered Kaw-bein village headman to build concrete roads in the whole village to create the first 'model village' in the township. In this village, there is one main road and many other small roads. On 10 February, the Chairman of Kawkareik Township, U Ko Ko Gyi (the former Lt . Col.), arrived to this village and ordered the headmen to build a piece of model concrete road near the market, which cost about 30,000 kyat to buy cement and other materials. As the cost was a small amount, it was not so difficult for the headman to collect money. Later on 14 March, the township authorities came to the village again and held a meeting with the village headmen. In that meeting, he ordered all roads in the village to be made from concrete. The headman faced a very difficult situation collecting money from the villagers. However, Township Chairman U Ko Ko Gyi ordered all roads to be completed no later than 24 March to welcome the Armed Forces Day. The headman had only ten days until the deadline to complete the construction of the concrete roads. The cost for the construction was about 2.5 million kyat and they managed to collect funds from the civilians to complete road construction. The families who stayed along the main road had to pay up to 30,000 kyat and the families who stay on small roads had to pay a lesser amount of money. On 24 March, when the roads were nearly completed, the Township Chairman came and held the opening ceremony of the concrete roads in Kaw-bein village. (Source: HURFOM)

On the night of 16 March 2002, Township PDC General Secretary U Aung Lin and 4 policemen entered into Kaw-bein village and arrested 17 farmers and forced them to

completely sell their remaining paddy to the village paddy-buying center set by the authorities. The reason for the arrest was that these farmers failed to sell their paddy and reported the wrong number of acres of their lands. After being arrested, the authorities forced them to sell another 20 baskets of paddy for another acre of land. The authorities instructed the farmers to sell 10 baskets of paddy per acre of land. At that night, they also made farmers promise that they would sell the remaining paddy to the paddy-buying center. (Source: HURFOM)

On 25 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 124 and an SPDC guerrilla unit demanded a tin of rice, 5 Viss of chicken, salt and fish paste from the villagers of Kaw-law-ka village. (Source: KIC)

On 29 March 2002, troops from SPDC burnt down the cardamom plantations and other plantations belonging to the villagers in Tha-daung and Tan-ta-bin Townships. (Source: KIC)

In March and April 2002, following the instructions of the township authorities, Kanni village tract chairman Nai Kyaw Myint planned to grow dry season crop on 25 acres of land just outside of the village. He forced all farmers in the village to grow paddy on at least one acre of land on their farms. Many of them refused. So, he told them to pay him instead and he would grow paddy on behalf of those farmers. About 25 farmers paid him and he planned to grow paddy on 25 acres of land, which is owned by other farmers in village. He also asked the 25 farmers to pay 6, 000 kyat each. (Source: HURFOM)

On 27 April 2002, the village authorities of Thayet-taw village arrested a 60 year old man named Nai Kmi Dae on the accusation that his ox went into their dry season paddy crops and ate the paddy. The man denied the claims and said he did not know about that. The authorities told him to pay 70,000 kyat as compensation for the lost crops. He refused to pay because it was more than the cost of the alleged destroyed paddy and equal to the price of 70 baskets of paddy. As one of his oxen was unable to eat this amount of paddy, he continuously refused to pay. After the man refused to pay, the village authorities brought him to the LIB No. 545 base and told the army commanders why they had arrested him. The second commander of the battalion ordered the man to pay 70,000 kyat immediately. If he did not, he would be detained in the army base indefinitely. He was afraid of being detained in the army base and working for army, so he paid. According to a villager from that village, the army and village authorities shared the money for their own profit. (Source: *HURFOM*)

8 October 2002, Column 2 commander Aung Soe of SPDC LIB 2, while on his way to Kaw-law-hta village, looted 3 pots, 2 plates, 3 spoons, 4 Pyi of rice and some clothing from the paddy field hut of Ta-eu-khee villager Saw Po Nyaw. (Source: KIC)

Situation in Thaton District

On 4 January 2002, troops from SPDC IB 96, demanded 300 kyat from each household of Mae-naw-theh and Mae-naw-gaw-hta villages for the construction of a motor road from Nan-gyi to Bee-lin. The troops also said that any household that failed to pay had to pay 3,000 kyat as a fine. (Source: KIC)

On 20 January 2002, Bo Khaing Zaw Lin from SPDC LIB 207, demanded 3 tins of rice from each village in Kaw po-pleh village tract. (Source: KIC)

On 21 January 2002, Zaw Lin, commander of SPDC LIB 207, based at Yoh-kla camp demanded;

1. 10 Viss of pork from Htaw-klaw-hta village,
2. 3 tins of rice from Kaw-po-kho village,
3. 3 tins of rice from Yoh-kla village,
4. 3 tins of rice from Lay-kaw-hti village and
5. 3 tins of rice from Htee-pa-doh-hta village. (Source: KIC)

On 26 January 2002, Kyaw-Naing Htoo, aka 'Ta-pwe-po' from DKBA battalion 999, demanded 300,000 kyat from Ta-u-khee villagers. He threatened them and them to bring the cash to him by 27 January 2002. (Source: KIC)

On 13 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 118, led by Bo Zaw Hlaing Soe, came to Ler-po village and burned down five paddy fields of;

1. Tee Dah
2. Tee Maung Dee
3. Tee Pa Kra
4. Tee Saw Eh and
5. Tee Kho Kya villages, located between Ler-po and Ta-u-nee. (Source: KIC)

On 1 April 2002, at 16:40 hours, Saw Mu Law from the DKBA came to Win-yaw village and started shooting indiscriminately without reason wounding villager Ma Sa Ee aged 18, daughter of Tee Kya Lag. On 3 April 2002, his troops demanded 5 poles of bamboo and 10 pieces of thatch from each household of Win-yaw village to build their military camp Win-yaw. (Source: KIC)

On 10 April 2002, Saw Than Htun from DKBA 333 came to Noh-aw-law village and shot and killed a pig and a chicken for meat. (Source: KIC)

On 24 April 2002, Company Commander Thein Tin of SPDC IB 96, demanded 100 wooden poles with a girth of 18 inches from Pe-tee-khee villagers, 900 wooden poles from Kler-law-seh villagers and 50 wooden poles from Pa-klaw-lor villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 18 May 2002, Company Commander Aung Lwin of SPDC LIB 9, demanded 2 baskets of rice from each house in both Noh-pa-leh and Kaw-sa-theh villages of Tha-ton District. (Source: KIC)

On 23 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 8 led by Captain Soe Aung, came to Htee-po-net village and looted from:

1. Saw Hla Shwe, 14,000 kyat and 6 Pyis of rice,
2. Naw Pa Kray, 7,000 kyat and 2 Pyis of rice,
3. Naw Mu Taw, 2 chickens and
4. Saw Khin Maung, 2 shirts.

They also brutally beat up saw Day Shwe, 28. (Source: KIC)

On 25 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 1 led by column commander Khin Maung Oo, came to Paw-khee village and looted from villagers, Naw May, 2 chickens, Tee Po Bi, 2 chickens and one Pyi of rice, Tee Pu Pu, one chicken and Naw Ma Pyu, one chicken. Moreover, these troops looted from Ta-eu-khee villagers all items to be offered to Buddhist monks on the Buddhist Ka-sone Full Moon Day. The looted items for offering were from;

1. Naw Aye Hlaing; 15,000 kyat worth of items,
2. Naw Ye Aye; 15,000 kyat worth of items,
3. Naw Hsa Htoo; 20,000 kyat worth of items,
4. Naw Pa Yaw Kay; 15,000 kyat worth of items and
5. Saw Pa Pleh; 20,000 kyat worth of items,

A total of 75,000 kyat worth of items. (Source: KIC)

On 1 June 2002 troops from SPDC LIB 207, based at Yo-kla, led by Aung Khin Win ordered the villages, namely; Htee-pa-doh-hta, Kaw-bo-kho, Htee-pa-doh khee, Htaw-klaw-hta, Noh-ber-baw, Wakh-hkeh-hta and Yo-kla to give 5 bamboo poles from each household. The troops also demanded 10 dinner plates from each saw mill in Yo-kla village and nearby villages. (Source: KIC)

On 5 June 2002, Saw Poo Lee of DKBA in Tha-ton District ordered Saw mill owners in Ta-eu-khee, Ta-eu-ni, Nya-po-khee, Htee-pa-dho-hta, Paw-khee, Kyo-waing and Noh-ka-neh villages to come to Lay-kay camp where he told them to give him 60,000 kyat per saw mill, by 10 June 2002 or he would come and collect the money by himself if they failed. The sawmills were set up for sawing timber for villagers' use and not for commercial purposes. (Source: KIC)

On 14 June 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 207, led by Battalion Commander Myint Htwe demanded 10 baskets of rice from Khaw-po-pleh village and 10 baskets of rice from Thawaw-pya village. (Source: KIC)

On 6 August 2002, combined troops from SPDC LIB 20, led by Soe Win and DKBA troops, led by Poo Lee extorted from Khaw-po-pleh village 10 Pyi of rice, five Viss of pork and one bottle of cooking oil. (Source: KIC)

On 9 August 2002 combined troops of SPDC LIB 207 and DKBA troops issued an order banning Khaw-po-pleh and Htee-hsi-baw villagers in Belin Township taking rice or rice packages with them. In addition, they had to arrive back home by 6 PM. (Source: KIC)

On 12 September 2002, column 2 commander, Win Naing Shwe of SPDC LIB 104, demanded from Win-yaw village, Tha-ton Township, 5 Pyi of rice, one Viss of fish, 2 bottles of liquor and 10 Kyat weight of onion. (Source: KIC)

On 14 October 2002, troops from SPDC IB 8, led by Column 2 commander Myint Naing, came to Noh-ka-neh village in Bilin Township and looted items from villagers:

1. Toe Lwee Moe, 2 ducks,
2. Pale Gay Htoo, 4 Pyis of rice and one fishing net,
3. Myint Win, 2 Pyis of rice and
4. Naw Aw Moo, one package of dry cell batteries. (Source: KIC)

On 14 October 2002, column 2 commander Myint Naing of SPDC IB 8 told villagers from Htaw-po-hta village and Noh-keh village in Belin Township to find him a hand gun and a

walkie-talkie respectively. He threatened the villagers with serious action if they failed to find the items. The Htaw-po-hta villagers were also banned from going to their paddy fields and as a result their hill paddy harvests were destroyed. (Source: KIC)

On 23 October 2002, troops from SPDC IB 96 led by company second in command, Aung Soe Min, banned Pa-lo-kee villagers of Kyaik-htee-yo Township from going to their hill paddy fields. (Source: KIC)

On 23 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 2 led by Column 1 commander Win Kyaw came to Htaw-klaw-khee village in Belin Township and looted from villagers, Maung Htun Kyaing Moe, 4 chickens, Ma Yin, 4 chickens and 46 baskets of rice from other villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 24 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 2 led by battalion commander Win Kyaw came to Lay-kaw-hti village in Belin township and looted a pair of shoes and some clothing from Saw Pah Yi's house. These troops shot and killed one goat, two dogs and 5 chickens for their meat from the villagers. The soldiers also poisoned all the pigs and chickens belonging to the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 27 October 2002, troops from SPDC IB 96 based at Kyaik-htee-yo allowed the villagers of:

1. Reh-thaw-khee village,
 2. Ta-ya-day village,
 3. Mae-praw-hta village and
 4. Blay-blaw-kyo village to go their hill paddy fields if they paid 500 kyat for a pass.
- (Source: KIC)

On 2 November 2002, SPDC LIB 8 troops, led by column 2 commander Myint Naing, came to Ler-ka-ter village and looted 10 chickens and one tin of rice from the villagers. Moreover, they ordered each of the saw-mill owners to send 10 pieces of timber planks measuring 3 cubits in length and 1 foot in width to Khaw-htee-khee. (Source: KIC)

On 2 November 2002, SPDC LIB 102 troops, led by company 2nd in command Maung Maung Hla came to Kaw-po-kho village and looted 3 baskets of rice, one duck, two chickens, 10 eggs, 15 penicillin, 30 gourd and 30 coconuts. (Source: KIC)

On 2 November 2002, SPDC LIB 102 troops, led by company 2nd in command Maung Maung Hla, came to Yo-kla village and shot and killed villager Saw Maung Hla's goat for meat. (Source: KIC)

On 16 November 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 3 and LIB 107 banned villagers of Ta-roikhee village, Shwe Yaing Pya village and Ta-maw-daw village in Thaton township from going to work outside the village. As a result, all of the villagers' paddy harvests both in lowland and highland paddy fields were destroyed. (Source: KIC)

Situation in Doopla-ya District

On 11 February 2002, combined troops from SPDC LID-88 led by Ohn Myint and SPDC LIB-103 led by Column Commander Sein Tin Thein Nyunt, came to Htee-law-bleh village, Kya-in township and summoned the village head and forced him to buy, at an extremely low rate, 10 Pyis of rice at 50 Kyat per Pyi and 5 Viss of pork at 250 Kyat per Viss. (Source: KIC)

On 15 February 2002, Divisional Commander Ohn Myint and Commander of Operation Command No. 2 Than Win forcibly collected many hundreds of thousands of kyat from local villagers for the construction of a school in Kyaik-don village of Kaw-ka-reik Township. They collected at least from 10,000 to 20,000 kyat from each village in Ah-zin village tract, Ah-zin-chaung-pya village tract and other village tracts. They demanded 1,500 kyat from each village for the support of the schoolteachers. In addition, they demanded 15 logs from each local village for the construction of a jetty on Hawn-tha-yaw river in Kyeit-don village. (Source: KIC)

On 1 March 2002, SPDC LIB (22) confiscated the plantations and gardens belonging to villagers growing sugarcane in Bilin township. The amount of land confiscated in different areas is the following; 120 acres from Ta-kyet-kon village; 500 acres from around the base of Daung-min-taung mount; 50 acres around the 500 tons monastery and 130 acres from around the central military camp. (Source: ABSDF)

On 10 March 2002, SPDC IB (283) and LIB (78) advanced along a car road construction area. They destroyed and burned down the buildings and gardens belonging to the residents living between Ka-ra-ni village and Ka-li-khee village along the road. The items burned include: all the lumber for construction and a school. In addition, they also destroyed and burned down the lemon garden of Saw Hla Doh, rubber garden of Saw Ka Lo, rubber garden of Saw Htoo Paw, rubber garden of Pah Ku Nu, rubber garden of Saw Nga Ti, rubber garden of Saw Htoh Lwi, cashew garden of Saw Lwi, chilly garden of Saw Lah Bleh Htoo, lemon garden of Saw San Nyut Poe, rubber garden of Saw Ki Ku, lemon garden of Saw Ka Lei Mee, lemon garden of Saw Lah Doh Poe, rubber garden of Naw Mu Naw, rubber garden of Saw Pa Heit, lemon garden of Naw Shee Mo, lemon garden of Saw Tee Maw and the betel garden of Saw P' Lay. All were destroyed without compensation. (Source: ABSDF)

On 19 March 2002, Lt. Deputy Colonel Aung Than Win, a Strategic Commander of No. 88 LID based in A-Zin village, Kya-in-seikkyi township, issued a directive to the fifty villages near his command that each village must provide five sheets of tin to be used for building military supply storage. Each sheet of tin is worth of the amount of 1,800 kyat, so each household of the villages had to pay 300 kyat. (Source: ABSDF)

On 25 March 2002, SPDC LIB 78 led by Tin Maung Win, arrived at Kru-ma-ti Village, Kya-in Township and looted 34 chickens, 24 eggs, 7 ducks, 2 tins of cooking oil (1 tin = 10 viss), 1 pig (about 30 viss of weight), and 2 big pots from the villagers. (Source: ABSDF)

On 26 March 2002, at about 2:30 in the afternoon, SPDC IB (83) led by General Min Naung arrived Thay-kho village, Kya-in township. They destroyed and burned down about (4) tins of the rice seeds belonging to Saw Pah Paw, 33 yrs old and the cultivation farm yielding (4) tins of rice growing seeds belonging to Pah Ku Kye, 32 yrs old, without any reason. (Source: ABSDF)

On 29 March 2002, SPDC Division (88) Commander Ohn Myint order a road to be constructed from Ta-mok-thei village through to Kyein-chaung village in Kya-in township for military operations. The local units extorted the 300,000 kyats from the Win-lon village according to the residents to pay for the construction.

On 1 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 415, led by Sai Aung came to Htee-ka-pler village and took by force 3 local made vehicles from the villagers and threatened to beat up the villagers if they failed to go. (Source: KIC)

On 2 April 2002, SPDC IB (83) under Division (88) led by column (2) Commander Myint Thein Tun arrived at Ser-po-klo village. They burned down the villager houses and looted the villagers rice as follows; (1) Saw Keh Sar's house was completely burned down and over (40) tins of paddy was looted, (2) Naw Mu Yo's house was burned down and over (50) tins of paddy was looted, (3) Saw Mu Wah Pa's house was burned down and over (80) tins of paddy was looted as well.

On the same day, when IB (83) led by column (1) commander Min Naung arrived in Pa-wa-khee area, they extorted 80,000 kyat and looted (1) golden necklace, (1) golden earring and (2) rings and other domestic belongings from villager Pah Ti Ku Say's house. Along the way, they also looted (1) tins of rice and (1) knife from Saw Htee Ku's house, (2) tins of rice from Naw Christ Htoo's house, and 65,000 kyats from Saw Pah Khee's house. (Source: ABSDF)

On 21 April 2002, the unit of LIB (301) under SPDC Division (88), led by battalion commander Tun Shwe arrived at Kru-ma-tee village, Kya-Inn Township, looted the belongings at the villager houses such as:

1. Pah Lei Htoo 1 pot
2. Saw Kya Lin 3 chickens, 1 pot
3. U Tin Mya 1 pot, 2 sarongs, 2 knives
4. Naw Kya Ma 5 tins of rice
5. Maung Hla Thein 3 chickens, 3 baskets of eggs and 3 tins of cooking oil (*1 tin is equal to 8 viss*) (Source:ABSDF)

On 21 April 2002, combined troops of SPDC LIB 301 column 1 and 2, LIB 416 column 1 and IB 78 column 1 and 2 came to Htee-tha-blu area in Kya-in Township and looted from the villagers:

1. Saw Dah (M, 28), 6 baskets of rice, 25,000 kyat, 1,500 baht, a pair of gold earrings and a half-baht weight gold necklace,
2. Wilbert Paw Moe (F, 35), 4 baskets of rice,
3. Maung Htun Htun, (M) household items,
4. Naw Pree (F, 36), one basket of rice,
5. Naw Ma Twe (F, 38), household items,
6. Paw Lah Ler (F, 37), one basket of rice,
7. Li Baw Moe (F, 65), 4 and a half baskets of rice,
8. Pah Haw Shu (F, 36), one basket of rice, a pair of gold earrings, 2,000 kyat, one Seiko wrist watch and one pig,
9. Ket Po Mo (F, 45) 3 baskets of rice and 40,000 kyat,
10. Saw Lweh Hgaw (M, 32) household item,
11. Ka Lay Lo (M, 40) household items,
12. Pastor Si Patrer (M, 51) a bull and 100,000 kyat,
13. Saw Po Dah (M, 38) 8 baskets of rice,

14. Gay Nay Htoo Moe, (F, 49) household items,
15. Naw Cha Eh (F, 38) 10 baskets of rice and one bull,
16. Saya Gay Tha (M, 54) one cow,
17. Naw Paw May (F, 45) a pair of earrings, one basket of rice and one pig,
18. Baw Shwe Paw (M, 34) two bulls,
19. Saw Paw Eh, (M, 45) household items,
20. Pah Koe Kay (M, 57) one tin of rice and seven chickens,
21. Sa Maree (M, 38) 2 cattle and 3 ducks,
22. Pah Kyaw Po (M, 25) household items,
23. Saw Hla Baw (M, 47) 5,000 kyat,
24. Naw Moe (F, 31) one pig,
25. Naw Day Po (F, 24) one buffalo and 40,000 kyat and
26. Naw Day Htoo (M, 36) 4 baskets of rice and household items.

Moreover, they took away corrugated iron sheets from the roof of Htee-tha-blu church and burned down the church. (Source: KIC)

On 23 April 2002, troops from SPDC IB 75 burned down 30 villagers' houses in Noh-klo-ti village, Kya-in Township and burned down villager Saw Kyaw Keh's paddy barn with 60 baskets of paddy. (Source: KIC)

On 24 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 came to Htee-ka-pu village in Kya-in Township and burned down Pa Chin Lone's paddy barn with 50 baskets of paddy and Pee Ta Maw's paddy barn with 40 baskets of paddy. These troops also confiscated paddy from villagers in Kaw Kher village tract and looted 200,000 kyat from villager Ah Win and 400,000 kyat from Kyaw Kwa. These troops also took away corrugated iron sheets from the roofs of the Christian church, assembly hall and some villagers' houses. They carried the iron sheets in six bullock carts. (Source: KIC)

On 24 April 2002, at 10:00 at night, SPDC IB (78) arrived at Lay-ta-ri village, Kya-Inn Township and burned down all the villagers' houses and belongings without any reason. In addition, they burned down the paddy barns belonging to the following villagers: (1) Saw Ki Ku's containing over 350 tins of paddy, (2) Saw Po Nyo's paddy barn containing 120 tins of paddy, (3) Saw Nya Wah's paddy barn containing 30 tins of paddy, (4) Saw Pah Peh's paddy barn containing 240 tins of paddy, looting his 2 tins of sesame oil and 20,000 kyats. They also looted 12,000 kyats from Naw Bweh Htoo. The arrested women and children from Lay-ta-ri Village and took them back to the Ah-sin military camp. The soldiers warned that in the next 6 days before 30 April, they would burn down the Lay-ta-ri village completely. (Source: ABSDF)

On 26 April 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78, led by column 2 commander Myo Hlaing, came to Kaw Kher village in Kya-in Township and burned down Saw Kay Lay's (M, 65) paddy barn and took away his sugar cane grinding machine and an electrical power generator. Moreover, they burned down Saw Soe Toe Kho's (M, 65) house. (Source: KIC)

On 27 April 2002, at 14:30 hours, troops from SPDC IB 78 led by column 2 commander looted possessions and burned down the houses of the following Htee-tha-blu villagers, Kya-in Township:

1. Si-pa-trer, 2 strong-king lamps, one electrical dynamo, one bullock cart, one rice mill and a paddy barn with 200 baskets of rice,
2. Maung Htun Htun 30 baskets of paddy,

3. Wilbert Paw Moe 25 baskets of paddy,
4. Saw Dah 40 baskets of paddy,
5. Naw Pree 3 baskets of paddy,
6. Ma Aye Thaung 5 baskets of paddy,
7. Ma Htwe 12 baskets of paddy,
8. Paw Lah Ler, (F, 40) 10 baskets of paddy,
9. Li Baw Moe 40 baskets of paddy,
10. Pah Haw Shu 10 baskets of paddy,
11. Ket Po Moe 60 baskets of paddy,
12. Saw Lweh Gaw 40 baskets of paddy and
13. Kweh Lay Lo 35 baskets of paddy.

The houses of all these villagers were burned down by the troops. (Source: KIC)

On 28 April 2002, at about 6:00 in the evening, SPDC IB (78) column (2) burned down a Church and 2 religious halls in Kaw Keh village, Kya-Inn township. These building had already been destroyed by SPDC LIB (301) troop on 24 April 2002. In addition, they tortured villagers and looted their belongings. The following is a list of villagers and the items taken from them: (1) Neh Pa Htaw, aged, 30 yrs old, 1 goat, 3 chickens; (2) Saw Hsay Poe Moe's domestic belongings, worth 200,000 kyats; (3) Ma Mu Aye's clothes and domestic belongings worth 700,000 kyats; (4) Ah Win's 2 cows, 60 chickens and 80,000 kyats; (5) Maung Pauk Kyaine, aged 40 yrs old, domestic belongings worth 170,000 kyats, 1 cow and he was taken as well; (6) Naw Cherry Pan's wood cutting machine after she was severely tortured; (7) U Kyi Lin was tortured strongly. The soldiers also took 6 bullock carts, 6 cows and 3 villagers back with them. (Source: ABSDF)

On 5 May 2002, at 14:00 hours, troops from SPDC LIB 301 column 1 led by Min Din burned down Saw Pa Hai Moe's house and a paddy barn with 30 baskets of paddy, Maung than Soe's house, Kyaw Pa Waw's paddy barn, with all their household items in Htee-pa-nwe village in Kya-in Township. Moreover, they looted a gold necklace and a pair of earrings from villager Naw Hsaw Aye. Htee-pa-neh villagers from 90 households were ordered to immediately relocate to Mae-ta-klet village. These troops also came to Mae-ta-klet village and shot and killed the villagers' buffalo for meat. (Source: KIC)

On 8 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 column 1 led by Min Din burned down the houses of;

1. Pah Lay Bya,
2. Naw Mu Say,
3. Naw Po Pwe,
4. Saw Kay,
5. Saw Ta,
6. Saw Wah Gay,
7. Naw Ma Pet,
8. Saw Po Pee,
9. Naw Bleh Htoo,
10. Saw Ah Htoo and
11. Saw Ka Neh in Htee-pa-neh village.

Moreover, the troops shot and killed a pig from Saw Keh Leh and a pig from Saw Heh Ha for meat. At 14:00 hours, these troops shot at the Htee-pa-nwe village head Maung Pan Aye (M, 46), wounding him in the thigh and then cut his thighs with a knife. (Source: KIC)

On 9 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 103 column 1 led by Than Oo came to Ma-oo village in Win -yae Township and demanded 6,000 kyat from each of the sawmill owners namely,

1. U Pa Pa, (M, 52),
2. U Aung Tin Thein (M, 38),
3. U Kyi Tang (M, 36)
4. Daw Chit Thang (M, 49),
5. Maung Thang Toe (M, 30)
6. Nai Htun, Pah Yu Wah (M, 37)
7. Zaw Khin Nwe, (M, 31,)
8. Daw Nyo Kyaing (M, 50),
9. Saw Pwe Say (M, 35) and
10. Pah Ta Ler (M, 49).

Moreover, these troops forced them to buy a pig for them. (Source: KIC)

On 10 May 2002, SPDC LIB (301) led by Column (1) Commander Min Din ordered the villagers of Paw-ner-moo to pay the amount of 600,000 kyats. The troops burned down the houses of 15 villagers who could not afford to pay the amount requested. (Source: ABSDF)

On 11 May 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78 led by Major Khin Maung Nyo came to Pah-klaw-khee village of Kaw-ka-reik Township and burned down (1) a paddy barn of Naw Pway Day Moe with over 100 baskets of paddy and (2) a paddy barn of Kyaw Hser Paw with over 150 baskets of paddy. They shot and killed (1) a pig weighing over 10 Viss of Saw Yo Htee and (2) 3 pigs weighing over 20 Viss each of Naw Twet Moe. Moreover, they looted 50,000 kyat worth of household items from Kyaw Nya Moe. (Source: KIC)

On 13 May 2002, at 10:30 hours, troops from SPDC LIB 301 column 1 under LID 88 came to Kya-in Township, Kaw-kher village and shot and killed a cow for meat. These troops took some rice from the villagers who had fled away and destroyed the rest. (Source: KIC)

On 16 May 2002, column commander Min Din of SPDC LIB 301 under LID 88 came to Ko-doo-kwe village, Kya-in Township, and demanded a total of 17,000 kyat for 15 unlicensed guns with the normal rate being 1,500 kyat per gun. They also demanded 16,000 kyat for 4 saw mills with the normal rate being 4,000 kyat per saw mill. (Source: KIC)

From 3 – 8 June 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 30 based at Theh-pyu-chaung village, Kya-in Township demanded for their food supplies from the villages of;

1. Htee-wa-doh, 3 baskets of rice and one pig weighing 15 Viss,
2. Htee-po-wai, 3 baskets of rice and a pig weighing 10 Viss,
3. Htee-kaw-pa, one basket of rice and a pig weighing 10 Viss,
4. Shwe-po-hat (old village), one basket of rice,
5. Shwe-po-hat (new village), one basket of rice,
6. Done-pa-laung, 2 baskets of rice and
7. Theh-pyu-chaung one basket of rice. (Source: KIC)

On 8 June 2002, troops from SPDC IB 77 burned down 2 houses and 3 paddy barns in Teh-thone-lone village in Kaw-ka-reik Township. (Source: KIC)

On 30 June 2002, in accordance with instructions of the Village Peace and Development Committee (VPDC) of Kyaung-ywa village tract in Win-yae Township, at 12:00 noon, every

village had to submit a list of the number of houses, population under and above the age of 18 according to gender, number of schools, students and school teachers, a list of monasteries and monks, and a list of plots of land. Moreover, on that day, the 18 villages of Kyaung-ywa village tract had to give 600 baskets of paddy as tax for the summer harvest from 140 acres of paddy fields. (Source: KIC)

On 30 June 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78 led by Column 1 commander, Myo Htun Hlaing came to Kya-in Township and looted from villagers:

1. Pah Taw Ler, (M, 37), two pieces of water proof, 6 umbrellas and one Pyi of rice,
2. Saw Di Ngeh, (M, 36) one Pyi of rice
3. Maung Khin Win, (M, 36), one sarong,
4. Paw Law Kaw (F, 40), 3 Pyi of rice,
5. Naw Su Hai, (F, 40) one plate, one basket of rice, one spoon, and a pair of shoes,
6. Pah Ter Kla (M, 33), one Pyi of rice, one plate, one spoon, one piece of water proof and one bag,
7. Pah Kyaw Moo, (M, 51), one piece of sarong, half a Viss of salt and one Viss of soy bean paste,
8. (Toe Gay (M, 25), one Pyi of rice and
9. Ah Kyaw, (M, 36), one Pyi of rice. (Source: KIC)

On 5 July 2002, about 100 troops from SPDC IB 83 under LID 88 came to Thone-se-thone-su village, after they were ambushed by the Karen resistance forces between Kyaik-tha-laik village and Thone-se-thone-su village in Kaw-ka-reik Township. The soldiers looted or destroyed the villagers' possessions. They looted 180,000 kyat worth of items from Saw Ah Htein's house and shot Saw Hein Aung's one oxen to death. The oxen was worth about 160,000 kyat. The soldiers looted or destroyed other villagers' various items and edible plants. (Source: KIC)

On 18 July 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78, led by column commander Myo Htun Hlaing, looted from Noh-klo-ti villagers in Kya-in Township,

1. Saw Pah Ta Toe, (M, 35), two baskets of rice, one chicken, one bag, one gallon tin, two torch light, two bottles of sesame oil and one water proof, having a total worth of 12,000 Kyat and
2. Saw Kyaw Myint, (M, 50) a knife from his paddy field hut. (Source: KIC)

On 18 July 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78, led by column commander Myo Htun Hlaing, looted from villagers in Noh-klo-ti, Kya-in Township;

1. Saw Pah Ta Toe, (M, 35), two baskets of rice, one chicken, one bag, one gallon tin, two torch lights, two bottles of sesame oil and one water proof, having a total worth of 12,000 kyat and
2. Saw Kyaw Myint, (M, 50), a knife from his paddy field hut. (Source: KIC)

On 13 September 2002, troops from SPDC IB 78 under LID 88 led by Major Kyaw Htay came to Ta-ku-khe village in Kya-in Township and extorted three baskets of rice from the villagers. The village chairman himself had to collect one Pyi of rice from each household. (Source: KIC)

On 6 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 415, led by Column 1 Commander Nyunt Aye, came to Kay-ra-mo village, Kya-in Township, and looted from the houses of

1. Saw Tu Po, 35,
2. Saw To Ku Ra, 57 and
3. Naw Mu Ray, 50

- five chickens, 4 ducks and 30,000 Kyat cash. (Source: KIC)

On 12 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 416, led by Column 2 commander Ye Naing, came to Ta-po-hta, Kya-in Township and looted from the houses of;

1. Naw Li Say, 20,
2. Naw Ka Bleh, 45,
3. Naw Moo, 24,
4. Naw Ter Moe, 32,
5. Naw Pree Nay Paw, 18,
6. Naw Tha Blay Paw, 22,
7. Naw Saw Hla Win, 38,
8. Naw Law Eh, 48,
9. Naw Mu Ku, 35,
10. Naw Paw Heh, 53,
11. Naw Paw Yeh, 41,
12. Naw Hsa Eh, 32,
13. Naw Paw Theh, 60,
14. Naw Ju, 20,
15. Naw Lweh Moo, 43,
16. Naw Lu Kleh, 61 and
17. Saw Gay Po, 54,

thirteen chickens, 12 spoons, 2 sarongs, 14 dinner plates, 1 mermaid brand makeup, 6 Pyis and 2 milk tins of rice, 2 pairs of shoes, one bag, 3 cooking pots and 41,500 kyat cash. (Source: KIC)

From 26 – 29 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 418 under LID 88, led by Column 2 commander Ye Naing, came to Tha-byu village in Kya-in Township and looted the following items from the villagers 121 chickens and ducks, 1 large container having fermented rice for distilling local liquor, 4 baskets and 6 Pyis of rice, 1 Pyi of pepper, 2 large bags of monosodium glutamate, 2 shirts, 3 pairs of Jean pants, 2 machetes, 2 torch lights, 7 boxes of dry cell batteries, 4 Viss of onion, 1 Viss of fish paste, 4 Karen bags, 2 pairs of shoes, 1 steal necklace, 1 bottle of honey, 1 cassette tape player, 2 cassette tapes, 1 Pyi of sticky rice, 2 Karen costumes and 418,000 kyat cash. (Source: KIC)

On 5 November 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 416, led by Column 2 commander Bo Naing Min, came to Ta-ku-khee village in Kya-in Township and looted - 2 blankets, 2 sarongs, one shirt, 2 pairs of jean pants, one sweater, 5 Pyis of rice, one backpack and 2,600 kyat cash from the houses of Naw Prin Khin, Naw Mu Ni and Naw Bree. (Source: KIC)

On 8 November 2002, at 8:15 hours, about 50 troops from SPDC IB 78, led by column commander Khin Maung Kyi came to Kyauk-ta village in Kya-in Township and looted from the houses of the following villagers,

1. Naw Baw, 27,
2. Naw Mu Tauk, 32,
3. Naw Tetma, 35,

4. Naw Kreh po, 45,
5. Naw Koo, 25,
6. Naw His, 30,
7. Naw Not, 32,
8. Saw Pa Gaw Kher, 63,
9. Naw Klet, 25,
10. Maung Thein Soe, 34,
11. Naw Thay Htee, 50,
12. Naw Kyaw Nyunt, 45, and
13. Naw Khee, 55

- one cat, 3 pigs, 6 ducks, 8 chickens, 3 mats, one towel, 14 Pyis of rice, 14 cooking pots, 7 spoons, one fishing net, one pot of pickled dog fruits, 3 machetes, one hoe, one bag, one basket of chicken eggs, 20,000 kyat and 600 baht. (Source: KIC)

On 11 November 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 343, led by battalion commander Myint Htun, extorted 1,500 kyat from each of the houses in the villages of Bi-saing, Kleik-tok, Wa-paw, Tu-ler and Bein-ka-lwe. The soldiers used an order from the battalion commander which instructed the villagers to provide salaries for school teachers of the model village primary school in Win-yae Township to whom the SPDC authorities could not pay salaries. (Source: KIC)

Situation in Pa-pun District

On 14 February 2002, troops from LIB 207 came to Mae-wah area and burned down paddy barns of Htee-wah-mee-kee villagers who were in hiding and looted chickens, pigs, goats, machetes, axes, dinner plates, spoons, mats and clothing. (Source: KIC)

On 7 March 2002, at 18:00, troops from SPDC LIB 207 came to Kwe-tu at Law-po-doe village area in Lu-thaw township. They opened fire on the villagers, looted the villagers' possessions and burned down the whole village. (Source: KIC)

On 9 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 207 came to Htee-kay-doe area and burned down the villagers' shops and paddy fields. (Source: KIC)

On 19 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 369 under No. 10 military operation command headquarters came to Ta-paw-doe village and shot at the villagers. Villager Saw Thay Wah Moo (M, 40) was wounded while Pee Naw Nah was captured and 5 houses were burned down by the troops. (Source: KIC)

On 22 March 2002, at 14:50 hours, SPDC troops burned down 5 hill farms of Bi-kho-doe of Lu-thaw Township. (Source: KIC)

On 22 March 2002, at 19:20 hours, troops from column 2 of SPDC LIB 251 burned down 10 hill farms of Hser-tee village. (Source: KIC)

On 24 March 2002, SPDC troops burned down 9 hill farms of Hser-tee village of Lu-thaw Township. (Source: KIC)

On 1 April 2002, Bo Pah Kay Kay from DKBA Company 5 of Ka-saw-wah battalion demanded 25 pieces of thatch from each household in Kler-si-kho, Tha-per-pah, Po-thwee-khee and Ler-klaw villages. (Source: KIC)

On 3 April 2002, SPDC troops came to Saw-ker-khee and Thet-tha-khee area and seized a villager named Naw Moo Ta Paw (F, 27) and burned down the house of Naw Pyet Lay. These troops looted from:

1. Naw Pyet Lay - 55,000 kyat, a pair of gold earrings, a gold ring, 5 pots, 10 plates, 10 blankets, 5 spoons, a mat, 5 pants, 10 women sarongs, 10 men sarongs, one waterproof coat, 2 pairs of shoes, 5 mugs, 3 baskets of rice, 7 machetes and one kettle and
2. Poe Ye Paw - 1,500 kyat, 1,000 Baht, 20 waterproof coats, one cassette tape player, 3 torch lights, 6 women sarongs, 3 men sarongs, 2 under wears, one fishing net, 4 Viss of dried fish, 2 packages of monosodium glutamate, 5 packages of tea leaves, 5 plates, one backpack, 4 shirts and one bag and burned down a hill paddy farm belonging to Saw Tu Lu.

These troops fired their heavy weapons and as a result losses were suffered by:

1. Saw Raw, 4 trunks, 80,500 kyat, 60,000 baht and 38 silver coins,
2. Maung Thay Ler, 170 tins of paddy, a trunk with items worth 400,000 kyat and 40 silver coins,
3. Saw Plo Gay, a trunk with items worth 200,000 kyat,
4. (Saw Po Lo, 10 women sarongs, 7 Karen women costumes and
5. Saw Oo Moo, a trunk with items worth 200,000 kyat and 150 baht cash were burnt and destroyed. (Source: KIC)

On 3 April 2002, SPDC troops burned down 24 hill paddy farms in Htee Nya Moe Hta area owned by villagers Saw Aung Min Than, Shew Tha Heh, Saw Eh Doh Wah, Saw Na Hai, Saw Maung Lay Doh, Naw Shabi Lay Paw and Saw Heh Say. Moreover, these troops destroyed by burning:

1. 100 baskets of paddy of Saw Maung Di,
2. 75 baskets of paddy of Saw Tha Deh,
3. 85 baskets of paddy of Saw Mee Tu,
4. 100 baskets of paddy of Saw Ree Kaw Paw,
5. 50 baskets of paddy of Saw Toh The,
6. 70 baskets of paddy of Saw Klay,
7. 90 baskets of paddy of Naw Kya Ra,
8. 70 baskets of paddy of Ya Naw,
9. 67 baskets of paddy of Too Loo Koo,
10. 60 baskets of paddy of Moo La Paw,
11. 62 baskets of paddy of Saw Play,
12. 100 baskets of paddy of Naw Bleh Lay,
13. 40 baskets of paddy of Saw Pah Ti,
14. 30 baskets of paddy of Saw Pa Kah,
15. 50 baskets of paddy of Saw Thay Heh,
16. 40 baskets of paddy and some other items of Saw Sheh Wah and
17. 50 baskets of paddy of Saw Kaw Gay. (Source: KIC)

On 11 April 2002, Bo Maung Win and his troops from SPDC LIB 2 under LID 44, came to Htee-gaw-hta village in Na-ko-khee village tract and destroyed by burning:

1. 70 baskets of paddy and 5 baskets of rice belonging to Saw Shwe Aye and

2. 80 baskets of paddy and 8 baskets of rice belonging to Saw Say Tay. Beginning from 4 April 2002 to the end of May these troops demanded 3 baskets of gravel from each household in the following villages Noh-law-su, Htee-ber-kha-hta, Day-law-pu, Ta-ri-per-kho and Kler-kho. The gravel was to be used to construct a motor road linking Ku-seik and Pa-pun. (Source: KIC)

On 18 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 104 under LID 44, led by battalion second in command So Thet, Company Commander Win Naing Shwe and company second in command Thay Hay came to Klaw-day village and demanded 12 chickens and 1 basket of rice from the villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 3 July 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 1, under LID 44, led by battalion commander Min Chit came to Htee-tha-blu-hta village and looted one pig, 3 Viss of fish paste and one chicken from Naw Mi and two chickens from Pa Kyaw Thein. (Source: KIC)

On 23 October 2002, troops from SPDC Tactical Command 3 LIB 1 column 2 led by battalion second in command Kyaw Shwe came to Bwa-doe area, Bu-tho township and planted land mines which killed a villager and a buffalo. These troops looted from the following villagers Saw Pyaing, Naw Wah Wah, Naw Kaw Paw, Saw Pah Too, Naw Ree Beh, Pah Loo Too, Kaw Pu, Naw Kya Kyay, Saw Kyaw Day, Pah Klerwe, Maung Hla, Saw Ah Wah, Pah Tu Pah, Naw Bla Heh, Poe Kher, Pah Mwe Heh, Naw Hgay Paw.

The soldiers took the following items - 657 baht, 20,000 kyat, 5 baskets of rice, one pig, 4 chickens, one hoe, 16 machetes, one axe, 25 plates, 17 pots, 4 Viss of tobacco, 10 Viss of salt, 15 shirts, 15 sarongs, 12 blankets, 4 pairs of trousers, 2 bars of soaps, 2 mats, 7 ducks, 2 fishing nets, one mosquito net, 4 pairs of dry-cell batteries, 2 Viss of shrimp paste, 2 pans, 4 hummocks, 3 torch lights, 3 plastic cans, one Viss of sugar, 6 pairs pf shoes, 2 Viss of onion, 10 bags, one box of antacid, one box of analgesic tablets, 30 packets of cheroots, 14 silver coins and one watch. (Source: KIC)

On 29 October 2002, combined troops from SPDC LIB 44, Tactical Command 443, IB 2, led by column commander Tin Kyi and DKBA Ka Hsaw Wah battalion 777, led by Naing Win and Po Thaung, gathered Kho-thu-hta villagers of Dweh-lo township and demanded from each house one tin of rice, 5 large bags of monosodium glutamate, 5 Viss of chili and one tin of cooking oil. (Source: KIC)

On 29 October 2002, Aung Than from DKBA battalion 777, based at Kho-thu-hta, wrote to village heads of Naw-wi-hta, Htee-baw-lor, Hser-ri-kyo, Deh-hta, Lay-kaw-hti and Pa-new-lor villages in Lay-kaw-hti area, Dweh-lo township, ordering each of the villages to deliver 5 baskets of rice on 30 October 2002. He threatened to take serious action against those who failed to obey the order. (Source: KIC)

Situation in Pa-an District

On 15 March 2002, 100 soldiers from both SPDC LIB 206 led by column 2 Commander Thet Naing, under Division 22 and from DKBA led by Pah Taw Bi under unit 555 came to Htee-tha-blu-ta village of Hlaing-bwe Township and burnt down the villagers' farms. The owners of the burned farms were;

1. Paw Say,
2. Moo Ko Po
3. Kyaw peh, and
4. Pah Tet Ler.

The farm owners from Kyaw Lah Ko and Kyaw-ta-lay-Ko village were at the same time Kyaw Paw Peh, Pah Naw Leh, Pah Raw Po, Maung Hla Kyin, Pah Ku Lu, Maung Ohn Kyin and Kyaw Htoo Ler, In addition, the troops looted a pig worth 40,000 kyat and merchandize from the shops worth 1,500 kyat from Kyaw-ta-lay-ko villagers. (Source: KIC)

On 15 March 2002, a group of 25 soldiers from LIB 999 led by Pah Nwee burnt down Mae-ta-moo villagers' hill farms in Hlaing-bwe Township. The hill farm owners were Pah Kyaw Klaw, Pah Lu Htoo, Pah Tar Thu, Pah Lah Aung and Aung Kit Kyang. (Source: KIC)

On 26 March 2002, about 30 troops of SPDC LIB 206 under LID 22, led by Captain Soe Aung, extorted 7 chickens worth 10,500 kyat from Htee-tha-blu-hta villagers in Tri-po-kwe village tract, Hlaing-bwe Township. (Source: KIC)

On 26 March 2002, about 40 troops from SPDC LIB 206 under LID 22, led by Column 1 commander Captain Han Min, killed a cow for its meat. The cow was worth 140,000 kyat and belonged to Saw Di Say of Wah-mee-kla village, Htee-pa-rai village tract in Hlaing-bwe Township. (Source: KIC)

On 11 November 2002, troops from DKBA battalion 2 came to Naung-daing village in Pine-kyone Township and looted from villagers:

1. Saw Maung Sein, one duck,
2. Saw Lay Tay, 2 ducks and 1 chicken,
3. Naw Kyi Aye, 4 chickens and 4 ducks,
4. Saw Kyaw Tin, 2 ducks,
5. Naw Thein Kyi, one chicken and 2 ducks,
6. Naw Lweh Dah, 2 chickens,
7. Naw Mu Beh, 2 ducks,
8. Naw Mu Dah, one duck,
9. Naw Mu Han, one chicken,
10. Saw Lweh Tha, one chicken,
11. Naw Mu Loo, 1 duck,
12. Naw Kah Lay, one goat, one pig and household utensils, and
13. Naw Paw Moo, 1 carton of cigarettes, 4 feeding cans, 4 packets of snacks, 6 dry cell batteries, 10 bags of coffee mix and 10 ball pens, the merchandise from her shop, estimated to have a total worth of 8,950 kyat. (Source: KIC)

Situation in Taungoo District

On 25 January 2002, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit, led by Htun Nay Win, came to Htee-pa-khee village, in Than-daung township. From 21 to 25 January 2002, they killed and ate the village's chickens weighing a total of about 30 Viss and a pig weighing 20 Viss. The total worth of the chickens and pig was about 50,000 kyat. (Source: KIC)

In the fourth week of February, troops from SPDC IB-73, Column 2, IB 30 Column 1 and 2, and Guerilla Unit came to the areas of Bu-sa-khee, Tha-kwee-soe, Klo-mu-doe, Si-hkee-doe and Play-hsa-lor where they burned down the crops and plantations of the villagers. (Source: KIC)

From 13 April to July 2002, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit led by Kyaw Zaw Han, Aung Maung and Si Thu Lwin demanded food items worth 150,000 kyat from Twenty mile villagers. Similarly, troops from SPDC IB 124 and LIB 439 came to the east Day-lor area and destroyed villagers' household items and crops. (Source: KIC)

On 29 May 2002, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit, led by company second in command Aung Kyaw and Sergeant Aung Maung, demanded 150 Viss of pork, 4 Viss of chickens and 4 Viss of betel nuts from Kaw-law-ka villagers. They ordered the villagers to give them the same items regularly every month and threatened to take action if the villagers failed to do so. (Source: KIC)

On 24 October 2002, villagers of Haw-lu-doe village, Than-daung township, Saw Ta Tee 40, Saw Sha La Mo 45, Saw Hser Hgay 21, and 4 other friends, a total of seven, were travelling to Than-daung town for shopping. Along the way they met SPDC guerrilla unit troops led by Kyaw Zaw Han near Sa-ba-lor-khee village. The troops threatened them and looted their chickens, weighing 70 Viss, and worth 15,000 kyat. (Source: KIC)

Beginning from December 2001 up to this day, the SPDC authorities prohibited Baw-ga-li and Kaw-thay-doe villages from bringing rice from the town. In addition, they used the villagers' trucks to construct roads and transport rice to the front line military camps. The SPDC troops set fire to the forest and as a result, many villagers' plantations were destroyed. (Source: KIC)

Situation in Nyaung-lay-bin District

On 10 February 2002, column 1 and 2 from SPDC LIB 363, came to Doo-pa-leh village in Htee-bla village tract, Shwe-gyin township and burned down 24 houses. Moreover, these troops looted 200 chickens and household items from the villagers and burned down the paddy barn of Saw Khin Maung Aye containing 180 baskets of rice. (Source: KIC)

On 18 February 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 361 burnt down Htee-nya-pa-day villager Saw Kyay Yin's paddy barn with 70 baskets of paddy and 10 other paddy barns from that village. (Source: KIC)

On 20 February 2002, combined troops of SPDC IB-60 and guerilla unit came to Eh-theh-soe and burned down a villager's paddy barn containing 50 baskets of paddy. (Source: KIC)

On 28 February 2002, combined troops of SPDC LIB 350 and DKBA fined Saw Tin Win 6,000 kyat for no reason when he was panning gold. (Source: KIC)

On 1 March 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 366 came to Mae-ka-ti village tract and burned down a paddy barn of villager Saw Chit Aye containing 60 baskets of paddy. (Source: KIC)

On 7 March 2002, troops from the DKBA demanded 50,000 kyat per village from the plain area of Kyauk-kyi Township to buy a generator. (Source: KIC)

From 12-14 March 2002, SPDC troops based in Pa-pun Township came to Thay-kho-doe village in Shwe-gyin Township and burned down the whole village. As a result the villagers were facing many problems. (Source: KIC)

On 2 September 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 599 led by battalion second in command Aung Myo Htet destroyed 68 boats belonging to Ko-ni villagers in Mone Township. They took two boats to the army camp of SPDC IB 599. (Source: KIC)

On 29 September 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 366 destroyed a plot equivalent to 8-baskets of seeded hill paddy belonging to Pah Seh Nyeh and a plot of 7-baskets of seeded hill paddy belonging to Saw Nwee Lay of Mu-lay-khee village in Kyauk-kyi Township. (Source: KIC)

On 29 September 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 363, 365, 366 and 368 under Tactical Command 1 of No. 10 Local Military Operation Command headquarters burnt down 19 houses of Mu-li-khee village and destroyed hill paddy fields in Maw-soe-kho and Doh-daw-kho areas in Kyauk-kyi Township. (Source: KIC)

On 4 October 2002, at 05:50 hours, troops from SPDC LIB 366 shot at villagers in Ta-kaw-doe hill paddy field plots and destroyed a plot of paddy equivalent to 7-baskets of paddy belonging to Saw Maung Doo. (Source: KIC)

On 7 October 2002, at 15:10 hours two battalions of SPDC combined troops, led by battalion commander Soe Lwin of SPDC LIB 366 and battalion commander Myo Aung of SPDC LIB 368, fired both their heavy weapons and small arms on Ka-du-mu-doe village in Kyauk-kyi Township. They looted all the villagers' possessions and burned down the whole village. (Source: KIC)

On 28 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 264 came to Maw-pu village, Mone township, and looted from:

1. Naw Bi Htoo; one pig, three tins of rice, 3 baskets of paddy, 5 Viss of fish paste, 10 Viss of salt and two mosquito nets and
2. Saw Nelson; one pig and one Viss of salt.

It was harvest time and the SPDC troops destroyed 42 plots of villagers' hill paddy fields and burned down one paddy field hut. (Source: KIC)

On 29 October 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 251, led by battalion commander Major Dagama, came to Thaw-keh-doe village, Kyaukkyi township, and destroyed the betel leaf plantations of Saw Kwaw Law with 400 plants and of Kho-lu villager Saw Ywa Mu Heh with about 100 plants. (Source: KIC)

Situation in Mergui/Tavoy Division

On 6 February 2002, troops from SPDC IB 280, led by Khin Maung Aye demanded from 90,000 to 100,000 kyat from each cashew-nut plantation owner. Those who failed to pay were put in a detention cell at the SPDC IB 280 camp. (Source: KIC)

On 10 March 2002, Nadao, second in command of SPDC LIB 409, burned down the cardamom plantations of:

1. Pee Hsa Ee
2. Thra Nu Heh,
3. Ler Klay and
4. Dah Hsee Seh Leh of Ler-ta-pu village

On 17 March 2002, these troops banned the following villagers from cultivating hill farms: Myitta village, Hsa-mu-htaw village, Ler-ta-pu village, She-bu-khee village, Pah-leh-po village, Kya-pee village, Ka-neh-they-khee village, Khay-ta-khee village and Maw-thaw-kawa. (Source: KIC)

On 20 April 2002, about 40 troops from SPDC LIB 431 column 2 led by Commander Zaw Oo came to Toe-moe-khee area and shot at Saw Sa Law and his son. The troops then looted 2 machetes, one Viss of salt, 2 Viss of chili, 2 pots, one plate, one male sarong, 2 shirts, a tube of tooth paste, a bar of soap and other items worth about 14,000 kyat from Saw Sa Law. They also looted a pair of shoes, one flashlight, one shirt and a package of snack altogether worth about 15,000 kyat from Saw Min Doo. (Source: KIC)

On 23 May 2002, SPDC militia troops based at Kaw-paw village seized 28 cattle at Ta-nay place in Htee-bleh-khee area. They shot at the cattle owner and his assistants, wounding cattle owner Maung Soe and cattle drivers Hun Soe and Nay Cha. (Source: KIC)

In June 2002, the training instructor of the 12th Batch SPDC army military training demanded 250,000 betel nuts from Pa-saw-oo and Pa-nwe-po-klo villages, and 250,000 nuts from Ta-ner-gaw-hta and Pay-cha-maw villages in Ler-mu-lah Township. A total of 500,000 betel nuts were taken. (Source: KIC)

On 30 June 2002, Bo Tin Nyunt Htun of SPDC LIB 403 based at In-bya camp forced Saw-hkay and Htee-pa-doh villages each to provide 2,000 saplings of pepper, 2,000 poles of bamboo and 800 kyat. Everything was to be sent to In-bya military camp. (Source: KIC)

Since 9 October 2002, villagers in Thabokleik relocation site have not been allowed to go and tend their paddy fields by order of the SPDC LIB 561 responsible for the area. In another relocation site in Mehwah, villagers had to boil and eat Kle Te (a kind of wild yam) because the price of rice was going up and new crops had not been collected yet. (Source: KIC)

5.8 Situation in Karenni State

Due to the scarcity of commodities, prices are going up daily. This problem is becoming a major challenge for people living in both cities and rural areas. Among the commodities are sawdust and charcoal. The current price for one sack of charcoal is 1,500 kyat and 20 kyat for one tin (60 milk tins) of sawdust. Poor families who cannot afford to buy charcoal and sawdust have to go to Painchit to buy the leftover wood. On the way back, with the leftover wood loaded on trucks, they would be ordered by KNPLF to pay a tax of 500 kyat per truck at the Loilin Lay checkpoint, as well as 5,000 kyat per truck at the LIB No. 261 checkpoint. (Source: *KNAHR*)

Unfair Taxes and Levies

There is a joint military checkpoint on the Loikaw main road to Taunggyi, capital of Shan State. This checkpoint is manned in turn mainly by LIB No. 250 and LIB No. 261. Sometimes, police, military intelligence and city investigation personnel jointly guard the checkpoint. All vehicles passing through this checkpoint are only allowed to pass between 06:00 and 18:00 after paying a tax. Only vehicles owned by cease-fire armed groups are allowed to pass freely at any time. The three recent Burmese deserters from LIB No. 261 who defected to the Karenni Army recalled that five of their troops were ordered in turn to go for guard duty at that checkpoint, earning 30,000 kyat per month for its battalion funds. (Source: *KNAHR*)

The SPDC regional authorities are now ordering all local villages to establish primary schools in their respective villages. Villagers were ordered to cover half of the total cost of the schools. In Naung Lon, the authorities provided only 12 million of the 26 million kyat total. Similarly, in the Daw Tahe primary school construction, the authorities gave 13 million kyat to the contractor, out of the 27 million total. Hteesakah villagers had to pay 70 million kyat for a generator, which provides electricity mainly for the military base and office. (Source: *KNAHR*)

Since the beginning of this year, Burmese troops from LIB No. 428, under the command of Camp commander Myint Thein at Markrawshe base, have been demanding that each village located in Kaylya village tract pay 400 kyat quarterly in order to purchase dry cell batteries. In addition, the troops ordered families from those villages to provide them with chickens, groundnuts, and vegetables every weekend. The same Burmese troops also ordered each village to cut 24-foot long hardwood posts for an electricity supply line. If they were unable to cut the posts, they were ordered to pay 200 kyat. Moreover, each village has been ordered by the LIB No. 428 commander to provide the troops with 50 sheets of thatch for roofing the military barracks every year. (Source: *KNAHR*)

In the first week of January 2002, Burmese troops from LIB No. 428, based near Prusoe and led by Captain Aung Htun, forced families from eleven villages in Markrawshe village tract to give one basket of groundnut and one basket of maize each to the SPDC troops. The troops took the extorted crops to the cities to raise funds for the military. The current market price for one basket of groundnut is 1,200 kyat and for one basket of maize is 800 kyat. (Source: *KNAHR*)

In March 2002, about 400 families in Mingalar Ward, Loikaw City, were ordered by Loikaw Province Peace and Development Council Chairman Lt Colonel Tin Htun to pay 200 kyat each in order to improve the one-mile long, 60-foot wide Gahgaw road. However, even after all the families had paid the demanded amount, there was no improvement made to the road. Ward residents suspect that Lt. Colonel Tin Htun has kept the money for himself. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 2 June 2002, the commander of Burmese troops from IB No. 102 ordered each village in Daw Plawdu village tract to weave 10 bamboo baskets to be sent to his military base. The Burmese commander said the baskets would be used to carry mortar shells in the event of a war with Thailand. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 15 June 2002, villages located in Htee Pawsoe village tract were ordered by Major Myo Nyunt from Pruso base's LIB No. 531 to provide 70 poles of bamboo each to his troops within three days. In addition, villages located along the Pruso - Deemaw Soe main road were ordered to provide food, cheroots, whisky and chickens to the Burmese units that were on sentry duty. No payment was made. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 28 June 2002, the Loikaw Province Peace and Development Council Chairman, Lt. Colonel Tin Htun, instructed all families in Loikaw City and area villages to pay 100 kyat each to their ward or village chiefs. Lt. Colonel Tin Htun said this money would be spent on repairing damaged parts of the railroad from Loikaw to Aungban. However, there has been no report of any repairs to the railroad. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 11 August 2002, Captain Myint Soe from LIB No. 531, commander of the Loilin Lay Burmese army base, ordered villagers living in Teelon and Wam Ngaw village tracts to repair the military barracks at the base. However, as it was the busiest time of the year for village farmers, no villagers were able to work. The Burmese commander demanded that each family pay a fine of 1,500 kyat for failure to provide labor. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 18 September 2002, villages in the Hteepaw Soe village tract were ordered by SPDC commander Myo Nyunt from LIB No. 431 to provide his troops with 20 wooden posts and 100 pieces of bamboo each. They were told to deliver the posts and bamboo by 22 September. (Source: *KNAHR*)

Land Confiscation

On 24 April 2002, about 70 Burmese troops from Regional Central Command, Loikaw base led by Htin Aung, came to Pakyeh Pagoda Mountain, east of Aung Than Lay Camp, and drove all the farmers out of their fields without giving any reason. The next day, those farmers complained to the Township Chairman Tin Htun and asked him to negotiate with the commander Htin Aung on their behalf. Instead of taking action, Tin Htun, threatened those farmers and intimidated them into not planting any more crops on the 100 acres. Now all farmers living in Narnah Taw, Hospital Hill, Naung Yah, Htee Tama and Chit Keh are in a situation in which it is too difficult to keep working in their fields or to feed their families. (Source: *KNAHR*)

Forced Sale of Crops

On 13 July 2002, Loikaw Province Chairman Lt. Colonel Tin Htun called village chiefs in Dee Maw Soe Township to his Loikaw office, where he ordered them to sell 5 baskets per acre of their recently harvested paddy. They were paid by authorities only 350 kyat for each basket. The current market price for one basket is 800 kyat. (Source: *KNAHR*)

On 12 September 2002, the Loikaw military authorities ordered families living in Loilin Lay, Teelon, and Hteesakah villages to sell their recently harvested paddy to the Paddy Buying Centre. Facing threats of arrest, about 350 families gathered and sold their crops at the Township office the next day. For one basket, they were paid 350 kyat by the authorities. The current market price for one basket is 800 kyat. (Source: *KNAHR*)

5.9 Situation in Mon State

Unfair Levies and Taxes

In January 2002, the authorities in Ye Township built a tar road in Yan-myo-aung and Aung-min-gla wards in the center of the town because they wanted the area to appear nice to visitors. However, the authorities did not provide any funds. Instead, they collected 20,000 to 50,000 kyat from each household in the town wards. The authorities collected different amounts of money from each house according to the accounts of the household's business. They did not collect any funds from government servants who stayed in the wards. The authorities also collected 200 kyat from each household in town wards. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Cash Extortion for Independence Day

To celebrate International Day on 4 January 2002, the Mon State General Administration Office collected a huge amount of funds from civilians and motorcar associations. In an order on 26 December 2001, that SPDC office ordered 38 motor associations in Mon State to provide 5,000 kyat if they were a large association and 1,000 kyat if they were a small association. The office received over 100,000 kyat from these associations. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Funds Collection for High School in Aung-min-gla, Ye Township

In January and February 2002, when Ye Township authorities planned to build a high school building in Aung-min-gla town ward in Ye Town, Mon State, the authorities collected money from Chaung-taung and Abor villages near Ye Town. The authorities collected 500,000 kyat from each village. And they also collected 500 kyat from each house in Aung-min-gla, Aung-thu-kha, and Aung-myt-ta town wards. Then they collected 1,000 kyat from each high school student for all the expenses of the building and other required school materials. On 5 February, after the authorities collected the funds and completed the building, military commander Brigadier Ye Win made an opening ceremony. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Tax in the Name of Rural Development

In February 2002, the village authorities collected funds from the villagers to dig a village well and build a concrete container for the water. The goal was to have enough water in in Taung-pyin village, Ye Township. On 15 February 2002, the village authorities collected 700 kyat from each household to dig the well. As the village has about 1,500 households, they collected 1.05 million kyat. Similarly, on 30 March, the village authorities collected 1,000 kyat from each household to build the concrete container. The authorities received another 1.5 million kyat from the villagers.

The amount of money they collected was twice the amount needed to build the well and container. The authorities did not use the extra and shared among themselves. Most village authorities also do not have to report how they use their money in these kinds of development projects. Therefore there is no accountability for any money that they have collected from the civilians. After the village authorities received water and kept it in the containers and they sold it to the villagers. Many villagers were satisfied by the misuse of their money by the authorities, but they could not complain about it. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Funds Collected for a Road in Ye Township

In March 2002, when Ye Township authorities planned to build a 3 mile long tar motor road from Ye to Abor village, they instructed the village leaders in the area to provide them with 5 million kyat in funds. The authorities instructed all the people in the area to pay for the costs of construction as the road was for their use. In early March, MOMC No. 19 Commander, Brigadier Ye Win ordered the village headmen in the surrounding villages to lay tar and complete the road that was roughly built the year before. He ordered the headmen from Andin, Asin, Zee-phu-taung, Duya and Abor villages tracts to provide 1 million kyat from each village tract in order to collect a total of 5 million kyat for the construction. The deadline for the fund collection was before the end of March. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Funds Collected to Repair Bridge in Ye Township

On 2 March 2002, an old bridge between Son-htit-tar and Aru-taung villages in the northern part of Ye Township was destroyed and the Township's construction department did not come and rebuild it. Transportation was cut for some days and the nearest military battalion, SPDC LIB No. 343, took responsibility to build a new road for temporary use and to repair the bridge. The battalion commander collected 10,000 kyat from every ferry car that used the road and collected 500 kyat from each civilian. Many ferry owners and passengers were upset with this fund collection. One ferry driver said that the collection was too much and the battalion would get a lot of extra money. About 200 ferry cars and hundreds of travelers used the road. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Tax for Tatmadaw Day

In March 2002, the authorities in every township were requested to provide funds to celebrate the 57th anniversary of Armed Force (Tatmadaw) Day on March 27 in the hall of Southeast Command in Moulmein, Mon State. In Mudon Township, every village was asked to provide funds for the ceremony. Depending on the household numbers, the funds demanded ranged from 3,000 to 15,000 kyat for each village. For example, Kwan-hlar village had to pay 7,500 kyat; Yaung-daung village had to pay 4,500 kyat; and Hnee-pa-daw had to pay 11,000 kyat.

Many other villages also had to pay. In Mudon Township alone, the authorities collected about 250,000 kyat from 45 villages. The Southeast Command requested 2 million kyat from 10 townships in Mon State for this ceremony. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Funds Collected for Road in Chaung-zon Township

In March 2002, when Chaung-zon Township PDC authorities planned to create a new town ward and outside of Chaung-zon Town, they also planned to build a new road in that town ward. In order to build the new road, they needed to lay tar on the length of the road which required a lot of funds. The authorities decided to collect 2,000 kyat from every house near the road and 1,500 kyat from every house that was not near the road. The distance of the road was only 2 furlongs or about 0.4 kilometer. The authorities started collecting funds in early January and forced the civilians to provide the set amount of funds as quickly as possible. But many poor families could not afford to pay that amount of money. The authorities reduced the set amount of requested funds from 2,000 to 500 kyat for a small number of the poorest families in town. They also reduced the amount for other poor houses so they only had to pay 1,500 kyat per household. The authorities had planned to complete the construction before the Armed Force Day that was to be held on 27 March 2002. The authorities instructed the paid workers to complete the construction of the road on 15 March and then they needed to arrange for a ceremony to welcome Armed Force Day by opening the road. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Unfair Tax and Corruption

On 31 March 2002, the village chairman of Hangan village collected one basket of paddy from each household to provide to the village militiamen. Village PDC Chairman Nai Khin Maung Thaung collected 1,250 baskets of paddy from the whole village because the villages had about 1,250 households. After the paddy collection, the chairman and his committee gave only 400 baskets of paddy to four members of the militiamen in the village. They kept 850 baskets of paddy in their hands. Although the villagers suggested that they sell the remaining amount of paddy to raise funds to construct a school in the village. However, the chairman and his committees refused.

In the end, they sold all the paddy for 1,500 kyat per basket. They shared the money among themselves. Many villagers believed they would also shared this money with the Ye Township authorities because the villagers know about the collaboration between the village authorities and township authorities. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Fund for Food for Soldiers

The village headmen of Khaw-za village in the southern part of Ye Township collected 500 kyat from every house on a monthly basis to pay for food expenses for feeding Burmese soldiers. Whenever Burmese soldiers (local name for members of Burmese Army) arrived into Khaw-za village, they always asked the village headmen to provide them with some food, especially rice and meat. Additionally, they also asked for liquor, beer, beverages and cigarettes. The village headmen had to manage to buy food, beer, liquor, beverages and cigarettes on credit and promised to pay later.

The Burmese military columns arrived in the village many times. Each time, the headmen had to feed at least 20 soldiers and sometimes up to 200 soldiers. Whether the number of

soldiers was large or small, the headmen needed to arrange for food and other stuff for all of them. The headmen were very busy with this duty because the Burmese soldiers came into the village very often. As an example, IB No. 61's 70 troops went into the village on 2 July and stayed there for 3 days. After only one day IB No. 61 troops left and another 60 troops from LIB No. 343 came into village. They stayed for another three days.

Thus, the village headmen have to spend a lot of money to feed different groups of soldiers. Burmese soldiers never bring their own food and usually just ask the civilians to provide for them. As Khaw-za village has about 800 households, the headmen could collect 300,000-400,000 kyat from the villagers. At the end of each month, the headmen had to pay all debts to shops where they bought the food and other stuff. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Funds Collected for Thanbyuzayat Township Administration

On 14 December, Thanbyuzayat Township authorities planned to stage a traditional dance concert in the town's cinema and sold many thousands of tickets to all villages in the township for the administration funds. They sold one ticket for 300 kyat. The village headmen were forced to sell the tickets and they must not return any tickets.

The authorities were able to raise a lot of money from selling tickets. Township authorities and the USDA always found ways to get money from the civilians. In some townships, the authorities staged one type of show each month and forced the civilians to buy the tickets to raise their administration funds. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Rice Collected for Militia in Mintha Village

In February 2002, with orders from local battalion LIB No. 273, the army and village militia troops requested 2,280 baskets from Mintha village tract of six villages for their food supplies. Included in the order was that Te-ngan-gyi village had to provide 230 baskets; Sin-swe village had to provide 250 baskets; Chattaw village had to provide 300 baskets; Le-gyi village had to provide 500 baskets; and Singu-village had to provide 500. All villages provided without payment. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Deep Corruption in VPDC Authorities in Kyaikmayaw Township

In the second week of March 2002, the Village PDC Chairman Nai Poe Sein and his two secretaries, Nai Hla Htun and Nai San Nu, explained to the villagers that according to Township PDC instructions, their village needed to buy a fire truck and to provide a payment of 5,000 kyat per household within three days. Although the villagers were not satisfied with the collection of this fund, they could not complain because the village authorities were too close with the Township PDC Chairman, Col. Thaw Zin, said a villager. Many poor families faced a lot of difficulty getting this amount of money in such a short time. As the village has about 1,250 households, the authorities received about 6.25 million kyat from the civilians. At the end of April, the villagers had still not seen a fire truck belonging to their village. They had suspected that these village authorities would take their money without accountability.

In April 2002, the authorities collected 3 baskets of paddy from every household for the wages of the village militiamen. The village has only 10 militiamen and according to the rule, each militiaman would receive 100 baskets of paddy as their salary. The authorities collected about 3,750 baskets of paddy from 1,250 households in the village. Then they gave 1,000

baskets of paddy to the 10 militiamen as their salary for the whole year and took the remaining amount of paddy. Then they brought the excess paddy to Moulmein and sold it to paddy-husking mills for 1,200 kyat per basket, said another villager. They would receive about 4 million kyat money and would share it among the three of them.

The villagers added that they would also bribe District and Township PDC authorities to keep them in their positions. The current authorities have remained in power for over 8 years. The villagers had to bribe Col. Thaw Zin with 800,000 kyat when he first became a Village PDC authority. The villagers also had to give him regular bribes, said the villagers. Since SLORC/SPDC came into power in 1988, there hasn't been a low level election for village leaders except in the areas controlled by rebel armed forces. The SPDC authorities just appoint their supporters or those who bribe them. (Source: *HURFOM*)

In March 2002, when Kyaikmayaw Township authorities planned to build a 37 mile long motor road that connected Kyaikmayaw town and a Mon village named Chaung-htit-kwa, the authorities collected funds from the civilians at a rate of 5,000 kyat per household. They mainly collected this money from the villages which are close to the road. They collected funds from over 15 villages in the township and they were: Tarana; Kaw-hlein; Kaw-ha-light, Kyaik-pran, Kyon-wan, Kaw-don, Kaw-panaw, Ka-don-si, Wae-pa-nae and many other small villages. The villages have about 2,500 households and about 12.5 million kyat could be collected in total. The regime only contributed 700,000 kyat when their construction companies tried to build a bridge. Even in the building of that bridge, the civilians in the area had to provide 400,000 kyat to cover all the costs.(Source: *HURFOM*)

Forced Sale of Crops

Forced Sale of Crops in Ka-nyor Village Tract

Starting on 29 January 2002, Chaung-zon authorities ordered U Aye Naing to buy 150,000 baskets of paddy from local farmers in Ka-nyor village tract. In this village tract, there are totally 8 villages and over 50% of the population are farmers. The villages are Mudoon, Bonet, That-kaw, Lamine, Kaw-mu-pon, Ka-nyor and Daw-yat. Without inquiring which farms could produce how many baskets of paddy per acre, but the authorities have defined to buy 15 baskets of paddy per acre at price 350 Kyat per basket. In this village, although the farms from Kaw -mu-pon village could produce better crop, 70 basket from one acre of land, but other villages' farmers could produce only 45 baskets in average. While the authorities decided to buy the same amount of paddy from every acre of land, the farmers in many villages felt disappointed with this decision. However they have no choice but to sell the set amount of paddy to the paddy-buying centers. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Forced to Sell Paddy in Tha-gun-daing Village

On 18 February, the Township PDC authorities, led by Chairman U Thet Naing Oo and the area tactical command Lt. Col. Aung Kyaw Nyein, went into Tha-gun-daing village and called a meeting with all village headmen from that village tract and ordered the farmers to sell their paddy before the end of February. The authorities and army commander also threatened that if they failed to sell the set amount of paddy, those farmers would be detained as punishment. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Paddy Destroyed by Flood, Difficult for Farmers to Sell Their Paddy

Since the early part of October 2002, the authorities from Township Myanmar Agriculture Products Trade Department have entered many villages in Mon State and forced the farmers to sign a contract promising that they would sell a set amount of paddy to the government paddy-buying center after the harvest. Harvest time is normally in early December and farmers usually complete all their cultivation activities at that time. Regime authorities always pressure farmers to sell their paddy crops to the paddy-buying centers before they bring it to their homes. As the quality of lands is different from one township to another, the authorities' orders for the farmers are also different. The farmers in Mudon Township had to sell 15 baskets per acre of land while Ye Township's farmers were instructed to sell 10 baskets per acre.

In the northern part of Ye Township alone, over 500 acres of paddy was destroyed by the floods which had lasted for nearly two months in the last rainy season. Mudon Township has large farmlands and the farmers lost over 1,000 acres of paddy crop. The floods lasted for nearly two months destroying most of their crops and farmers lost the chance to re-grow paddy plants because replanting is only possible when the water level reduces. Some farmers in Ye, Mudon, Kyaikmayaw and Chaung-zon Townships in Mon State informed the authorities who are responsible for buying paddy about their crop conditions. The authorities replied that crop damage or death of paddy is not their concern and the farmers needed to sell the full amount of paddy required to the paddy-buying center. The regime forced the farmers to sell their paddy at the low price of 300-350 kyat per basket to the paddy-buying center. Currently the paddy price in the market is 2,000 kyat per basket. The worst part about the situation is that the farmers did not have enough paddy crop to sell to the regime. Most farmers said they would face detention if they failed to sell the set amount of paddy. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Moulmein City Farmers Are Forced to Sell Their Paddy

In an order issued on 12 December 2002, the City Ward Chairman forced the farmers in his ward to sell their paddy to complete their duty. The order indicated that there were 63 farmers in Shwe Myaing Thiri ward of Moulmein, the capital of Mon State, and none of them had sold their paddy to the paddy buying center until December 10. The authorities set up paddy-buying centers in many wards in Moulmein and forced the farmers to sell their paddy at the low price of 350 kyat per basket. This price is about 5 times less than the market price.

The authorities planned to buy about 4,490 baskets from those 63 farmers in the ward and had given them the orders in November before the harvest. According to instruction, the farmers were required to sell their paddy to the regime paddy-buying centers soon after their harvest. 'Selling the complete requested amount of paddy by farmers means that that farmer completes his (*State*) duty. In the order, the authorities allowed 13 days for the farmers to complete their duty. It described that 'the farmers in Shwe Myaing Thiri must complete selling their paddy without failure.' It also means if they failed to sell their paddy they would be taken to court.

The authorities requested farmers to sell about 15 baskets of paddy from each acre of their land. This amount is nearly a half or over 30% of the total amount produced from one acre. In reality, no farmer wishes to sell their paddy at this low price while the market price for one basket of paddy is about 1,500 kyat. The SPDC'S Agriculture Products Trading Department

has mainly taken responsibility for buying rice. The purposes of buying rice at a low price are to distribute rice free of charge to government servants and soldiers and to export to foreign countries for profit. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Land Confiscation

Land Confiscation by MOMC No. 19 for Artillery Regiment

In April 2002, with the purpose of deploying a new artillery regiment in the northern part of Ye Township, SPDCs MOMC No. 19 commander, Brigadier Ye Win, confiscated 300 acres of land between San-pya and Done-phi villages. These 300 acres of land were owned by 30 families from both villages and most of the land owners were Karen villagers from San-pya village and a few were Mon villagers from Done-phi village. Most of the lands were used to grow rubber trees, betel-nut and other fruit trees. Local villagers estimated the cost of the land and trees to be about 30 million kyat. In the second week of April, Brigadier Ye Win, the commander of MOMC No. 19, came to San-pya village and called a meeting with the villagers who owned the land between these two villages along the motor road. The commander explained to the villagers that he need to confiscate land to deploy a new artillery regiment and then he forced all the land owners to sign a document that these lands were not theirs. The documents meant that there were no owners for these lands and that MOMC No. 19 then had a chance to take them.

"As I know, the MOMC No. 19 would deploy only 10 military battalions and they already confiscated many acres of land. Now, they said they were confiscating lands for an artillery regiment. Most lands are owned by our Karen villagers. My land and crop trees cost about 4 million kyat and they took it without giving me one kyat. Many other plantations have a higher value than mine. Nobody got any compensation for the costs." said a Karen villager from San-pya.

"The commander told us that these lands are owned by the government. We are only the owners of the trees but we do not own the land at all. However, he said, after the land is taken by the government, we lose the chance to harvest our crops there." added the villager.

One Karen villager, who is about 60 years old said, "I owned two plots of land in that area. Now, the Burmese Army confiscated both plots. I have nothing left to eat. My children cried when they heard the bad news. We had no food more. Only my son, who is a (Buddhist) monk, has been able to feed our family with small amounts of food."

Most of the lands were registered with the township land registration department and these lands were not in a forest area said the villagers. "They (the commanders) said these lands are theirs. I am surprised. We paid taxes to the Township office every year and the lands are registered. They take our lands for what ever reason that they like." added a dissatisfied villager. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Land Confiscated in Karawpi Village for Military Base

On 28 July 2002, the DVB [Democratic Voice of Burma] learned that No. 606 Heavy Artillery Headquarters under the Southeast Military Command was planning to open a new Heavy Artillery Battalion near Karawpi Village in Ye Township. A group comprised of Lt Col Thant Zin Maw, commander of Ye Township-based No 311 Heavy Artillery Battalion,

and township-level officials from the Land Records Office, Forestry Department, and General Administration Department arrived in Karawpi Village to choose the site for the battalion. They also chose land to confiscate for constructing the battalion and other livestock breeding and agriculture activities. The following was confiscated in Ye Township for building the new battalion - 23 acres of pasture, 26 acres of forest land, 11 acres of rubber plantation owned by U Atin, 14 acres of runner plantation owned by U Paw Tote, 12 acres of rubber plantation owned by Daw Tin Ngwe, and 14 acres of rubber plantation owned by U Sa Net. (Source: DVB)

Land Confiscation for Shrimp Farms

In late December 2002, SPDC IB No. 210 based in Mudon Township confiscated 64 acres of land belonging to Mon farmers to create shrimp farms and grow paddy under the battalion's 'self-reliance' program. The confiscated land was situated in the southern part of Mudon Township and in the western part of Moulmein, Ye railway road. The land belonged to 9 Mon farmer families from Yaung-daung and Kwan-hlar villages. Since October before the farmers reaped their crops, the Burmese Army and Township authorities came and informed the village headmen that they would inform the landowners after harvest. The authorities went to the farms and measured the land area. However the authorities did not inform the farmers that their land would be confiscate.

The farmers have regularly given tax for their lands and sold their paddy to the government set paddy-buying center every year. However, the army and authorities selected the best lands in the area and took them for their own business. According to the plan of IB No. 210, *they* would dig several pools to create shrimp farms and also grows paddy in the remaining lands. The farmers who lost land and the amount of land they lost are:

1. Nai Aunt Yein (8 acres),
2. Nai Lun Aung (5 acres),
3. Mi Own Kyi (12 acres),
4. Mi Shwe Uu (6 acres),
5. Nai Maung Kyi (1.5 acres),
6. Nai San Hlaing (3 acres),
7. Nai Pan Taung (5. 5 acres),
8. Nai Dout (10. 5 acres) and
9. Nai Tun Shinn (3 acres). (Source: *HURFOM*)

5.10 Tenasserim Division

Forced Sale of Crops

In January 2002, the SPDC authorities in Yebyu township ordered the villages in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division to sell their paddy at low price set by the paddy-buying center, which are designated in every village tract. Every farmer in the township had to sell 10 baskets per one acre of farmland to the paddy-buying center. The cost set by the centers is only 350 kyat per basket of paddy, while the price in the market is about 600 kyat per basket.

The authorities instructed the villages in Min-tha village tract had to sell the following amounts: Ye-ngan-gyi village had to sell 500 baskets; Sin-swe village had to sell 800 baskets; Cha-taw village had to sell 1,500 baskets; Hmaw-gyi village had to sell 3,500 baskets; Le-gyi village had to sell 3,500 baskets; Sin-gu village had to sell 3,000 baskets. They instructed Gan-taw village tract that East Gan-taw village has to sell 8,000 baskets and West Gan-taw village has to sell 15,000 baskets respectively. They also instructed Thin-gun-kyun village to sell 1,500 baskets of paddy and Talaing-myaw village to sell 1,500 baskets of paddy. (Source: *HURFOM*)

In the beginning of November 2002, the township Land and Agricultural Corporation (LAC) officials of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in Tavoy district came to meet the farmers. The authorities restricted everyone from selling their rice to others until they finished selling their ‘ dutiful rice’ (quota of rice) to the government. The LAC authorities from Yebyu, Tavoy, Laung Lon, and Theyetchaung townships in Tavoy district arrived at the time the peasants were harvesting rice in their fields. With the assistance of the village administration, the LAC authorities started to buy the rice from the peasants. The peasants had to sell what the authorities called ‘dutiful rice’ (quota of rice) to the government as a compulsory deal with a confined price. ‘Dutiful rice ‘ means a must to sell 12 to 15 baskets of rice per acre to the government’s Land and Agricultural Corporation. (A basket is the standard unit of measurement of rice. 1 basket = 46 pounds or 21 kegs.) The normal yield of rice per acre is 50 baskets if there are no problems and the peasants have enough time to tend their fields. As the 2002 rainy season brought floods in some areas, the yield of some peasants’ rice fields reduced. They would not get more than 30 baskets per acre. Some abandoned their fields. Most of the peasants worried that they would have to buy rice from others at local price in order to fill up their quotas, at the government confined price. (Source: *HURFOM*)

Unfair Levies and Taxes

In December 2002, Burmese troops taking security to Kamoethway area in the east of Tavoy, Tenasserim division, demanded betel nut tax from the local villagers. The beginning of December is betel nut harvest time. Villagers in Kamoethway area earn their living on betel nut plantations. When the betel nut harvest time arrived, the Burmese troops ordered the local villagers to pay the betel nut tax. The tax is 15 kyats per viss (Weigh unit, 1 viss =1.5 kilogram) of betel nut. The tax was extracted by the Burmese troops at the wholesale store where the villagers sold their betel nuts. The Burmese troops said that the tax was for Taunghonlone-Kawpaw road construction. Actually the Burmese troops had already demanded money from local villagers for this road construction. In addition, the villagers had to construct this road by themselves.

In the mean time, villagers in Kamoethway area have to feed and support *Pyithusit* (People's Militia), which is established and backed by the Burmese troops. Each household in the Kamoethway area has to pay one sack of rice for the militia each year. The house hold which does not join the militia has to pay 5,000 kyats aside from the rice. The people's militia is a group of villagers picked up from local villages and is equipped by the Burmese troops. They are given authority to rule over the local villagers, to organize security in the village, and to help fight the resistance groups. (Source: KHRG)

Since the beginning of October 2002, the Commander of No.8 Operation Commanding HQ, which is based in Myitta village in the east of Tavoy, Tenasserim division, ordered his troops who took security in Kamoethway area to search and arrest all of illegal cattle traders and confiscate their cattle. According to a local villager, the troops took away some cattle. On 30 November 2002, the Burmese troops looted 30 cattle from the outskirts of Kawpaw (Myinkanbaw) village. On 7 December 2002, the Burmese troops looted 13 cattle from the outskirts of Naw Tru Taw village. On 9 December 2002, the Burmese troops took away 10 cattle from the outskirts in Pwe Poe Klah village. It is unknown whether the cattle traders escaped or were arrested. Usually, cattle traders are in danger when they encounter the Burmese troops. Sometimes, the Burmese troops open fire at them. Some people have died and some have managed to escape. Some villagers in Tavoy district earn their living by selling cattle to Thailand. They have to pass Kamoethway area to get to the border. Some cattle traders bribe the local People's Militia. Even though they bribe the militia, their cattle may be confiscated by the Burmese troops on the way. Sometimes the Burmese troops ask them to buy their cattle back. (Source: KHRG)

On 15 August 2002, Battalion Commander Htin Way from Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion 404 based in Htoo Ler (Kyauk Htu) village ordered local villagers from Ka Taw Ni to send 3,000 pieces of roofing leaves to their military camp. Htoo Ler village is to the east of Theyetchaung township, Tavoy district, Tenasserim division. The villagers in Ka Taw Ni and the surrounding areas have to live under the watchful eyes of the Burmese troops. They also continually have to pay various fees to the army, including forced labour. (Source: KHRG)

On 25 August 2002, Battalion Commander Soe Thein from Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion 403 based in In Bya demanded 180 pieces of bamboo from Saw Kay (Taungzin), Htee Pah Doh, Kyaw Pya and Kasid villages. The villagers had to send the bamboo, each of which had to be at least 20 feet long, to the military camp no later than 20 August. These villages are in the so called white areas, which are totally under control of the Burmese troops. Bya, in which the battalion is stationed, is in Theyetchaung township, Tavoy district, Tenasserim division. (Source: KHRG)

On 12 August 2002, Colonel Tin Myint, commander of Burma Army No.12 Divisional Training Center, demanded 300,000 kyats (Burmese currency) compensation from Pasawoak (Wazoneoak) village. The village is in Palaw township, Mergui district, and close to the training center. The soldiers were taking a training when one of them died from an explosion. Although the villagers knew nothing about the explosion, they were ordered to pay compensation for that soldier. The commander threatened to fine the villagers 600,000 kyats and to kill the village elders should such incident happen again. He also warned the villagers that anybody who is found in the area of the training centre will be shot without any questions asked. (Source: KHRG)

In October 2002, it was reported that villagers who are in Pawatawma, Pawat Plaw Paw Htaw forced relocation site in Tenasserim township, Mergui district, Tenasserim division were busy with the Burmese troops' forced labour. Usually, October is harvest season but they did not have time to complete the harvest activities. They had to build outposts, make fences, dig trenches, and do other jobs. The Burmese troops demanded, pigs, chickens and other food times from the villagers frequently. In addition, the soldiers do not allow them to stay overnight in the fields, some of which are about three-hour walk from the relocation site. Therefore, many villagers do not have enough time to harvest their crops and cannot protect their fields from the wild animals like the wild pigs. As a result, they not only lose much of their crops, but also cannot finish their harvesting in time. (Source: KHRG)

On 4 November 2002, the Burmese troops base in Palauk village in southern Theyetchaung township, Tavoy district, Tenasserim division, demanded 200 pieces of roofing leaves, 2,000 pieces of bamboos, four logs and 1,200 slits of bamboo from the villagers. Everyday three villagers had to report to the army for building the outpost and doing chores. (Source: KHRG)

On 6 November 2002, the Burmese troops from Infantry Battalion 104, which is based in Kaw Paw village about 35 kilometers in the east of Tavoy, demanded fire wood from a local villager in a relocated village called Kamaik. Saw Tin Lah (about 38 years old, son of Saw Chaw) was ordered by Burmese troops to send three bullock-cart-loads of fire wood to their base. (Source: KHRG)

On 10 November 2002, camp commander Aung Myo Win of Burma army's Light Infantry Battalion 410 demanded 5,000 betel nuts from Mawmatru and Tameh Hta villages which are about 60 kilometers to the south east of Tavoy, Tenasserim division. (Source: KHRG)

On 20 November 2002, camp commander Maung Myo Win of Burmese army's Light Infantry Battalion 410, which bases in Htu Ler (Kyathtu), about 60 kilometers to the south-east of Tavoy, demanded 100,000 betel nuts from local villagers in Kaw Htee (Thabyuchaung), Htu Ler and 100,000 from Kahtawni village. (Source: KHRG)

5. 11 Other places in Burma

Rice Pilfering Authorities Arrested

On 7 October 2002, it was reported that several members from Rangoon's Sanchaung Township Peace and Development Council were arrested during the last couple of weeks for pilfering rice and cooking oil that was destined for the distribution program to combat the skyrocketing prices of essential commodities. The regime had been subsidizing daily rations of these necessary products in hopes of quelling public dissent. It was reported that the chairman of a quarter located within Sanchaung Township was arrested along with four of his aides, and that the group was reportedly sentenced to five years in prison.

The government is selling each family two kilos of rice and three kilos of oil each day at a price five times lower than the current market value. The regime also issued a directive banning the export of rice and other essential goods including chili and onions outside of Rangoon Division. Reports of residents looting rice and other foodstuffs last month preceded the government's decision to begin rationing rice and oil. Also last month dozens of villagers

from the Mon State's Mudone Township were arrested after they raided a warehouse in search of rice. (Source: *The Irrawaddy*)

Tax-Free Markets Flop

On 5 March 2002, it was reported that the tax-free markets established by Burma's military government to decrease the cost of essential goods have failed to meet consumer demands despite private firms being forced to provide products to the government run markets. While people arrive and queue at the markets before 5:00am, the stock is not sufficient to supply all the people.

The Rangoon City Development Committee (RCDC) opened the markets in March 2000 and sells products such as cooking oil, eggs and soap. The markets were created in hopes of easing the effects of Burma's continuing economic crisis on the local population by allowing them to sell their goods without having to pay a tax to the government, according to sources familiar with the markets. Sources say only restaurants and residents who live near the markets rely on them for goods. Local customers reportedly sell goods purchased at the tax-free markets for an inflated price at other markets, says another Rangoon resident. The government has only been able to supply 500 eggs to each of the four markets and allows each person to buy ten eggs, causing many to leave empty handed. Tensions reportedly run high at the markets where fighting among customers is also common place. (Source: *The Irrawaddy*)

Farmers Feel the Pinch

On 11 December 2002, it was reported that farmers in Burma's Kachin State say that their survival is becoming increasingly precarious due to a combination of soaring commodity prices and a government policy forcing them to sell a large portion of their crops at a reduced rate. Government authorities have been requiring all rice farmers in Kachin State to sell 12 tin (1 tin = 32 kilograms) of rice paddy, or unmilled rice, for every acre of arable land they possess. Each acre produces a minimum of 40 tin. But farmers say that if part of their land is not under cultivation, they still are expected to provide the government with an amount corresponding to their total acreage. The market price for a tin of rice paddy is 1,500 to 2,000 kyat (1 USD = 1,050 kyat). The government, however, only pays the farmers 350 kyat per tin. Farmers who cannot grow the necessary amount must purchase rice paddy at the market price before reselling it to the government at the reduced rate or face arrest. One man reported that two of his neighbors had been detained for this reason.

There was a rice shortage in Burma in 2002 as a result of flooding. In September 2002, a series of lootings occurred in Burma due to food shortages. Passenger buses were reportedly stopped and forced to hand over any food on board, while dozens of villagers in Mon State were arrested after they raided a rice warehouse in Mudone Township. Rice prices have doubled in Rangoon in 2002 already, and reports from some rural areas have said the price even tripled. The government has given out daily rice rations in hopes of easing public dissent. Sources in Burma, however, have said that much of the rice bought by the government is being exported to shore up hard currency reserves.

The Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development said that rice exports had reached 742,000 tons during the first eight months of 2002, marking a year-on-year increase of 114.19 percent for rice exports. According to government statistics, Burma's agriculture

industry supplies 28.3 percent of the country's exports and 48 percent of the country's gross domestic product. Burma has more than 18 million hectares of arable lands, half of which is farmed. (Source: *The Irrawaddy*)

Crime Wave Linked to Hunger

A wave of violent crime appears to be spreading across Burma, as the country's crumbling economy continues to drive its poorest citizens to increasingly bold acts of desperation. Sources report that robbery and looting have become rampant in the impoverished satellite towns of Rangoon and Mandalay, Burma's two largest cities. Elsewhere in the country, there have been reports of travellers being confronted by local people demanding food and money.

"A bus on the Rangoon-Mandalay highway was stopped and robbed by hungry-looking villagers near Pinyinmana last week," confirmed the assistant manager of a tour agency in Rangoon. "Company vehicles have also been targeted," he added.

"In some cases, the villagers, including children, stopped vehicles and begged for food and money from bus passengers and private car owners. They didn't steal anything, but they looked so desperate that the motorists were afraid to refuse," the source continued.

The crime wave has even hit relatively prosperous areas of the Burmese capital, where there have been a rash of reports of daytime looting and break-ins. "In our neighborhood alone, there have been five break-ins since last week," said Myo Lwin, a resident of Rangoon's Tamwe Township. "In most cases, a group of people knocked on the apartment door and then rushed in when the tenant answered." Similar incidents have occurred in nearby Yankin Township, he added.

News of skyrocketing crime rates comes amid evidence that Burma's poor have been hard hit by the recent plunge of the kyat and a concomitant rise in food prices. The kyat was valued at 1,100 kyat to the US dollar yesterday, up from all-time lows of 1,200 to the dollar earlier in the week. Reliable sources report that in many rural areas, some villagers have nothing to eat except bamboo shoots. Meanwhile, in the Rangoon satellite townships of Shwe Pyithar and Hlaing Tharyar, many families have been reduced to eating just a thin rice gruel, or in some cases, just water used in cooking rice. Burma's strictly controlled media has been instructed not to report on the recent dramatic rise in hunger-related crimes. (Source: *The Irrawaddy*)

5.12 Documents and Orders

Cost of Living

Money (*Kyat rate 29/8/2002*)

100 Thai baht = 2,050 Kyat (Thai-Burmese border, Na E Tong)
100 Thai baht = 2,250 Kyat (Thai-Burmese border, Three Pagodas pass)
100 Thai baht = 2,200 Kyat (Tavoy town)
1 US\$ = 850.00 Kyat (www.feer.com Sept. 9, 2002) (Unofficial rate)
1 US\$ = 42.385 THB (www.feer.com Sept. 9, 2002)
Price of commodities; (Tavoy town 29/8/2002)

Rice

Best quality = 350 kyat/pyi
Low quality = 300 kyat/pyi
White sticky rice = 350 kyat/ypi
Black sticky rice = 400 kyat/pyi (1 pyi = 2 kilogram)

Meat

Pork = 1,200 kyat/viss
Chicken = 1,200 kyat/viss
Goat = 1,500 kyat/viss
Beef = 1,200 kyat/viss (1 viss = 1.6 kilogram)

Cooking oil

Bean oil = 1,200 kyat/viss
Sesame oil = 2,700 kyat/viss
Coconut oil = 900 kyat/viss
Palm oil = 1,800 kyat/viss

Petrol

Thai petrol = 2,400 kyat/gallon
Burmese petrol = 2,100 kyat/gallon
Thai diesel = 1,400 kyat/gallon
Burmese diesel = 1,100 kyat/gallon

Daily wages for hired labor

Male = 300-500 kyat/day
Female = 200-300 kyat/day

(Source: HURFOM)

To

Chairperson

(All) Town quarter/ village *Peace and Development Council* (PDC)

Kawkareik Township

Subject: To halt the activities of small (*Hala*) paddy-husking mills

1. During 2001-2002 Year, Kawkarein Township plans to buy 180000 baskets of paddy from the whole township and it also needs to create lawful activities for *Hala* paddy-husking mills and husking registration under the management of *Myanma* Agricultural Produce Trading department, and so mat you must stop the activities of all mills in your area (village or town quarter) temporarily from February 7, 2002.
2. Therefore, some equipment (*belts and-rollers*) must be kept in the nearest police stations and if the village has no police station, the village PDC authorities concerned and the army commanders in the area need to keep them.

Signed by - (Aung Kyaw)
Chairman Kawkareik Township

(Source: *HURFOM*)



6. Rights of the Child

6.1 Situation of Children in Burma

Burma became a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on August 15, 1991. The CRC affirms that every child has the right to protection, the right to life, and the right to survival and development. The CRC also specifically refers to the protection of children in armed conflict and mandates that no child under 15 should take part in hostilities; that children should not be separated from their parents except for their own well-being; that States should protect children from harm and neglect; and that all children should be entitled to the rights enshrined in the convention, without discrimination. The SPDC, (then SLORC) promulgated a new Child Law on July 14, 1993 in order to "implement the rights of the child recognized in the Convention." The child law states that "the State recognized that every child has the right to survival, development, protection and care, and to achieve active participation in the community." (Chapter 5, paragraph 8) The regime's decision to accede to the CRC was widely interpreted as a positive sign and temporarily improved its image throughout the international community. However, widespread evidence of continuing violations against children has shown that while national laws to protect children may be in place, the SPDC has taken little action to enforce these laws.

The SPDC published its second periodic report to the CRC committee in 2002, which outlined what actions had been undertaken to implement the provisions of the CRC. This report, already overdue by two years, concluded by stating that, 'Myanmar today is striving its utmost to create best opportunities for the children.' (Source: Paragraph 253. *Myanmar's 2nd periodic report to the CRC*, 11, June 2002). According to the regime, children are the 'jewels' of Burma, and are cared for and respected by every member of society. The SPDC noted that children in Burma are very well protected, physically and psychologically (see paragraph 83). The large body of information collected in 2002 by NGOs, opposition groups, and other national governments dispels these claims, and provides clear evidence that children in Burma cannot depend on the government to protect or advocate for their rights. Instead, the SPDC is at best, negligent, and at worst complicit, in abuses such as the recruitment of child soldiers, the trafficking of children, and the destruction and dislocation of ethnic minority families and communities.

Burma has seen almost constant conflict since independence from Britain in 1948. Internal civil war and poor governance has brought about widespread poverty, poor health care, low educational standards and systematic human rights abuses. Children, who are among the most vulnerable members of society, have been disproportionately affected by all these factors. Decreasing levels of government spending on education have caused standards of primary education to deteriorate, with corresponding rises in illiteracy and drop out rates. At present, it is estimated that less than 50% of all school-aged children in Burma attend school. Paradoxically, government military spending has grown to consume over 40% of the national budget. According to the US Department of State, the SPDC's spending education is less than 1% of the GDP and spending on health is less than .3% of the GDP (source: *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US State Department). The World Health Organization's 2000 report rated Burma's healthcare system 190th overall, out of 191 countries surveyed. The regime's failure to invest in children has had direct and visible consequences. According to UNICEF, out of the 1.3 million

children born every year in Burma, more than 92,500 will die before they are one year old. Another 138,000 children will die before they reach the age of five.

Children in Burma are also increasingly vulnerable to exploitation for dangerous labor. Approximately one quarter of children between the ages of 10-14 are engaged in paid work and there are a growing number of street children in concentrated urban areas. (Source: ICRC, 2002) In particular, street children, runaways and orphans are particularly vulnerable to forced recruitment into the armed forces. The SPDC is believed to be one of the world's largest single users of child soldiers with more than 70,000 children serving in the national army alone. In addition, some armed opposition forces also recruit children, but in smaller numbers (source: Human Rights Watch, 2002). Burmese children are also victimized when forced into the sex industry, and the trafficking of children has become increasingly prevalent throughout the country, and especially in border areas.

Ethnic minority children are often more vulnerable to abuse due to the fact that civil war is often drawn along ethnic lines and fought in ethnic minority areas. In addition to contending with the discrepancy between access to social services available to the military and civilian populations, ethnic minorities face the more direct consequences of internal conflict. Throughout 2002 children living in ethnic minority areas, like other members of their communities, continued to be subjected to physical injury, torture, rape, murder, forced labor, and forced relocation. Children in these areas were also forced to witness atrocities carried out against their family and community members; to endure separation from their families and communities; and to suffer from extremely limited access to health care, education, housing, and food.

6.2 Status of Education of Children in Burma

'All children have an equal right to education'.

(Source: Article 28 UN CRC)

In Burma, children are denied access to quality education due to ongoing conflict, declining resources, minimal professional support and deteriorating learning conditions. Throughout the country there are less than 1,600 high schools and most schools at all levels are overcrowded and lack basic amenities, such as furniture. There are clear differences in standards of education between State and military schools, and to a lesser degree between urban and rural schools. Schools run by the military for children of the ruling elite have more funding and thus better facilities and educational programs. In contrast, schools in ethnic minority areas have the least government support. Students in these areas suffer further discrimination in education as the state mandated syllabus ignores their own culture and language and forces them to learn in Burmese

If Burma is to uphold the standards set out in the CRC, the SPDC must focus on increasing accessibility to basic education for all children. The most recent statistic available in 2002 cited the SPDC's expenditures on all civilian education as equivalent to less than 1% of the GDP. In addition, government spending on education has declined by more than 70 percent in real terms since 1990 (source: Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US State Department). Despite a compulsory

education law coupled with a policy of free primary education, one quarter of those who start school will fail or drop out during their first or second years. According to UNICEF, 75% of children who reach the age of five years will enroll in primary level education. Less than half of this group will graduate to middle school and only one in four teenagers will enroll in high school. Overall, this means that 50% of all school-aged children in Burma do not attend school (source: "Situation of Children and Women in Myanmar." UNICEF, <http://www.unicef.org/myanmar/pages/a4.html>, January 2002). According to Of the 750,000 children that drop out of primary school each year, 630,000 are students in rural areas. Government figures show that 84% of the annual dropouts from primary school are in rural areas, with the lowest enrollment for the primary level age group in eastern Shan, Karen, and Arakan States (source: Situation Analysis of Children and Women in Myanmar, UNICEF, August 1999).

A large percentage of students drop out of school because they are unable to pay increasing school tuition fees. While laws exist which stipulate that free primary education should be available to all children, in reality students and their parents are usually forced to pay a large variety of 'fees' to cover the shortfall in state spending on education. In rural areas students and parents are often also forced to pay for teachers' food and lodgings. Various studies by UNICEF, UNDP, and other NGOs have identified parents' inability to pay school costs and the need for children to work to provide the family with income, as major reasons for children dropping out or not attending school. Predictably, drop out rates have increased as the economy continues to deteriorate.

Children may also drop out of school by choice due to poor performance and dissatisfaction with school. The education system in Burma is not student-centered, and discourages creativity, discussion and critical thinking. Instead students are taught basic curriculum through rote learning and memorization. In their 2002 report on education in Burma, the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABSFU) notes that the state curriculum 'encourages military might and ethnic prejudice, instead of inspiring students towards a peaceful and multiethnic nation.' (source: Education Report 2002, Foreign Affairs Committee-All Burma Federation of Student Unions. May 2003).

Throughout Burma, girls are often less likely than boys to receive an education, and less than one third of all female students who begin primary school manage to graduate. (Source: CEDAW, 2002) The high drop out rate of female students stems from traditional beliefs about gender roles as well as early marriage and pregnancy of girl students. Most girls and young women are expected to manage both educational and domestic responsibilities, which often results in poor scholastic performance and leads them to drop out of the educational system. In some areas, parents refuse to allow their daughters to attend school if they have to travel through SPDC-controlled areas, as they fear that they will be vulnerable to rape and sexual harassment by soldiers. Where families have only enough funds to educate one child, they usually choose a son over a daughter. One woman stated: "In a poor family, if the parents can only afford to send one child to school, they never choose a daughter. They say, 'Girls are for others...If a girl can read and write a letter, that is enough.'" (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002) (For more information on the situation of education for women and girls see chapter on Women).

Those children who are able to attend school rarely receive a quality education. The State requirements for passing classes have been lowered with the introduction of a new exam

system, which has lessened the need to study. Cheat sheets are widely available and bribes, corruption and favoritism are linked to passing with high marks. Teachers are paid very low salaries, far below subsistence wages. The headmaster at a standard government high school earns 12,000 kyat per month, and teachers earn usually 4,500 kyat a month. As a result, many educators have been forced to quit teaching out of economic necessity. Other teachers tutor privately to supplement their wages and this is often where the real teaching and learning takes place. Teachers purposely leave out essential parts of the curriculum from their classes forcing students to take extra tuition classes in order to pass examinations. Those children who cannot afford to pay for extra classes often fail examinations or drop out. One teacher, Wyne Win, notes that 'Teachers have taken to leaving out key parts of curricula, only to teach them later in private tutorials that cost anywhere from 3,000 to 20,000 kyat per month.' (Source: Agence France-Presse, 24 November 2002)

Schools also suffer from a lack of educational resources and facilities. Textbooks, equipment and school supplies are outdated and in short supply. The government claims to give out free text books, but students report that in most cases they and their parents have to pay for all learning materials themselves. While some schools do have new teaching materials donated to them by aid agencies, one student reports that students were not allowed access to these new materials. "When I was studying at high school in Mandalay, UNICEF gave us school books, really nice textbooks, but we were never allowed to use them. They kept them locked up in a glass case and we were only allowed to touch them when the district education department officials visited. Then they would take them out. But as soon as they left the books would go back into the case again.." (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

Education in Ethnic Minority and/or Conflict Areas

Children in the various ethnic states face the greatest barriers to accessing education. In addition to dropping out of school for financial reasons, thousands of children are forced to interrupt their education due to ongoing conflict and human rights abuses carried out by SPDC troops in their communities. These abuses include, forced labor, mass forced relocation and the burning of fields and villages. In order to improve their international image, the regime has begun ordering relocated villagers to rebuild schools in relocation sites. This places a heavy burden on people who have already lost most sources of livelihood, as the villagers are usually forced to provide most of the building materials and labor themselves. For example, in April 2002, the SPDC ordered villagers in the east of Tavoy Township, Tenasserim Division to build a 'modern' primary school, entirely out of wood. The Coastal Military Command promised to pay for tin roofs and cement, but the villagers had to pay for construction fees and other materials. This proved a heavy burden for the villagers who were already forced to pay numerous extortion fees to the authorities and go regularly for forced labor. (Source: KIC)

Even when schools exist in ethnic minority areas, many children cannot afford to pay the fees. In addition, government teachers sent from central Burma sometimes leave because they do not want to live in such a remote area. One parent living in Chin state noted that: "although there are schools in the area, many can't afford to send their children to school because it's expensive. In our village, 80 percent of school-age children can't attend the school. We have to pay for the books, various taxes, and school tuition fees. Most teachers don't want to teach in the border areas, so the villagers themselves have to pay 20,000 kyats per month for a teacher and the enrollment fees then have to rise up. Therefore, most parents can't afford the

cost and instead send their children to farming and work places." (Source: Education Report 2002, Foreign Affairs Committee-All Burma Federation of Student Unions. May 2003)

Throughout the country, female students are usually less likely to receive an education than male students. However, in some ethnic states, there are reports that girl students are more likely to receive an education than boys. In conflict areas, many teenage boys leave school early to join armed opposition groups. One Karen girl notes: "I studied at Wangkha till 10th standard. In primary school, there were the same number of boys and girls, but in high school there were more girls and fewer boys, because during our school days, there were battles between the Karen National Union (KNU) and the SLORC so often. So when the boys completed 6th or 7th standard, they joined the army because they wanted to help fight. The girls couldn't go to the frontline, so we continued to study." (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

This is true sometimes even in areas where opposition groups have signed ceasefire agreements. One girl from Kachin state where the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) signed a ceasefire in 1993, revealed the girl boy ratio. "In 5th standard, there are 26 girls and 16 boys. In 6th standard, there are 12 girls and 10 boys. There are more girls than boys because all the boys join the Kachin army." (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

In ethnic conflict areas, the government forces children to attend state run schools, which have banned teaching in local languages. While the CRC mandates that children not be subjected to discrimination in education based on ethnic origin, the regime continues to maintain an education system that is clearly orientated towards Burman history and culture. At the same time, the state curriculum ignores and delegitimizes the history and culture of other ethnic groups (source: Education Report 2002, Foreign Affairs Committee-All Burma Federation of Student Unions. May 2003). For example, in Arakan State, students are forbidden to study Rakhine literature. As a result, many ethnic minority children find that the education system has little relevance to their daily lives or futures, and choose not to start school or to continue their studies.

Arakan State

In June 2002, Kaladan Press reported that government teachers were refusing to take postings in some remote locations in Arakan State. Other teachers who were posted in these areas simply did not show up. One NGO reported that Buddhist teachers also refused to be posted to Rohingya Muslim communities. This was especially problematic as since 1978, the SPDC has banned Rohingyas from working as teachers. (Source: Kaladan Press Network)

Mon State

In Mon state, where there is a cease fire, large numbers of SPDC authorities have moved into the area, actively curtailing opportunities for Mon cultural education. New restrictions have cancelled celebrations for Mon National Day, stopped the building of Mon national schools and halted the Mon National education program. In addition, the SPDC has ended the dry season Mon literacy education courses. (Source: HURFOM)

Karen State

According to the Karen Teachers Working Group, schools in Karen State are often burned by the SPDC, who consider such schools to be 'signs' of KNU presence in the community. School materials are then destroyed and stolen. Increasingly, the SPDC authorities are targeting teachers as 'KNU supporters' and thus educators are at increased risk of SPDC brutality. In Karen State, the school year is often disrupted as villagers are forced to flee SPDC military offensives. While some schools are reopened in the jungles, most children living as IDPs do not have access to education. In addition, the SPDC destroys the rice fields and livestock of Karen villagers, making it impossible for the community to provide for their teachers. Most local teachers have little or no formal training themselves nor do they have educational texts to rely on for support. While these teachers do their best to provide their students with a good education, they usually lack experience, skills and teaching materials. (Source: Karen Teachers Working Group)

One student in Karen state describes her education: "I went to school but from kindergarten to 2nd standard-we didn't have full time study. We studied for three or four months and then we had to stop. We had always to be wary when we were studying, because the Burmese soldiers shot at our place with heavy weapons once every month. In some months they shot their heavy weapons at our place two or three times. So we had to run away all the time, and finally we weren't interested in studying." (Source: Gathering Strength. Education for Women and Girls. Brenda Belak, Images Asia. 2002)

Another Karen student recalls that: "I studied for four or five years, until 3rd standard. Since the Burmese troops destroyed my village, we had to try to avoid them, so we ran to the jungle and sat our exams under the bamboo together with my schoolmates and teacher. At that time, my parents arranged for food to be sent to me. Our school was damaged by the fighting, and after that I couldn't continue studying. From that time until now, we have been persecuted." (Source: Belak, Brenda, Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights. Images Asia, January 2002)

One female student notes that girl students in her community faced further barriers to obtaining an education. "People in my village had no chance to study because the Burmese soldiers came and burned down the village rice barns, so everyone had to flee to the jungle to hide. I went to a school in my hill village when I was young. There weren't enough notebooks or teachers. I think it was better in the schools in town, but we couldn't go there because there were battles going on. Most of the other parents didn't encourage their daughters to study. They used to say, "You can eat rice whether you can read or not," so they mostly sent their sons. But my mother wanted all of us to study because she was illiterate and she thought if we got some education, we wouldn't have to do hard labor like her." (Source: Belak, Brenda, Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights. Images Asia, January 2002)

6.3 Status of Health of Children in Burma

‘By uplifting the health care of mothers and children, the improvement of the child’s health is evident. There is a decrease in maternal, infant and under 5 mortality and the objective laid down for children’s health status has been successfully achieved.’

(Source: Paragraph 142, Myanmar’s 2nd periodic report to the CRC, 11, June 2002)

Despite claims by the SPDC that, ‘the health situation in Myanmar has improved dramatically’ (Source: New Light of Myanmar ,1 December 2002), there is great deal of information available which refutes this. According to UNICEF, child mortality figures state that 130 deaths per 1000 children occurred in 2002. This reveals only minimal improvement from the 1997 UN figures that reported a mortality rate of 131 deaths per 1000 children. The Human Development Report 2002 reported infant mortality to be 87 deaths for every 1000 live births (source: UNDP). Many more children become ill from acute respiratory infections, diarrheal diseases, tuberculosis or malaria, which are the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among children in Burma. Malaria is thought to kill approximately 30,000 people per year and it is believed that a significant percentage of these are children. More than one third of all children under 5 are malnourished, most frequently children between 1 and 3 years old. These statistics are likely to understate the severity of the health crisis faced by children in Burma, as most international organizations do not have access to the most vulnerable populations, such as IDPs.

Children are disproportionately affected by the regime’s lack of support for health care. The World Health Organization (WHO) found Burma’s health care system to be extremely poor, with government expenditures on health in 2002 equal to only 2.2% of GDP. The SPDC spends the majority of state funds on increasing the size and strength of the military, not protecting the health of future generations. In the past few years, the country has received increased international aid and funding for health care, which has improved the situation for some individuals and communities. However, these mostly small-scale projects cannot replace a largely non-functioning state health care system.

Throughout Burma, there are large disparities in access to health services and information particularly in the peripheral regions of the country and poor urban areas. The result is a health care system with insufficient facilities, too few health care workers, inadequate health education programs and lack of rural services. Most deaths of children are caused by diseases that are preventable and treatable. These deaths result from a lack of basic medicines, knowledge, inadequate care and insufficient resources. According to UNICEF, the main causes of death of children in Burma are malaria, TB, HIV/AIDS, acute respiratory infections and diarrheal diseases.

Children living in conflict areas are usually the most vulnerable. Access to immunizations and medical treatment is usually unavailable, as government hospitals are unlikely to be built in these areas. In addition, most international aid organizations are denied access to conflict areas where the need for health care is the greatest. Ongoing armed conflict increases the vulnerability of children living in these areas, as like adults in their communities, they can be directly affected by landmines and military violence.

Children and HIV/AIDS

Only recently has the SPDC begun to acknowledge the growing threat of HIV/AIDS in Burma. UNICEF believes that the disease is reaching epidemic proportions, but that the prevalence has not yet peaked. Rapidly rising infection rates in Burma are fuelled by population mobility, poverty, sexual assault, and an extremely high rate of infection among intravenous drug users. The International Crisis Group estimates that 1 in 50 adults are infected, although Burma's Ministry of Health officially puts the number of HIV patients at only 40,000 (Source: Irrawaddy, January 2002). The official HIV-positive prevalence rate for pregnant women is approaching 2%, however the real figure is likely to be much higher (Source: Financial Times, 17 May 2002). With increasing numbers of Burmese children being trafficked into the sex industry, children are increasingly vulnerable to contracting HIV/AIDS. The demand in neighboring countries for young 'virgin' girls, increases the likelihood that children trafficked will be sold multiple times to customers who will have unprotected sex with them. (See section on child trafficking in this chapter.) (For more information on HIV/AIDS see Chapter on the Situation Health and Education.)

6.4 Children in Prison and Labor Camps

Children in Prison

Children under the age of 5 can be found in prison with their mothers for 3 reasons: they have no relatives to care for them; their mothers have requested that they stay together; or they are born there. However, all children must leave at the age of 5 and if there are no relatives to care for them they are placed in social services. This frequently means military training schools for the boys and a precarious future for the girls, who often end up working in the sex industry. Both girls and boys run away from social services, adding to the number of street children in urban areas.

Female political prisoners are only allowed to keep their children with them if they are born in prison. Male prisoners are never allowed to have their children stay with them. Children live in prison under the same conditions as other prisoners, which includes inadequate health care, unsanitary conditions and lack of nutritious food. Prisoners are allocated 7-8 cups of water a day for washing which must be shared with their children. Meals consist of rice gruel in the morning and two other meals a day of boiled rice and watery soup made with a little fish paste and unwashed vegetables. This must also be shared between the mother and child.

No special provisions are made for education or recreational needs of children in prison. They have no books, toys or play area and because they have to stay with their mothers at all times, their movements are restricted and they can rarely go outdoors or out of the multiple occupancy cells. They are not given immunizations- because there is rarely medicine in the prison clinic, and the prisoners must rely on family members or other prisoners for medicine if the children get sick. T.B. is a common problem in prison and also affects children. Because their mothers are not tested for HIV, the number of children with this condition is unknown. It is likely that the numbers of children with HIV is relatively high, as a high number of women in prison have the virus. In addition, women giving birth in prison do not receive adequate pre-natal care and during birth they are only assisted by a midwife, who is a

fellow prisoner. A high number of children born in prison die during childbirth due to complications.

According to one former female political prisoner, there were approximately 50 children staying in Insein prison from 1992-1995. Of these, 15 were born in prison, mostly to long-term prisoners. There are three prison labor camps in Burma that have women prisoners; Pyinmana-Yezin, HtoneBon, and Mandalay-Pathein Gyi. Mothers have to work long days and have quotas to fill; if they do not they are beaten. For this reason, some women choose to tie their children to trees so they can complete the task more quickly, and are not bothered whilst working. Many children die in the labor camps due to the heat, lack of water, no health care, and no medicine for treatable conditions such as diarrhea.

Juvenile Prison Laborers

There is also an unknown number of juveniles serving time for petty offences in prison labor camps. Conditions in prison labor camps are notoriously difficult, and there are no special provisions made for underage prisoners. Children are sentenced for different reasons, such as not registering with local authorities or fleeing the army after forced conscription. Ethnic children are particularly targeted in certain areas. The situations in the labor camp are dire, with many adults and children dying due to the extremities of the work environment. Long hours with no breaks, carrying out dangerous work, combined with inadequate food, physical abuse, high disease and non-existent health care, cause children to be in an especially vulnerable position. There are no figures available for the child deaths in labor camps.

Tawn Soon labor camp, in Mon State is one labor camp known to have juvenile inmates. One former child soldier, Tin Ko, who was arrested when he tried to flee from the army, reported hearing that many other child soldier prisoners had been transferred from Insein prison to this camp. A few months after they were transferred, Tin Ko says he received news that some had died. The official comment was that they died whilst trying to escape, but Tin Ko did not believe this. 'I don't believe their words because if anyone died in labor camp from heavy work, the officials always said that the prisoners were killed because they tried to escape.'(Source: ABFSU)

Child Soldiers in Prison

Boys that are caught running away from the army are faced with a choice; either return to the army and face further abuse, or else serve a jail sentence, after which they are told that they will not have to rejoin the army. Many child soldiers choose the second option, believing that life away from the army can only be an improvement. However former child soldiers in prison often face further abuses at the hands of criminal prisoners. With minimal or no protection from the prison authorities, former child soldiers have reported that rape and physical abuse occur regularly.

6.5 Child Labor

‘any adult foundemploying a permitting a child to perform work which is hazardous to the life of the child or which may cause disease to the child or which is harmful to the child’s moral character’ is find up to 1000 kyats or faces 6 months imprisonment,’

(Source: Paragraph 87 (a) CRC report 2002)

As the economic conditions continue to deteriorate in Burma, children are often needed to work alongside their parents in order to raise enough income for the family. Other children are forced to work to support themselves, after losing one or both parents. In 1992 UNICEF estimated that as many as 4 million of a total 11.8 million school age children were working in both urban and rural areas. The figures are likely to be higher now with inflation and unemployment having increased dramatically over the past ten years. (Source: UNICEF). Children are frequently seen working in teashops, and begging to supplement their family income. [See section on begging].

In addition to working to support their families, children, like adults, are often pressed into service to carry out forced labor for the military. Despite the SPDC’s pledges to stop child labor, and although orders banning forced labor have been passed issued, authorities continue to force children and adults to work without pay on military and government projects. The regime forcibly conscripts boys into the army, and also uses children as forced laborers on infrastructure development projects, income generating projects for the military, and to provide support for military operations. Forced labor includes such work as portering, road construction, sanitation and building maintenance for military camps, building construction, acting as messengers and various other chores for military personnel.

In many cases, when the military demand forced labor from families or villages, children are sent, either to free their parents to work for the family’s livelihood, or to ease the burden on the village. At particularly busy times in the harvest, men must stay and finish work in the fields in order to guarantee income for the family. At these times it is very common to see children doing forced labor in place of adults. When a village is assigned a particular task, such as building a road or a ditch, they may be given a time limit, or may wish to have it completed as quickly as possible, so as to return to their own work. Subsequently when this situation arises, children are sent out to work with their families.

In Burma exploitative and dangerous forms of child labor have been widely reported. Children as young as 7 are sometimes forced to serve as porters in combat areas, where they are made to carry heavy loads, and are frequently subjected to beatings, rape and other mistreatment. (Source: HRW, 2002) In addition, there are reports that children have been used as human minesweepers and human shields during military operations. The ILO has repeatedly condemned the use of child labor in Burma, and specifically called on the SPDC to demobilize and rehabilitate all child soldiers.

Sample Incidents of Forced Labor Involving Children-2002

Mon State

On 7 December 2002, troops from LIB 506 arrested about 50 porters in the area outside of Three Pagoda Pass border town. When they arrived near Kyaw-palu village, in the southern part of the Town, they also arrested a 16 year old Mon boy named Mehm Krat Khakao. The boy was a high school student who attended a Mon national school. He stayed in a village under New Mon State Party (NMSP) control where the Burmese Army does not arrest porters. When he was arrested he explained that he was a student but the soldiers did not release him. They said that he needed to carry ammunition for them regardless of whether he was a student or a villager. They put 5 motor shells on his back and made him carry for one day. The weight of the 5 motor shells was about 40 Kilograms and very heavy for a young boy. Although he asked to take a rest, the soldiers did not allow him to do so. After the village headmen found out that the student was arrested, they petitioned the commanders to release him, which the soldiers agreed to do. (Source: HURFOM)

Chin State

On 23 September 2002, Captain Myunit Lwin from LIB 50 ordered Sabawngte villagers to serve as porters from Sabawngte army camp to Dar Ling village. Upon arrival, the captain collected porters, including one 8th grade student and one 5th grade student, to transport army supplies to the next village, Tonglalung. (Source: CHRO)

From 20-29th September 2002, SPDC troops from LIB 266 forced 75 people including 6 women and 2 middle school children to serve as porters in Matupi township, Chin state. The porters were forced to carry army rations and supplies to and from Ruazua and Sabawngte army camps, a distance of 80 miles apart. (Source:CHRO)

Karen State

In March 2002, SPDC authorities in Kya-inn-seikyi town ship led by township PDC General Secretary, U Aung Lin, forced local villagers to contribute labor to build a road from Kaw-bein to Paya-gyi village, which is half-mile long. They forced villagers from three main villages, Kaw-bein, Min-ywa and Paya-gyi to contribute labor finding stones, crushing them into small pieces, and then laying the stones on the embankment to make the road. The authorities instituted a rotation system for forced labor, during which time many women and children under 18 years old were involved in the construction. According to one villager, about 50% of the total workers were women and children. (Source: HURFOM)

6.6 Child Soldiers

International law prohibits the recruitment of children under the age of fifteen into the armed forces. Such recruitment has been recognized as a war crime under the statute for the International Criminal Court. In 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child that raised the minimum age for participation in armed conflict to 18, and prohibited all forced recruitment of children below age 18. Burma is a party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but has not yet signed and ratified the optional protocol. The International Labor Organization (ILO) convention on the worst forms of child labor, adopted in 1999, recognizes the forced recruitment of children under the age of 18 for use in armed conflict as one of the worst forms of child labor.

While the SPDC continues to deny that they forcibly recruit child soldiers,(see paragraph 217, 2nd Periodic report to the CRC, 2002), the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers has cited Burma as one of the world's single largest users of child soldiers. A major report published by Human Rights Watch in 2002, *My Gun Was As Tall As Me*, stated that Burma is in fact the largest single user of child soldiers in the world. Currently there are estimated to be over 70,000 children serving in the SPDC army. The regime forcibly recruits children as young as 11 and UNICEF has reported on a child aged 7 years old being forcibly recruited (see end of chapter). The Burmese army has doubled in size since 1988 and a huge number of these soldiers are believed to be child recruits. HRW estimates that between 35-45 % of soldiers in the army are children, the vast majority of whom have been forcibly conscripted.

Children living in conflict zones; who have been separated from their families; are orphans; or who are living on their own on the streets; are at the greatest risk of being recruited. These children are usually from the poorest and most marginalised families and have little opportunity for education. Many have run away from their families to escape abusive homes and to try to earn money selling food or other goods on the streets. Often children are arrested for minor infractions of the law, such as not carrying an identity card, and then given the option of joining the army or going to prison. One boy recruited at the age of 14 reports: "I was at Bassein harbour with three friends. We had come to buy some goods and were going back to our village. We were stopped by three soldiers in uniform. They asked, "Do you have ID?" I said, "I have no ID because I'm still too young," I was fourteen...They took us to the recruiting office in Bassein and when we arrived there we were put in the lockup." (Source: *My Gun Was As Tall As Me. Child Soldiers In Burma*. Human Rights Watch 2002)

Military recruiters are increasingly targeting younger boys who are more easily manipulated than older teenagers. While the youngest children are not usually sent to the front lines, they are often used for other strenuous and dangerous tasks including portering or working as human mine sweepers. Some boys are kept by the commanders in the training bases as gardeners, or groundskeepers, tending to animals or cutting grass. Others are used as housekeepers, or personal servants.

Thousands of boys have been forced into Burma's national army in this way. Recruiters typically pick them up at railway, bus, and ferry stations, on the street, at marketplaces and festivals or on buses. If the children resist, they are often beaten or detained until they agree to join the military. Other young boys are lured to join the military with promises of earning money and gaining prestige as a soldier. People that recruit young soldiers receive payments

of between 1000-10, 000 kyat and 15-64 kg of rice. Soldiers who wish to retire are also often forced to provide three new recruits before being allowed to leave military service. (Source: Human Rights Watch)

Many children are recruited from ethnic states. *Narinjara News* reported that children as young as 13 and 14 were being conscripted from Arakan State. An SPDC official stated that 'the number of Rakhine soldiers in the Burmese Army is about 30% out of the total of 350,000 Burmese forces.' (Source: *Narinjara News*, 5 November 2002). In Mon State, military commanders have forced village headman to provide them with a list of all men between 13 and 30 years old, and then order them to join the army. For example, on 18 January 2002, the Commander of MOMC No. 19, Brigadier Te Win called a meeting with all the headmen from all villages in the Township and ordered them to increase the number of village militiamen in village and told them that every village chairman must become the chief commander a paramilitary force. He instructed all village headmen to provide a list of villagers between the ages between 13 and 25 years old, and said that all males in this age range must attend the military training school. (Source: HURFOM)

After being recruited children are taken to military run training camps called Ye Nyunt or "Brave Sprouts" camps. The SPDC often refers to these military camps as a 'youth organizations' and in their 2nd Periodic report to the CRC committee claimed that such children are 'being nurtured at the training schools' and upon completing training are allowed to leave and return back to their families if they want to. In reality, former child soldiers report that they suffer systematic abuse at such training camps, are denied contact with their families, and are forbidden to leave. At these camps, young boys are forced to undertake military exercises which they are often too young to carry out properly. When they make mistakes, they are usually beaten and abused by training officers. Child soldiers receive little food and minimal medical attention if they fall ill or are injured. Training officers often force recruited child soldiers to beat other recruits caught trying to escape. If a child is caught crying at night they are also beaten. Any mistakes made in training are punishable by group beatings, or other degrading and painful punishments. (Source: *My Gun Was As Tall As Me. Child Soldiers In Burma*. Human Rights Watch, 2002) One boy who was recruited when he was 16 says: 'Yes, I saw [other young boys crying]. The trainers beat them to stop crying. These young boys asked to the trainers to give leave to see their parents. As they were not allowed, they cried and they committed suicide, shot themselves dead. I saw it once. I saw when he shot himself. I buried him.' (Source: UNICEF, 2002)

Many child soldiers, once deployed, are forced into combat. In addition, child soldiers are also often ordered to carry out abuses against civilians, including looting and burning villages, and participating in torture, rape, and execution of villagers. Kyaw Aung was kidnapped by the military at 14 years old, and recently deserted. He reports that his company once tied a Karen elder suspected of being a rebel to a post, and his sergeant ordered him to gut the prisoner from neck to groin. Kyaw Aung says: "I had no choice,..If I hadn't done it, the sergeant would have had the other soldiers tie me up and cut me open." (Source: *TIME Asia*, 4 February, 2002) Another soldier who was forcibly recruited at age 12, said "We threatened them [villagers] with guns to make them work. No soldier would dare be kind to the villagers because the officers would beat us if we showed them any mercy.' He added, 'I have nightmares about what we have done.' (Source: *Time Asia*, 4 February, 2002)

Child soldiers who manage to flee the army have few options, and typically either join armed opposition forces or flee to neighboring countries. While the SPDC is by far the largest user

of child soldiers, a number of opposition armies have also been found to recruit child soldiers on a smaller scale. Of all the non-state armies, the United Wa State army (UWSA) is the largest user of child soldiers, with an estimated 2,000 in its forces. The UWSA has been found to recruit children as young as nine, and forces every Wa household to send one male member to fight or face a fine of approximately 250 Baht. One UWSA soldier interviewed by Human Rights Watch stated: "when they're only four years old they give the boy a rock and pretend it's a grenade; if he can throw it up the hillside he gets food. At age eight or nine they give real military training with real guns. Once they're over ten they're sent to the front line." (Source: *My Gun Was As Tall As Me; Child Soldiers in Burma*. Human Rights Watch, 2002). Children in the UWSA are treated similarly to children in the SPDC army. They are beaten if they do not understand orders and are not allowed to write to their families. However unlike child soldiers in the SPDC, UWSA recruits report that they do get decent food, and the punishments are not as severe.

The several dozen opposition groups and independent armies operating throughout Burma probably have a combined total of approximately 6,000 to 7,000 child soldiers. Most of these armed groups do not forcibly recruit young soldiers, and a number are extremely vocal about discouraging child recruitment. The Karen National Liberation Army, Karenni Army, and Shan State Army-South do accept younger boys who express a desire to join their ranks, despite the fact that these armies' official minimum recruitment age is eighteen. A number of younger boys seek to join the army because they have witnessed or experienced abuses by the SPDC, and/or been orphaned by military attacks. Some deserters from the Burmese army join opposition forces as they feel they have nowhere else to go.

6.7 Child Trafficking

Widespread poverty has led to a growing number of children from Burma being trafficked into prostitution and street begging. In the face of extreme economic hardship, some parents sell their children, because they believe that the child will have a better life elsewhere, or because they are desperate for the small amount of money paid by the trafficker. Children who are orphans are also particularly vulnerable to trafficking. According to Save the Children, ethnic children living in border areas are at greatest risk of exploitation, and are most likely to be trafficked. Many of these children have been lost or abandoned when their communities were forcibly relocated or forced to flee military offensives. (Source: *Annual Report 2002*, Save the Children)

The Sex Industry

Children who are sold into prostitution suffer both emotional and physical trauma, in the immediate context and long term. Thailand is the primary destination of trafficking from Burma with an estimated 40,000 Burmese women and children, working in the sex industry. Although Burma's Child Law states that "every child has the right to... protection and care" the SPDC has done little to prevent the trafficking and exploitation of women and children from Burma. Government efforts have been ineffective and limited to infrequent arrests and regulations restricting the cross border movement of young females which rarely has any effect in combating trafficking. Contributing to this problem is the tacit approval, and sometimes complicity, of Thai and Burmese officials in the trafficking of women and children.

The trafficking of women from Burma for commercial sex work in Thailand has been well documented. There is a growing demand for young girls who are virgins because of the belief that there is less chance that young girls are HIV positive. According to the Women's League of Burma (WLB), doctors at a clinic in the Thai border town of Mae Sot have reported that the increased demand for virgins has led more and more families to sell their daughters into brothels for a short period of time until the "value of their virginity" has expired, at which point they return to their families. In practice, young girls are sold as virgins several times until the amount they can be sold for decreases below a certain point.

One 13-year old Karen girl who was sold into prostitution against her will reports: "At first, they didn't put me in the prostitute house. I don't know what they call it - is that "Par Kin-Paunt"? ("Par-Kin-Paunt" is a Burmese word that literally means "first opening" or "deflowering" and refers to virgin girls who are new to prostitution and who are free from HIV/AIDS) I don't know. They sent me to that place. As soon as they sent me there, a man started to "Par-Kin-Paunt" me. I asked him, "what are you going to do to me?" The uncle told me, "I paid for you, I can do whatever I want." I tried to fight him, but he beat me and then used me. At this place, they sold me as "Par-Kin-Paunt" maybe three times, I don't remember. After that, the head-person of Darling Prostitution House came and took me to work at their brothel. They didn't allow me to go out or look out the windows. They beat me when they saw me looking out the windows. And they didn't feed me enough food." (Source: WLB)

These young prostitutes are not adequately educated about sexually transmitted diseases and customers who pay more for a virgin girl are rarely willing to use a condom. Child prostitutes are often held against their will after being sold into prostitution and do not receive adequate food or health care and live in physically insecure situations where they fear bodily harm from both their employers and customers. If a girl is no longer profitable because of pregnancy or disease she is often turned out on the street.

Organized Begging

A large number of children are also trafficked into organized begging rings. Street children, with little education are especially vulnerable. Most of these children are trafficked to Thailand where they receive little or no money and are subjected to cruel treatment at the hands of the adults who 'control' them. In most cases, child beggars are forced to earn a certain amount of money each day, reportedly between 2000-6000 baht, if they fail to collect this money then they are often beaten. Most child beggars live in dirty overcrowded conditions, with many other children. They are given little food, and often no medicine or treatment when they are ill. These children have no chance for education, and are at an increased risk for becoming drug users. In addition, girls who are beggars are often recruited into the sex industry. Many of these children are sold repeatedly from one employer to another and have no chance to contact or visit their families.

6.8 Children in Armed Conflict

Violence Against Children

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, specifically refers to the protection of children in armed conflict and provides that every child has the right to life, survival and development; that no child under 15 should take part in hostilities; that children should not be separated from their parents except for their own well-being; that states should protect children from harm and neglect; and that children of minority and indigenous populations should freely enjoy their own culture, religion and language, as well as all other rights enshrined in the convention, without discrimination.

Children living in conflict areas in Burma are routinely deprived of most of these rights; violence committed against children being the most blatant breach of these rights. Children are murdered by the army and security forces, and are victims of rape, torture, and landmines. Girls under the age of 18, and sometimes boys, are routinely raped by SPDC troops operating in their communities. Children doing forced labor, particularly clearing roads and forced portering, are often forced to act as human minesweepers and human shields. In free fire zones, known as "Black Areas", troops regularly shoot at villagers and shoot into homes, regardless of whether there are children present.

Even when a child is not a direct target of violence, children living in areas of armed conflict are subjected to numerous hardships that mar their entire lives. Family, community and cultural life in these areas is continually disrupted by violence and insecurity. Children witness killing and violence directed against family, neighbors and community members. The emotional and mental toll that this will take over a lifetime is impossible to calculate. These children are denied the right to grow up in an environment that nurtures and promotes their development. Burmese children need special protection both from direct harm and lost opportunities. Children have a crucial role in peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction and need to be recognized as actors in their own right.

Violence against Children 2002 – Partial List of Incidents

Mon State

17 Year Old Shot by SPDC Soldiers

On 9 November, at 6 am, the SPDC military column arrived close to Bay-ka-lawe village and shot one boy, Mehm Kyaw Moe, age 17, who they suspected of being a rebel soldier. This boy is from Morkanin village. Mehm Kyaw Moe was seriously injured, but was abandoned by the soldiers. After the village headmen heard about the incident, the villagers came and took Mehm Kyaw Moe back to the village. The commander of the military column then lied to villagers, stating that the boy was shot while fighting with KNLA soldiers. The commander also threatened the boy's parents, warning them not to tell the truth to the other villagers or the local authorities about the shooting, but to say that the boy was caught in the middle of a fight. (Source: HURFOM 2002)

Shan State

4 Month Old Baby Killed by Soldiers

On 30 January 2002, six Shan civilians, including a 4 month old baby, were killed near the border with Thailand. The six were originally from Loi Saan village, Ham Ngaai tract, Murngkerng township, but were relocated in the 1996-97 campaign to the outskirts of Murngkerng town. They were traveling in a group to Thailand however on the way the group encountered troops from Infantry Battalion 281. The troops shot and killed the six people, and stole all their Thai money and possessions. The local military then reportedly closed the border crossing. The six victims are: Lun Kon, (m), age 56; Sai Ohn Ta, (m), age 38; Sai Nyunt, (m), age 34; Pa Pan, (f), age 43; Nang Leng, (f), age 27; and Naing Naing, (f), age four months. It appears that this group of civilians were not killed in the context of counter-insurgency activities, as there are no SSA-South troops in the area. The motivation for the killings is not clear, nor is it known whether soldiers from Infantry Battalion 281 were acting on orders from their commanding officers. (Source: *Myanmar; Lack of Security in Counter-Insurgency Areas*. Amnesty International 17 July 2002)

Karen State

Soldiers Kill 1 Child; Injure 2 Others

On 30 October at 3:30 pm, troops from SPDC LIB 235 entered Yu-Au-Ler-Hta in Ler Mu Plaw township and opened fire upon the villagers whilst they were harvesting and working in the paddy fields. One villager, Saw Roby Wah aged 35 was killed on the spot and 5 villagers were wounded, including children. The wounded persons were: Saw Thay Bay Wah aged 40, Saw Shee Nay Moo aged 17, Saw Tee Tu aged 17, Naw Moo Day Wah aged 8, and Naw Ler Per aged 14. The 8 year old child, Naw Moo Day Wah later died, on 9 November. (Source: CIDKP)

7 Year Old and 9 Year Old Arrested by Soldiers

During the dry season from February to June 2002, the Burmese army killed many Karen villagers, whom they suspected of having connections to the KNLA. In March 2002 HURFOM reported that soldiers arrested about 10 villagers, including one 50 year old woman and two children aged 7 and 9 years old..... The villagers were brought from their village [no name given] to Pha-ya-nyote-to village, where the LIB No. 548 base is situated, for one week. Although the village headmen tried to get them back by bribing the commanders, no one was released. After 7 days, they heard the news that the soldiers had killed 7 of the villagers. The 50 year old woman was released and she told the other villagers about the killings. The commander had been involved in the killings of these villagers. The soldiers also released the two children before they killed the other villagers, after receiving 200, 000 Kyat ransom from the children's relatives. (Source: HURFOM)

Family, Including 8 Children, Interrogated and Tortured

In late May 2002, when IB No. 77 arrived to Htee-pa-nae village, which is situated on the Zami riverbank, they declared that the village was a base for KNLA soldiers. The soldiers then ordered all the villagers to leave their villages within three days, and added that if they found someone after the deadline he/she would be killed. On 1 June, when the troops

returned to that village, they found one family still remaining. Saw Htee Paw and Naw Nong Plae had remained in their home along with their 8 children and 2 other relatives. The soldiers arrested, interrogated and tortured the family, asking why they hadn't left the village. According to other villagers who knew them, the family had delayed to try and collect food to take along with them.(Source: HURFOM)

Soldiers Kill 10 People, Including 6 Children

On 21 April 2002, a combined column of Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) 301, LIB 416 and Infantry Battalion (IB) 78 entered the village of Tee Tha Blu. They looted houses and then proceeded to burn some of them. They beat villager Pa Haw Su brutally, cutting him in the neck with a knife. The villagers were locked in a group in the church for three days without food, except the children who were fed once a day. After three days they were taken out of the church and were forced to watch the soldiers steal the zinc roofing from the church and the meeting hall, and then burn both buildings. The column beat and interrogated four villagers, including pastor Thra Si Pa T'Rer, aged 51, and a medic, and then took them both away. One villager escaped later, but the others have not been seen since. They also beat Ghay Nay Htoo Mo, a 49 year old woman. On 27 April 2002, the troops returned and burned the remainder of the village, ordering the villagers to leave.

Most villagers had little choice but to move to the relocation sites or other SPDC-controlled villages, but some fled into hiding in the jungle or tried to escape to the Thai border. After this event, the village head of Tee Law Bler in Kya In Township had been given orders to move all of his villagers to Lay Wah Kah. Some people fled to other villages where they had relatives, while others decided to leave for Thailand. Together with some families who had fled Noh Ta Sghu and Meh K'Taw villages further north in Kya In township, one group set out towards Thailand on April 28th and spent the night in a group of rice field huts not far along the way, at K'Ray Dtay Kee. A column from IB 78 discovered them sleeping in the huts, and without investigating whom was inside, the troops unleashed a barrage of fire into the huts. Ten people were shot dead, six of them children: Saw Toh Paw (age 56), his wife Naw Hsa Ghay (51), their granddaughters Naw K'Ree Htoo (12) and Naw Bleh Po (5), Ma Htwe Yi (50), Naw Mu Tha (40), Mu Bpaw Bpaw (7), Saw K'Pru Mu (14), Naw Plah (5), and Naw Dta Baw (2). All except Saw Toh Paw and Saw K'Pru Mu were women and girls. Nine others were wounded and left there by the troops.

Naw Pee Lee, age 45 from Tee Law Bler village, was shot in the left breast and thigh. Eight or nine months pregnant, she stayed in the forest and her husband, Kho Noc tried to care for her. They tried to seek medical help but were too far away from the nearest medic. The attempted journey was fraught with bad weather and army checkpoints, sending them back. When a medic finally did arrive it was too late. She gave birth, but the baby died immediately. Three days later, on May 10th, Naw Pee Lee died. Two of her five children had been among those already killed in the first barrage. Her husband said, 'I don't know what their reasons were for shooting her. We're just poor people.' His daughter Kar Kur, 12, was also shot. A bullet smashed her right arm breaking the bone. She cradled it, protectively in its bamboo shield and crying she said, 'We ran away when the shooting started. All the people were crying and screaming. I got knocked over by a big bang and my face filled with dust and stones when I fell.' (Sources: *Bangkok Post*, 28 April 2002, and CIDKP, 2002)

17 Year Old Killed, 2 Other Boys Tortured

In 2002, SPDC troops from LIB 415, company 2, led by Kyi Aung entered Ta Ku Kee village, Kya Inn Township. Maung Hla, aged 15, was tending his cattle, when they came upon him, asking if he had met the Kawthoolei soldiers. Maung Hla replied that he had not, and they punched him and kicked him. The same day they met Pa Hto Oo, aged 12, and asked him the same question. He too was badly beaten by the soldiers. They the soldiers went down to the village, and arrested Saw Na Ku, aged 12. He was also badly tortured by the soldiers. On the way back, they came upon Saw Ko Ko, aged 35 who was sawing wood with his two friends. They beat the three men severely without reason. Then the soldiers shot and killed Saw Law Wa Dit, aged 17, near the Ta Ku Kee school. The troops later arrived at No Praw and arrested and tortured Saw Mu Tu. (Source: *Burma Issues*)

Tenasserim Division

Villagers Killed, Including 5 Year Old Child

In March 2002 Amnesty international interviewed an 18-year-old Burman fisherman from Kyunsuu Island off the coast of Tenasserim Division, who was working on a farm in Thailand. He had left his home because of ‘*mistreatment by the tatmadaw and the militia in my village*’. The interviewee described in detail several grave human rights violations by the *tatmadaw* which he had witnessed, including torture, ill-treatment, and extrajudicial killings. He himself was subjected to torture after he was forcibly conscripted as a soldier. He witnessed the killing of two Karen civilians from Pa Wa village, Yoma mountain range, by the *tatmadaw* unit who had abducted him. He said that they slit the throat of a Karen man who was working on his farm and bayoneted his five year old child. The mother was taken away and the witness did not see her again, but was later told by a sergeant that he had raped and killed her. The soldiers also took all the livestock and personal belongings from the Karen villager’s house. The witness did not know the names of the victims but he said the killings made him very angry. (Source: Amnesty International, March 2002)

6.9 Sexual Assault against Children 2002– partial list of incidents

The frequent rape of girls and young women is particularly demoralizing to ethnic communities, as it conveys the notion that the community is unable to protect even its most vulnerable members. In May 2002, SWAN and SHRF released a report, *License to Rape*, which documented widespread and systematic rape in Shan State by Burmese soldiers. The youngest rape victim whose case was included in the report was a five year old girl. In April 2003, Refugees International released a report, *No Safe Place*, which provided evidence that many women and girls from a number of other ethnic minority groups are also targeted for rape by SPDC soldiers. While several cases from 2002 are recorded here, it is important to note that the vast majority of rape cases go unreported and undocumented. (*For more information see the chapter on Women.*)

Shan State

3 Women and Girls Raped by Military Commanders

On 7 January 2002, 3 women from Murng-Nai were detained for 3 days and nights and raped by SPDC troops at the base of IB99, in Larng-Khur township. Naang Wun Ki, aged 16, from Kung Nyawng village in Kun Mong village tract, Murng-Nai township, and Naang Thun Mint, aged 17, from Kung Kyawng village in the same village tract, were traveling with Pa Thawn, an elder woman, from Kun Mong village to the border with Thailand to find their relatives. Upon arrival in Larng-Khur town, they were stopped and checked at a police checkpoint, but were let go after a brief search by the police. When they reached a military checkpoint, again they were stopped and checked. When the SPDC troops manning the checkpoint saw the 2 girls, they ordered them to get out of the car, saying that they could not let them go yet. Pa Thawn then said that she could not go without the 2 girls and stopped with them. When evening came, Pa Thawn took the 2 girls to the house of her friend in Lurng-Khur town to stay for the night. However, at about 8:00 p.m., 5 SPDC soldiers came to that house. They said that they would take (Naang Wun Ki) and (Naang Thun Mint) to see their captain at the military base for questioning just for a short while, and they would bring them back right away. But Pa Thawn insisted on going with them and the troops finally had to let her go. As they got into the IB99 military base, the women were separated and Pa Thawn was taken to a different place and interrogated. The troops asked her whether she had ever taken rice to rebel soldiers and many other questions concerning the rebels. After that she was kept and raped by Capt. Aung Hpyu of Co.1 for 3 nights. The 2 girls were kept and raped by the commander of IB99, Ong Myint Kyaw, also for 3 nights after which all the 3 women were released. (Source: SHRF)

15-Year Old Girl Kidnapped and Raped for 45 Days

On 8 March 2002, a patrol of about 50 SPDC soldiers from LIB 524, led by commander Htun Myint (probably a Captain), looted a remote camp of displaced farmers in Kaeng Kham tract, Kun-Hing township. They forcibly took away a 15-year-old girl to serve as a guide for 45 days, during which time she was raped repeatedly by the commander. The victim, Naang Seng Ying (not her real name), aged 15, belonged to one of the two displaced farming families, originally from Naa Khaa village in Kaeng Kham tract, Kun-Hing township, which had been forcibly relocated by Burmese army troops in 1996-1997. They were staying at a remote camp in the area of their old deserted village.

The troops searched the camp and took chickens and pigs, and all the food stuff they could find, and finally ordered Naang Seng Ying to go with them to serve as a guide for a short while, just to the nearest crossroad. The SPDC troops, however, did not release Naang Seng Ying but forced her to go with them for 45 days while they patrolled the surrounding areas until they reached Wan Lao village in Wan Lao tract, where they released her and returned to their base in Kun-Hing. During the 45-day period of patrolling, commander Htun Myint kept Naang Seng Ying as if she was his wife and raped her almost every night. Soon after she got back to her relatives, following her release, Naang Seng Ying fell ill, became increasingly pale and weak and could not eat properly due to the long ordeal she had to undergo. As her condition became worse, Naang Seng Ying's relatives took her to the hospital in Kun-Hing town where she received treatment for 6 days, at a huge cost to her relatives of 36,400 Kyats. However, some time after the treatment, she had not fully recovered, and is suspected to have become pregnant. (Source: SHRF)

17 Year Old Girl Gang Raped

In June 2002, Nang Oun, 17 years old, was raped by 3 soldiers. In the interview she could not speak louder than a whisper and had difficulty conveying the events that occurred. She was on the way to fetch water when she was surrounded by the Burmese soldiers. Three of them slapped and beat her while taking turns raping her. She traveled to Thailand with her Aunt, Ba Law, who says that the girl has barely spoken since the incident. In fact, all the young victims interviewed in this particular report were clearly traumatized and mentally disturbed. Two of them gazed around aimlessly and smiled off and on without speaking at all. (Source: *U.S. Investigation of Burmese Military Rape of Ethnic Women Report*. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State 1 – 4 August 2002)

13 Year Old Girl Raped By SPDC Soldiers

On 1 August 2002 US State representatives met with a group of 12 women newly arrived from Shan State. 10 out of the 12 women and girls had been raped, all by more than one soldier, and several had additional stories of brutality, torture and execution of other family members or friends. The most recent rape incident among this group, that of a 13 year-old girl, occurred in June 2002. The 13 year old girl was raped by SPDC soldiers, just a month before her and a group of 12 women fled to Thailand. She came from a relocated village in the center of the Shan State. (Source: *U.S. Investigation of Burmese Military Rape of Ethnic Women Report*. Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State, 1 – 4 August 2002)

3 Women, Including 13 Year Old Girl, Raped by Patrol Commander

From 26 to 30 June 2002, 3 female petty-goods peddlers were forced to go with a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB514. They were robbed of their goods, and were raped and sexually harassed by the patrol commander, Maj. Than Zaw, in Murng-Kurng and Ho-Pong Township. Than Zaw first forced two women to accompany him, namely Pa Seng, aged 35, and Ae Yaen, aged 13 (not their real names). As the troops left Nawng Zaeng village, they met another women peddler, Naang Awng, aged 25, (not her real name) and forced her along with them. The first night Ae Yaen was continually raped through the night by Than Zaw. The second night he continually raped Pa Seng, and there after raped either of them every night until their arrival at Nawng Mawn village in Ho-Pong Township, on the 30 June. They were then released. The third women Naang Awng managed to hide from the troops when they left the next day, avoiding rape. (Source: SHRF)

Women and Girls Raped Daily by Military Commander

From 8 to 21 August, 2002, 2-3 village women were raped each day by an SPDC military commander while being forced to work at the base of IB292 in Lai-Kha township. The previous week, the commander of IB292 issued an order to the village headmen in the area to provide 5-6 young women per day to ‘help’ clear grass and weed flower beds in the military compound because some senior officers would be visiting the base in the near future. Every day, while the women were working in the military compound, normally around the main buildings, the commander called up one woman at a time to go and work around the barrack where he had his bed room, and eventually forced her into his bed room and raped her.

Each day, 2 to 3 younger and prettier women were raped in this way and were warned not to tell anyone about it by the commander, who also threatened to send troops to shoot and kill not only the women but also their parents if they dared complain about it. One of the rape victims, Naang Thun Nae (not her real name), aged 16, was so shocked by the experience that after she had returned home for some time, she remained withdrawn and could not eat or sleep properly. Finally, she related her plight to her mother and told her that she had been raped by the commander at the IB292 base, on 11 August 2002 whilst working at the base. Her mother then told her father about their daughter's plight and they both complained about it to the village leaders in the area. When the village leaders asked among the other women who had to go for forced labor during the same time frame as mentioned, most of them dared not speak out, but at least 3 women did say they had been raped like Naang Thun Nae. The village leaders, however, did not dare push the case any further. (Source: SHRF)

15 Year Old Girl Raped; Her Mother Killed

On 6 October 2002, Pa Kham (not her real name), aged 51, was killed and her daughter, Naang Man (not her real name), aged 15, was raped by 2 SPDC soldiers from IB245, at their house in Paang Hung village, Paang Law village tract, Kaeng-Tung township. Pa Kham was a single mother who lived with her teenage daughter, Naang Man, and they made a living by cultivating a vegetable garden near their village. On the evening of the 6 October, after they had returned home from their vegetable garden, 2 SPDC soldiers suddenly came into their house. When the 2 SPDC soldiers saw Naang Man cooking alone in the house, they grabbed her and immediately began to rape her. As she was grabbed by the troops, Naang Man managed to shout out a couple of times, and her mother, hearing the cries, came out of the bedroom. When Pa Kham saw her daughter being attacked and raped by the SPDC troops, she shouted at them and grabbed a kitchen knife as if to strike at them. One of the soldiers then jumped up and kicked Pa Kham, causing her to fall down, and struck her with a rifle butt several times upon the head. Pa Kham died instantly of the beating and Naang Man was raped by the 2 SPDC soldiers. Soon after they had left the house, Naang Man reported her plight to the village headman, who in turn reported it to the head of people's militia in the area.

Although the head of the people's militia had listened to the case and said he would take it further to the regional military commander, no action has so far been taken in relation with this case at the time of this report. (Source: SHRF)

Arakan state

13 Year Old Girl Raped; Soldiers Refuse to Allow Her to Seek Medical Treatment

On 10th July 2002, a 13 year old Rohingya girl named Tayaba Khatun from Thamila village of Ratheduang township was raped by 3 Burmese soldiers from Battalion 537. The soldiers had come to the village to loot some chickens. After taking many birds from the villagers, they stored them in front of Maung Bullah's house. Whilst they were drinking water at the house, they saw Tayaba Khatun inside the house. Finding her father absent from the house, they entered and raped her one after the other, until she fell unconscious and bled profusely. Tayaba Khatun's elderly mother tried to stop them, but was pushed away. She took out a knife but the soldiers tied her to a post inside the house. She cried for help but the villagers were afraid of the army and dare not come. Before leaving the soldiers threatened the girl and her mother with death if they ever reported what had happened. The following morning when

her father Maung Bullah was on his way to hospital with his daughter, the military stopped them, and prohibited them for going for treatment. The incident was reported to the commander, but no action has been taken against the soldiers. (Source: Kaladan Press Network)

14 Year Old Girl Raped by VPDC Chairman

On the 13 May 2002, 14 year old Jamalida of Pranpru village, Na Sa Ka sector No.6, in Maungdaw, was raped by Rahmat Ullah. Rahmat is the chairman of the Village Peace and Development (VPDC). Jamalida is an orphan, and only has her grandmother to care for her. In the middle of the night Rahmat Ullah broke into the house and raped Jamalida at knifepoint. The next morning when the matter was reported to the village elders, a villager in sympathy with the victim, lodged a complaint with the Officer-in-Charge of the nearby Na Sa Ka camp. But no action has yet been taken. The rapist threatened the Jamalida and her grandmother with death if they exposed him. (Source; Kaladan Press Network)

Karenni State

12 Year Old Girl Raped and Killed by Soldiers

In April 2002, a paddy farmer from Karenni State, was interviewed by Earthrights International. He reported: "I have heard about a recent case of rape. [Name redacted], from [name of village redacted], told me that a twelve-year old girl had been raped by soldiers in her village. The girl was sent to a hospital, but she died. I don't know the battalion number. I don't know much about this case because I only heard from other people." (Source: We Are Not Free To Work for Ourselves, Earthrights International, January – May 2002)

6.10 Personal Accounts

Education

Name: Leh Wah

Age: 21

Gender: F

Source: *Gathering Strength*; Education for Women and Girls, Brenda Belak, Images Asia. 2002)

When I was young, my mother was a school teacher. My father was dead. My aunt and my grandparents were illiterate. Eventually, my mother started working with the Karen Women's Organization, and she moved far away from our village. When the government found out, they wanted to arrest my mother and my whole family. Luckily, we found out ahead of time. At about 3 a.m., we took our bundles of household goods, what we could carry. We had to move to a village quite far from ours. I was only in the 5th standard, in a government school. I had to leave in the middle of school term. The village that we moved to had a school far away, a Kawthoolei [KNU] school that went up to 7th standard. I wanted to continue my education. We had to cross streams on the way. My grandparents didn't allow me to go to school anymore. I cried!

I wanted to finish school. My grandparents said, "You have to go far away. Go there only next year." I told them, "Next year you're going to say the same!" I didn't think they would allow me to go to school. I begged them. At that time, there was a guy at the other end of the village. He went to the school far away. My mother felt sorry for me. She went to discuss with the parents of that guy. We were teenagers. She said to them that her daughter would also like to go to school and asked them if I could follow their son. They said it was okay, no problem. I was very happy.

We went to their house first and then went to school. It was far away. We had to walk about three hours. We also had to go across the streams. We used rafts. I was fine as long as I could attend school. So I started to go to school again. But it was different. I copied the lessons. My friends helped. When I was in the government school, we didn't study Karen language. In the new school, we studied Karen language. I had to work hard.

Once it rained heavily and the streams flooded. The friend I used to go to school with didn't go to school one day. We had a raft. He knew how to use the raft. I thought I could use the raft. School was going to start, so I went by myself. I was in the middle of the stream and the bamboo pole went under the raft and I lost it. First I screamed, and then I was able to retrieve it. Later I got used to going all by myself and didn't need his help anymore. Sometimes I got scared. When it rained, there would be lightning and I was alone. I cried. Since it was windy I couldn't use the umbrella. I had to walk in the rain. I went to that school for a year. I passed the exams. I worked hard. I went up to the 7th standard.

If I wanted to go to the 8th standard, I had to go to the government school. My family were outside and I would have to go back in. I had to change my name. I had to write down different names for my parents' names too. So I went to school up to 8th standard. After the 8th standard exam, my mother became more active. The army was after my grandparents. At that time, I passed the 8th standard and I was about to go to the 9th standard. My

grandparents didn't dare to stay there anymore. At that time, my mother was going back and forth between the border and our place. My grandmother was also scared of being arrested and beaten up. And so my grandparents told my mother that they heard there were refugee camps. We didn't dare to stay there anymore and decided to move to the refugee camp. It was the year I was in the 9th standard. My teachers didn't want to let me go. But we had to come to the refugee camp and I continued to attend 9th standard. I passed the 9th standard exam and took the 10th standard exam.

Then I went for a medical training. It was far away, near Battalion 6. I went there for two years, and I was able to become a medic. I thought that if we have education, we can do something. My parents were not educated. If I had listened only to my parents and my grandparents, I would have had to leave school by the 4th or 5th standard. But I thought to myself that my grandparents are uneducated, and they cannot decide, because they're uneducated. That's how I really felt. I thought it's bad if we're not educated. So I took a risk. Many times I missed my family and my mother very much. I cried from loneliness. But I am very glad I got an education, because now I am able to do many things for our people.

Soldiers Receive Payment for Recruiting Children into Army

Name: Maung Soe (not real name)

Age: 20 years

Gender: Male

Source: Interviewed by: HRDU

Date of interview: 2002

Place of interview: Mae Sot, Thailand

According to Maung Soe, in Thinkanyut, a suburb of Rangoon, there are many train stations, and 8 soldiers are posted at each station. Maung Soe says that in the whole town there are approximately 80 soldiers. The soldiers frequently try to recruit young boys they see at the station who are not accompanied by adults. These are usually children who have run away from home. The soldiers generally only try to recruit young boys, because they are more [naïve] and easier to convince than older teenagers or adult men. Maung Soe says that he has seen boys as young as 8 years old be recruited, but based on his experience he thinks that the majority of the boys recruited, (approximately 70%), are 10 or 11 years old.

Maung Soe reports that when soldiers see unaccompanied boys lingering around the station, they call them over and ask questions such as: "Where do you live? Who are your parents? " If they suspect that the children are alone they will then say: "Do you want to join the army? Do you want to carry a gun? Do you want to be a lieutenant? We will pay you lots of money."

After the boys are recruited they are sent to the Insein recruitment center. Maung Soe says that young boys are kept at the recruitment center until they are 15, before being sent to the front lines. Sometimes parents of the boys go to the recruitment center to complain that their children are too young to be in the army. However they are told that their children will be kept at the recruitment center for training until they are 15. Parents also face difficulty in tracking down children who are recruited at train stations, as every two months the soldiers posted at the train stations are rotated to another location and replaced by new soldiers.

One of Maung Soe's friends, Ali (not real name) was recruited in 2000 when he was 17 years old. Ali was very unhappy at the recruitment center and after spending 15 days there he escaped and ran home to his parents. However the authorities from the recruitment center tracked him down at his house and arrested him. Even though his parents begged the soldiers not to take him away, the soldiers said that Ali had committed a crime and he was put in prison for one year.

Maung Soe says that it is widely known that soldiers are paid for every boy that they bring to the recruitment center. When the boys are brought to the center, which is run by LIB 200, the soldiers receive 4,000 kyat and one bag of rice for each new recruit. Maung Soe's friend Ali, was told this when he arrived at the recruitment center by other new recruits who had heard the soldiers talking about it. Nowadays older teenagers or young men generally refuse attempts to recruit them into the army and tell the soldier "you only want money."

When he was in Burma Maung Soe traveled frequently because of his job, and so says he has witnessed this type of recruitment countless times in train stations. He estimates that in his town at least 500 runaways and street children have been recruited by SPDC soldiers to join the army. He also says that he has rescued many boys from being recruited by warning them not to believe what the soldiers promise about their future life in the army. Nowadays, Maung Soe says that young boys rarely spend more than one or two days at a train station before they are recruited.

Interview with Child Soldier #1

Name: Zaw Myint (not real name)

Age: 13 years

Ethnicity: Burman

Religion: Buddhist

Address in Burma: xxxxx Township, Rangoon Division

Father: xxxxxx

Mother: xxxxx (died in 1995)

Siblings: 2 older brothers, 21 and 18 years old. Both are soldiers. The elder joined the army 7 years ago, and the middle brother joined 3 or 4 years ago.

Education completed: 1st standard

Time spent in the army: 2 years

Source: Interviewed by: HRDU

Date of interview: 2002

Place of interview: Mae Sot

Zaw Myint was forcibly recruited as a soldier during the summer of 2000 when he was 11 years old. At this time he was traveling to Mingaladon Township to visit his aunt. When he arrived at the Mingaladon bus station two SPDC corporals grabbed him and told him that he was being forced to join the army, and that if he refused he would be put in jail. Then he was taken to Danyingone recruitment center opposite Mingaladon Township. From here he was taken to a basic training camp for soldiers in Ye Ni (Pyinmana) Township. The training he attended was the seventh training held at the training camp. There were 250 other soldiers at the training camp while Zaw Myint was there, 15 of them were 15 or 16 years old, and 15 others were 8 to 14 years old. The older and younger soldiers were kept together. The youngest recruit at the training camp was a boy named Kyaw Aung who was only 7 or 8

years old. This boy was too young to attend the trainings, but after the training period was sent to Kyainseikyi military camp (IB 32) to perform chores at the camp.

Zaw Myint and the other recruits spent four months at the basic training camp. While there he reported that he got an adequate amount of food but the quality of the food was not good. Most of the time the recruits were fed bean curry, and only got buffalo meat three times a week. Zaw Myint did not get sick while he was there but some of his friends suffered from malaria and other illnesses and were treated at the camp clinic. There was no school at the training camp, and the recruits were only taught how to use a gun, how to follow orders and other military matters. Zaw Myint says that he was taught nothing about the laws of war or the Geneva Convention. Sometimes the teachers beat the recruits if they could not perform a task correctly, but Zaw Myint was not beaten at the training camp. While he was in the training camp, Zaw Myint wrote a letter to his parents, but received no reply. He believes that the letter was never sent or did not reach them, and to date he has had no communication with his family since he was taken at the Mingaladon bus station.

After the four months of training Zaw Myint was sent to LIB 341 based at Kow-pauk military camp, Papun Township, Karen State. There were approximately 200 other soldiers at the camp, including 15 soldiers between the ages of 11 and 15. Two of his friends from the training were sent to the same camp. One of his friends, 13 year old, Lin Lin Oo contracted a severe case of malaria. Though he was given medicine, he died in June 2002. Lin Lin Oo was from Mergui, his personnel number was (Taung-oo-bu / 21128). Another of Zaw Myint's friends was XX, who is 14 or 15 years old and is currently on duty in the rear camp. Two of the other younger soldiers that Zaw Myint remembers were XX and XX who are both 15 years old. Most of the 15 younger soldiers spent time on duty at the front lines. Four of the other 14 young soldiers are:

1. XX - 13 yrs old
2. XX - 15 yrs old
3. XX - 15 yrs old
4. XX - 15 yrs old

Zaw Myint was never sent to the front lines and stayed at Kow-pauk the entire time he was with the army. His daily routine at the camp began at 6am when he woke up and had breakfast. As soon as he finished eating he had to work cutting bamboo and building fences with it until 11 am. At 11 he had lunch and then a break until 1pm. He continued to work cutting bamboo until 4pm. After dinner he served as a sentry from 6 to 10 pm. After 10 another person relieved him and he went to bed. While at the Camp Zaw Myint carried a machine gun called a MA-11 (MA= Myanmar Army), and 120 cartridges. During the first six months that Zaw Myint was with the army, including the four months of training he was paid 3,500 kyat a month. After six months he was paid 4,500 kyats a month. Zaw Myint was beaten twice by one of the officers, Htay Myint, when he was unable to perform some duty. Both times he was hit on the face hard.

The Battalion Commander of LIB 341 was Thura Thura Saw Mya Thaung. The other officers were:

1. Ko Ko Zart - Company (3)
2. Pyint Soe Han – Company (4)
3. Thant Zaw Oo – Company (2)
4. Zin Min Aung – Company (1)
5. Lin Zaw Htut – Assistant of battalion office

There were some villages near the camp, but Zaw Myint does not remember their names. Once a week the soldiers would collect 10 residents of nearby villages to come and do construction work at the camp. These people were required to bring leaves used for building the roofs of huts. Some opposition troops did come and stage campaigns near the camp, and soldiers who had been at the camp longer told Zaw Myint that they had burnt down many villages. Zaw Myint remembers that one time a man from one of the nearby villages was brought to the camp and accused of laying landmines. Though he was tortured and beaten all night, the soldiers could not find any evidence against him so he was released the next day.

Zaw Myint hated staying at the military camp. On 30 September 2002 he said he was going to bathe in a stream outside the camp, and then ran away. He walked for one day until he met a villager. He explained that he had been a soldier but was trying to escape from the army, and the man brought him to one of the KNU camps. He stayed there for one night and then a KNU official sent him to Mae Sot (Thailand).

In the future Zaw Myint would like to be a professional football player or wrestler. He would also like to go back to Burma and meet his family.

Interview with Child Soldier # 2

Name: Sai Maleik (or) Sai Hein Thu

Age: 17

Ethnicity: Shan

Religion: Buddhist

Address: Lin Khea township. Shan state

Private Number: Ta/ 206403

Battalion: LIB 256, Division 101

Area: Pakukku, Magwe Division

Time spent in the army: 1 year.

Source: Interviewed by FTUB (TUR/HR)

Date of interview: 5 March 2002

Place of interview: Nyaung Lay Bin District

In May 2001, I was arrested by the SPDC soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)525 whilst I was working at our slash and burn rice field. I was forced to serve as a porter and I had to carry rice and ammunition for eight days. The weight was over 10 viss (1 viss equals to 1.6 kg) and I had to carry it for about 12 hours a day. At that time, soldiers provided us with meals two times a day. There were about 60 soldiers from the LIB 525 and over 30 porters including me. During the journey, porters who could not carry loads were beaten. The LIB 525 soldiers shot dead three porters when they tried to escape. The three dead were villagers from Wan Sit village. After serving eight days, I was taken to an army camp located between Pan Pao and Moe Neh villages. Two days later I was sent to the Recruit Centre in Taunggyi against my will.

Days later, I was sent to Ayardaw Training Centre, Mone Ywar district, in Sagaing division, in central Burma, which I had never been to before. I had to attend four months basic army training course. During this time, trainees had to grow tamarind, mango and other vegetable plants. There were about 200 trainees and the training camp commander was Captain Aye Lwin.

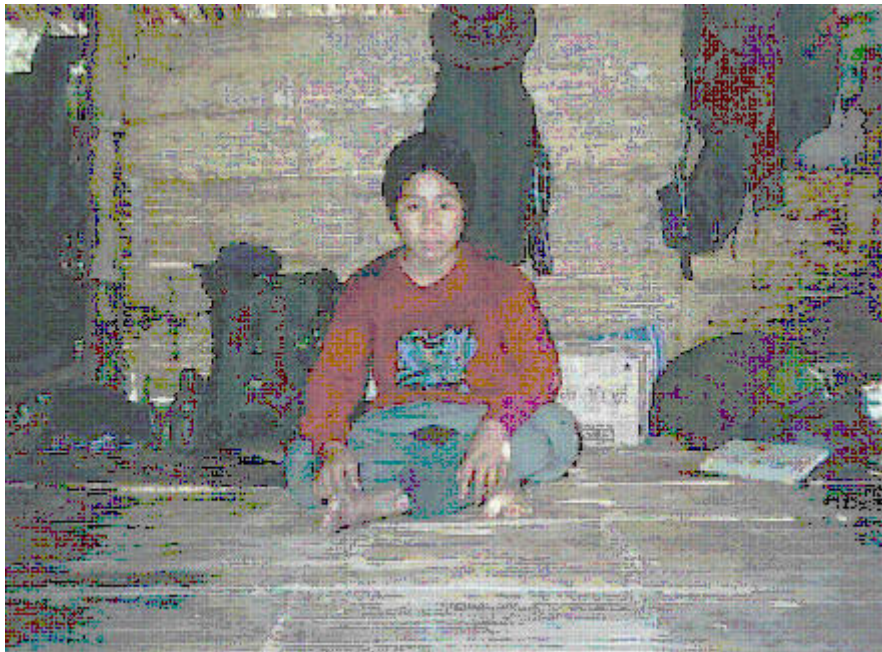
There were child soldiers in the training course. Many of them did not voluntarily join the army, and always tried to escape from the training centre, but our homes were too far to go. To prevent escape, a trainee had to take off all clothes in the night time when he wanted to go toilet.

During the training period, the first salary, 3000 Kyats was paid after the second month. However, because of deduction for uniforms, equipment, etc. we got around 600 to 700 Kyats a month.

After the training course, I was appointed to Light Infantry Battalion 256, Division 101, located in Pakukku, Magwe Division. The acting battalion commander was Major Aung Min. There was no deputy battalion commander and there were only about 170 men including officers and soldiers. In the first two months, October and November 2001, I worked at the battalion's plantation field and cleaning the battalion office. I saw some soldiers that managed to escape but were later arrested by the battalion and were severely beaten.

In December, 2001, our battalion was sent to the front line, Nyaung Lay Bin area. We reached Kyaukkyi and then in January 2002, the battalion was stationed between Mu Thea and Shar Daw. Our company had about 30 soldiers and 6 prisoner porters.

On January 31, 2002, early in the morning while I was serving sentry duty, I decided to run from the battalion. I brought my automatic rifle (MA 1) with 170 rounds, a hand grenade and four magazines. I spent 9 days in the forest and found no one but destroyed villages. After nine days, I saw two villagers with a home made shot gun and I asked assistance. They brought me to their hidden village and then handed me over to the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). My will is I would like to return home. If not, I prefer to join the SSA (Shan State Army). The Karen National Union officers promised me to send back home.'



Interview with Child Soldier # 3

Name: Saw Aung

Age: 17

Ethnicity: Karen

Religion: [not stated]

Address: [not stated]

Source: Interviewed by UNICEF

Date of interview: 2002

Place of interview: Karenni refugee camp

Saw Aung was 7 years old and working on his family's farm during the summer school break with two cousins, ages 6 and 8, when they were taken away by Burmese soldiers. Saw Aung, whose father is Burman and mother Karen, has not seen his family since.

'About 10 Burmese soldiers in uniform with guns came and said, "Come with us." "No, we are very young." "No, follow us," they said, "We will give you food, candy." We were young, we couldn't think much. We traveled by motorboat for three nights. When we reached the recruitment center in Rangoon, we talked with others about how they had come there – their parents had kicked them out of the house and they didn't know where to go. Like us, they were forced or kidnapped with promises of food and candy. The center was called 'Ye Nunt'. We were very, very afraid about what we were going to tell our parents. I tried to communicate through letters. I stayed in Ye Nyunt for five years. We were told we couldn't go back home and that we would have to stay there. They threatened us to keep us from escaping. Some escaped and were sent to prison. Some were beaten. Some committed suicide. I know of five. One person drowned by driving a truck into a river. One jumped from a high building. Most were forced or tricked to join and always wanted to go home. They were very frustrated. The only way out was to kill themselves. We were children. We wanted to play, have fun or work with our parents.

I was very depressed. I stayed in the barracks. Of course I wanted an education. I'm illiterate now. I can only write my name.

Within the camp, you don't go to school. I took care of the pigs. You could work at the fishpond, raise chickens, breed livestock. You could do any of these things but you couldn't go home. Some of the officers were nice. Some kicked us; they'd lose patience if you kept crying. A child crying a lot and not taking orders was sent to prison. The barracks were very long. As far as you could see there were kids. Some stayed only one or two years in the barracks.

I felt I had no freedom. We were never allowed to go and see our parents. Finally, I decided to flee. I'm very bitter about the Burmese army. I haven't been able to see my parents or my sisters and brother. After I escaped, the Army told my parents I had died in the fighting.

I have bad dreams but not frequently. Sometimes I am being killed, sometimes I'm being tortured but not killed. Sometimes I dream I get to finally meet my parents but they're sick. Sometimes my anger is so big. I'm trying to be happy with friends. I drink a little alcohol now. I still want to take revenge because I'm separated from my family. I want to give them

[the Burmese army] the same suffering I have had. One day...if I get a chance...I will do something for all the people sharing the same suffering. If I hadn't been taken by the soldiers, I'd be living with my parents happily, warmly. I'd be educated. It's what I want.'

Child Labor Interview

Name: Nay Myo

Age: 9.

Ethnicity: Burman.

Religion: Buddhist.

Father's name and occupation: (deceased), Construction worker.

Mother's name and occupation: (not stated), Homemaker.

Other siblings: Eldest of three brothers (one deceased) and one sister.

Address in Burma: XX village, XX township, Mon State

Address in Thailand: Mae Pa, Tak province.

Education completed: 2nd standard.

Source: Interviewed by HRDU

Date of interview: 2002

Place of interview: Mae Sot, Thailand

Nay Myo's Father died of a heart attack in 1996. The only medical service available in the village is a nurse's clinic. As the family could not afford it, his father received no medical treatment. His Mother remarried an alcoholic after he had raped her. In 2001, while drunk he broke one of Nay Myo's brother's legs when he threw him from their house. His brother subsequently died through lack of medical attention.

Nay Myo's mother is now in jail and has been accused of stealing 60,000 kyat. She maintains her innocence but has to remain in detention until such time as she can replace the money. After his mother was put in jail relatives took Nay Win to stay with them in Thailand. His sister has gone to stay with the family of one his Father's former co-workers in Rangoon Division. Nay Myo's other brother has gone to stay with his maternal Grandmother. No family is rich enough to take all the children and keep them together.

For about one year before his mother was arrested, Nay Myo worked with her and his brother as substitute forced laborers. In his village people who can pay between 100 to 200 kyat per day to the VPDC can avoid mandatory forced labor duty. The VPDC acts as a broker and hires other people to replace those who have paid. Nay Myo's family was paid 3000 kyat per month for this. Their task was to serve as sentries, watching over a train bridge for the police. There were six other lookout posts and a central police checkpoint. This checkpoint was manned by 10 police officers armed with rifles and revolvers. The police threatened Nay Myo's family that if anything happened to the bridge or track, they would make them act as porters. The substitute forced laborers had to maintain a 24-hour 7-day a week watch, which was divided into three shifts.

The police often made the substitute forced laborers go and buy alcohol for them. There was no safety rail for pedestrians on the bridge and crossing it at night on these errands was dangerous. The police were often drunk. They would also often take food from the family, including meals that had been prepared but had not yet been eaten. Usually the family ate dried fish and rice. Nay Myo says that he was not hungry and his mother just made do with what they had.

During his off shift for sentry duty, Nay Myo also worked as a cattle herd for local farmers. He expected to be paid but wasn't. He kept the job because it gave him the opportunity to forage for wild vegetables from the land. He also reports working as a day laborer doing work such as catching and selling fish or harvesting coconuts.

In November 2001, the first month Nay Myo and his family started working as sentries, a police private became drunk and lay down to go to sleep on the train tracks. A train ran over him, splitting his body with such force that it fell far from the track. The police asked Nay Myo and his family if they had seen the body, but being afraid they lied and said no. They were taken to the police checkpoint and had to make statements as witnesses. They also had to contribute 5000 kyat for funeral expenses.

When he first came to Thailand, Nay Myo was working as a day laborer for 12 baht a day. He is currently attending a school funded by an NGO and is not working. In the future Nay Myo wants to continue studying and become a teacher.



7. Rights of Women

7.1 Background

Since the military regime took power in 1962, it has put disproportionate resources into maintaining its power and strengthening the military. The result of this and the ongoing civil war is poor infrastructure, inadequate health care and education systems, widespread poverty and a militarized society that puts the needs of the civilian population, particularly women, second to military concerns. The elevation of the military in society has enforced stereotypes about the subordinate status of women while at the same time blocked access to the tools, such as education and health care, women need to attain genuine equality. Although the military regime became a party to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women (CEDAW) in 1997 it has done little more than make token changes, such as the formation of some women's organizations, to implement the tenets of the convention.

Ethnic women living in conflict areas are particularly vulnerable to human rights abuses. Health care and education is severely underdeveloped in these areas, including access to family planning methods. Women in these areas are also subject to forced relocations, forced labor, forced portering in war zones, physical abuse and sexual violations. These are directed, primarily, at ethnic minorities seeking autonomy. Women in conflict areas find themselves vulnerable to abuse and lacking in their basic needs which may force them into becoming refugees or migrants.

Women in Politics

Although Burma signed the U.N Convention on Political Rights in 1954, male dominance is also seen in the Burmese political arena. Women and girls are educated less frequently than males and are often relegated to low-paying, unskilled jobs in the economy. As a result of this and other factors women have less access to positions of power, and are excluded from the decision and policy-making process. Since 1962 the number of women reaching high-level positions in their careers has declined, and, because women are barred from serving in the military, they are effectively blocked from all positions of leadership in the country. The few women who are in senior positions, such as Dr. Khin Win Shwe, leader of the MMCWA, are often the wives and relatives of SPDC officials. In 1996, following the Beijing conference on women, a Myanmar National Women's Affairs Committee was established, which was followed by the establishment of Women's Affairs Committees at the state/division and township levels. However, on the national level both the chair and vice-chair are men and of the remaining 32 members only half are women. On the state/division, district and township levels, the wives of SPDC administrators hold the second positions. There are no women in the SPDC cabinet. At the district and township levels administrators are male military appointees. In addition, in villages and remote areas that have little contact with the central government, most local authority figures, such as village heads and village council members are men.

During the 1988 pro-democracy uprising many women took to the streets to protest against the military dictatorship and during the violent suppression of the movement hundreds were shot and killed while demonstrating in Rangoon and other towns. After the formation of independent political parties in 1988 several women, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi of

the NLD, rose to prominent political leadership roles. In the election of 1990, the results of which have never been honored, 16 women, out of 485 members, were elected to parliament. Since that time hundreds of women have been imprisoned, systematically harassed, interrogated or detained for being politically active, aligning themselves with a political party, or speaking out for human rights. As of 2002, there were still at least 87 women political prisoners in detention. Wives and mothers of male political prisoners have been harassed by MI and are left with the financial responsibility of the family in the absence of their husbands and sons. The number of politically active women on the whole has been smaller than that of men, in part because of a fear that they are vulnerable to sexual abuse if taken in to custody. Young women who are part of banned student unions are also routinely arrested and deprived of their liberty, often whilst taking part in peaceful protest demonstrations.

On 6 May 2002, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released after 19 months of house arrest. Many people felt this was a hopeful signal of progress for the country and a move toward change in the government. However, Aung San Suu Kyi continued to be the subject of harassment and discrimination by the SPDC during her travels and campaign activities. Prior to her release, the SPDC had slandered her for defying the traditional role of a woman. The SPDC accused her of being a bad mother who has neglected her responsibilities to her family by working as politician. At times, their defamations went so far as to call her a prostitute (source: ALTSEAN & Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002).

After just over one year of freedom from house arrest, the SPDC re-arrested Aung San Suu Kyi on 30 May 2003, also known as "Black Friday". Her arrest followed an attack on her convoy while campaigning in northern Burma. The attacks were reportedly led by SPDC government supporters, Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) members, police, and soldiers. Several other NLD members were arrested simultaneously including NLD General Secretary Deputy Chairman U Tin U. Others were killed or reported missing. NLD offices were forced closed and arrests continued beyond the day of the attacks (source: *Briefing: Black Friday and The Crackdown on the NLD*, ALTSEAN, 24 July 2003)

The SPDC claims that Aung San Suu Kyi was taken into "protective custody" and will be released when a calm and peaceful environment has been regained in the country. On 30 July 2003, it was reported that SPDC Foreign Minister Win Aung stated that Aung San Suu Kyi would possibly released before the October 2003 ASEAN meeting. Many remain skeptical that this will actually occur (source: Johnston, Tim, "Aung San Suu Kyi Detention to End in 3 Months", VOA, 30 July 2003).

7.2 Health of Women from Burma

As a result of the SPDC prioritizing military expenditures over spending for social services, such as health care, women's health has suffered. According to World Health Organization (WHO) statistics, the SPDC spends 6.5% of total government expenditures on health. In June 2000, the WHO rated Burma at 190th among the nations of the world as a health care provider, distributor and for successfully delivering and supporting the plans it has proposed. According to the World Bank in 1999, reported spending for military needs was nine times that for health services. A UNICEF –Myanmar report from 2001 indicated that there is 1 health worker for every 4 villages or every 3,400 people. Very few women participate in the decision making bodies of the SPDC government, therefore women's health issues are not represented as policy is designed. Lack of infrastructure, continued armed conflict between the SPDC and rebel groups, high cost, lack of transportation and privatization of health care services all lend to making access to good quality care increasingly difficult for women. Access to basic health care, family planning information and prenatal care is increasingly scarce in rural and ethnic minority areas or areas of conflict. Women who are on the run or in relocation sites, suffer from exposure to the elements, lack of clean water and sanitation, not enough food and no medicine, and are thus more likely to contract diseases such as malaria, anemia, hepatitis and dysentery.

Most women give birth with the help of a midwife or a trained birthing attendant, whose skills are often questionable. Even when formal medical facilities are utilized, they are often ill equipped or the staff is undertrained to handle birth complications. According to UNICEF figures, the maternal mortality rate is 230 per 100,000 births. Infant mortality rate is 78 per 1,000 births. *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*, a report released by Images Asia, indicated that 65% of women in urban areas and towns receive antenatal care from midwives and 12% from doctors. In remote or rural areas, many women receive no antenatal care at all. Most women are unaware of birth spacing methods, contraception or risks of sexually transmitted diseases. Contraceptives were only legally introduced in 1991 and condoms in 1993. According to UNICEF, 33% of married women between the ages of 15-49 utilize contraceptives. Most women learn about contraceptives through their own or other women's experimentation causing either negative experiences, misuse or improper understanding. Many women are inhibited from buying condoms because of the cost, the association with sex work and the fact that possession of condoms can be grounds for arrest if a woman is stopped by the police. As HIV/AIDS is an ever increasing problem in Burma, women are increasingly at risk of contracting the disease yet education is limited. Cultural taboos and heavy government control over information restrict discussion or education about sex or women's health issues.

Lack of access to contraceptives and lack of education about reproductive health, have made illegal abortions a common form of birth control in Burma. According to the Women's League of Burma, 750,000 abortions are performed every year. 50% of all maternal deaths are believed to be the result of unsafe abortions or post-abortion complications. While cultural beliefs promote the notion that only unmarried women have abortions, married women are increasingly turning to abortion as a means of birth control. According to UNICEF, approximately 14 % of married women between the ages of 15 and 49 have at least one abortion in their lives. If a woman or a medical practitioner is discovered to have had or given an abortion, they may be subject to fines or up to three years imprisonment. Abortions do occur in hospitals, but more often than not women seek the help of untrained practitioners.

Women use a variety of methods to induce abortion including ingestion of large doses of traditional herbs to cause menstruation and deep abdominal massages. Often foreign objects such as sticks, bamboo or other objects are inserted into the cervix. Infections and other complications are highly common leading to infertility or death. (Source: ALTSEAN & Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

According to preliminary research collected by Suzanne Belton, PhD Candidate at Melbourne University Key Centre for Women's Health in Society, Faculty of Medicine, 12 Burmese women died in local Thai hospitals in Tak province Thailand during 2001-2002 due to lack of antenatal care, post abortion complications and complications while giving birth. 457 post abortion cases were treated at the Mae Tao clinic, which was established by Dr Cynthia Maung to treat the Burmese migrant population. 40% of the women interviewed performed home abortions before coming to the clinic for treatment (see chapter on migrant workers for more information). (Source: Suzanne Belton, PhD Candidate at Melbourne University Key Centre for Women's Health in Society Faculty of Medicine)

7.3 Women and Forced Labor

Burma ratified Article 11 of the ILO convention No. 29 in 1955; the article states that the use of compulsory labor must be confined to males between the ages of 18 and 45 and only used under very limited circumstances. Moreover, the SPDC passed a law in October 2000 banning forced labor under Section 374 of the Penal Code. Despite this, the SPDC not only continues to use forced labor but does not hesitate to use women in all kinds of forced labor, such as building railways, hydro-electric dams, building and maintaining military supply roads, digging ditches, breaking stones and portering in war zones. As forced labor is particularly prevalent in rural areas inhabited by ethnic minorities, ethnic women are routinely taken for forced labor duties, including teenage girls if both their parents are busy working and they must fill a household forced labor quota.

Forced labor, in particular forced portering, puts women at greater risk of sexual violence. In addition to being vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse during forced labor, women most often do not receive adequate food or medical treatment. This combined with the physical strain of forced labor puts their health at risk. Women who are pregnant are not exempt from forced labor assignments. Generally it is possible for people to pay another person to go in their place, but women who cannot afford to do this must risk their own health and that of their unborn child to carry out what are often arduous tasks (please see the appropriate chapter for more information on forced labor).

Example Incidents of Women and Forced Labor in 2002

On 25 February 2002, about 600 Burmese troops arrived at Nakawngmu, opposite Chiangdao District, Chiangmai Province, in 30 Chinese six-wheeled lorries. More than a hundred porters including women were collected. Another group of 150 porters (50 each from Maeken, Mongharng and Poongpakhem tracts) who were captured around February 15 were engaged in carrying supplies from Namhukhun, east of Poongpakhem, to Pakhee outpost. (Source: SHAN)

On 3 June 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 53 demanded 7 villagers from Kler-doe-kha village and 6 villagers from Kler-pa-hti village to work as porters to carry food supplies for the army to Than-daung Town. Naw Khar Gaw, 33, a pregnant woman, was injured by a truck, which hit her while she was carrying army food supplies for Day-thaw camp. (Source: KIC)

On 20 June 2002, IB No. 77 troops led by Lt. Col. Myo Lwin and Maj. Kyaw Kyaw Oo arrested about 40 people from Wet-nan and Wet-sadon villages of Kya-inn-seikyi Township to use them as porters in their military offensives against the KNLA.

The troops went into these two villages, which are close to each other and are in a 'free-fire zone' and arrested about 40 villagers including some women. The soldiers forced them to carry ammunition and food supplies for 7 days and the commanders said they would release them after that period.

Whilst the soldiers were taking these porters, they launched offensives in 'Kyaik-done' area. After 7 days of offensives, the troops returned to the two villages again. When they tried to get another 40 villagers to replace the old porters, they weren't able as many men and other villagers had fled from the villages, so they used the same porters and arrested some more women from the village, for another weeks in porter service.

One woman porter said that the soldiers forced her to carry 4 mortar shells and she was beaten when she could not climb the mountains like the male porters. She said she also saw the soldiers kill some Karen villagers in some rural villages in Kyaik-done area. (Source: HURFOM)

On 20 June 2002, LIB No. 77 under the command of LID No. 88 led by Lt. Col. Myo Myint Win and his deputy, Maj. Myint Myint Oo, went into Wet-don and Wet-sa-kon villages and asked the village headmen from both villages to provide them with 40 male porters. The village headmen provided them and the soldiers took those villagers as porters for 7 days. After 7 days, they returned to these two villages again and requested the village headmen again to provide them with 40 porters to exchange for the former porters. As most men were afraid of being arrested by the soldiers, they fled from village and hid in the forest. The commanders were quite angry with the village headmen and then they arrested some women and used them as porters to carry ammunition and food supplies for another 2 days to reach their base. According to one woman, she was forced to carry about 5 motor shells like a man. (Source: HURFOM)

On 2 July 2002, these battalion troops also entered into Taung-bauk village and arrested 10 villagers as porters including Nai Halae, who was used as a guide. When he showed them the wrong way to a Mon village, he was severely beaten, said one of the female porters. (Source: HURFOM)

On 9 November 2002, when troops from the Burmese Army entered into Khaw-za village, in the southern part of Ye Township, Karen State, they tried to arrest some men to use them as porters. However they arrested about 30 women in the village and forced them to carry their food supplies and also used them to walk in advance as human-shields. It was too dangerous for Burmese troops to walk alone along the road to Ying-ye village because they could be attacked by Mon rebel soldiers. The two villages were over 10 miles apart so they had to walk for some hours to reach the destination. To prevent an attack or to avoid casualties, the Burmese soldiers made the women walk in advance. (Source: HURFOM)

7.4 Violence against Women

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was ratified by the SPDC in 1997. According to a shadow report prepared by the Women's Affairs Department of the NCGUB and various women's groups from Burma for the 22nd session of CEDAW, violence against women is present in 3 realms of society; the family, the community and the state. Yet the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs indicates that violence against women is not a matter of major concern. At the same time, a survey of 80% of Burma's townships reveals that physical and mental violence affects 3-15% of women. Domestic violence is a worldwide problem, however it has been found that incidents of domestic violence increase in situations where there is fear, anxiety, desperation and anger such as in areas where there is ongoing civil war. One symptom of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which has been found present in up to 15% of some adult refugee populations, is irritability and anger than can lead to aggressive and violent behavior. Most women in Burma do not have a means of escaping situations of abuse as they are financially dependent on their husbands and would not be able to support themselves or their children if they left. Domestic violence is often viewed as a private matter between husband and wife. Community and family often pressure women not report incidents of abuse, therefore authorities are not often involved. All types of violence are aggravated by the militarized nature of Burmese society and the ongoing civil unrest. (Source: ALTSEAN & RI & Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

Women, particularly ethnic women, are the targets of state violence in Burma. Rape is a common form of violence carried out against women and SPDC troops often rape ethnic women in conflict zones knowing that they will not be punished. Because women are often raped during everyday activities they cannot avoid situations where they might be at risk of rape and are in constant fear of sexual violence. Gang rapes are common, suggesting that rape is not a random act of violence but is systematically carried out by the military and women are not infrequently killed afterwards to prevent them from reporting the incident. In addition, women and in particular young girls often die of injuries sustained during rape. There are also known cases of soldiers raping women in order to force marriages. The SPDC has shown itself at worst to be encouraging the practice of rape of ethnic women and at best to be indifferent to it. Villagers that complain about rape can either be met with apathy or threats of retaliation if they continue to complain about it.

In June 2002, the Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN) and the Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF) released a report, *License to Rape*. The report detailed the systematic use of sexual violence by the military regime against the women of Shan State. The report documents 173 incidents of rape involving 625 women and girls by SPDC soldiers from 1996

to 2001. 83% of the documented rapes were perpetrated by officers. 25% of the incidents resulted in death. 61% of the rapes were gang-rapes. In only one case out of 173 was the perpetrator punished by the military. *Licence to Rape* has made a successful impact on the international community and called attention and criticism to the SPDC. The UN General Assembly and the US State Department and Congress condemned the Burmese military's use of sexual violence as a weapon of war. The SPDC denounced the report and suggested that the cases documented were all fabricated. The SPDC reportedly conducted their own investigation into the rapes in Shan State and found the evidence in *License to Rape* to be untrue. It was discovered that the SPDC's investigation included intimidation and forced documentation that the rapes never occurred. In September 2002, SWAN and SHRF released *A Mockery of Justice: The State Peace and Development Council's Investigation into the 'License to Rape' Report* documenting the SPDC's human rights abuses in their attempt to discredit the information in *Licence to Rape*. The following is an excerpt from the report detailing the methods in which the SPDC concluded that information in *License to Rape* was invalid:

"The investigations were carried out in an intimidating manner. Male military officers led the investigation. The team traveled in a 12-truck military convoy, each truck filled with 8-9 armed soldiers. Headmen in selected localities were ordered several days in advance by local military units to provide a specific number of villagers (between 15-40) to meet the visiting team. The headmen were threatened not to mention any incidences of rape by the Burmese military in their area. If a headman did not attend the meeting, he was threatened with a fine of 3 000 kyat (equivalent to 10 days of labor at the current daily wage-rate in Shan State). The headmen randomly chose people who were available. Male villagers, on the whole, met the investigation team.

At each locality, the team's armed escorts and local soldiers scoured the area in advance, and stood guard while the meeting took place. The venue was either in front of a local district office, a school, a village headman's house or in a military base.

As villagers arrived at the venue, a military officer wrote their names on a prepared Burmese language document. When the required number of villagers had arrived, the visiting SPDC team came to the venue. The officer in charge of the team then stated he was there to confirm there had been no incidences of Burmese troops raping women in that area. He spoke in Burmese; there was no translation. Villagers who could not understand Burmese did not know what was being said. Those that could speak Burmese did not dare mention any cases. All the villagers were ordered to sign next to their names on the prepared document, which stated that there had been no incidences of Burmese troops raping women in their area. Those that could not write had to stamp their fingerprints, and did not know what the document said.

Outside the township office in Murng Hsat, after signing the statement, the villagers were forced to chant publicly three times: "The Burmese army have not raped Shan women," and raise their hands as they chanted. Pictures were taken of them doing this." (Source: *A Mockery of Justice: The State Peace and Development Council's Investigation into the 'License to Rape' Report*, SWAN, 24 September 2002)

In March 2003, Refugees International published *No Safe Place*, a report confirming and supporting the evidence presented in *Licence to Rape*. The report detailed incidents of rape and sexual violence in other non-Shan ethnic areas including Karen, Karenni, Tavoy, and Mon areas. The report indicated that rape occurs in conjunction with increased militarization

and other human rights abuses. Rape and sexual violence occur during flight, migration, incarceration in military camps, forced labor and while farming. The Burmese Penal Code indicates that a perpetrator of rape must be imprisoned from 10 years to life. The Burmese army also indicates that all soldiers are aware that rape and sexual violence are subject to punishment under both military and civilian laws. Many soldiers use rape as a form of entertainment to demoralize the ethnic minority populations and as a method of Burmanizing the country through resulting forced marriage and impregnation. In urban areas incarcerated women, who may have been participants in peaceful protests, are also reported to be subject to rape during their imprisonment. (Source: *No Safe Place: Burma's Army and the Rape of Ethnic Women*, Refugees International, April 2003)

7.5 Trafficking of Women

Women from all over Burma leave the country through the hands of traffickers every year. The continually declining economy, high levels of poverty, lack of opportunity for education and employment result in women looking outside the country for work. This is the case particularly in areas that have been subject to forced relocation and in border regions, which are predominantly the ethnic states. Many who are fleeing as refugees, particularly from Shan State, Chin State and Sagaing Division are unable to enter refugee camps and therefore are restricted in their options for leaving the country. At the same time, the SPDC created international and domestic travel restrictions for women under the pretense of protecting women from trafficking. Women between the ages of 16 to 25 must travel in the company of a legal guardian. In some areas, women must have special permits in order to travel between towns. The high cost of identity cards, which allow for travel in and out of Burma, prevents many women from obtaining them. Since May 1996, women have not been able to obtain work passports if they are under 30 years old. Women have also been unable to get overseas study passports without the sponsorship of the government. These travel restrictions combined with the poor economic conditions and restrictions for entry into the refugee camps lead to women to seek the help of agents and to be trafficked, whether for sex work or other types of employment, such as factory work or domestic service. (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

Women from Burma are trafficked to China, Japan, Malaysia, Pakistan, Taiwan, and Thailand. The greatest number of women is trafficked to Pakistan via Bangladesh and Thailand. Many of the women who leave Burma with the help of a trafficker do so without knowing what sort of employment or working conditions they will encounter. In a best case scenario trafficked women are able to escape exploitative labor situations and enjoy greater self-determination than they would have by staying in Burma. In worst case scenarios they are sold into bonded labor situations where they are kept incommunicado in slave like conditions. Age is an important factor in determining what kind of situation a trafficked person will face, with younger women and girls being more easily exploited. The continuing economic crisis in Burma combined with the lack of social welfare services and the strong sex industry in Thailand, as well as inside Burma, has left sex work as one of the only viable employment opportunities for women. It is estimated that there are more than 40,000 Burmese sex workers in Thailand alone. Sometimes women willingly go into this kind of work, but often don't realize the conditions they will be working under or the risks to their health. In other cases women and girls are sold by their families, or others, into prostitution. Once inside brothels, their bonded labor situation continues, with the women being forced to

pay for mandatory HIV tests and abortions, and exorbitant living costs, thus ensuring that they remain in debt to the brothel owners. Brothels in Thailand are frequently raided, with some of these raids carried out with owner's cooperation in order to further raise the women's debts. In February 2001, 33 teenage girls were arrested in Thailand on charges of prostitution, with four of them admitting that they were from Burma. During these raids police frequently find women and girls tied up or chained to prevent them from trying to escape. (Source: Burmanet)

The United States 2002 *Trafficking in Persons Report* indicated that Burma is in violation of the minimum standards of the "Trafficking Victims Protection Act". Moreover, the SPDC has done little to try and meet these standards. The SPDC indicated that it is creating "Human Trafficking Prevention Committees" as a part of its "Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign". The committees will be located in various states and divisions to monitor people ages 16-25 years and travel in the border areas. There is concern that these committees will do more to limit freedom of movement and expression than to thwart trafficking. Meanwhile, individuals who traffic women and girls are often powerful and easily escape prosecution as a result of maintaining close ties with border police and other officials who profit from the trafficking. The complicity of officials allows the trade to continue and thrive and limits women's access to other types of work as they are often passed from the trafficker directly into the hands of the brothel owner. Women who return home after working in the sex industry often face discrimination and can be prosecuted for illegal departure and prostitution with sentences of up to three years. (Source: ALTSEAN)

Sex Workers in Burma

Gathering Strength, a 2002 report produced by Images Asia, indicates that the population of sex workers in Burma is ever increasing. Some sex workers were reportedly victims of rape or sexual abuse and turned to sex work as a result of cultural beliefs that women who have sex outside of marriage are ruined. Yet, most women turn to sex work because of economic factors. In Burma, most women involved in sex work do so on a part-time basis to supplement their primary work as traders, laborers, and transport service workers in roadside teashops. Many sex workers are divorced or married with husbands who are away for extended periods of time. Even wives of army personnel are reported to take up sex work as a means to supplement the meager earnings of their husbands to feed their families. Some women feel that sex work provides a better pay rate and better working conditions than other forms of employment as a laborer or factory worker. Some sex workers with foreign business clientele in Rangoon are able to make as much as \$100 per client. Although, most women do not have foreign clients and make as little as 5 Kyat per client, depending on location and desperation of their economic needs. Female sex workers in Burma are concentrated in cities such as Rangoon, Pegu, Prome, Magway, Mandalay, Monywa, Lashio, Pa-an, Tavoy, and Mergui; or else along trade routes or international border towns such as Tachilek, Muse, Mong La, Keng Tung, Myawaddy, Kawthaung, or Tamu.

Burmese women engaged in sex work face many risks, both physical and psychological. For fear of ostracism by their communities, most women travel outside of their communities to perform their work. Sex workers are also at risk of arrest and are likely to be raped during any time of imprisonment. Most girls and women engaged as sex workers feel that they are unable to insist that customers use a condom. At the same time, possession of a condom is grounds for arrest, if discovered by the police. Thus it is believed that most commercial sex in Burma, and the rest of Asia, occurs without a condom leaving sex workers at risk of

contracting sexually transmitted diseases. According to the research of Dr. Chris Beyrer, Director of the Johns Hopkins Fogarty AIDS International Training and Research Program, nearly 52% of all female sex-workers in Burma are HIV+. There are many obstacles to empowering and educating all women in Burma about sex-issues. Cultural taboos limit open discussion about any kind of sexual activity, and there is a tendency for many people to view sex in general as immoral. There is also a huge stigma against people with HIV, and many women who are infected feel that they cannot return to their communities. (Source: ALTSEAN)

In many cases women are forced into the sex industry, and significant physical and sexual abuse is used in order to 'break them in'. Such violent sexual acts can result in abrasions increasing a women's susceptibility to contracting HIV. A practice gaining in popularity is the selling of young girls as 'virgins.' These girls face increased risk for infection due to the immaturity of their cervix.

Trafficking of Rohingya Women to Pakistan

Gathering Strength, a report released by Images Asia, states that large scale trafficking of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh via India to Pakistan has been going on for about a decade and the number of Rohingyas in Karachi is estimated to be over 300,000. Some women are believed to be trafficked as far as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Exoduses of Rohingya refugees from Burma in 1978 and 1991/2 have coincided with influxes of immigrants into Pakistan. The refugee camps in Bangladesh have become recruiting areas for traffickers and a Bangladeshi NGO found that there have also been various cases of disappearances, abductions, rape and sexual assault of women living outside the camps. Many women are trafficked into brothels in the southern province of Sindh and some have been sold to feudal landlords as concubines. Rohingya prostitutes are extremely likely to contract sexually transmitted diseases because they have little knowledge of contraception and are afraid to visit health authorities for fear of being caught by the police. The Rohingya in Bangladesh are unwanted refugees and face the threat of repatriation and deportation to Burma where they are deprived of citizenship and face atrocities committed by the military junta. This and the conditions of the refugee camps where they are unable to meet their most basic needs means that being trafficked is often the only option for survival. A woman's education, appearance, virginity or lack thereof, and age all lend to her price. Bangladeshi traffickers make from US \$1,285 to \$2,428 per woman. During the journey to Pakistan the women are vulnerable to sexual and physical abuse whether it be from traffickers, police, border guards or while in detention. (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

Most Rohingya women lose contact with their families after they are trafficked. Therefore, there is a lack of information as to the actual work environments and circumstances they encounter once they have reached their destination. Muslim culture also allows for polygamy, therefore women who are trafficked are easily disguised as wives and proper members of the household even if they are servants. (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

Not only Rohingya women are trafficked into Pakistan. There is large scale trafficking of women of other ethnic groups from Burma into Pakistan on the pretense of finding them legitimate work. However, they are then sold to third parties, mostly for prostitution, but also as domestic servants. In some cases they are sold like slaves in an open market, such as the

one in Thar district of Bangladesh, in which buyers are able to examine them, molest them and harass them before buying them. At least one former minister and two members of the disbanded parliament maintain huge stakes in the business of selling women in Thar. They are often sold and resold after one buyer has used up their utility. Human rights lawyer Zia Awan says women can be bought in any Burmese slum in Karachi where 2.5 million of the residents are illegal.

The Dhaka Ahsania Mission, a Bangladeshi NGO, reported one case to Images Asia in 1998 in which a bus carrying 71 passengers, mostly women and children, was intercepted on its way from Cox's Bazaar to Benpore on the Indian border, after the bus driver got suspicious. It was found that all the passengers were going to be trafficked illegally to India and after the passengers gave fake addresses in Cox's Bazaar to the police, it was assumed that they were all Rohingya.

7.6 Rape and sexual violence - Partial list of incidents

Incidences of Rape and Killing

Rape and Killing of Displaced Farmers From Kun-Hing, in Murng-Nai

In February 2002, 3 displaced farmers, 1 man and 2 women, were beaten to death, the women being raped before being killed, by SPDC troops from Kun-Hing-based IB246 at a deserted (relocated) village, Kung Nyawng, in Kun Mong village tract, Murng-Nai township, Shan State. The 3 victims were:

1. Zaai Ku (m), aged 20, son of Lung Saw-Zin and Pa Nyunt
2. Naang Awng (f), aged 27, daughter of Lung Kham and Pa Maad
3. Naang Ong Khin (f), aged 23, daughter of Lung Zaam and Pa Naang Long

These people were originally villagers of Saai Khaao village in Saai Khaao village tract, Kun-Hing township, which had been forcibly relocated to Kun-Hing town by Burmese army troops in 1996-97. In early January 2002, when villagers of Saai Khaao village were told by SPDC authorities to return to their original village, these 3 villagers were among those who returned.

On 5 February, the 3 victims, Zaai Ku, Naang Awng and Naang Ong Kin were going to their farm outside Saai Khaao village, which they had returned to about a month before, when they ran into a column of about 60 SPDC troops from IB246 at Paang Maw bridge north of Saai Khaao village. The SPDC troops were on their way from Kun-Hing to the area of Kaeng Tawng in Murng-Nai township. When they saw the 3 villagers, the troops forced them to go with them until they reached a deserted village, Kung Nyawng, in Kun Mong village tract, Murng-Nai township, where they stopped for a rest and spent the night.

The 2 women were first raped by the SPDC commander of the column and then handed over to his troops, and were then raped all night by most of them. The next day, after most of the troops had raped the women to their satisfaction, they took them to a place on the east of the deserted village and, together with the man, beat them all to death. (Source: SHRF)

Rape and Death on Valentine's Day in Shan State

An army officer has been named by villagers who recently fled to Thailand for the rape and murder of a Shan girl just before her marriage.

According to the refugees, Captain Kyaw Myint, Company 4, LIB 515 (Laikha) had raped and murdered Nang Liengsa, 18, of Wan-khai village, Panghsang Tract, Laikha Township, on 14 February in the woods outside the town. Her body was found two days later after a soldier from the unit tipped off her relatives.

"The captain, during his patrol on that day, came across her picking vegetables in the woods, raped her and beat her to death because of her resistance," one villager quoted the soldier as saying.

A few days after the incident, the said officer and his men passed through the village and he was pointed out to her brother, Sai Mon, and sister-in-law, Nang Lu. One of the members of the patrol then overheard them talking about Liengsa's death in connection with Capt Kyaw Myint and took them to him. He beat them and sentenced them to a 3-month imprisonment.

"She was already engaged to be married to Sai Awng Myint, one of our own villagers, this month," said one, "Her death broke his heart".

Liengsa was one of those thousands of people who were forcibly moved to Laikha from her home village in 1997, when the massive 4 cuts campaign was launched by Rangoon against the Shan State Army of Yawdserk. (Source: SHRF)

A Woman Raped and Killed, Her Brother and Sister-in-Law Tortured and Detained, in Lai-Kha

On 14 February 2002, a woman was taken away by a patrol of about 28 SPDC troops from Co.4 of LIB515, led by commander Kyaw Myint and later raped and killed in a forest near a relocation site in the outskirts of Lai-Kha town, Shan State.

Naang Leng Sa, aged 18, was originally from Wan Khaai village in Paang Saang village tract, Lai-Kha township, which had been forcibly relocated to Lai-Kha town relocation site by the Burmese army troops in 1997.

On the day of the incident, Naang Leng Sa was gathering wild vegetables some distance outside the relocation site when a patrol of the said SPDC troops came by and forced her to go with them.

About 2 days later, on 16 February, there was news that some villagers were told by someone from a Burmese army unit that Naang Leng Sa had been raped and killed by the SPDC troops and her body left in a forest.

Her relatives and some village leaders then went in search and found Naang Leng Sa's body in the forest some distance from the relocation site. They then cremated her body and 7 days later conducted a funeral rite at the relocation village.

A few days after the funeral, Naang Leng Sa's elder brother and his wife were taken to the military base by the SPDC troops. They were accused of trying to defame the Burmese army by spreading news that Burmese soldiers had raped and killed their sister.

They were interrogated and beaten until they lost consciousness several times, and finally they were put in jail. It was said that they would be locked up for 3 months. It was learned that Naang Leng Sa was engaged to a young villager and was set to be married in April 2002. (Source: SHRF)

10 Displaced Farmers Shot Dead In Group, A Woman Raped and Her Husband Beaten to Death, in Lai-Kha.

In mid-June 2002, a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB515 surrounded a group of 11 displaced farmers, shot dead 10 of them and forced 1 to serve as a guide at a remote farm some 7 miles west of Lai-Kha town. A few days later they raped a woman and beat her husband to death at a remote farm some 11 miles north of the town.

The 11 displaced farmers belonged to the same extended family originally from Nawng Zem village in Haai Seng village tract, Lai-Kha township, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Lai-Kha town in 1997 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. They managed to survive the hard years at the relocation site by secretly growing rice at remote farms and working as day labourers.

On 11 June 2002, a patrol of about 35 SPDC troops from LIB515, led by Capt. Maung Win of Company No.4, came to a remote farm about 7 miles west of Lai-Kha town and rounded up the said 11 farmers, including 10 young men and women and a middle-aged man, Lung Puk, aged 57, who was the head of the family.

The SPDC troops accused the farmers of supporting Shan soldiers with rice and food and shot 10 of them dead, leaving only Lung Puk to be used as a guide. The SPDC troops then told Lung Puk that they had killed the farmers because they had given help to the Shan soldiers who were fighting against them and forced him to guide them to search the area for 3 days before releasing him.

On 15 June 2002, after releasing Lung Puk, the SPDC troops continued to search the area and came to another remote farm about 11 miles north of Lai-Kha town, where a young couple of displaced farmers had been working.

The couple, Zaa Taan Nyunt and Naang Mo (not her real name), from (——) village (name withheld to protect the rape survivor) in Naa Mang village tract, Lai-Kha township, were going to their farm when they ran into the said SPDC troops at the edge of the farm. The couple was seized by the troops and taken to different places.

The officer, a Sergeant Major or a Second Lieutenant, who took away Naang Mo raped her, and then let 10 of his troops rape her until she lost consciousness. Zaa Taan Nyunt was beaten to death some distance north of the farm.

When Naang Mo regained consciousness, it was around 4 o'clock in the afternoon and she was alone in a forest some distance away from her farm. She tried to find her husband in and around the farm for a while but could not find him, so she returned to the village and related

her plight to her relatives and fellow villagers, but they could do nothing that evening because it was getting dark.

The next day, about 20 villagers went in search of Zaai Taan Nyunt and found his dead body where he was beaten to death north of the farm. The villagers then buried his body properly where it was found and on the 7th day of his death conducted a funeral for him at a Buddhist temple according to their tradition.

Naang Mo was said to have been suffering from sickness and weakness since her ordeal up to the time this report was received. (Source: SHRF)

IB No. 62 Soldiers Killed 5 Mon Villagers After Raped a Girl

About 4 o'clock in the morning, four soldiers from Burmese Army's Infantry Battalion No. 62 shot five Mon villagers in a village in Thanbyuzayat Township in Mon State, after they raped a young Mon girl.

Four soldiers of IB No. 62, whose base is in Thanbyuzayat town, were patrolling in the area along the Thanbyuzayat - Ye motor road and a gas-pipeline nearby. They went into a Mon village called "Ganaing-padaw" in the early morning. Ganaing-padaw village is situated about 9 kilometers in the southeastern part of Thanbyuzayat Town.

When they arrived to the village, they went to the village secretary, Nai Kun Tit's house but did not wake up Nai Kun Tit. They met his grand-daughter, Mi Eat Sar (16 years old and a school girl from a middle level school in a village nearby), who was cooking rice to give food donations to the monks in the dawn according to Buddhist tradition.

Four soldiers, including a soldier named Thein Naing (Burmese Army's ID Number 176399), climbed into the house and raped the girl. While the soldiers were raping the girl, Nai Kun Tit woke up and tried to help her, but as he knew the soldiers had guns he ran out of his house to the garden entrance and shouted to the other villagers for help.

One soldier shot him because of his shouting. He fell down in the entrance of the garden and died on the spot. The soldiers quarreled with each other because some of them disagreed with shooting the man. Then they shot at each other.

After several shots went off in the house, the other family members woke up and ran around in the house while the soldiers were still shooting at each other. Then another four villagers, including Mi Eat Sar, the rape victim, were shot by soldiers. They also died on the spot with many other injuries. The villagers who were killed in this incident are:

1. Nai Kun Tit (66 years old), the secretary of the village,
2. Mi Kun Bae (60 years old), wife of Nai Kun Tit,
3. Mi Eat Sar (16 years old), raped victim and grand-daughter of Nai Kun Tit,
4. Min Chit Ko (20 years old), grandson of Nai Kun Tit, and
5. Nai Wet Tae (42 years old), labourer for Nai Kun Tit's farm.

Due to the shooting at each other, a IB No. 62 soldier, Thein Naing, received serious injuries and fell down in the kitchen of the house. In the morning, the army officers from Thanbyuzayat's IB No. 62 headquarters came and inquired about the incident. When they found their men really were involved with shooting the innocent villagers, they told the

villagers to change the news so that everyone thought the villagers were killed in the middle of fighting that happened between rebels and their battalions.

IB No. 62 base is in Thanbyuzayat Town, which is about 80 miles from Moulmein, the capital of Mon State. Its main responsibility is to maintain the security of the area and the Kanbawk-Myaingkalay gas-pipeline.(Source: HURFOM)

8 Displaced Farmers Raped and Killed in a Group in Murng-Pan

On 24 September 2002, 8 displaced farmers, including 5 men and 3 women, were beaten and shot to death, the women being raped before being killed, by a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB502, led by Capt. Soe Naing, at Tawng Kwaai Tai village (deserted) in Tawng Kwaai village tract, Murng-Pan township, Shan State.

The 8 displaced farmers were originally from Tawng Kwaai Tai village which had been forcibly moved to Ho Phaai Long village tract by the Burmese army troops some years ago. These farmers had managed to get permission from the SPDC authorities of Murng-Pan township and, with a pass given by the township office, had been going to work at their original rice fields at their old village since May 2002.

On the day of the incident, however, the said patrol of 40-45 SPDC troops from LIB502, led by Capt. Soe Naing, came and rounded up the farmers who were working in the fields. The farmers were kept for one night, during which the 3 women were raped by the SPDC troops. They were all killed on the next day. The victims were:

1. Lung Kaw-Ya (m), aged 48
2. Lung Kan-Ta-Ma (m), aged 47
3. Zaai Wan-Na (m), aged 45
4. Zaai Pae-Ti (m), aged 36
5. Zaai Kat-Ti-Ya (m), aged 32
6. Naang Lu (f), aged 31
7. Naang Thun Nae (f), aged 29
8. Naang Zing Nyunt (f), aged 25

Where their bodies were found, the women's were lying separately about 20-25 yards from one another with no clothes on whatsoever and there were signs of severe beating and rape on all of them. The men's bodies were lying together but only one had bullet holes; the others had bruises and wounds all over, apparently beaten to death. The women were also beaten to death. (Source: SHRF)

Husband Shot Dead, Wife Gang-Raped, in Murng-Khark

On 28 September 2002, 2 villagers, husband and wife, from Nam Wok village, who were going to Murng-Khark town market were stopped on the way by SPDC troops from IB227 after which the husband was shot dead and the wife gang-raped by the troops.

Naang Noi (not her real name), aged 21, and her husband, from Nam Wok village in Nam Wok village tract, Murng-Khark township, were going together to the town market when they ran into a group of the said SPDC troops at a remote spot between their village and the town. The SPDC troops shot dead the husband, gang-raped the wife and left the site when they finished, leaving Naang Noi and her dead husband at the site. (Source: SHRF)

Rape and Killing of 10 Displaced Farmers in Kun-Hing & Nam-Zarng

On 2 October 2002, 10 displaced farmers, including 6 men and 4 women, from Kun-Hing relocation site were beaten to death, the women being raped before being killed, by a patrol of SPDC troops from IB66, near Nam Wo village (deserted) in Nam-Zarng township.

The 10 displaced farmers were originally from Nam Wo village in Haai Laai village tract, Nam-Zarng township, which had been forcibly relocated to Kun-Hing township at the relocation site on the outskirts of Kun-Hing town in 1996 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops.

These farmers had been given permission by the local SPDC military authorities of Kun-Hing-based IB246 to go and cultivate their farms at their original old village, Nam Wo. On the day of the incident, while the farmers were working at their farms a patrol of SPDC troops from Nam-Zarng-based IB66 came and arrested them.

All the 10 farmers were later beaten to death by the SPDC troops; the women were raped before being killed. Their bodies were scattered in and on the edge of a farm near Nam Wo village. The 10 victims were:

1. Lung Zan-Da Lam (m), aged 48
2. Zaai Taw-Ling (m), aged 28
3. Zaai Phaw-Ka (m), aged 35
4. Zaai Long (m), aged 31
5. Zaai Mu-Lung (m), aged 28
6. Zaai Maad (m), aged 27
7. Naang Seng (f), aged 26
8. Naang Zing Lu (f), aged 24
9. Naang Nae (f), aged 22
10. Naang Thuay (f), aged 20 (Source: SHRF)

6 Sugarcane Cutters Beaten to Death, Women Raped Before Being Killed

On 3 October 2002, a group of 6 displaced villagers, comprising of 3 couples of husbands and wives, from Son Oi village in Son Oi village tract, Larng-Khur township, who were working at a sugarcane plantation were arrested and detained for one night, during which the women were raped, and beaten to death by a patrol of SPDC troops from IB248, led by Capt. Myint Oo. The 6 victims were:

1. Zaai Wan (m), aged 22
2. Zaai Mu Ling (m), aged 25
3. Zaai Nya Na (m), aged 26
4. Naang Nae (f), aged 20
5. Naang Non (f), aged 24
6. Naang Sing (f), aged 26

These villagers were originally from Son Oi village in Son Oi tract, Larng-Khur township, which had been forcibly relocated to Nawng Long village in Nawng Long village tract, Larng-Khur township, in 1996 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops.

On the day of the incident, the 3 couples were hired by an original owner of a sugarcane plantation to cut sugarcane near Son Oi village (deserted) and, while they were cutting sugarcane, were seized by a patrol of about 40-50 SPDC troops from Co.4 of IB248, led by Capt. Myint Oo.

The SPDC troops detained the villagers for one night and finally beat all of them dead. The bodies of the women were scattered 10-12 yards from one another with no clothes on, and there were clear signs of them being raped. It was not clear for what reason these villagers were killed. (Source: SHRF)

Mother Killed, Daughter Raped in Kaeng-Tung

On 6 October 2002, Pa Kham (not her real name), aged 51, was killed and her daughter, Naang Man (not her real name), aged 15, was raped by 2 SPDC troops from IB245, at their house in Paang Hung village, Paang Law village tract, Kaeng-Tung township, Shan State.

Pa Kham was a single mother who lived with her teenage daughter, Naang Man, at Paang Hung village and they made a living by cultivating a vegetable garden near their village. In the evening of the said day, after they had returned home from their vegetable garden, 2 SPDC troops suddenly came into their house.

When the 2 SPDC troops saw Naang Man cooking alone in the house, they grabbed her and raped her right in the middle of the house. As she was grabbed by the troops, Naang Man managed to shout out a couple of times, and her mother came out of the bedroom.

When Pa Kham saw her daughter being attacked and raped by the SPDC troops, she shouted at them and grabbed a kitchen knife as if to strike at them. One of the troops then jumped up and kicked Pa Kham, causing her to fall down, and struck her with a rifle butt several times in the head

Pa Kham died instantly of the beating and Naang Man was raped by the 2 SPDC troops until they had satisfied themselves. After the troops left the house, Naang Man cried and went to report her plight to the village headman, who in turn reported it to the head of people's militia in the area.

Although the head of the people's militia listened to the case and said he would take it further to the regional military commander, no action has so far been taken in relation to this case at the time of this report. (Source: SHRF)

Incidences of Rape

On 19 February 2002 in Mergui Tavoy District, an SPDC militia-man, Win Nyunt, raped two girls from Pa-na-mi village. The victims were (1) Naw Leh Say, F-17, daughter of Pati Gaw Lar and Mwa Mu, (2) Naw Mu Mu, F-18, daughter of Parti Posi and Mu Naw Pee.(Source: KNU)

On 11 February 2002, some troops from SPDC IB-10 under LID-88 came to Mae-thraw-htha in Kaw-kareik township, Dooplaya district and threatened by pointing their guns at Naw Moolah Aing 16, daughter of U Maung Htun Aye, and Ma Cho Win 18, daughter of U Myint Sein and took them away. When they got outside of the village, the troops tied them up with

ropes and raped them. No action was taken against the troops who committed the rape.(Source: KNU)

In the first week of March 2002, a column of Burmese troops from LIB No. 428, led by Nyi Nyi Min, were temporarily stationed at Markrawshe village, on their way back from the frontline. One night during the week, at about 23:00, two soldiers from this column went to a private residence and tried to rape Pray Moe, a mother of six. Pray Moe's husband woke up and tried to stop them but was beaten by the soldiers. (Source: KNAHR)

On 8 June 2002, troops from SPDC IB 77 ordered Kya-ka-wa and Ka-toe-ha villages in Kaw-ka-rik Township, Dooplaya district to relocate to Aung-lan village and looted from villagers 15 baskets of rice and 15 chickens. These troops raped Naw Paw Gay, wife of Kya-ka-wa village head and also seized and took away 59 unmarried people, both male and female, from the village.(Source: KNU)

On 17 August 2002, SPDC Captain Zaw Min Oo and his troops found Jekly (daughter of Martino and Maytilar), 14, working in a maize field and attempted to rape her. Her uncle, who witnessed the incident, reported it at the village monthly meeting on 27 August. The village chief then reported the incident to LIB No. 530 so that legal action might be taken. During the battalion commander's investigation, two Corporals, Kae Reh and Khin Zaw, indicted their commander Zaw Min Oo. Captain Zaw Min Oo is still under investigation. (Source: KNAHR)

On 25 August 2002, Maw Lee Meh, 17, from Daw Tamadu village, Deemaw Soe Township, was raped by SPDC private Myint Lwin from IB No. 530 while she was alone at home. She told her parents about the rape when they returned from their paddy field the next day. Her parents, seeking justice, reported the incident to the column commander Myint Soe. However, Myint Soe took no action and threatened the family with death if they talk about the rape with other people. (Source: KNAHR)

On 21 October 2002, in Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State troops from SPDC guerrilla unit led by Bo Hla Min raped, at Theh-saw-lor-klo place, Ma Myint Thein aged 28 of Theindar ward, Kyaukkyi town, daughter of U Kway Ni and Daw Ma Wet. (Source: KNU)

On 23 October 2002, in Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State, troops from SPDC guerrilla unit led by Bo Sai Hla Shwe raped, beside Bway Kho motor road near Kho-po, Naw Ka Toe aged 20, mother of one child, of Pa-aw-taw village, Kyaukkyi Township, daughter of Saw Maung Ta and Daw Khin Htay Kyi. (Source: KNU)

2 Displaced Women Raped in Kun-Hing

In early January 2002, 2 displaced women who were returning from their farm were taken by a passing patrol of SPDC troops from IB246 and raped for several days and nights at Wan Lao village (deserted) in Kun-Hing township, Shan State.

The 2 victims, Naang Mi Awng (not her real name), aged 27 and Naang Khin (not her real name), aged 23, were originally from Nawng Lom village in Saai Khaao village tract, Kun-Hing township, that had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Kun-Hing town some years ago by the then SLORC troops.

On 9 January 2002, the 2 women were returning from their farm in Saai Khaao tract, where they had gone to work on permission from the SPDC authorities in Kun-Hing, when they ran into a patrol of about 50-60 SPDC troops who forced them to go with them.

The patrol was from Kun-Hing-based IB246 and was heading towards Kaeng Tawng area of Murng-Nai township when they met the 2 women near Saai Khaao village (deserted). The troops forced the women to go with them until they reached Wan Lao village where they stopped for 4 days and 3 nights.

During those days and nights, the 2 women were raped by one soldier after another most of the time and they were slapped and kicked when they tried to refuse any soldiers who approached them. After they were released and got back home, they continued to suffer from what they had been through for quite some time and their husbands and relatives were outraged but could do nothing and dared not complain to anyone. (Source: SHRF)

Rape Attempt Against a Mon teacher

(Ye Township, Mon State)

On 5 January 2002, a Sergeant from LIB No. 343 attempted to rape a Mon teacher, Mi Ai Chan, at about 7:00 o'clock in the evening at Pram-maw village, Ye Township, Mon State.

LIB No. 343 is based in Pran-maw and that evening, the army Sergeant sneaked into the teacher's house, while she was alone. Then he tried to rape her. So, she called for help and the villagers in the surrounding area arrived to arrest him. As the villagers knew that that Sergeant had already tried to rape the teacher for many days, they were quick to stop his attempt. (Source: HURFOM)

3 Women Raped for 3 Nights in Larng-Khur

On 7 January 2002, 3 travelling women from Murng-Nai were detained for 3 days and nights and raped by SPDC troops at the base of IB99, in Larng-Khur township.

Naang Wun Ki, aged 16, from Kung Nyawng village in Kun Mong village tract, Murng-Nai township and Naang Thun Mint, aged 17, from Kung Kyawng village in the same village tract, were travelling with Pa Thawn, an older woman from Kun Mong village who had travelling experience and knew the way, to the border with Thailand to find their relatives.

When the car they were travelling in arrived at Larng-Khur town, they were stopped and checked at a police checkpoint, but were let go after a brief search by the police. When they reached a military checkpoint, they were stopped and checked again.

When the SPDC troops manning the checkpoint saw the 2 girls, they ordered them to get out of the car and said that they could not let them go yet. Pa Thawn said that she could not go without the 2 girls and stopped with them.

When evening came, Pa Thawn took the 2 girls to the house of her friend in Lurng-Khur town to stay for the night. However at about 8:00 p.m. 5 SPDC troops came to that house and said that they would take Naang Wun Ki and Naang Thun Mint to see their captain at the military base for questioning just for a short while and they would bring them back right

away, but Pa Thawn insisted on going with them and the troops finally had to let her accompany them.

As they got into the IB99 military base, the women were separated and Pa Thawn was taken to a different place and interrogated. The troops asked her whether she had ever taken rice to give to rebel soldiers and many other questions about the rebels. After that she was kept and raped by Capt. Aung Hpyu of Co.1 for 3 nights.

The 2 girls were kept and raped by the commander of IB99, Ong Myint Kyaw, also for 3 nights after which all the 3 women were released. Despite their horrible experiences, the women continued their journey and reached the Thai border on 16 January 2002. (Source: SHRF)

3 Farming Women Raped in Lai-Kha

On 4 February 2002, 3 women who were working at their farm were raped by SPDC troops from LIB 519 at their farm huts in Lai-Kha township, Shan State. A column of about 160 SPDC troops from LIB519 were patrolling the rural areas of adjacent Murng-Nai, Nam-Zarng and Lai-Kha township and on the day of the incident came to a remote farm in Lai-Kha township, somewhere between Kho Lam village in Nam-Zarng township and Lai-Kha town, where there were 3 small farm huts clustered together.

The SPDC troops went to the huts and ordered the people inside to come out. When the troops saw only 3 women, one from each hut, they asked about their men folk and the women said their men had gone to get some food at their village and had not yet returned.

There were 3 families from Maak Laang village in Naa Poi village tract, Lai-Kha township staying at that farm and the men had run away and hidden in the forest before the troops reached the farm. Even though the farmers had a pass or permission from the local SPDC troops, they were still too afraid to face an SPDC patrol.

The 3 women were then forced back into their huts and raped by the SPDC troops. Naang Zing (not her real name), aged 18, was forced into her hut and raped by the commander himself. The other 2, Naang Khawng (not her real name), aged 22 and Naang Thun (not her real name), aged 28, were also forced back into their own huts and raped by several other officers.

After raping the women for 3 hours, from 13:00 to 16:00 hrs., the SPDC troops left the women at the farm and continued to patrol the areas. (Source: SHRF)

A Woman Molested in Kaeng-Tung

On 12 February 2002, a woman who was fetching water from a well some distance from her village was molested by an SPDC Sergeant, Khin Maung Win, from LIB314 near Nawng Kung village in Kaeng-Tung township.

In the evening of that day, as it was a custom for village women to fetch water from the well outside the village in the evening, Naang Ai (not her real name), aged 19, went to fetch water. As she was returning from the well, carrying 2 pails of water with a shoulder pole, a drunken

SPDC soldier came after her and asked for her love. He was Sergeant Khin Maung Win from LIB314 and was looking very drunk.

Naang Ai was frightened and tried to walk as fast as she could, but the soldier came after her and at one point grabbed her by the hand. She shouted for help but no one seemed to hear her and he dragged her towards a nearby bamboo grove.

Naang Ai then threw down her shoulder pole and struggled with all her strength. She managed to free herself and ran into the village shouting for help. The soldier fled the scene.

Naang Ai and her parents and relatives later tried to file a complaint at a law court in Kaeng-Tung town, but no one seemed to be interested in the case or dared to take action against the culprit. No action related to this case has been taken up to the time of this report. (Source: SHRF)

Mothers of Small Children Conscripted as Porters, and Raped, in Murng-Nai

On 27 February 2002, people in Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township, including many women who were mothers of small children, were conscripted by a column of SPDC troops from LIB519 to serve the military as unpaid porters for 9 consecutive days, during which the women were raped at night by the troops.

A column of SPDC troops from Murng-Ton-based LIB519, led by Capt. Zaw Win, were patrolling the rural areas of Kun-Hing and Murng-Nai township. On the day of the incident, the troops came to Kaeng-Tawng area in Murng-Nai township and conscripted more civilian porters.

These SPDC troops did not even notify the village and village tract leaders about their conscripting of civilian porters in the area. It was late in the morning and most men had gone to work elsewhere and were not to be found in their houses, so the troops took the women who could not go to work with the men because they had small children.

The civilian porters were forced to carry military rations, ammunition and clothes etc., starting from Ton Hung village relocation site in Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township, to Murng-Pan town in Murng-Pan township.

The journey took about 9 days, from 27 February to 7 March, during which they stopped for rest at nights either in the jungle or deserted villages. During those nights, all the women were said to have been raped by the SPDC troops every night.

The following were some of the known civilian porters conscripted from Kaeng-Tawng area on that occasion:

1. Naang Kham (f) (not her real name) aged 32 had a 10-month-old baby
2. Naang Mya (f) (not her real name) aged 43 had a 1-year-old child
3. Naang U (f) (not her real name) aged 27 had a 7-month-old baby
4. Naang Myint (f) (not her real name) aged 28 had a 2-year-old child
5. Naang Paang (f) (not her real name) aged 36 had a 2-year-old child
6. Naang Zaam (f) (not her real name) aged 31 had a 3-year-old child
7. Naang Yong (f) (not her real name) aged 46 had a 3-year-old child
8. Naang Zern (f) (not her real name) aged 28 had a 1-year-old child

9. Naang Tong (f) (not her real name) aged 19 had a 7-month-old baby
10. Zaa Mawng Nyunt(m) aged 17
11. Zaa Mung (m) aged 19
12. Zaa Taan (m) aged 18
13. Lung Awng Sa (m) aged 51
14. Lung Kham Leng(m) aged 53 (Source: SHRF)

Displaced Farmers Robbed, Beaten, Forced to Go As Porters And Raped in Kun-Hing

In March and early April 2002, a man was severely beaten at a remote farm and 2 women were taken to serve the military by SPDC troops from IB246 for 15 days during which they were repeatedly raped by the troops.

On 18 March 2002, a patrol of about 80 SPDC troops from Co.2 of IB246, led by commander Myint Maung, came upon a remote farm, about 7 miles south of Kun-Hing town, and arrested the following man and 2 women they found there:

1. Lung Mu-Lin (m), aged 54
2. Naang Sa (f) (not her real name), aged 30
3. Naang Yaen (f) (not her real name), aged 15

The troops then looted the farm, taking all they wanted, including chickens, pigs and other food stuff, and beat Lung Mu-Lin so severely that he lost some teeth and suffered from a fractured skull. Later his relatives had to take Lung Mu-Lin to Kun-Hing town hospital to receive treatment, which cost him 3,100 Kyat.

The 2 women were forced to go with the troops and after being forced to serve day and night as sex slaves for 15 days, they were released at Wan Lao village. They were so weak and pale after their release that they had to be taken by their relatives to Kun-Hing town hospital and treated for 10 days, which cost each of them 6,600 Kyat.

These displaced farmers were originally from Naa Khaa Own village in Kaeng Kham village tract, Kun-Hing township, which had been forcibly relocated to Kun-Hing town in 1997 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. Since there was no land for them to farm near the town, they had to go far from the town to grow rice for their survival.

There were 7 members in that family but, fortunately, 4 of them were at the Kun-Hing town relocation site on the day of the incident, and only the 3 that were at the farm had fallen victims to the passing SPDC troops' patrol. (Source: SHRF)

A Girl Gang Raped, Her Pigs Stolen, in Kun-Hing

On 29 April 2002, SPDC troops from IB246 raped a 17-year-old girl and stole away 2 of her pigs, at Kun-Hing town relocation site, Kun-Hing township.

Naang Laai (not her real name), aged 17, was originally from Kaeng Lom village, Kaeng Lom tract, which had been forcibly relocated to the outskirts of Kun-Hing town in 1996 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. Naang Laai and her parents managed to survive at the relocation site by breeding some pigs and chickens and occasionally working as day labourers.

On the day of the incident, Naang Laai's parents had gone to work as day labourers at someone else's farm and she was left alone at home to feed their pigs and chickens. When a group of 8-10 SPDC troops from IB246 who were patrolling in the area passed by the house and learned that she was alone, they seized her and gang-raped her.

After raping Naang Laai, the SPDC troops seized 2 of her pigs, each weighing about 28 kilograms. The market price of pork in the area at that time was about 150 Kyat per kg.

Although later Naang Laai and her parents reported the incident to the community leaders, no one dared to take the case further, saying that with the Burmese army troops they could not win the case and could even be further abused and money extorted. Even though Naang Laai knew the SPDC soldiers who raped her and stole her pigs, they would not let her see them. (Source: SHRF)

Immigration Official Raped a Young Mon Woman

On 14 June 2002, an official of Ye Township's SPDC immigration department raped a 22 year old young Mon woman after she was arrested by officials for illegally migrating to Thailand.

On that day, the Deputy Chief of the Township Immigration Department, U Than Win (about 40 years old), checked the passengers from all trucks on the Ye river bridge, the largest bridge in town and arrested 23 Mon villagers who were suspected to be migrating to Thailand to seek work. The group included 22 year old unmarried Mi K— H—, from Lamine village, Ye Township, Mon State.

The group of villagers, including 2 traffickers, were brought by the officials and policemen to the police station to face trial. The officials took 700 000 Kyat from the traffickers and villagers. When they put the 2 traffickers on trial, the migrant villagers were needed as witnesses in the court.

For the release of these villagers, the officials also requested money. Some villagers paid the bribes to the officials and then they were released. However, the young woman could not pay in advance and appealed to pay later. U Than Win did not accept her offer and took her to a house and raped her for the whole night. The next day, he released the woman so that she could return to her home. The woman told her parents about the rape and they informed the officers from military intelligence and asked them to handle the case. Until now, they still do not know if the official will be punished or not. (Source: HURFOM)

Rape Case in Kya-inn-seikyi Township, Karen State (June 2002)

On 7 June 2002, when the troops of IB No. 34 went into a Karen village in Kya-inn-seikyi Township, the second commander raped a married Karen woman at night at about 10 o'clock.

About 60 troops (a company) of IB No. 34 went into this Karen village, Phar-pya, during their military operation against KNLA troops in the area. The second commander of the troop company, Captain Aung Myint raped a 27 year old Karen woman, Naw Win Yee.

The troops arrived to the village in the evening and the commander rested in her house with some of his soldiers while Naw Win Yee's husband, Saw Khin Aye, was still in the house.

Saw Khin Aye is a fisherman and he always leaves to find fish in a stream near the village at night time.

About 8 o'clock, when the dark came and after taking dinner, her husband left for the stream, however he never suspected that the Burmese soldiers would rape his wife.

At night time about 10 o'clock, the commander, who slept in the outer space of the house, went into the inner room where Naw Win Yee was sleeping with her one-year-old baby. He grabbed her, closed her mouth, and threatened to kill her if she shouted. Then the commander raped the woman while his soldiers were taking respite in the house compound.

After he raped her, he left her room. The woman fled to the neighbouring houses without taking her baby because she was too afraid and could not manage herself. While she was in her neighbour's house her baby cried loudly, but she did not dare to return to her house to get the baby. So a group of elder women went to her house, retrieved the baby and gave it to the woman to feed.

The next day, the villagers went to the village chairman and told him about the incident. Although the villagers urged him to report the case to the commander of the troop company, he was afraid of being mistreated by the Burmese commanders. He did not inform the commander.

Sexual violations against ethnic women in rural areas by the members of the Burmese Army have often occurred while they operate military activities against the rebel armed forces. As the women in the ethnic rural areas are always suspected as rebel-supporters, they continually suffer from rape. The rape of women in rural areas is becoming normal practice for members of the Burmese Army and whenever they have chance, they try to rape women. (Source: HURFOM)

A Woman Raped in Her House in Nam-Zarng

On 26 June 2002, 2 SPDC soldiers from IB66 raped an 18-year-old woman in her house at (——) village (name withheld to protect the rape survivor) in Nam-Zarng township.

On the day of the incident, Naang Hom (not her real name), aged 18, was alone at home when 2 SPDC soldiers from Nam-Zarng-based IB66 came to her house and asked her to sell them one of her 2 small pigs.

Naang Hom said that she could not sell them because she had only just bought the pigs a month ago and they were still too small, weighing only about 5-6 viss each (1 viss = 1.6 kg), and that she needed to raise them for some more months. The soldiers said they wanted to discuss it further and told her to go into the house.

When Naang Hom said they could just talk outside the house because there was no one inside, the SPDC soldiers said they just wanted to ask for some sticky rice from her because they were very hungry.

As Naang Hom went into the house to get the rice, the 2 soldiers went after her and, when they were sure there was no one else inside the house, seized her. Naang Hom struggled to get free and shouted out for help but after she had shouted one time, the soldiers firmly

covered her mouth with their hands and held her tightly to the floor, threatening to kill her if she made more noise.

Both SPDC soldiers raped Naang Hom to their satisfaction and left the house. A neighbouring friend who was home at that time and heard Naang Hom's voice later asked her about it, and she related her plight to her. (Source: SHRF)

Rape and Beating, Causing Permanent Disability, in Murng-Nai

On 26 June 2002, a vegetable gatherer was raped by an SPDC Sergeant from LIB324 near Waeng Kao village in Kaeng Tawng area, Murng-Nai township, Shan State, and was beaten with a rifle butt so severely that one of her legs became permanently disabled.

Pa Thuay (not her real name), aged 39, was from Waeng Kao village and was gathering wild vegetables outside her village when an SPDC soldier came upon her and forced her to sit down. The soldier was a Sergeant from the SPDC troops of LIB324 that were stationed at Waeng Kao.

The soldier forced Pa Thuay at gun point to lie down and started to rape her. She tried to shout 2-3 times for help but no one heard her, so the soldier raped her to his satisfaction. When the soldier finished, he said to Pa Thuay, "Why did you shout?" and beat her with his rifle butt severely several times at her waist, hip and thighs.

The beating was so severe that Pa Thuay could not get up and had to lie and shout for help until some villagers found her and took her home. Although she was treated traditionally at her home, one of her legs could not be fixed and up to the time of this report she still has to drag it along when she walks. (Source: SHRF)

Rape and Sexual Harassment in Murng-Kerng and Ho-Pong

From 26 to 30 June 2002, 3 petty-goods peddlers were forced to go with a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB514, were robbed of their goods and were raped and sexually harassed by the patrol commander, Maj. Than Zaw, in Murng-Kurng and Ho-Pong township.

On 26 June 2002, a patrol of SPDC troops from LIB514, led by Maj. Than Zaw, forced 2 women, Pa Seng, aged 35 and Ae Yaen, aged 13 (not their real names), who were peddling petty goods at Nawng Zaeng village in Murng-Kerng township, to go with them.

As the SPDC troops left Nawng Zaeng village, they met another woman peddler, Naang Awng (not her real name), aged 25, at a place called Kung Paang Turk near the village, and also forced her to go with them.

At night, when the troops stopped to sleep in a village, Maj. Than Zaw raped Ae Yaen repeatedly for the first night. They then raped Pa Seng another night and later raped one of them every night until they arrived at Nawng Mawn village in Hai Khaai village tract, Ho-Pong township, on 30 June 2002, where the 2 women were eventually released.

During that time, Naang Awng was also harassed by Maj. Than Zaw, who tried to get her go to his room, but she feigned sickness and managed to keep him away by moving to sleep in a different house where no SPDC troops were staying.

When the troops stopped at Nawng Mawn village in Ho-Pong township on 30 June 2002, Naang Awng managed to hide away and did not go with them the next day, and thus narrowly escaped from being raped.(Source: SHRF)

LIB No. 587's Three Soldiers Raped a Mon Girl

On 8 July 2002, three soldiers from LIB No. 587 arrested an 18 year old Mon girl near Kun-doo village, southern part of Ye Township, Mon State and they proceeded to gang rape her.

The soldiers repeatedly raped the young girl, Mi Khin Htwe (the daughter of Nai At) until she lost consciousness. The rape incident occurred half way between the two Mon villages, Ayu-taung and Kun-doo, in the northern part of Ye Township. The native village of Mi Khin Htwe is Ayu-taung village.

She and her two friends (a boy and a girl) paid a visit to Kun-doo village and when they were returning to their homes in Ayu-taung village, at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon, they met the 3 soldiers. As they knew the soldiers could make problems for them, they decided to return to Kun-doo village.

However, the soldiers followed and dragged Mi Khin Htwe into a rubber plantation. Although the boy who came along with her tried to stop them, the soldiers pointed their guns at him and threatened to kill him. The boy ran to Ayu-taung village, to ask for help from the villagers.

In the rubber plantation, the soldiers repeatedly raped her until she lost consciousness. When a group of villagers arrived to the place of the incident, the soldiers had already left and they only found the unconscious and injured girl laying down near a rubber tree. They carried her back to the village.

Although the villagers and the headmen knew what had happened, they did not dare to inform to the battalion commander, because they were afraid. They kept silent. Of the three soldiers, one soldier was a medic in the battalion and he could be easily recognized by the boy. The boy indicated that the other two soldiers were ordinary soldiers. LIB No. 587 has had a base near that village since 2001 and it has confiscated many hundreds acres of lands from the Kun-doo and Ayu-taung villages. (Source: HURFOM)

LIB No. 343's Commander Threatened to Kill a Woman

On 15 July 2002, when LIB No. 343's military column commander, Maj. Lin Oo met a woman in Ye Town, Mon State he accused her of buying food for rebel soldiers and threatened to kill her.

The Mon woman, Mi Nwe Yee (about 40 years old) is from Khawza village, in the southern part of Ye Township, where some Mon rebel groups launch military activities. When the commander met her in the market, he believed that she had bought some food for rebel soldiers.

Then he approached the woman and grabbed her arm and asked about her shopping. She said that she had bought food and materials for her home but he did not believe her and drew a knife and tried to kill her. The woman suddenly ran into the crowd in the market and escaped being killed.

As the commander and his troops regularly launch offensives in the southern part of Ye Township against a Mon armed group led by Nai Bin, he can recognize some villagers from Mon villages and so he always suspects the villagers to be supporters of the Mon armed group. (Source: HURFOM)

A Woman Gang-Raped in Lai-Kha

On 19 July 2002, a woman who was going to her rice field from her village (--) in Tan Ae village tract, Lai-Kha township, Shan State, was gang-raped by a group of 20 SPDC troops from LIB 513.

In the morning of that day, Pa Thawn (not her real name), aged 36, was taking food from her village to her rice field for those who were working there when she ran into a patrol of about 20 SPDC troops at a remote spot on the way between the village and the field.

The SPDC troops stopped Pa Thawn, seized her and took her into a roadside bush and raped her, taking turns until all of them had raped her to their satisfaction. After all of them had got what they wanted, the troops left the place, leaving Pa Thawn alone lying near the road.

Pa Thawn was so hurt and felt so much pain all over that she could not move. She was found by some of her fellow villagers some hours later and was taken home. She had not yet recovered from her ordeal and had to be treated until the time this report was received earlier this month. (Source: SHRF)

Displaced Farmers Robbed, Their 15 Year-Old Daughter Raped While Being Forced to Be A Guide, in Kun-Hing

On 3 August 2002, a patrol of about 50 SPDC soldiers from LIB 524, led by commander Htun Myint (probably a Captain), looted a remote camp of displaced farmers in Kaeng Kham tract, Kun-Hing township, and forcibly took away a 15-year-old girl to serve as a guide for 45 days, during which she was raped by the commander Htun Myint virtually every night.

The victim, Naang Seng Ying (not her real name), aged 15, belonged to one of the two displaced farming families, originally from Naa Khaa village in Kaeng Kham tract, Kun-Hing township, which had been forcibly relocated by Burmese army troops in 1996-1997, who were staying at a remote camp in the area of their deserted old village.

There were altogether 13 men, women and children in the 2 families, but on the day the SPDC troops came to the camp, most of them had gone away to work somewhere else and there were only 4 persons left at the camp.

1. Pa Awng (f), Aged 30
2. Naang Seng Ying (f), Aged 15
3. Zaai Lu (m), Aged 5
4. Naang Peng (f), Aged 3

The troops searched the camp and took all the chickens, pigs, and food stuffs that they could find. Finally, they ordered Naang Seng Ying to go with them to serve as a guide for a short while, just to the nearest crossroad. The SPDC troops however, did not release Naang Seng Ying but forced her to go with them for 45 days while they patrolled the surrounding areas until they reached Wan Lao village in Wan Lao tract, where they released her and returned to their base in Kun-Hing.

During the 45-day period of patrolling, commander Htun Myint kept Naang Seng Ying as if she was his wife and raped her almost every night. Soon after she got back to her relatives following her release, Naang Seng Ying fell ill and became pale and weak and could not eat properly due to the long ordeal she had to undergo as a sex slave.

As her condition became worse, Naang Seng Ying's relatives took her to the hospital in Kun-Hing town where she received treatment for 6 days and 5 nights, which cost her relatives 36,400 Kyats. However even some time after the treatment, she had not fully recovered, and is suspected to have become pregnant. (Source: SHRF)

4 Displaced Villagers Raped While Gathering Mushrooms, in Murng-Nai

On 9 August 2002, 4 women who were gathering mushrooms were raped by SPDC troops from LIB514 in the forest about 2 kilometres east of Wan Mai Paang Saa village in Kun Mong village tract, Kaeng Tawng area, Murng-Nai township.

The 4 women were originally from Kun Naa and Long Waeng villages in Kun Mong village tract, which had been forcibly relocated to Wan Mai Paang Saa village in 1996 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops.

The women had gone out to gather mushrooms in the forest east of their village when they ran into 4 SPDC troops from LIB574, led by a Sergeant, that had their base in the area. The troops called the women to them and asked why they had come into the forest.

The SPDC troops did not believe them when the women said they had come to gather mushrooms but accused them of either bringing food for Shan soldiers or cattle traders, and forced the women at gun point to go with them into the brush.

The 4 SPDC troops took the 4 women one-by-one to different places and raped them to their satisfaction before releasing them. The 4 victims were (not their real names):

1. Naang Zaam, aged 28
2. Naang Leng, aged 31
3. Naang Kham, aged 34
4. Naang Koi, aged 30 (Source: SHRF)

Rape During 2 Weeks of Forced Labor in Military Base, in Lai-Kha

From 8 to 21 August 2002, 2-3 village women were raped each day by an SPDC military commander while being forced to work at the base of IB292 in Lai-Kha township, Shan State.

On 3 March 2002, the commander of IB292 issued an order to the village headmen in the area to provide 5-6 young women per day to 'help' clear grass and weed flower beds in the military compound because some senior officers would be visiting the base in the near future.

Every day, while the women were working in the military compound, normally around the main buildings, the commander called up one woman at a time to go and work around the barrack where he had his bedroom, and eventually forced her into his bedroom and raped her. Each day, 2 to 3 younger and prettier women were raped in this way and were warned not to tell anyone about it by the commander, who also threatened to send troops to shoot dead not only the women but also their parents if they dared complain about it.

One of the rape victims, Naang Thun Nae (not her real name), aged 16, was so shocked by the experience and after she had returned home for some days she still looked sad and could still not eat and sleep properly. Finally, she related her plight to her mother and told her that she had been raped by the commander at the IB292 base on 11 August when she had to go and work at the base.

Her mother then told her father about their daughter's plight and they both complained about it to the village leaders in the area. Naang Thun Nae and her parents, Lung Thun and Pa Tem, were originally from Paang Hu village which had been forcibly relocated to Phuay Hai village in 1997 by SLORC troops.

When the village leaders asked among the other women who had had to go for forced labour during the same time frame as mentioned above, most of them dared not speak out, but at least 2-3 courageous women did say they had been raped like Naang Thun Nae. The village leaders, however, did not dare push the case further. (Source: SHRF)

Rape in Tenasserim Division

A Burmese soldier raped a Karen woman when the troops entered a remote forced relocation site on Tenasserim riverside, Tenasserim division in southern Burma.

On 22 August 2002, the Burmese troops from Light Infantry Battalion 551 (under control of Light Infantry Division 15) entered Buthawplaw, a relocation site. On the same day, one of the soldiers went into a villager's house in Kyawthuhta (a section in the Buthawplaw relocation site) and raped a 25 year old woman (name omitted). The next morning, the same soldier went to her house and raped her again.

The villagers dared not report the case to the responsible commander for fear of the victim's getting into trouble and bringing shame to her family. In addition, even when reported, an event like this would not cause the Burmese commanders to take any actions. (Source: Mergui-Tavoy District Information Department, Karen National Union August)

A Vegetable Gardener Raped in Kaeng-Tung

Some time in September 2002, a woman who was weeding her vegetable garden was raped by an SPDC soldier from LIB314 in her vegetable garden outside of Zurng Tai village in Murng Lang village tract, Kaeng-Tung township.

Naang Aam Dip (not her real name), aged 26, was weeding grass alone in her vegetable garden which was not very far from her village when an SPDC soldier from LIB314 came into the garden and asked her for some garlic.

When she nodded to the SPDC soldier, meaning that he could take some garlic from the garden, the soldier suddenly came up to her and grabbed Naang Aam Dip and, holding her tight to the ground, raped her to his satisfaction right in the garden.

As soon as the soldier left, Naang Aam Dip cried and ran back into the village to tell her husband what had happened to her. Although her husband took Naang Aam Dip to the village leaders and filed a complaint with them, no one dared to take the case further. (Source: SHRF)

2 Forest Gatherers Raped in Murng- Khark

In early October 2002, 2 women were raped by a group of 6-7 SPDC troops from IB227 in the forest near Wan Ngen Tai village in Murng Ngen village tract, Murng-Khark township.

On the day of the incident, Naang Li (not her real name) and Naang Sing (not her real name), both about 18-19 years of age, of Wan Ngen Tai village went into the forest near their village to gather wild vegetables.

As they were gathering vegetables in the forest, a group of 6-7 SPDC troops from IB227 suddenly appeared and forced them into the brush at gun point and raped them. Both of them were raped by all the troops one after another until they were satisfied and left the place. (Source: SHRF)

A Laundry Woman Raped And Thrown into Water, in Kaeng-Tung

On 18 October 2002, a laundry woman who was washing clothes on the bank of the Nam Laab river was beaten and raped by 2 SPDC soldiers from LIB314 and, after being raped, thrown into the river, at Te Saai village in the quarter-3 of Kaeng-Tung town.

The victim, Naang Phat (not her real name), aged 26, married and with 3 children, was originally from Kaeng Laek village, located 2-1/2 miles east of Kaeng-Tung town, which had been forcibly moved to Te Saai village in the suburban area of the town by SPDC troops some time in 2000.

Naang Phat earned a living washing clothes for other people to help support her family at the new place. On the day of the incident, at about 14:30 hrs., as she was preparing to go home after finishing washing the clothes at the Nam Laab river, 2 SPDC soldiers approached her. She did not think they would do anything to her because it was day time and did not pay attention to them.

However, when the SPDC soldiers got close enough to Naang Phat, they suddenly seized her. She shouted for help and they beat her with their rifle butts, in her face and on her body, until she gave in and raped her to their satisfaction.

When the soldiers finished raping her, Naang Phat was virtually unconscious, and they carried her to the Nam Laab river and threw her into the water. Fortunately, Naang Phat regained full consciousness after she was carried a short distance downstream by the current and managed to climb up the bank. She had to sit and rest there for some time before she could walk slowly back to her house.

Although Naang Phat and her husband complained about her plight to their village headman and the community leader of quarter-3 of Kaeng Tung town, no one seemed to dare to take the case further to the police or SPDC township authorities. No actions are known to have been taken in relation to this case up to the time of this report, and although Naang Phat has received treatment at the town hospital for some time, scars and marks left by the rifle butts can still be seen on her face and body. (Source: SHRF)

7.7 Personal Accounts

Interview Date: February 2002
Name: [name redacted]
Gender: Female
Age: 22
Occupation: Farmer
Religion: Buddhist
Ethnicity: Shan
Township: Nam Zarng

I came to Thailand around February [date redacted], 2002, and it took about three days to get here from my village. The Burmese soldiers oppressed us. It is very difficult for us to stay in our village. For example, we cannot go out in the evening. If we go out, they might shoot us. Also, we have to do work for them and we cannot go freely to our farms. If we go to the farm, they always investigate us and accuse us of being SSA [Shan State Army]. Also, sometimes we need to stay at the fields of our farm, but we are not allowed to do this. It is also very difficult to go in the jungle. The military is also cutting all the big trees on the hills and mountains.

I had to make a farm for the military, starting by clearing the land and the place. Then we had to dig the holes to put the seeds in. Then we had to take care of the plants, and make sure that weeds do not grow. Then we had to harvest the farm. We had to grow a crop called "*toe heh*." After the harvest, people who had ox carts or cars had to let the military use them to transport the crops to the military camp. We had to plant these things at least for the last five years. The last time we did this was last year between around July 2001 until around October 2001. The villagers had to go every day on a rotational basis. Each rotation had to go one day a week or about four times in a month. Each time, twenty villagers had to go work for them. Men and women had to go. I only had to go a few times, and my sister and other relatives went other times. I had to dig out the tree roots. The farm was two acres, and it was in an area called [name redacted]. It was a three mile walk from my village to the farm; it took about one and half hours to walk there. We had to work between 8AM and 3PM, and if we arrived at the farm late, we had to stay later. Shan, Pa-O, Karen, and Burmans all had to work on the farm. There was more than one farm like this. Each battalion in Nam Zarng had three large farms. There are four battalions in Nam Zarng. The battalion numbers are #66, #99, #116 and the "Youth Battalion." I'm not sure why it is called the "Youth Battalion."

Children as young as eight years old had to work watching the cows in my village. The military stole these cows from other villages and brought them to our village, where the children had to watch them. The military also made a stable for the cows because there were seventeen or eighteen cows. The children had to come every day around 9AM until 5PM. The

children did not get any payment. The children got a little bit of food and some clothes from a Burmese man, named [redacted], in the village, and he is a relative of a General [name redacted]. This General is based with battalion # [redacted], and he often comes to the village. He always asks to buy cows from the villagers; if the price of the cow should be 10,000 *Kyat*, he will only pay 5,000 *Kyat*. Or if the cow should be 5,000 *Kyat*, he will only pay 1,000 *Kyat*. The General will always only pay a very low price for a cow. If a villager did not sell the cow, the General would just take the cow. I saw the General take the cow from a villager in our village one time; the General took two of [name redacted]'s cows in May 2001, and one time during the past rainy season, he took [name redacted]'s cow and paid only a very low price. The children's names, who watch the cows, are [names of four children and ages redacted]. The children have been working for two years already, and they were still working when I left the village. The parents know, and this is organized by the headman. If the children do not watch the cows, the military would ask for money to hire someone to watch the cows.

During the rainy season after helping to start the "*toe heh*" farm [around August 2001], I went to stay on my farm and I was not in my village very much. The military was still asking villagers to do things, but I was not there, so I don't know the details.

During this time that I was on the farm, I met with Burmese soldiers from battalion #66. The soldiers said, "why are you staying here?" I said, "because we need to work on our farm." The soldiers said, "why do you need to stay over night?" I said, "because we have to work for you so much building a fence and making your farm, and we just want to finish our own farm." The soldiers said, "no, you cannot stay here over night because you might support the SSA." So we had to pick up all our things and go back to the village. There were three families staying there at this time. If we did not go back, the soldiers would have killed us or raped us. All but two of us went back to the village at first. My husband, [name redacted], and [name redacted]'s husband, [name redacted], stayed behind to wait for a few buffalo that had not come back yet. When the soldiers returned again and found [the two of them] there, the soldiers said, "why don't you listen to us? Do you want to die?" Then, the soldiers took a piece of bamboo and hit [name redacted] on the back of his neck and on his back. They also hit [name redacted] on his back and on his leg. Then [both of them] came back to village and did not dare stay over night again.

I know about one rape that happened recently. In the second month of the Shan year [around January 2002], the Burmese soldiers raped [name redacted]. She is 18 years old. She is the [name redacted] wife in [name redacted] village in Nam Zarng township. At that time, [she] was carrying water back from the well, and she was carrying her six-month old baby on her back. When she arrived at the fence of the house, one soldier said, "'Pi Nang' [Sister], stop one moment." She said, "No, I have a lot to do," and she continued to go into her house. The Burmese soldier followed her into the house, and then he knocked down the water that she was carrying. There were a lot of soldiers around the house, and she ran away from the house, and the soldiers followed her. They took her to another house where there was no one. Then, the soldiers took the baby away outside the house, and they took her into a room and raped her. The baby was crying at the time. People heard the baby crying, and they heard her shouting, "help," but the villagers could not help her. These soldiers came from battalion #66. I know about this because my older sister came to tell me. My older sister stayed next to her house, so she knew about the rape. My older sister heard the baby crying, and she heard [her] shouting, but the soldiers' covered her mouth. Two soldiers raped [her]. Her husband, [name redacted] could not complain because the soldier told him that if he complained, he would shoot him. Her husband told me this at my house. He wanted to get other people from the

village to go complain with him, but everyone was scared except for one man, whose name was [name redacted]. They went to complain to the military, saying, "your soldiers raped my wife, and I am not happy. You need to deal with this case." After that, the general called the soldiers that raped [his wife] to investigate. The general punished the soldiers by hitting them with a stick. One soldier, who was a sergeant, was demoted. Then the soldiers told [him] that they would kill him, and whenever he sees these soldiers, he is very scared.

Two months ago [in late 2001 or early 2002], the military went to meet people who were staying over night at their farms, and the soldiers said, "you are not staying here to take care of your farm but to help your Shan soldiers. If you do not go back, we will kill you."

I did not have to do forced labor myself since the end of the last rainy season because I was traveling around to other villages and visiting relatives, and then we came to Thailand. I have seen other people doing forced labor though up until when I left for Thailand.

I have never heard of Order No. 1/99. A Burmese soldier came to the village one time and told my brother and brother-in-law at a meeting, "you villagers are not happy to give Shan State to us, so we have to make you do forced labor." At that time, the soldier said, "we will not use your free labor. We will pay you for your work." The soldier did not say how to complain about forced labor and I do not know how to complain. I did not see anything change after that. The people still have to work for free. (Source: *We Are Not Free to Work for Ourselves*, Earth Rights International, January – May 2002)



8. Rights of Ethnic Minorities

"Far from being a marginal or remote borderland question, Burma's troubled history has repeatedly demonstrated that ethnic rights and conflict resolution are at the centre of challenges facing the country today. Not only do minority peoples make up an estimated third of the population, but it is in ethnic minority areas that many of the most acute political and humanitarian crises exist. This, in turn, has fuelled the debilitating cycle of conflict, militarization and economic malaise that has long needed to be addressed if Burma is ever to progress as a modern nation state."

(Source: Smith, Martin, Burma (Myanmar): The Time For Change, Minority Rights Group International, May 2002)

8.1 Background

Burma is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world, with over 135 different ethnic groups, and its population speaking over 100 different languages and dialects. Ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples are believed to represent approximately one-third of the state's 52 million inhabitants, which includes an estimated population of 2 million Chinese and Indian. The major ethnic groups include: Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni (or Kayah), Mon, Rakhine (or Arakan), and Shan and are predominately located in the border areas. Because of Burma's location, it has acted as a historic buffer between the neighboring powers of China, India, and Siam (Thailand). Over the past 2,000 years, many ethnic groups have migrated across Burma. The impressive and unique diversity found in Burma has been a source of conflict throughout Burma's history and in the more recent attempts to create a democratic nation state. Throughout its entire existence as an independent state Burma has experienced a complex set of conflicts between the central government and ethnic minority groups. More than half a century of civil war has caused immense suffering and devastation for Burma and its people. A series of ceasefires between the SPDC and armed ethnic opposition groups since the late 1980s have brought relief in some areas but no real solutions and fighting continues. The government's determination to preserve a unified state remains the main justification for military rule, and armed conflict is a root cause of ongoing human rights abuses and a deepening humanitarian crisis in ethnic minority areas. (Source: *Myanmar Backgrounder: Ethnic Minority Politics*, ICG, 7 May 2003).

Before the British annexed the territory of Burma, as a province of British India, the people inhabiting the land were ruled by various separate kingdoms and local tribal leaders. The kingdoms in the central Irrawaddy plains made successive attempts at pushing the boundaries of their territories further into the hills but the geography of the land served to isolate those in the hills from those in the plains. Before Burma achieved independence in 1948, there had been no political integration of the minority national territories with the Burman areas. The non-Burman indigenous nationalities in Burma were politically autonomous before and during the time of British colonial rule. Under colonial rule, ethnic differences became further amplified through the system of government in which Burma was administered as two separate territories: 'Ministerial Burma', areas predominately Burman, and the 'Frontier Areas', where ethnic minorities lived.

In Ministerial Burma, the traditional monarchy was abolished and a form of parliamentary home rule was introduced. For the most part, the frontier areas were left under the local authority of their traditional headmen and chiefs. Ethnic minorities, principally the Chin, Kachin, and Karen, were preferred for recruitment into the colonial army and the natural resources of minority areas were the most heavily exploited with little investment in return. This divide and conquer strategy not only created divisions and resentments which carry on until this day, but it ultimately set the peoples of Burma on different paths of political and economic development. (Source: Smith, Martin, *Time For Change*, Minority Rights Group International, May 2002)

The Burman majority has always held the roots of anti-colonial sentiment, while after early resistance, many of the hill peoples were more welcoming to the British than the Burmans. Like the Burmans, plains or valley-dwelling minority groups, notably the Mon and Shan, have languages with long and rich written traditions. With British annexation, Christian missionaries promoted education and the transcription of minority languages into writing for the hill peoples, galvanizing a sense of modern ethnic or national identity among peoples that previously had been scattered or politically disparate. Cultural and political organizations swiftly followed, the most important of which, the Karen National Association (KNA), was formed in 1881. Such new influences and institutions, however, created a sense of unease among many Burman nationalists who regarded Christianity, like Indian and Chinese immigration, as a divisive element in the British arsenal of 'three Ms': missionaries, merchants and military (Source: Smith, Martin, *Burma(Myanmar): The Time For Change*, Minority Rights Group International, May 2002).

During the Second World War, Burman nationalist forces aligned with the Japanese Imperial Army were involved in a series of bloody clashes with ethnic minority groups who stayed loyal to the British. They later turned against the Japanese and cooperated with the returning British army. However, atrocities committed during the early months of the Japanese campaign, particularly in Karen communities in the delta, left deep-seated enmity among many ethnic nationalists that remain today. (Source: *Myanmar Backgrounder: Ethnic Minority Report*, ICG, 7 May 2002).

From 1945 to 1948, a new state structure had to be developed in order for Burma to become independent. General Aung San, the Burman independence leader, stated: "In my opinion it will not be feasible to set up a unitary state. We must set up a Union with properly regulated provisions to safeguard the rights of the national minorities." Independent Burma was created on the understanding that it would be a federal union. The separate political rights of the minority national areas were recognized in the January 1947 agreement between General Aung San and the British Prime Minister Attlee. The rights of the ethnic national groups were also recognized in the February 1947 Panglong Agreement between Burman leaders and other national groups, in the commission of inquiry on the frontier areas, and in the independence constitution of 1948. Each of these fundamental political and legal documents recognized rights of self-determination of the indigenous nationalities. The 1948 constitution gave each nationality representation in a Chamber of Nationalities at the national level. The constitution specifically only recognized four states for the Karen, Karenni, Shan, and Kachin. Only the Shan and Karenni were granted the right to separate after 10 years. For other groups, territory was not provided for in the constitution. Many groups felt that the constitution did not grant equal rights and representation to the ethnic groups which increased tensions and numerous armed resistances which, in the case of the Karen, began as early as 1949. The present constitution of Burma, enacted in 1974 under General Ne Win, gives no autonomy to

the ethnic nationalities. Under the SPDC, there is no respect for minority languages, cultures, or political aspirations. The Government's response to the minority nationalities is purely militarized. In spite of this reality, Burma still claims to be a "union", and the anniversary of the Panglong Agreement has been celebrated every year since 1962 as "Union Day" (Source: Smith, Martin, *Time For Change*, Minority Rights Group International, May 2002)

The Panglong Agreement, between General Aung San and Chin, Kachin, and Shan leaders, is the closest that the minority ethnic groups and the majority Burmans have ever come to having a successful and peaceful union and is often considered the starting point for future negotiations. The challenge to create a sense and structure of national unity in the new Union from peoples that had formerly been administered separately, while still respecting their rights to ethnic autonomy, was first attempted here. However, the Karen –which constituted one of the largest minorities –boycotted these negotiations, believing that the British would grant them an independent state, and there were strong critics also among other ethnic groups. The agreement is also important because it, in many respects, is what led to independence a year later. Respected Shan resistance member and scholar, Dr. Chao Tzang Yawngwe, has noted, "The Panglong Accord and its principles or the Panglong spirit is at the very heart of our past, present, and future. The Panglong vision, shared by all non-Burman leaders and by General Aung San, was to establish a democratic, federal Union, based on federalism, the equality of states, and their self-determination." In the final agreement of 12 February 1947, 'full autonomy in internal administration' (Article 5) and the enjoyment of democratic 'rights and privileges' (Article 7) were guaranteed for the Frontier Areas, and hence some ethnic minority peoples. No one state was envisioned as being the mother-state (Pyi-Ma), superior to or above other states. The Panglong spirit is critical to future attempts at building the nation because it provides a solid and historical basis for democracy, peace, and real people's power" (Source: "An Evening with Dr Chao Tzang Yawngwe", *Kao-Wao News*, 16-20 February 2002).

8.2 Ethnic Politics, Nationalism, Armed Resistance, and Cease-fire Groups

Ethnic minorities or Non- Burman people make up one third of the population of Burma and occupy approximately half the land area of the country. The population of Burma is estimated to be 50 million people, therefore there are nearly 20 million ethnic minorities living on 55% of the land area or 371,000 sq kms. Burmans make up 60% of the population. Ethnic minorities are thought of as such because they are disenfranchised from full citizenship. The term "ethnic nationalities" is often used to refer to non-Burmans because of the varied and strong ethnic identities within the country.

The ruling military regime regards the ethnic minority groups with intense suspicion because of their lack of unity throughout the history of Burma. The ethnic minority groups have felt the loss of political and economic power even more acutely than the majority population as both the SPDC government and military are overwhelmingly Burman in make-up and are widely perceived as a foreign force in ethnic minority areas. Ethnic minority groups are economically marginalized while their social, cultural, and religious rights are suppressed. Ethnic minorities consider themselves discriminated against and have openly accused the SPDC of a deliberate policy of "Burmanization". While many ethnic groups originally fought for independence, today almost all have accepted the Union of Myanmar as a fact and merely

seek increased local authority and equality within a new federal state structure. The military government, however, still suspects them of scheming to split the country and sees this as justification for its repressive, often brutal policies in minority areas. (Source: *Myanmar Backgrounder: Ethnic Minority Politics*, International Crisis Group, 7 May 2003)

Non-Burman armed ethnic groups have been fighting the military government and their army, called the Tatmadaw, to varying degrees for more than 50 years. Scores of opposition groups have formed, split, reunited, and dissolved at various times over the years. While most ethnic minority armies have been fighting the SPDC army, some at times have cooperated with it against other groups, or they have fought each other over territory or other resources. In 1976 minority nationalists formed an alliance called the National Democratic Front (NDF). NDF continues to seek a political solution to the national question in Burma, and seeks a federal union with equality and self-representation for the nationalities. As stated at their 1987 congress, the political goal of a federal union is envisioned as, "Each republic government is to have full power of self-government, while the central government shall exercise the power defense, foreign affairs, finance and monetary affairs, post and telecommunications, airways, waterways, railway communication, and federal judiciary." (Source: Center for World Indigenous Studies).

The group had originally called for a ceasefire in Burma only if all ethnic armies agreed to it, but since its formation groups—including the New Mon State Party (NMDP) and the Kachin Independent Organization (KIO)—have brokered ceasefire deals with the ruling military junta. Although the military junta has signed cease-fires with individual ethnic groups, seven ethnic groups, who remain members of the NDF have not agreed to ceasefire deals and continue to fight against the ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). NDF members include: The Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), Chin National Front (CNF), Karen National Union (KNU), the Lahu Democratic Front (LDF), the Palaung Liberation Front (PLF), Pa-O Liberation Organization (PLO), Wa National Organization (WNO). Since 1989, the NDF has formed the nucleus of a new grouping, the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB), which includes majority Burman opposition groups as well. The NDF has called on the SPDC to hold tripartite dialogue and to declare a nationwide ceasefire, but the SPDC has so far refused. (Source: Irrawaddy)

The armed struggle underwent a brief revival in the aftermath of the 1988 uprising and 1990 election when thousands of Burman activists fled to the jungle bases of ethnic armed opposition groups, raising expectations for the emergence of a more powerful, truly national alliance. By then, however, the ceasefire movement was already underway, which was soon to include most of the major ethnic nationalist armies and undercut any prospects of a serious armed challenge to the central government. The ceasefire policy, initiated by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) secretary-one, Lt-General Khin Nyunt, has had profound affects on the armed opposition's resistance struggle. Ceasefires have included agreements to end fighting, but with no political details. Under truces reached, ceasefire forces are allowed to maintain their weapons and territories – and join political discussions—until a new constitution is introduced. Originally many ethnic leaders were encouraged by the 1990 elections and the ceasefires spread to include even more parties, including the Kachin, Mon, Palaung, Pa-o and Shan members of the NDF. By 2002, over 15 ethnic forces had peace, though not political-agreements, around the country. (Source: Smith, Martin, *Burma (Myanmar): The Time For Change*, Minority Rights Group International, May 2002)

In non-ceasefire areas, especially in the Chin, Karen, Karenni and Shan borderlands, there are still clashes and intensive government operations. From the mid-1990s, the situation of the armed resistance groups was steadily undermined, as a series of splinter groups broke away to make their own cease-fires. The 1995 defections of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army and Shan State National Army (SSNA) were particular blows to Karen and Shan forces. The ceasefire movement and the decline of its individual members, seriously diminished the NDF's military strength. In 2002, the only groups continuing armed struggle that have significant military strength are the KNU, the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) and the Shan State Army South (SSA South). These three groups have formed a new military alliance, including also some smaller groups, but their aims are largely defensive. (Source: *Myanmar Backgrounder: Ethnic Minority Politics*, ICG, 7 May 2003).

The SPDC military government has responded to any ethnic group's demands of self-determination with counter-insurgency military operations. All demands for political autonomy have been rejected as illegitimate. The special councils and ministries that existed during the parliamentary era for the ethnic states were abolished. The SPDC military has engaged in relentless counter-insurgency operations in areas controlled by the ethnic nationalist armies since the mid-1960s. Borrowing from American military tactics during the Vietnam War, a strategy known as the "Four Cuts" has been employed. It aims at cutting off the rebels from the four main links of food, funds, intelligence, and recruits between them and local villagers. While the program has been extremely effective in paralyzing the various insurgency groups, the general population in ethnic areas has suffered gravely because of it. Millions of people have lost their homes and livelihood as numerous villages were forcibly relocated and food and crops destroyed. Scores of other civilians have been killed. Since 1996 alone, more than one million people have reportedly been displaced by the forced relocation program launched by the SPDC in Karen, Karenni (Kayah) and Shan states. While hundreds of thousands have fled to neighboring countries such as Thailand, some are living in hiding within their own country. A human rights group working with British Parliament, Jubilee Campaign stated, "Altogether over 648,000 Karen, Karenni and Shan people have been internally displaced inside Burma by the Burmese military. Many of them are hiding in the jungle with no food or medicine and are killed on sight by Burmese troops." (Source: SHAN)

Since 1988, most ethnic minority organizations have expressed support for democracy, seeing it as chance to gain a voice in national politics and press for a redress of their long-standing grievances. But few leaders of the dominant ethnic militant groups regard democracy as an end in itself. Their main concern is to secure local political and administrative authority, further development of their regions, and enjoy the right to maintain and practice their language, culture and religion without constraints. The strength of ethnic minority organizations traditionally has been measured in military terms. The shift in national politics since 1988 and subsequent ceasefires, however, has transferred the main struggle from the battlefield to the political and administrative arena. The primary challenge for ethnic minority organizations today is to build political and organizational capacity – individually, and collectively – to ensure that they are not left out of negotiations about the future of Burma and can continue to represent the interests of their communities. They also need to help rebuild their war-torn communities and economies, in order to reestablish a sense of normalcy and confidence in the future. (Source: *Myanmar Backgrounder: Ethnic Minority Politics*, ICG, 7 May 2003).

8.3 Need for Tripartite Political Dialogue

In October 2000, national reconciliation talks commenced seemingly working towards democracy in Burma. Ethnic minority groups have not been party to these talks that have been held between democracy leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and the ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). In 2002, while there were hopes that the talks would move from "confidence building" to more the substantial issue of democratic reform, ethnic minorities insisted that their voices be heard as well. International rights groups also called on the SPDC and the democratic opposition to broaden their dialogue to include at minimum the concerns of ethnic minorities. Pro-democracy parties representing eight major ethnic groups assembled an informal coalition known as the United Nationalities Alliance (UNA), with the objective of forming an alliance to prepare for eventual tripartite talks. The UNA regularly meets to discuss issues like: participation in bipartite dialogue between Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the Rangoon military junta, the needs of the ethnic nationalities, how to solve political problems, literature and culture of the various nationalities, and the right to map their own destinies. Of the eight member groups, seven parties won seats at the Multiparty General Elections held in 1990. (Source: "Ethnic Groups Form a Political Alliance", *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 5 August 2002)

All the member parties except the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) were later deregistered after the 1990 election, in which Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy (NLD) won in a sweeping victory. As a result, only the SNLD is able to engage in political activities at present.

Although the NLD won a sweeping victory in the 1990 elections, some ethnic groups claim that those elections were not truly representative of the population of Burma because most hill tribe members did not vote. The UNA met with UN envoy Razali Ismail on 4 August 2002 and asked him to help the deregistered parties win reinstatement believing that it is important for the various parties get reinstated if they are to take advantage of the military's promise to give all political parties more freedom of movement in the future. On 19 October 2002 the UNA also met with the UN Special Rapporteur to Burma, Mr. Pinheiro to discuss human rights abuses affecting the various ethnic groups. (Source: "UN Special Envoy Meets Representatives of Burmese Ethnic Groups", *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 19 October 2002)

In October of 2002 in a measure to give more representation to ethnic minorities, the Burmese Opposition parliament, expanded to include representatives from the Mon, Shan, and Zomi ethnicities. The military reacted harshly to what it considers an illegal organization and detained dozens of would be members of the opposition legislature. (Source: "Burma Oppositions Parliament Expands with New Members Representing Mon, Shan, and Zomi Ethnicities", *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 25 October 2002)

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, has also acknowledged the need for minorities to be involved in drafting a future for Burma. "The important thing is to bring them to the negotiating table for an amicable solution," she said several weeks after her release from house arrest on 6 May 2002, at an event attended by Shan, Mon, Chin, and Arakanese leaders. On 21 November 2002, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi publicly apologized for the weak efforts by the country's Burman majority in fostering national unity among ethnic races. Suu Kyi made the remarks while addressing more than 2,000 supporters during a one-hour speech marking the reopening of the National League for Democracy's (NLD) Taunggyi office, in Shan State.

She made the apology as a Burman, and said it was necessary for all nationalities in Burma to participate together in the country's reconciliation process. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has continually called for the need for tripartite dialogue in Burma since she was released from 19 months of house arrest. (Source: Moe, Kyaw Zwa, "Opposition Leader Apologizes to Ethnic Groups", *Irrawaddy*, November 2002)

While her trips across the country to minority regions have turned up thousands of supporters who testify to her wide appeal, she has many challenges ahead if she is to engage ethnic minorities fully in the process of nation building. The United Nationalities Alliance also faces challenges of including both the various cease-fire groups and the armed ethnic groups in negotiation with Rangoon. (Source: *AFP*)

The political agendas of the National League for Democracy and the various ethnic parties have historically been quite different. Many ethnic minorities in Burma are concerned that their decades-old struggle against the Rangoon government is now being eclipsed by the more visible ethnic Burman pro-democracy forces. Both Karen and Shan leaders have expressed the view that Aung San Sui Kyi's release from house arrest this year has had no affect on the political situation of the ethnic groups. Karen National Union leader General Bo Mya, who is also president of both the Democratic Alliance of Burma, an alliance of ethnic groups and pro-democracy activists, and the National Council of the Union of Burma, which also includes the NLD, said looting, killing and gang rapes still continue as part of the SPDC's "ethnic cleansing" efforts. There is growing concern that while the international community is aware of the concerns of the pro-democracy opposition, international lobbying efforts have forgotten to include other human rights violations such as arbitrary killing and rape, which disproportionately affect the ethnic minorities. There are complaints that Burmans dominate the opposition movement, and there is resentment that Burmans get more international assistance than minority ethnic groups. (Source: "Ethnic Groups Fear Being Sidelined in Struggle for Democracy", *UN Wire*, 5 August 2002)

Although it appears that most ethnic minority groups support pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi, they also distrust some other leaders of the opposition National League for Democracy because of past ties to the army. Many Burmans in the pro-democracy movement feel the same way. General Shwe Hser, president of the National Democratic Front (NDF), described Suu Kyi as the only NLD leader the ethnic groups can trust. Other NLD leaders, he said, were generals and have the blood of ethnic minorities on their hands. Suu Kyi has said she envisions a federalist nation, although not one in which individual states could secede. Suu Kyi is generally seen as a positive force in the building of a federation and many are encouraged by the fact that since she was educated in the West she has seen federations work. Unlike her mostly nationalist party members, she may have the proper experience to bring about open negotiations that respect the rights and concerns of all the various parties in Burma. General Bo Mya described Suu Kyi as very important to the struggle for democracy in Burma and said most ethnic groups will benefit if she becomes Burma's leader. At the same time, he said, Suu Kyi, cannot do much alone. (Source: "Ethnic Groups Fear Being Sidelined in Struggle for Democracy", *UN Wire*, 5 August 2002)

Others reservations reflect that ethnic groups may not believe that the NLD represents them. Some suggest that while Suu Kyi has respect because of her father Aung San, an independence hero who was assassinated in 1947, she may not know what is on the minds of non-Burman ethnic groups. At the same time, talks will have to proceed among the government, NLD, and ethnic opposition for lasting peace to occur, as the SPDC knows well

how to play the two components of the opposition against each other. It is clear that the ethnic group support for the pro-democracy forces — including provision of most of the opposition's military muscle — depends on whether the groups believe they will have a real role in a new Burma. (Source: "Ethnic Groups Fear Being Sidelined in Struggle for Democracy", UN Wire, 5 August 2002)

8.4 SPDC Campaigns of Abuse Against Minority Villagers

The economic ruin faced by Burma is reflected in the armed forces. 40% of the national budget is spent on the military. Even though there is no foreign threat, the government commonly does not provide sufficient wages or supplies to its inflated personnel. The SPDC military, or Tatmadaw forces, often reside in ethnic areas and demand support from the poor civilian population. When civilians simply cannot afford to give provisions of food or livestock, even after threats and intimidation, they are robbed of everything they own by the armed forces. Food, livestock, and personal possessions are all taken. Rape and use of villagers for forced labor as porters for the military troops without compensation is wide spread. People who are taken for forced labor are also used as human mine sweeps in the ethnic areas. Members of various ethnic groups are subject to theft, re-location, forced labor, rape, torture, and murder at the hands of the Tatmadaw forces. This strategy makes it easy for the SPDC to maintain so many troops, while also effectively terrorizing many citizens at the same time. These highly vulnerable citizens are left caught in the crossfire between the armed insurgent groups and the military, with nowhere to hide.

Many of the worst violations in the country in 2002 were reported against civilians living in minority regions, especially in Karen and Shan States. In March, fighting flared up along the Thai-Burmese borders, when Karen rebels reportedly attacked army outposts. According to the Democratic Voice of Burma, 5,000 people were displaced by Burmese soldiers in Doooplaya district in Karen State alone, between April and June of 2002. Moreover, during the same period, six villages were burned, six schools destroyed, five churches burned, and at least fifteen villagers murdered. In May 2002, the Burmese Tatmadaw and Buddhist Karen allies attacked Christian Karen villages, hospitals, and schools. Burmese soldiers executed villagers suspected of sympathizing with the rebels, and in several instances also executed Karen families caught while attempting to flee forced relocation. Townships in Shan State, such as Loi Kha and Loi Kawwan, were closed off by the Burmese military to outside visitors, amidst reports of forced relocation, forced labor, torture, rape, and extrajudicial killings. Refugees reported massacres in Shan State in September 2002. Thousands of Karen and Shan refugees fled across the borders to Thailand. (Source: Human Rights Watch World Report) *(For more information on specific abuses see relevant chapter.)*

8.5 Abuse of Ethnic Minorities by Cease-fire Groups

Although the ceasefire deals reached between the Burmese army and several ethnic armed resistance groups during the last decade are claimed by the ruling Burmese military junta to be one of their major achievements in their 'peace' efforts, in reality many local ethnic communities in the ceasefire areas are being faced with even more difficult living conditions than before. In order to promote their own ethnic culture in ceasefire areas, some ceasefire groups have committed actions that have infringed on the cultural rights of other local ethnic peoples. This ethnic nationalism is creating further divisions and resentment among various ethnic groups, and destroying any possibility of harmonious co-existence within the communities. (Source: SHRF)

Human Rights Violations Committed by the DKBA

In late 1994, complaints by Buddhist soldiers over discrimination by the predominantly Christian Karen National Union (KNU) leadership erupted into open conflict, and a few hundred soldiers broke away to form the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA). The armed splinter organization subsequently surrendered to the SPDC military regime and accepted material support and control over parts of Karen State in return for help fight against KNU strongholds. This divide and conquer strategy led to the fall of Manerplaw, the KNU's General Headquarters, in January 1995 and of all remaining KNU base areas along the Thai border in a second major offensive in 1997. The DKBA's main bases are located in the Pa-an Township, with other bases in Townships in both Karen and Mon States, such as Kawkaeik, Kya-inn-seikyi, Three-Pagoda-Pass, and Kyaikmayaw. Sporadic fighting continues today between KNU and DKBA troops. After the SPDC occupied KNU strongholds, they ceased to provide monetary or food assistance to the DKBA.

Without financial support the DKBA was unable to feed its soldiers or obtain more recruits. The SPDC encouraged them to do their own business, and as former KNU members their familiarity with border areas has enabled them to conduct sizeable trade via the Myawaddy-Mae Sot border in eastern Burma. Some of this trade includes the trafficking of drugs, as the SPDC gives members of the DKBA 'special privileges', making them free from punishment of crimes. Other privileges accorded to DKBA members include freedom from forced labor and tax payment to the SPDC. As the DKBA does not currently have any major military operations against the KNU, the soldiers are used primarily to protect the organization's businesses. The DKBA has also undertaken various contracts from the SPDC for the implementation of development projects, especially road construction, in Karen State.

As an armed organization, the DKBA has mimicked many of the human rights abuses committed by the Burmese Army against both Mon and Karen villagers. In most of such development projects the DKBA conscripts forced labor, using hundreds of civilians to contribute unpaid labor. Additionally, like the Burmese Army, they have conscripted forced labor in order to construct military barracks and to work on the DKBA's rice-farms and fruit and rubber plantations. The DKBA also collects taxes from civilians, is involved in gambling and robbery activities, and the general abuse of power and discrimination against civilians. (Source: HURFOM)

In late 2001, there were religious clashes between Muslims and Buddhist monks in Pegu, Prome, and some Townships in Rangoon, the capital of Burma. The clashes originated from

anti-Muslim sentiment among the Buddhist monks after the September 11 attack in US. This sentiment has also infected members of the DKBA, as the organization is based on Buddhism. Many of the DKBA's members have anti-Muslim sentiment and have accused Muslim civilians of being part of political groups, religious extremists, and terrorists. When DKBA soldiers come upon Muslims in villages, farms, or the jungle it is common practice for the soldiers to beat them. The torture of Muslims is also often committed by DKBA commanders and soldiers. For instance, on 12 February 2002, when DKBA troops led by Maj. Nga Kywe launched the military patrol in western part of Kya-inn-seikyi Township, they arrested a 50-year-old Muslim farmer. During their interrogation they tortured him in order to discover his involvement in politics. Although the man replied he was simply a farmer and had never been involved in politics, they slapped, beat, and kicked him. He was seriously injured as a result of the torture, and had to be brought to the town hospital for treatment. (Please see chapter on freedom of religion and belief for more information)(Source: HURFOM)

The DKBA claims that they are representing the Buddhist Karen people and that their activities should only benefit their own ethnic people. As a result, the members of the DKBA are widely involved in discrimination, especially against ethnic Mon people. In the conscription of forced labour, DKBA commanders select Mon villages and order the village headmen to send villagers to contribute unpaid labour, while at the same time not requiring Karen villagers to contribute labour. Similarly, in early 2002 it was reported that when the DKBA decided to collect tax from fishermen who fished along Gyaing River, they only selected Mon fishermen to pay the tax. (Source: HURFOM)

It is also widely believed that the DKBA has been involved in human trafficking to Thailand for many years. In their plans to monopolize the trade in human trafficking into Thailand, they intimidated, threatened and oppressed their competition of Mon traffickers. When they could not abuse traffickers, they made problems for the parents and relatives of the human traffickers instead. On 27 February 2002 a group of DKBA soldiers led by Lt. Maung Hla Nge went to Port-gyi-gone village, Kawkareik Township, and arrested and tortured a 60-year-old Mon woman. DKBA soldiers arrested her with the accusation that her son was a trafficker of migrant workers into Thailand, and had failed to successfully send some Karen workers that were relatives of DKBA soldiers. As her son had left home many months ago, she knew nothing of her son's work. Still the soldiers accused her son of stealing the money charged to the Karen workers, and tried to force her to pay. When she refused she was severely tortured. Afterwards her relatives had to pay a 700,000 kyat ransom for her release. (Source: HURFOM)

In rural areas where DKBA troops took bases, the Mon, Karen and other ethnic people faced not only oppression by SPDC authorities and military, but they also suffered from violations of human rights committed by DKBA. The SPDC's support of the DKBA is an attempt to create further divisions among ethnic people. Reasoning that if there are many conflicts within the ethnic nationality groups, any attempts to gain rights of self-determination by the various ethnic nationalities in Burma will fail. Whenever the international community asks the regime for national reconciliation, with the inclusion of ethnic representatives in tri-partite negotiations, the regime can refuse by pointing to the divisions among ethnic peoples. The militia DKBA is therefore merely a tool in the political games of the SPDC. (Source: Mon Forum)

Cultural Persecution of Shan by the Pa-O Ceasefire Group in Tawng-gi (Taunggyi)

Since the ceasefire deal between the SPDC and a Pa-O armed group a few years ago, local Shan communities in the area under the Pa-O ceasefire group's control have been complaining about cultural persecution, especially concerning the ancient Buddhist holy site "Kaad Ku" in Tawng-gi township. "Kaad Ku" is a famous historical site where thousands of pagodas have been built over the past two thousand years. It is one of the main tourist attractions in Southern Shan State, where tourists and pilgrims from all over Burma and abroad come to visit every year. Local Shan communities have complained that the inscriptions in Shan script on many of the ancient structures at the holy site are being removed and destroyed by members of the Pa-O ceasefire group in the area, with tacit approval from the SPDC authorities. The Shan inscriptions are being replaced with ones in Pa-O script. Those who have tried to put up new Shan inscriptions or signs have been intimidated. The Shan see this as an attempt to destroy the cultural evidence which points to the fact that Shan people, since ancient times, have been living in the area and have been involved in the building and maintaining of the holy site.

In December 2001, when a monk from Singapore, who was invited by the Pa-O ceasefire group, donated 72 million kyat for the repair and maintenance of "Kaad Ku", the event was marked by the construction of 4 stone-pillar monuments at the four corners of the site. The pillars each had four sides with inscriptions in Chinese, Pa-O, Burmese, and English, without a line in Shan. The justification was given by the Pa-O ceasefire group that only those who had donated hundreds of thousands of kyat in a single installment would be honored with an inscription in their language. Thus, one side went to the main donor, the Chinese monk from Singapore, the second to the leader of the Pa-O ceasefire group who donated 3,000,000 kyat, the third was taken by the 1st Secretary of SPDC, Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt, who donated 2,000,000 kyat, and the last side was in English script was for the expected foreign tourists. Since the stone-pillar monuments will serve as proof for the future generations as to whom the major donors of the holy site were, all the credit will go only to those recorded on the pillars. The Shan's effort at maintaining the site, who have long been regular donors, will not be recognized thus threatening their legitimacy in the area.

Furthermore, Shan villagers from the Shan villages in the surrounding areas of "Kaad Ku" holy site are often banned from wearing Shan attire and advertising in the Shan language. The Shan members of the committee that looks after the holy site are required to wear Pa-O dress. The feelings of the local Shan are clearly expressed with one Shan villager's statement: "The fact that we do not have rich people among us who could donate hundreds of thousands in one single installment is because we have been continuously donating what we have earned during our life times. Our ancestors had been doing that since ancient times, generation after generation, down to our time. I feel as if all our efforts have been ignored and our cultural heritage destroyed". (Source: SHRF May 2002)

8.6 Obstruction and Interference of Holidays and Other Cultural Events/ Denial of Cultural Expression and Identity

Mon National Day Celebrations

The New Mon State Party (NMSP) held restricted ceremonies in southern part of Burma in 2002 to mark their 55th anniversary of Mon National Day. Burma's military government had earlier prohibited celebrations planned for Rangoon and the Mon State capital of Moulmein, according to party members. One ceremony was held in Pha-Lan, in Ye Township, and a smaller gathering attended by both Mon officials and local Burmese military officials took place in Peyathosu, near Thailand's Three Pagoda Pass. "The authorities in Rangoon only allowed us to gather in the compound of a Mon monastery," said a member of the Mon Independent News. NMSP Chairman Nai Shwe Kyin urged the Mon to unite and fight for ethnic rights during his annual national day speech. The 89-year-old party leader also said that the NMSP had issued an official statement regarding inclusion in the ongoing reconciliation talks in Rangoon. (Source: "Mon National Day Celebrated", Irrawaddy Online, 1 March 2002)

Obstruction of Shan New Year Celebrations

This year Shan in Muse and Lashio were told that their New Year celebrations would not be permitted to be held, as they coincided with a visit to the northern Shan State by Daw Khin Win Shwe, Gen Khin Nyunt's wife. Nevertheless, after foreign radio stations reported the news, the authorities were persuaded to change their mind. The wife of Rangoon's number three man in the SPDC also unexpectedly cut short her visit to the Shan State when ex-dictator Ne Win died suddenly, in order to return home on the same day. (Source: SHAN)

Burma's Ethnic Groups Banned from Union Day Celebrations

In February 2002, the Burma's ruling military government banned ethnic political parties from participating in the nation's Union Day ceremonies. Union Day is a celebrated yearly in Burma to mark the signing of the historic Panglong Agreement between twenty-one representatives from Burma's ethnic minorities and independence leader General Aung San during Burma's push for independence. The SPDC claimed that the groups did not notify authorities early enough regarding their planned celebrations, according to ethnic leaders in Rangoon. The government said that the groups had to inform them at least two weeks in advance in order to hold any ceremonies. Khun Htun Oo, chairman of the Shan National League for Democracy said, "We don't understand why they did this. We already sent invitations to embassies, political parties, and other guests, but we had to cancel everything." He also noted, "Union Day is supposed to unite Burmans and ethnic minorities, without our participation, what is the meaning of 'union'?" The military regime celebrates Union Day every year but does not invite ethnic politicians or opposition party members. The government, however, requires some ethnic groups to provide traditional dance and food at their ceremonies. While claiming to build national solidarity, it is clear that these events are simply paying 'lip-service'. (Source: Htein, Win, "Burma's Ethnic Groups Banned from Celebrations", *Irrawaddy*, 11 February 2002)

Burmese Junta Extort Toll for Celebrating the New Year in Arakan State

The Burmese military collected illegal tolls for the New Year celebration, popularly known as the Water Festival, from all businesses and farms in Arakan State during April 2002. Although last year's festivities were cancelled because of Buddhist - Muslim race riots, this year the junta ordered eighteen townships to participate, including the Paletwa township of western Chin State, in a grand Maha Thaung-gran celebration to be held in the capital of the state at Sittwe. The government departments in the townships had been issued orders by the SPDC for compulsory participation in the grand festivities at their own cost. The Sittwe Township Peace and Development Council issued orders to each of the owners of saw mills in the township to give five hundred cubic feet of saw timber for erecting stages in the town in order to celebrate Thaung-gran. The poor owners of saw mills, who could not afford to pay the illegal toll, faced closure of their saw mills as well as other legal actions.

The Arakan Thaung-gran, or traditional New Year, is a unique celebration with much of its festivities and traditional ceremonies vastly differing from those in Burma proper or even Thailand. Since the military juntas have been at the helm of Burma, each year the celebration of the traditional Arakanese festival has been discouraged. Instead, the military junta has urged the celebration of the Burmese traditional New Year (called Thingyan in Burmese), by the general Arakanese public. This year the junta has instead directed all of their administrative councils across the state to attend the Arakan Maha Thaungran, including those from inaccessible and remote areas. According to a high government official, this year's decision to hold the festivities in a grand gala ceremony had been taken in order to divert people's attention from the suspicious activities going on in Rangoon between the junta and their predecessor, Ne Win. (Source: Narinjara)

8.7 Discrimination in Education

Children belonging to ethnic minorities living in rural areas are especially at risk of being denied access to adequate education. They are relegated to substandard educational facilities, poorer quality of instruction, fewer teaching materials, and fewer opportunities for higher education than the rest of the population. According to *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*, a 2002 report released by Images Asia, "Of the 750,000 children who drop out of primary school each year, 630,000 are rural students. Government figures show that 84% of the annual drop-outs from primary school are in rural areas, with the lowest enrollment for the primary level age group in eastern Shan, Karen, and Arakan States." (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002). In rural ethnic areas, where a large percentage of the people are mobile, as labor migrants driven by poverty or internally displaced, most children miss out on opportunities of education. Nationwide school coverage is low in general, but especially in rural and ethnic areas. Many villages have never had a school, and others that have a primary school do not go beyond the 4th standard.

Political unrest has profoundly affected access to education in Burma. In areas of armed conflict, primary, middle, and high schools closed repeatedly because of fighting or forced relocation. Karen and Karenni children in particular, both in past and present, have been denied education because of civil war in their areas. In some areas close to borders that have seen fighting for decades, instability prevents government schools from opening at all. Some

opposition groups have opened their own schools, but they are critically under-resourced. Often they have no books and are staffed by volunteer teachers who have not even passed the ten standard themselves. In Karen State there are several hundred schools maintained by the KNU, but the teachers are often paid no salary at all and sometimes the villagers cannot even afford to supply them with rice because of their own dire economic circumstances. Some other ethnic opposition groups continue to operate schools in remote rural areas under ceasefires, but they are still plagued by problems arising from the lack of funding and resources.

Schools, besides lacking the basic teaching materials and supplies, are often used as a place to enculturate students who are forced to undergo the process of "Burmaization" at school. Not only are students forced to learn and speak in Burmese, but they are also forced to perform Buddhist worship. One teacher has said, "There are various religions among the students. Before the class begins, the authorities force all the children to worship in the Buddhist way. It is difficult for Muslim students. They don't want to do it, but they are forced to." (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength: Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002). (See chapter on health and education for more information about education)

Discrimination in Education against the Mon people

Though ethnic groups have their own primary languages, Burmese language is the sole language of instruction in all state schools. Even in ethnic areas, primary and secondary state schools do not offer any instruction in the local ethnic minority language, even as a second language. The New State Mon Party (NMSP) has built Mon National Schools in various parts of Mon State, in order to provide instruction in the Mon language. The curriculum has been provided by the Mon National Education Committee and is sponsored by the NMSP. The Mon Education Department has established schools in most of the villages in the Ye Township over the past 25 years. After losses in NMSP territory to the SPDC, the regime has gradually taken over such schools, forcing the teachers to instruct only in the Burmese language, and further implementing the SPDC's assimilation policy.

The Establishment of Mon National School Barred

In March 2002, the Committee for the Establishment of a National School in Morkanin Village, Ye Township, planned to build a primary school with community support. In order to do so, two Mon monasteries in the village had originally donated a space of land in 2000. This land was later confiscated by Brigadier Gen. Thiha Thura Sit Maung, the former Commander-in-Chief of Southeast Military Command based in Moulmein, Mon State. After his death in a helicopter crash, the Committee for the Establishment of a National School again began plans to build the school, assuming they would be able to do so. However, they were barred from building the school by the Village Peace and Development Council Chairman. (Source:HURFOM)

Teaching of Mon Language Barred in School in Ye Township

In mid-July 2002, after the rebuilding of a primary school in a Mon village in southern part of Ye Township, the nearest SPDC's LIB No. 587 commander ordered that the Mon language must cease being taught at the school. The commander threatened punishment for both teachers and the village headman if the Mon language was taught as a subject in the school. According to the village headman, the battalion commander first ordered the headmen to collect money from the villagers in May to re-build the new primary school, as the old school, a Mon National School, was in a ruined condition. Many houses had to pay 5000-10000 kyat in order to raise enough funds to pay for the project. The monks from the village monastery donated some wooden lumbers and poles for building. Most of the villagers believed that after the school was built, they would be able to teach the Mon language again, as they had done so for many years. In the last schooling year, Kun-doo village primary school taught both Mon and Burmese languages, and both the students and their parents were happy with this arrangement. They were surprised and upset upon learning that the Mon language could no longer be taught at their school. "If someone would like to teach Mon language, they can teach in forest in where nobody hear", said the SPDC commander. However, out of fear of retribution by the authorities, the villagers were forced to remain silent. (Source: HURFOM)

8.8 Land Confiscation and Burman Resettlement

Confiscation of Land in Northern Arakan State for Burmese Junta's Model Villages with Special VIP Privileges for Residents

The SPDC has established 'model villages' in the northern part of Arakan State for the rehabilitation of ethnic Burmans. There are now more than thirty such model villages in the three townships, which are occupied by settlers brought in from Burma proper. The land has usually come from areas confiscated from the original village inhabitants. The residents of the villages are released hardcore criminals, HIV patients, drug addicts, homeless, and retired armed forces personnel. Most of the settlers have been brought to the area with enticements of a better life, while some have been forcibly brought. Shortly after the settlement programs were initiated a few years ago, many of the new settlers were given land, cattle, one year's foodstuff, homes and other necessary amenities such as generators and television sets. Though the Burmese junta has given all of the necessary land and homes to the Burman resettlers, many find life harsh and boring here compared to Burma proper and have run off back to their original homes.

In order to resettle ethnic Burmans in so-called 'model villages', the State Peace and Development Council has been confiscating privately owned land from Rakhine and Rohingya residents in the border townships of Maungdaw, Rathedaung, and Buthidaung of Arakan (Rakhine) State, in the western part of Burma. On 1 April 2002, Mayaka Township Peace and Development Council Chairman of Maungdaw, Captain Hla Paw and his group called upon U Thein Tun, the leader of Payrung model village. They surveyed 135 acres of hilly area owned by local neighboring villagers. Afterwards the group confiscated the land and distributed it among the residents of Payrung model village.

Residents of the model villages are given special advantages and privileges including food rations, TVs, health clinics, and government-run schools, which are a far cry from the

conditions in the traditional non-Burma villages nearby. Besides teaching materials in the schools, students are given free books and school uniforms. As SPDC officials regularly pay visits to these model villages, the township authority is always careful to meet the needs of the model village residents, who enjoy special VIP treatment in comparison to their poor neighbors. The differential in treatment of citizens has caused growing resentment among the original inhabitants of the township. The establishment of Na-a-fa model villages in the area has also raised concern because of the consequential rise in both crime rates and the spread of HIV among the local population. This resettlement of the Burman population is seen as a threat to the ethnic balance of the area. (Source: "Confiscation of Land for Burmese Junta's Model Villages", *Narinjara*, 16 April 2002)

Resettling of Burmans and Discrimination Against the Shan People in Shan State

Since 1996, more than a million people have been displaced by the forced relocation program launched by Rangoon in the Karen, Karenni (Kayah) and Shan states. Hundreds of thousands have also fled to neighboring Thailand. However, whereas there are refugee camps for those coming from Karen and Karenni states, there are no facilities whatsoever for the Shan. This has resulted in the Shan working as cheap illegal laborers, who are often exploited by their Thai employers, in order to survive. The military continued to forcibly relocate minority villages in Shan State during 2002, especially in areas where ethnic activists and rebels were active, and in areas targeted for the development of international tourism. The U.S. State Department's 2002 country report on human rights in Burma estimated that forced relocations had produced hundreds of thousands of refugees, with as many as one million internally displaced persons within the country. (Source: SHRF)

Burmans Being Resettled in Southern Shan State

A village in southern Shan State, whose residents were relocated by the Burmese military during the 1996 - 98 forced relocation campaign, had recently been opened for resettlement to arrivals from Burma proper in September 2002. The village Nayok, comprised of 47 households, used to be a thriving hamlet and was known for its delicious loganberries. According to former occupants, half of whom have already fled to Thailand, there are 22 houses, 5 two-storied and 17 one-storied, all built entirely of teakwood. "I couldn't bear to stay there and watch outlanders living in my home while my family had to struggle each day just to survive, so we decided to leave," said a former native of Nayok Village, Nawng-hee Tract, Kengtawng Township. "When the Kengtawng urbanization project was announced two years ago, we went back to apply for permission to return to our homes but were rejected," added another. "The trouble with us Shan is that most of us don't have any official document to show we own the place, because we were never given any since the days of Zaofahs (Shan ruling princes)." (Source: SHRF)

Kengtawng, (formerly part of Mongnai Township, but named a separate township in August) is a historic area huddled up against five townships, namely: Namzarng, Kunhing, Mongnai, Langkher and Mongpan and was the center of mass forced relocations in 1996-98. By September 2002, it had become a place bustling with resettlers from Burma proper. Kengtawng had been slated for the resettlement of 3,000 families coming up from lowland Burma. So far about 500 have already resettled there. The area is also known for its lucrative teakwood forests. Asia World, owned by Law Hsinghan, and Shan State South, owned by Mahaja, are two of the firms that have been granted logging concessions in the area by Rangoon. (Source: SHRF)

Rangoon's massive eviction program had uprooted inhabitants of other villages as well. The forced relocation program had taken place in 11 townships and had put 1,478 villages and 55,957 households on the run, according to the Shan Human Rights Foundation. According to one witness, "3-4 trucks arrive each day to unload Burmese civilians in Nawnghee and Tonghoong tracts, escorted by Burmese soldiers. They've been filling up the homes and fields vacated by the Shan who have been relocated elsewhere over the last five years. Some of them are even trying to seize occupied residences and domains." (Source: SHRF)



9. Rights to Education and Health

9.1 Background

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care.”

- Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Burma has one of the poorest health records and lowest standards of living in the developing world. Health and education are given incredibly low priorities in the national budget, and lip-service to these issues often takes the place of substantial reforms or programs. The root causes of problems in these arenas, such as the affects of landmines and forced labor on health and the effect of school closings and censorship on education, are not dealt with in meaningful ways because of political considerations. Low salaries and lack of transparent and effective supervision has made it easy for corruption to flourish among medical personnel and educators. Patients more often than not have to pay a bribe to be seen by a doctor, get a bed in a hospital or receive essential medicine. Primary school students can pay to receive better grades or get private tutoring from their teachers. Higher education in Burma is particularly substandard with students, during those times that the universities are actually open, being given rush degrees in order to prevent any political opposition to the military regime from springing up on college campuses.

The political situation in Burma has a direct impact on the poor quality of education and healthcare available to the general public. The level of access a person has to health and education infrastructure depends on economic level, geographical location and individual, family or ethnic group relations with the military regime. For example, a Burmese military officer and his family living in Rangoon have access to education and medical treatment that are unavailable to a family that is part of an ethnic and religious minority group living in a conflict area on the border. As yet, the military regime has been unwilling to address these inequalities to ensure that all people living in Burma, regardless of their ethnic group, religion, political affiliation, economic status or geographical location have access to adequate health care and education. (For more information about the health and education situations of specific populations such as refugees, women, children, political prisoners and IDPs, please see appropriate chapters).

Government Spending on Health and Education

An August 2002 report by Nonviolence International, *Myanmar's Expenditures on the Military, Health and Education*, states that: "Myanmar's military expansion comes at the cost of ordinary people's health and education." According to this report, Burma has the highest rate of military expenditure, in comparison to health and education spending, of any other ASEAN nation.

Since 1988, the SPDC has focused the majority of the country's resources on increasing the size of its standing army and equipping troops with advanced weaponry. In recent years the number of soldiers in the Burmese army has increased 242 percent, from 186 000 in 1988 to 450 000 in 1999. This figure gives Burma the highest per-capita number of soldiers in the

world. The SPDC's expenditure on military development has come at a high cost for civilians and the current state of government health and education infrastructure in Burma clearly reflects government spending priorities. (Source: Nonviolence International, for full report see www.nonviolenceinternational.net) The most recent statistics available in 2002 cited the SPDC's expenditures on health and education as equivalent to less than 1% of the national GDP. Total government spending on health has declined by more than 70% since 1990. In recent years government expenditure on public health has been cut even more dramatically than spending on education and in 1998-99 the SPDC's health budget was equal to only 0.3 % of GDP. (Source: *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices - 2002*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, US State Department)

The Asian Development Bank's April 2002 report, *Outlook 2002, Economic Trends and Prospects in Developing Asia*, analyzes the current economic and humanitarian situation inside Burma stating: "In a context where there is so much that now needs to be done, it is difficult to prioritize. Nevertheless, deficits in the provision of basic education and health services stand out. In terms of the public sector budget, each receives less than 0.5% of GDP in terms of recurrent and capital expenditures. Yet from the perspective of promoting both durable and equitable growth, international experience attests that investments in these sectors are crucial. A realignment of priorities in this direction, combined with policies that promote the liberalization of agriculture, could do much to help reduce poverty."

9.2 Situation of Education

"A good education system is necessary for the long-term development of a country and we all are responsible to work for the improvement of the education system."

(Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, speech given on National Day, November 2002)

"The State shall pay special attention to the young and promote their education."

Section 34, Chapter IV of the 1947 Constitution

Education in Burma has been severely impacted by more than four decades of military rule. The military regime views potentially politically active university and high school students as one of the biggest threats to their grip on power, so all-non military education is treated as expendable. All civilian schools and universities throughout Burma suffer from a lack of resources and qualified educators, a problem found in many developing countries, however, unique to Burma is the fact that the ruling government actively tries to thwart universal and advanced higher education.

In order to receive higher education in Burma several conditions must first be in place: the student must not be politically active or have politically active family members; the universities must be open and the student must be from a social and economic group and have an educational background that makes higher education feasible. When these conditions are met, a student then faces a university system where teaching materials and classroom topics are heavily censored, group activities are restricted and freedom of thought is generally hindered. Students are then rushed through courses that focus on memorization rather than

critical thinking and upon graduation are ill-equipped to find quality employment. (See chapter on children for information on primary education)

Adult Illiteracy

A January 2002 report by Images Asia gives the following information on adult, and specifically women's, illiteracy:

"The 1983 census is the most widely quoted source of demographic information, and its figures for illiteracy, in the absence of others, continue to be used by many UN agencies. At the time the census was conducted, the measured literacy rate for men was 82% and for women 71.3%. However, it is not known to what degree these figures accurately reflected the situation in rural areas, since many areas had been excluded from assessment for decades by poor infrastructure and civil war. As the education system has deteriorated over the past 16 years since this survey was taken, it is likely that these figures do not reflect present levels of literacy. UNICEF estimated in 1995 that overall literacy had dropped to about 55%, and reiterated a figure of between 50 to 60% in its 1999 "Situation Analysis," on the basis of the "significant proportion of adults who claim they have never been to school."

All figures appear to conceal significant variations not only between the sexes but also between different areas of the country. The 1983 census shows male to female literacy rates of 86%: 77% in the predominantly Burman divisions, compared to 65% : 50% in the predominantly ethnic states. Community leaders in some border areas, where there is very little data available, have estimated a female illiteracy rate as high as 80%. Surveys conducted in the mid- 1990s in refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border showed that less than 50% of Mon women between the ages of 20 and 30 were literate and that 50 to 60% of Karenni women in all age groups were literate. Among both these ethnic groups, rates of literacy generally decreased with age, evidence that more young women are gaining access to education with time, a reason for cautious optimism. However, in both ethnic groups and among all age categories, male literacy remained notably higher than female, usually by 10% or more. Surveys conducted in Karen refugee camps during the same period showed similar results to those of the Karenni, with average literacy rates among women 20 to 40 years of age slightly over 60%, while men in the same age groups averaged nearly 75%. These studies also indicated that women's illiteracy inhibited their access to non-formal education, including various kinds of training offered in the camps.

According to the women we interviewed, illiteracy in Burmese is prevalent in areas of Burma where ethnic languages are more commonly used, particularly among women who rarely leave their villages. Since teaching of ethnic languages is discouraged in many areas, for students, learning to read and write Burmese often means studying a second or third language. Even literacy in women's mother tongues often is not perceived to be important in farming communities where it does not always serve any immediate purpose in terms of vocation or life skills.

The most common reasons behind high illiteracy rates among women are non attendance and drop out. Government attendance surveys in 1991 showed that one third of the population overall had not completed any standard of schooling and only 7% had completed 9th or 10th standards, with much lower attainment for women than men. Again, significant differences were recorded between urban and rural areas. Almost 77% of women in urban areas attended

school compared with less than 56% of rural women." (Source: Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

High School Education

According to government statistics, as of August 2002 there were a total of 42,000 basic education high schools in the country as a whole, which served over 7 million students. Beginning in 2001-2002 the SPDC announced plans to initiate a six-phase 30 year long plan to improve education. The goals of this plan are to rapidly improve human resources to the meet the needs of the current knowledge age. (Source: "More school-age children in school in Myanmar," *Xinhua*, August 7, 2002)

However in January 2002 Images Asia released a report stating that in actuality there are fewer than 1,600 high schools in the country, and these are disproportionately concentrated in urban areas. Most of these schools are overcrowded and many reportedly lack even basic materials and furnishings. In some areas, communities cooperate to build their own schools and parents contribute to pay teachers a small salary or else provide them with basic food and accommodation. In border areas, some opposition groups have established their own high schools, however these schools almost always suffer from a lack of funding and other resources. (Source: (Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

In addition, ongoing armed conflict in border areas frequently interrupts students' education and a number of high school age male students join armed groups instead of attending school.

While education is more accessible to students in urban areas, high schools in cities also suffer from a lack of educational resources. For example, most high schools do not have enough textbooks for all the students, so for each course students have to draw lots to see who will get a copy of the textbook. Those students who do not receive a textbook have to either copy or buy another textbook.

Students also suffer from the lack of qualified teachers. In 2000, the SPDC's education research department released statistics showing that 60,843 primary school teachers and 49,920 secondary-level school teachers had been unable to receive teacher training. These figures however include only those teachers who are directly appointed by government authorities. In many schools there is an extreme shortage of teachers which forces local education officials and school administrators to hire additional teachers using school funds or money collected from local residents. Many of these teachers, especially those teaching at the high school level lack training and qualification. Thus government statistics about the number of teachers who have not received training are likely to understate the problem.

Students are also constrained by rigid and outdated teaching methods employed within the classroom. In Burma learning is not student centered and students are expected to learn by attending lectures and memorizing facts. Students are not encouraged to participate in discussions, to critique material, or to offer their own knowledge and experiences during classes. This teaching style directly correlates with the current political structure, where people are prohibited from openly criticizing or questioning government officials or anyone of higher rank or status. (For information on academic freedom see chapter on Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and the Press).

Students and their parents also face a large financial burden when they are forced to pay for private tuition classes to supplement what they learn in the classroom. High School teachers in Burma make only 5,000- 6,000 kyat per month, which is not enough to live on. In order to supplement their government salaries, most teachers are forced to teach private classes after school hours. Increasingly students report that teachers intentionally leave out information they need to pass state exams from the classroom lectures, forcing students to attend tuition classes if they want to pass the course. In addition, many teachers reportedly favor those students who attend their tutorials outside the classroom and are more likely to give them better grades. High school students reportedly pay from 3000 - 20,000 Kyats per month for private tuition classes.

Due to the deteriorating levels of education available at government schools, students and parents are increasingly turning to other educational options when these are available. In Arakan State, a large number of students are reportedly leaving government schools to enroll in schools run by Buddhist monasteries. Many people in this area believe that monastic education is better quality and less expensive than education at state-run schools. In March 2002, Narinjara News reported that there were approximately 500 students enrolled in just one monastery in Sittwe, the capital of Arakan State. (Source: Narinjara)

In urban areas, private schools, which include a student hostel, are also becoming more common. Students attending these schools register with public schools to sit for nation-wide examinations, but take all their classes at private facilities. However these schools are too expensive for most high school students and their parents. In Rangoon, a year of private school tuition costs from 500,000 - 900,000 Kyats. In 2001 the SPDC announced that students could not sit for their high school matriculation exams if they did not attend a government school. This move was a conscious effort to undermine the growing popularity of non-government educational options for high school. (Source: Education Report 2002, Foreign Affairs Committee-All Burma Federation of Student Unions. May 2003)

University Education

Only a small percentage of people in Burma are able to continue their education past high school. The majority of students are unable to pursue higher education for economic reasons. In order to support their families, many students have to quit school to take jobs that don't require a high education level, sometimes migrating to other countries where there are more employment opportunities. Other people cannot attend universities because they have fled their homes or been imprisoned for political activities. According to a 2002 report by Images Asia, "Extrapolating from 1991 figures, there are currently approximately 10.5 million people between the ages of 15 and 24. Figures from the Ministry of the National Public Education Department in 1997-98 indicated that of these, there were a total of only 374,112 students at the country's 53 post-secondary institutions." (Source: Belak, Brenda, Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights. Images Asia, January 2002)

Those students who have attempted to continue, or begin, university studies, have faced numerous obstacles in obtaining a quality education, including frequent school closures and low standards for materials, facilities and educators.

The erratic nature of civilian higher education in Burma since 1988 has deprived a generation of young people of the chance for quality higher education. In the 8 years between the military coup in 1988 and the December 1996 student uprising universities and colleges in

Burma were open for only a total of 30 months. In August 1998 the SPDC allowed universities to open for one month and students were called to take examinations. Following this however, universities remained closed until June 2000. When the universities were finally reopened, students whose education had been interrupted when schools shut in 1996 were allowed to return and take entrance exams. Only an estimated 25,000 to 60,000 new students were permitted to enroll, out of the more than 400,000 students who had matriculated from high school since the closures in December 1996.

When the universities reopened in 2000, the SPDC instituted key changes to minimize possibilities for students to engage in political activities on campus. In the new curriculums, one year's course content was packed in to 3 months and 2/3 of the available courses were offered by mail. Before students could enroll they had to take an oath that they would not become involved in political activities or join any political parties. Many students refused to agree to these terms, and only 1/3 of previously enrolled students were allowed to re-enroll in 2000. Those students who were permitted to enroll found that they were not allowed to choose which campus they would attend, but instead were assigned to one by government authorities.

The military government also went to the extra expense of building university facilities on the outskirts of major cities near military barracks in order to stop students from gathering and protesting. The main campuses of Rangoon University and Rangoon Institute of Technology, which had been centers of student protest in the past, were moved 20 kilometers outside of Rangoon. Students from the provinces were being spread out among the new universities in order to prevent a concentration of students. The distance of the campuses prevented some students from attending classes regularly because they couldn't afford transportation. In light of the restrictions placed on higher education, in 2001 the United Nations Commission on Human Rights stated:

"[The UN Commission on Human Rights welcomes] the reopening of some university courses, but remains concerned that the right to education continues to be a right that is only exercised by those willing to refrain from exercising their civil and political rights and concerned at the reduction in the length of the academic year, the division of the student population to distant campuses, and inadequate allocation of resources...."

(Source: "Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar," Economic and Social Council Resolution on Burma at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights 2001, Fifty seventh session, Agenda item 9, 12 April 2001)

Disparity between Civilian and Military Education

The hallmark of the current education system in Burma is the discrepancy between education received by the military and their families and that which is available to the civilian population. Following the 1988 pro-democracy movement, the military authorities embarked on a campaign to strengthen the armed forces and began to set up military institutions for education. To date the government has yet to release information on military educational institutes, and so student enrollment and government budget allocation given to these institutions is unknown. However, a comparison of civilian and military institutes of higher learning clearly shows that the SPDC has put most of the resources allocated for education into military institutions while neglecting and oppressing civilian education.

While the civilian population has to struggle to pay education expenses for their children as a result of the ongoing financial crisis, the children of the military get higher quality education with financial support from the government. Although the SPDC manages all primary schools in the country, it has also founded and operates 15 primary schools open only to the children of military elite. During summer holidays, the military runs computer training, English courses and field trips for students from military families. Upon completion of high school these students are usually easily accepted into any Military Institute and are eligible for scholarships and scholastic awards. In order to qualify for this preferential treatment, older students in addition to having parents who have high-level connections to the regime are also themselves required to join the USDA. (For more information on primary level education see chapter on children)

The majority of university students in Burma are forced to struggle to pay ever rising tuition costs, while contending with insufficient facilities and learning materials. In direct contrast, members of the military elite are able to attend Military Institutes for free or at reduced cost, which feature computer access, modern libraries, well-equipped scientific labs and other resources. Students at these institutions are also sometimes given the opportunity to attend short-term trainings given by foreign scholars and professionals in specific subjects. While civilian high schools and universities have faced frequent closures since the 1988 military coup, military institutions have remained open. As a result, to some degree military school graduates have been trained to run the civilian education system, and reportedly a third of the graduates of military schools enter civilian universities as lecturers and tutors.

At the post-secondary level, the government has in recent years opened the Defense Services Academy (DSA), the Defense Services Institute of Medicine, the Defense Services Institute of Nursing, the Defense Services Technological Academy and the Defense Services Technical Colleges. In 2002, the government opened the Maritime University which operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Transportation. This university offers bachelors degrees in engineering with concentrations in naval architecture, marine engineering, river and ocean engineering and marine electrical systems and electronics. The Maritime University also offers a bachelors of Science degree specializing in nautical science. An Aerospace Engineering University was also opened in 2002 by the Ministry of Science and Technology. This institution offers undergraduate degrees in engineering with concentrations in aerospace propulsion and flight vehicles, and aerospace electronic systems and instrumentation. Entrance into these programs is highly competitive, and only 100 students are accepted annually for each program. Students who are able to obtain recommendations from military gazette officers or have other high-level military connections have a distinct advantage in the application process as the selection boards for entrance into these programs are run by military officials.

Due to the poor quality of civilian education, students from non-military backgrounds have become interested in applying to military institutes. While civilian students may be accepted into military institutes, the government has created a strict system of application, which includes mandatory recommendations from various government officials, including military officials. This system ensures that the applicants, or the applicants' relatives, have had no history with opposition political parties and no criminal history. The applicants must also promise not to be involved in politics and pledge to serve in the army for a number of years upon graduating. In some universities, which are affiliated with but not directly under the auspices of the military government, students are screened for such things as USDA membership and political affiliations before they are allowed to take entrance exams.

Students who attend these universities are also required to go into military or government service upon graduating. Students who are related to the military elite are favored above civilian applicants and in many cases military students do not have to pay tuition unlike civilian students.

Following graduation, those students loyal to the military are rewarded with educational and employment opportunities not open to the rest of the population. The military government provides well for its army students and gives them stipends, scholarships, and for the very elite, chances to study abroad. In January 2002 the Japanese government committed to providing 203 million yen through their ODA programme to establish The Human Resources Development Scholarship fund which would allow Burmese students to undertake postgraduate studies at Japanese universities in a wide range of fields. According to the Myanmar Times, at the beginning of 2002, 300 students from Burma were studying in Russia and the Russian ambassador had expressed interest in establishing further educational assistance programs, especially in the fields of science and technology.

In addition, members of the military elite are also able to attend diploma trainings and post-graduate programs at civilian universities with financial support from Defense Services. Due to the high cost of these programs, which include courses for languages, computer science, and technical subjects, civilian students who do not receive government support are usually unable to enroll. (Source: Education Report 2002, Foreign Affairs Committee-All Burma Federation of Student Unions. May 2003)

Universities Supported by the Military

1. Sagaing Regional Co-operative College
2. University of Development of National Races, Sagaing
3. Mandalay University of Foreign Languages
4. Defense Services Technical College, Mandalay
5. Nationalities of Youth Resource Development Degree College, Mandalay
6. Defense Services Academy, Maymyo, Mandalay
7. Defense Service Technological Academy, Mandalay
8. Mandalay Regional Co-operative College
9. Myanmar Aerospace Engineering University, Meikhtilar, Mandalay
10. Yangon University of Foreign Languages
11. Defense Services Institute of Medicine, Yangon
12. Yangon Co-operative Degree College
13. Central Co-operative College, Phaunggyi, Yangon
14. Nationalities Youth Resource Development Degree College, Yangon
15. Defense Service Institute of Nursing, Yangon
16. Myanmar Maritime University, Yangon. (Source: ABSFU)

Access to IT Education

In January 2001 the SPDC launched an official program for 'e-education.' Prior to this the government had been pressuring public high schools to build multi-media classrooms. In January 2003, Secretary General Khin Nyunt announced that 1,300 government high schools had built multi-media classrooms. However, even if these numbers are accurate, this still represents only 2.2% of the 58,082 high schools that the government claims to run throughout the nation. As only 7.5% of the government budget goes towards education, government

officials generally force teachers and parents to fundraise or contribute their own money to build these IT facilities. Many parents reportedly were required to pay 5,000 to 10,000 kyat each towards the cost of these multi-media classrooms.

In some cases when school administrators are unable to collect enough money to build these multi-media classrooms, they resort to temporarily renting computers and other IT equipment from other schools or corporations. This equipment remains in place only long enough for government authorities to host official opening ceremonies and then computers and other resources were returned. Even those schools that are able to purchase this equipment often do not have the funds to maintain it, and in many cases these multi-media classrooms are shut down soon after opening.

In border areas IT facilities are non-existent, and students living in these areas, especially those who are members of ethnic minority groups, are extremely unlikely to ever have access to computers. Even in urban areas, most students have little chance to use computers, unless their parents can afford to enroll them in expensive private courses. Students are also hampered by government restrictions on Internet access that apply throughout the country. (For more information on restrictions on the internet see chapter on Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and the Press)

Burma receives the greatest amount of assistance in IT education through The Center for the International Cooperation for Computerization (CICC) from Japan. The CICC regularly holds IT training courses in Japan for Burmese students. However these programs are open only to members of the government organized "Myanmar Computer Science Association." As with most other coveted educational opportunities, preference is always given to those applicants with connections to the military elite. (Source: Education Report 2002, Foreign Affairs Committee-All Burma Federation of Student Unions. May 2003)

Troops Shut Down Two Universities Following Gang Fighting

On 14 February 2002, it was reported that soldiers were called to intervene following fighting between students from the Institute of Economics and the Culture University in Ywarthargyi in South Dagon Township, Rangoon. It is rumored that, what the SPDC has called 'riots,' began when a fight broke out between members of the Scorpion Gang controlled by Kyaw Ne Win, a grandson of former dictator U Ne Win, and the rival White Snake Gang. This fighting reportedly developed into a clash between approximately 200 students from the two universities.

Eyewitnesses to the incident reported that four military trucks from the War Office in Rangoon arrived at the scene after midnight and raided the campuses of the two universities. Following the incident the two universities were temporary closed, and there has been no further information available regarding the arrest of students involved in the fighting. (Source: DVB)

Military University Closed and 2 Students Arrested Following Strikes

On 11 June 2002, several Burmese news services reported that the Defense Services Technical College (DTC) had been closed since the previous week. The closure reportedly was in response to growing unrest among the cadets about perceived discriminatory treatment between DTC students and students at the adjacent Defense Services Academy (DSA).

The DTC was opened only two years ago and is located adjacent to the prestigious Defense Services Academy (DSA), in Pyin Oo Lwin (also known as Maymyo), Mandalay Division. The DSA is considered to be the country's most prestigious military academy and many of the Burma's military leaders are graduates of the academy, including Gen Maung Aye, the army chief and second most powerful member of the SPDC; Lt-Gen Tun Kyi, a former trade minister who was forced to resign in 1997; and the late Maj-Gen Nyan Lin, a former junta member.

Recently, DTC students reportedly initiated a series of strikes, and complained to school officials that DSA students received preferential treatment and better food than they did.

On 17 June 2002 DVB reported that two DTC students had been arrested and sentenced to 7 years imprisonment by a military tribunal from Maymyo. It was also reported that other students were being held at the school and their parents were unable to visit them, while the military conducted interrogations. Many other students were reportedly expelled.

DVB reported that the government is currently preparing to relocate the DTC to a location in Shan State. (Source: RFA, DVB, Irrawaddy)

9.3 Situation of Health

In December 2002, General Khin Nyunt announced that "the health situation in Myanmar has improved dramatically in recent years." (Source: New Light of Myanmar) This improvement has not been readily evident to the thousands within the country who continue to die annually from diseases that are preventable and treatable. The ongoing civil war in Burma has meant that non-military expenditures, including those for health care, are given a low priority in government spending. This results in a health care system with insufficient facilities, too few health care workers, inadequate health education programs and lack of rural services. At the same time, the health problems of many are exacerbated by the ongoing armed conflict which disproportionately affects ethnic minorities. People living in conflict areas are directly affected by things such as landmines and military violence, while migration and forced relocations are the cause of malnutrition and other conditions that lead to the spread of disease.

According to the WHO World Health Report 2000, Burma is ranked 139th out of 191 countries in terms of the overall level of health of the population. People in all groups can expect to live an average of 51.6 years in full health. Women can expect to live 7.1 years with a disability and men 7.4 years. Life expectancy for men is 54.6 years, for women 59.9 years, in the ASEAN Region only Cambodia and Laos have lower life expectancies. Many of the countries ranked lower than Burma are suffering from the ravages of AIDS, a problem which has yet to come to a head in Burma. Lt. Gen Khin Nyunt condemned the findings of the WHO report saying that "The WHO report, based on false information from antigovernment sources aimed at tarnishing the image of the country is unjust and unacceptable...The ministry totally rejects the assessment." However it is difficult to see how the SPDC can effectively argue that public health is a national priority. According to WHO, in 2000 the SPDC spent only 4 'international dollars' per year on health for each citizen. In comparison, neighboring Thailand spent 136 international dollars per person, and even developing countries like Bangladesh and India spent 17 and 13 dollars per person, respectively.

Women, children and ethnic minorities are disproportionately affected by the lack of health care. More than 92 500 of the 1.3 million children born each year in Burma will die before they reach their first birthday. Another 138 000 children will die before the age of 5. Many more children will suffer from acute respiratory infections, diarrhoeal diseases, tuberculosis or malaria, which are the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among children in Burma. More than one third of children under age 5 will become malnourished, most commonly when they are between 1 and 3 years old. (For more information on children's health see chapter on children). (Source: UNICEF)

A significant percentage of women continue to die in childbirth, especially those women who live in rural areas. Estimates vary from between 100-580 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. While more than half of these maternal deaths occur at home, over a third occur in government facilities, which lack the resources to provide adequate emergency obstetric care. Many other women die from unsafe abortions, which are illegal in Burma and must be obtained outside the public health system. (For more information on women's health see chapter on women). (Source: UNICEF)

Access to Health Care

In January 2002 the SPDC reported that "there are 750 hospitals in the nation, up 119 from 631 in 1988. There are now 13 township hospitals and 37 station hospitals in the border areas. The number of dispensaries has increased to 346 at present from 247 in 1988. There are now 1 402 rural health centers and 64 regional health centers. In the past there were 1 337 rural health centers. Within a three-year period, the Government has used US \$ 12 million from its funds to buy modern health, medical and hospital equipment in fulfilling the health requirements. There are now 13 institutes of medicine and other universities of the health sector." (Source: Myanmar Information Committee, Myanmar Medical Association 48th Conference, January 17, 2002)

However in reality, most illnesses and deaths in Burma continue to result from inappropriate or inadequate treatment and/or knowledge, which ultimately stem from a lack of resources. In government hospitals, patients often have to pay a bribe to be seen by a doctor, get a bed, or to receive essential medicine. Families of patients must provide all essential drugs and supplies in public facilities, or else rely on unregulated private practices. Only the very wealthy can afford to go to private clinics with high levels of care. Despite efforts made by NGOs to extend the public health care system, huge disparities in access to health services and information continue to exist, most acutely in border regions and in poor urban areas. (Source: UNICEF) Burma's health care system has been found to be more discriminatory than that of any other country in the ASEAN region in terms of responsiveness. People's access to healthcare is directly correlated to their ethnic background, income level and whether they are civilians or military personnel. In 2000, WHO ranked Myanmar 190 out of 191 countries in terms of the gap between potential health services and actual performance.

In 1999, WHO statistics showed that Burma had 29.7 physicians, 26.1 nurses, 22.1 midwives, and 2.1 dentists per 100,000 people. This rates Burma on the level with countries like Cambodia, which has 29.7 doctors per 100,000 but far below neighboring India with 48 doctors. In addition, medicines in Burma are often expensive and difficult to obtain. The only high-quality drug manufacturer in Burma is the government-owned Burma Pharmaceutical

Industry. As this company fails to produce the amount of medicine needed, approximately 95% of all medicine is smuggled in from India and Bangladesh and sold on the black market. A tablet of Paracetamol (an analgesic) sells for 25 kyat on the black market, while a day laborer is paid a maximum of 500 kyat a day. (Source: Narinjara)

Access to Clean Water and Sanitation

Throughout the developing world, lack of sanitation and access to clean water is a major concern. When adequate systems are not in place for the disposal of human waste, cholera and diarrhoeal diseases can rapidly spread, causing illnesses and deaths. A 2000 Survey conducted by UNICEF estimated that in rural Burma only 57% of the population had access to improved sanitation, where in urban areas 84% of the population had access. A previous survey conducted in 1997 estimated that 34% of the population nationwide lacked access to safe drinking water. (Source: UNICEF)

In 2002, arsenic levels in tube wells in the coastal and delta regions of the country were discovered to be 50 times higher than the level deemed safe by WHO. The SPDC Department of Health Planning said: "the local community were unable to be informed about arsenic when the water samples were collected, as the confirmatory tests needed to be conducted first." There is no information available on how many people have suffered poisoning, however the SPDC has failed to publicize any government-sponsored medical treatment for these people.

Malaria

The SPDC has labeled malaria the top priority disease in the National Health Plan. According to government figures, about 600,000 malaria cases and 3,000 malaria deaths are registered annually, with the highest number of cases and highest mortality rates in the remote border areas. However these figures only represent the number of patients who visit official health centers and UN statistics estimate that in fact around 30,000 people die annually of the disease. (Source: UNICEF)

On 23 January, Narinjara news reported that there had been an outbreak of malaria and diarrhea in northern Maungdaw Township, Arakan State. Several foreign doctors working with Danish NGO, Doctors without Boundaries (AZG) treated victims in some of the worst affected areas. Many of the malaria patients were suffering from drug-resistant strains of the disease, and the foreign medical team reportedly had difficulty coping with the large number of patients. The foreign doctors also found that there was little or no medical treatment available at government hospitals or dispensaries in the area. Local residents report that there have been a number of deaths from malaria and diarrhea already this year. This drug resistant strain of malaria has reportedly now crossed the border from Arakan State into the Chittagong Hills in neighboring Bangladesh. (Source: Narinjara)

Tuberculosis

The SPDC has stated that tuberculosis is the second priority disease in the country's national health program. In 2002 a WHO study reported that approximately 20,000 people die annually from tuberculosis, and about 85,000 people contract the disease each year. WHO has been working to set up "TB control centers" with the goal of establishing one in every township. WHO has categorized Burma as one of 22 countries with a high rate of TB, however the organization has stated that the cost of treatment in Burma is low compared to other countries. WHO estimates that 4.5% of TB patients are infected with HIV, and 60 to 80% of AIDS cases suffer from TB.

HIV/AIDS

HIV prevalence is rising rapidly in Burma/Myanmar, fuelled by population mobility, poverty and frustration that breeds risky sexual activity and drug-taking. Already, one in 50 adults are estimated to be infected, and infection rates in sub-populations with especially risky behaviour (such as drug users and sex workers) are among the highest in Asia. Because of the long lag time between HIV infection and death, the true impact of the epidemic is just beginning to be felt...Recently, there have been signs that the government is crawling out of its deep denial about the true magnitude of the HIV epidemic in Myanmar and is preparing to take real measures to stem its spread. ...HIV is an unforgiving epidemic: once the initial opportunity for effective prevention is lost and a critical mass of infection builds up, the epidemic assumes a life of its own. Prevention becomes more and more difficult, and care needs begin to swamp health and community services, diverting resources that could otherwise be used for other development priorities. Myanmar stands perilously close to an unstoppable epidemic. (Source: Myanmar: The HIV/AIDS Crisis, International Crisis Group April 2, 2002)

Burma has the highest incidence of HIV infection in Asia after Cambodia. At the end of 2001, UNAIDS estimated that 180,000 to 400,000 people in Burma were living with AIDS and that AIDS will be a major, if not *the* major, cause of death for young adults in the next decade. A number of factors have contributed to the growth of the AIDS epidemic in Burma, these include: government denial and lack of political will to address the disease; a deteriorating health sector; an unclean blood supply; a growing sex industry; high population mobility; extremely high rates of infection in drug users; and a large, poorly paid and poorly educated army. (Source: The Washington Quarterly: "the Regional Impact of HIV and Aids Accelerating and Disseminating across Asia". 2001 Winter. Vol. 24, No. 1; Pg. 211)

As in many other countries, those hardest hit with the disease initially have been intravenous drug users and commercial sex workers. By 1989, UNAIDS figures show that 73% of drug users in Rangoon were HIV positive, and since then infection rates among drug users in Rangoon and Mandalay have ranged from 50 to 85%. HIV infection rates among Burma's addicts are among the highest in the world, and as there is a shortage of syringes along with other medical supplies, the spread of the disease is facilitated by widespread needle sharing. HIV infection among sex workers in Rangoon and Mandalay has also increased from a median of 4% in 1992 to 26% in 1997. HIV rates among military recruits tested in Rangoon and Mandalay grew from 0.5% in 1992 to 1.4% in 2000.

Internal migration for the purpose of employment is also a cause of the spread of HIV. Hundreds of thousands of people work seasonally in the jade and ruby mines in Shan and

Kachin states and it has been found that most young adults who are HIV positive in central Burma have worked in the mines, bringing HIV with them when they return home. The virus is also spreading in prisons where needles are often re-used several times, and in monasteries where young men shunned by their families move to die. One doctor said that he has treated a number of monks, including elderly monks, who have AIDS.

Burma's already overburdened health system is ill equipped to deal with the medical needs of growing numbers of AIDS patients. People who are living with HIV/AIDS in Burma rarely have access to counseling or anti-HIV drugs. In addition there is a countrywide shortage of antibiotics for TB, which kills most AIDS patients. It has been reported that once a patient is diagnosed with AIDS he or she usually dies within 3 months.

People in Burma also often lack the necessary information and services to protect themselves from the spread of the disease. Condoms are too expensive for most people and are not yet widely socially acceptable, having only been legal since 1993. HIV tests are rarely free and many people cannot afford the US\$10 dollars it costs to take one. The government has been extremely slow to respond to the AIDS epidemic, for many years simply denying that it existed. Lately the regime has been more proactive in addressing HIV/AIDS, labeling it 'priority disease number three' in their national health program, and cooperating with a number of INGOs and UN organizations to initiate programs for prevention and treatment. Despite this, the government continues to place the disease in a moral context, which serves to further stigmatize people who are HIV positive. At a speech on National AIDS Day in December 2002, General Khin Nyunt stated that: "the cultural and social values of Myanmar society are found to have a protective effect to a greater extent in many population groups."

State media are largely banned from reporting about AIDS, and healthworkers complain that HIV/AIDS education materials released by the government are outdated and confusing. Most of these campaigns avoid mention of sex and condoms or the need for drug addicts to use clean needles, instead blandly urging people to "respect family values" and "stay faithful to your spouse." Homosexual relations are never acknowledged or addressed in these campaigns.

This denial of the facts affects not only Burmese citizens, but also neighboring countries. As drugs, migrant workers and sex workers leave the country, Burma has become an AIDS exporter. In neighboring China, India and Thailand, the provinces with the highest HIV rates are those that border Burma. A report released by Johns Hopkins School of Public Health has connected outbreaks of HIV and injection drug use with overland heroin trafficking routes originating in Laos and Burma and spreading throughout the region.

Mental Health

Mental health is an often overlooked aspect of health care in many societies and the situation is exacerbated in Burma by the lack of resources allocated to health care in general. Ongoing civil war and violence is accompanied by an increase in mental health disorders. Studies of refugees on the Thailand-Cambodia border found that 55% suffered from some form of depression and 15% from post-traumatic stress disorder. The literature on the subject indicates that because mental trauma is a concern for a sizeable portion of war-affected populations, it should be addressed as a major public health issue.

International Humanitarian Aid

INGOs began re-entering Burma in 1991, with the majority of them working in the health sector. This was a controversial move because many people felt that an INGO presence in Burma would provide legitimacy to the military regime. However, INGOs that decided to work in Burma argued that some issues, such as the spread of HIV, could not wait for a change in the political situation. From the start, the SPDC has shown a preference for working with intergovernmental organizations such as the United Nations. U.N. bodies, such as UNICEF, UNDP and WHO, play a larger role in funding than INGOs. Many of these organizations have taken a lead in development, especially in the areas of management and assessment and often they are the only buttresses against the collapse of government health and education programs. INGOs have been more active in implementing development projects at the community level and have focused their efforts on training rather than providing hard resources or cash. In 1994, the SPDC decided to accept offers of assistance from international agencies and NGO's in areas covered by the Border Areas Development Program "as long as they do not threaten national security and solidarity." As a result, some organizations have established their own programs and some have funded projects through local community groups, however they have not used a common structure, system or method.

In order to work in Burma, INGOs have to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which outlines the conditions under which they are allowed to work. To be granted a MOU, INGOs first must approach the relevant ministry, such as the Ministry of Health and then have their case presented by a ministry representative to the Foreign Affairs Committee. After this, if all goes well, final permission to operate is granted by the Cabinet.

Problems faced by INGOs working in Burma include: lack of accurate information; lack of access to all parts of the country and an inability to address the underlying problems that affect health such as forced labor, forced relocations, and armed conflict. INGO's are also hampered by a shortage of trained personnel in ethnic areas and political restrictions on who they associate with. They are also frequently subject to arbitrary whims of local military commanders and SPDC officials regarding their status.

Throughout 2002 the debate on humanitarian aid in Burma intensified. Several organizations including the International Crisis Group, Altsean-Burma, and NCGUB released reports analyzing the debate and stating a position on if and under what conditions, humanitarian aid should be given. The International Crisis Group (ICG) report, *Myanmar: The Politics of Humanitarian Aid*, gave an "unequivocal yes" to increased humanitarian assistance. The report argued that the current humanitarian crisis in Burma cannot wait for a political resolution which may be years in coming. The ICG also urged "working with the government and through government institutions" to address issues such as HIV/AIDS.

In contrast, ALTSEAN-Burma, NCGUB and a number of Burmese activists have argued that humanitarian aid cannot be divorced from a political context, as the problems such aid is addressing are at root political. In January 2002, a Strategic Coordinating Committee of the Burmese democracy and ethnic movements released a statement on humanitarian aid. The statement called for aid to be distributed only in consultation with NLD and local community leaders; that aid be delivered directly to the recipients through credible INGOs without SPDC involvement; and that delivery of aid to border areas be monitored by an independent body. Burma activists have further urged that aid should contribute to the process of national reconciliation including political and economic reforms. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has stated

that "better governance, not increased funding" is the answer to Burma's humanitarian crisis. She emphasized "Unless there is good governance, you cannot ensure that the assistance will really benefit the country."

9.4 Personal Account

Name:	Thomas
Age:	22 years
Ethnicity:	Chin
Religion:	Baptist
Occupation:	Student
Interview Conducted by:	HRDU
Date:	July 1, 2003
Place:	Mae Sot

I have gone to government schools all of my life. I went to primary school and high school in my hometown in Chin State. When I was in 10th standard we didn't have any textbooks. This was a big problem because at the end of 10th standard students around the country have to take a matriculation exam and we knew that the information in these textbooks would be on the exam. During the year the Minister of Education, U Than Aung came to visit our school. He stood in front of our class and asked us what we needed for our education. We told him that we needed textbooks so that we could study for the exams. Then he started laughing and told us that we could just bring in a sheet with all the answers to copy from. All of the students were upset and even the teacher was angry at him when he said this.

Because the government school was not very good, in the evening and at night I attended extra classes at a private boarding school. The tuition for this school was 40,000 kyat for 8 months, so most of the other students at the government school could not afford to take classes there. Even though the private school was much better, the government forced us to attend the government school if we wanted to take the exams. When we took our exams I got first place for English in Chin State.

I finished 10th standard in 1999 so at that time all of the universities were closed, except for the military colleges. Soon after I graduated 3 SPDC soldiers from battalion 266 came to meet me and invited me to join the army and attend the military college. They told me that there were no Chins in the military and since I had done so well on my exams I would have a lot of opportunities if I joined them. I refused, because in Chin State the soldiers are very bad and everybody hates them. When they go in to villages they take chickens and pigs from the villagers and they also make us carry their weapons without pay. Five or ten years ago some Chin people became soldiers, but because they were Chin they never got promoted. Instead they were just sent to the front lines. This happens not only with Chin people, also other ethnic minority people like Karen and Shan have no chance for promotion in the army.

I worked as a teacher for two years until the universities reopened at the end of 2000. Then I was accepted to the Government Technical College (formerly the Rangoon Institute of Technology) in Rangoon. This was very unusual. Usually the government doesn't allow Chin people to go to university in Rangoon, if Chins want to attend university then they must go to Mandalay or Magwe Division.

I began my studies at the Government Technical College (GTC) in January 2001. The college was located 40 miles away from Rangoon and there was no school hostel, so we had to pay to stay in boarding houses. In classes we never had textbooks, only our teacher had a textbook which he would give us chapter by chapter to photocopy. All the subjects we were learning were explained in English in the text book but none of our teachers could speak English, so they just explained the subjects in Burmese. However they couldn't translate the meaning of the text. Most teachers themselves had never graduated from engineering college so they didn't know very much about the subject. Our university lacked many facilities, we didn't have a library, or any computers, and we didn't have the equipment necessary to do practical labs. According to the school law all the students were prohibited from discussing politics or from forming groups or organizations. In February or March 2001 many of the students asked the college principle to try and improve the school facilities. One day, almost all of the students wore T-Shirts on which we had drawn an upside down pyramid with:

RIT
YTU
GTC

This showed that our school was very good when it was Rangoon Institute of Technology (RIT) but after the government had separated RIT into Yangon Technical University and Government Technical College the standard of education had been getting worse and worse.

That day the principle of the college took our T-shirts and warned us that if we wore them again we could be arrested. The next day some military soldiers came to our college. About 10 of them stood outside holding guns and guarding the school for the next two weeks. Our school was surrounded by military barracks so it was very easy for the government to send troops to our school. Later we kept reading in the newspapers that government schools were very good and that GTC was a very good college. This wasn't true. When the college principle refused to respond to our requests to improve the college, we wrote letters to Khin Nyunt, as well as the Minister of Education and the Minister of Science and Technology. Almost all of the approximately 70 students signed their names to the letter, except for some of the women students. The government ministers never answered our letter. However soldiers began coming to the school every morning and evening and recording the students who were getting on and off the buses to go into town. They were doing this to intimidate us.

None of the students were happy at the school, and in the first year several students dropped out. After the first year the student population grew as a new class of first year students joined GTC. People believed that there were many MI spies among the first year students. During the first semester of our second year my classmates and I again wrote letters to Khin Nyunt, the minister of Education, and the Minister of Science and Technology but again we received no reply. In one of our subjects that year the teachers only taught 40% of the material that we needed to study for the exams, also they only gave us chapters of the textbook to copy one by one, so we didn't have a chance to study the whole textbook. Then at the end of the year when we had to take our final exam many of the questions on the exam were from parts of the course that we hadn't covered in class. The authorities gave us these questions because they knew that we couldn't answer them and they wanted us to fail. When we got our exam results, 37 out of the 43 students had failed. The only students who had passed were the 6 girls who had never signed the letters to the government ministers. In the

other section of 2nd year students the same thing had happened. When we asked the teachers if we could retake the exam they refused. University students in Burma almost never fail because if they fail they are allowed to retake exams. Many of my classmates left school after this. I went home to my family and told them that I wanted to quit school and join some of the revolutionary or opposition groups, because I was very angry about what had happened. My parents however wanted me to go back to Yangon and back to school. Before I had gone home, the principle had announced that students should bring their fathers to the school to pledge that their children would follow school laws.

When I arrived back at GTC for my third year, the deputy principle of the college called all the students one by one to come and stand before his desk. He asked me why I didn't bring my father. I told him that I was 22 years old, and my parents lived far away. Also my parents support me and everything I say was in accord with my parents' views.

Then he asked me, "do you know the purpose of this school?"

I said, "yes."

He asked, "do you know the meaning of discipline?"

I said "yes I understand discipline, but I don't understand the discipline at this school."

He said: "so you failed your subjects, and you don't understand discipline."

Then I said: "I followed all the college rules, I have never drunk alcohol or broken discipline."

Then the deputy principle said: "This is a government school, if you criticize the government you are breaking the most important college rule."

I said: "Even though none of the students are happy in this school we have never criticized the government because we just want to stay peacefully and study, but we cannot study without the necessary facilities."

Then he said: "You are so low that you should never have dared to write letters to the government ministers. If you criticize the government you will lose your opportunity to study. Why don't you nod your head when I say this? Many other students born in Rangoon nod their heads when I say this."

I said "I didn't nod my head because you asked me a question which I know the answer to in my heart..many other students feel like me, maybe they agree and nod their heads because they are afraid."

Then he said: "You should not stay in school, I had better expel you."

Then I asked "Why?"

He said: "I know you are a person who criticizes the government by the way you have been speaking."

When he told me this I felt very sad and angry and wanted to cry. After I left many of my friends warned me that I had better run away because many other students and teachers had heard my discussion and some of them were sure to be MI agents. They said that if I was expelled from school I was sure to be arrested. So first I tried to apply for a passport but I was rejected, and then I ran away and came to Thailand. I hope in the future when democracy comes to Burma I will have a chance to continue my studies.



10. The Freedom of Belief and Religion

10.1 Background

While the majority of Burma's population follows Theravada Buddhism, there are significant numbers of Christians (mostly Baptists as well as some Catholics and Anglicans), Muslims (mostly Sunni), Hindus and practitioners of traditional Chinese and indigenous religions. Government statistics record that almost 90 percent of the population are Buddhist, 4 percent Christian and 4 percent Muslim; however these statistics most likely understate the percentage of adherents to religions other than Buddhism. In Burma, there is some correlation between ethnicity and religion, with Theravada Buddhism serving as the dominant religion among the majority Burman ethnic group and among the Shan and Mon ethnic minorities of the eastern part of the country. The Kachin ethnic group in Northern Burma and the Chin and Naga ethnic groups in the west (some of which practice traditional indigenous religions) are largely Christian and Christianity is also widespread among the Karen and Karenni ethnic groups in the south and east. Other Karen and Karenni are Theravada Buddhists. Hinduism is practiced by Indians, for the most part Tamils and Bengalis, the majority of whom live in larger cities and in the south-central region (though a number of Tamils are Catholic). Islam is widespread in Arakan Division on the western coast, where it is the main religion of the Rohingya minority. Many Indians and Bengalis along with their descendants are also Muslims. A small Chinese ethnic population practices traditional Chinese religions. Traditional indigenous religions remain prevalent among the smaller ethnic groups in the northern regions.

The US Secretary of State has designated Burma as a "country of particular concern" under the International Religious Freedom Act for acute violations of religious freedom since 1999. According to the US Department of State Annual Report on International Religious Freedom for 2002, there remained minimal respect of religious freedom in Burma. The 1974 Constitution indicates that freedom of religion should be granted to members of the national races as long as their activities do not interfere or disturb existing laws or public interest. Burma does not have an official religion, but the SPDC shows favoritism towards Theravada Buddhism. As the minority religions are associated with ethnic minority groups connected with opposition groups, the SPDC often considers religious freedom as a danger to national unity. As a result, the SPDC keeps all organizations, including religious organizations, under a watchful eye by entering or monitoring meetings. All organizations must register with the Ministry of Home Affairs with the approval of the Ministry for Religious Affairs, except for "genuine" religious organizations. In order to buy or sell property or maintain a bank account, an organization must be registered. Therefore most are compelled to do so. In addition, registered organizations may also receive assistance from the government towards electric and utility services. (Source: US Department of State)

The SPDC established rules for the proper code and conduct of Buddhist clergy and bans any involvement with political activism or the promotion of human rights. The SPDC has forcibly converted Christians and Muslims, the minority religions and mostly minority ethnicities, to Buddhism. The SPDC does not allow Muslims to build new mosques or to make repairs on the exteriors of existing mosques. Christians must gain permission from many different government levels in order to build new churches. The SPDC has been reported to destroy religious buildings of minority religions and construct Buddhist temples or military buildings

in their place. The SPDC has also included Buddhist codes of belief in the state authorized curriculum of all elementary schools. While students are allowed to choose not to partake in Buddhist instruction, the SPDC often punishes those who don't. (Source: US Department of State)

10.2 Religious Discrimination against Christians

A recent study by Christian Solidarity Worldwide reports that new laws in Burma have been enacted to restrict Christians' right to freedom of worship. Through these new laws the SPDC has attempted to force the closure of all churches under one hundred years old, sent priests into hiding, and banned the construction of new church buildings. In some parts of Burma it is also illegal to hold church services in private homes. (Source: Asian Legal Resource Center)

Government regulations prohibit Christian clergy from attempting to proselytize in some areas and there is at least one report of a clergy member being beaten to discourage him from proselytizing. The Government has a general policy of prohibiting permanent foreign religious missions to operate in Burma. This policy has been in place since almost all foreign missionaries were expelled by the government in the mid-1960s when time all private schools and hospitals, the majority of which were affiliated with Christian organizations, were nationalized. Following the take-over of these institutions no compensation was offered to those who had previously run them. Some Christian theological seminaries established before 1962 do continue to operate.

In recent years it has become increasingly difficult for Christian groups to obtain government permission to build new places of worship. In some areas of Chin State it has been reported that authorities have not given permits for the construction of new churches since 1997. In cities such as Myitkyina, the capital of Kachin State, the SPDC has also refused to allow churches to be built on main roads; in Rangoon they have mandated that some Christian groups refer to their places of worship as "social centers" rather than "churches." (Source: US Department of State) Only after paying a large amount of bribe money to lower level township or district authorities, are Christians allowed to repair, expand, or build places of worship. In addition, Christian sermons were reportedly subjected to censorship. (Source: CHRO)

There are numerous other ways in which the military government has attempted to prevent Burmese Christians from practicing their religion. Army units frequently destroy churches and Christian graveyards to build their camps. It has been frequently reported that Chin Christians are forced to assist the SPDC in these projects. Sometimes churches are not destroyed but instead taken over by the SPDC to be used as military bases, an act that is perceived as desecration of a holy place by local Christians. Since the early 1990's, military authorities have taken down or forced villagers to remove all crosses standing outside Chin Christian villages. In many cases the government has replaced the crosses with Buddhist pagodas, sometimes forcing resident Christians to provide the labor to construct them. As part of a larger campaign to "Burmanize" the Chin, the SPDC has greatly increased their military presence in Chin State and other majority Chin areas. They have also sponsored and encouraged Burman Buddhist monks to emigrate from other areas and built Buddhist monasteries and shrines in Chin communities with few or no Buddhists, frequently requiring the residents to contribute forced "donations" of money or labor.

On 20 November 2002, it was reported that the Burmese military chose Lentlang in Tiddim Township, a small Christian village in northern Chin State, as the site for a new Buddhist pagoda. The area is predominantly Christian and the SPDC is building the pagoda as part of their program to spread Buddhism to Christian areas. The SPDC is forcing all trade and commercial vehicles on route to India to provide labor for the building project by transporting bricks, sand and other building materials. The trucks transport the materials from Haimual, Rhkhawdar and Malsawm villages to Lentlang without compensation. (Source: CHRO)

In their efforts to encourage Chin Christians to convert to Buddhism the government has resorted to using a carrot-and-stick approach. Christians that convert to Buddhism are promised monthly payments and Buddhists are able to take advantage of reduced price rice supplied by the government, free food distributed on Sunday mornings when Christians are in church, and exemption from forced labor. It has also been reported that SPDC soldiers stationed in Chin State were given a higher rank and pay if they married a Chin women who would convert to Buddhism.

To punish those who refuse to convert, authorities frequently disrupt church services and celebrations and force Christians to clean and repair Buddhist shrines. Christians are also ordered to attend sermons where Christianity is disparaged or are made to join training courses for Buddhist monks, after which they are pressured to convert. In addition there have been reported incidences when Christian children have been taken from their families, under the pretext of receiving a secular education, and then converted to Buddhism without the knowledge or consent of their parents. There have also been credible reports that in Pa'an Township in Karen State army units routinely conscript young men leaving Sunday church services for forced portering, causing young men to avoid church attendance. Throughout 2001 there were continued reports that Chins were taken for forced portering by the military, both in Chin State and Sagaing Division (see chapter on forced labor).

Another Christian minority group is the 20,000 ethnic Naga Christians who live in northwest Burma on the border with the Indian state of Nagaland. (Source: AFP) While there is less information available about the situation of Naga Christians, there have been reports that indicate that they suffer many of the same restrictions on their freedom of religion as the Chin. In 1999 it was reported that more than 1,000 Naga Christians fled to India to escape from religious persecution. These refugees reported that they were being pressured to convert to Buddhism by the military and by local monks and that the churches in their villages had been shut down by the government and then desecrated (Source: US Department of State)

Persecution of Christians-partial list of incidents

Restrictions on Kayah State Baptists' Convention

Baptists from Kayah State hold their annual convention every year in March. In 2002 they wanted to hold the meeting at Htee Tamoh village. However, the authorities did not give them permission to hold the meeting in March as usual. Instead the authorities ordered them to hold the meeting between 13 -18 February and forbid them from telling anyone that they were attending a religious meeting. They had to say that they were going to church to worship. (KNAHR)

Junta Coerces Chin Christians to Pull Down Cross

In March 2002, Major General Ye Myint, Chief of the Bureau of Special Operations, visited Matupi in southern Chin State. He was offended by a 30 ft high cross that stood 1 mile south of the town. As a result the town was pressured to remove the cross. The SPDC closed down humanitarian and development projects run by the Matupi Baptist Association (MBA) including a water supply improvement project. Although the MBA had obtained support from the Japanese Embassy in Rangoon to complete the projects, the SPDC would not allow them to receive the water pipes that were being shipped from Mandalay until the cross was removed. (Source: CHRO)

Concurrently, in Matupi 200 Christian households, who had already paid 8,500 Kyats in telephone connection fees, were denied telephone connections in their homes. The authorities indicated that their telephone lines would be connected once the cross was removed. (Source: CHRO)

Burmese Baptist Convention Banned on Orders of Junta

On 4 April 2002, the Kachin Baptist Church (KBC) planned to commence its 34th 3 day convention in Muse Township, Shan State. General Maung Aye, the commander in Chief of the Burmese military, ordered the convention to be cancelled. This overturned the permission to hold the event which had been previously granted by the northern Shan State regional commander and First Secretary Lt. General Khin Nyunt, head of the military intelligence. The KBC had intended to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the arrival of Ola Hansen the first missionary to Kachin State, as well as the 75th anniversary of the translation of the bible into the Kachin language. 100,000 people from across Burma were expected to attend the convention, in which elections for the church leaders would be held. This was the third instance of the event being cancelled by the military since 1962. (Source: Christian Solidarity Worldwide)

Burma's Junta Arrested Two Prominent Chin Christian Ministers

On 5 April 2002, Rev. Htat Gyi/That Ci and his son-in-law Pastor Lian Za Dal alias Saya Tun Lin, two prominent Chin Christian ministers, were arrested by local officials in Rangoon for not registering guests. Rev. Htat Gyi's daughter and his son-in-law had come to visit and earlier in the evening he had gone to the Block Peace and Development Council office to register them as guests in his home. The local authorities informed him that his request would be reviewed and the Township authority would inform him as to whether or not he was permitted to have guests. At midnight the police raided his home and arrested all the family members for not registering their guests. It was reported that during interrogation the police asked Rev. Htat Gyi if he would stop holding church services. The Rev. Htat Gyi is well known among Christians and Buddhists alike for his sermons. Buddhists often attend his services. While he has been warned by the local authorities not to construct churches in the local area, he has ignored their warnings in the belief that he is not a threat to the stability of the state. Rev. Htat Gyi and Pastor Lian Za Dal were sent to Insein Prison on 8 April 2002. (Source: CHRO)

Konnah Baptist Church Banned from Building New Church

On 7 December 2002, the Loikaw Township military authorities banned the Konnah Baptist church from building a new church after the church had already gathered construction materials. The church had spent 50 million kyat on the construction materials. Some said this ban was part of the Burmese military's restriction on religion. (KNAHR)

10.3 Religious Discrimination against Muslims

According to the US Department of State, 4% of the population of Burma practices Islam. This figure may be underestimating the actual number. According to research completed by Human Rights Watch, Muslim religious leaders believe this figure is closer to 10%. Muslims suffer from a wide range of human rights abuses; from restriction of movement, extra-judicial killings and forced labor, to discrimination in hiring and higher education. Many Muslims are not indigenous to Burma and because long familial links to Burma must be proven in order to gain citizenship, many Muslim families who have been living in Burma for generations are denied citizenship and are thereby excluded from government positions and subject to domestic travel restrictions.

Islam initially arrived with traders and travelers from the Middle East and India who settled in Arakan State and along the coast. While some Muslims have lived in Burma for hundreds of years, most arrived during the period of British colonial rule beginning in 1824, when many Indians and Bengali Muslims migrated to Burma in search of work and business opportunities. The term Muslim in the Burmese language is used to indicate both a religion and an ethnicity therefore Muslims in Burma face discrimination as both an ethnic and a religious group. The Burmese use the term "Ka La" or "Indian" to refer to all Muslim people as most are descended from South Asian countries such as Bangladesh or India. Most Muslims who live in Burma were born there, speak Burmese as a first language and come from families that have lived in Burma for several generations. Communities of Muslims can be found all over Burma in most every urban area. While Arakan State has the largest Muslim population, large communities can also be found in Mandalay and Rangoon. Many Muslims who live in Karen State refer to themselves as 'Black Karen' or 'Pwakanyaw Thu' as they have integrated smoothly into Karen communities. While the non-Muslim Karen do not view the Muslims as Karen, they tend to coexist peacefully. (Source: KHRG)

Tension between Muslims and non-Muslims is longstanding in Burmese history. During the period of British colonial rule Muslims took up many occupations as traders, businessmen, laborers, civil servants and moneylenders. Those involved in money lending or Indian chettyar profession were often viewed as cheating the Burmese by stealing their money and land. Generally accorded higher status by the British, the Indians were often resented by the Burman population. As a result tensions and violence often occurred during the colonial period. During World War II, nearly 500,000 Muslims were driven out of Burma by General Aung San's Burma Independence Army because they supported the British at the time when General Aung San was supporting the Japanese.

The government has readily exploited whatever Anti-Muslim sentiment is present among the public. There is a history of anti-Muslim riots breaking out in Burma when the government wants to divert the public's attention from political and economic concerns. In 1988 the

SLORC provoked anti-Muslim riots in Taunggyi and Prome during the pro-democracy movement. In May 1996 anti-Muslim literature, widely believed to have been written by the SLORC, was distributed in four towns in Shan State leading to several incidences of violence. In September 1996 the SLORC razed a 600-year old mosque in Arakan State and used the rubble to pave paths between new military base camps in the area. And in March 1997 SLORC officials were accused of instigating attacks against Muslims and of exacerbating existing tensions between the Muslim and Buddhist communities in Central Burma. (Source: The BurmaNet News: SLORC Anti-Muslim Campaign in Karen State, April 29, 1997, Issue #707)

In February 2001, anti-Muslim riots broke out in Sittwe the capital of Arakan State. The rioting persisted for 4 days until the authorities intervened to prevent any further aggression. Both Buddhists and Muslims were killed and suffered injuries. Approximately 50 Muslim homes were burned. In May 2001, riots broke out in Taungoo, Bago Division. After 2 days the military intervened, promptly halting the unrest. 10 Muslims and 2 Buddhists were killed and there was widespread damage to mosques and Muslim homes and businesses. In both cases monks were reported to have incited some degree of the violence. In addition it was reported that the monks were Union Solidarity and Development Association members (USDA) or military personnel dressed as monks. In both cases government security, firefighters and police did little to nothing to protect Muslim mosques, homes or businesses. In October 2001, riots broke out again in Prome, reportedly the result of anger over a young Buddhist woman eloping with a Muslim man who allegedly later forced her to convert to Islam. The riots sparked violence in many other regions as well.

In July 2002, Human Rights Watch (HRW) released a briefing paper summarizing the religious violence of 2001. HRW indicated that the SPDC took minimal action if any to prevent or stop the violence against Muslims. (Source: *Crackdown on Burmese Muslims*, HRW, July 2002) The SPDC reacted by claiming that the riots were minor disagreements. Moreover, the SPDC claimed that conflicts based on religious differences rarely occur. In the event that it does, authorities together with religious leaders resolve all problems peacefully preventing any extended violence. (Source: AFP) On 27 December 2002, during his report at the 59th Session of the UN General Assembly, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Burma, indicated that "Chronic problems involving Muslims especially but not only in Rakhine (Arakan) State, continued to be reported." (Source: "Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar," Economic and Social Council Resolution on Burma at the United Nations Commission on Human Rights 2002, Fifty ninth session, Agenda item 9, 27 December 2002)

Muslims are often issued special identity papers or no identity papers at all and face heavy travel restrictions. According to the 1982 citizenship law, citizenship will only be extended to people who can prove that their families resided in Burma before the commencement of British colonial rule in 1824. The SPDC indicates that as of 10 years old, any Burmese is eligible to obtain an interim national identity card. When he or she reaches 18 years of age, a permanent identity card can be obtained. As Muslims are not viewed as citizens, they are unable to receive national identity cards. Muslims are seen as foreigners in their own country but they are also denied Foreign Registration Cards, which allow foreigners to live legally in Burma. According to SPDC law identity cards must be shown any time a police or military personnel requests. Lack of an identity card can lead to arrest and imprisonment. A Muslim person must obtain a 10-day travel visa in order to go to Rangoon. Bribes ranging from 300 to 1,000 Kyat must be paid at every checkpoint along the way. According to SPDC law, all

visitors and guests must be registered with the Immigration Police and the District Peace and Development Council upon arrival at their destination. This also requires an identity card. Penalties for housing unregistered guests include interrogation, arrest, imprisonment, or subjection to forced portering on the frontlines for the army. Both guests and hosts alike may be subjected to penalties. (Source: KHRG & HRW)

Without an identity card obtaining employment and education are increasingly difficult for Muslims. The SPDC does not allow Muslim communities to build any more Islamic schools instead Muslims are allowed to study in SPDC schools through high school. In order to study at the university or college level entrance exams must be completed. Identity cards must be shown in order to take the exams, therefore Muslims are often unable to even take the entrance exams. At the same time, they would not be able to travel easily to another town or city in order to attend a university. Similarly, Muslims are prevented from procuring employment in private companies as many require identity cards. For the same reason, most Muslims are unable to join the civil service or military. For those who are able to obtain a position promotion is highly unlikely. (Source: *Easy Targets: The Persecution of Muslims in Burma*, KHRG, May 2002)

According to Human Rights Watch, travel restrictions have prevented Burmese Muslims from performing the Haj, the holy pilgrimage to Mecca. In 2002, Muslims had to overcome greater restrictions than before. Prior to 2002, an official SPDC coordinated delegation of 200 Burmese Muslims and an additional 5000 Muslims performed the pilgrimage every year. In 2002, only the delegation of 200 was granted permission to travel. While the SPDC did not ban Muslims from performing the Haj, they did not grant passports to any Muslims. The President of the Burmese Islamic Council reported that the percentage of Muslims procuring passports dropped from 20% to 5%, making both holy pilgrimage and business activities increasingly difficult. (Source: *Crackdown on Burmese Muslims*, HRW, July 2002)

After the 1988 pro-democracy demonstrations, the SPDC created a law banning gatherings of five people or more. Those who do so may be subject to arrest. This law is often overlooked except in the case of Muslims who must seek permission from all levels of government to hold celebrations for major religious holidays and ceremonies. The levels of government include the Township, Division, State, Peace and Development Councils as well as the Military Region Commander. In the cities where rioting transpired in 2001, Muslims have been banned from attending mosques or other group worship including the funerals of those who were killed in the riots. (Source: *Easy Targets: The Persecution of Muslims in Burma*, KHRG, May 2002)

Discrimination Against Rohingya

“Crossing the border won’t give us any solution since the neighboring country is not willing to take us. Though we are subjected to the worst human rights violations, not even being allowed to earn our own livelihood, we won’t be considered as political victims. Even in Bangladesh, there is a rising tendency to accuse the Muslims who fled from here to be considered as ‘economic migrants’, which we are not. We want to live honorably enjoying the full rights of a Burmese citizen but the SPDC won’t allow us though we have been living in this country for hundreds of years.”

–A Village Elder from Maungdaw Township, Arakan State (Source: Narinjara News)

There are 1.4 million members of the Rohingya (Bengali-speaking Muslims) minority in Arakan State, on the country’s western coast. The Rohingya are mostly concentrated in the northern part of Arakan State and experience severe legal, economic and social discrimination. Under the leadership of General Ne Win restrictions and oppression of Muslims increased tremendously. Because the majority of Rohingyas immigrated during the period of British colonial rule, General Ne Win viewed them as foreigners who had settled illegally. In the 1974 Emergency Immigration Act the Rohingya were denied citizenship and nationality. In 1977, General Ne Win led operation Naga Min or Dragon King which drove 200,000 Rohingya across the border into Bangladesh to seek refuge from the registration and prosecution campaign against the "illegal" residents in Arakan State. According to the 1982 citizenship law, proof must be provided that ancestors resided in Burma prior to annexation by the British.

More than 30,000 Rohingya living in and around Sittwe, the Capital of Arakan State, have no national identity cards as the government refused to issue new identity cards to them after the existing identity cards were abolished in 1988. Without ID cards these people are unable to travel freely, attend educational institutes or start a business. Hundreds of Rohingya are without identity cards in other parts of the State, including Maung Taw township, Buu Thee Taung township and Paut Taw township. People have written many times to the Home Ministry on the issue, yet there has been no reply from the government. (Source: AHRW)

According to Forum Asia, 100 000 Rohingya continue to flee Arakan State every year. Most refugees report that they flee as the result of starvation and lack of food. Due to forced labor, lack of employment and land confiscation for either Buddhist settlers or military camps, most Rohingya are unable to obtain food or money to buy food. The problem is exacerbated by heavy travel restrictions. Rohingya are required to get a travel permit in order to go anywhere outside of their own villages including a neighboring village. After the communal riots in Sittwe in February 2001, travel restrictions tightened. Rohingya can no longer obtain travel passes to go beyond Buthidaung and Maungdaw, nor can they go to Sittwe. All of these factors create tremendous obstacles for the Rohingya to seek employment and engage in trade. The SPDC requires the Rohingya to seek permission to get married and they are required to pay a fee, which ranges from 10,000 to 20,000 kyats. As most families are unable to secure proper nutrition they are also unable to pay the marriage fees. Rohingya who do not follow these procedures may be subject to fines or arrest. (Source: Forum Asia)

Muslims in Arakan state also continue to suffer as victims of forced relocation. Currently there are townships such as Suchas, Thandwe, Gwa, and Taung-gut, that have been declared "Muslim-free zones." In the areas where Muslims are no longer permitted to live, mosques

have been destroyed and Muslim lands have been confiscated. To make sure that these mosques are not rebuilt they have been replaced with government-owned buildings, monasteries and Buddhist temples. As further evidence of the anti-Muslim sentiment entrenched in government policies, the SPDC has issued a court order in Arakan State which mandates that the killing of a Muslim be punished with a minimum 3-month sentence, while if a Muslim hits a Buddhist, they will be sentenced to 3 years imprisonment. Additionally, by the end of 2001 there were reports that in the northern part of Arakan State the SPDC was systematically destroying mosques in some small villages. In one area, local government authorities had already destroyed at least 10 of a total of 40 mosques that had been marked for destruction. These mosques, which in most cases were little more than thatch huts, reportedly were constructed without proper authority by villagers who were unable to go to mosques in neighboring towns because of strict travel restrictions placed on Muslims. After the 2001 riots, Rohingya have been denied permission to build any new mosques or restore those that were damaged in the riots. The SPDC has created restrictions on the number of Muslims that can gather together in mosques and have denied permission for Rohingya to gather to celebrate Muslim holidays.(Source: US Department of State)

Many sources indicate that another cause of increased restrictions on religious activities and travel for Muslims was the attack on the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001. Initially, the SPDC refuted the existence of any terrorist organizations in Burma. Yet, in August 2002, Burma became a signatory to the US-ASEAN declaration on cooperation against terrorism. Colonel Hla Min, spokesman of the SPDC, said that the government learned that there are Muslim rebel groups in Burma who have been trained by the Taliban in Afghanistan and in terrorist training camps in the Middle East. He indicated that the SPDC would not tolerate any individuals who would pose a threat to national and regional security (source: "Myanmar Says Muslims Trained by Taliban and in Middle East Camps, *AFP*, 8 August 2002). In reaction, members of Muslim Liberation Organization of Burma denied the claims (source: Seng, Naw "Exiled Muslims Deny Taliban Connections, *Irrawaddy*, 9 August 2002). In another public statement, the SPDC claimed that the Rohingya are a terrorist separatist group. The Rohingya National Organization rejected the allegations and indicated the SPDC was merely attempting to find new avenues for persecuting the Muslims of Arakan State (source: "Myanmar to Investigate Terror Tape", *Myanmar Times*, 26 August -1 September 2002).

Persecution of Rohingya - partial list of incidents 2002

More Land Confiscation for Burman Buddhist Incomers on the Order of Western Command.

On 1 June 2002, Brig General Maung Oo of the Western Command accompanied by the Na Sa Ka Commander of Akyab (Sittwe), instructed local officers to confiscate 750 acres of Rohingya farm lands from Nwa-Ron-Daung (Khoror Dale) village tract in Maungdaw North, Arakan State, an owner of confiscated land reported.

Upon arrival to Maungdaw Brig. Gen Maung Oo held a meeting with Lt Col. Soe Twe, chairman of the District Peace and Development Council (DPDC) and Lt Col. Aung Ngwe, commander of Na Sa Ka headquarters in Maungdaw Township, during which they reportedly discussed the progress of the new model villages (Natala villages) established by the military.

Brig. Gen. Maung Oo, accompanied by Col. Khin Naing Thein, the Commander of Military Operation Command (MOC) No.15, visited the two townships of Buthidaung and

Rathedaung between 2-3 June, and inspected the progress of works of the projects related to Natala villages for new Burman Buddhist settlers.

On 5 June, Brig. Gen. Maung Oo and team left Maungdaw for Akyab in a speedboat. 3 days after their departure, the commander of Na Sa Ka sector No.6, Maj. Than Tun, as per instruction of Brig. Gen. Maung Oo, confiscated about 750 acres of Rohingyas' lands from Nwa-Ron-Daung (Khoror Dale) village tract, a place about 4 miles north of Maungdaw. Earlier, on May 13, about 300 acres of land, belonging to both Rohingya and Rakhaing communities, was confiscated by the Na Sa Ka and so this second confiscation means that land had been taken twice from the same village tract within a span of two months.

Now is the season for paddy cultivation, however most of the Rohingya farmers have become landless while their remaining farmlands are being progressively confiscated. Being landless and jobless and having no opportunity to work except forced labour, the Rohingya farmers are now in acute difficulties and in a miserable condition. This is a deliberate policy of the ruling junta to cause a serious famine-like situation in the future for people in Arakan state. Burman Buddhist settlers have been regularly brought into northern Arakan from Burma proper to settle down on these confiscated lands and to grab more lands from the local people. Thereby gradually pushing the Rohingya inhabitants either into the internally displaced people or refugees, said a retired government servant. (Source: Kaladan Press)

Muslims Pay Rice for Burmese Settlers

On 18 November 2002, a Muslim leader reported to news sources that Muslim villagers living in Maungdaw Township on the western Burma border with Bangladesh have been forced to give rice to the Burmese junta officials for the upkeep of the Burmese settlers in the area. Beginning in 1995, a number of model villages have been built around Maungdaw Town for the Burmese settlers brought in by the ruling Burmese junta. Each Muslim family around Padummala village, 10 miles south of Maungdaw, were ordered to pay fifteen baskets of rice (about 180 kilo) for the season.

The Burmese settlers brought to the area in 1995-96 were mostly homeless people with few skills. One village elder indicated that many Burmese settlers were suspected of being connected to crime in Burma proper. Each of the settlers were granted three acres of paddy, a buffalo cart, and a pair of bullocks. They were also provided with houses built by the junta officials. The houses had corrugated iron sheet roofs. Because most of the settlers were unskilled and unable to support themselves, they sold the corrugated iron sheets to buy food. Many have secretly returned to their homes in areas such as Mandalay and Rangoon. Yet, the Burmese settlers remain a heavy burden on the Muslim villagers nearby because they must support the Burmese with rice and other agricultural products, as ordered by the junta. (Source: Narinjara)

Persecution of Muslims - partial list of incidents

Muslims Forced to Flee Due to Food Scarcity Caused by Forced Rice Collection and Travel Restrictions

On 29 June 2002, it was reported that no less than 30 Burmese Muslims fled across the border from Arakan State to Bangladesh. Their village was in Maungdaw Township near the Naaf River. The group, which included women and children, left their homes because of lack

of food and oppressive regulations of the SPDC. The shortage of food was the result of the SPDC's "rice collection drive" through which farmers are forced to sell large quantities of rice to the government leaving them inadequate amounts of rice to feed their families. According to one rice farmer, the SPDC demanded a larger amount of rice than the previous year. In addition, the farmer revealed that the SPDC only paid between 25 –35% of the market price. At the same time, the Muslim residents were unable to find work in their villages nor were they able to travel to other villages because they do not hold travel permits. In order to obtain a travel permit, they would have to bribe three different government departments. (Source: Naranjara News)

SPDC Authorities Extort Money from Muslim Funeral Goers in Burma

On 22 September 2002, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) authorities extorted 20,000 kyats from 7 relatives of a deceased Muslim who were on their way to participate in the funeral and burial in Karen State, Burma, according to a relative speaking on condition of anonymity.

The funeral was of U Swa Leh, (50 years old). The relatives were stopped at Kawkariak entrance gate by the authorities, who beat one of them and demanded bribe money, the relative said. The deceased was from Ye Nan Si Gong Yat Kwet, Kawkariak Myo (town), and the relatives were from Kyon Doe village, the same township, the relative said. (Source: MICB)

Closure and Destruction of Mosques - partial list of incidents

Mosque Destroyed in Ka Ma MOUNG Village

Name: Zaw Htun Oo
Age: 27
Occupation: livestock trader
Address in Burma: Karen State
Religion: Islam
Ethnicity: Muslim

On 28th or 29th February, Zaw Htun Oo traveled to Ka Ma MOUNG village in Pa-an Township to buy forty cattle. For every two cattle he bought he was forced to pay 25,000 kyat to the local DKBA authorities. Moe Lwin, who is a VPDC section leader in Ka Ma MOUNG village and also a member of the DKBA, gave the order to the village residents that they must destroy the mosque or else the entire village would be relocated. The next morning both VPDC and DKBA members together bulldozed the mosque.

Hasein, the Muslim religious leader in the village, went to Moe Lwin and asked him why he was destroying the mosque and demanded that he stop. Moe Lwin then arrested him and threw him in jail for six days. The Muslims in the village had to pay Moe Lwin 270,000 kyat to release Hasein. The SPDC Ka Mi Ya 202 then told the 65 muslim families in the village "this area is not for you, it is only for Burmese Buddhists." They gave the families new places to stay that were ½ mile to 2 miles away from Ka Ma MOUNG village. The muslim families were forced to work as laborers in nearby fields belonging to others. Much of the land they were resettled on became flooded in the rainy season, it was difficult to get food and many of

the families fled to refugee camps in Thailand. About 25 Muslim families were able to pay 100,000 kyat to the DKBA to stay in their homes in the village.

Buddhist families living outside the village took over most of the homes and fields of those Muslim families who had been forced out. A new pagoda and monastery was built on the site of the mosque. Currently in Ka Ma MOUNG village if a Muslim family wants to buy land from a Buddhist they must pay a heavy tax. For example if the price of the land is 100,000 kyat, they must pay an additional 200,000 kyat to the DKBA. (Source: HRDU)

Military Attacks on Mosque and Villagers

On 10 June 2002, at about 4:20 pm, 4 army personnel in civilian dress equipped with knives and swords attacked, without provocation, the mosque, villagers and Iman (the religious leader leading the prayer) of "Saan Gana"(Thin Ga Net) village tract, about 12 miles north of Buthidaung whilst they were praying said a villager from Saan Ganavillage who recently crossed the border.

The army personnel belonging to SPDC LIB No.551 of Buthidaung township had suddenly come to the village, attacked the village mosque, beat and tortured the devotees, demolished the mosque walls, ransacked the holy Qur'an and other holy books and destroyed whatever was found inside the mosque. At one stage, when it became intolerable, the villagers saying the prayers inside the mosque caught two of the culprits while the other two managed to escape, he further added.

Upon hearing this information, a section of the army rushed to the location while beating and torturing the villagers along the way from their camp to the place of occurrence.

The army also went to a house of one Abdus Salam, a resident of the village, where a marriage ceremony was being held and started indiscriminately beating people. Many were injured, including old men and women. Meanwhile, some of the participants were arrested and carried away to the army camp, he further said.

The next day, on 11 June, the Chairman and Secretary of the Village PDC together with some villagers went to the Nasaka, Military Intelligence (MI) and police of Taung Bazar of Buthidaung township and appraised them of the event. They were advised to give information about the incident to the Military Operation Command (MOC) No. 15 stationed at Dabru Chaung under Buthidaung Township. The Commander of MOC asked the villagers to pinpoint the accused so that action could be taken by police, said a source from Dabru Chaung.

Starting on 14 June, under the pretext of the inquiry, the police and the army frequently visited the village and arrested and tortured the villagers leaving a number of them injured. The arrested people were implicated in the case and were detained in the military camp until payment of ransoms, a police source said.

Again on 24 June, 4 Rohingyas of the same village were arrested and detained by the army. They were: Noor Hossain, 50, S/o Late Abu Taleb, VPDC Chairman, Mohammad Idris S/o Akhtar Kamal, 35, Secretary of VPDC, Noor Mohammad S/o Abul Khair, 51, member of VPDC, Shamsu, 35, Chairman of Ma-Ba-Ka (a newly formed village reporting committee).

All of them were tortured and were later released on medical grounds but on the condition that they would be present before the military when requested, said another villager.

It is reported that the villagers are still taken by surprise and implicated in the case. Many villagers have gone into hiding to escape arrest. They include Moulvi Mohamed Yunus, 28, S/o Sayed Hussain, Mohammed Tuha, 27, S/o Jalal Ahmed, Ahmed Hussain, 50, and two sons of Abu Sayed, aged 23 and 25 years, the villager further added. (Source: Kaladan Press)

Mosque Closed in Mon State

During the hot season of 2002, it was reported that the SPDC shut down a mosque in Kaw Ka Ni village in Mon State. A Buddhist girl and a Muslim boy (both around 19 years old) who worked as a carpenter had fallen in love. They decided to go to the mosque and were married by the Iman without their parents knowledge. When the girl's parents found out what had happened they called the police who came and arrested the boy. The boy was given a ten year sentence and sent to prison and his family was forced to pay a fine. The Iman was able to escape but the mosque was ordered to be shut down. There are approximately 100 families in Kaw Ka Ni village, and prior to the closing of the mosque there was a total of three mosques. (Source: HRDU)

10.4 SPDC control over Buddhism

According to the US Department of State, over 90% of the total population of Burma or 45,000,000 people practice Theravada Buddhism. 2% of the male Buddhist population or 300,000 men are either Buddhist monks or novices. As Buddhism is the majority religion, the SPDC has allied itself to Buddhism as a method of maintaining legitimacy as a government in Burma. The SPDC operated media often publicizes government participation in special ceremonies, donations to pagodas, homage paid to monks and organizes public donations of food, money and labor to pagodas and monasteries. SPDC run newspapers often publish excerpts from Buddhist texts. Furthermore, the SPDC published Buddhist lesson books and supports two State Sangha Universities in Mandalay and Rangoon. Directed by the State Clergy Coordination Committee or the Sangha Maja Nayaka Committee (SMNC), the universities prepare new Buddhist clergy. The SPDC also sponsored the International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University (ITBMU) in Rangoon in the mid-1990's, as a means to share information about Buddhism with the world. (Source: US Department of State)

The SPDC only recognizes nine monastic orders, which are all subject to the authority of the SMNC. All other monastic orders are banned. The SPDC created a code of conduct for monks. Those who deviate from the code may be subject to criminal penalties or trial by military tribunal. Buddhist clergy are also subject to travel restrictions in some areas. In 1999, monks in Mandalay were required to get written permission from local authorities and submit their identity cards before traveling outside of their township of residence. (Source: US Department of State)

Buddhist clergy have often played a role in political activism against the government, so the SPDC continually works to prevent Buddhist clergy from engaging in pro-democracy political activities. Some monasteries are restricted from allowing political party members to stay overnight. In the 1990s, over 100 Buddhist monks were detained as a result of

involvement with pro-democracy activities. While nearly half have been released, at the end of 2002 many remained in prison or labor camps. Others are serving life sentences including the venerable U Kalyana of Mandalay, a member of the Aung San Red Star Association, and the venerable U Kawiya of the Phayahyi monastery in Mandalay. According to the US State Department, a Buddhist Monk was arrested for giving a sermon in which he scrutinized the economic and political conditions of Burma at a religious ceremony in Mandalay on 1 August 2001. (Source: US Department of State)

Burmese Army Disrobed a Mon Buddhist Monk on Suspicion of Being a Rebel

On 28 January 2002, SPDC LIB No. 550 disrobed a Mon monk in Kyon-kwee village, Three Pagodas Pass township, Mon State because they believed him to be a member of the Mon Restoration Party (MRP) or Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), both rebel groups. The LIB No. 550 was patrolling the area when they were attacked by MRA soldiers near Kyon-keww village, which is about 15 Km from Three Pagodas Pass. After the fighting ended, Lt Col. Tin Maung Lwin of SPDC LIB 550 was angry and arrested the monk Nai Galae, 45 years old. The Lt Col had received incorrect information from other villagers that the monk had been involved with the fighting as a lay man. After the fighting ended the Nai Galae put on monks robes. The soldiers tortured and interrogated the monk for over an hour before disrobing him. They tortured him by beating his head and then holding it under water until he gave information. They also kicked him and punched him in the stomach.

Villagers who knew him reported that he was not involved in the fighting, but when the MRP had arrived to their village they had ordered him to buy some food and liquor for them from neighboring villages. As the ambush attack had occurred in the same area, the SPDC soldiers thought that the man was an informer. After the fighting ended, the man was afraid that he would be accused of being a rebel so he dressed as a monk with the help of the Kyon-kwee monastery. After the soldiers arrested and tortured him, they took him away with them and he has not been seen since that time. (Source: HURFOM)

10.5 Personal Accounts

Myanmar (Burma) Jew Keeps His Faith Alive

Moses Samuels sits in front of Myanmar's (Burma) only synagogue, thinking back to his childhood in the days before most of the country's Jews were forced out by its military rulers. "There were plenty of Jews. We had a school, the upstairs of the synagogue was full with women on a Friday evening and the gents were downstairs," said Mr. Samuels, 51, the synagogue's trustee and Jewish community leader in predominantly Buddhist Myanmar (Burma). "My father had plenty of friends, and every Saturday they came and we ate together." However in 1964, military dictator Ne Win unleashed a socialist-inspired nationalization drive, forcing Rangoon's once-thriving Jewish community, which numbered approximately 2500, out of business and out of the country en masse. Only 20 Jews from eight families remain now, and many plan to leave, choosing the economic promise of Israel over impoverished Myanmar. I will soon send from here two or three families," Mr. Samuels said. "Most haven't got jobs".

Business is slowing down and they want to go to Israel. A letter from Israel's President posted at the synagogue entrance urges Jews to move there. "If the majority of Jewish people lived among us, the peace process with the Arab nations would progress more quickly and effectively," it says. Mr. Samuels says most of his friends are Muslim.

The cool, blue stone synagogue, built in 1893, lies among run-down but bustling, shops offering fishing nets, paint and shoes in the middle of Rangoon's main Muslim community. "I've got plenty of friends in these streets," Mr. Samuels said. "In the hot season they come and sit inside the synagogue." They use my water and during the high holidays, if I can't get electricity I get it from the Muslim shops for two or three hours," he said, lamenting Myanmar's (Burma) almost daily electricity cuts, which can last for hours. "The Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Middle East politics are not conversation topics. They don't discuss it with me. They talk business and then they go to the mosque and I go to the synagogue," Mr. Samuels said.

Mr. Samuels is a descendant of Iraqi Jews who started to arrive in Myanmar — formerly Burma in the 1850s. Like most in the community, his grandfather and father had a trading company, sending cotton, rice and textiles to British India. The synagogue follows traditional Iraqi design and is easily spotted from the busy street by a navy blue Star of David that Mr. Samuels hammered onto the front of the building. Inside two wooden balconies overlook the main aisle where a handful of worshippers, usually including three or four people from the Israeli embassy, congregate for major Jewish holy days. The services are led either by Mr. Samuels's son Sammy or the Israeli ambassador. "The last time a rabbi came here was in 1967, from India," he said. "A rabbi can't stay very long because there's no kosher food," Mr. Samuels said. "I eat halal, there's plenty around here."

Mr. Samuels spends much of his time welcoming visitors. Some are the sons and daughters of Rangoon Jews who left for Israel, the United States, Britain and Australia in 1964. "Thank you for keeping the Jewish spirit alive" in Rangoon, a New Yorker wrote in the visitors' book. "A miracle," an Israeli wrote of Myanmar's (Burma) surviving Jewish community. Most visitors also go to the nearby Jewish cemetery to see the 700 curved concrete tombs that, lined together in more than 20 rows, resemble a rough corrugated roof. The cemetery has

been officially closed since 1997 when the military government ordered Mr. Samuels to move the graves to a new site on the outskirts of Rangoon. He said the government wants to build on the land, but he will not abandon the cemetery until the ruling generals force him. "It's sad, but what can I do? All the land belongs to the government here. There are no Jewish boys or girls here, everyone's old," he said. (Source: Reuters, May 2, 2002, Myanmar Jew keeps his faith's light alive)

Personal Account of Muslim in ??????????????

Name:	U Soe Win
Age:	35
Occupation in Burma:	Iman (Muslim religious leader)
Occupation in Thailand:	Iman
Religion:	Islam
Ethnicity:	Muslim

U Soe Win came from Burma in 2001. He reports that Muslims in Burma have no rights. If they want to go anywhere outside their village or town they have to pay money at every checkpoint. If they can't pay the money they will be arrested. In Pa-an town for the last two years if people want to go in a group and spend several days in a mosque for prayer or festivals they must first contact the police to get permission. The police record the number of people, their names, addresses, age, names of parents and how many days they will stay there. If one person wants to go alone to pray at the mosque for a short time they do not have to do this. U Soe Win reports that he believes this situation is the same throughout the country.

U Soe Win also reports that Muslims traveling between towns are frequently stopped by the police who demand to know where they are going. Muslim men in particular are often easily identified by their beards, religious caps and distinctive dress. The police tell them that they must not go and must stay in their home town or village. To continue their journey people have to pay a bribe to the officials, which ranges from 3,000-5,000 kyat for a person who appears poor, to 10,000-50,000 to a person whom the police think has more money. People who can not pay the money are arrested and put in jail.

In 1999 U Soe Win and his brother were traveling from Kawkareik to Pa-an when they were stopped at a checkpoint. The officials demanded that he and his brother pay 5,000 baht or be arrested. After they paid the money the officials told them not to tell anyone else that they had paid money. Saya Naing Zaw notes that all the officials were Buddhists.

Nowadays because Muslims are not given any ID cards it is very difficult for them to travel anywhere within the country or go to university. There are many Burmese Muslims and Christians who are very educated but are not allowed to practice their professions, for example if someone is a doctor they are not allowed to practice as a doctor. Muslims who want to go abroad for study are not allowed to go unless they pay a very large amount of money. (Source: HRDU)



11. Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and the Press

11.1 Background

Freedoms of opinion, expression, and the press have been virtually non-existent in Burma since the military coup of 1988. The Press Scrutiny Board (PSB), a division of the powerful Ministry of Information, scrutinizes every publication for anything perceived as 'anti-government.' Similar censorship boards retain tight control over art, music, film, performance, and all other forms of artistic expression. All authors, publishers, journalists and poets must submit a personal biography to the board of literary censorship. The board then investigates to find out if these individuals have any association to opposition political parties or connections to other people or groups deemed threatening by the regime. Anyone suspected or proved to have 'undesirable' connections is placed on a blacklist and their work is not allowed to be published.

People's access to information in Burma is officially limited to one main state run news agency that disseminates information to government controlled newspapers, radio, and television stations. Burma's four daily newspapers are all published by the News and Periodicals Enterprise (NPE), a division of the Information Ministry. While currently there are approximately 50 private weekly and monthly magazines published in Rangoon, all are kept under close scrutiny by the regime. Burmese people are well aware that much of the news from official sources is propaganda, and to find out what is really happening in their own country and the rest of the world they must depend on sources of information outlawed by the regime.

A main source of outside information is the daily Burmese-language radio broadcasts by Radio Free Asia (RFA), Voice of America (VOA), British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), and the Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB). In addition a limited number of publications by exiled groups working along the Thai/Burma border are smuggled into the country. The junta is aware of and attempts to cut off these sources of information. Outside radio broadcasts are closely monitored and sometimes scrambled, and individuals caught distributing or possessing dissident news material are punished. At present, within Burma, there is almost no underground press activity, as the students who undertook such activities in the past, have largely been imprisoned, killed, or forced into hiding or exile.

As part of their overall effort to control information, the military regime severely restricts all forms of communication. Without a government permit, which is expensive and difficult to obtain, individuals can be arrested for possessing or using fax machines, mobile phones, photocopiers or computers. The Internet can only be accessed through a company called Bagan Cybertech, which is partially government owned. In the past year the company began offering public access through Web-based e-mail to about 900 selected web sites, none of which contained information on international news or allowed users to access other sites. The cost of this service effectively barred most people in Burma from being able to use the Internet.

International Media watchdog groups such as the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF - Reporters Without Borders) have repeatedly criticized the Burmese regime for its suppression of press freedoms, and its imprisonment of journalists. On 13 February 2002, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) released a report, "Under Pressure: How Burmese journalism survives in one of the world's most repressive regimes." The report stated that reporters in Burma work under a "harsh regime of censorship, licensing, and threats." The report also went on to note that "Burma is by far the most information-starved country in Southeast Asia."

11.2 SPDC Laws Restricting Freedom of Opinion, Expression, and the Press

(Source: Burma UN Service Office)

The Official Secrets Act 1923

This law makes it an offence, among other things, to possess, control, receive or communicate any document or information, the disclosure of which is likely to affect the sovereignty and integrity of the state or friendly relations with foreign states or otherwise prejudicial to the safety of the state (sec. 5). No exception is made for disclosure of classified information on public interest grounds. Anyone convicted of an offence is liable to be punished with imprisonment for up to two years, or with a fine, or with both. Other, lesser known laws have been used by the military regime to justify their frequent clampdown on freedom of statement. These include:

The Burma Wireless Telegraphy Act 1933

This act makes it an offence to possess, without official permission, any 'wireless telegraphy apparatus'. This law was amended in 1995 to cover the use of unlicensed fax machines, and again in 1996 to cover computer modems. Anyone found possessing these apparatus without official permission was made liable to be imprisoned for up to three years or fined up to 30,000 kyat. In April 1996, the SLORC used this law to prosecute James Leander Nichols, a close friend of Aung San Suu Kyi, on charges of operating unregistered telephone and facsimile lines from his home in Rangoon. Nichols was sentenced to three years' imprisonment, but died two months into his prison term, allegedly as a result of previous medical problems.

Section 122, Penal Code of Burma

This section of the Penal Code makes it an offence to commit treason against the government. This offence is punishable with death or with imprisonment for life. Several of the NLD functionaries who attended meetings in Mandalay in September and October 1990 with a view to forming a provisional government-in-exile after the election results were disregarded, were arrested and sentenced from 10 to 25 years' imprisonment under this section.

The Law Protecting the Peaceful and Systematic Transfer of State Responsibility and the Successful Performance of the Functions of the National Convention Against Disturbances and Oppositions

This law makes it an offence, among other things, to incite, demonstrate, deliver speeches, make oral or written statements and disseminate anything which would 'disrupt and deteriorate the stability of the state, community peace and tranquility and prevalence of law and order', or 'affect and destroy national reconsolidation', or 'affect, destroy and belittle the tasks being implemented at the National Convention for the emergence of a firm and enduring Constitution and cause misunderstanding among the people'. It also forbids anyone from drawing up or writing or distributing a Constitution for the country without legal authorization, and makes any attempts at collaboration in any of the above-mentioned acts an offence.

Each of these acts is made punishable with imprisonment from between three months to twenty years and a possible fine. Organizations found guilty of any of the offences risk being banned or disbanded and their properties confiscated. This law was used, for example, against nine students in September 1996 after they had distributed leaflets outside Aung San Suu Kyi's house in Rangoon. Observers believe this law specifically targets the NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi who, in 1996, announced that she and her colleagues had decided to write a new constitution for the country due to the SLORC's continued refusal to hand over power to the 1990 elected representatives.

Emergency Provisions Act 1950

This law confers sweeping powers on the authorities to silence and punish any real or perceived dissent, even in the absence of a proclaimed state of emergency.

It is an offence, punishable with imprisonment for up to seven years, to commit any act which 'violates or infringes upon the integrity, health, conduct and respect of State military organizations and government employees towards the government' (art. 5(a)), or 'causes or intends to spread false news about the government' (art. 5(e)), or 'causes or intends to disrupt the morality or the behavior of a group of people or the general public' (art. 5(j)).

Article 3 renders any act which is 'intended to cause, or causes, sabotage or hinders the successful functioning of the State military organization and criminal investigative organizations' liable to be punished with death or life imprisonment.

Similar punishment is prescribed for 'collecting and divulging, or intending to divulge, information to people involved in treason against the State, on the movements, the strength, the location, the guidelines and regional defense strategies of the State military organizations and criminal investigative organizations who are engaged in preserving the stability of the State' (art. 2).

The Printers and Publishers Registration Law 1962

This law has historically been the main instrument of official censorship, requiring all books, magazines, other periodicals, song lyrics, and motion picture scripts to be submitted for vetting to the SPDC prior to publication or, in some cases, prior to distribution. The effect has been to shut out any criticism whatsoever of the regime. Anyone who fails to comply with any rules or regulations framed under the law could be imprisoned for up to seven years and fined up to 30,000 kyat.

State Protection Law 1975 (also known as the ‘Law to Safeguard the State from the Dangers of Destructive Elements’)

This law allows the government to declare a state of emergency in a part or the whole of Burma and to restrict any fundamental rights of the citizens in specified regions or all over the country (sec. 4).

The law gives the authorities sweeping powers: anyone who is suspected of having committed, or who is committing, or who is about to commit, any act which ‘endangers the sovereignty and security of the state or public peace and tranquility’, can be imprisoned for up to five years without trial on the orders of the executive (sec. 14, as amended by Law 11/91, dated 9 Aug. 1991).

This law also allows the executive to pass restriction orders under which anyone can be confined to a specified area or have their freedom of movement otherwise restrained, or be prohibited from possessing or using specified articles (sec. 11). No order passed under this law can be the subject of an appeal to any court, although appeals are allowed to be made to the Union Cabinet.

The Television and Video Law

This law provides for compulsory licensing of television sets, video cassette recorders and satellite television by the Ministry of Communications, Posts and

Telegraphs, and of the video business by newly constituted State or Divisional Video Business Supervisory Committees. The latter have been given responsibility for deciding on the grant of video business licenses and for inspecting and supervising video businesses within their territorial jurisdictions.

The law also provides for mandatory censorship of all video tapes, whether locally produced or imported, by a Video Censor Board composed of government officials and representatives of the public. The requirement of obtaining censorship certificates has been extended also to videotapes imported by foreign diplomatic missions or agencies of the UN for public exhibition. Operation of a television transmission business without permission from the SPDC is punishable by imprisonment for up to five years or an unspecified fine.

The Motion Picture Law

This law creates a regime of censorship for conventional cinematograph films. A license must be obtained from the Myanmar Motion Picture Enterprise, a State agency. Violation of the terms and conditions of a license are punishable with a fine ranging from 5,000 kyat to 50,000 kyat and with revocation of the license. The law also provides for the establishment of a Motion Picture Censor Board. Foreign diplomatic missions and the UN have been made subject to the censorship regime under this law. Appeals against decisions by both entities can only be made to the Ministry of Information whose decision on appeals are final and conclusive.

The Computer Science Development Law

This law requires anyone who wishes to import, possess or use computer equipment, notably those with networking or communication facility, to obtain a license from the Ministry of Communications, Posts and Telegraphs. It also requires those who wish to set up 'a computer network or connecting a link inside the computer network' to apply for prior sanction to that Ministry' (sec. 28).

The Ministry is granted absolute power to grant or refuse licenses and sanctions and to impose conditions. Failure to obtain a license or sanction is made punishable with imprisonment for between seven and 15 years and with an unspecified fine (secs. 31, 32).

It establishes strict controls on the formation and operation of computer-related associations - three types of associations may be formed with official sanction (the Computer Enthusiasts, Entrepreneurs' and Scientists' Associations), all others are illegal. Anyone forming, running or belonging to an illegal association is liable to be punished with imprisonment for up to three years, or with a fine, or with both.

The law makes attempts or conspiracy to commit an offence punishable with the same severity as the offence itself.

11.3 State of the 'Freedom of the Press' in Burma

On 23 October 2002, Paris-based media watchdog organization Reporters Sans Frontieres (RSF) released the first worldwide index of press freedoms. In this index Burma was ranked 137 out of 139 countries for press freedoms, with only China and North Korea ranked lower. Likewise a report released by Freedom House, "Freedom of the Press 2003: A Global Survey of Media Independence," gave Burma a score of 94 out of a 100 for press freedom, with higher scores indicating less freedom.

Strict government censorship of all publications continued throughout 2002, and the SPDC continued to prohibit journalists from reporting on any events of real importance. Topics banned from media coverage included: natural disasters, the AIDS epidemic, human rights developments, debates about government policies, criticisms and commentary about the poor state of the national economy, or any local, national or international news which could be seen as uncomplimentary to the government. On 6 May 2002, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was

released from 19 months of house arrest, however the SPDC banned local media from reporting on her release.

On October 22 the state-run New Light of Myanmar reported the following speech given by Minister Brig-Gen Kyaw Hsan outlining the objectives of the Ministry of Information: "Recently, the destructive expatriate groups taking refuge abroad and the terrorist insurgents using the territories of some neighboring countries bordering Myanmar as their dens are launching smear campaign to discredit Myanmar with the help of some foreign media groups that are against Myanmar...Misusing the international media, they are launching slanders against Myanmar..with accusations including sexual violence against Shan women, religious oppression, sectarian discrimination and forced recruitment of juveniles as themes of their invented stories...The mass media is the only means to counter the alien media penetration and manipulation against the people..It is the duty of the officials, the mentors and the patriots to collectively give correct outlook and knowledge to the youths who are going to shape the future. Sadly, some quarters are found to be misleading the youths. Such acts are a great danger to the Union...(Source: New Light of Myanmar)

Severely restricted in the news they can print, the 50 or so private journals published in Burma are also regularly forced to pay stiff bribes just to get non-offensive materials passed by the censorship board. If an article is found to violate government standards, the editors are forced to change the entire layout of the magazine to hide the removal of the censored material. Thus there is a strong incentive for magazine editors and writers to engage in self-censorship in order to avoid this extremely time-consuming and expensive process.

One publication which appears to be able to operate with less censorship is 'The Myanmar Times,' a glossy weekly magazine launched in March 2000, and published in English and Burmese. The magazine is privately owned by an Australian publisher, but is closely linked with the Office of Strategic Studies (OSS), which is controlled by military intelligence chief Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt. The Myanmar Times has more latitude than any other news source in the topics it is allowed to cover, and recent issues have included articles about the reopening of NLD offices and the dialogue between the regime and Aung San Suu Kyi. However many analysts have argued that the Myanmar Times is just a more subtle propaganda tool controlled by Khin Nyunt, and is primarily aimed at attracting foreign investment. In terms of increasing access to information the Times has had little impact, as at 500 Kyat per copy, most Burmese cannot afford to buy the publication.

On 16 December 2002, Irrawaddy Magazine interviewed well-known Burmese author and literary critic, Maung Swam Yi who stated that aside from the Myanmar Times, there has been no change in Burma regarding censorship and press freedoms since reconciliation talks began two years ago. Maung Swam Yi also reported to Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB) that [regarding censorship]: "There is nothing changing. You must go three times a month to the PSB (press scrutiny board) office: once for proof censoring, second for printing and the third for delivering. If you are absent or delayed, your magazine will definitely be banned for months, years or for life."

Individuals that fail to fall in line with censorship regulations are denied jobs, harassed, and sometimes thrown in jail. According to The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) 9 media professionals are currently imprisoned in Burma. In 2002 RSF released a report labeling the country "the largest prison for journalists in Asia." In a November 7th article in Irrawaddy Magazine, Vincent Brossel, Director of the Asia-Pacific Desk at RSF stated: "Burma is one

of the countries of the world where the government has used a very large spectrum of mechanisms and policies to oppress journalists and suppress freedom of expression. As we usually say 'there is no freedom without press freedom'. But in the case of Burma, we might say 'there will be no press freedom without democracy.'" (Source: Irrawaddy)

Foreign journalists, while not subject to the same risks and pressures as Burmese journalists, also face restrictions on reporting news from Burma. International journalists who write articles critical of the regime can find themselves banned from the country. Swedish journalist Bertil Lintner, a reporter for the Far Eastern Economic Review and internationally renowned authority on Burma, has been blacklisted from the country for the past fifteen years. No foreign journalists are allowed to live in Rangoon, with the exception of one correspondent for China's official Xinhua News Agency. Visiting foreign reporters must apply for special journalist visas as well as a "Permit to Conduct Journalistic Activities." In the past, reporters granted visas were kept under close surveillance by MI agents, who often tried to prevent them from interviewing opposition leaders, including Aung San Suu Kyi. Since Aung Suu Kyi's release on May 6th, foreign media representatives report that they have been allowed much freer access to the country. Despite this, a limit on the number of visas allowed for international correspondents was reimposed later in the year. In October the SPDC barred the press corps traveling with Australian foreign minister Alexander Downer from entering Rangoon. (Source: CPJ)

In May, following a border dispute with Thailand the regime issued an order forbidding the mention of Thailand or Thai products in the Burmese press. Editors also reported that they were ordered to print anti-Thailand articles written by MI-backed writer, Dr. Ma Tin Win. Thai authorities have deemed these writings highly insulting to the monarchy and banned Dr. Ma Tin Win from entering Thailand. This did not deter the SPDC Ministry of Information from awarding her the 2002 National Literature Prize.

In July, the government banned 15 Thai journalists from entering Burma, accusing them of "damaging bilateral relations, causing disunity among ethnic minorities and belittling [government] policies." In October, the exile group Burma Media Association (BMA) reported that the fashion magazine *Beauty* was banned for carrying advertisements from a Thai company. BMA noted that the Burmese private media, which is heavily dependent on Thai companies for advertising revenue, was hit hard by the government ban.

Regime Censors Information on HIV/AIDS

In January 2002 Irrawaddy magazine published an article, 'The AIDS Embargo,' examining censorship of information on HIV/AIDS in Burma as well as within Burmese exile groups in Thailand. Physicians and health workers in Burma told Irrawaddy that speaking publicly about HIV/AIDS is even more difficult than speaking on political issues, as the generals believe that opposition groups and the international community are using the AIDS issue to incite criticism against the SPDC. In addition, the government's Press Scrutiny Board (PSB) refuses to publish accurate figures or personal stories of people with AIDS. While Burma's Ministry of Health cites the number of HIV patients at 40,000, UNAIDS estimated last year that over 500,000 people are HIV positive. One Burmese physician stated: "The number could be higher, the government does not want us to reveal actual numbers or areas [with high infection rates] to the public or the press. It is very sensitive and controversial." One staff member at the Myanmar Times reported that: "We want to write more stories related to AIDS, but officials tell us to be careful."

Despite the fact that increasing amounts of HIV/AIDS education materials are being published in the government run media, health workers still say that this is insufficient. They also cite serious concerns that the censorship of AIDS news and information will directly result in more casualties. One nurse from Rangoon reported that "Over 80 percent of people in Thakata [in Rangoon division] do not know how HIV is transmitted." She adds, "Among family members, the mention of condoms is taboo."

In December 2001 the regime refused to allow two HIV patients to attend the "Fifth International Conference on Home and Community Care for Persons Living with HIV/AIDS" in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Release of Journalist Myo Myint Nyein

Burmese journalist and NLD member Myo Myint Nyein was freed on 13 February 2002 after spending 12 years in prison for publishing a poem against the army and then for complaining about prison conditions. His family told RSF that he was released from Tharrawaddy prison (100 km north of Rangoon) and taken to Rangoon to be interrogated by the MIS military police. He was expected home later in the day.

Held since September 1997 at Tharrawaddy after six years in Rangoon's Insein jail, Myo Myint Nyein had been sentenced on 19 November 1990 to seven years in prison for publishing a poem criticizing the Burmese army in his magazine Yin-Kyae-Hmu (Cultural). After a show trial, he was given another seven-year sentence on 28 March 1996 for helping to write a letter to the United Nations special rapporteur for Burma about prison conditions and ill-treatment of prisoners at Insein. His release, two years before the end of his sentence and along with four other political prisoners, came during the visit to Burma of the UN special rapporteur, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, who recently urged the regime to free the journalist.

While in detention, Myo Myint Nyein was never given proper treatment for the acute psychological and stomach ailments that plagued him for years. For several months he was forced to live in a dog kennel at Insein prison. A former prisoner who shared a cell with him said solitary confinement, interrogations and untreated illnesses brought down what was once a physically robust man, whose father was a boxer. (Source: RSF)

State Media Censors News of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's Release

On 6 May 2002, government run media blacked out the news of Aung San Suu Kyi's release following 19 months of house arrest. Instead front pages of state-owned newspapers featured as their top story the activities of the visiting Vietnamese President Tran Duc Luong. "Just imagine, we get to see the faces of only the generals and their wives. How come they don't publicize our leader's release," shouted Nwo Nwo, a grocery store owner in Yangon, as her customers nodded in agreement. State-run TV also failed to report on her release. This media silence is typical, as the SPDC apparently fears that publicity will only increase Aung San Suu Kyi's popularity. "I am very disappointed that Daw Suu's release was not even broadcast on our TV. Many people wanted to have a glimpse of her," said San San, a 37-year-old housewife. (Source: AP)

Release of Magazine Editor Sein Hlaing

After 12 years in prison and two years before the end of his sentence Sein Hlaing, co-publisher of the cultural magazine Yin-Kyae-Mu, was freed from Tharrawaddy jail (100 km north of Rangoon) on 14 May 2002.

Sein Hlaing was arrested by members of the MIS on 9 September 1990, along with the journalist Myo Myint Nyein and the poet Nyan Paw. In November 1990 he was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment for having publishing an article entitled "What's going on?", which was critical of the attitude of the Burmese army, in the magazine he co-published with Myo Myint Nyein. On 28 March 1996, Sein Hlaing received an additional seven-year sentence for having contributed to a report sent to the United Nations' special rapporteur for Burma, containing information about prison conditions and the ill treatment of prisoners detained in the Insein jail, and for his involvement in the editing of an underground publication within the prison. After six years in the Insein jail in Rangoon, Sein Hlaing was transferred to No 3 block in the Tharrawaddy jail. Forty-five-year-old Sein Hlaing was an active member of the NLD from its inception in 1990. He was in charge of the opposition party's youth section in Rangoon. (Source: RSF)

SPDC Bans Publication of Thai-related Articles and Advertising

On 22 May 2002, the Literary Works Scrutinizing Committee, one of the government's censorship agencies, told the managing editors of Rangoon's private press that publication of articles referring to Thailand were forbidden, as well as Thai advertisements. The editors had to sign an agreement undertaking to comply with the directive. According to DVB, the editors were also ordered not to use the term 'Thailand' but instead refer to the country as 'Yodaya' (the name formerly used for the Kingdom of Siam). The issuing of this directive followed the diplomatic and military clashes between Burma and Thailand. The SPDC decided to close frontier checkpoints between the two countries following border skirmishes between troops from Rangoon and armed opposition groups.

Thai companies are the principal source of advertising revenue for many newspapers and magazines in Burma. Robert Ménard, General Secretary of RSF (Reporters Without Borders) issued a letter to SPDC Home Affairs Minister, Colonel Tin Hlaing, stating that: "The military junta has just issued yet another grotesque directive which, in addition to depriving the population of news about Thailand, threatens the very existence of private publications that are dependent on advertising." RSF has further noted that the junta's latest action not only represents an unfair financial sanction of the private press, but also that it is an act of censorship. (Source: Mizzima)

NLD Announces Plan to Start Opposition Newspaper

In a 24 May 2002 interview with the Thai newspaper, The Nation, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi announced that she would apply for permission to publish an NLD newspaper. "We will apply for the right. We have a plan. We'll see whether this will be allowed," she said. (Source: Reuters)

State Media Launches Propaganda Campaign Against Thailand

At the end of May 2002 the SPDC launched a media campaign which appeared to be an attempt to punish Thailand for recent border skirmishes. Newspapers in Rangoon started referring to Thailand as "Yodaya", a local corruption of Thailand's former capital, Ayutthaya, which was conquered by Burma in 1767. "When the Myanmar government is mad at Thailand, they call it Yodaya," said one Rangoon-based analyst. "This has happened before." "Our forefathers never acknowledged Yodayas as their rivals who had military skills and military pride," said one article in the English-language New Light of Myanmar newspaper. "They did not think highly of the Yodayas. They regarded Yodayas as spiritually and physically weak and insincere people. Yes, they were."

The article, written under the pseudonym "Kyaw Htin Nawrahta", which is the name of an ancient Burmese king, went on to describe various acts of treachery blamed on Thailand. (Source: Deutsche Presse-Agentur)

Two Magazines Banned by Censors

In June Burma's Press Scrutiny Board (PSB), which is responsible for censoring all private magazines and journals, prohibited two magazines from publishing. The Living Color business magazine and Mhyar Nat Maung Mingalar magazine were both told that their current issues were not fit for distribution. Sources close to the magazines reported that the Mhyar Nat Maung Mingalar was barred from distributing this month's magazine because it placed an advertisement ahead of the government's mandatory propaganda page, which states the "three national causes." Living Color was censored for printing an advertisement from the MK Billiard Company. MK Billiard reportedly infuriated the government last month for refusing to donate snooker tables to the state-owned Myanmar Billiard and Snooker Association, which is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Sports. "I think the government is just upset with MK," said a source familiar with the Mhyar Nat Maung Mingalar. "The ban will only affect this month's issue." (Source: Irrawaddy)

Regime Blacklists 15 Thai Journalists

On 12 July 2002, the Burmese authorities blacklisted 15 Thai journalists, accused of writing propaganda against the Burmese military junta. These reporters were not quoted by name, but Kyaw Win, the deputy chief of military intelligence, said they work for the newspapers: "The Nation", "Bangkok Post", "Thai Rath", "Thai News", "Daily News", "Siam Rath", "Matichon", "Khao Sod" and an unidentified radio station. "These 15 have been blacklisted for consistently writing anti-Myanmar articles. They will not be given any visas to come to this country," said Kyaw Win.

Two NLD Members Arrested for Possession of Banned Newspaper

In July 2002 two NLD youth members, Aung Thein and Kyaw Naing Oo were arrested and beaten for possessing the New Era (Khit Pyaing) journal, which is published by Burmese dissidents living in Bangkok. Family members report that the two men were accosted by five or six police officers, while walking near Rangoon's Thiri Mingalar market. Kyaw Naing Oo's family said he received five stitches in his head as a result of injuries sustained during the attack. The two men were youth members of the NLD's Kyee Mying Daing Township office, and are also said to be in close contact with Aung San Suu Kyi. "They accompanied

Aung San Suu Kyi on some of her political trips," one friend reported to Irrawaddy magazine. "That's also one of the reasons why we think they were arrested in such a harsh way." Separate trials were held on August 23 and 26 in Rangoon's Insein Prison. Aung Thein and Kyaw Naing Oo were charged under 5(j) of the 1950 Emergency Provision Act. Attorneys from the NLD's Kyee Myin Daing office did represent the two men, however, court authorities did not allow them to present any evidence at the trial. (Source: Irrawaddy)

SPDC Requires New Personal History Forms for Publishers and Editors

On 12 August 2002, the SPDC State Peace and Development Council Literary Works Scrutinizing Committee (LWSC) issued more stringent restrictions on the publishers and chief editors of magazines, journals, and books. The new regulations require all publishers and chief editors to submit their personal history forms to the LWSC. This edict caused confusion, as the LWSC had issued a similar order two years prior to this. When some publishers argued that they had already submitted their personal histories, the LWSC replied that changes could take place in two years and personal history forms should be updated. Publishers and chief editors were warned that their literary works could not be published nor distributed if they had not yet submitted their personal history forms. In addition, the LWSC has also asked for the nom de plume or pen names of all writers and journalists. According to one magazine publisher, the LWSC has warned the publishers and chief editors that if poems and articles of writers whose personal history forms have not been submitted appear in the publications and magazines, the publishers and chief editors would be held responsible and action would be taken against them. (Source: DVB)

Thirty Activists Arrested for Possession of Banned Newspaper

On 25 September 2002, about thirty activists, mostly former political prisoners, were arrested and interrogated by intelligence services for possessing opposition publications, notably the newspaper Khit Pyaing (New Era) which is published in Thailand.

On 11 October, Reporters without Borders and the Burma Media Association (BMA) called on the junta to release the detainees. "This new crackdown is evidence of the military regime's hostility towards the pluralism of information," said Reporters without Borders (Reporters Sans Frontieres) secretary-general Robert Menard. "It is intolerable that dozens of Burmese people should be imprisoned simply for having read or distributed a newspaper," he wrote in a letter to Burma's Home Minister Colonel Tin Hlaing signed jointly by BMA president U Thaung.

In 1993, 23 people were arrested for both reading and distributing the New Era journal. Seventeen of them—including elected members of parliament—were sentenced from 7-20 years in prison. (Source: The Nation)

Two Magazines Banned

On 25 October 2002, the publication permits for two popular magazines were withdrawn and they were each ordered to stop publishing for a month by the SPDC censorship board. Han Thit (New Style) magazine was banned for publishing the poem of a dead poet, Maung Chaw Nwe which contains a reference to another poet, Ko Lay (Inn-wa Gonye). Ko Lay's writings are prohibited by the regime and magazines are forbidden to mention his name because he participated in a literary meeting organized by the NLD. Another magazine, 'Beauty Magazine,' was banned for featuring an advertisement from a Thai company. (Source: DVB)

This move follows Thai authorities' decision last month to blacklist Ma Tin Win, the author of a series of articles accused of insulting Thailand's monarchy. Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai said on June 28 that his ministry had blacklisted both Ma Tin Win and Maung Maung, editor of the official New Light of Myanmar.

11.4 Continuing Detention of Journalists

According to The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), at least 9 media professionals remain behind bars in Burma. CPJ has compiled the following list of people who have been arrested and imprisoned for reasons such as "distributing information hostile to the State", owning undeclared video cameras, talking with foreign journalists or sending information to Burmese media in exile groups. The majority of journalists imprisoned in the country are also members of the NLD. Most of these journalists were active in the "Spring of Burmese press" in August 1988, when some one hundred new publications appeared, many of them openly denouncing crimes perpetuated by the dictatorship led by General Ne Win. Since the military regime seized power in Burma, three journalists have died in prison. (For more information on conditions for political prisoners see chapter on Arbitrary Detention and Enforced or Involuntary Disappearance).

U Win Tin, free-lance

Imprisoned: July 4, 1989

U Win Tin, former editor-in-chief of the daily *Hanthawati* and vice chairman of Burma's Writers Association, was arrested and sentenced to three years of hard labor on the false charge of arranging a "forced abortion" for a member of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD). One of Burma's most well-known and influential journalists, U Win Tin helped establish independent publications during the 1988 student democracy movement. He was also a senior leader of the NLD and a close adviser to opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

In 1992, he was sentenced to an additional 10 years for "writing and publishing pamphlets to incite treason against the State" and "giving seditious talks," according to a May 2000 report by the Defense Ministry's Office of Strategic Studies. On March 28, 1996, prison authorities extended U Win Tin's sentence by another seven years after they convicted him, along with at least 22 others, of producing clandestine publications—including a report describing the horrific conditions at Rangoon's Insein Prison to Yozo Yokota, the U.N. special rapporteur for human rights in Burma.

U Win Tin was charged under Section 5(e) of the Emergency Provisions Act for having "secretly published anti-government propaganda to create riots in jail," according to the Defense Ministry report. His cumulative sentence is, therefore, 20 years of hard labor and imprisonment.

Now 72 years old, the veteran journalist is said to be in extremely poor health after years of maltreatment in Burma's prisons—including a period when he was kept in solitary confinement in one of Insein Prison's notorious "dog cells," formerly used as kennels for the

facility's guard dogs. He suffers from spondylitis, a degenerative spine disease, as well as a prostate gland disorder and hemorrhoids. The journalist has had at least two heart attacks, and in 2002, he spent several months at Rangoon General Hospital following a hernia operation.

In July 2002, reports emerged that U Win Tin's health had deteriorated even further, and many international groups, including CPJ, called for his immediate and unconditional release. In November 2002, authorities again transferred U Win Tin to Rangoon General Hospital, this time for medical treatment in connection with a heart ailment.

Ohn Kyaing, free-lance

Thein Tan, free-lance

Imprisoned: September 6, 1990

On September 7, 1990, Col. Than Tun, Burma's deputy chief of military intelligence, announced at a press conference that Ohn Kyaing and Thein Tan were among six leaders of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) arrested on the previous day, according to international news reports.

On October 19, 1990, the Information Committee of the junta (then known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council and later renamed the State Peace and Development Council) announced at a press conference that Ohn Kyaing and Thein Tan "had been sentenced to seven years imprisonment by a military tribunal for inciting unrest by writing false reports about the unrest, which occurred in Mandalay on 8 August 1990," according to the BBC's translation of a state radio broadcast.

The Mandalay "unrest" the committee referred to involved the killing of four pro-democracy demonstrators by the military. Government troops fired on protestors—who were commemorating the democracy rallies of August 8, 1988, during which hundreds were shot dead—killing two monks and two students.

Ohn Kyaing, who also uses the name Aung Wint, is the former editor of the newspaper Botahtaung and one of Burma's most prominent journalists. He retired from Botahtaung in December 1988 to become more involved in the pro-democracy movement, according to the PEN American Center. In 1990, Ohn Kyaing was elected to Parliament for the NLD, representing a district in Mandalay. (The results of the elections, which the NLD won, were never honored by the military junta.) A leading intellectual, he continued to write. Thein Tan, whose name is sometimes written as Thein Dan, is also a free-lance writer and political activist associated with the NLD.

PEN reported that in mid-1991, Ohn Kyaing received an additional sentence of 10 years in prison under the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act for his involvement in drafting a pamphlet for the NLD titled "The Three Paths to Power." Thein Tan also received an additional 10-year sentence, according to Amnesty International, presumably for the same reason.

In a list of Burmese political prisoners published in April 2001, Amnesty International reported that the sentences of both men were reduced to 10 years on January 1, 1993. However, Ohn Kyaing and Thein Tan remained in prison at the end of 2002. Ohn Kyaing was

jailed at Taungoo Prison, and Thein Tan was jailed at Thayet Prison, according to the Thailand-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners in Burma.

Maung Maung Lay Ngwe, Pe-Tin-Than

Imprisoned: September 1990

Maung Maung Lay Ngwe was arrested and charged with writing and distributing publications that "make people lose respect for the government." The publications were titled, collectively, Pe-Tin-Than (Echoes). CPJ believes he may have been released but has not been able to confirm his legal status or find records of his sentencing.

Sein Hla Oo, free-lance

Imprisoned: August 5, 1994

Sein Hla Oo, a free-lance journalist and former editor of the newspaper Botahtaung, was arrested along with dissident writer San San Nwe on charges of contacting anti-government groups and spreading information damaging to the state. On October 6, 1994, Sein Hla Oo was sentenced to seven years in prison. San San Nwe and three other dissidents, including a former UNICEF worker, received sentences ranging from seven to 15 years in prison on similar charges.

Officials said the five had "fabricated and sent anti-government reports" to diplomats in foreign embassies, foreign radio stations, and foreign journalists. Sein Hla Oo, elected in 1990 to Parliament representing the National League for Democracy (NLD), had been imprisoned previously for his political activities.

Though San San Nwe was granted an early release in July 2001 along with 10 other political prisoners associated with the NLD, Sein Hla Oo remained in jail. He was held at Myitkyina Prison, according to the Thailand-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners in Burma.

Though Sein Hla Oo's sentence should have expired in August 2001, he is now being forced to serve the remainder of an earlier 10-year prison sentence, issued by a military court in Insein Prison in March 1991, according to his wife, Shwe Zin. Authorities had arrested Sein Hla Oo in August 1990 along with several other NLD members but released him under an amnesty order in April 1992. Shwe Zin told the Oslo-based opposition radio station Democratic Voice of Burma in an interview that her husband had signed a document in October 2001 agreeing to abide by Article 401 of the Criminal Procedure Code, which allows prisoners' sentences to be suspended if they pledge not to engage in activities that threaten public order.

Aung Htun, free-lance

Tha Ban, free-lance

Imprisoned: February 1998

Aung Htun, a writer and activist with the All Burma Federation of Student Unions, was arrested in February 1998 for writing a seven-volume book documenting the history of the Burmese student movement. He was sentenced to a total of 17 years' imprisonment, according to a joint report published in December 2001 by the Thailand-based Assistance Association for Political Prisoners in Burma and the Burma Lawyers Council. Aung Htun was sentenced to three years for allegedly violating the 1962 Printer and Publishers Registration Act, seven years under the 1950 Emergency Provisions Act, and another seven years under the 1908 Unlawful Associations Act. He is jailed at Tharawaddy Prison.

In April 1998, the All Burma Students Democratic Front announced that five others were also prosecuted for contributing to the books, including journalist Tha Ban, a former editor at Kyemon newspaper and a prominent Arakanese activist. Tha Ban, whose name is sometimes written as Thar Ban, was sentenced to seven years in prison. He is being held at Insein Prison.

In August 2002, the human rights group Amnesty International issued an urgent appeal on behalf of Aung Htun and Tha Ban, saying that both journalists required immediate medical attention. Amnesty reported that Aung Htun "has growths on his feet which require investigation, is unable to walk, and suffers from asthma," and that Tha Ban's eyesight has "seriously deteriorated."

Aung Pwint, free-lance

Thaung Tun, free-lance

Imprisoned: October 1999

Aung Pwint, a videographer, editor, and poet, and Thaung Tun, an editor, reporter, and poet better known by his pen name Nyein Thit, were arrested separately in early October 1999. CPJ sources said they were arrested for making independent video documentaries that portrayed "real life" in Burma, including footage of forced labor and hardship in rural areas. Aung Pwint worked at a private media company that produced videos for tourism and educational purposes, but he also worked with Thaung Tun on documentary-style projects. Their videotapes circulated through underground networks.

The military government had prohibited Aung Pwint from making videos in 1996 "because they were considered to show too negative a picture of Burmese society and living standards," according to Human Rights Watch, which awarded Aung Pwint a Hellman-Hammett grant in 2001. A notable poet, he has also written under the name Maung Aung Pwint.

The two men were tried together, and each was sentenced to eight years in prison, according to CPJ sources. Aung Pwint was initially jailed at Insein Prison but was later transferred to Tharawaddy Prison, according to CPJ sources. Thaung Tun was jailed at Moulmein Prison, according to the Thailand-based Assistance

Association for Political Prisoners in Burma.

11.5 Academic Freedom

(Information in this section was taken from the ABSFU 2002 Education Report)

There is no academic freedom in Burma, and the Ministry of Education controls the selection of all faculty and students at universities. No new academic programs or courses can be initiated in the country without government permission. All academic discussions and seminars must be government sponsored, and moderators and university faculty members leading these events are chosen by the regime. The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science and Technology, Human Resource Departments, and Ministry of Defense regularly organize academic seminars and symposiums affiliated with foreign institutes or governments, under the titles "Social Development," "Economy," "Education," or "Human Resources." Many Burmese scholars are invited to these events and encouraged to "freely" participate and present their papers and research on specific topics. However, all papers and other information presented by scholars at these seminars is banned from public distribution, and reports from these seminars are generally ignored by the government once the event is over.

University professors are forbidden to say anything critical in their lectures about the curriculum, the education system or the government in general. Military Intelligence and government officials regularly join university meetings to remind academics of these laws and to intimidate them into submission. Members of the Military Intelligence Service (MIS) are reportedly present in every classroom to report on teachers or students who speak out against the government. All academic articles and papers are subject to censorship, and academic publications cannot be issued, or even distributed within the university, without government permission. Burmese scholars who criticize the government or contradict government policy are frequently prohibited from publishing articles in their field of study. For example, in February 2003 the government censorship board prohibited the publication of articles by Dr. Than Tun, a prominent Burmese historian, after he criticized a government order that forced people to pay respect to white elephants.

Newsletters, research booklets and academic reviews issued by the departments of various educational institutes have been banned since the start of military rule in 1962.

Students are prohibited from publishing course reviews, and study guides, and only government sponsored textbooks on these subjects are available. Students are generally discouraged from undertaking research and the writing outside of their coursework.

Thesis proposals from the graduate students, studying subjects such as History, Burmese, English, International Relations, and Social Development, must all be submitted to the MIs and university authorities for approval. A small number of Burmese students are able to pursue graduate studies at universities in Japan and Singapore through scholarship programs. However officials from the Burmese Embassy reportedly show up to monitor these students' thesis defenses to ensure that none of their research could be interpreted as 'anti-government.' (For additional information on education in Burma see chapter on 'Rights of Education and Health.')

Student Literacy Association Warned to Disband

In the first week of July 2002, 17 students from 4 different universities in Rangoon formed a group called the University Student Literacy Association. The Association began publishing the "Universities Literary Journal" without seeking permission from the government censorship board. On 27 July 2002, two members of the group, Win Ko and Nyan Lin Aung were arrested by military personnel from No.7 Military Intelligence Unit. Some other members of the literary association were also arrested and taken into police custody in July. These students reported that they were questioned and told to disband the literary association, and then released after two days of detention. Since then, other members of the group have been harassed and threatened by the MIS. Amongst them, Thaw Thaw Myo Han, a writer and contributor to the monthly magazines Sa-Be-Byu, Han, Han-Thit and Atwe-amyin, has frequently been arrested and detained because of his involvement in the literary group and his contribution to student publications. Finally, the government censorship board banned his articles and contributions in various monthly magazines. (Source: ABSFU)

11.6 Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Expression

People in Burma are denied the right to freedom of speech. Ever-present MI undercover agents force people to be cautious in what they say, and open, verbal support of groups such as the NLD can, and has led to imprisonment.

Throughout Burma, November is traditionally "Literature Month," and literary talks or speeches are held nationwide. On these occasions, invited authors or poets come and give speeches about literature to the public. The military regime has forced some of these speeches to be canceled by refusing to issue a permit for public gatherings. In other places, the authorities insist on being involved in selecting which authors are to be invited. Some famous authors are unable to give public speeches because the government deems their political backgrounds to be suspicious. Authors that are allowed to speak are warned by the authorities not to talk about political issues. Members of the MIS attend these events and tape all the speeches. If any speech is interpreted as having political content, action is taken against the author and organizers of the event.

Man Arrested and Tortured for Allegedly Contacting Foreign Radio Stations

On 12 February 2002, a Burmese national was arrested by SPDC authorities upon his return from Ranong, Thailand. Ko Tin Saw alias Tharkhan, was arrested by a combined group of Bayintnaung Market security forces and Kyant Phut [derogatory term for Union Solidarity and Development Association] members in front of Daw Khin Kyi's shop in Bayintnaung Market, Kawthaung. He was caught with a mobile phone and the February issue of Khit Pyaing journal [a monthly journal published by Burmese opposition groups in Thailand] and was accused of passing information to foreign radio stations. Ko Tin Saw was handed over to Kawthaung-based No 3 Military Intelligence Battalion that same evening. After torturing and interrogating Ko Tin Saw, the military intelligence obtained through his confession the names of five other people who had also allegedly passed information to foreign broadcasting stations, and made arrangements for their arrest.

The SPDC has stated that they believe there are many informers sending information to foreign radio stations and noted that they plan to arrest these people as soon as possible. A combined team has been monitoring and questioning those who return from Ranong at Mway Kyun, Bayinnaung Bridge, and Dhammayone jetties. Two SPDC military intelligence personnel have been waiting everyday at Kawthaung Airport ready to arrest any suspects. Furthermore, another 10 informers have already been sent to Ranong. On 29 January, The Kawthaung Border Committee sought the assistance of Thailand's Ranong Border Committee to arrest and repatriate anti-SPDC activists in Ranong. (Source: DVB)

Two Prominent Writers Detained For Criticizing Forced Relocation

On 7 April 2002, two prominent Burmese writers, U Win Pe (pen name Maung Swan Yi) and Daw San May (pen name Shwegu May Hnin) were placed under house arrest. School teacher Daw Yin Yin Myint and U Sai Hla Kyaw who live in the same district were also arrested. The reason for these arrests is not yet known but local residents believe that the four may have been arrested for giving interviews to overseas Burmese language radio stations regarding the demolition of their houses by military forces. These houses were demolished on April 5th, when a troop of over 1,000 soldiers, security policemen and the members of pro-military organization USDA (Union Solidarity and Development Association) demolished 25 houses in Rangoon's Waggi district of Kamayut township.

Waggi district had been destroyed by fire in 1977, and the SPDC allowed new houses to be constructed again in 1999. Later the government changed their policy and demanded that residents relocate somewhere else. The Waggi District residents were ordered by Major Yan Naing Oo to demolish their houses at their own expense not later than April 5th, and were warned that they may be arrested if they failed to do so.

U Win Pe, age 65, won the National Literary Prize in 1964, and has produced a large body of analytical literature and poems. Daw San May, 63, has written novels and is also an elected MP of the NLD. (Source: DVB)

Jailed Poet Receives PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Award

On 11 April 2002, the New York-based PEN American Center named Aung Myint, a Burmese poet serving a 21-year prison term, as one of the recipients of its 2002 PEN/Barbara Goldsmith Freedom to Write Awards. The award honors international literary figures who have been persecuted or imprisoned for exercising or defending the right to freedom of expression.

On September 14, 2000, poet Aung Myint and his assistant Kyaw Sein Oo were arrested by members of the Military Intelligence Service for distributing information about persecution of National League for Democracy figures to international press agencies and Western diplomats based in Rangoon. The charges specifically related to a press release he and his assistant issued a few hours after NLD leader Aung San Suu Kyi was arrested by security forces as she was trying to leave the city in September 2000. Aung Myint was charged with violating the State Protection and Emergency Provision Acts and on December 20, 2000 was sentenced by a military court to 21 years' imprisonment. His assistant was tried separately under the Printers and Publishers Registration Act and sentenced to seven years in prison.

A leading representative of the so-called Second Line poets the second generation of poets following Burmese independence Aung Myint is known for poems illuminating the daily lives of the people. In the 1980s he worked as a civil servant and contributed articles and poems for the official newspaper Botahtaung, the now-banned magazine Pay-ful-lwa (The Message), and Cherry, where he served as assistant editor beginning in 1988. He was also active in the NLD, and in 1997 was jailed for two years for his work as the party's head in Bahan Township. SPDC authorities fired him from his position at Cherry and prohibited him from returning to his post when he was released, reportedly banning his name from all Burmese publications. He was working as an information officer at NLD headquarters in Rangoon, where he was in charge of literary postings, at the time of his arrest in 2000. Aung Myint is married to a successful fiction writer and has a daughter who is also a well-known writer and actress. He is serving his 21-year sentence in Insein prison and is scheduled to be released on September 13, 2021.

Two Students Arrested for Staging Peaceful Protest

On 17 August 2002, law student, Thet Naung Soe, and another student, Khin Maung Win, staged a peaceful protest in front of Rangoon city hall. During the protest Thet Naung Soe unfurled the flag of Myanmar's underground student union, which shows a fighting peacock, while Khin Maung Win handed out leaflets. Within minutes police personnel in charge of Rangoon city hall security arrived and arrested the two students and took them inside the city hall. (Source: AFP)

The All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) has reported that 4 other students were also arrested in conjunction with this protest. According to ABSFU, three university students were arrested on Saturday, a day before Thet Naung Soe and Khin Maung Win's protest outside Rangoon's city hall. Thet Naung Soe and Khin Maung Win were arrested after the protest along with another student.

On November 6 2002, a closed court sentenced Thet Naung Soe to 14 years imprisonment and Khin Maung Win to 7 years. (Sources: AFP, Reuters)

Man Arrested for Making a Democracy Symbol

On 7 November 2002, Ko Shwe Aung was arrested in Mandalay for making a symbolic gold-coated copper hat. Known as kha mauk (hat worn by Burmese farmers), the hat is a recognized symbol of the opposition National League for Democracy and was gold-coated as a gift for NLD leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. According to DVB, Ko Shwe Maung was sentenced four days after his arrest to three years in prison. "The reason we made kha mauk was to show our confidence and support for Aung San Suu Kyi," U Shwe Maung said in a tape-recorded message for reporters outside Burma. "We wanted to warn the SPDC [State Peace and Development Council] not to ignore the results of the elections [in 1990], to stop their foolish actions and to transfer power to the elected party." Par Par Lay, a famous comedian who spent five-and-a-half years in prison and was released in July last year, also helped produce the hat. "Kha mauk gives shade. It means we are able to provide shade for the people of Burma. We believe kha mauk will stand up for the people of Burma," Par Par Lay said. (Sources: Irrawaddy, AFP)

11.7 Freedom of Expression in the Arts

Writers, poets, filmmakers, actors, musicians, painters, and other artists in Burma are subjected to numerous restrictions which seriously inhibit their freedom of expression. The paranoid censorship of the PSB has stilted the creativity and variety of Burmese art that was once famous in Southeast Asia. The censorship board ensures that nothing produced in Burma or imported from outside the country can be interpreted as "anti-military" or "western-influenced" which could be detrimental to "national security" or "culture." Such censorship is in direct opposition to the very nature of art and artistic expression, as any change to the original piece can potentially ruin a masterpiece. The SPDC lavishes awards, luxuries, and chances to go abroad on artists who choose to be pro-military and who stay away from expressing any ideas deemed political. Artists who fail to fall in line with government policy are isolated and unable to get their artistic work in the public eye.

Censorship of Film and Television and Restrictions on Actors

Filmmakers in Burma are required to submit their scripts to the PSB, and the censorship boards are notoriously sensitive to what might be interpreted as "anti-regime." During the January 2002 annual Motion Picture Awards, Information Minister, Major General Kyi Aung warned film makers to preserve national culture and avoid foreign influence. In his speech he advised those attending the ceremony to abide by two fundamental elements in Burmese culture, which he said were a "sense of shame" and fear of sinning or indulging in uninhibited desire. The New Light of Myanmar quoted the general as saying that adopting, what he described as "alien styles" amounts to neglecting the national culture. (Source: VOA)

Filmmakers in Burma are restricted in how much film they can buy, and after the shooting, the completed film must again be approved by the censors before it is released. Filmmakers are also required to occasionally produce government propaganda films. Actors who work in these propaganda films receive benefits and recognition. It has been the case that actors who have participated in pro-military films have won the Burmese academy awards. It is also common for actors to be seen in posters or TV specials, which promote the army. Beautiful young female actors dressed in military uniforms appear on calendars saying, "We're with you!" Such actors are given opportunity for great popularity and wealth.

In the past year both foreign and locally-produced karaoke videos have become increasingly popular in Burma, however these videos are also subject to censorship for obscenity or anything that appears derogatory to the government or national culture. Mr. Thein Tun Aung, director of the state-run Myanmar Motion Picture Enterprise told the Myanmar Times that authorities were cracking down on video piracy, and in January 2002, 14 people had been handed jail terms of up to nine years and three months. 'Those who break laws protecting intellectual property rights or who show videotapes which have not been passed by the censor board can expect severe punishment,' he said. 'We will protect the national culture.' Last year a total of 800 obscene videotapes and laser discs, all made overseas, were seized and destroyed by the Video Supervisory Committee and police. (Source: AFP)

The 2 Television stations in Burma are known for their propaganda, and most of the programming is dedicated to showing the "achievements" of the military. There are a limited number of Chinese TV programs and foreign cartoons which make their way onto the airtime. Foreign films are also subject to censorship.

Censorship of Music and Musicians

Musicians face many difficulties in finding ways to express themselves through their music in Burma. The economic situation has made music a formidable occupation as instruments and music lessons are prohibitively expensive for all but the wealthy military elite, and finding venues at which to play is difficult. Lyrics to music are put through the same censorship as other writings, and even the musical style itself is often censored. Rock and Roll music is now common in Burma, and other western influenced styles, such as rap, are making their way in, but most western music is not widely available. Instead, Burma has an active "copy" industry, where original western melodies are converted into Burmese lyrics deemed un-harmful to the regime or the "national culture." The regime continues to monitor dress styles of musicians, and forbids them to dance on stage. The regime encourages (through the offering of privileges) musicians to sing government and pro-military songs and sing at government sponsored events, and those who try and refuse are threatened with not being able to have their music produced.

Censorship of Painting, Photography, Sculpture, other Visual Arts, and Performance Art

Painters, photographers, sculptures, and other visual artists are also subjected to military scrutiny. As visual art played an important role in the 1988 uprisings, the regime has taken efforts to put an end to art deemed 'revolutionary.' After the military reestablished power in 1988, the fine-arts building at Rangoon University was destroyed and the fine arts program discontinued. Today it is only possible to study visual arts under private tutorship, or at the Cultural University in Rangoon. The Cultural University (CU), a military institute, is a prime example of the situation of artistic expression in Burma. According to the ABFSU 2000 report, 'The Current Education System in Burma', the CU only accepts 100-150 students per year, who are required to be USDA members. The authorities at the Cultural University admit students to CU according to such requirements, without first learning of the applicants' artistic abilities. In addition, the Minister of Culture of the SPDC has told CU students that if they do not participate in any student strikes or demonstration, the regime will ensure them positions as officers in government administration. In the 1998-99 academic year, 27 students were enrolled for the Arts (Music), 48 Students were enrolled for the Arts (Performance), 29 students were enrolled for the Arts (Painting), and 5 students were enrolled for the Arts (Sculpture). At the CU, students of Music and the Dramatic Arts are denied the chance to study international music and western plays, due to prohibitions from the military regime. The professors, lecturers and schoolmasters of the university are academics from the elite military society and military servicemen.

In her book, "Living Silence," author Christina Fink reports that in Burma art exhibition organizers are required to submit a detailed written description of each of the art items to the Information Ministry prior to any art exhibition in Burma. Then, before the exhibition opens, the authorities come to do a final inspection. If any of the art pieces are considered to be "subversive", the art is not only taken down or away, but also stamped "censored" on the art work itself.

Performance art in Burma has also been restricted. The SPDC has promoted dance as part of its campaign to retain "national culture", yet dancers are only given career opportunities in such government sponsored campaigns or events. Comedy also suffers under the military eye,

and comedians who make jokes, however innocent, that are considered to be "disruptive" are often threatened, interrogated, or even detained. In 1996 two comedians U Pa Pa Lay and U Lu Zaw were sentenced to seven year's imprisonment for making anti-government jokes during one of their performances. Following a sustained campaign by Amnesty International the two were released in July 2001 after spending over 5 years in labor camps.

11.8 Control of Computer Technology and Communications

The SPDC has long viewed the open exchange of information as a potential threat to the regime and has invested considerable efforts to monitor and restrict all forms of communication. Prior to 2002, existing laws mandated that all post, telecommunications, and e-mail services must be provided through a state agency, the Myanmar Post and Telecommunications (MPT). This changed only slightly when in March 2002 a semi-private company, Bagan Cybertech, began offering e-mail accounts along with MPT, and even going so far as to offer limited Internet access. However this company is also closely linked to the regime as its CEO, Dr Ye Naing Win, is the son of Military Intelligence chief Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt. Throughout 2002, regulations stipulating that all computers, fax machines, and modems, must be registered by the government remain in place. Individuals that fail violate these laws face a 7-15 year prison sentence.

Telecommunications in Burma

In Burma the number of telephones has steadily increased over the years, from 67,000 in 1988 to over 280,000 at present. However according to government statistics, this is still only approximately one telephone per 200 people. On March 24, the Myanmar Times reported that Burma had launched a GSM mobile telephone network which would support 100,000 mobile phones in Rangoon and Mandalay. Myanma Posts and Telecommunications (MPT) project manager for the GSM project, Kyaw Win, told the Myanmar Times that the first phase of the system involved 70,000 GSM handsets in Yangon and 30,000 in Mandalay. Prior to this only 15,500 mobile phones were in circulation, and they cost up to 3.0 million kyat (3,660 US dollars at the current black-market rate). (Source: AFP) However even with the new GSM network, mobile users report that communication problems are common and service prices remain high. In addition only close friends and relatives of the generals can easily obtain mobile phones.

On September 16, a joint force of police, military intelligence and immigration under the command of border immigration control (NaSaKa), confiscated more than 300 personal mobile phones from residents in Kawthaung. One local resident reported that authorities in Ranong (Thailand) complained that people were using these phones to contact international Burmese language radio stations such as BBC and DVB to report on incidents in Burma and corruption in the military. However residents report that most of the mobile phones are used by local businesses to order goods from Thailand and inquire about commodity prices. (Source: Network Media Group)

Irrawaddy magazine also reported that in mid-September 30 mobile phones were seized by the chief of the local Peace and Development Council in Three-Mile village, in the Kawthaung area. The reason for the seizures is unknown, but one Three-Mile resident told

The Irrawaddy, "The first phones to be confiscated belonged to government officials." It's reported that Thai mobile phones are brought into the country illegally by members of Burma's Border Discipline Committee. In Rangoon and Mandalay, a mobile phone costs about four million kyat, or nearly US \$4,000. At the border, illegal Thai mobile phones are much cheaper and more easily accessible. (Source: Irrawaddy)

The Internet and Electronic Mail in Burma

The Internet was officially introduced in Burma in January 2000 when MPT became the sole Internet provider in the country. Initially, to connect to the Internet, individuals and businesses first had to obtain a license from MPT, which was extremely difficult for the average citizen, as priority was first given to government officials and organizations, then to foreign embassies and foreign businesses, and finally to favored local businesses. In March 2002 Bagan Cybertech, a "semi-government" company run by the son of Military Intelligence chief Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt, and its private joint venture partner, Maykha, began offering public e-mail accounts and restricted internet access. However overall this has done little to democratize internet access, as the company requires that customers pay an installation fee of US \$260, which puts access out of reach for most of the population who make an average of about US \$15 a month. A March 11th article in the Myanmar Times estimated that at the time there were approximately 4000 e-mail users in the country but less than 100 internet users.

In Burma it remains illegal for companies to operate unlicensed private computer networks connected to their overseas offices. On 10 July 2002, the Ministry of Post, Telegraph and Communications issued an order stating that companies must obtain permission to establish such networks which could be used to connect to the Internet. Those found to be in violation of this order can face from 7 to 15 years in jail. (Source: AP) The government also monitors the content of e-mails for any "anti-nationalistic" sentiment. At the beginning of 2000 the MPT issued regulations for the Internet in which any mention or discussion of politics was explicitly banned.

Through Bagan Cybertech, public users are allowed to send and receive e-mail and have access to about 860 web sites. One sales manager for BaganNet said that in the future they will try to open up more sites requested by subscribers, but only if this is cleared with the board members, who are members of the military elite. Sales manager Ye Htut stated that: "Internet users will be able to access all web sites except free e-mail and sites which could have an ill-effect on Myanmar culture." Sites currently accessible include computer-related sites, corporate websites for hotel chains, airlines, international banks, electronics companies, sports sites, a few foreign universities, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and Nasdaq. However internet users are blocked from access to any international news sites, web-based e-mail accounts or search engines. At present some companies and NGOs which have close ties to the government are being allowed to apply for accounts that will allow them unrestricted internet access. However it is unknown whether or not this permission will be granted by the government. Prices for these accounts are very steep, at US \$500 for installation charges, \$300 in annual maintenance charges, as well as regular monthly charges.

In March 2001, an RSF report entitled "Enemies of the Internet", described how the military regime had responded to the Internet presence of many of its opponents by launching its own propaganda site in 1996: myanmar.com. The junta has also sent out large amounts of disinformation e-mails in an attempt to discredit political opposition groups, specifically the

NLD. In addition, The Defense Ministry and government intelligence services closely monitor the Internet and have reportedly sent virus-infected messages to Burmese dissidents. (Source: RSF)

In September, the monthly business journal, Living Color reported that the country's first Internet cafes would be opening in October, but customers would not be allowed to use the email services. At present, any company wishing to open an Internet cafe must do so in cooperation with Bagan Cybertech. (Source: Irrawaddy) Prior to this there were a few 'internet cafes' in Rangoon, however they did not actually offer access to the Internet, and instead only allowed customers to use CD-ROMs. To send an e-mail, users first had to put the information (text only) on a floppy disk, then take it to an office with an e-mail server, and pay US\$1 per page to send it.

On November 13 the SPDC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Japan on cooperation in the field of computers. The two countries have been cooperating in the IT sector since a Myanmar-Japan e-learning Center was established in Rangoon in October 2001, where Burmese educators could be trained by Japanese experts. In January 2002 Burma set up its first Information and Communication Technology Park in Rangoon. Khin Nyunt, who is also chairman of the Myanmar Computer Science Development Council said at the opening ceremony of the park that "the government is committed to the development of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in the country and will render necessary assistance and support as much as possible." The ICT Park was constructed with an investment of US\$ 1.2 million from more than 40 local private companies. About 32 companies have set up shop at the park, and some 1,500 programmers will be slated to work there. However people attending the ICT park opening noted that when they tried to access the Internet at the teleport they were blocked from entering any websites critical of the government. (Source: Reuters)



12. The Freedom of Movement, Assembly and Association

12.1 Background

Throughout 2002 the SPDC continued to interfere with and monitor the movement of people in Burma. Similarly, the rights of assembly and association continued to be effectively denied especially in border areas, despite the release of Aung San Suu Kyi in May. There was however, a temporary and partial easing of restrictions on the NLD which briefly gave rise to climate of hope for improved conditions in the future. However, by the end of the year Aung San Suu Kyi was clearly encountering increasing and serious harassment on her political trips outside the capital.

There has been overall a notable absence of the freedoms of assembly and association throughout the period of military rule in Burma, especially since the 1988 coup and formation of the SLORC. Under the SPDC these freedoms have been further restricted, and labor unions, student unions and private civic associations are all banned. Through its extensive intelligence network and administrative procedures, the SPDC systematically monitors the travel of all citizens, especially the movements of politically active people in the country. All residents in Burma are required to carry national identity cards, showing their citizenship status, normal place of residence, date of birth, name of father, and so on. Since 1990 these cards are also required to contain information on the holders' ethnicity and religion. All residents and citizens of Burma are required to apply for these cards, with the exception of the Muslim Rohingya minority, who are not considered citizens by the government (see chapter on minority rights for further information). As possession of these national identity cards is mandatory in order to buy train or bus tickets, to register with a local council outside one's normal place of residence, to vote in any future election, or to enroll in institutions of higher learning, those without such cards face severe restrictions on their freedom of movement.

Citizens with proper identification are able to travel freely within the country except for limitations in areas of ethnic armed activity. However, there is the requirement that any person who spends the night at a place other than his registered domicile must inform the police in advance, and that any household that hosts a person not domiciled there must submit to the police a guest list. The name of the overnight guests must be reported to and registered with the local authorities. SPDC Order 1/90, issued on May 22, 1990 stated: "action will be taken against all those who fail to report people illegally residing in their home."

Authorities sometimes enter homes during night hours to check registration documents of occupants, as part of government efforts to monitor people's movements. Security forces also commonly search private premises and other property without warrants. In addition, curfews have also been enforced in parts of Burma.

12.2 International Travel

Leaving the country legally requires the possession of specific government authorization, which it is extremely difficult to obtain. The SPDC carefully scrutinizes prospective travel abroad. This produces rampant corruption as many applicants are forced to pay large bribes to obtain passports to which they are otherwise entitled. The official board that reviews passport applications denies applicants in some cases solely on political grounds. All college and higher education graduates who obtain passports (except for certain government employees) are required to pay a specific education clearance fee to reimburse the government for the cost of their education. The authorities on occasion restrict the issuance of passports to young women applicants seeking work abroad, reportedly to prevent young women from being enticed to travel abroad for jobs in the commercial sex industry. Burmese citizens are required to return their passports to the authorities each time they re-enter the country, and a new passport application must be submitted each time they want to travel outside the country.

In August 2002, new Burmese passports were to be issued with a microchip embedded in them which carries identifying information about the passport holder. This innovation would not be noteworthy were it not for the authoritarian nature of the regime and the opportunities this presents for increased surveillance. UN special envoy Razali Ismail, part owner of Iris corporation which won the contract to install the new system, dismissed such concerns. He said, "Must you think of things in such sinister terms? Anyway, it's only for those people who want to travel outside. In most cases, those will be government people." (Source: BBC / The Washington Times August 15, 2002)

12.3 Restrictions on the Movement of Women

As part of a programme to prevent young women from being trafficked into the sex industry in neighbouring Thailand and China, measures were established in 2002 to prevent the movement of young women into these countries. "Authorities from the SPDC set up human trafficking prevention committees in all states and divisions. These committees are set up even at ward and village levels in eastern and southern Shan State regions. Once the committees are formed they are ordered to collect data about young men and women between the ages of 16 and 25. These committees are thoroughly checking people travelling to the border areas, and if they suspect any young woman, her parents are summoned and told to escort their daughter back home." (Source: DVB, 19 December 2002)

Despite these restrictive measures, hundreds of thousands of young Burmese people very often have no option but to travel to neighbouring countries in order to simply make a living.

12.4 Restriction on Movement of Migrant Workers to Thailand

From May to September 2002, the border with Thailand was closed. As many Burmese people rely on Thailand to obtain such basic necessities as an income and health care this caused great hardship. In Tachelik, opposite Mae Sai in Thailand, it was reported that Burmese caught by the SPDC authorities with wet trousers were automatically sentenced to six months imprisonment, on the assumption that they had waded across the Moei River and evaded immigration control. Those with dry trousers found loitering near the riverbank were given three months imprisonment. (Source: Irrawaddy)

On 13 October 2001, a new law came into effect which imposed harsh penalties on those seeking to leave Burma illegally. This is part of an effort by the regime to stem migration flows. Large billboards have been erected in many townships accusing those who wish to leave Burma of "fleeing the country". Checkpoints near border areas such as Myawaddy reportedly even have orders to turn back young people to stop them from migrating. Ironically, money repatriated by these workers is crucial in helping many people in Burma to survive.

As a result of a MOU (memorandum of understanding) reached with Thailand in November 2001, the SPDC agreed to establish a series of reception centers to facilitate the deportation of migrant workers back to Burma. Currently the only center to be operational is located in Myawaddy, across the border from Mae Sot, Thailand. At this center deportees go from table to table to be screened by five different state branches. These include the Ministries of Health and the Interior, the police, the immigration authorities and the army and/or DKBA. The deportees are photographed and have their fingerprints taken. These are then checked against existing files. Those who have been deported on two previous occasions are reportedly sentenced to seven years imprisonment. The remainder are transported back to their home towns, mostly at their own expense, and there made to sign a pledge to the local authorities that they will never attempt to illegally migrate again.

Returned migrants suspected of involvement in opposition groups are handed over to military intelligence for identification by former pro-democracy activists who have recently surrendered to the regime. Deportees are also subjected to a mandatory blood test without any explanation at the reception center. This test is used to check migrants for a number of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Malaria, TB, and Sexually Transmitted Diseases. A number of human rights organizations have protested this mandatory HIV/AIDS testing, and the reported separation of 20 individuals who reportedly tested positive for HIV/AIDS. Such mandatory testing contravenes UN HIV Principles and Guidelines to which both Thailand and Burma are signatory.

12.5 Laws Restricting the Freedoms of Assembly and Association

The most far-reaching law prohibiting free association and assembly is Order 2/88, which SLORC issued on the day it assumed power. This law outlaws strike centers and the gathering of more than 5 people in one place. While this law has not often been enforced, there are many other laws which have. The most frequently used law is the 1907 (1957) "Unlawful Association Act" which allows for the detention of up to five years of anyone who is a member of or assists in any way an association outlawed by the regime. A number of organizations, including political parties, student unions, profession groups, religious associations, as well as armed opposition groups, have been declared illegal under this Act. This Act contravenes international human rights standards; and its incompatibility with international standards is underlined by the arbitrary, indiscriminate, and heavy-handed manner in which it is applied, usually to suppress peaceful dissent.

Order 1/90 was issued on 22 May 1990 to remind people that, "action will be taken against all those who fail to report people illegally residing in their homes."

Noting that under existing laws any person not normally residing in a house who stays for one night or more must be registered at the local township office, this order threatens to charge persons failing to do so under section 124 of the criminal code, "for failing to disclose to the authorities concerned either an act or a conspiracy that amounts to high treason."

The order was issued after two members of the ABSDF were arrested after hiding in Rangoon for some time. Another regulation, SLORC Order 1/91, issued on April 30, 1991, prohibits public servants from engaging in party politics.

Since July 1998, the SPDC has used section 5/1 (g) of the 1961 Habitual Criminal Offenders Act against NLD MPs in order to restrict the activities of the NLD. This Act puts repeat offenders on permanent bail, forcing them to sign up with local authorities on a daily basis. This 1961 Act was intended to be applied only to monitor and restrict habitual criminals and not to limit, monitor and control political activity. The SPDC has misapplied this act, and used it to issue restraining orders against NLD MPs. These orders, which force MPs to remain within a prescribed area, violate the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In 2002, the SPDC relaxed restrictions on political opposition members, and the NLD (particularly in Rangoon) enjoyed more freedom of movement. Prior to 2002 for example, ordinary NLD members visiting the NLD Headquarters were questioned by military intelligence personnel and sometimes prevented from entering. In 2002 people were able to leave and enter the building at will. (Source: DVB)

12.6 Restrictions on Foreigners in Burma

Government servants are generally required to obtain advance permission before meeting with foreigners. In 2002 military intelligence agents continued to monitor the movements of foreigners and to question citizens about conversations with foreigners, however this seemed less frequent than in previous years. Burmese embassies abroad issue tourist visas, valid for one month, however, select categories of applicants, such as foreign human rights advocates, journalists and political figures, continued to be denied entry visas unless traveling under the agency of a sponsor acceptable to the SPDC and for a purpose approved by the authorities. In 2002, although some areas of the country remained closed to foreigners for security reasons, the authorities permitted travel to most other destinations. Rangoon-based diplomats generally must apply ten days in advance for travel outside the capital. Throughout 2002 international NGO's were often required to have a government representative accompany them on all field visits. (Source: US State Department, 2002)

International Non-governmental Organization (INGOs) are subjected to monitoring and restrictions by the SPDC. In order for INGOs to operate programs inside Burma, they must obtain Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) from top generals in the SPDC (an exception is the INGOs which are in Arakan State under the UNHCR mandate for the Rohingya repatriation.) One of the restrictions in these 'MOUs' states that "... (NGO) representatives and personnel shall not interfere with the political and religious affairs of Myanmar and shall abide by the laws and regulations of Myanmar."

As most INGOs do not wish to jeopardize their programs, they instruct their staff to avoid activities that would put them in disfavor with the junta, including association with the NLD or INGOs working for Burmese people in other countries, which are often associated with the democratic opposition. (For more information on INGOs working in Burma see chapter on Situation of Health and Education).

Example of Restrictions on Foreigners in Burma

Burma Police Block Suu Kyi Visit

On 25 February, officials from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) were prevented from seeing Burmese opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi. The police refused to let them through a checkpoint blocking the road to the house. The two officials were at the end of a week-long visit to Burma to check whether the government had put an end to the practice of forced labour. A spokesman for the ILO in Geneva said the terms of the visit required officials to be allowed freedom of movement and access to leading political figures. The head of the ILO delegation, Francis Maupain said he was "very disappointed" not to have been allowed to see Aung San Suu Kyi. Policemen refused to lift a barrier as cars carrying Mr Maupain and ILO secretary Richard Horsey approached her lakeside home. (Source: BBC)

12.7 Restrictions on Political Parties

In 1988 political parties were allowed to form for the first time in decades. Over 200 such parties were formed, yet as of 1993, following the 1990 elections which were never honoured, only 7 remained legal. Notably, among the first parties to be de-registered were those which represented ethnic minorities and those which had collectively called for a federal constitution in their party manifestos. However, some of the parties which were formed by the ethnic minority groups that had made cease-fire agreements with the SLORC between 1989 and 1993, were removed from the list of "unlawful associations."

At the beginning of January 2002, the SPDC directed regional military intelligence personnel to compile the details of government employees who were relatives of active NLD members. The directive emerged at a time when the NLD headquarters was planning to accept new members. Authorities systematically compiled the details and personal history of U Win Maung, who is the brother of U Saw Ngwe Saw, the NLD joint secretary of Kya-in Seikkyi Township in Karen State. U Win Maung is currently an assistant director of Rangoon Electricity Distribution Department. Local authorities compiled the names and personal histories of relatives, who are government employees, of members of various NLD Organizing Committees, NLD Humanitarian Assistance Committee, NLD Youth Wing, and NLD Women's group. In some townships, houses of NLD members were searched at odd hours of the night for unregistered guests. In certain wards, only the houses of some NLD members were handpicked and searched. (Source: DVB)

12.8 Prohibition of Free and Independent Trade Unions

Burma ratified the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87) in 1955 and is bound, as an ILO member, to apply the principles of freedom of association. However, the SPDC has been criticized for not bringing its laws into compliance with Convention No. 87 by refusing to recognize independent trade unions and harassing workers who attempt to organize.

Several of Burma's laws relate to freedom of association and union organizing, but each is inconsistent with international standards and ignored in practice. The SPDC does not recognize any independent labour unions in Burma. Rather, civil servants, who form the majority of the white collar work force, are compelled through various coercive means, to join the Union Solidarity and Development Organization. The SPDC actively suppresses attempts by workers to organize, and workers who try to form or join such unions are liable to be harassed, arrested and tortured. They are also under constant surveillance by the police and military intelligence.

12.9 The Union Solidarity and Development Association

The Union Solidarity and Development Organization (USDA) has recently gained international attention for its' role in the harassment of Aung San Suu Kyi. Throughout 2002 it was employed by the SPDC to intimidate, obstruct and harass Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD on her visits around the country. Although it is clearly an instrument of the state, SPDC officials utilize the USDA to mask and distance their role in initiating such human rights abuses and to give such actions the appearance of popular grass roots support. On previous occasions, USDA members have been used by the SPDC to deface NLD billboards and to attack vehicles in which Aung San Suu Kyi and her entourage were traveling in.

The USDA was formed on 15 September 1993, about 2 weeks after the SPDC announced that they were holding a national convention to write a new constitution. The USDA is registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs, and although it is not a political party, some claim that it was created to rival the opposition National League for Democracy for popular support. The USDA mandate is to support the activities and policies of the military, and the association was created by the junta to give the illusion that the regime enjoys popular support from its citizens. Membership in the USDA is virtually compulsory for school children, civil servants and anyone seeking the favor of the generals.

The organization claims that membership is voluntary, and that the purpose of the association is essentially social, yet even at the basic and middle school levels, students are pressured to become members. This pressure includes the incentive that if the students have fulfilled their "social" requirements, they receive extra marks on their final examination and recommendations from their schoolteachers. Members of all ages are given social and economic incentives for joining. USDA members have the privilege of attending vocational, language, management and other courses.

The organization claims to be non-political, and members are required to stay away from party politics, yet since its formation the USDA has been directly involved in opposing the NLD, and recently has been involved in organizing events to call for the abolishment of the NLD. USDA members, along with the police and MIS forces have been actively involved in pressuring NLD members to resign, and in coercing or often forcing other citizens to sign papers stating their "loss of trust" in the NLD, the CRPP, and/or certain elected MPs. In another disturbing trend, USDA members and leaders have been increasingly involved in the arbitrary arrests of those suspected to be in opposition to the regime, going along with SPDC and MIS agents, or even sometimes alone. The USDA has also achieved the power that enables members and leaders to call upon people to "contribute" their labor for free. USDA involvement in forced labor has been especially notable over the last few years.

The USDA claims further to be fully supported by their own businesses, such as the Myan-Gon-Myint Group of Companies. Yet the organization receives the majority of its support, both direct and indirect from the military regime. In contrast to attacks on the NLD, the military's 'New Light of Myanmar' consistently praises the USDA. In September 2000, Senior General Than Shwe addressed the USDA annual general meeting and praised it as, "a reliable force, serving the historic duty of undertaking tasks in line with our three main national causes..."

When Lt.-Gen. Win Myint flew into Beijing on 25 October 2002, he was greeted not by his title as a senior member of the SPDC, but as vice-president of the USDA. China is the only country to have recognized and forged party-to-party ties with the USDA.

The tight relationship between the SPDC and USDA can further be seen through the power and privileges that comes to USDA members. In the past, BSPP members were appointed by the military as Township PDC authorities. Now it is USDA members that are appointed to these prestigious posts.

Examples of Forced Attendance at Mass Rallies

USDA Rallies around Burma to Support Regime

In January 2003 Burma's military junta staged mass rallies in major cities around the country as talks with the democratic opposition faltered. The events were organised by the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), the military's de facto political party. Beginning in the capital Rangoon from January 8, soon after the important January 4 Independence Day celebrations, the rallies were held in various cities and divisions including the northern city of Mandalay and southern Kayin state bordering Thailand, reportedly attracting crowds of up to 44,000. At the rallies, USDA spokesmen made speeches promoting the junta's achievements over the last dozen years since a bloody 1988 pro-democracy crackdown and disallowed 1990 elections. "All of us understand that the government has been carrying out tasks to maintain national consolidation, peace and stability, to develop infrastructure, strengthen the economy, develop human resources, promote social skills and to forge international cooperation," one said. (Source: AFP)

Anti-Thai Rally in Shan State

On 1 June the SPDC held a public rally in Kengtung, Shan State, denouncing Thailand. "There wasn't any ill will against Thailand involved on the part of the people," said one Kengtung resident who attended the rally. "The Burmese (authorities) like to hold rallies. They want us there. It is not good for us to dodge them. So we go there. The speakers pretend to give speeches and we pretend to listen. In the end, when they raise their fists and shout slogans, we do the same and go back home a hurry to have our meal. It's all very normal."

Another source dismissed Rangoon's report that 20,000 people were present at the rally as an exaggeration. "The field (Myoma Sports Ground) wouldn't hold more than 3,000," he said. Another rally had been held the day before in Taunggyi, Shan State's capital, to denounce, "external elements that interfere in the internal affairs of Myanmar." (Source: SHAN)

Mass Rally Denouncing Shan and Karen Insurgents

On 6 July 2002, Radio Myanmar reported:

"A mass rally to oppose and denounce Shan United Revolutionary Army (SURA) and Karen National Union (KNU) insurgents, who are deemed to be undermining peace and stability in the border areas, was held at the People's Sports Ground in Taunggyi, Shan State South on 2 June. The function was attended by over 21,000 people from departments, members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), the Myanmar War Veteran Organization (MWVO), the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), the Women Affairs Committee, the Red Cross, auxiliary fire brigades, local people from 20

wards, 12 villages of Pantin Village tract, and students of Taunggyi District. " (Source: Radio Myanmar)

12.10 Other Social Organizations in Burma

No independent human rights and pro-democracy groups are allowed to operate inside Burma. Those that did in 2002 were able to do so only from outside the country. People in Burma are only allowed to associate with social organizations approved by, and under the control of the SPDC. In addition to the USDA, the government backs its own organizations, and pressures the population to join them. Government sponsored organizations include: The Myanmar Medical Association (MMA), Myanmar Red Cross (MRC), Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), Myanmar Anti-Narcotic Association, Auxiliary Fire Brigade, Parent Teacher Associations, Women's Welfare Association and the Myanmar Nurses Association (MNA).

The extent to which these organizations, which are located at township levels across the country, are dominated by the SPDC, varies. However, the organizations are generally led by senior officials with military backgrounds, or the wives of senior officials, military officers, or USDA members, as is often the case with the chairpersons of the local MMCWA. Members of these organizations are expected to participate in pro-military and USDA rallies, or anti-opposition rallies, and often the political agendas of the regime have more precedence in the organization than the actual social issues the organizations are supposed to address.

A select number of local NGOs, mostly religious and church-backed organizations, are able to operate limited social programs. However, SPDC laws confine them to religious activities. These groups are not allowed to be registered as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Burma and are instead registered under the Ministry of Home and Religious Affairs. This non-NGO status limits these organizations's access to overseas funding and their ability to conduct in-country training with foreign experts. Local NGO programs are also under constant surveillance from the SPDC and SPDC backed social organizations. For the most part, individuals in SPDC controlled areas of Burma who desire to work for their communities have no alternative but to join government sanctioned organizations. (Source: HRW)

12.11 Restriction of Villagers in Border Conflict Areas

Roadblocks and Checkpoints in Conflict Areas

Travel within the country continues to be monitored and numerous checkpoints exist along all major travel-routes. In areas of conflict, these checkpoints multiply dramatically. During military operations or at times of political tension, more checkpoints are opened and roads are often blocked off.

In July 2002, Amnesty International released a report entitled, *Myanmar, Lack of Security in Counter-insurgency areas*. The report noted that despite improvements in some urban centers, human rights abuses committed by the Tatmadaw and its' allies against ethnic populations in and next to war zones in Burma continued unabated. These included draconian

restrictions of freedom of movement, assembly and association. (See also torture, extra-judicial executions and forced labour chapters) For example, the Karen Human Rights Group has documented how villagers suspected of being in contact with or even related to anti-SPDC guerillas are subject to arbitrary detention, torture and execution. Similarly, those villagers who have fled from the prospect of being confined to relocation sites and have become IDPs (internally displaced persons) also face hazards. In addition to the hardships of living in the forest, the SPDC soldiers view them as enemies and they are often shot on sight if detected by SPDC forces. When IDPs attempt to flee to Thailand their movement is obstructed by Tatmadaw landmines and patrols.

In areas of ethnic insurgency, there are often severe restrictions placed upon movement. In "brown" or "black" areas, people wishing to leave their villages often must obtain a permission slip from local officials before they can go out to tend their farms, or travel. These permission slips are usually only obtained if a "fee" is paid. In relocation sites, people are often not allowed to return to their land, as they have been warned that anyone moving about in their former fields and towns will be shot on sight. In addition, it is common for the army to burn houses and place landmines in the former fields and towns of relocated people to further prevent them from returning.

Example Incidents of Restriction of Movement and Conscription of Villagers in Conflict Areas

(for more information see chapter on Internally Displaced People and Forced Relocation)

On 16 March 2002, SPDC troops summoned village heads in Baw-ga-li area, Karen State for a meeting. At the meeting, the Der-doh village head failed to attend and as a result the SPDC soldiers showed a bomb from an RPG launcher, a round from a G-3 rifle and a piece of charcoal to the others village heads who came and said that they would kill all the Der-doh villagers they found. In addition, they issued an order to ban villagers from Klay-soe-khee and Baw-ga-li villages of east Pa-leh-wah area from traveling out of the area. (Source: KIC)

In early April 2002, people in Kaeng-Tung township, Shan State were ordered by LIB 533 to provide food for troops on security duty during the visit of Secretary-1 of the SPDC and his entourage. On the day of the visit, villagers of Yaang Khum Mu and Yaang Kwaai villages were ordered not to leave their villages' limits. The troops informed the villagers that anyone who failed to comply with the order would be shot on sight. (Source: SHRF)

On 9 June 2002, troops from LIB 577 stationed in the village of Wan Soap Huay Saowa ordered the villagers to stay indoors. Wan Soap Huay Saow is a village situated in the motor road between Larng Khur and Murng Pan township, Shan State. Due to their heavy casualties in the battle with the SSA near the Thai border, these Burmese soldiers punished the villagers in Murng Pan township. As the villagers could not leave their homes, they were in great difficulties to make a living. (Source: Freedom)

On 9 November 2002, in Karrenni State, a Shadaw relocation camp resident, Lu Reh, 31, was arrested by Burmese troops from LIB 302 while he was working in his paddy field. Because he had stayed in his fields for two days, the troops accused him of having violated the relocation camp regulations. Lu Reh was then sentenced to one month's imprisonment. The military authorities have imposed tight restrictions on camp residents. In recent years they have not been allowed to sleep in their paddy fields outside the camp. (Source: KNAHR)

Restriction against the Civilians' Movements near Pipeline Area

About 210 miles gas pipeline passes through hundreds of paddy fields, fruit plantations and rubber plantations in Ye, Thanbyuzayat, Mudon and Kyaikmayaw Townships in Mon State and Pa-an Township in Karen State. Since the gas pipeline passes their plantations, when villagers go to their plantations or paddy fields they have to walk over the pipeline. After parts of the gas pipeline were bombed in April/May 2002 by opposition groups, authorities in the northern part of Ye Township, Mon State, where the majority of the pipeline is located, and in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division, issued restrictions on civilians's movement, especially the movement of farmers, who regularly travelled in the area. The authorities accused local villagers in these areas of cooperating with rebel armed forces. The authorities ordered to farmers and villagers not to go near the pipeline at night.

In May 2002, the authorities from Ye Township area further ordered the civilians in surrounding villages to stay away from the pipeline at all times. The village authorities and local army personnel warned that if villagers approached the pipeline during the day they would be beaten and if they went at night time they would be shot. In an order issued by LIB No. 299 in the southern part of Ye Township, they authorities officially declared that anyone who crossed the pipeline late in the evening or at night would be shot.

In some villages, the authorities displayed this order on the village offices' blackboards. Many villagers who owned plantations around the gas pipeline area faced increasing difficulties in travelling to their plantations. There are many plantations around the gas-pipeline in both the southern and northern part of Ye Township and some hundred families, who depend on these plantations for their livelihood, were affected by this order. The order was instituted during harvest time, and as a result many farmers lost their crops.

On 8 May, a 40 year old woman from Koe-mile village crossed the pipeline while traveling to her planation. This woman was arrested by soldiers from LIB No. 299 and then beaten. After she was beaten, despite the fact that she had suffered many injuries the soldiers forbid her from seeking treatment at the town's hospital. Similar movement restriction against civilians, especially farmers, were also instituted in Mudon Township, Mon State. In this Township, the gas pipeline passes through many hundred acres of paddy farms and farmers have to travel to their paddy fields every day. Sometimes, the farmers arrived back late to their homes in villages. In May, the village authorities and militia declared that all farmers must stay away from the pipeline route between 6pm and 6am. Maj. Naing Win of IB 31 instructed the militia force in every village that they have right to shoot anyone found in the gas pipeline area during these times. (Source: HURFOM)

12.12 Restriction on the Movements of Religious Minorities

In 2002 it was still virtually impossible for Muslim Rohingya people to move within Arakan State or to other parts of Burma from Arakan State. Only citizens carrying identity cards are free to travel within the country, which precludes movement by those unable to meet the restrictive provisions of the "citizen law." In the past, Rohingya (Bengali-speaking Muslims) who wanted to travel outside their village could apply to the local SPDC authorities for permission. However on 7 June 2000, a meeting was held by Maj. Gen. Aung Htwe, the commander of the Western Command in Arakan state capital Akyab (Sittwe), and was attended by members of all Township PDC, Districts PDCs, the Director of Immigration, the Head of the MI and Director of the NaSaKa (Western Area Command) Headquarters. Following this meeting Rohingyas were no longer allowed to travel within their own localities unless they carried with them recommendations or exit passes from the Township PDC, District PDC, Military Intelligence, or Area Commander of the NaSaKa. In addition, they had to fill out "Form-4" issued by the Department of Immigration. To obtain these documents, the Rohingya traveler has to pay a sum of kyats 2,800 to the authorities to process an Exit Pass that is usually valid only for 24 hours. Any Rohingya who is found to be traveling with improper documentation, is accused of illegally trying to immigrate and is jailed for 3 years. (Source: ARNO)

In most cases, passes are only granted for a twelve-hour period; only on rare occasion are Muslims permitted to stay outside their village overnight. To travel further, for instance, to the Township capitals at Maungdaw or Buthidaung or the state capital at Sittwe is virtually impossible. The only Muslims able to travel to Sittwe, or further to Rangoon, are those who can afford to bribe SPDC officials. Reportedly, Muslim traders have paid bribes of 500,000 kyat to be able to travel to Rangoon. (Source: Narinjara News)

Example Incidents of Restrictions on the Movement of Religious Minorities

Curfew in Sittwe

On 2 December 2002 a curfew was imposed in Sittwe, the capital of Arakan State, after a tense situation arising from reports of the rape of a Rakhine girl and the murder of two people by a group of Muslim fishermen. As the news spread, a large number of the students at Sittwe University became enraged and began to gather to "take action against the perpetrators." The news stirred up widescale discontent among the majority Rakhine community in Arakan State. The previous year, in February 2001, a race riot broke out in Sittwe after Muslim Rohingya youths reportedly teased a Rakhine girl. In the aftermath, the police, with the help of Burmese military troops arrested hundreds of Rakhine youths as young as ten years old who have been missing ever since. (Source: Narinjara)

Burmese Muslims Flee Western Burma to Escape Food Scarcity

By 29 June 2002, Narinjara reported that at least thirty Burmese Muslims including women and children from Maungdaw Township, Arakan State had left their homes due to lack of food. The artificial food crisis was caused by SPDC officials forcibly buying large quantities of rice from the farmers without leaving behind enough for their consumption in a "rice collection drive." Another problem for the villagers is the scarcity of work, as they are not

allowed to travel to even nearby villages for work unless they obtain a travel permit. In order to get a travel permit villagers must obtain written permission from at least three official departments and pay a bribe. One elderly woman resident reported: "There are more women than men in the village at present, and we are scratching everywhere for a grain of rice to eat. But due to travel restrictions we are confined in large prison-like villages from where we cannot go out even to do menial labour in the nearby villages or town. Our children are just like 'bamboo sticks' without adequate nourishment, and at least twelve children and some grown-ups have died because of diarrhoea and fever caused by lack of nutrition." (Source: Narinjara)

12.13 Restriction on the Movements and Harassment of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD

Beginning on 30 January 2002 with the Latha Township office, the NLD was able to reopen 35 out of 300 offices by June. The SPDC's move to grant permission to reopen NLD offices, combined with the release of some political prisoners and the greater freedom of movement enjoyed by NLD members in general, gave rise to hopes that a political thaw was underway. Secret talks, brokered by UN Special Envoy Razali Ismail of Malaysia, had been taking place between the SPDC and the NLD and Aung San Suu Kyi since the end of 2000. Although they excluded the ethnic minorities, it was hoped by many that the talks would usher in a new political era for Burma. After much speculation Aung San Suu Kyi was released from 19 months of house arrest on 5 June 2002. Colonel Hla Min said, "She can travel. We will sort of cooperate because she is a prominent person," indicating that her freedom was unconditional. The last time Aung San Suu Kyi had attempted to travel outside the city was September

2000 and had resulted in her being placed under house arrest. Both to test her freedom and to reorganize the NLD after a long period of suppression, Aung San Suu Kyi embarked on a series of trips throughout the country. The first of these in June was pointedly to Mandalay, which had been her previous destination. There she was met by a large jubilant crowd and experienced no interference from the authorities. Other trips soon followed throughout the year to Chin, Mon, Shan and Arakan States. On these trips she was met by enthusiastic crowds and engaged in activities such as giving speeches, attending meetings, re-opening offices and re-erecting NLD billboards. On her fourth trip outside Rangoon, to Tachilek, Shan State, the SPDC even allowed Aung San Suu Kyi for the first time in 14 years to fly by plane. On all her trips the SPDC always provided "security details." These troops were ostensibly for her protection, however their primary function was to monitor her activities. (Source: Irrawaddy)

During her November trip to Tachilek, SPDC surveillance became ostentatious and was used by military intelligence officers to harass Aung San Suu Kyi and her party. As the NLD's convoy made its way from Taunggyi to Maymyo, a military intelligence van sped up to take videotape Suu Kyi's car from in front of the convoy. As the van rushed to get ahead of the convoy, one of the NLD escort motorcycles crashed on the roadside. In the town of Muse only about 200 people had turned out to see her as military intelligence officers had instructed people to stay away. "Local intelligence videotaped Aung San Suu Kyi even when she went to rest room," U Lwin, NLD spokesperson said. "She told authorities that it wasn't appropriate, but they continued." (Source: Irrawaddy)

Despite attempts by police to intimidate and deter them, large crowds did however manage to turn out in Kyaukme and on later trips such as the one to Myauk-Oo, in Arakan State in December. At one point the authorities prepared to disperse the crowd with high pressure water hoses. Daw Suu reportedly said, "I cannot stand by and watch people being bullied in this manner," and climbed atop the fire-engine and requested the authorities to cease their actions, which they did. She then thanked them for their co-operation and asked the crowd to disperse. After this incident, amidst growing international concern about the lack of progress in negotiations, Aung San Suu Kyi criticized those SPDC officials responsible for this harassment and for their failure to enter into substantive talks.

12.14 Statements and Interviews

Following reports of the harassment of opposition groups in Burma, on 1 January 2003, British Foreign Office Minister Mike O'Brien said: "I am deeply concerned at reports of harassment and intimidation of ordinary people before and during Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's recent trips within Burma, and at reports of restrictions imposed on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as she travels. I am also appalled by reports that a Minister in the ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) dissuaded people from meeting Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and that the government sponsored Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) distributed leaflets making personal attacks on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her family. I have spoken to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on a number of occasions in the last few weeks and we agreed that Burma cannot make progress until we see a real will for political reform from the SPDC. I call on Senior General Than Shwe to enter into a serious dialogue with the NLD and other opposition parties in Burma. Part of that process of development must be to allow opposition groups and the people of Burma the right to express their political views freely and to make substantial steps towards restoring democracy." (Source: News Department, Downing Street (West), London SW1A 2AH UK)

Interview with Senior NLD Official about Aung San Suu Kyi's Travel Plans

Date: 17 December 2002,
Conducted and published by: DVB

DVB : How difficult is it to travel around?

U Lwin : "There are many difficulties. Road conditions are not as good as in Shan State. Another factor is regional security. Military and authorities in Arakan State find it more difficult to move about than in Shan State. Right or wrong, they need to act as needed. There are Muslim extremists there. Departmental officials, therefore, need to check very thoroughly. In Shan State, you can go about as you like even if you forget your national registration [identity] card. That does not work in Arakan State. Responsible officials concerned reminded us to take our national registration cards along. This is because they check everyone coming in or going out over there. They check the national registration card. The situation is different from Shan State." (Source: DVB)



13. Internally Displaced People and Forced Relocation

"If villagers refuse to serve as porters, SPDC and DKBA troops will accuse them of supporting KNU guerrillas. Then, the soldiers would have the right to kill villagers who refuse to work. In order to save their own lives, five families left the village because they refused to work SPDC orders. Three of them lived in jungle as IDPs and two of them joined the KNU."

Village elder, Mae Tha Mu tract, Haling Bwe Township, Pa-an district, 2002. (Source: FTUB)

13.1 Background

The situation of internally displaced people (IDPs), in Burma remained critical throughout 2002. The U.S. State Department's country report for 2002 on Burma estimated that forced relocations had produced hundreds of thousands of refugees, with as many as one million internally displaced persons.

"Throughout 2002 the military continued to forcibly relocate minority villages, especially in areas where ethnic activists and rebels were active, and in areas targeted for the development of international tourism." (Human Rights Watch World Report 2003)

In 2002, Human Rights Watch reported that tens of thousands of villagers in the ethnic insurgent areas remained in forced relocation sites or were internally displaced. It has been estimated that in 2002 around 170 villages have been burned down and 300 villages have been forced to relocate, in the Karen area alone. (Source: UN Wire) The most significant displacement has occurred in the border ethnic areas where the military regime has been at war with ethnic armed opposition groups for over 50 years. Ethnic minorities such as the Muslim Rohingyas of Arakan State, the Shan, Karen, Kachin and the Karenni, as well other smaller ethnic groups that live in the same areas have suffered disproportionately. Whatever their background, internally displaced persons in Burma live under conditions of severe deprivation and hardship. Almost all are without adequate access to food or basic health and education services. A large number of IDPs are women and children.

People in Burma become displaced as a result of SPDC policies that either directly or indirectly compel them to leave their homes. Villagers are subject to forced relocation by the SPDC as part of the military's *four-cuts* program; for urban resettlement or "beautification" projects, which are often linked to the SPDC's campaigns to promote tourism; and for rural resettlement programs. People are also frequently left with no choice but to flee their home villages when faced with resource scarcity, and the loss of their security and livelihoods that result from oppressive SPDC policies. Economic reasons for fleeing include: numerous demands for forced labor and portering; government crop quotas; ceaseless taxes and fees to support the army; army looting or destruction of property; and uncompensated loss of land or property due to SPDC development projects. Even more pressing are people's fears of the torture, rape, arbitrary arrest and arbitrary killings perpetuated in border areas by the military. Finally, villagers also often flee in anticipation of forced relocation.

The majority of crossborder refugees report that before arriving in refugee camps they had spent some time living as IDPs. Currently however, those IDPs that would seek asylum in neighboring countries are finding it much more difficult to flee Burma, due to increasing SPDC control of the border, increased use of landmines in border areas, and the increasingly restrictive policies on refugees adopted by neighboring governments.

Thai Policy towards IDPs

As a non-signatory to the 1951 International Convention on Refugees and its' 1967 protocol, Thailand argues that it is under no legal compulsion to provide asylum for any refugees. Thailand does not allow the establishment of any refugee camps for, and denies refugee status to, all people from Shan state despite very heavy fighting there throughout 2002-03. The Shan Human Rights Foundation estimates that since 1997 over 300,000 people in Shan state have been forcibly relocated, and some 150,000 have sought refuge in Thailand. The Thai government estimates that there are an estimated 110,000 refugees in Thailand, which represents only part of the Burmese IDP population. (Source: Refugees International 2003) Only those refugees from recognized zones of conflict, fleeing directly from fighting officially qualify as refugees in Thailand. Refugees International reports that: "This confusion about who actually qualifies to be called a refugee is compounded by the refugee-seekers themselves. Rather than describe themselves by their starting point — i.e. the reason they fled Burma — many people look to their present situation, i.e. their status as illegal workers...Forced labor and forced relocation are human rights abuses, they are not "economic reasons," and those people fleeing such violations are escaping first and foremost from persecution." (Source: Development of Democracy in Burma, Testimony to US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs by Refugees International, 18, June, 2003) In addition, RI notes that the Thai army and border police have effectively sealed off the border from IDPs seeking refuge.

"The displaced endure abuses rather than seeking asylum because they know that coming to Thailand can be dangerous and that denial of entry at the border happens routinely. News has trickled back inside Burma that even if IDPs can find a secret route into Thailand, they may not be allowed into refugee camps. There are no guarantees that they will be protected from abuse by Thai authorities or receive humanitarian assistance. Thailand's strict policy towards refugees is achieving its goal of deterrence, causing IDPs to stay in Burma at great risk to their security and well-being.

To qualify for refugee status in Thailand, Burmese must be able to prove that they are "fleeing fighting," which is defined as literally being shot at within hours or, at most, a few days of reaching the border. Only a fraction of the three to four thousand people seeking asylum in Thailand each month qualify as refugees under this narrow definition. As a result, many refugees fleeing human rights abuses are rejected and left with few options for protection and assistance. To make matters worse, in a further effort to deter refugees from entering Thailand, the Thai authorities halted the entire refugee screening process for the past year, leaving no mechanism available for refugees to enter camps. The Royal Thai Government has so tightly circumscribed UNHCR's role in protecting refugees that, in effect, the UN refugee agency is unable to carry out its core protection mandate along the border with Burma.

In summary, there are few options available for IDPs to find a safe haven. Knowing of the threats they could encounter on their journey to Thailand, the uncertainty of being allowed to

cross the border, and the likelihood that they will be denied access to refugee camps, many prefer to live in hiding in the jungles or in government relocation sites, where on-going human rights abuses and threats to their survival are a day to day reality." (Source: Refugee International 2002)

Land Confiscation

The SPDC has subjected people to displacement for both economic and security reasons. Government displacement programs have been in place since the late 1960s, and possibly before. Since that time, under the guise of regional or area development, private land and plantations from civilians have been confiscated by the military - without any compensation - for military plantations, farms or animal breeding ranches, or for the construction of roads, railways, hydroelectric power plants, large dams and small scale infrastructure projects. In addition, the regime has forced numerous urban populations to move into areas away from city centres. In the 1990s the trend has been for the military to displace civilians from cultivable land which is then used for the construction of military bases or for income-generating projects.

The "Four Cuts" Campaign

In the volatile border regions, displacement campaigns have been aimed at securing combat zones, cutting off civilians support for insurgents, and curtailing the activities of ethnic armed groups. These activities fall under what the SPDC refers to as the '*four-cuts*' policy. This program was introduced in 1974 with the aim of cutting the supplies of 1) food, 2) funds, 3) recruits, and 4) information to the resistance groups. In some border areas which the regime had labeled *brown areas*, forced relocation programs were carried out systematically. In other areas, which were classified as *black areas*, all villages were destroyed, fields and paddy barns were burnt, and anyone found in the area was shot. These campaigns against civilians were intensified after the 1988 pro-democracy uprising. Currently under the four-cuts campaign, villagers suspected of having contact with the resistance are detained, tortured, and executed; regime troops systematically extort and pillage villagers' crops, food supplies, livestock, cash and valuables; and villagers are forced to labor for army projects. Any village that is suspected to be supporting the opposition is forced to relocate. In 1996-1997, the military regime launched programs to forcibly move or wipe out all rural villages in areas not directly under their control. As a result of these intensified programs to destroy the populations in the ethnic areas, the number of people displaced has continued to increase dramatically.

When a village is forced to relocate, the villagers are usually told that they will not be permitted to go home until the opposition groups have capitulated. The SPDC issues written orders addressed to village headmen, which specifies the date by which the entire village must be relocated to a designated site. Relocated persons are not compensated for their homes nor are they given enough time to collect all of their belongings. Villagers must leave behind the majority of their belongings, including their livestock. Often people must also leave behind elderly and sick relatives. The areas cleared of villagers are then designated as "*free-fire*" or *black areas*. Houses, villages, and crops left behind are often pillaged and then dismantled and/or scorched to prevent the return of villages. Villagers seen in the areas of their former homes are considered to be rebel soldiers and shot on site. In some cases landmines are laid on the roads leading into villages, or in abandoned fields and homes.

13.2 IDPs in Burma

There are four types of displacement in Burma:

1) Displacement into state-controlled relocation sites and satellite towns

Villagers forcibly relocated generally are required to move to one of the areas designated as "relocation sites" by the SPDC. These sites are most often located in other villages or towns near army bases, car-road sites where there are no villages, and barren areas where there are no resources or transportation. In the cases of urban resettlement or "beautification" projects, the townspeople are moved to outlying areas of the city called "satellite towns."

Satellite Towns

These new towns are made of populations forced to relocate by the military government, and are located in the outskirts of cities, usually a few miles out where there are very few facilities. In the last five years, the junta has forcibly resettled tens of thousands of potentially restive poor people from city centers into these distant slums. Clean water is scarce and sanitation is poor in these slum areas. In addition, the people who are relocated face great difficulty as public transportation into the cities is either nonexistent, or else extremely poor and unreliable. Employment in the new satellite towns is scarce. There are inadequately equipped schools in these towns, but health care is a problem as the few clinics that exist are understaffed and under supplied and the city hospitals (also understaffed and under supplied) are difficult to get to.

The Relocation Sites

In most of the places that have been chosen as "relocation sites" by the SPDC, little preparation or organization is done in order to receive the displaced people. The SPDC is unconcerned whether or not water, food, cultivatable land, employment and services are available in the new areas. The burden for sheltering and caring for the displaced at relocation sites generally falls on the local community. If the relocation site is part of, or near another village or town, this extra burden results in increased depletion of the resources of the original population. No humanitarian assistance comes from the government, although at some sites there is very limited assistance from church organizations. In some cases, rice has been distributed to the IDPs during the initial relocation period, yet these rations are insufficient and the distribution period is short. One refugee who came from the relocation site at Mawchi in Karenni State stated that rice intended for the relocated people was diverted and sold by local township authorities.

The SPDC troops force the villagers in the relocation sites to work on a daily or weekly basis; generally one person from each family must go. This forced labor includes clearing bushes and trees from the roadsides both inside and outside the relocation sites, cleaning military buildings, cultivating land for the military bases, hauling water for the troops, building fences around the military camps, digging bunkers, road construction, portering for the military and other general servant work. The villagers are also forced to work in the infrastructure projects in the area. Moreover, they are made to pay various fees for development projects, military funds, food for visiting troops, and so on.

Services at the relocation villages vary from site to site, as each site is under the responsibility of relevant state or township committees. However, in general there are no arrangements made to provide services for the relocated people.

Access to water varies – in some sites wells have been dug in addition to streams and lakes. Yet in some sites, such as the Shadaw relocation site in Karenni State, the lack of drinkable water has resulted in several problems, including sickness and deaths caused by chemicals that were added to the water in an attempt to clean it.

Sanitary facilities are usually nonexistent for the IDPs and they either are required to build their own, or use outer areas of the sites for latrine purposes.

The poor water and sanitation at the sites, among other things, has resulted in higher levels of sickness and mortality, yet health care facilities are either missing altogether, or else seriously under-equipped and under-supplied.

There is no access to electricity in most sites, and in some sites, such as Shadaw relocation site in Karenni State, torches (flashlights) are banned and dry cell batteries are not permitted to be sold in the site. This lack of provisions for night lighting increases the vulnerability of women, among other things.

Education facilities are also insufficient or nonexistent. In most cases, the relocated people establish makeshift schools themselves. If there are pre-existing schools, school buildings, teaching materials and teachers are never sufficient, and families often do not send their children to school as they cannot afford the school costs, or they require their children to help in the family's attempts for survival. (See chapter on health and education for more information)

At all relocation sites in Burma, access to farmland and employment is a serious problem for the relocated villagers. In some sites, IDPs are able to access farmland around the relocation site, yet this allocated land is usually insufficient for basic survival or unsuitable for farming. In other sites, access to surrounding land is denied, especially when villagers are relocated to sites where local residents are already farming the land, either for themselves or for the military. New refugee arrivals at the Thai border in 1999 reported that they had been able to find daily labor at local farms near the relocation sites, earning between 40 and 120 kyats per day. In some cases, villagers are permitted to return to their former farms and plantations, yet due to the restrictions imposed on their trips out of the sites and the dangers these villagers face outside of the sites, most are unable to make a living in this way.

Villagers in relocation sites live in constant fear of the violence and demands of the state forces, both inside and outside the relocation sites. Villagers are not permitted to leave the sites without passes, which they must purchase from either SPDC soldiers or local authorities. The passes are usually only valid for 1 day, from dawn to dusk, although in rare cases week passes have been granted. (see chapter on the freedom of movement) This leaves the villagers little time to travel to their places of work, complete their work, and then return. In addition, security for the villagers outside of the relocation sites is notoriously bad. Villagers seen outside the camps are vulnerable to capture, arrest, torture, and killing, even if they hold valid passes, as they are accused by SPDC troops of leaving the camps to support rebel forces. Women are especially vulnerable, and many cases of rape have been reported by women who

have gone outside the camp to forage for vegetables or get water. (see chapter on women)
The local authorities do nothing when cases of abuse are reported to them by the villagers.

2) Displacement into areas under full SPDC control;

Many villagers suffering from abuse under the SPDC *four-cuts* program, or who have been told to relocate without a specified site have chosen to resettle in areas under full SPDC control, which they feel are safer and more stable than the conflict areas, or where they have friends or relatives. Yet as most of the displaced villagers are farmers, they face many difficulties when they are forced to move into new villages or towns. Available land in these areas is often scarce and the search for other employment in new areas is difficult. In larger towns or cities farmers are often forced to seek work as day laborers in low paying jobs. The families who have been forcibly relocated also usually move without being able to bring all their belongings, adding to their problems of resettlement. Villagers sometimes move to villages and towns where they have relatives, but their relatives are often not able to provide the extra support needed, as they themselves are suffering. In addition, these IDPs living in areas under SPDC control are subject to the same abuses as the other villagers around them. These include the demands for forced labor, fees, and restrictions that are commonplace across Burma. Yet because the abuses committed are sometimes less than in areas under the *four-cuts* program, many villagers choose to face the risk of moving to areas under full SPDC control.

3) Displacement into areas and camps controlled by armed opposition groups

Villagers who have been forced to flee their homes and villages for any of the above mentioned reasons, are sometimes able to seek shelter in areas controlled by armed opposition groups, where they feel they have some protection from SPDC abuses. Several of the armed opposition groups operate camps and resettlement sites in their areas of activity. However, in these camps and sites, supplies and services are very limited, and often the shelter and supplies offered are only temporary. Access to food, education and health varies from site to site, as does the level of security. In some camps and sites schools, health care and other services are provided for a limited number of IDPs, and the area is safe from SPDC attack, yet in almost all such places, there are no employment opportunities. Therefore, the IDPs have to live off of whatever the opposition groups can provide for them.

4) Displacement into jungles, fields, and other remote, usually "free fire" or black areas of Burma

There are nearly 1 million people estimated to be hiding in the border conflict areas of Burma, and this is the IDP group with the least access to basic survival needs. These villagers have fled into hiding, despite the risks, because of various factors. These IDPs include:

- Those who flee SPDC troops in advance of their arrival;
- Those who can no longer stand the abuses they suffer in their villages;
- Those who were ordered to move from their village to a relocation site or other place, and who chose not to do so; and
- Those who have fled from relocation sites due to unlivable conditions.

These IDPs are regarded as enemies by the SPDC troops, as the areas where most villagers hide are located in *black* or "*free-fire*" zones. They are shot on sight, or else captured, tortured and then sometimes killed whenever they are found. Their shelters, rice plantations

and belongings are looted or destroyed when discovered. Under the guise of ridding areas of opposition forces, the SPDC has launched several "search and destroy" operations, in which soldiers root out and destroy everything they see in the area including people. The troops often plant landmines on paths that they suspect the IDP villagers use, and they practice a "scorched earth" policy of looting, destroying and burning any signs of habitation or food supply. Troops have even been known to cut down fruit trees growing naturally in the forest in these operations in an attempt to make it impossible for anyone to survive in the forests or jungles.

Villagers often hide in areas near their old villages and risk attempting to work and harvest their crops in secret. This work is extremely dangerous, and if crops are discovered by soldiers, they are burned or destroyed. If the villagers are unsuccessful in harvesting rice, they forage for other sources of food in the forests. Villagers in hiding, for the most part, are unable to travel outside of their area of hiding to purchase other necessities, and must make do with what they can find around them.

Health is a major concern for people in hiding. Life in the tropics without shelter or adequate food leads to high sickness and mortality rates from malnutrition, diarrhea, malaria, minor injuries and other easily preventable illnesses. With a complete absence of health care facilities, people mainly rely on herbs and traditional medicine. Although there are some healthcare teams which seek to reach IDPs, the medicine and care they are able to provide is insufficient for the numbers of IDPs in hiding across many border areas.

IDPs hiding in the jungle are sometimes able to operate temporary makeshift schools with volunteer teachers. These schools lack any supplies, and are forced to shift from place to place depending on SPDC activity. With the increase in SPDC activity, in recent years, and the common occurrence of "search and destroy" operations, the number of these schools has been greatly reduced.

13.3 Situation in Arakan State

Throughout 2002 the Muslim Rohingya population continued to be subject to large scale internal displacement as they have been over the last decade. Forced relocation has not been uncommon. Most relocation is connected to military efforts to install military camps, to build administrative or religious infrastructure, to move the Muslim Rohingya population to the north of the state and to settle Buddhist people throughout the state in "model villages." Small minorities of Arakan (notably the Mro) have also been relocated from their mountainous and remote homelands to the plains.

Within Arakan State there is significant displacement due to the government's continuing discrimination and repression of the Rohingya Muslim minority. The SPDC's abuses against Rohingya Muslims, including denial of citizenship, forced labour, and arbitrary confiscation of property, continue to prompt new refugee flows and limit the reintegration of those who have returned from refugee camps in Bangladesh. (For more information about discrimination and displacement of Rohingya Muslims see chapters on Freedom of Belief and Religion, and Situation of Refugees).

Muslim villages outside the far north are becoming rare. Most of the Rohingyas who lived in the Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U or Minbya districts have been forcibly displaced to the north over the past few years. These forced relocations, which go hand in hand with serious human rights violations, have been denounced by the UN Special Rapporteur on Burma, notably in February 1993 and January 1995. According to villagers still living in Rathidaung, out of the 53 Muslim villages existing in the district before 1995, only two remained in 1999. The construction of model villages for Buddhist settlers in the north of the state also entails the forced relocations of Muslims who are moved to less fertile lands, usually without adequate time to prepare or any compensation.

SPDC Plans to Establish More Settlers' Villages in North Arakan

On 16 November 2001 it was reported that the SPDC is preparing to establish more settlers' villages in the Muslim majority border areas of north Arakan during the 2001-02 dry season. Instructions have already been sent to local authorities to make the necessary arrangements for this. So far, 33 settlers' colonies, dubbed 'model villages,' have been established in Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships on lands confiscated from Muslims. The new settlers are ethnic Burmans, Rakhines and some members of hill tribes from Arakan Hill Tracts in eastern Burma. They have all been provided with readymade houses, farmlands, bullocks and carts, free rations for more than one year and free labour from Muslim forced labourers. Although the above settlements are established in the border areas they are not under the control of the Na Sa Ka (border security force) like Muslim villages. Instead they are controlled by the Headquarters of Military Intelligence under the Western military command and Township Peace and Development Council in Buthidaung. These new settlers have been responsible for various crimes against Muslim villagers including picking fights and stealing livestock. (Source: Arakan News Agency)

Forced Relocation in Arakan State - partial list of incidents 2002

SPDC Army Forces Carpenters to Build Houses for Burman Settlers

On 7 March 2002, a large number of carpenters from Maungdaw and Buthidaung Township areas have been forced by the SPDC Army to construct houses for Burman Settlers. According to a Construction Department engineer, the SPDC is constructing houses in about one dozen "Model (*Sanpya*) Villages" in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships. Seventy Burmese families consisting of 296 people total, from central Burma will be relocated in the new houses built in the "Model Villages" of Pe-yung, Tharay-kung-baung, Mora-waddy, Udaung-kye-rwa, Aung-tha-bray and Naing-ra-gaing, in Maungdaw township. The SPDC has ordered the local carpenters to complete the houses before 27 March, the Burmese Army (*Tatmadaw*) Day.

It was learnt from some of the residents of the 'model' (otherwise known as SPDC) villages, that since February 3 2002 two families who had been forcibly relocated from Rangoon to Aungthabray 'SPDC' village, fled to unknown destinations. These relocated villagers took their belongings with them and left behind a bullock-cart and two acres of paddy land.

According to the Contruction department engineer and sources in the Maungdaw township administration (Mawata) the new houses being built in the dozen model "SPDC" villages will house people relocated from central Burma. People being relocated to Maungdaw include the

homeless, lepers and people with HIV/AIDS. The carpenters building these houses are paid below market wages by the SPDC. (Source: Narinjara)

Land Confiscated for Model Villages

Throughout April 2002 the SPDC have been confiscating privately owned land in the border townships of Maungdaw, Rathedaung and Buthidaung. On 1 April, Mayaka Township Peace and Development Council Chairman of Maungdaw, Captain Hla Paw and his group met with U Thein Tun, the leader of Payrung model village and took him to the east of the village. There they surveyed 135 acres of hilly area owned by neighbouring villagers. Afterwards the authorities confiscated the land with plans to distribute it among the residents of Payrung model village.

The confiscated land will be distributed after the traditional Thaung-gran New Year festival that ends on 17th April by casting lots among the mostly Burman residents of the model village. There are now more than thirty such model villages in three townships which are occupied mostly by settlers brought in from central Burma. The residents of these villages are reportedly former hardcore criminals, HIV patients, drug addicts, and retired military personnel. Residents are concerned that the establishment of Na-a-fa model villages in the area will increase crime rates and the spread of HIV to the local population. (Source: Narinjara)

NaSaKa Forcibly Relocates Villagers

Between 7-16 June, the NaSaKa troops forced 39 families from Zedibraung village, Laungdung village tract, Maungdaw Township to relocate to Chaung-they-braung (Sin-the-byin) village, in the northern part of Maungdaw. This forced relocation left the villagers landless and homeless. Though the monsoons were in full swing they were left with no land to cultivate. Due to the torrential rains, the villagers faced difficulty in building houses in the area where they were forced to resettle. This area is located in an inaccessible part of the township where there are practically no road links, and materials like bamboo, timber and thatch for building houses are not available in the nearby hills.

The Nasaka border security forces evacuated the villagers following the November murder of a prostitute by four Nasaka members in a camp close to the village. The murderers decamped with the arms and ammunition. The NaSaKa have alleged that the murderers came from the village, and carried out an 'investigation' into the incident which involved the detention and torture of many villagers including women and teenagers. The NaSaKa have accused the villagers of being accomplices to the murder, and the villagers believe that they were relocated as punishment for this. (Source: Irrawaddy)

Rohingyas Continue to Flee to Bangladesh to Escape Forced Labor and Starvation

On 7 October 2002 Narinjara reported that increasing numbers of Rohingyas had entered Bangladesh after fleeing starvation and forced labor in Burma. In Area # 8, Maungdaw Township, controlled by Myin Hlwett Nasaka (Border Security Force) alone, at least 16 Muslim Rohingyas have left for Bangladesh in recent weeks to escape conscription for forced labour and widespread starvation caused by rising rice prices.

In Bangladesh, the new arrivals are not recognized as refugees, and are usually unwelcome by locals as they are viewed as a 'menace.' While it is difficult to estimate the total number of Rohingyas who have crossed into Bangladesh in recent months, many journalists in Cox's Bazaar estimate the number to be between 4 and 5 thousand.

On 5 November 2002 a fresh wave of Muslims from Burma including Rohingya Muslims, reportedly crossed into south-eastern districts of Bangladesh through Burma's western border. The influx has caused wide concern among the local administration. At the end of November an estimated five thousand illegal Rohingyas had crossed the Naaf River and taken shelter in Cox's Bazaar, according to a news item in the Independent (26 Nov) from Dhaka. The Rohingyas arrived fleeing increasing demands for forced labour by the Burmese junta officials. Sabib Ali (not real name) a resident of Maungdaw Township who is now living in Cox's Bazaar, reported that there is an undisclosed famine-like situation prevailing in the area where the majority of Rohingya Muslims live. These hardships are a result of widespread conscription for forced labour, rising costs of basic commodities, and high levels of unemployment. This man estimated that there were approximately 9,000 to 10,000 illegal Rohingyas currently living in Cox's Bazaar.

Sabib Ali also reported on further persecution that drives Rohingyas out of Burma: "The Burmese junta imposed travel restrictions on the movements of the Muslim Rohingyas also make our life miserable as we cannot even move from one village to another without the permission of the local junta officials. That does not come without a large bribe. Our wedding also needs permission from the junta to take place. In the coming Eid-ul-fitr, the greatest of Muslim festivals, we will have difficult times observing it as most of the Muslim population is hard-up due to all the restrictions." (Source: Narinjara)

Muslims Forced to Give Rice for Burmese Settlers.

On 18 November 2002 Muslim villagers living in Maungdaw Township near the border with Bangladesh have been forced to give rice to Burmese settlers who have been relocated in the area by the SPDC. Each of the Muslim families in the villages around Padummala village, situated 10 miles south of Maungdaw Town, have been ordered by the SPDC officials to give fifteen baskets (about 180 kilo) of rice during the current harvest.

Reportedly, many of the Burman settlers who were brought to the area in 1995-96 were previously homeless. One local village elder reports: "Many of them are single persons either jobless or of doubtful livelihood...many are believed to have had connections with crime in Burma proper."

After being brought to the Maungdaw by the SPDC, each of the settlers was given three acres of paddy land, a buffalo cart, a pair of bullocks, and a house with a corrugated iron sheet roof. As most of the settlers were unable to earn a livelihood, many were soon forced to sell the corrugated iron sheets to buy food. To date many of those resettled have surreptitiously left for their previous homes in central Burma. The remaining settlers continue to be a heavy burden for the native Muslim and Buddhist villagers living nearby, since these villagers have to do all the agricultural work for them in addition to giving them rice demanded by SPDC officials. (Source: Narinjara)

13.4 Situation in Karenni State

Brief Summery of the Situation of Internally Displaced Persons in Karenni State

Currently in Karenni State there are three types of displacement: conflict-induced; development-induced; and displacement arising as a result of resource scarcity. Conflict exists in these areas as a result of the Karenni National Progressive Party's (KNPP) efforts to cede from Burma. These efforts have been strongly resisted by the military government, with displacement used as a tool since the 1960s to secure areas from rebel forces. This displacement has included the confiscation of land and natural resources by the military, greatly impoverishing local communities.

The successive military regimes of Burma have three times carried out forced relocation programs in Karenni State. First under the BSPP, particularly in No. (2) District of Karenni State, when an estimated 50 villages were destroyed and burnt down and tens of thousands of villagers in the area became homeless. Second, under the SLORC, who forcibly relocated many villages in No. (3) District of Karenni State, and about 500 of the villagers in the area died from diseases such as malaria and diarrhea. Then in 1996, the military government again carried out its forced relocation program across the Karenni area. A forced relocation order with the deadline of July 7, was first given to villagers living between the Salween and Pon rivers, the two major rivers in Karenni State. According to the order, the villagers had to leave their villages in seven days and go to forced relocation sites designated by SPDC. The villagers were warned that seven days after the order, the area would be declared a free-fire zone, and anyone found in the villages or in the free-fire zone would be considered a rebel and shot dead on sight. In the year 2000, the SPDC allowed many Karenni people who had been living in forced relocation sites since 1996 to go back to their own villages. The villagers however, were ordered to report to the nearest SPDC outposts at least once a week. Currently, they are not allowed to stay over night at their farms, and are required to possess passes, which cost 20 kyat in order to travel to their farms during the day. Villagers are prohibited from carrying military uniforms or traditional guns used for hunting, and from trading in medicine or batteries, and the purchasing and selling of rice is restricted. Villagers are allowed to travel from village to village only twice a week- on Tuesday and Thursday. When they travel they are checked for their National ID cards, and are required to pay 20 kyat at every checkpoint.

Partial Return of IDPs from Southern Shan State

In 1996 people from Karenni State fled into Southern Shan State's SNPLO area and joined a population of Karenni that had moved there as IDPs twenty years ago. When they arrived in Shan State, they started wearing Pa-O clothing rather than their own. They did this because they worried that if the SPDC troops saw them wearing Karenni clothes, they would be victimized. The people there farm rice and opium. Those who arrived after 1996 are waiting for the political situation to improve before returning. In the summer of 2002, several villages returned to Karenni State although there is still no security, health care or education. Before returning, they informed the SPDC authorities based in their old township. The SPDC authorities replied that they could return as long as there is no fighting around their village and they are not allowed to contact the KNPP. They threatened that if any fighting took place, they would come back and burn down the village. (Source: Burma Issues)

Villagers Displaced by Government Infrastructure Projects

"Recent data indicate that while villagers have been displaced by fighting, it is also government-initiated development schemes, aimed at separating people from non-state groups by forcing them into relocation sites, that has resulted in most displacements since 1960s. These schemes were responsible for the wide-scale displacement of about 25,206 people in 1996 alone. Of these, 11,669 are known to have moved to relocation sites, 4,400 were registered in refugee camps and a further 9,137 unaccounted for. Since 1998, many IDPs have moved out of relocation sites back to their villages (some voluntarily, while others have been ordered back) or to refugee camps in Thailand. (BERG September 2000)

"Another project that caused an unknown number of displacements was the rail link between Loikaw and Aung Ban on the border with Shan state. Work on the railway, which is 40 kilometres long, started in 1991 and was completed in 1994. During this time, 31 acres of farmland plus 9 acres of land in Loikaw city were requisitioned to make way for the line [...] A further 24 households were displaced in Loikaw to make way for additional but unspecified transport infrastructure projects. In each case no compensation was made. In addition to the displacements which came about directly as a result of the railway, the building of the embankments disrupted (in some cases blocked) irrigation systems and supplies of water to local farms. This then resulted in a further voluntary displacement, the extent of which is not known." (BERG May 2000)

"Land ownership is extremely fragmented and a significant proportion of the population is landless in Karenni State. There are large numbers of displaced connected to economic interests in the area. With an economy based on access to teak resources - and of equal importance, hydro-electric power and mining concessions - the government has in some cases taken steps to pacify areas, quelling so-called 'insurgency' problems before undertaking investment in the areas. Much of this displacement is carried out in military style outside any civil or legal framework. Moreover, the deterioration of the formal economy has fostered the growth of an extra-legal state economy, focused on the extraction of natural resources that all groups, including the state, rely on. In the absence of lasting and substantive peace, the displacement of civilians is likely to continue. The current cease-fire agreements in the state appear to be ad hoc economic deals rather than a process aimed at political resolution and peaceful reintegration. The cease-fires in fact have allowed armed groups to legitimise their the extra-legal state economy and added to further factionalism in the competition for increasingly scarce resources." (BERG September 2000)

Situation in Relocation Sites

Relocation sites have been scattered throughout the state at Shadaw, Ywathit, Mawchi, Pah Saung, Baw La Keh, Kay Lia, Mar Kraw She, Tee Po Kloh and Nwa La Bo. As more villages were relocated, more sites such as Daw Dta Hay were created. All were under complete control of the Army, usually located adjacent to new or existing Army bases. Although living in the jungle was fraught with problems associated with the danger of the patrols and finding food to eat, some people still tried to remain there, but many gave in to the order and moved to the relocation sites. Conditions at the relocation sites were extremely basic, with the lack of proper shelters, pure drinking water, and little food or medicine contributing to many deaths from starvation and illness. At each of the large sites, there is evidence of an intention to provide health care to IDPs, either at a health facility inside the site or at a nearby health centre. In practice, however, given the general constraints to the public health system,

services were not utilised well. With facilities both under-equipped and under-supplied, health care providers were often left to do the best they could. In some of the other sites, such as Htee Poh Kloh and Mar Kraw Shay, refugees said there were no health facilities at all.

Approximately, 1000 villagers in No. (1) District alone died in both forced relocation sites and hideouts. International relief organizations have no access to the sites. Leaders from a couple of local churches tried to provide food and other needed materials for the villagers in the hideouts but they were not allowed to do so. The villagers were not allowed to go out of the sites to farm. Recently, villagers from some sites have been allowed to farm outside the sites, but they must return at the end of the day. The villagers also face forced labor and portering. A certain number of villagers have to go to the nearest strongholds of the SPDC everyday where they are forced to offer free labor such as digging trenches, making fences, fetching water and collecting firewood. Women and children are also made to do forced labor.

Perimeters of the relocation sites are reportedly largely left unguarded and the fences that the villagers are often forced to build are primarily around the army camps and not the actual relocation sites. Troops are lax in securing the camp perimeters realizing that villagers have no choice but to forage for food outside the camps. This is often used by the villagers as a chance to flee the relocation site and go into hiding in the jungle, usually near their old villages. The continual flight of residents has been ongoing since the relocation sites were first established, and many villagers report that a large number of people have already left the relocation sites in search of food and that the current populations of the relocation sites are much less than what they were initially. (NCGUB, KNAHR)

Situation of IDPs in Hiding

A large number of villagers who were ordered to leave their villages in 1996 remain displaced outside relocation sites. In the first few months following the order to relocate, there were at least 13,537 IDPs living in hiding. These villagers find their lives are in great danger as they are constantly being hunted by SPDC troops. While on the run and in hiding the villagers suffer from many kinds of diseases such as malaria, diarrhea and skin infections. Many villagers have died from treatable diseases. Villagers fall ill frequently due to lack of proper shelter. They are all the time on the move, especially when SPDC troops approach their hideouts. While on the move, villagers have to travel in all kinds of weather, sleep on the ground, eat what they find in the jungle and drink impure water. Many IDPs in hiding have also died from starvation, as most are not able to farm. These IDPs also have no access to education. (CSW November 2000)

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On 4 and 5 May, 2002, Burmese Township authorities from Mawchi and Pasaung gave a verbal order to the villages in Lopwakhoo District, to move the Mawchi and Pasaung relocation sites. This was the second time they had been ordered to relocate by May 27. People living in these villages had been moved to the relocation sites in 1996 and returned to their native villages at the beginning of 2000. After having re-settled in their native villages, they were forced to work on the old Mawchi-Taungoo road repair project by the Mawchi military commander in 2001 and were told to complete it at the end of the year. However, the road repair project could not be finished according to schedule, due to lack of manpower.

Because of their previous painful experiences in relocation sites, the people decided not to move to the sites, which are also known as concentration camps. Instead, some traveled to Thailand and some people traveled to the Karen area bordering Thailand. Local Thai authorities denied shelter to those people who crossed into Thailand and tried to push them back across the border into Burma. Currently these people are living a precarious existence without safety or adequate provisions. (Source: KNAHR)

On 15 June 2002, the Burmese commander from LIB No. 302 at Shadaw base ordered villagers from Tin Loi, Shadaw Township, who had just recently re-settled there to move their village once again. The Burmese commander did not say where the villagers were to go. The village chiefs approached the Shadaw military commander the next day requesting that he re-considered his order and also explained their situation. However, their appeal was rejected and they were told that if they failed to move within 3 days, the troops would raid and burn the village down. (Source: KNAHR)

13.5 Situation in Mon State

While not on the same scale as in neighbouring Karen State, forced relocations continued to occur in Mon State throughout 2002. The incidence of forced relocation decreased after 1995 when the New Mon State Party (NMSP) made a cease-fire agreement with the SLORC. However, the continuation of Mon resistance under the MRA (Mon Revolutionary Army) alongside continuing operations in the area by the (Karen National Liberation Army) KNLA has ensured that much of Mon state remained a war zone throughout 2002.

In October of that year in Bangkok the umbrella organization of the Mon asked the UN human rights envoy to allow the International Committee of Red Cross access into the areas of displaced persons. Sunthorn Sripanngern, General Secretary of the Mon Unity League (MUL), asked for ICRC access into the Mon area of internally displaced people at a meeting with the UN human rights special envoy, Mr. Paulo Sergio Pinheiro. According to an MUL spokesperson, the meeting was organized by Mr Nicholas Howen, UNHCR Regional Representative for Asia-Pacific, and attended by NGOs working on Burma and the Head of the ICRC Regional Delegation for East Asia, Mr Jean-Marc Bornet. Several armed groups including SPDC troops are active in the so-called cease-fire zone of the Mon making the situation there arguably worse than before the cease-fire deal with the SPDC in 1995. (Source: Kao Wao, November, 1, 2002)

In early 1990s "...when the NMSP had already lost much of its former territory - forced labor, forced relocations, arbitrary taxation, and the extrajudicial execution of villagers suspected of assisting Mon soldiers were the main causes of flight. The SLORC set about developing the Mon state and Tenasserim division peninsular, embarking on a massive program of road and railroad construction and clearing economically important areas of people who might support the Mon and Karen ethnic armies. The single most common reason for flight over the next five years was the construction of the railroad between Ye and Tavoy (a distance of 160 kilometers). In late 1993 the SLORC started rounding up villagers in Mon state to provide labor to build the railroad, and as of May 1998 the use of forced labor on this project was continuing. Over this period of time, thousands of Mon, Karen, and Tavoyan villagers were forced to work at the site for up to two weeks per month, sometimes more. As in other forced labor projects, the villagers were forced to find their own transportation to the site, take with

them their own tools and food for the duration of their stay, and work without pay until their allotted section of work was complete. Villages nearest the site were targeted first, but as the project continued, people from further afield were used. The work was overseen by Tatmadaw soldiers, who often beat people considered not to be working hard enough, and there were few safety precautions, so that laborers sometimes died in accidents and landslides. After months of such work, during which time they were no longer able to tend their fields, villagers lost the ability to sustain themselves and had no option but to flee to Thailand....

The other major development project that affected the Mon was the gas pipeline that was to be built to carry natural gas from the Gulf of Martaban across Burma and into Thailand. The original route was to have taken the pipeline to Three Pagodas Pass, though a shorter land route coming out further south at Nat Ei Daung was finally agreed upon. Nevertheless, in preparation for the pipeline, which would be vulnerable to attack by ethnic minority forces, Mon and Karen villages were forced to relocate, and in 1995, the SLORC created a new army command position, the Tenasserim Coastal Military Command, whose headquarters were in Tavoy. The increase in Tatmadaw soldiers in the area led to an immediate increase in the forced recruitment of civilians as porters and as laborers to build new army barracks in the region, and this contributed to refugee outflows from 1994 onwards." (Source: HRW: "The Ethnic Minorities" & "The Mon," September 1998)

In most cases, whenever forced relocation happens in rural area in Mon State, the commanders who order the villagers to leave their homes do not give the villagers a place they need to move to. Instead they tell the villagers that they can resettle anywhere, as long as it is not in the area of their former village. Some villages are accused of being rebel bases and villagers are suspected of being rebel-supporters. These villagers suffer more than other villagers from torture and killing by the SPDC, and those villagers who are afraid of being killed and tortured try to leave the village.

Sometimes after villagers have been displaced they try to return to their original villages despite the dangers, to harvest cash crops such as betel-nut, and coconut, or to try and cultivate paddy in the fields. When the battalion that ordered them to leave their village is replaced with a new battalion, IDPS are in some cases able to return to their homes, and if the new battalions are less brutal than the previous ones, they can stay longer in their villages. When more brutal battalions come, they flee again. Population displacement is a main problem in southern Burma especially in Karen State, in some part of Mon State and most parts of Tenasserim Division. (Source: HURFOM)

Forced Relocation in Mon State - partial list of incidents 2002

Villagers Flee after SPDC Restrictions on Movement

At the end of January 2002, the commander of LIB No. 550, in retaliation for an attack made by the MRA, prohibited 200 villagers from traveling to work on their paddy farms or fruit plantations which were outside of the village. The SPDC commander accused all the villagers of being rebel supporters and said that if they did not follow his orders to stay only inside village, he would burn down the whole village.

After this order, many people fled from the village because they were afraid of being killed or tortured. After the SPDC troops left on 30 January, about 30 families with a total of 150 villagers fled to Halockhani Mon refugee resettlement site, which is about 10 Kilometers

from their village. The remaining villagers fled to other areas and are currently living as IDPs. (Source: HURFOM)

SPDC Confiscate Land for Artillery Regiment

On 5 November 2002, SPDC Southeast Command confiscated about 200 acres of land from 49 Mon farmers, in order to build an artillery regiment in the southern part of Mudon Township. Most of the land had been used to grow rubber trees, which the farmers had planted several years ago and were waiting to harvest. The owners of the land were Mon villagers from Set-thawe, Do-ma, Kalort-tort and Ah-bit villages. The army did not pay any compensation cost to those who lost their land.

At the same time, some authorities from the forestry department lied to the farmers saying that if the farmers paid them a bribe they wouldn't lose their land. Since 2000, the Burmese Army has confiscated many thousands of acres of land from Mon farmers in Ye Township. (Source: HURFOM)

13.6 Situation in Sagaing Division

"...In Sagaing Division, the designated administrative boundaries of the division conceal the ethnic diversity within its borders and the internal displacement which has occurred. Many Naga people, estimated to be around 100,000 strong in total, populate the four northern townships of the division, near the town of Khamti and the Patkai mountain range [...]. Fighting for an independent Nagaland in both India and Burma, and facing increased internal divisions, the Naga have suffered significant conflict-related displacement....It is estimated that up to 1,300 villagers have been displacedThe construction of the Kalay-Gangaw railway line in Sagaing Division illustrates clearly that the problems of forced displacement are not only confined to the war-affected zones. The line crosses mostly flat farmland and paddy fields; these were destroyed without any compensation being paid by the national government." (BERG, September 2000)

Forced Relocation in Tamu Town

On 14 September 2002 Mizzima reported that U Maung Maung Myint, Chairman of the district SPDC division, ordered residents of 38 houses in Block No. 5, Tamu town to vacate their houses before October 2002. The Tamu residents were relocated to Natmyin village to make room for a government project scheduled to start on 15 June. The authorities will disburse no compensation or reimbursement for the expenses incurred during relocation. U Maung Maung Myint further warned local residents that "whoever apprises the BBC or the RFA of the forced relocation plan will be punished severely," reported a local resident. The houses slated for relocation measure 60 inches in length and 80 inches in width. One of those facing forced relocation said that he would defy the order and stay at his place. (Source: Mizzima)

13.7 Situation in Shan State

The SPDC has engineered mass forced relocation in Shan state since 1996. This relocation has occurred on a scale so massive that many observers conclude that it is intended to permanently change the ethnic composition of Shan state. In 2002 these campaigns continued, often in the name of crop substitution and drug eradication programs. In 1996 the SLORC delineated a huge area of Central Shan State, and ordered the forced relocation and destruction of every village in the region. The villagers were forced to move into sites more directly under military control. By 1998, over 1,400 villages in 12 townships had been forcibly relocated and destroyed, displacing a population of at least 300,000 people. (Source: Charting the Exodus from Shan State: Patterns of Shan Refugee flow into Northern Chiang Mai Province of Thailand 1997-2002, SHRF May, 2003)

Indicative of the SPDC's widespread campaign to suppress and 'Burmanize' Shan people was Khin Nyunt's January 2002 response to the ILO's investigation into the alleged killing of villagers in Kengtung who had complained about forced labor. In his communication to the ILO, Khin Nyunt casually stated that "there were only a few villages in the area" (of Kaeng Tawng), when in fact these villages are relocation sites to which 50-60 formerly thriving villages were forced to move in 1996. Khin Nyunt also denied the existence of several victims because their villages "did not exist" (they had been relocated). Khin Nyunt further corrected SHRF's use of the Shan name of one village, referring to it by a Burmese name. This village is one of the areas where the regime is now relocating Burmans. In response to Khin Nyunt's statements, SHRF notes that: "the intent of the SPDC to Burmanize the region, erase the Shan history and identity, and its own crimes in the process, is thus frighteningly apparent." (Source: "SHRF Monthly Report", March, 2002, Shan Human Rights Foundation)

In 1999 SHRF noted, "There are various patterns of displacement for the Shan villagers who have been forcibly relocated from their homes. There are basically four alternatives, which are detailed below. However, many of the displaced have not chosen a single alternative, but have chosen more than one or, in some cases, even tried all four, in different orders. Thus, there are countless variations on the patterns of displacement.

Moving to the Relocation Sites

The term "relocation sites" refers to the sites designated by SPDC troops to which the relocated villagers were forced to move. These were usually areas of bare land near towns, main roads and army bases where nothing at all was provided for them by the local authorities.

Going into Hiding

One option for the villagers ordered to move was simply to go into hiding in the jungles near their villages, and then lead a precarious existence dodging Burma Army patrols while seeking to continue cultivating their crops.

Moving to Towns or Other Areas of Shan State (Outside of Relocation Sites)

Some forcibly relocated villagers moved straight to towns. The main factor influencing whether people did this was either money, which meant that they could afford to purchase land or housing there, or else having relatives in towns with whom they could stay, and perhaps find work. Other people moved to villages on the periphery of the area of forced relocation, which they felt would be safe from relocation because they were under the control of the ceasefire organisations such as the Shan State Army, the Shan State National Army, the Shan Nationalities People's Liberation Organisation or the Pa-O National Army.

Moving to Thailand

There has long been a pattern of migration of Shans to Thailand to find work, as the historical, ethnic and linguistic connections are very strong. An estimated 150,000 people from Shan state have moved to Thailand since 1996. The overwhelming majority of them come Central Shan state which has borne the brunt of the military's relocation program. The majority of Shan migrants to Thailand are refugees and their participation in the Thai economy is a direct refusal of the Thai government's refusal to recognize their status as refugees and allow them to establish refugee camps. (Source: SHRF 2003)

The Cause of Migration

Four Shan families arrived on the Thai border in March/April 2002 from a village in Murg Nai township. These people reported that continuing forced relocation campaigns by SPDC troops have had a severe impact on villages in remote areas. People living close to towns or army garrisons were not subjected to forced relocation, but suffered from other hardships. The conditions for people allowed to remain in their villages are not much better than conditions for those who had been relocated. Although these peoples' homes are intact, their farmlands have been confiscated for the SPDC troops. In addition, these people spend much of their time carrying out forced labor either for the construction of army camps or to tend the army's fields. Due to inflation of the Burmese currency, the price of household goods has more than doubled, and with no land for cultivation and not much free time to work, local residents live in a state close to starvation. Even if these villagers are able to find time to work, the average daily wage of 400 kyats (about 20 baht), is insufficient to feed their families. When villagers are allowed to farm lands that have been confiscated from them, they are forced to sell 8 out of every 9 baskets of rice to the army at below market price. The Burmese authorities paid them 1,000-2,000 kyats per basket, while the price is 5,000-6,000 kyats at current market rate. Sometimes the authorities do not pay anything for the rice that they 'buy.' As conditions continue to deteriorate daily, more people are choosing to try and flee to the border. (Source: Freedom, March & April 2002)

Year Township Number of people resettled

1999-2000 Monghsat 55,000
 2000-2001 Mongton 35,000
 2001 (rainy season) Tachilek 15,000
TOTAL 105,000

(Source: SHAN November 2001)

Wa Relocation

In April 2002, the Lahu National Development Organization (LNDO) published a report titled "Unsettling Moves: The Wa forced resettlement program in Eastern Shan State." It describes the mass relocation of Wa people from the Wa Substate which borders China, to the Thai-Burma border in Shan state. The report states that:

".....since the end of 1999, over one quarter of the entire Wa population have been forcibly resettled from their homes near the China border to southern Shan State. Authorized by the Burmese military junta, the United Wa State Party (UWSP) has sent approximately 1 26,000 men, women and children by truck and on foot over 400 kilometres south to the Thai-Burma border.

Both the UWSP and the junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), have officially stated that the mass Wa resettlement program is aimed to eradicate opium production by enabling villagers to grow alternative crops in the more fertile lands of southern Shan State. However, evidence in this report shows that the resettled villagers are planting new opium fields, with the support of SPDC and UWSP officials.

While it is clear that this resettlement program has little to do with drug eradication, the real motives have yet to be confirmed. This report speculates that the UWSP has carried out the program to gain territory and economic advantages from border trade into Thailand and Laos. It is speculated that the SPDC are carrying out their usual divide-and-rule strategy: pitting the UWSP against the Shan resistance in southern Shan State, and using the UWSP as a proxy army against neighbouring countries; not to mention dividing the Wa themselves. Wa sources also state that financial benefits for individual SPDC leaders have facilitated the move.

Whatever the rationale for the resettlement, this report clearly documents the forced nature of the program and the abuses inflicted not only on those resettled but also on the villagers in the south who lost their lands to the new arrivals. The resettled Wa came from six townships in the northern Wa area, as well as inside China's Yunnan province. Some were given no warning whatsoever before the move, and all were forced to abandon most of their possessions. Most were herded into trucks to travel south, but many were forced to walk through mountains, taking over two months. Some died en route.

On arrival in the south, the villagers were settled mainly around existing villages in the townships of Mong Hsat, Mong Ton and Tachilek, lying opposite Thailand's Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai provinces. Upon arrival, the villagers were given rice by the UWSP but, unused to the new surroundings, many fell ill. It is estimated that over 4,000 people died, of malaria and other diseases, during the year 2000 alone.

The lives of the original inhabitants of these areas, mainly Shan, Lahu and Akha, have been gravely disrupted. Their lands and property have been seized by the newcomers, and they have had to face abuses committed by both SPDC and UWSP troops. This report estimates that the number of original inhabitants affected by the resettlement program is approximately 48,000. Of these, it is estimated that at least 4,500 have fled to other areas of Shan State, while another 4,000 have fled to Thailand. These Shan, Lahu and Akha villagers have no access to refugee camps where they can access protection and humanitarian assistance." (Source: LNDO 2003)

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Wa Development Project

The remaining villagers in a Thai crop replacement project site at Yawng-kha in Monghsat township across from Chiangrai were ordered to vacate the area.

"Soon after the Thais (in the survey team) left on 28 January, (2002) the Wa began erecting stakes attached with red cloth to mark the outline of what we think is the project site," said one villager who fled to Tachilek, opposite Maesai of Chiangrai province. "They also told us to sell our places and leave because we wouldn't be allowed to stay there anymore anyway."

The Yawng-kha area, known as Nayao to native villagers, used to have more than 240 households of Shans, Akha and Palaungs, according to a local Shan relief agency but only about 60 were left. The vacated land was filled up by thousands of Wa newcomers, it said. The drive for a Thai-initiated crop replacement project began in earnest soon after Gen Khin Nyunt's landmark visit in September. Meanwhile, troop movements have been reported from Tachilek to the Yawng-kha area where hundreds of Burmese-Wa forces face the Kengtung Front Force of the Shan State Army at Loi Kawwan. Chiangrai's local FM radio has also been warning Thai citizens against crossing the border at this time. The battle of Loi Kawwan that was launched against the SSA on 5 February 2001 escalated into a Thai-Burmese border conflict when the nearby Pangnoon Thai outpost was taken by the Burmese forces. (Source: S.H.A.N.)

Villagers Told to Return to Relocated Village in Kun-Hing.

In early 2002, villagers from Saai Khaao village in Saai Khaao village tract, Kun-Hing township, (who had been forced to relocate to the outskirts of Kun-Hing town in 1996-97 by the Burmese army troops), were told by SPDC troops from Kun-Hing-based IB246 to return to Saai Khaao village. When the villagers returned to Saai Khaao village they were forced to stay within restricted areas provide the military with free labour.

Saai Khaao village was the site of one of the most gruesome massacres of innocent villagers committed on 16 June 1997 by the Burmese army troops. On that day, about 60 IDPs were killed at Saai Khaao village and Taad Pha Ho waterfall. These villagers had been forced to move to a relocation site, but then were given permission by SLORC troops to retrieve the rice they had left at their original villages. However the villagers were stopped when they were returning to the relocation site with 40-50 ox-cart-loads of rice and shot dead in groups by SLORC troops. Their ox-carts were then burned and destroyed.

By 4 March 2002, about 68 families, comprising a total of 345 people, had gone back to Saai Khaao village. Burmese military authorities in the area set up an outpost camp at the village and issued an order requiring the villagers to do the following things:

1. To grow teak trees on both sides of the main road from Kun-Hing town up to Kaeng Tawng area in Murng-Nai township;
2. To build fences around the village, about 4 elbow-lengths in height;
3. Each household to grow 20 mango and 5 jackfruit trees;
4. Each house to dig a ditch in front of the house, 3 elbow-lengths deep, 2 elbow-lengths wide and 10-15 arm-spans long;
5. Every household to take turns to cultivate the 5-acre mango orchard of the military;

6. No villagers to go beyond 2-3 miles from the village to farm;
7. All villagers to stay in their respective house-compounds between 6 pm to 6 am; anyone found outside their compounds within that time would be shot on sight.
8. Each household to raise at least 2 pigs, of which 1 was for the military, and take all the responsibilities, including buying and feeding them, etc., until they were big enough to be eaten;
9. Each household to raise 10 chickens, of which 5 were for the military, and take all the responsibilities, including buying and feeding them, etc., until they were big enough to be eaten;
10. Any one who refused to comply with this order would be fined 5,000 Kyat and punished with 3 years in jail.

The villagers who have left Kun-Hing relocation site and returned to their original village, Saai Khaao, are now facing even more difficult conditions and are secretly, little by little, fleeing to other places. While having to serve the military with forced labour, the villagers continue to be subjected to arbitrary killing and rape. In February 2002, 3 villagers from Saai Khaao village, who were going to their farm were seized by a passing SPDC military column and later raped and killed. (Source: SHRF)

Villagers Forced to Relocate for Second Time

On 14 April 2002, an SPDC army brigade commander ordered his troops to search the houses and farm huts in every village in Naa Poy village tract, Lai Kha township. After searching and confiscating the villagers' property, the brigade commander then summoned all the village headmen and said, "Who gave you the permission to return to your old villages? You must resettle along the motor-road-side within 15 days after which all these villages will be burned down". The villagers, who had just returned to their old villages before the cultivation season, then had to move for the second time. (Source: Freedom, May 2002)

Confiscation of Cultivated Land and Repeated Relocation of Displaced Villagers in Nam-Zarng and Lai-Kha.

In June 2002, displaced villagers from Kho Lam village relocation site in Nam-Zarng township who had earlier been permitted by local SPDC troops to return to their original villages, were forced back to Kho Lam by SPDC troops from different units. In addition, the villagers' and farms were confiscated and given to the Lahu people's militia.

In March 2002, displaced villagers originally from Ton Hung Haai Laai village tract in Nam-Zarng township and Naa Poi village tract in Lai-Kha township (which had been forcibly relocated to Kho Lam in 1996-97 by the then SLORC troops) were permitted by the present local SPDC troops to return to stay and farm their lands at their original villages. Since then, many displaced villagers had returned to cultivate their lands at their original villages.

The villagers had been staying and working at their original villages for almost 2 months — many had already put up new fences around their old compounds and prepared their lands for growing crops, and some had already planted rice — when a column of SPDC troops from the adjacent Wan Zing village tract in Kae-See township came to Naa Poi village tract area. The SPDC troops brought with them some members of the Lahu people's militia. When they saw the villagers who had returned to Naa Poi village tract, the troops ordered them to go

back to Kho Lam relocation site in Nam-Zarng township, giving them 10 days to move their belongings.

A different group of SPDC troops from Kho Lam also came to Ton Hung Haai Laai village tract and ordered the villagers who had returned to go back to Kho Lam relocation site. These troops accused the villagers of having returned without permission and threatened that they would shoot at anyone found in the area next time they came to the area.

The SPDC troops from Kae-See also told the villagers that their farm lands had been given to members of the Lahu people's militia because they were helping in the work of the Burmese army, and if Lahu militia were attacked by Shan soldiers after they had come to stay on the lands, the villagers would be held responsible. The Shan villagers had no choice but to return to Kho Lam relocation site, to face a life even harder and more destitute than before. (Source: SHRF)

Shan Teak Houses for Burmese Resettlers

In September newly arrived Shan refugees in Thailand report that a village in southern Shan State whose residents were relocated by the Burmese military during the 1996 - 98 forced relocation campaign has recently been opened for resettlement to arrivals from central Burma proper. "I couldn't bear to stay there and watch outlanders living in my home while my family had to struggle each day just to survive", said a former native of Nayok Village, Nawng-hee Tract, Kengtawng Township. (Kengtawng, formerly part of Mongnai Township, was named a separate township last month, said migrants from the area.) "So we decided to leave".

Nayok, comprising 47 households, used to be a thriving hamlet and was known for its delicious loganberries. There are 22 houses, 5 two-storied and 17 one-storied, built entirely of teakwood, according to its former occupants, half of whom are already in Thailand. "When the Kengtawng urbanization project was announced two years ago, we went back to apply for permission to return to our homes but were rejected," added another one. "The trouble with us Shans is that most of us don't have any official document to show we own the place, because we were never given any since the day of Zaofahs (Shan ruling princes)."

Rangoon's massive eviction program had uprooted 99 villages, consisting of 3,850 households in the area, according to *Dispossessed: Forced Relocation and Extrajudicial Killings in Shan State* by Shan Human Rights Foundation, April 1998.

Kengtawng had been slated for resettlement of 3,000 families coming up from Burma proper, according to the sources. "So far about 500 have already been resettled there," said one. It is also known for its teakwood forests. Asia World, owned by Law Hsinghan, and Shan State South, owned by Mahaja, are two of the firms that have been granted logging concessions in the area by Rangoon.

"One piece of good news is that forced labor in Kengtawng has lessened since the ILO row over last year's killings of 7 villagers (who complained to authorities of the existence of forced labor despite official banning)," said one. "But we would be happier if we were given back our lands and homes." (Source: SHAN, 22 September 2002)

Displaced Farmers Beaten, Their Land and Property Confiscated and Driven Away in Murng-ton.

In October, 2 displaced farmers were arrested, beaten and detained by SPDC troops from LIB519. The farmers were later forced to leave their land and houses, which were also confiscated, at Wan Naa village about 1-2 miles from Murng-Ton town. These farmers were originally from Naa Khaa Awn village, Ngaa Teng village tract, in Kaeng Kham area of Kun-Hing township, which had been forcibly relocated in 1997 by the then SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) troops. The farmers did not go to the relocation site but came to Thailand instead.

Zaai Aw, (m, 42) the head of the family, reports that after working in Thailand for 3 years, the family members managed to save up some money and return to Shan State where they bought a small plot of land, consisting of a small house and a vegetable garden, at Wan Naa village near Murng-Ton town in Murng-Ton township. After they had stayed at Wan Naa village for over a year, SPDC troops from LIB519 came and arrested Zaai Aw's son and Zaai Aw's younger brother and took them to the military camp.

The SPDC soldiers accused Ai Ta, aged 20, Zaai Aw's son and Zaai Laek, aged 35, Zaai Aw's younger brother, of being members of the Shan resistance and of having led Shan soldiers to shot at SPDC soldiers. The SPDC soldiers severely beat the two men until their heads were fractured and bleeding, and then locked them up in the camp. The next morning, Zaai Aw and the village leaders went to the military camp and pleaded for the release of Ai Ta and Zaai Laek. Zaai Aw and the village leaders assured the soldiers that the two men did not have any connections with the Shan resistance.

The SPDC troops then told the village leaders that if these people were originally from Kaeng Kham (in Kun-Hing township), they were bad people and must be driven away, and their land would be taken by the military. On 23 October 2002, the SPDC troops from LIB519 actually came and forced Zaai Aw and his family to leave their house and land immediately and banned them from taking anything away. Because they had no choice, Zaai Aw and his wife, their 2 sons and Zaai Aw's younger brother, once again fled to Thailand. (Source: SHRF)

13.8 Situation in Karen State

"While the world welcomed the release of pro-democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on 6th May, the Burmese military were attacking villages in Eu Tu Klo, Karen State. According to the Committee for the Internally Displaced Karen People (CIDKP), the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) troops burnt down a hospital, a workshop for the handicapped, a school and seven houses. Around 500 people from Pau Kar Der internally displaced persons (IDP) village and Kho Kay village were forced to flee to Thailand.

The 1 to 2 million IDPs, who are eking out a fragile and uncertain existence in the jungles and mountains of Burma, remain in critical need of food, medical care and education. In the month of March alone, over 30 settlements were reportedly attacked and torched. Saw Day Law, the Secretary of the Karen Refugee Committee, described one of the attacks, "On 2nd March, the SPDC troops came to my home village in Karen State, just a few hours walk from the Thai border. The villagers tried to escape to the forest, taking with them what they could. The military has stepped up cross-border security, making it increasingly dangerous for the ethnic minorities to flee to Thailand. Those caught trying to escape are often summarily executed or tortured and then executed." (Source: CSW 8 May 2002)

Situation in Dooplaya District

"Most of 88 Division's ten battalions arrived in the district in January 2002, with orders to begin Operation *Than L'Yet* - a traditional Burman four-edged dagger, a possible allusion to the Four Cuts policy of undermining resistance forces by attacking civilians. Divisional commander Brigadier General Ohn Myint established a Divisional Operations Command at Kyaikdon and two Tactical Command bases (#882 and 883) at Wah Lay and Azin, and his battalions were deployed throughout Kya In, Kawkareik, and Kru Tu (Kyone Doh) - three of the district's four townships. *[These are the Karen township names, not those assigned by the SPDC. The former Karen township of Kaw Ta Hgah has been amalgamated into Kya In and Kawkareik townships.]* While the battalions previously based in the district continued to control their garrison villages, the Division 88 troops began forcibly relocating all villages not near Army-controlled villages and roads.

On February 28th they burned K'Toh Hta village in Kawkareik township, and in early March they forced the villagers out of nearby Seh K'Weh village without telling them where to go. In March, all the villages in the Tee Po Than area of Kru Tu township were forced to move to the vehicle road at Tee Po Than village, where Infantry Battalion 77 (part of Division 88) now has a camp. They were forced to build a fence around the village and they are not allowed out without a pass. Also in March, the five villages of Tee Khu Thaw village tract in Kya In township were forced to move to Tee Khu Thaw village, where Division 88 troops confiscated several plantations and forced the local villagers to clear them and build an Army camp. All five relocated villages were then burned by the troops.

In mid-April 2002, with the outside world increasingly focused on the imminent release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Rangoon, the SPDC took the opportunity to rapidly intensify Operation *Than L'Yet*. Between April 11th and 14th, Division 88 troops destroyed and forcibly relocated Na Tee Kloh, Thi Kweh, Noh Kweh Hta, and T'Ray Kee villages in Kya In township. From April 19th to May 12th, columns moved through the area south and west of their divisional base at Kyaikdon, forcibly relocating the villages of Kru See (a.k.a. Kyone

Sein), Tee Tha Blu, Noh Kloh Dtay, Noh Maw Pu, Pa Klaw Kee, Lay T'Ray, Tee K'Pa, Khaw Kheh, Tee Kyaw Kay, Tee P'Nweh, Baw T'Roh Kee, Paw Ner Mu, Tee Khay, Tee Hsa Rah, K'Kya Po Kee, Tee Law Bler, Meh Naw Na, and Tee K'Mler Hta to Army-controlled sites. Other villages were ordered out without being told where to go. Tee Tha Blu, Lay T'Ray, Khaw Kheh, Paw Ner Mu, Tee P'Nweh, Noh Kloh Dtay, Baw T'Roh Kee, Tee Law Bler, Tee K'Pa, K'Toh Hta, Noh Maw Pu, Pa Klaw Kee, and Paw Wah Kloh were partially or completely burned down. Kwam Thi Hta was shelled with mortars and then looted, and Tee Law Bler was strafed with assault rifle fire. Rice storage barns were looted, burned, or had their contents emptied out and destroyed.

Troops from the Division's Tactical Command #883 in Azin (a.k.a. Saw Hta) forcibly relocated several villages in that area, including Pa Klaw Kee and Toh T'Naw Kee, and in July villages near the Thai border at Ber Kler were forced to move to the vehicle road there. By the time these last forced relocations occurred in July the rainy season had begun, and KHRG researchers estimate that by then possibly as many as sixty villages throughout Kya In, Kawkareik and Kru Tu townships had been forcibly relocated, displacing at least ten thousand people. Kya In township has been the worst hit, with more than half of all villages being relocated and destroyed. Most of the villages still remaining are those positioned along SPDC-controlled vehicle roads or adjacent to Army camps. Even in these villages, residents have been forced to move their houses into a compressed area in the middle of the village where they can be fenced in and controlled by the Army; for example, Tee Po Than village in Kru Tu township has close to 200 families spread out in five sections, but most of them have now been forced to move into the one or two sections of the village closest to the vehicle road. As noted earlier, every other village in the area has also been forced to move to Tee Po Than, leading to serious overcrowding and shortage of land.

In most cases the troops either go to the village or summon the village head to their camp, and order the villagers to move within one or two weeks. If a column visits the village, the villagers are forced to the church or the football ground and held there under guard while soldiers move house to house systematically looting or destroying their belongings and livestock. Closer to the deadline, a column goes again to the village. If some villagers still remain there, village elders are arrested and tortured, houses are burned, and the remaining villagers may be force-marched to a relocation site. Eventually the entire village is burned or dismantled.

On May 10th, Paw Ner Mu village in Kya In township was ordered to pay a bribe of 600,000 Kyat to Light Infantry Battalion 301 or move; when they told the soldiers that they could not pay, fifteen houses were burned and they were ordered to move to Meh T'Kreh within fifteen days. On May 5th, a column from Light Infantry Battalion 301 arrived at Tee P'Nweh village in Kya In township and told the villagers they had seven days to move to Meh T'Kreh by order of Brigadier General Ohn Myint. They burned three houses and a rice storage barn and robbed several villagers at gunpoint. When they left they took three villagers and two elders with them. Along the way one of the elders fled, but they took and detained the others at Meh T'Kreh. On May 7th they brought the elder back to Tee P'Nweh and told the villagers they must move by noon the next day. On May 8th they returned and burned the houses in the village. As they did so, Karen soldiers fired on them from outside the village. As punishment, they [tortured the village head and left him to die-see chapter on torture for more information]...At this point, those villagers who had not already moved to Meh T'Kreh either did so, or fled into hiding in the jungle.

Similar events occurred in several other villages. Many villagers were arrested, detained for extended periods and tortured, including women, adolescents, village heads and some Christian pastors. This occurred when troops first came to the villages and were looting them, or when they came back later and found that not all of the villagers had moved as ordered...The village was visited again on May 13th by Light Infantry Battalion 301, who forced the entire village into the meeting hall and detained them there with no food whatsoever until May 16th, when they were forced to move to Meh T’Kreh.

On April 21st, a combined column of Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) 301, LIB 416 and Infantry Battalion (IB) 78 entered Tee Tha Blu, [looted and burned houses and arrested and tortured some of the villagers]. On April 27th, the troops returned and burned the remainder of the village, told the villagers to get out but did not tell them where to go.

Most villagers had little choice but to move to the relocation sites or other SPDC-controlled villages, but some fled into hiding in the jungle or tried to escape to the Thai border. After the village head of Tee Law Bler in Kya In township had been given orders to move all of his villagers to Lay Wah Kah, some people fled to other villages where they had relatives, while others decided to make a run for Thailand. [Ten people including six children were killed by SPDC troops while fleeing from Noh Ta Sghu and Meh K’Taw villages, see chapter on execution] For those who choose to flee into hiding, Dooplaya has fewer places to hide than some other Karen regions. Apart from the easternmost regions adjacent to the Thai border, the three townships affected by the operation are dominated by wide open ricefields separated by stretches of forest, with winding rivers and low hills. Even so, many villagers are still trying to hide near their fields or among the higher hills. The SPDC troops have not pursued them extensively thus far, because up until the beginning of the rains in June they were preoccupied with forcibly relocating and destroying villages, and since that time their mobility has been somewhat limited by the rains.

The last forced relocations occurred in July, and since that time the operation has not been as intensive. Army patrols have continued to comb the villages throughout the rainy season, and people hiding near their villages have frequently had to run to avoid them, but those hiding in the more remote areas have thus far escaped discovery. All of them are certain that if seen they will be shot on sight. At present they are surviving on whatever food they were able to salvage from their villages, and are trying to tend a rice crop in their former fields or in small fields they have cleared at more remote sites. They forage for roots and jungle vegetables, and some return to their villages occasionally to harvest coconuts and other fruit from their trees, or to tap rubber which they hope to sell.

The difficulty of finding places to hide has led most of the villagers to move to the relocation sites as ordered. These are generally within or adjacent to SPDC-controlled villages, usually along a vehicle road or major oxcart track and close to an Army camp. Thus far KHRG is aware of sites at Kya In ‘New Town’ (Myothit), Meh T’Kreh, P’Ya Ngote Doh, Wah Mi Gone, Lay Wah Kah, Ka Lay Kee, Noh Taw Plah, Meh Ta Lah, Lay Taw Hta, Paw Wah Kee, Bee T’Ka, Nga Pyaw Taw and Kyaw Kay Ko in Kya In township; Kyaikdon and Saw Hta (Azin) in Kawkareik township; and Tee Po Than in Kru Tu township. At many of these sites villagers have been forced to build fences around themselves, and their movements are tightly restricted. They cannot go out without a pass, and even with a pass are only allowed out from dawn to dusk. To prevent families from fleeing into hiding, whenever someone goes out some of his or her family members must remain behind at the site. Villagers are not allowed to return home to farm their own fields because the SPDC believes that they would then

supply food to the Karen Army. Instead, most of them look for unused land near the relocation site which they can clear for a hill rice field. The SPDC provides nothing whatsoever to the relocated villagers, so most of them do not have enough food and many are presently surviving on thin rice gruel made from the remnants of the rice they could carry when forced out of the village, or on *klih dtee*, a root which must be very well boiled before eating or it causes stomach problems. As noted below, villagers in the relocation sites are used for various forms of forced labour by the local Army units. Despite the movement restrictions, some villagers have managed to escape the relocation sites and have fled into the forest or toward the Thai border.

On April 6th the Bee T’Ka villagers and those who had been forced to move there were forced to move again, this time to Ko Kwa, while villagers at Dta Ghay were all forced to move into the centre of their village. Since the forced relocations began, both local villagers and those who have been relocated have been forced to work on these road and bridge projects, and to provide road sentries on rotating shifts. These sentries must build shelters at intervals along the road and are supposed to send a signal up the line to the nearest Army camp if there is any suspicious activity on the road. If any ambushes occur or landmines are found along the road, the village providing the sentries is held responsible and punished, usually by being burned or forced to relocate, or by having its elders detained under torture.

Villagers who have been forced into relocation sites usually build huts, whether by choice or by order, side by side with others from their village; thus, relocation sites tend to consist of a section for each village which has been moved there, as well as sections inhabited by the original occupants of the SPDC-controlled village. In demanding forced labour, the Army and SPDC authorities still treat each as a separate village, even though they have been forced together at one site with no land to farm.... On average a village, whether it has been relocated or is still in place, has to provide two or three people per day as messengers, two or three for camp labour, one or two as camp sentries, ten or more as road sentries, three or four as porters, and a few more for whatever other *ad hoc* labour may be required. When roads or bridges are being built or repaired, one person per family is usually demanded every day until the work is completed." (Source: *Operation Than L’Yet: Forced Displacement, Massacres and Forced Labour in Dooplaya District*, 2002, KHRG)

Forced Relocation in Karen State - partial list of incidents 2002

In May 2002, more than 300 refugees from Karen State, opposite Umphang District in Thailand, arrived at Noh Poe refugee camp and were accepted by the UN. Normally the acceptance of new refugees is strictly prohibited by the Thailand. They fled the Burmese army which carried out "Operation Sword" in which villagers were the primary target. Many villages were forced to relocate. The Burmese troops also carried out mass killing in the villages they reached. As a result, about 7,000 people from are homeless. Many of them were blocked by the Burmese troops on their way to Thailand and remained hiding in the jungles. (Source: Burma Issues)

Villagers Given 3 Days to Relocate

Sometimes, when the BA commanders ordered the villagers to relocate from their villages, which were suspected as rebel base, if the villagers delayed to relocate, they were punished or killed for their refusal. In late May, when IB No. 77 arrived at Htee-pa-nae village, which is situated on the Zami river, they accused that village of being used as a base by KNLA

soldiers. They ordered all villagers to leave their villages within three days, and added that if they found someone after the deadline he/she must be killed. On 1 May 2002 when the troops returned to that village, they found one family who were still remaining in village. The heads of family are Saw Htee Paw and Naw Nong Plae and they have 8 children and 2 relatives in their homes. Then the soldiers arrested and interrogated them why they did not move from the village. According to other villagers who knew them explained that they delayed in the village as they need to try to collect foods along with them. (Source: HURFOM)

Pa-an District

On 23 June 2002 commander, Pah Day of DKBA Myeing-gyi-ngu Special Battalion summoned Kler-kat village head Saw Kya Maung to come to the military camp at 12:00 pm. The commander accused the village head of not informing him of the movement of the KNU. Saya Than Zaw Oo struck at his chin with the butt of an M 79 grenade launcher and hit him many times on his back and in the chest with rifle butt. Commander Pah Day then ordered Kler-kat village and Htee-baw-khee village to relocate either to Klar-day or Mae-ta-poo village. He threatened to drive them out from their village himself if the villages did not go. (Source: KIC)

On 11 September 2002, combined troops from SPDC IB 24, led by battalion second in command Sit Aung and DKBA troops, led by battalion commander, Pah Day, who is responsible for the security of Myaing-gyi-ngu came to Kler-ku village in Hlaing-bwe Township, summoned the village head and ordered him to relocate his village near the motor road which was used for transporting their food supplies. (Source: KIC)

On 6 October 2002, combined troops from SPDC IB 24, led by battalion second in command, Major Sit Aung and Myaing-gyi-ngu DKBA security unit, led by battalion commander, Pah Day, summoned the village head of Kler-ka village of Kler-day village tract, Hlaing-bwe Township, to the army camp and told him to relocate the villagers to Shan-yaw-thit motor road, which was used to transport the military food supply. As a result, the villagers fled to the jungle and survived as internally displaced persons. (Source: KIC)

Pa-pun District

On 14 March 2002, troops from SPDC IB 38 led by battalion commander Min Aung combined with troops from SPDC LIB 308 forcibly relocated some villages in Bu-tho Township. These included:

1. Forced relocation of Htee-gi-lo villagers to Nah-kyauk village,
2. Wah-moe-lor villagers to Mae-mwe-ha,
3. Htee-per-khee villagers to Nya-tay-lor,
4. Wah-po-kha and Pana-kalaw villagers to Tkhu-yaw-klaw and
5. Thwa-ha villagers to Wah-lu-klo.

The deadline for the forced relocation was 23 March 2002. The troops also threatened that all of the houses and paddy barns of the villagers who did not relocate would be burned down. In addition, the troops demanded 500 pieces of thatch from Tha-per-pah village and 500 pieces from Kler-si-kho village. (Source: KIC)

On 6 May 2002, at 10:00 pm, troops from SPDC LIB 8, LIB 204 and IB 434, under Operation Command 441 having a total strength of 300 troops came to Kho Kay village. On

7 May 2002, at 5:30 am, they burned down Kho-kay village and as a result about 500 villagers had to flee into Thailand for refuge. (Source: KIC)

Nyaung-lay-bin District

On 6 January 2002, combined troops from SPDC LIB 351 and a SPDC guerrilla unit came to Ma-la-daw village and commandeered 20 bullock carts from the village. In addition, the troops forced Ma-la-daw villagers to relocate to the plains area. (Source: KIC)

On 6 January 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 351, led by major Tha Aung, forced Maw-ket-tha-per-ko villagers of Mone Township to relocate to Tha-byi-nyunt. Some villagers fled and hid in the jungle. On 8 January 2002, these troops burnt down 38 houses in Kyaut-pya village of Kyaut-pya Village Tract. (Source: KIC)

Beginning from 15 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 349, forcibly relocated 5 villages to areas along the Kyau-kyi motor road. The villages affected were:

1. 60-families from Ma Pi forced to move to Pyi-thay-gon,
2. 20-families from Nga-pe-in/Shan-su to Kat-pyet village,
3. Ma-u-bin village to Shan-su village,
4. Let-kauk-wa village to Kho-po village and
5. Aw-pa-la village to Thay-kyo-thay-lah-ger-kho village.

Nowadays, the villagers are moving to places the SPDC troops designated for them. These troops forcibly conscripted 2 people from each village in the plains region of Kyauk-kyi Township for the army. Pa-deh-gaw and Mar-bee villages had already sent their quota of new recruits, but the villages that could not provide recruits were fined 3,000 Kyat a person. (Source: KIC)

Doo-pla-ya District

At the beginning of 2002, Division 88, led by Colonel Ohn Myint arrived in the Kya Inn Seik Gyi and Kawkareik areas. The troops under Division 88 burned down six villages in April and May 2002. All of the house materials and animals were looted and destroyed by the troops. Fourteen villagers were shot dead and some villagers were severely tortured. Many villagers are hiding in the jungle and plan to go to refugee camps or reside in Thailand. Now they are facing serious problems with housing and food.

At present there are nine relocation sites in Kya Inn Seik Gyi area and these sites are not well prepared; no clean water and no plans to assist with building houses (even though it is late for villagers to collect wood and thatches because of the rainy season.) Many villagers (even rich persons) have become very poor within a month (from the middle of April to May.)

As a result [of the SPDC army campaigns], thousands (estimated 3,000 - 5,000 villagers in the middle of May 2002) have become internally displaced persons and are hiding in jungles. About 400 - 500 villagers reached the border area and are searching for jobs in Thai villages along the border. . (Source: FTUB)

On 4 March 2002, combined troops from SPDC LIB 416, under LID 88, led by battalion commander Win Kyaw Oo and battalion second in command Aung Soe Lin and troops from SPDC IB 63, led by battalion commander Min Naing and battalion second in command

Myint Thein Htun, having the total strength of about 370 men, burned down the villages of Htee-kay-ko and Thay-paw-oo-khee in Kaw-ka-reik Township. A total of 30 houses were burnt down and the villagers' paddy, rice, chickens, ducks, cattle and household items were either destroyed or looted. Moreover, troops from SPDC IB 83 and LIB 416 seized villagers as porters every day from villages of Sa-ka-wet, Aung-hlaing, Ka-to-hta and Nan-shwe-hmon. Due to this, the villagers had to flee and hide in the jungle. (Source: KIC)

On 31 March 2002, IB (83) under control Division (88) led by Myint Thein Tun summoned the Ta-po-hta villagers and gave the order to the villagers to abandon their village and move to Ka-li-khee village within 3 days. (Source: ABSDF)

On 31 March 2002, LIB (10) under the control Division (88) led by General Mya Kyaw ordered residents of Noh-klo-ti and Htee-kya-ra village, Kya-in township to relocate to Ywa-lon-taung village by 3rd April 2002. (Source: ABSDF)

On 1 April 2002, column (1) commander Win Kyaw Oo, from IB (83) under the control of Division (88) summoned villagers from Paw-thay-khee village and ordered them to leave their village and move to the other place within a day. (Source: ABSDF)

On 5 April 2002, IB (78) under Division (88) led by column commander Win Kyaw forced residents of Pah-wa-klo village and Noh-taw-plo village to relocate to Ka-li-khee village, Kya-in township. The next day, the same unit burned down all the houses in Pit-ta-ka village and forced the residents to relocate. (Source: ABSDF)

In April 2002, three KNLA soldiers were captured returning home for water festival and tortured. As a result, troops from five battalions (IB 77, IB 78, LIB 301, 317 and 416) from Division 88 followed the three guerrillas and arrested their relatives, friends and supporters, looted properties, destroyed livestock and killed people. Because of this the villagers have been fleeing into the forest. Rich villagers became poor within a few days. Villages which were targeted by SPDC troops include:

1. Meh Sa Kit (Meh Ku),
2. Kyone Sein,
3. Baw Kalo Khee,
4. Noe Klo Tay,
5. Kaw Keh,
6. Mae Kaw Khee,
7. Lay Kari,
8. Htee Kapa,
9. Kwan Thit Ta and other villages.

Thousands of villagers lost possessions and are now hiding in forest without food, shelter or protection. Over 5 villages were burned down and some were ordered to relocate (they can move to anywhere except their villages.) (Source: FTUB)(See also torture chapter)

On 19 April 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301, led by battalion commander Htun Shwe forcibly relocate Kyone-sein village of Kya-in Township and, as a result, the villagers fled either to nearby villages or into the jungle. (Source: KIC)

Beginning from 19 April 2002, troops from SPDC IB 77, 78, LIB 301, 317 and 416 under LID 88, entered villages in Kya-in Township and tortured and killed villagers without reason. In

addition the troops looted or destroyed villagers' possessions, and killed and ate livestock such as buffaloes, cattle, chickens, ducks etc. As a result, hundreds of villagers had to abandon their land and plantations and either go into hiding in the jungle or flee to the Thai border for safety. Villages targeted by SPDC troops included Kyone-sein, Theh-pyu-chaung, Htee-tha-blu, Noh-klo-ti, Khaw-kher, Mae-kaw-khee, Lay-ta-ri, Htee-ka-pa, Htee-pa-nwe, Mae-pra, Toe-doh-net, Kwan-thit-ta, Paw-neh-moo, Htee-law-bleh, Htee-blav, Ka-kya-po-khee, Htee-kyaw-kay and Baw-ta-low-khee (Source: KIC)

On 23 April 2002 troops from SPDC LIB 301 came to Khaw-kher village and arrested the village head and 3 other villagers and took them to the Army LID 88 headquarters in Kyaik-don. They were not released up to this day. Moreover, these troops ordered villages namely Khaw-kher, Htee-ka-pah and Htee-kyaw-kay villages to relocate to Kya-in, Kyaik-don, Mae-ta-klet and Paya-ngote-toe within 2 weeks. They destroyed the villagers' houses, household materials and food store. Thus, the villagers had to face a severe shortage of food, shelter and clothing. (Source: KIC)

On 5 May 2002, at 2:00 pm, the SPDC unit from LIB (301) led by Min Din, Column (1) commander, set fire to and destroyed the homes and/or belongings of residents from Htee-P'-Nwai village, Kya-Inn township. Residents who lost their homes and or belongings include:

- Saw Pa Hae Moe, aged (40) yrs old - house, 1 paddy barn including (30) tins of rice
- Mg Than Kyi Soe, aged (25) yrs old - house
- Kyaw Wah Paw, aged (46) yrs old - house

The SPDC troops destroyed everything that they found in the villagers' houses. In addition, the soldiers pointed a gun at one villager. Naw Hsaw Aye, and grabbed 1 gold necklace and a pair of gold earrings that she was wearing. The soldiers also forcibly relocated Htee-P'-Nwai village to Mae-tae-klav village. There are approximately (90) dwellings in Htee-P'-Nwai village. (Source: ABSDF)

On 10 May 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 301 led by Min Din burned down 15 houses of Paw-ner-moo village, because the villagers could not pay a sum of 600,000 Kyat demanded. They also ordered Paw-ner-moo villagers to relocate to Mae-ta-kret village within 2 weeks. (Source: KIC)

On 12 May 2002 SPDC LIB 301 battalion ordered Htee-kay and Ta-kya-po-khe villages to relocate to Si-hson village in Kya-in Township. (Source: KIC)

On 13 May 2002 at approximately 10:30 am, LIB (301) Column (1) under Division (8) arrived at Kaw-keh village, Kya-Inn township, and killed 1 cow. In addition, they also looted and destroyed the villager's rice crop. The villagers were forced to flee to avoid from the SPDC troops. (Source: ABSDF)

On 2 June 2002 it was reported that Burmese soldiers had killed at least five people and set fire to ethnic Karen villages in new raids on separatist rebels along Burma's border with Thailand, refugees said today. Thai officials said more than 700 Karen had fled to Thailand from 22 villages in the Kyar Inn Seik Kyee township in Burma. The township is about 25 miles from the border. Hundreds more refugees are believed to be making their way through the jungle to Thai territory. The refugees began arriving in small groups last Friday in the Umphang district of Thailand, about 120 miles northwest of Bangkok, the border officials said. One villager, Naw Mu Nuei, 63, said Burmese troops accused the villagers of backing

the rebel Karen National Union and ordered them to leave the area before May 21. When the villagers defied the order, troops detained them at a local church for four days, beating some of them before driving the group into the jungle and setting fire to their houses, they said. (Source: Associated Press)

On 5 June 2002 Min Din commander of SPDC LIB 301, issued an order that Ka-la-pa-sote village located by the side of Za-mi river to relocate to the village of Shwe-po-hat-ywa-thit, in Kya-in Township by the end of June. (Source: KIC)

On the night of 8 June 2002 troops from SPDC IB-77 ordered Kya-ka-wa (Sa-ka-wat) and Ka-toh-hta villages in Kaw-ka-reik township to relocate to Aung-lan village. Moreover, these troops looted 15 baskets of rice and 17 chickens from Kya-ka-wa village. (Source: KIC)

On 8 June 2002 troops from SPDC IB-77 burned down two houses and 3 paddy barns at Thon-ein-zu (Teh-thon-lone) in Kaw-ka-reik Township. (Source: KIC)

On 12 October 2002 at 7:00 am, about 20 troops from SPDC IB 588 under No 19 Military Operation Command, led by battalion second in command Aye Lwin came to Bi-saing village in Win-yae Township and handcuffed Saw Kyaw Bwe, aged 37, and took him to the battalion headquarters. As of 7 October 2002 the troops were continuing to detain him and had subjected him to torture in many ways, accusing him of having contact with the rebels. For this reason the villagers became very terrified and fled to other places. (Source: KIC)

On 12 October 2002 about 20 troops from SPDC LIB 588, under Local Military Operation Command 19, led by battalion second in command Aye Lwin, came to Be-saing village, Win-yae Township, and handcuffed villager, Saw Kyaw Pwe aged 37 and took him to the army camp and tortured him up to this day. These troops accused Be-saing villagers of having contact with the rebels. As a result, the villagers took fright and went into hiding. (Source: KIC)

Tha-ton District

On 3 June 2002 Maw-ple-khee camp commander Bo Khin Zaw Win of SPDC LIB 1 ordered villagers living in Maw-ple-khee area and nearby places to relocate to Maw-ple-khee village by the dead line of 10-6-2002. He threatened to take action against villagers who failed. (Source: KIC)

Toungoo District

On 16 March 2002 SPDC troops summoned village heads in Baw-ga-li area for a meeting. In the meeting, Der-doh village head failed to attend and as a result they showed a bomb of RPG launcher, a round of G-3 rifle and a piece of charcoal to the others village heads who came and said that they would kill all Der-doh villagers they found. In addition, they issued an order to ban villagers from Klay-soe-khee and Baw-ga-li villages of east Pa-leh-wah area not to travel. (Source: KIC)

13.9 Situation in Other Areas of Burma

There is little information available about the situation of IDPs in other areas of Burma, such as in the Chin and Mon States, and many of the Divisions, as the plight of these people has not been well documented. However, it is known that there is a significant population of IDPs in these areas, as villages have been relocated in the past, relocation sites exist, and the conditions which push people out of their villages have been documented.

Situation in Chin State

There is little information available regarding internal displacement in Chin State, and the true scale of the problem remains unknown. However, estimates by The Chin National Front (CNF), a pan Chin nationalist movement, report that widespread displacement is a major problem in the area. CNF estimates that there are 40-50,000 persons in Chin State who have been displaced from their homes. Many of these people have reportedly fled to Mizoram State in northeast India.

Situation in Kachin State

"While the situation of internal displacement is not reported and hence the scale of the problem not well known in Kachin state, 30 years of internal conflict between the various Kachin independence movements and the Burmese army has resulted in large-scale displacement of the Kachin population. Figures from Kachin State suggest that perhaps 100,000 were forcibly relocated from their homes by counter-insurgency operations between the 1960s and 1990s, while other estimates suggest that in 1994 - prior to the signing of a cease-fire - there were around 67,000 internally displaced. More recent estimates suggest that although conflict-related displacement has decreased, the impoverishment of many rural dwellers following three decades of strife have led to significant rural displacement. As no peace dividend followed the cease-fire agreements, leaving the issue of resettling previously displaced groups obscure, many rural populations in Kachin State have become landless and forced to seek a livelihood in the extractive natural resources (mining) sectors or in the service sector in urban areas.

Indeed despite the negotiated cease-fire arrangements between the central government and the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) and the Kachin Democratic Army (KDA) there continue to be problems of displacement and land confiscation. As has been remarked by numerous civilians in Kachin State, cease-fires have allowed the different armies to retain their arms and territory, controlling and taxing the populace, while basically prioritising business for themselves through the extraction of natural resources. These complaints are not solely levied at the cease-fire groups, but more importantly at government, as the army has claimed much farmland, principally to grow food." (BERG September 2000, "Kachin State")

Tenasserim Division

SPDC troops forcibly relocated more than forty houses at a place between Taung Tho Lon and Heinda Chaung, in the east of Tavoy, Tenasserim division, to construct a new artillery battalion. On November 27, 2002, Col. Soe That, commander of No.1 Strategic Command based in Myitta village, ordered the villagers who lived in the place between Taung Thon Lon and Heinda Chaung villages to move out of their houses, plantations, and lands. It was

estimated that more than 300 acres of land would be cleared up for the building of that artillery battalion. All the villagers' lands and plantations in that area were confiscated without any compensation. Starting from the end of 2002, the Burmese troops have been planning and building more artillery battalions and anti air craft battalions in Tenasserim division. (Source: KHRG)

Rangoon Division

Residents Evicted, Detained

A one thousand member force of army, riot police and local police raided a residential neighborhood in Rangoon's Kamaryut Township on the night of April 5th, according to a Rangoon resident. As authorities began destroying homes and detaining residents, an elderly woman yelled at the security forces, calling them robbers, said an eyewitness. The destruction and arrests follow the refusal of the residents to obey an order issued by Col Yan Naing Oo last month. He ordered the twenty-five families of Kamaryut's Waggi quarter to evacuate and move their homes by April 5th or face arrest.

Several residents spoke openly last week while using their real names during interviews with the Washington-based Radio Free Asia (RFA) Burmese service. The interviews were later broadcast into Burma. Security forces demolished seven homes and detained the residents and their children. Authorities later separated the children and the adults before sending both groups to different detention centers. The government also sent doctors and nurses to the scene to take care of the sick and elderly, according to the source. It is not known how many people have been apprehended or where they are being held. Officials ordered the remaining families to vacate their homes by April 7th, the source added.

Included among the detainees was Daw San May (pen name Shwe Gu May Hnin), an author and elected Member of Parliament from the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD); U Win Pe (pen name Maung Swan Yi), a respected critic and poet; Yin Yin Myint, a teacher, and U Sai Hla Kyaw, according to a report from the Burma Media Association. The government did not give any reason for the forced eviction, according to several Waggi residents. But a former Waggi resident, who sold his property to a business interest two years ago, reported that a deal between investors and local authorities was behind the order to relocate the neighborhood.

The forced relocation of some Rangoon neighborhoods has taken place since the 1988 democracy uprising. Several neighborhoods, which were vocal in their opposition to the government, have been relocated to areas outside of Rangoon for security purposes. Other forced relocations in Rangoon have occurred to make room for well connected business interests. In the rural areas, forced relocation is a commonly employed military tactic to cut support for ethnic insurgents. The forced relocation has received criticism by Burmese activists' abroad. Yesterday, Burmese activists in Washington, DC gathered in front of the Burmese ambassador's house to protest the government's action. (Source: Irrawaddy)

Junta Demolished Homes

Dozens of houses have been demolished and at least 13 people were arrested-including three children-in Rangoon's Shwe Leikpyar quarter, also know as the Zay Kalay quarter, near Rangoon University's Kyee Myin Daing campus earlier this month. Residents of the neighborhood told The Irrawaddy that the demolition had been ordered by the government to make room for a new apartment complex. According to eyewitness accounts, an estimated 30 men from the military, local police and the junta's de facto political party the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) descended upon the quarter on June 10 and notified the residents that they had 24 hours to move all their belongings from their homes.

The residents said no explanation was given but that those who did not cooperate would be arrested."They did not want to go, but they were given no choice," said one resident whose home is just outside of the demolished area. He added that he thought the government might compensate the residents. At least 13 people were arrested after authorities raided the neighborhood, which is in Kyee Myin Daing Township, on June 11 and found them still in their homes, according to a member of the National League for Democracy (Liberated Area). Among those arrested were three members of the opposition National League for Democracy (NLD) as well as three children.

NLD (LA) secretary U Nay Win told the Washington, DC-based Radio Free Asia (RFA) that the residents and their children are being detained at Insein Prison and the Htaung Kyant interrogation center, both in Rangoon. He added that they have been charged under an obscure 1962 housing law. Shortly after the raid the NLD's headquarters in Rangoon released a strongly worded statement condemning the junta for carrying out such unwarranted and illegal acts. In April, thousands of riot police and local police raided the Waggi quarter in Rangoon's Kamayut Township and demolished 25 homes. Homeowners and their children who refused to vacate were also arrested. Under Burma's military regime, forced relocations in urban area have become commonplace. The relocations are often times ordered to eradicate what the government sees as subversive cells or because of business interests. Resident normally receive no compensation from the government. (Source: Irrawaddy)

Seized Land Sold

Only a month after residents were forced from their homes, Shwe Than Lwin Company has purchased the vacated real estate from authorities. Last April, 25 homeowners and their families in Rangoon's Waggi quarter of Kamaryut Township were told to relocate, although no reason has been given by the authorities. Some Waggi residents were detained for over a week for speaking about their relocation on Radio Free Asia broadcasts. Shwe Than Lwin Company is a large investment and import company, led by Kyaw Win. They are engaged in business with some ethnic ceasefire groups, particularly the DKBA. Authorities said they would give evicted homeowners an apartment room and 100,000 kyat as compensation. But these would be in remote areas, making transportation difficult. (Source: AP)

13.10 Interviews

(All interviews conducted by FTUB)

Name: xxxx
Age: 56 Years Old.
Nationality: Karen
Residence: Htee Khu Thaw, Kyar Inn township, Karen State.
Date: 16 March 2002

"There are about one thousand families in Htee Khu Thaw tract (Day Law Ni, Ler Kaw, Tha Wal Pa Doe, Htee Saw Shee and Htee Lor Thei War villages), Kyar Inn Seikkyi township, Karen State. Since early 2000, the SPDC has disenfranchised our villagers in Htee Khu Thaw and set up a military base there. The army confiscated several plantation yards on which they built their camp. At this time, hundreds of villagers have fled to hide in the jungle in exile. Although some families are still living in their villages, they are doing so for the sake of keeping their fields farms.

One of the battalions from Division 88 is based in our village. They usually have cooperated with the Karen Peace Organization (split from KNU) led by Tu Mu Heh.

There are some bridges on the road between Kyar Inn Seikkyi and Kawkareik. In 2001, we (villagers) were warned that the bridges must not be destroyed. If the bridges were ever lost, the villages nearby would be relocated.

Between January to March 2002, some of the bridges were destroyed by forest fire. At this point, troops controlled by SPDC division No. 88 and Karen Peace Organization cooperated to begin a process of forced relocation and labour in rebuilding.

The army demands villagers be porters every day. Each day, at least 2 people in my village must leave and work for at least 2 days. If the village heads cannot find someone to replace the villagers after two days work, villagers are not released and must continue until someone else comes to replace them. Villagers are forced to carry soldiers' backpack filled with shells, bullets, and food. Often times, the weight of the pack exceeds 15 viss¹. Most the time they return, villagers have wounds on their bodies. In 2002, villagers also have been forced to reconstruct army camps. Those villagers had to do labor including:

- -Making fences for the military yard.
- -Collecting fire wood.
- -Digging trenches.
- -Making bamboo traps around the army yard.

One person in each family is called without fail for camp reconstruction.

All the villages in Htee Khu Thaw tract have been forced to relocate to the Htee Khu Thaw village by the SPDC troops and the Karen Peace Organization troops. Villagers became unhappy, so some attempted to leave, especially those who do not own land.

After villagers were relocated, the troops destroyed our houses. Most villagers

thought that the troops would sell the land, or use it for themselves. Making a plan to get to the Thai-Burma border was very difficult because we were afraid the troops might overtake us along on the road. It took 6 days to walk from our village to the border. Some villagers who came later told us that some villagers were overtaken by the SPDC soldiers and the DKBA. The SPDC would have beaten the villagers, but the DKBA kept them from becoming violent". (Source: FTUB)

Name:	xxx
Age:	23 Years Old.
Nationality:	Karen
Residence:	Ta Aia Shie village, Kyar Inn Seikkyi township, Karen State.
Marital status:	Married, (one child died)
Occupation:	Farmer

"I am from Ta Aia Shie village. We along with another family secretly left our village and came up to the Thai-Burma border. We were the only 2 families to leave. In the beginning of 2002, the bridges between Kyar Inn Seikkyi to Kawkareik were destroyed and the SPDC started their operation of forced labor. Currently the SPDC troops patrol our village tract. In our village, SPDC soldiers demanded three porters at a time, each had to spend three working days. At the end of 3 days, the village head had to replace them with other villagers. But the troops also capture villagers to be additional porters.

In February 2002, I was arrested by the combined column of SPDC soldiers and the Karen Peace Organization. I had to serve 4 days as a porter and I escaped. When I was in porter service in February, I saw prisoner porters being treated terribly by the troops. They were beaten and kicked. Each porter had to carry a load of at least 12 viss weigh. Loads contained food, shells, bullets, etc. Along the operation path, if the troops saw and wanted something from any villagers, they looted it from them and gave it to the porters to carry. When I reached home, my wife and I discussed and decided to leave. We have been living here for weeks." (Source: FTUB)

Interview with a DKBA Defector.

Name Nyunt Win alias Aung Pai
Age 22 years.
Race Karen
Religion Buddhist
Address Kar Inn, Hlaing Bwe, Karen State
Sex Male
 DKBA Thaw Thi Wah (Elite Security Force for Myaing Gyi Ngu),- BC/10307
Rank Platoon commander
Date of interview: 12 March 2002.

"When the DKBA split from the KNU, I was 15 years old then and I joined the DKBA. During my service in the DKBA in March 1998, our Elite Squad (27 persons) was ordered by General Kyaw Than (DKBA) to destroy the Huay Kaloke refugee camp together with the 999 Brigade. I was given not only a rifle but also a pressurized gas bottle (octane gas) and a lighter to ignite it.

Weeks later, we were ordered to destroy Mae La refugee camp, together with 70 DKBA soldiers led by Moe Gyo. Burmese soldiers (SPDC) guarded us but they did not cross the Thai border. During the raid, we were only able to burn down two houses from Mae La camp. One DKBA soldier was killed, and one was injured, so we withdrew. Even though our families and relatives resided in refugee camps and villages (both Thai and Burmese sides), we must follow orders came from SPDC.

Then, I was transferred to Thaton district as a guide for the SPDC 44 Division together with DKBA officer Moe Gyo. While following with DKBA officer Moe Gyo (meaning Thunder in Burmese language), we had to kill many villagers, using the charge against them that they were KNU supporters. While patrolling with SPDC soldiers, we were forced to march in front of the column. If they instructed us to collect porters or to burn down villages, we had to comply. Even though I was an elite force officer, there was no salary given to me. We were issued two condensed milks tins (one tin costs 250 kyats). Months ago, we were told we would get 50,000 kyats a month, but we still have not received it.

Thus, when we returned from Thaton district, my colleagues and I began to rob around Hlaing Bwe township. Later, I was shy and embarrassed when I met villagers we robbed. Villagers knew of me as a robber and probably thought of me as an enemy, but they never told me this directly. Instead, they followed my orders. This year, we were ordered to burn down several houses by the SPDC and I was wary about that.

When our troops guarded for the SPDC column at Htan Hna Pin village, I heard that my parents from Kyar Inn village, also from Hlaing Bwe township, were called to serve as porters in February 2002. I asked permission to free them from having to serve as porters from the area commander, Maj. Tin Win, Battalion 2 of the DKBA 333 Brigade. He said he could not because the SPDC column had demanded to collect porters. I then proposed that I resign from my service with DKBA. The argument turned bad and I shot him dead with a pistol. Then I was suspended and detained by DKBA headquarters' troops.

On March 6th, I told my Sergeant who I had commanded (Ka Tone Gyi, alias I Love You {See Torture chpt}) to prepare for my escape. At dinner, the sergeant put sleeping drugs in

curry and all the guards fell asleep. At 2 a.m., two of us took guns from 27 soldiers who were sleeping and stole a new Toyota 4-wheel truck owned by General Kyaw Than. (His car was sent to inspect road construction.) I drove the car while the sergeant sat in the back with a machine gun. We drove towards Dawna range from the east, and when we reached the bottom of the hills we left the car. Then we brought guns and ammunition we could carry and then reported to the KNU local authority." (Source: FTUB)

Name: xxxxx
Age: 57 Years Old
Religion: Christian
Residence: Htee Tha Blu, Kya Inn-Seik Gyi twonship.
Sex: Female
Occupation: Farmer
Date of Interview: 18 -5-2002

"There are 30 families in my village. Our village is situated in a remote area as well as quite far from SPDC troops base. So when SPDC troops arrive at our village, they act very violently. On the third week of April, the SPDC troops led by Myo Tun Hlaing arrived and accused our villagers that, "You are Nga Pway, you must relocate immediately at once." And then the troops ordered all villagers including children to enter the church. And the troops locked the doors. We had to stay in this church three days, they did not give any food to us except the children. Children were fed once a day, although the food for the children was not enough. The troops gave a little water to drink. When villagers went to the toilet, soldiers followed and pointed at them with their guns. While villagers were detained in the church, the troops burnt down our processing and rice barns completely.

On 27th April, we were called to go outside of the church and then it and a public hall were burnt completely. The SPDC troops took four men from our village with them. Those four men were interrogated and tortured by the soldiers before they took them away. We did not dare to watch when the soldiers tortured them and we felt very sorry for them. One of them was a pastor, another one was a medic (who had a medic certificate issued by SPDC), and two other were villagers. Among the four, one of them (a villager) managed to escape but the other three were not released. After Division 88 soldiers left, we (villagers) dispersed to Paw Neh Moo, Toe Doe Neh and into the forest. The troops destroyed everything. Even the rice pots were punctured and small chickens killed even though they did not eat them. We (three families) crossed the jungle to the Thai-Burma border." (Source: FTUB)

Name: xxxxxx
Age: 60 Years Old
Religion: Animist
Residence: Khar Kla, Kya Inn-Seik Gyi twonship.
Sex: Female
Occupation: Farmer
Date of Interview: 17-5-2002

"There are 30 families in my village. They are farmers. Our village tract was controlled by Division 88, stationed in Azin village. The troops demanded us to work on the bridges in Kyaik Don, to repair an army camp in Azin village, to serve as porters to go with them as they desired. We tried to do our duty as ordered by them.

But on April 11 to 14, about 70 soldiers from Division 88 came to our village tract, burnt down some villages and forcibly relocated some villagers from some of the villages. The belongings of villagers were taken away or were destroyed completely. The villages are Na Htee Klo, Thee Kweh, Noh Kwe Hta and Ta Ray Khei. Each village had between 25 to 30 families. Some villagers fled away when they heard that the troops would come to relocate the villagers and to burn down their villages. Some are still staying in their villages. During April and May some villagers moved to the Thai-Burma border and some were still staying in the jungle with poor accommodation. After my house, rice barn (170 baskets, for one year's stock) and my belonging were destroyed, our families had a discussion and came to Thai-Burma border." (Source: FTUB)

Htee Moo Hta Area, Thingan Nyinaung, Karen State

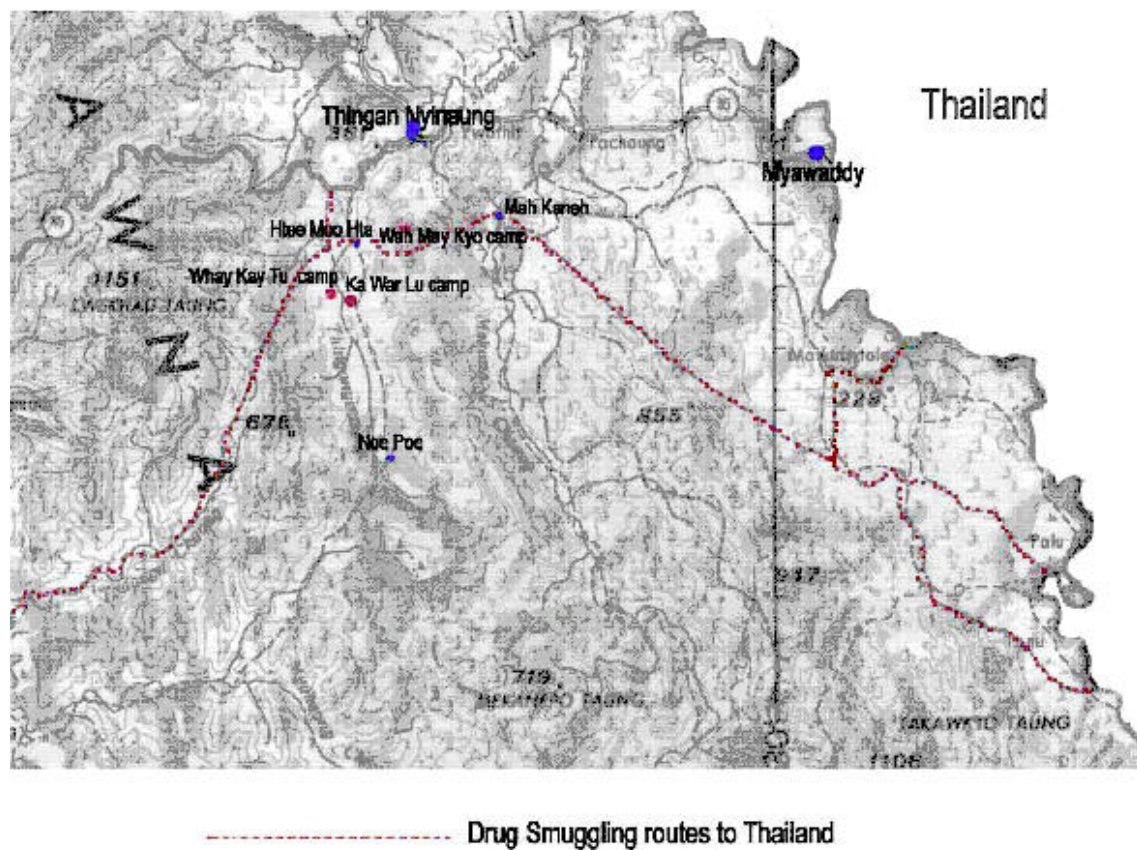
On 13th March 2002, village elders from Htee Moo Hta (Outer Kwin Galay), Noe Poe (Inner Kwin Galay) and Meh Kaneh villages were called to attend a meeting in Htee Moo Hta village. Here, army officers from SPDC and DKBA told them that all of the villagers from the three villages must relocate to other places between the 20th to the 25th of March, 2002. If the villagers refused to relocate, they would be severely punished and their houses and property would be burned down. As the villagers were too afraid of SPDC and DKBA soldiers, almost all villagers arranged to move to other places. Many people went into the forest, while some went to the Thai-Burma border.

"Our family made the decision to move to the border with 40 other people. Some young male villagers who were very angry were seeking Karen guerrillas, as they wanted to join the KNLA", reported one villager."

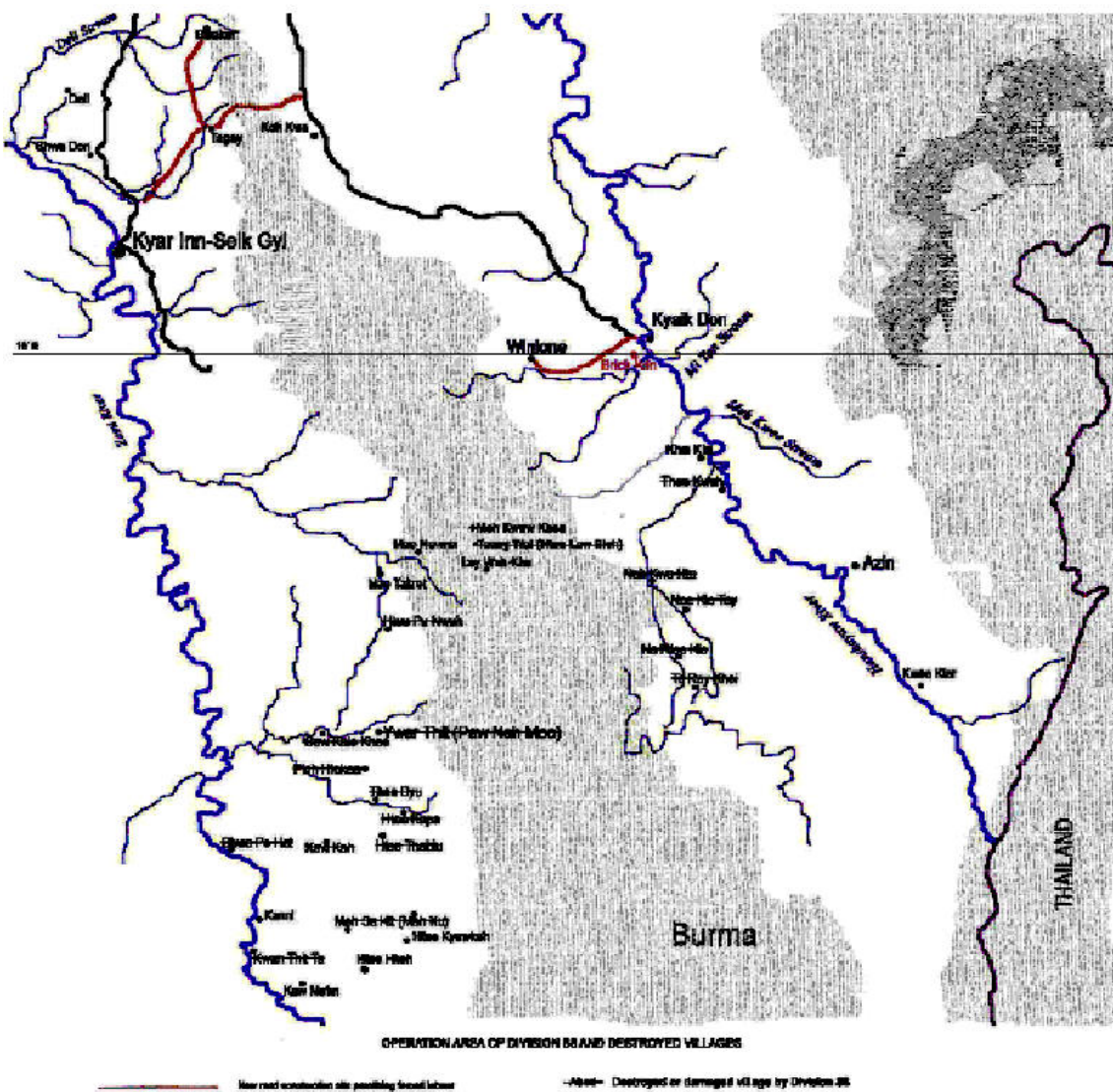
Note: According to the KNU source, Methamphetamine smuggling route from Kawkaik to the Thai border passes Htee Moo Hta village and KNU guerrillas have been trying to block the route at Htee Moo Hta area. Thus, SPDC and DKBA soldiers (who protect drug smugglers) have tried to relocate the villages. (Source: FTUB)

13.11 Maps

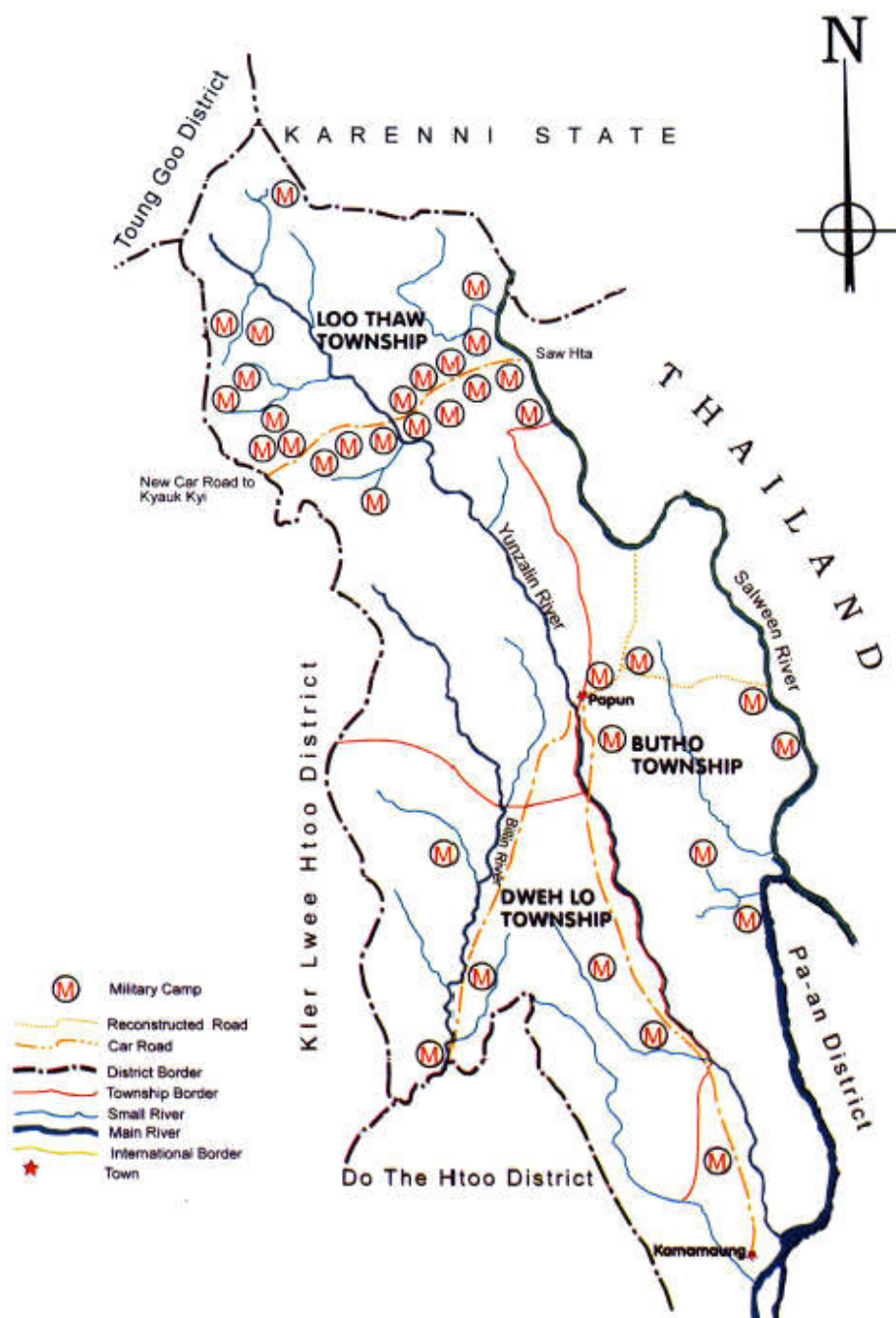
Map of Htee Moo Hta and Thingan Nyinaung Area.



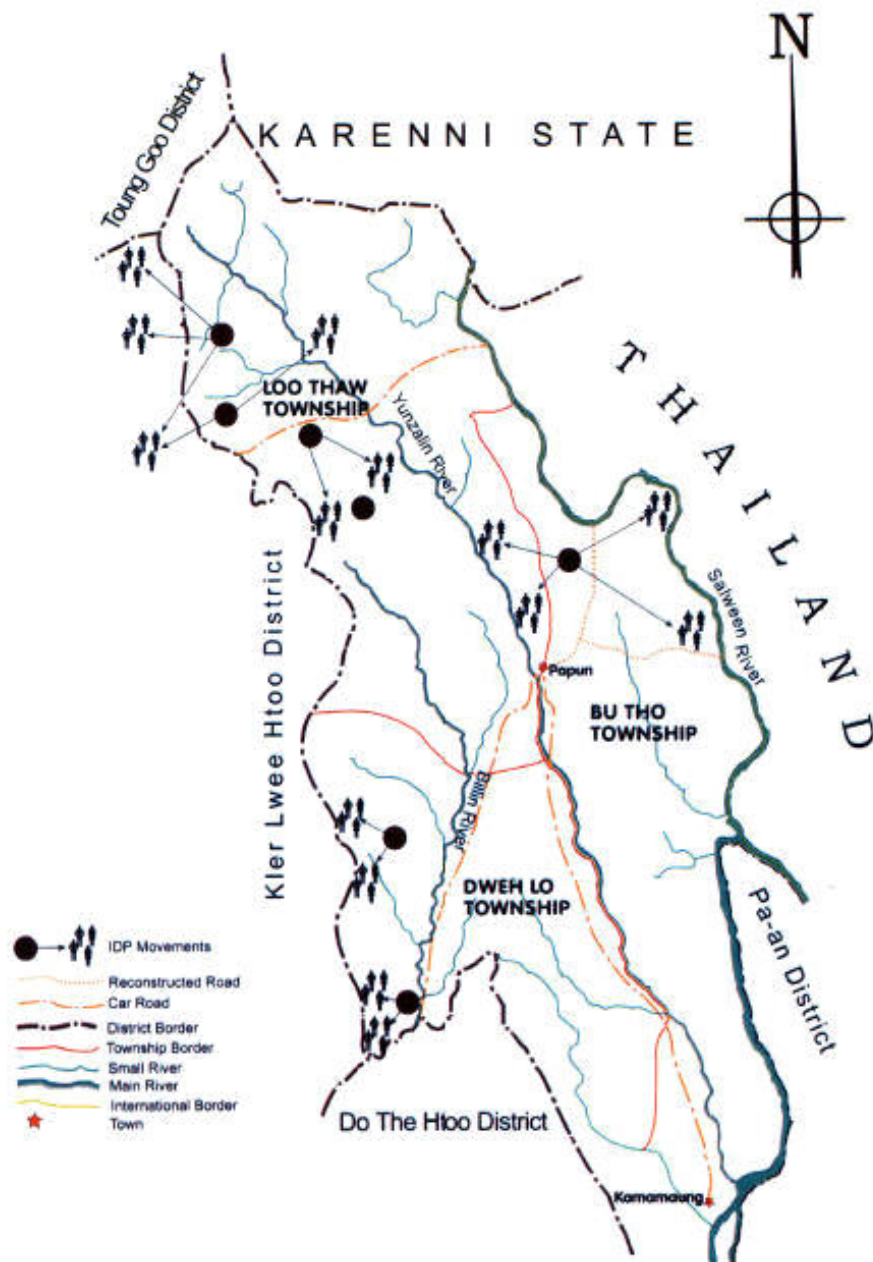
Kyar Inn-Seik Gyi Area – FTUB 2002.



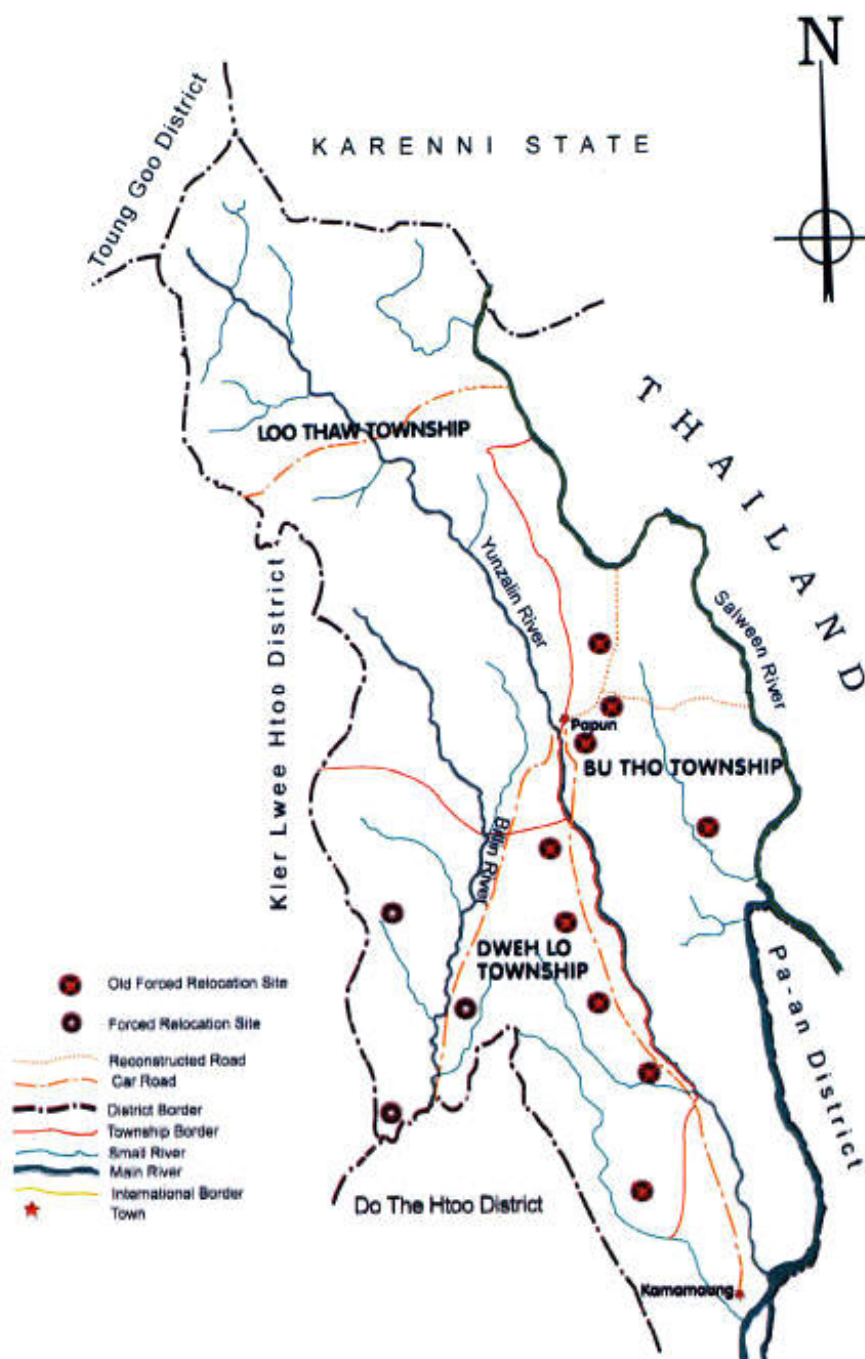
Location of SPDC Military Camps in Papun (Mu Traw) District. Map by CIDKP. Dec. 2000



Location of IDPs, Papun District Map by CIDKP, Dec 2000



**Forced Relocation Sites in Papun (Mu Traw) District, Karen State , Map by CIDKP
Dec. 2000**



Htee-Pa-Ne village and Don-Pa-Loung village:

The two villages which were burned down and destroyed by Lt. Commander Min Din, of Column (2), LIB (301) within September 2002.

1. Village name - Htee-pa-ne village, Don-pa-loung village
2. Township group - Kya-in-seik-kyi
3. Families - approximately over 43
4. Population - approximately 239
5. Ethnicity / Religion - Karen / Christian
6. Over (18) yrs - Approximately 100 persons
7. Under (18) yrs - Approximately 239 persons
8. Main Business - Agriculture
9. Other Business - growing sesame seeds
10. Rate of product - 30 baskets per acre
11. Taxation -
12. Income / expenses rate for a family per year - income about (50000) Kyats expenses over (7000) Kyats
13. Transportation - by bullock carts in Hot season and by foot in Raining season
14. The nearest town / village - Kya-in-seik-kyi (24) miles, Hti-wa-hto (1.5 miles), Pwa-ne-mu (1.5 miles)
15. Drinking water - from well and stream
16. Common disease / fever (for age of over 40 yrs) - Malaria, Jaundice
17. Common disease / fever (for age of under 18 yrs) - Diarrhea, Jaundice, Poliomyelitis, Malaria.
18. Health care system (Clinic, hygienic staff) - None
19. Health education (from any organization) - None
20. Using of sanitary toilet - None
21. Death and birth rate per year - (10) birth, infant (4) death, adult (3) death
22. School - only primary school (for secondary school only at Kya-in-seik-kyi)
23. Amount of students - over (40) students
24. Amount of teachers and their education level - female teacher (2), 10th and 7th standard.
25. Provision for teachers - (50) baskets of paddy per year.
26. Provision for school - no promotion
27. Literate - 25%
28. Curriculum - Government's and Karen literate

Hti-khaing village:

1. Village name - Hti-khaing village
2. Township group - Kya-in-seik-kyi
3. Households - approximately over 45
4. Population - approximately 200
5. Ethnicity / Religion - Karen / Christian
6. Over (18) yrs - Approximately 100 persons
7. Under (18) yrs - Approximately 100 persons
8. Main Business - Agriculture, gardening
9. Other Business - None
10. Rate of product -
11. Taxation - a basket of grain and 100 kyats per family annually to KNU
12. Income / expenses rate for a family per year - income about (50,000) Kyats expenses over (100,000) Kyats
13. Transportation - by bullock carts
14. The nearest town / village - Kya-in-seik-kyi (24) miles, Te'-pyu-chaung (2 miles), Pwa-ne-mu (3 miles)
15. Drinking water - from well and stream
16. Common disease / fever (for age of over 40 yrs) - Malaria, Arthritis, blood pressure.
17. Common disease / fever (for age of under 18 yrs) - Diarrhea, Jaundice, Scabis, Malaria.
18. Health care system (Clinic, hygienic staff) - None
19. Health education (from any organization) - None
20. Using of sanitary toilet - None
21. Death and birth rate per year - (15) birth, infant (5) death, adult (3) death
22. School - Self established school available to 2nd standard; after that have to join at Kyon-sein.
23. Amount of students - over (45) students
24. Amount of teachers and their education level - female teacher (2), 7th and 4th standard.
25. Provision for teachers - (40) baskets of paddy per year provided by village community.
26. Provision for school - Self provision
27. Literate - 25%
28. Curriculum - Government's and Karen literate



14. The Situation of Refugees

14.1 Background

According to the US Committee for Refugees, there are more than 450,000 Burmese refugees and asylum seekers in countries neighboring Burma. Driven out by the ruling military regimes unrelenting policies and practices that violate their human rights, refugees and asylum seekers have fled to Thailand, Bangladesh, India and Malaysia. The human rights abuses committed by the SPDC include forced relocations, rape, forced labor, torture, the confiscation of land and property, arbitrary arrest and lack of personal security. As the SPDC continues to try and eliminate all resistance forces, particularly in ethnic areas, they attempt to expand military control over the population through mass forced relocation programs. There are currently over 1 million internally displaced people who have the potential to become cross-border refugees in times of increased military conflict.

In Thailand, there are over 144,000 refugees, the majority of whom are from Karen, Karenni, Mon, and Shan ethnic groups. At the same time, there are more than 1 million migrant workers in Thailand who flee to Thailand for many of the same reasons as refugees. A new trend is more ethnic Burmese leaving Burma from both urban and rural areas in family groups. They usually become migrant workers and leave Burma due to forced labor, heavy taxation, corruption, inability to maintain an adequate standard of living and interference with their livelihood through the theft or confiscation of land, property and livestock.

In 1992 over 250,000 Rohingyas fled religious persecution in Arakan State to take refuge in Bangladesh. While most have been repatriated, there are still over 21,500 Rohingya refugees in the two remaining refugee camps as well as over 100,000 who are living and working among the Bangladeshi communities. Rohingyas have also fled to Malaysia while the refugee population in India consists mostly of Chin people.

The Refugee Convention states that refugee protection rests on the principle of *non-refoulement*, which dictates that no refugee should be returned to any country where he or she is likely to face persecution on grounds of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group. This principle has been repeatedly violated by the governments of Bangladesh, India and Thailand, who continue to forcibly repatriate refugees back to areas where their safety cannot be guaranteed.

14.2 Situation in Thailand

Refugee Demographics in 2002

The Burma Border Consortium (BBC) reported that there were 144,358 refugees in Thailand at the end of 2002. The population increased by 6,241 from the end of 2001. For the past three years, the average rate of arrival has been approximately 800 per month. Yet, from July to December, this figure decreased to approximately 411 per month. The decrease in arrivals has not been attributed to an improvement in the human rights situation in Burma. The SPDC continues to engage in activities that violate the human rights of the population in Burma on a regular basis. According to the BBC, the lower numbers could be the result of an unusually

long and heavy rainy season, which may have inhibited migration. The lower numbers reflect the fact that escaping Burma and entering the camps in Thailand has become increasingly difficult for potential refugees. Thai policy to accept only those "fleeing fighting" has been strictly maintained, and authorities have ordered camp committees not to allow any increase in camp populations. In order to avoid both SPDC patrols and notice by the Thai Authorities, refugees have begun to split up and arrive to the camps in smaller numbers. When they do arrive, many decide not to register themselves for fear that they will be sent back across the border. BBC estimates that there are at least 1,500 new arrivals in the camps who have not been recorded. If this is the case, then the actual rate of arrivals in camps in Thailand was around 1,200 per month, which is consistent with previous years. (Source: BBC)

The breakdown by age and sex reported by the Karen, Mon and Karenni Committees in December 2002 was as follows:

Group	Families	Adult*		Children		Total
		Male	Female	Male	Female	
Karen	18,071	32,085	30,556	19,629	18,810	101,080
Mon	2,189	3,694	3,853	1,791	1,864	11,202
Karenni	4,333	6,597	5,846	4,404	4,221	21,068
Total	24,593	42,376	40,255	25,824	24,895	133,350

* For Karen and Mon, this is over 12 years old, for Karenni over 14 years old.
(Source: BBC (6)Month Report: June–Dec 2002)

Thai Government Policy Towards Refugees

Thailand is the one of the main destinations for political dissidents, ethnic minorities and all other groups suffering under the control of the SPDC military regime. Yet in Thailand, refugees face a lack of protection because Thai government policies largely do not adhere to international norms and standards. Thailand is not a party to the 1951 United Nations Convention on the Status of Refugees (Refugee Convention), the main international treaty for the protection of refugees, and lacks an adequate legal framework for determining refugee status. The Thai government's attitude towards the refugees is based on the belief that any assistance offered by NGOs and the UNHCR serves as a 'pull' factor to encourage refugees to enter Thailand and a deterrent to their eventual repatriation. Since 1992, the government has maintained a policy towards the refugees that rests on several key components, which include:

- Only allowing Burmese to cross into Thailand if they are fleeing active fighting, and denying entry or forcibly repatriating those refugees who are fleeing systematic human rights abuses;
- Locating refugee camps in areas too close to the border to be considered secure;
- Severely limiting the role of UNHCR;
- Working to promote cease-fire agreements between the ethnic insurgents and the Burmese government as a way of solving the refugee problem. (Source: HRW)

Thai policy towards the refugees is further complicated by the country's shifting and sometimes contradictory strategic and economic interests in Burma and the state of Thailand's diplomatic relations with Burma. During 2002, the Thai government was accused of putting economic interests and appeasing the military junta ahead of humanitarian concerns and national security. In May 2002, fighting between the Shan State Army (SSA) and the SPDC/United Wa State Party (UWSP) resulted in a conflict with the Thai Army engaging in military exercises in the area. The SPDC accused the Thai Army of aiding the opposition forces of the SSA, while the Thai Army insisted that the fighting had entered Thai territory. The SPDC reacted with an intense media and propaganda campaign slandering the Thai government and monarchy while simultaneously closing the border. The border remained closed until October 2002. During that time, all bilateral trade ceased and Thailand suffered \$113.7 million in trade losses. Despite Deputy Prime Minister Chavalit's expressions of distress and admonishments to the SPDC for their displays of disrespect to the Thai monarchy, the Thai Army was instructed not to get involved with further border skirmishes. In addition, on 4 July 2002, the Thai National Security Council issued a directive to restrict and closely monitor all Burmese opposition and pro-democracy groups working on the border. This directive was followed by a crackdown on opposition groups in August 2002, which included raids of organizations, arrests and deportation of several political activists.

In December 2002, the Thai government was criticized again for bending to the wishes of the SPDC when they led another crackdown on Burmese dissident groups. Not only were organizations in Sangklaburi, Mae Hong Song, and Chiang Mai raided, but in Sangklaburi landlords were instructed not to rent to Burmese political activists or they would be considered to be harboring illegal immigrants. As a result of the crackdown, many pro-democracy organizations reduced their activities in locations all along the border and others went into hiding. Arrests of Burmese dissident activists continued into January 2003, when 7 more were arrested in Sangklaburi. Files, office materials and personal belongings were confiscated by the Thai authorities when offices were raided. The Thai government insists that these crackdowns were an attempt to protect Thai interests and promote better relations with neighboring countries. Furthermore, Thailand has continually stressed that it will not allow foreign opposition groups working against neighboring countries to operate on Thai soil (source: UN Burma Service Office). On 29 December 2002, this sentiment was clearly punctuated by Thai National Security Council Chief Gen Winai Phattiyakhul who publicly stated that Thailand would stop welcoming and sheltering refugees from political conflicts, instead "from now on, we will force them to go back to where they came from. Thailand will not welcome refugees from neighboring countries anymore." (Source: The Nation)

Moreover, at the sixth meeting of the Thai-Burmese Joint Commission in January 2002, the Thai government reiterated its desire to repatriate the 144,358 refugees living along the border. While, the two governments agreed on most other components of their meeting, the questions of refugees remained unsettled. The government of Burma felt that there must be a clear definition of those who are displaced and must be repatriated. Thailand wants to repatriate all the Burmese refugees and close the camps. Officially, Thai policy does not allow for any new arrivals or increases in the refugee camp populations. The reality is that refugees are continuing to flee from Burma because the situation of human rights abuses has not abated.

Many prominent members of the international community disagree with the Thai government's contention that the presence of the camps and some limited assistance

‘encourages’ people to come to Thailand as refugees. Instead there is overwhelming evidence that people flee to Thailand as a last resort, to escape an intolerable situation of systematic SPDC abuses. The majority of people arriving in refugee camps have previously been living on the run as IDPs inside Burma. It is estimated that in the last 5 years, as many as one million people have been victims of SPDC village relocations, with hundreds of thousands of people displaced and forced to live in resettlement sites, or in hiding, constantly moving to escape SPDC troops. Throughout 2002 the Burmese military continued to root out IDPs, destroying their food supplies, and torturing and killing those they could catch. When a community had been ordered to relocate, SPDC troops returned repeatedly to prevent people from re-establishing their homes. The Burmese Border Consortium estimates that there are 268,067 IDP living in hiding inside Tenasserim Division, Mon State, Karen State, Karenni State, and Shan State, all of whom are potential refugees. There are many other IDPs who are living in over 176 resettlement areas controlled by the SPDC, where they are frequently conscripted for forced labor and forced portering, as well as subjected to many other abuses (please see the chapter on forced labor for more information). A large number of people living in these areas also attempt to flee to Thailand.

New asylum seekers face great obstacles coming to Thailand. The Provincial Admission Boards (PABs), who handle the cases of new asylum seekers, stopped meeting in 2002 and therefore did not examine any new cases. While they were meeting, the PABs only considered those who were fleeing from direct fighting in border areas. This is despite the fact that in the 1998 working arrangements worked out between Thailand and the UNHCR, it was noted that people fleeing "the effects of fighting," should also be given consideration. UNHCR's statistics show that 33,427 persons have sought admission to Thailand from May 1999 to December 2002. Of these, 11,731 were accepted as refugees (35%), while 10,408 were rejected (31%) and 11,288 (34%) are still waiting for a decision to be made regarding their status. UNHCR has stated that they believe that the 10,408 rejected cases have a legitimate fear of persecution if they return to Burma and they are appealing the decision to repatriate these individuals. Currently 5,541 of these cases have been reconfirmed as rejected with 330 people already repatriated.(Source: BBC)

Situation in the Camps

Despite Thai policy, which does not allow any new refugee arrivals, Burmese refugees continue to arrive to all the refugee camps located along the Thai-Burma border. Thai policy has caused new arrivals not to register their presence in fear of being sent back to Burma. Therefore, overcrowding and inadequate food supplies are a continued problem. Most refugees are dependent upon humanitarian aid for their total food supply. Leaving the camps is dangerous as refugees face arrest and harassment from local communities.

In recent years, as refugees have become more aid dependent due to restrictions on their movement, nutritional intake has been impacted. Refugees receive a basic food basket of rice, salt, yellow beans, oil and fish paste from relief agencies, and in the past were able to supplement their diets by foraging, cultivating vegetables, raising livestock, growing crops on land held by opposition groups and purchasing other needed items with wages from seasonal work in Thailand. As the self-sufficiency of refugees has declined, due to tightened security in Thailand and the loss of land to the Burmese army, relief organizations have gone from providing 50 percent of staple diet needs in 1984 to providing 100 percent by the mid 1990s. A food consumption/nutrition status survey carried out by the BBC in Umpiem Mai, Tham Hin, Ban Don Yang in 2002 and in Mae La and Karenni Camp 2 in 2001, indicated that

refugees are almost solely dependent on BBC rations for food supplies. Despite the fact that most refugees living in Mae La and Karenni Camp 2 have been in Thailand for a considerable amount of time, they are very poor. The BBC survey indicated that the average monthly expenditure for food is about 55-70 Baht per family. Because the refugees do not have the proper income to supplement their rations or because refugees are sharing their rations with those who are unregistered and do not receive any, most refugees suffer from chronic malnutrition. The BBC study showed that as a result of poor living conditions, frequent infection, and a diet lacking in animal protein and micronutrients, low-level, chronic malnutrition is prevalent among children in the camp. The survey indicated that the acute malnutrition rate for children averaged at 4.9%. According to the World Health Organization, under 5% is acceptable. (Source: BBC)

In March 2002, the BBC was instructed that in the future it must only send food supplies for the registered camp population of 108,000, as determined by the UNHCR and the Ministry of the Interior (MOI). BBC was also notified that they would not be permitted to feed new arrivals in the future. If this policy is implemented, the BBC would reduce their supplies by 15% which would lead to insufficient nutrition in the camps. This policy was not enforced through the year. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, April 10, 2002)

Thailand does not permit the refugees to build permanent structures, therefore most homes and buildings are built with materials that are obtained locally such as bamboo and wood. Most homes are not durable and suffer from damage each rainy season. On 2 September 2002, heavy rains resulted in a flash flood and mudslide in Mae Khon Kha camp near Mae Hong Song. 27 refugees died and 484 buildings, homes, schools, churches, and NGO offices were either damaged or destroyed. Thai authorities initially blamed the refugees for the flood, insisting that illegal logging activities carried out by the refugees caused the mudslide. The Thai authorities and forestry services have been pointing their fingers at the refugees as the cause of deforestation in areas local to the camps and started to impose restrictions on cutting bamboo in 1997. These restrictions have increased through the years and in 2002, it was reported that the sale of bamboo to refugees was barred in some areas. As a result, refugees rely on humanitarian organizations such as BBC, to supply building materials as well. (Source: BBC & Irrawaddy)

Environmental degradation caused by the refugees was highlighted as one of the main reasons for the relocation of Karenni Camp 3 to Karenni Camp 2 on 4 July 2002. The Mae Hong Son governor's office indicated that other reasons for the move included refugee conflict with local inhabitants as well as theft of local crops and belongings. Forum Asia, a Thai NGO, criticized the relocation emphasizing that a greater number of individuals would be in danger of death or injury as Karenni Camp 2 is closer to the border and often subject to attacks by the SPDC. Despite these concerns, the Thai authorities moved forward with their relocation plan and moved almost all families by the end of the year with approximately 921 refugees remaining at the Karenni Camp 3 site. The remaining group includes the Kayan or long necks and handicapped refugees. The Kayan are considered a tourist attraction and therefore may not be moved at all. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session July 10, 2002 & BBC)

On 19 March, the camp commander of Mae La camp and local Thai authorities met and announced that the unregistered camp population of 7,000 had the choice to voluntarily repatriate or to be forcibly repatriated. A 600 Baht stipend was offered to those who volunteered before the end of March. After 1 April, the remaining unregistered population

would be forcibly repatriated. 109 people volunteered. The UNHCR and NGOs did not have access to consult with any of the 109 refugees.

The decision to forcibly repatriate the unregistered population coincided with fighting on the Burma side of the border near Mae La. The UNHCR was successfully able to receive guarantee from Thai authorities in Bangkok that the repatriation would be delayed until the fighting abated. (Source: CCSDPT OPEN SESSION, April 10, 2002)

Situation of Women in Refugee Camps

Most refugees in camps live in family units, either arriving as such or reuniting after separate arrivals. The ratio of males to females is 51:49 and there are relatively few single mothers. The average family size is 5.4 people. Nearly 6% of households are headed by single women. Women tend to be under-represented in the committees that organize the day-to-day administration of the camps, but are active in areas such as teaching, health care work and home visits to gather information about the daily routine of refugees. Obstacles to increased participation of women in camp administration are lack of education and basic knowledge about their rights. There are various women's groups in all the camps, some focusing on the daily needs and welfare of women and some on the more political aspects of women's rights. (Source: BBC)

The majority of refugee women come from ethnic minority groups and suffer from a wide range of human rights violations prior to arrival in the camps. Ethnic minority women living in conflict areas are used as forced labor on infrastructure projects and forced porters for the military, are subject to the constant threat of rape and have virtually no personal security. Conditions in the camps vary from place to place, but women have generally suffered from the recent tighter restrictions on movement outside the camps and have seen their ability to be self-sufficient decline. The conditions of refugee women strongly effect children, of whom women are the primary caregivers.

Two girls at Karenni Camp 2 raped by Thai soldiers

"On 17 March, two refugee women from Camp 2, aged 15 and 20, reported that they had been raped by Thai soldiers while foraging for food outside the camp. The rapes were witnessed by two women aged 41 and 35, as well as an eight-year-old girl. One of the witnesses was held at knife point while the attack took place. The alleged perpetrators were three soldiers temporarily assigned to Mae Hong Son for the royal visit and had apparently been transferred very soon after the incident. The attack was reported by the camp leader to the police in the Thai village of Nai Soi that same day and on March 22, the women filed a report with the police in Mae Hong Son town. On March 27, both the victims and the witnesses made a statement to the police. On March 28 the victims and witnesses were asked to return to the police station in Mae Hong Son for a photo identification. On arrival they were fined Bt100 per person, apparently for leaving the camp. The 15 year-old was then shown photos of such poor quality that she was unable to see the faces. Also on March 28, the KNPP and the Karenni women's group were approached by representatives of the district office and the military, who offered compensation if charges were withdrawn.

The military repeatedly visited the camp asking to speak to the victims, but were prevented from harassing them by the Karenni women's group and the camp committee. Despite the intimidation tactics and following a meeting with lawyers from the Thai Law Society on

April 8, the victims decided to continue with the legal process. The two lawyers had also met with the governor and the Nai Amphur and received assurances that the women would be safe. UNHCR had raised the incident with high level officials at MOI and had received assurances that Thai law would be followed in dealing with this incident. UNHCR would continue to closely monitor the case. As of May, the Thai military had expelled the three soldiers and they were placed in Mae Hong Son prison to await their trial. (Source: CCSDPT OPEN SESSION, April 10, 2002)

Situation of Refugee Children

Although the decision to flee one's home is usually made by adults, children are deeply affected by the situation. The physical dangers for children during flight are immense. They are threatened by landmines, shelling, sudden attacks and their health is put at severe risk due to long days of walking without adequate food and water. They become malnourished and their resistance to diseases, such as malaria, is lowered. Unaccompanied children are vulnerable to neglect, military recruitment, sexual assault and other types of abuse. Children also suffer greatly from the emotional effects of fleeing their homes. They leave behind friends, relatives, possessions and established social structures and witness the fear and uncertainty felt by adult authority figures. This is in addition to their exposure to the factors that caused their flight to begin with, such as the killing, torture, rape and use of forced labor of their family and community members. All of this, along with shortages of basic resources, can lead to harmful effects of the physical, psychological and social development of refugee children.

Situation of Karen Refugees

The Karen, like the other ethnic minority groups, have settlements on both sides of the Thai/Burma border. With an estimated population of between 3 and 4 million, they are one of the largest ethnic minority groups in Burma. The majority of Karen support and consider themselves represented by the KNU and its army, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Large numbers of Karen refugees began crossing from Burma in 1984, and since that time they have received assistance from the KNU-linked, Karen Relief Committee (KRC). At the end of 1994, 400 former KNLA soldiers left to form the break away Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA). They claimed that KNLA Christian commanders had persecuted Buddhist KNLA soldiers. The split was partly engineered by the SPDC as part of their 'divide and rule' strategy, and since 1994 the DKBA troops have attacked Karen camps inside the Thai border, sometimes in cooperation with the Burmese military.

According to the CCSDPT, the situation in Karen State is acutely deteriorating, particularly over the last 5 years. The human rights abuses committed in Karen State include "attacks on villagers, pastors, and even monks, destruction of villages and increases in IDP's, forced labor, rape, murder and massacres, which in several cases involved children. " (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, July 10, 2002)

Situation of Karenni Refugees

In 1989 the small and relatively lowly populated Karenni state had four separate armed groups. In the early 1990s two of these groups signed cease-fire agreements with the SPDC, which left the two larger groups, the Karenni Nationalities People's Liberation Front (KNPLF) and the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) continuing their armed struggle against the Burmese government. In 1992, as a result of mass forced relocations carried out by the SPDC (then SLORC) in their area of operations, the KNPLF was forced into agreeing to a cease-fire agreement. As the situation remained insecure, most people who had fled the area did not return. The KNPP also signed a cease-fire with the Burmese government in March 1995, but by June SLORC troops had violated the agreement and it was discarded. In 1996 the Burmese military began a large-scale forced relocation program in areas they perceived as sympathetic to the KNPP. By the end of March 1998 there were 12,500 Karenni refugees in Thailand, and today there are over 20,000. (Sources: BBC & HRW).

Situation of Mon Refugees

The Mon have been struggling for autonomy since 1948 led by the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and its armed wing, the Mon National Liberation Army. There are nearly 2 million Mon people. When Mon refugees began to flee to Thailand in growing numbers, the NMSP, like the KNU, formed their own organization, the Mon National Relief Committee, to coordinate assistance to the refugees. In June 1995 the NMSP signed a ceasefire treaty with the Burmese military, which enabled them to retain their arms within a few areas in Mon state. The agreement also mandated that Mon refugees in Thailand be repatriated, which was done the following year. The newly repatriated refugees however remained afraid to return to their homes, and instead established new camps in NMSP-controlled territories. Currently these individuals remain internally displaced within Burma, while a further 13,000 remain in camps in Thailand. (Sources: BBC & HRW)

In late 2001, fighting broke out between the NMSP and the Hongsawatoi Restoration Party (HRP), a breakaway group from the NMSP, with the SPDC. As a result of the fighting, the situation of the Mon resettlement sites was tenuous throughout 2002 and the refugees faced new obstacles in obtaining proper food. In conjunction with the fighting, new landmines were laid making farming and foraging exceedingly dangerous. In the first half of 2002, on two different occasions, groups of refugees tried to flee the fighting in the Halochanee site and enter Thailand. On both occasions, the refugees were held at the border by the Thai authorities and sent back once the hostilities had subsided. By the end of 2002, the HRP began to move away from the Halochanee area and to break apart. Many members of HRP defected back to the NMSP. (Source: BBC)

Situation of Pa-O Refugees

The Pa-O live primarily in the Taunggyi area of southwestern Shan State. A smaller number live in the Thaton area of Mon State in Lower Burma. The Pa-O in the Thaton area have largely become "Burmanized" and like their neighbors the Mon and Karen, they have adopted Burmese language, dress and customs. The Pa-O in southwestern Shan State have learned to speak Shan, but have maintained their own distinct language and customs.

Forced relocation programs carried out by the SPDC have been particularly sweeping in Mon, Karen and Shan States, the states where most of the Pa-O live. The Pa-O Nationalist Army signed a ceasefire with SLORC in 1991, but because the Pa-O live in many of the areas where other rebel groups are still active they have been swept up in the forced relocations and human rights abuses for which the ruling junta has become infamous. (Source: Pa-O Human Rights Watch)

Situation of Shan Refugees

Shan State is the largest ethnic minority state in Burma, and one of the most ethnically diverse. Aided by Shan armed groups, for decades Khun Sa, the notorious drug warlord, ran his drug production operations in Shan State and along the Thai border. The Shan are the largest ethnic group in Shan state, and their language and culture is closely related to Thailand's. Because of this, many Shan people have been able to find temporary seasonal work across the border when fighting or economic factors made it difficult to survive in Shan State. However due to their prevalence as migrant laborers, and more importantly the large amount of illegal drugs produced in Shan state, Thailand has consistently refused to recognize any Shan people as refugees, instead labeling them 'economic migrants.'

In January 1996 Khun Sa officially surrendered to the Burmese government, and Burmese troops launched a major relocation program trying to extinguish the remaining Shan armed groups. Lack of refugee status became a major concern, as tens of thousands of Shans fled across the border from a forced relocation campaign that disrupted the lives of over 300,000 people. By the end of 1997, the three Shan opposition armies had reportedly joined forces to create the Shan States Army (SSsA). At the beginning of 1998 fighting broke out near the Thai border between the SSsA and Burmese military troops. It is estimated that up to 150,000 Shan refugees have entered Thailand since 1996. (Source: SHRF)

According to BBC, Shan refugees continued to flee Burma and arrivals in Fang district alone reached a rate of approximately 1,200 people each month in 2002. Forced relocation in central Shan State from 1996-98 as well as resettlement of Wa people from northern Shan State to Shan lands, which commenced in 1999, has been the cause of many people's flight to Thailand. According to a report released by the Lahu National Development Organization in April 2002, nearly 48 000 people have been displaced as result of the relocation of 126 000 people to Shan occupied areas. The majority of the Shan people who have fled Burma live in the fields and orchards of Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, and Mae Hong Son provinces. Most are able to survive on the meager wages of seasonal work. NGOs are largely prohibited from providing them with any assistance as these people continue to be denied recognition as refugees by the Thai government. As a result, access to health care is minimal, and children have little opportunity for education. Without any official status, Shan people in Thailand are subject to abuse by their employers and frequent arrest and detention. A health concern for Shan refugees is their unprotected exposure to pesticides in the orange orchards where they live and work. (Source: BBC)

Shan refugees also settle in one of the two unofficial refugee camps located along the border. The camp populations range from 2-3 000. The camp locations are close to areas where the SSA is carrying out anti-drug operations and continuing its opposition against SPDC/Wa troops. In these areas the situation remains very volatile and insecure. If there is an SPDC/Wa attack, the refugees in these camps would almost certainly have to flee into Thailand.

In May 2002, 600 Shan refugees fled to Wiang Heng district Thailand as a result of the fighting between the SSA and SPDC/Wa troops. The group took shelter in Nong Korkham and Mak Kayon temples in Wiang Haeng district, Thailand. Those who did not flee were reportedly killed, tortured, imprisoned, or forcibly relocated to Nakawngmu. While the Thai authorities did allow the refugees access to Thai health care, the Thai government denied the group's application to stay permanently in a camp and planned to repatriate as soon as the SPDC finished their offensive against the SSA. As of the end of 2002, the group was still in Wiang Heng and supported by supplies from the BBC. (Source: Bangkok Post & BBC)

Timeline of Major Refugee Related Events on the Thai/Burma Border in 2002

January

On 7-9 January, the Sixth meeting of the Thai-Burmese Joint Commission was held for the first time in two years. The meeting concluded without an agreement as to how the two countries will deal with the 100,000 displaced Burmese living along the Thai Burma border. Thailand expressed its desire to repatriate all the refugees with the help of a third party monitor to ensure their safe return and relocation. Burma indicated that the two parties needed to define "displaced". (Source: The Nation)

In January, it was reported that 963 new Shan refugees fled forced relocation areas in central Shan State, particularly Keng Tung area, where the SPDC was utilizing forced labor for urbanization projects. The refugees fled to Fang district, Thailand. (Source: CCSDPT OPEN SESSION February 13, 2002)

February

On 6 February, it was reported that six Shan refugees were robbed and killed by SPDC soldiers at Nong Ook. The group, which included two women and one child, were about to cross the border when the incident occurred. (Source: CCSDPT OPEN SESSION February 13, 2002)

On 10 February, one DKBA and two SPDC battalions moved out of Papun and were expected to attack the area of Wygee, targetting the IDPs in the area. In response to the build up of the SPDC and the coming offensive, the Thai authorities had an increased surveillance and presence in the border area. (Source: CCSDPT OPEN SESSION February 13, 2002)

On 15 February, all villages on the Burmese side of the border near Mae La camp were ordered to relocate to an area near Tha Song Yang by the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA). (Source: CCSDPT Open Session March, 13, 2002)

In February, it was reported that the Shan population of Mae Fah Luang grew to 1200 people, an increase of 300. The growth was attributed to the augmented SPDC military presence and Wa presence in southern Shan State. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session March, 13, 2002)

In February, it was reported that the SPDC set up "Guerrilla Retaliations Units" in the mountains of Toungoo district, Northern Karen State. "These units had a notorious reputation for brutality and execution of villagers suspected of past or present contact with the resistance. Construction had recommenced on three unfinished roads using both convict and forced

labour. The army camp in Toungoo was now up and running and, in line with the plan to promote tourism in the area, a hotel had been built and an amusement park was planned." (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, February 13, 2002)

March

On March 3, it was reported that a landmine went off near Mae Or Pa Lu, a village on the border with Thailand. The landmine was laid in a tree in area that villagers regularly come to gather herbs and vegetables. One woman was killed and several others were injured. Many villagers felt that the mine was a message that they should not go over to the Burmese side of the Moei River. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session March, 13, 2002)

On 9 March, it was reported that 2,000 people were forcibly relocated from three different villages in Duplaya, Karen State. The people were taken to perform forced labor to build a new car road to Three Pagodas Pass. The SPDC burned down Htee Ku Hta village, which was situated along the Irrawaddy River. The SPDC also killed seven people from a family and a villager walking in his field. Afterwhich, it was reported that the number of IDPs living in the Myawaddy areas reached from 2,000 to 3,000. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session April 10, 2002)

In March, 26 new families or 135 individuals were reported to have come to Mae Kong Kha/Ban Sala as a result of SPDC food confiscation. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session April 10, 2002)

Throughout March, intermittent fighting occurred between the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and the break-away Hongsawatoi Restoration Party (Mon Land Restoration Party), as a result of ever increasing tension between the two groups. The HRP grew to approximately 800 to 1,000 people and relocated with their families to an area external to the Mon ceasefire zone. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, March 13, 2002)

In March, it was reported that the SPDC launched an offensive against villagers and IDPs in northern Papun, Karen State. 11 villages were burned in March. Between January and March, a total of 29 villages were reported to have been burned. Many of these villages had been recently rebuilt following offensives in November and December of 2001. In addition, the military laid landmines, destroyed paddy fields and rice stores, stole belongings from the villagers, and killed two villagers who did not flee quickly enough. 4,000 people were in danger during the month as 6 SPDC military battalions were engaged in search and destroy missions. An estimated 3000 people became homeless as a result of these offensives, which caused the number of IDPs, who were all hiding in the jungle in Papun, to increase to more than 5,000. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session April 10, 2002)

April

On 4 April, it was reported that a 60 year old woman stepped on one of the many landmines that have been laid around the Halochanee resettlement site and was seriously injured as result. Problems had been reported in Halochanee resettlement site in Mon State as a result of discord between the New Mon State Party and the break-away Hongsawatoi Restoration Party. In addition, the tensions between the two groups and landmines created increased obstacles for the residents to maintain their livelihood. Most residents have farmland outside of the village but felt hesitant to leave and work for fear of the landmines. According to the

Mon Relief and Development Council, approximately 2,000 people have left the Halochanee resettlement site to go to safer areas. It was reported that some families moved to the Three Pagodas Pass area. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, April 10, 2002)

On 12 and 16 April, grenade and bomb explosions occurred near Mae Sot District, Tak Province, Thailand.(Source: ALTSEAN)

In April, NGOs reported that about 3,000 Burmese migrants deported from Mae Sot, Thailand were forced to undergo HIV testing in a holding center on the Burmese side of the border. Those who tested positive were reportedly segregated and sent to a hospital in Rangoon. Both mandatory testing and the segregation of those HIV-positive violates international standards. The Burmese government has yet to take clear steps in mounting a serious response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic.(Source: Human Rights Watch World Report 2003)

General Maung Aye, the Chief of the Burmese Army, was reported to encourage the Thai Army to attack Wa drug producers. (Source: BBC)

In April, it was reported that the SPDC was forcing villagers to cultivate opium and due to a poor harvest, the villagers were unable to pay taxes and fled to Thailand. 1,394 new Shan refugees were reported to have fled to the Fang area of Thailand in April as a result of forced opium cultivation and forced relocation. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session April 10, 2002)

It was reported that the population of Mae Fa Luang refugee camp grew to 1,329 in April. The camp population is comprised of mostly Shan and Akha refugees. The population growth was attributed to Wa resettlement in southern Shan State. According to the press, there was fighting between the Wa and the Shan at the end of April. The SPDC ordered the Wa to withdraw from both the border and Tachilek in an attempt to improve relations with Thailand. While the Wa were reported to have closed all of their offices, they did not retreat from the Thai border areas. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, May 8, 2002)

May

In the beginning of May, it was reported that the SPDC was establishing a new military base and completing construction of a road to Taunggyi in district two of Karenni State. As a result 73 new arrivals came to Karenni Camp 5 in the beginning of May. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, May 8, 2002)

On 22 May, the SPDC closed its borders with Thailand after the Thai army fired shells into Burmese territory during a battle between the Burmese army/United Wa State Party (UWSP) and ethnic Shan rebels (Shan State Army or SSA). The hostilities began on 20 May. The border closing had a devastating impact on the Thai border economy with a total loss in trade of 113.7 million dollars. The SPDC re-opened the border on 15 October (source: UN Burma Service Office). As a result of the fighting between the SSA and SPDC/UWSP, a group of over 600 Shan refugees took shelter in Nong Korkham and Mak Kayon temples in Wiang Haeng district, Thailand. The Thai government planned to repatriate the group as soon as the SPDC finished their offensive against the SSA. (Source: Bangkok Post)

In May, the SPDC was reported to have attacked the traditional Karen stronghold of Weigi. The residents in the area were informed ahead of the attacks and 550 people fled with their

belongings to the Salween River in Thailand. The group mentioned that they planned to return to their homes when the conditions were safe again. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, May 8, 2002)

At the end of May, the SSA and UWSP/SPDC were reported to have been engaged in fighting in Doi Tai Laeng of Pang Mapha district. As a result, nearly 500 Shan refugees fled to Doi Tai Laeng. Access to the area for NGOs was denied and it was uncertain how many refugees crossed into Thailand because of the fighting. Yet, it was reported that the Thai military did permit refugees to enter Thai territory in the Doi Tai Laeng area. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, June 12, 2002)

Between 1 April and 27 May, 885 new arrivals came into Nu Po camp. Most were from Duplaya district, where the SPDC was clearing the villages and relocating the residents to Lay Wanker. On 28 April, SPDC troops had entered the village of Thi Lor Bler burned it to the ground, massacred 11 people and injured another eight, most of them women and children. These people were apparently living on the perimeter of the village having come from a neighboring village that had earlier been razed by the troops. It is estimated that 24 villages were cleared and burned down. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, 10 June 2002)

Mae Kong Kha reported 121 new arrivals in May. Most resided in the Ban Sala camp reception center throughout the month. (Source: CCSPDT Open Session, 10 June 2002)

It was reported that the SPDC engaged in a search and destroy mission in Dooplaya District, particularly focused on Kay-In and Kawkareik townships. Anyone thought to be sympathetic to or in support of the KNU was ordered to relocate. The army returned days after issuing their orders. They destroyed the homes of the suspected KNU supporters and killed anyone who had not yet moved. (Source: CCSPDT Open Session, 10 June 2002)

It was reported that 400 to 500 Mon people crossed the border into Thailand as a result of increasing tension between the Mon National Army and the Hongsawatoi Restoration Party (HRP). An HRP member was killed on 21 May after the HRP entered Balt Don Pai resettlement site. The group of refugees returned to their village the following day having been told that the situation was safe again. At the same time, the Karen refugees living in Ban Don Yang were affected by the tensions between the HRP and Mon National Army because of their proximity to the border. As a result, the Thai authorities indicated that the camp was in no danger and relocated the residents to an area opposite a ceasefire zone. (CCSDPT Open Session, June 10, 2002)

June

On 3 June, unidentified gunmen opened fire on a Thai school bus in Ratchaburi province. 2 people were killed and 13 were wounded. The gunmen were suspected to be from the KNU, the DKBA or the SPDC trying to frame the KNU. As a result of the incident, NGOs and UNHCR were denied access to Tham Hin camp, located close to the location of the incident, until 20 June. (Source: Associated Press & CCSDPT Open Session, June 10, 2002)

On 9 June, Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra of Thailand, in an attack on foreign human rights defenders, said that NGOs and United Nations outfits helping minority groups in Burma could be scaled back once Thailand and Burma were on better terms. "These organisations should not interfere because they will cause problems for reconciliation

attempts...Burma should be left to work out its own problems." (Source: UN Burma Service Office & Bangkok Post)

Between 1 April and 24 June, it was reported that 1,267 new refugees arrived to Nu Po camp. 50 more had arrived between 24 June and 10 July. The refugees reported that they were fleeing surprise attacks, forced relocation and execution if they did not comply with orders. Nearly 10,000 villagers in Duplaya were reported to have been affected by the SPDC's activities. Many were reported to be heading towards the border but their journey was constantly prolonged as they were trying to avoid all encounters with SPDC soldiers. New refugees arrived in small groups and moved in with relatives who were already residents of the camp or in available barracks. The camp reportedly had plans to build seven new barracks to house the new arrivals. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, July 10, 2002)

July

By July, Thailand and Burma were embroiled in a no-holds-barred media war, in which Burmese state press attacked the Thai monarchy; Burmese authorities also closed lucrative border crossings to Thai traders.(Source: HRW World Report 2003)

On 4 July, the Thai National Security Council (NSC) adopted a security directive, which imposed new restrictions and surveillance of activities of pro-democracy and human rights groups working on Burma issues in Thailand, including NGO's, reporters and foreigners. The NSC directed the police to utilize immigration laws as the principle measure to control and stop the activities of Burmese pro-democracy and human rights groups, as individuals and organizations. (Source: UN Burma Service Office)

On the same day, the Governor of Mae Hong Son announced plans to relocate Karenni Camp 3 to Karenni Camp 2. Forum Asia, a Thai NGO, criticized this move indicating that Karenni Camp 2 is often subject to attacks by the SPDC military, therefore by combining the camps, the government of Thailand is putting more people at risk of injury and death. (Source: AFP)

On 15 July, the Thai National Security Council banned all foreign journalists from visiting the refugee camps on the Thai-Burma border and restricted access for NGOs. The government indicated that this area is under "martial law" and access must be limited due to security concerns. The Thai government was accused of trying to appease the SPDC but they insisted this policy was created to protect Thai interests. (Source: AFP) The Burma Border Consortium reported that this policy did not prevent humanitarian assistance programs from operating if the NGOs already had agreements with the Thai Ministry of the Interior (MOI). (Source: BBC)

It was reported that 65 new refugees arrived to Karenni camp 5 as a result of SPDC attacks on a KNPP position west of the camp. 133 other Karenni villages arrived in Mae Kong Kha. They were unable to reach the Karenni camp because of the SPDC's position and movement. (CCSDPT Open Session, July 10, 2002)

It was repoted that 212 new refugees arrived to Nu Po fleeing forced relcation in Duplaya area. While there were reported to be some 3,000 IDPs, the SPDC was successful in blocking their flight across the border. (CCSDPT Open Session, July 10, 2002)

August

On 12 August, news sources reported that foreigners were working with the Karen National Union (KNU). Thailand's Immigration Bureau indicated that it was conducting investigations of people who illegally enter Burma from Thailand to aid opposition groups. (Source: DPA)

On 20 August, the Thai authorities raided pro-democracy groups including, NLD-LA, DPNS, KNU, PDF, ABSDF and MYPO in Sangklaburi. 10 people were arrested while attending English class at DPNS, while four others were arrested at the NLD-LA office. 17 people, including children, were arrested when the police raided the Sangklaburi Fellowship Church. The pastor was also arrested, despite the fact that he held a proper ID, on charges of housing illegal immigrants. The Thai authorities proceeded to repatriate the activists whom they had arrested. (Source: HRW World Report 2003 & Irrawaddy)

On 29 August, 9 Italian medical volunteers, providing services to internally displaced people in Burma, were arrested for "illegally crossing the border."

September

On 2 September, there was a flash flood in Mae Khong Kha Camp resulting in the death of 27 refugees and the destruction or damage of 484 houses. Those who lost their homes also lost all of their belongings. There was concern that more landslides/floods would occur in Section 3 and 4 of the camp. Therefore the residents of those sections were temporarily moved to Section 1 and 2. The total cost of emergency supplies, emergency activities and rebuilding was estimated to be around 7 million Baht. The amount of damage or loss of schools and the loss of school supplies amounted to approximately US\$100,000. All schools were closed during the month of September. (Source: BBC & CCSDPT Open Session, September, 11 2002)

On 21 September, the SPDC was reported to have arbitrarily killed Shan civilians in Kholam, a relocation site in central Shan State. The SPDC was reported to have removed 10 people from a Buddhist temple as they were observing Buddhist lent. The group was then led out of the village and shot. The group included 7 elderly people and all were killed. This incident partially caused the arrival of 372 new Shan refugees in Fang area in late September and early October. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, October 9, 2002)

October

On 2 October, SPDC troops were reported to have shot and killed relocated Shan villagers on their way to work in their rice fields. The groups of villagers consisted of people from 10 relocated Shan villages and children. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, October 9, 2002)

On 5 October, Mae Kong Kha camp was hit by another flood. There were no casualties reported, only the damage of approximately 7 houses. Some schools were destroyed which had survived the earlier September floods. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, October 9, 2002)

On 15 October, the Thai-Burma border was officially reopened. (Source: Burma Today)

On 27 October, Nai Min Htut, a member of the Central Executive Committee of the New Mon State Party, was murdered in the Bee Ree resettlement site. Five other people were also

murdered in the same incident. Many people believed that the Hongsawatoi Restoration Party (HRP) was responsible for the murders. The HRP denied any responsibility. As a result of the apparent tension between the Mon groups, the refugees residing at Ban Dong Yang were again concerned about their safety in the coming dry season. (Source: CCSDPT Open Session, November 13, 2002)

November

On 20 November, the Thai authorities arrested two former members of ABSDF in Bangkok and attempted to hand them over to the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok. The students refused to enter the building and were finally sent to the Immigration Detention Center (IDC). Meanwhile, the Thai authorities gave the Myanmar officials all photos and documents that the students had with them as they were on their way to Jesuit Refugee Services to seek assistance when they were arrested. This was the first time that the police tried to send members of opposition groups directly to the Burmese embassy. (Source: Network Media Group)

On 26 November, Deputy Prime Minister of Thailand, Gen Chavalit Yongchaiyudh announced that the SPDC government in Rangoon had agreed to move forward with 4 projects, including a series of dams on the Salween river. This decision was made disregarding the protests of many Burma advocacy groups and a warning from Thai Senate Foreign Affairs Chairman Kraisaak Choonhavan, that the dams would cause greater human rights violations. In turn, this would cause more people to flee the abuses in Burma and create an increase in the refugee population in Thailand. (Source: "Thailand's Investment in Salween Dam Project Win Approval from Rangoon", *Bangkok Post*, 3 December 2002)

On 30 November, the chief of the Thai-Myanmar Cultural and Trade Cooperation Committee for Three Pagoda's Pass went to visit offices of Burmese human rights defender groups in Sangklaburi accompanied by soldiers from the 9th Infantry Division. The organizations' staff were questioned about the sources of their funding and ordered to supply their names, photographs and biographical details. The offices visited were the Federation of Trade Unions Burma (FTUB), People's Defense Force (PDF), Democratic Party for a New Society (DPNS), Mon Youth Progressive Organization (MYPO), All-Burma Student's Democratic Front (ABSDF), Tavoy Women's Union (TWU) and Myeik-Dawei United Front (MDUF). (Source: UN Burma Service Office)

December

On 10 December, police arrested 28 Burmese human rights defenders who had gathered together in Mae Hong Song to discuss Thailand's Constitution and International Human Rights Day. They were reportedly charged with conducting illegal political activities. News agencies were invited by police to cover the event. Burmese human rights defenders were arrested from the Karenni National Youth Organization (KNYO), Karenni School Teacher Organization (KSTO), Karenni Independent News Group (KING), Pa O Women's Organization (PWO), ABSDF, National Network for Democracy (NDD) and Green November 32 (an environmental organization). Fourteen of those arrested possessed valid travel documents and were released. The remainder were released after being detained and fined. The host of the event, Dawn Ni of Green November 32, was sentenced to 6 months in jail. (Source: UN Burma Service Office)

On 15 December, soldiers from the 9th Infantry Division demanded information from PDF and MYPO in Sangklaburi about two English language teachers from the United States and Canada. Soldiers returned on December 19 to inform both teachers that their visa conditions did not permit them to teach. Both teachers subsequently left for Bangkok. (Source: UN Burma Service Office)

On 20 December, the Thai police raided the Mon Youth Progressive Organization (MYPO) based in Sangklaburi, Thailand and arrested six Mon youth political activists. The Thai authorities released the activists in Plaing Japan of Three Pagodas Pass, a border town inside Burma (source: The Kao Wao). On the same day, the commander of the Thai Ninth Army ordered all offices of Burmese opposition groups in Sangklaburi to close their offices within two days or face arrest and deportation. It was reported that over 100 political activists took refuge in the jungle in order to avoid the Thai authorities. (Source: The Irrawaddy)

On 23 December, Major-General Mana Prachakit held a public meeting in Sangklaburi during which he ordered all village headmen to insure that no Burmese human rights defenders reside in their areas of responsibility and that homeowners stop renting to Burmese human rights defenders on threat of arrest for harboring illegal migrants.(Source: UN Burma Service Office)

In the last week of December, two groups of Burmese refugees in Kanchanaburi province were taken by the Thai authorities and deported back to Burma after the Surasi Task Force inspected the border area. The Thai government reiterated that it would not allow foreign groups leading opposition campaigns against neighboring countries to operate on Thai soil. The local media reported that 65 Karen villagers were deported. (Source: Agence France Presse)

On 27 December, it was reported that the Thai Ninth Army burned down an area of Karen homes and treated the residents violently in Kanchanburi province. The Thai Army denied these charges and insisted that they only relocated the inhabitants in accordance with Thailand's policy of not allowing opposition groups to organize on Thai soil. The Thai Army insisted that the group had established an office in Wia Ka Dhi village and were organizing against the Burmese government. (Source: Xinhua General News Service)

On 29 December, Thailand removed Burma from the list of countries from which a 30-day visa is issued upon arrival in Thailand.. This means that Burmese human rights defenders can no longer receive a visa at border checkpoints and must travel to a neighboring country in order to apply for a visa at a Thai embassy. However, Thai embassies in neighboring countries have been refusing to grant visas to Burmese applicants and instruct them to apply in Rangoon. This has a serious impact on the ability of Burmese democracy and human rights activists to stay in Thailand legally and several Burmese human rights defenders have had to forgo their passports and the protection it provides them. (Source: UN Burma Service Office)

On the same day, newly elected Thai National Security Council Chief Gen Winai Phattiyakhul publicly stated that Thailand would stop sheltering refugees from political conflicts saying, "from now on, we will force them to go back to where they came from. Thailand will not welcome refugees from neighbouring countries anymore."(Source:The Nation & UN Burma Service Office)

14.3 Situation in India, Bangladesh and Malaysia

Situation of Rohingya Refugees

The Muslim Rohingya of Arakan State suffer human rights abuses above and beyond their non-Rohingya Buddhist neighbors living in the same area. Victims of ethnic and religious discrimination dating back to independence, most Rohingya have never been given Burmese citizenship. While the Rohingya have been living in Burma since the 12th century, the government does not identify them as one of the "135 national races". Since the ruling military regime came to power in 1962, the Rohingya have been labeled as illegal immigrants. The government has made concerted efforts to push them out of Burma by restricting their freedom of movement, confiscating their land for Buddhist settlers or military use, destroying mosques and subjecting the Rohingya to forced labor (source: RI).

As a result of this, their status as both migrants and refugees is made more precarious, with Burma refusing to accept some repatriated refugees back, stating that they were not Burmese citizens initially. Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and Malaysia, as well as Chin refugees in India, are all subject to the constant threat of forced repatriation or deportation, raising concerns of refolement, which is contrary to international law. On 1 August 2002, the SPDC signed the United States – Asean Joint Declaration of Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism. This has categorized the Rohingya as terrorists and led to further suppression. (Source: Forum Asia & RI)

Bangladesh

The refugees from Burma in Bangladesh can be divided into three categories: Rohingya inside the camps, Rohingya outside the camps and Rakhine living in Dhaka. There are approximately 21,500 refugees from Burma living in the two existing refugee camps in southern Bangladesh. There is another estimated 100,000 to 200,000 Rohingya living outside the camps as illegal immigrants in the Cox's Bazar and Bandarban areas. Lastly, there are 50 official Rakhine urban refugee cases, which are recognized by the UNHCR.

After the 1990 elections, SLORC increased their presence in Arakan State in an attempt to crackdown on Muslim extremist insurgents. As a result of the military's augmented presence, the Rohingya were subjected to land confiscation, forced labor, forced relocation, execution, torture and rape. Many Muslim leaders were harassed, while mosques were destroyed and religious activities banned. In 1991 – 92 over 250,000 Rohingya fled across the border to Bangladesh in an attempt to escape the conditions in Burma. In 1996, a second wave of 10,000 to 15,000 asylum seekers entered Bangladesh to escape an intensified environment of discrimination. The government of Bangladesh was initially welcoming of the refugees and made efforts to accommodate and support them. At the same time, the government of Bangladesh maintained the perspective that the refugees' presence was only temporary and encouraged their return to Burma. The process of repatriation began as the result of agreements between Burma, Bangladesh and the UNHCR worked out in 1992. In 1993 the UNHCR commenced a campaign to repatriate 190,000 refugees by 1995. However, the agreement contained no provisions for impartial screening of the refugees before they went back or for monitoring their well-being when they returned. The voluntariness of the refugees' return was questioned and there are reports that the authorities in Bangladesh withheld food from and beat the refugees to forcibly return them to Burma. In 1997

repatriation was halted by the Burmese government and only began again in very limited numbers the next year.

In June of 1997, 5,000 new refugees arrived in Bangladesh, however 500 of them were sent back by local authorities. As of May 1992, access to the refugee camps has been denied to new arrivals. Refugees who managed to find places to stay in the camps, with friends or relatives, were tracked down by the Bangladeshi authorities and charged with illegal entry. Others did not enter the camps but hid in jungle areas or slums in Cox's Bazaar. It is estimated that between 10,000 and 15,000 Rohingya arrived in Bangladesh in 1997, as well as in 1996, but because they didn't enter the refugee camps there is no exact population count. As of 1997, police officials announced that 2,000 newly arrived refugees had been sent back to Burma in the preceding months.

The repatriation process has continued in smaller numbers through the years. At the same time, the inflow of refugees has also been maintained at smaller numbers. In early 2002, Burma cleared 5,000 Rohingya refugees to be repatriated. While the UNHCR reports that most agreed to return, many refugees are reluctant to go as they are wary of the human rights situation in Burma. The Bangladeshi government has worked to continue the process of repatriation and refuses to allow integration into the local community. The Burmese government has not officially cleared the remaining refugees in the camps and has created extensive bureaucratic procedures that have complicated the repatriation process. In the hopes of improving economic and general relations with Burma, Bangladesh aims to repatriate all Rohingya refugees in the two remaining camps by the end of 2003. In January 2002, the UNHCR also announced its plans to continue repatriation with proper information and counselling sessions. In early 2003, the UNHCR released the details of its plans to extricate from the border area over a two year period. This plan includes relinquishing authority over the two remaining camps to the Bangladeshi government by the end of December 2003.

The UNHCR hopes to promote integration of the Rohingya into the local community pending voluntary repatriation to Burma. Job skill training, development of local infrastructure, and income generating projects would be initiated in order to prepare both the refugees and the community for a successful integration process. The aim is for refugees to be self-sufficient and no longer dependent on the economic support of humanitarian agencies. In addition the UNHCR plans to end their participation in the repatriation process in June 2003 and leave the Burma/Bangladesh governments in charge of the proceedings. At the end of December 2004, the UNHCR office in Cox's Bazaar would close but the protection of refugees would still be monitored. This plan raises some concerns over the possible abuses that could ensue without the presence of the UNHCR as it is the only international organization with a protection mandate. The Bangladeshi government wants the UNHCR to remain an active participant in the repatriation process and a source of assistance for the camps. The government of Bangladesh also indicated that a program to promote self sufficiency might create a "pull factor" encouraging refugees to stay as opposed to returning to Burma, which is contrary to their aims of repatriating all refugees. (Source: Forum Asia)

Under the supervision of the UNHCR, nearly 232,000 refugees have been repatriated to Burma while approximately 25,000 still live in the two remaining refugee camps. Of the 20 original camps that were erected to accommodate the masses of refugees in 1991, only Nayapara camp near Teknaf and Kutupalong camp near Ukhia remain. According to a survey conducted by Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) in the 2002 report, *10 Years for the Rohingya Refugees In Bangladesh: Past, Present and Future*, 53% of adults and 58% of children in the

camps are malnourished. These figures result from the consistent problems the refugees face receiving food and water supplies. Over population is another problem leading to over crowding and poor sanitation. The 2002 MSF survey also indicates that the average house holds 6-7 people in a 100 sq ft space. The government of Bangladesh prohibits any construction of permanent structures or improvements to old ones because the refugees' stay is viewed as temporary.

Officially, all refugees are not allowed to leave the camps or to work. Most are completely dependent on humanitarian aid for their survival while a minority work outside the camps. As these activities go against camp regulations, those who go outside risk arrest by the local police or punishment from the camp police if they are caught. Rohingya refugees also continually report harassment from the local community. (Source: MSF)

Outside of the camps, the members of the Rohingya community of anywhere from 100,000 to 200,000 people, are considered illegal immigrants. Denied access to the camps since 1992, they are considered "new arrivals" and have mostly settled in the Cox's Bazaar and Bandarban areas. The government of Bangladesh views them as "economic migrants" and not as refugees. In actuality, these refugees are continuing to flee conditions in Burma where they are unable to find suitable employment, feed themselves or maintain a living place as a result of the SPDC's discriminatory policies and practices of forced labour, extortion and land confiscation. The inflow of "new arrivals" consists of people who are fleeing Burma for the first time as well as people who were repatriated once and entered Bangladesh for a second time. Teknaf camp, which is unofficial and is not supervised by the UNHCR holds 4,500-5,000 Rohingya who were evicted from their rented homes in November 2002. The "camp" consists of provisional structures made of plastic and cardboard. (Source: Forum Asia)

Only a small number of Rakhine Buddhists go to Bangladesh. UNHCR has 50 documented cases of urban refugees living in Dhaka who are political activists. The Rakhine Buddhists leave Burma due to the SPDC's heavy tax and strict controls on Arakan State and their attempts to conform them to Burman ways. In 1998, the UNHCR reduced aid to the urban refugees leaving their living conditions worse than before. (Source: Forum Asia)

Burmese in Bangladeshi Prisons

According to a report by Forum Asia, there are more than 500 Burmese detained in Bangladeshi jails. These detainees are mostly "released prisoners" who have completed their prison sentences but because the SPDC does not recognize them as Burmese citizens, they can't be released. Many have been detained for over 10 years past the finish of their sentence. Half are Rohingya and half are fisherman from areas such as Mon State and Tenasserim Division, who were employed by Thai fishing boats and were arrested for fishing in Bangladeshi waters. (Source: Forum Asia)

In early 2001, the SPDC agreed to take back prisoners in small numbers. On 28 September 2001, 89 approved prisoners were taken from the Cox's Bazaar prison by officials from the Burmese embassy and handed over to the SPDC Nasaka border security forces in the border town of Maungdaw. Each prisoner was given 1,000 kyat to cover the cost of their journey to their homes. (Source: Narinjara)

On 4 November 2002, it was reported that 237 Burmese prisoners in the Bandarban prison commenced a hunger strike to protest their extended detention. The group demanded to be

repatriated to their country as they had remained in prison for at least 9 years after their prison term was complete. The District Commissioner of Bandarban tried to stop the prisoners by promising that he would try his best to resolve the situation. The prisoners replied with a threat of mass suicide. (Source: Narinjara)

Unrest and Protest at Nayapara Refugee Camp

As a result of the continued work of the Government of Bangladesh to repatriate all refugees throughout 2002, unrest and fear grew among the camp populations. On 3 July, it was reported that the Rohingya refugees residing in Nayapara Camp protested the government of Bangladesh's repatriation program and demanded Bangladeshi citizenship. The protest resulted in a collision with the local police. The protest occurred at the same time as a visit by high level organizations such as the World Food Programme, the UNHCR, the US Embassy in Dhaka and the Ministry of Relief. The refugees held banners with slogans expressing their aversion to repatriation and desire to be granted citizenship in Bangladesh. At the same time, 17 families were reported to be refusing their food rations in protest of the military regime in Burma and to call for the establishment of democracy. (Source: Narinjara News)

On 5 July, 300 Rohingya refugees at Nayapara Camp refused to receive their relief materials while holding meetings and rallies to demonstrate their aversion to being repatriated to Burma. (Source: Independent Bangladesh)

Again on 15 September, it was reported that a group of Rohingya refugees at Nayapara Refugee Camp clashed with police and Ansar paramilitary forces. The refugees had been protesting the Government of Bangladesh's repatriation program when the clash broke out. The incident commenced in the afternoon and continued through the night. More than 20 Rohingya refugees were wounded as well as four law enforcement officials. 5 Rohingya refugees were arrested as a result and the camp was raided by the Bangladeshi authorities on 21 September. 106 weapons were confiscated. (Source: Narinjara & Reuters)

Malaysia

According to the U.S. Committee for Refugees World Refugee Survey 2002 – Burma, there are approximately 5,000 Burmese refugees in Malaysia. Rohingyas go to Malaysia to escape the SPDC's policies of religious discrimination which prevent them from working, feeding their families, and practicing their religion. Yet very few Rohingya have received UNHCR refugee status in Malaysia. Since the beginning of the 1990s, over 2,000 Rohingya have applied for refugee status but only 100 have been resettled in third countries. In the past two years over 470 Chin refugees have petitioned for refugee asylum and only 29 have been recognized. (Source: Irrawaddy)

The Malaysian government is not a signatory to the UN Refugee Convention of 1951 and not obligated to respect the decisions of the UNHCR. There is no repatriation agreement between the Malaysian government and the SPDC. The Malaysian government has been reported to deport Burmese refugees to Thailand where they often fall into the hands of traffickers leading to work in brothels or on fishing boats (please see chapter on women for more information on trafficking). Even refugees who have been recognized by the UNHCR, have been subject to arrest or deportation. In 2002, it was reported that two Chin women with UNHCR refugee status and proper documentation, Tha Sui Chin and Tha Hnaing Sung, were arrested. Both women were sent to a camp for illegal immigrants. The government of

Malaysia does not distinguish between refugees and those who are seeking better economic opportunities. All Burmese refugees are subject to the same laws and penalties as illegal immigrants/workers. As of 1 August 2002, the Malaysian government instituted their "zero – tolerance" policy of illegal workers and their employers. A worker caught by the authorities without proper documentation risks caning and 6 months imprisonment. Employers of illegal workers risk 6 months imprisonment, 5 licks of a cane and a \$13,157 fine. Workers who try to leave usually must purchase the help of a broker who can arrange for their travel. The fee for a broker is \$263US. This policy is a threat to both refugees and migrant workers alike. (Source: ALTSEAN)

In January 2002, 28 Rohingyas entered the UNHCR office in Kuala Lumpur demanding refugee status. The UNHCR concluded that the group did not qualify for refugee status and turned them over to Malaysian police custody. As a result, there was a reported increase in criticism of the UNHCR Malaysia office and its low record of granting asylum. Again in June 2002, 17 Rohingya entered the UNHCR premises and demanded protection under refugee status. They held banners saying "Please help us on humanitarian considerations." This group was also handed over to the Malaysian police. The UNHCR in Malaysia has been widely criticized by international human rights groups in the past, including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, for not properly fulfilling its role of international protection. In this instance, human rights groups expressed concern that the UNHCR was not fully considering the danger that the Rohingyas face if they are sent back to Burma. (Source: AFP)

Situation of Chin Refugees in India

According to the U.S. Committee for Refugees World Refugee Survey 2002 – Burma, there are 52,000 Chin refugees living in India. The Chin are a minority ethnic group concentrated in Chin State Burma. The majority of the Chin population is Christian and as a result, they often suffer from religious persecution as well as ethnic discrimination. The SPDC prevents or limits religious gatherings and prohibits evangelists from giving sermons. In addition, Christians have been forced to engage in labor for Buddhist pagodas. The Chin are also subject to other forms of forced labor, extortion, rape and other human rights abuses which have increased as the SPDC presence has grown in Chin State.

Yet, Chin refugees are not guaranteed any protection or better circumstances in India. The government of India is not a signatory to the 1951 UN Convention on Refugees. In addition, the government of India does not allow most foreigners or the UNHCR access to Mizoram State, where the majority of the Chin refugee population has settled. There is no refugee camp or humanitarian assistance for the Chin refugees in Mizoram State. Most people enter the local labor market in order to survive. While the Chin people are ethnically related to the Mizos, people of Mizoram State, they are often the subject of resentment because the foreigner population is ever increasing and is believed to be the source of social problems. The Chin refugees often become the targets of different political groups and are frequently threatened with deportation, arrest or eviction. In 2001, many Chins were forcibly evicted from their homes and left homeless in Lunglei District. In March 2002, it was reported that Chin refugees again were evicted from their homes by the Young Mizo Association in Lunglei District. It was reported that Mizos entered the homes of many Chin refugees and told them to leave their homes or their possessions would be destroyed. In June 2002, it was reported that the local authorities of Lunglei town initiated a campaign to expel all foreigners from Lunglei district as a result of pressure from the Young Mizo Association. Local home owners were instructed not to rent to Chin refugees and evictions continued through to 2003.

In Dampui village of Serchip district, the district authorities instructed the Chin refugees to vacate their homes by 15 January 2003 or they would be placed under arrest. The authorities also prohibited church attendance after the same date. (Source: CHRO)

"A few hundred Burmese activists and their relatives facing persecution have approached UNHCR in New Delhi for protection. Chin represent the largest Burmese urban refugee caseload in Delhi of about 800 individuals. Even though most of them have been recognised by UNHCR as "persons of concern", their situation in Delhi is also uncertain. So far, UNHCR has provided them with a small monthly subsistence allowance of Rs 1,400 (about US\$30) per person and even less for dependents. But over the last couple of years, UNHCR has been threatening to cut this financial assistance in order to promote self-reliance. Lack of education and employment opportunities combined with inadequate and cramped living standards make their lives miserable. The Indian authorities have issued them with residence permits, but denial of work permits makes any attempt at self-reliance almost impossible and illegal. Young Chin people often join Bible schools in the absence of other educational opportunities." (Source: *The Refugee Situation on the Western Borders of Burma*, Forum Asia, 9 October 2002)

14. 4 Personal Accounts

Living With a Density of Diseases: by Poe Dah

This article is written by Poe Dah, a friend of Burma Issues, on her experiences within Tham Hin Refugee Camp and the conditions in the camp that are the cause of major health concerns. This refugee camp houses a population of nearly 9000 refugees, encompassing the population of a small town in a small, restricted area, with little infrastructure to deal with the myriad of health problems.

Since February 1997 the Karen people, including my family and I from Mergui / Tavoy district, fled to Thai soil as their area was invaded by the SPDC (State Peace and Development Council) troops. When we first arrived in Thailand we had to sleep on the ground at the border, often sleeping in fear because we could not build a higher floor to sleep on. After a month of living like this we were moved to Tham Hin camp. When I lived in Tham Hin camp four years ago I felt very upset because the camp situation is very horrible. I have watched many of my neighbours and friends die due to the diseases in the camp, most of the children and adults are contracting the dangerous disease called meningitis which is killing the people very quickly.

The Thai military authorities had classified the entire Tham Hin camp population as living in temporary shelter and did not allow the people to even call the place a "Refugee Camp". It was grouped into three zones, Zone (1), Zone (2) and Zone (3) and in June 1997 they gave it the name, Tham Hin camp. "Maybe this is why they called it a temporary shelter area. But this is no shelter, you can't call this is a shelter area." [*The Nation 18 October 2000, UNHCR Sadako Ogata.*] They set-up the population of 8250 people (about 1850 houses) into houses, located within 5 by 5 meter sq. plots for a family with only 6-8 meters of plastic sheet as roofing. This has resulted in an unhealthy living situations. The heat from the plastic sheet roofing creates high temperatures and the size of the housing has caused over-crowding. Dry toilets, poor drinking water, dirty bath water and not enough soap has all contributed to the

current health problems. The flow-off from the rain has become their source of drinking water, meaning there is very little fresh water available to drink, baths are also taken in dirty water. All of this produces poor living conditions and many people get sick very easily. "Htam Hin is very crowded. That's the biggest problem". [*Bangkok Post* 12 December 2000, Mr. Kapranis.]

I have seen many of my neighbours and friends die from many diseases when they arrived at the camp. Health care is provided by MSF (Medcins Sans Frontiers). "Malaria and diarrhea were among the most common diseases afflicting the refugees but these are controllable.

Even HIV/ AIDS cases are rare and not a big problem," according to the MSF Director. Many diseases have increased over a short period of time; usually the people get many diseases like high blood pressure, Malaria, Diarrhea, Dengue Hemorrhages Fever, and they die. In 2001 this disease later known as Meningitis which infects the brain, affected many children in Tham Hin camp. As this disease can easily spread people have to avoid visiting these patients. The following is a common situation experienced by many families: When the children get this disease the family has to take the sick person to the hospital immediately. When the people get this disease it is very sad for them because they cannot walk and their whole body is not like it was before they got this disease; it appears like measles, mumps, whooping cough and ear infections. If they get this disease we cannot visit them because the disease can infect anyone who stays close to them, families will visit but cannot stay close, only the doctors will touch them. They can suffer this disease for a few days then they die.

Because of the high density of the population it is easy for the diseases to travel, especially in the drinking water; this is exacerbated in the rainy season when many things are not good for your health. When we arrived in the camp we had to use one toilet for 2 or 3 families. The toilets are located very far from our houses and are very dirty and smelly, these conditions have improved somewhat now the MSF supplies quality toilet water but the condition of the drinking water is still not good. Most people also use the same stream for bathing and drinking. The food is not so fresh to eat as fly eggs and rats destroy the food before the people can eat it.

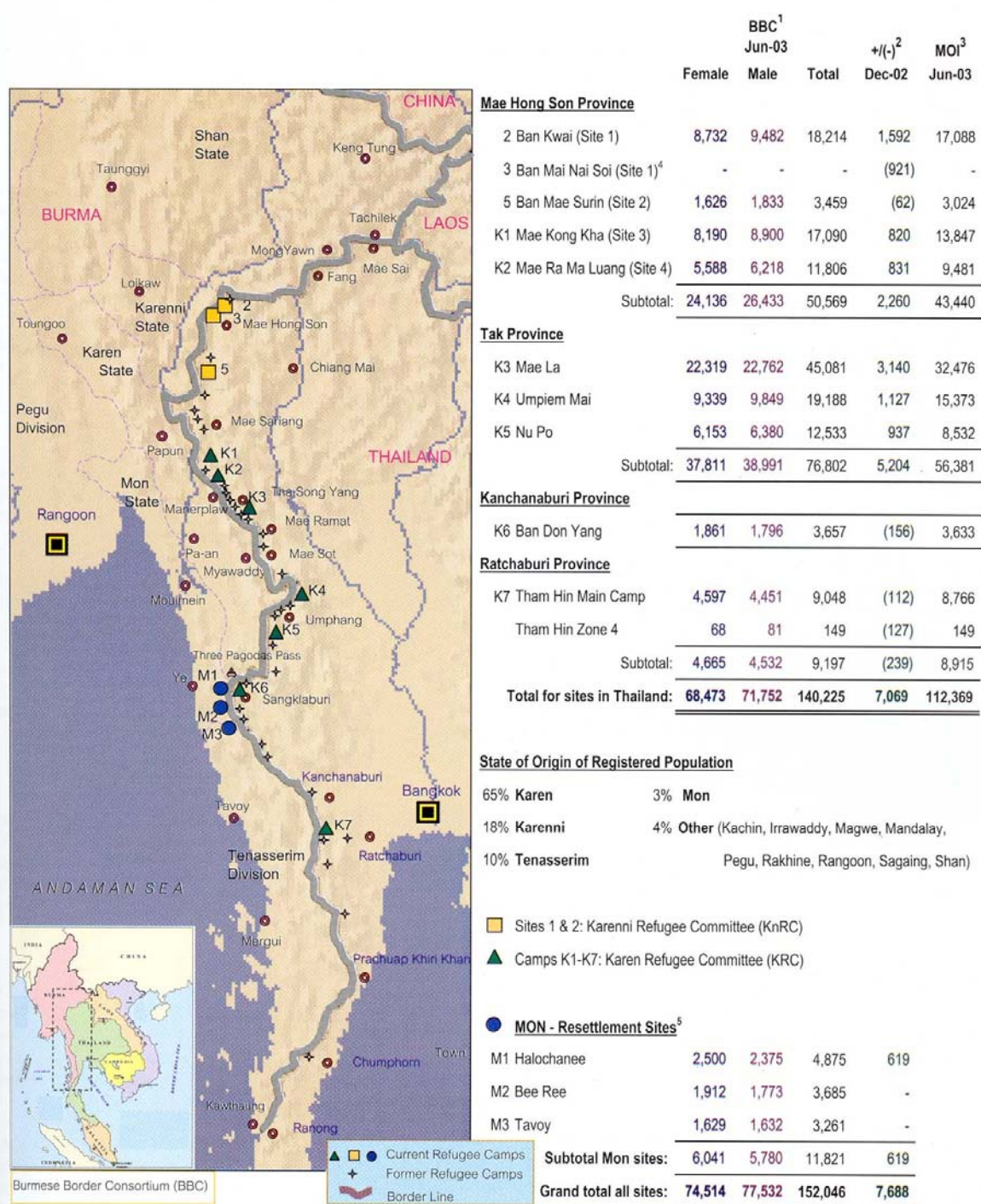
The previous United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Miss Sadako Ogata, had visited Tham Hin Camp in early 2000 and said that the location of Tham Hin camp is very poor. She had compared it with other refugee camps in Thailand and remarked that the Thai military authorities did not do the best they could in the camp. When she saw refugees from Cambodia in Thailand the situation was far better than Tham Hin. She also expressed deep concern over the camp's sanitation, but as yet there are still epidemic out-breaks. She recommended that the location especially spacing and shelter must be reconsidered. [*The Nation* 18 October 2000, Sadako Ogata.]

People in the camp want to go back to their own villages, before we lived in established and self-supporting villages, but they want to do this with peace and a feeling of security for their lives. When we lived in our own villages we did not spend lots of money on food and other supplies. We want freedom, we want to have control of our lives and then we can find money for ourselves. We also had good health and fresh air, fresh drinking water and fresh food in our villages. We did not need help from anyone and this lack of control over our own lives creates an unhappiness at having to stay in Tham Hin camp. The Thai military authorities have encouraged people to return quickly to their villages but if we do go back we do so without peace and safety from SPDC control.

In this article I have tried to show the very difficult conditions in Tham Hin camp and how these conditions have made so many neighbours and friends of mine get sick or even die. It doesn't have to be like this. I believe the Thai authorities need to consider the following recommendations, or else the problems and suffering will only continue.

The Thai authorities must consider allowing the refugees to manage their own land and there must be wider space and better shelter that will bring better health. Other essential items are the need for more land to build their houses on and to change the roofing to thatch. I encourage the UNHCR and other groups to seek protection for the refugees and to encourage the Thai government to allow more assistance for health. Many refugees complain that they only receive paracetamol and low milligrams of medicines and that it's not enough to combat the health problems in the camp. So we need MSF to consider this situation when implementing their working systems in the camp. In regards to the poor drinking water, if we cannot change the water source we must make the existing source as clean as possible. The people have to participate in taking care of themselves and preparing health structures to get more sanitation in their community. (Source: Burma Issues, "Living With a Density of Diseases", Poe Dah, July 2002)

BURMESE BORDER REFUGEE SITES WITH POPULATION FIGURES - June 2003



15. The Situation of Migrant Workers

15. 1 Background

Throughout 2002 large numbers of people continued to leave Burma to seek work abroad. Approximately ten percent of Burma's population migrates to other countries, according to a report *Migration, Needs, Issues and Responses in the Greater Mekong Subregion 2002*, by the Asian Migrant Center. People leave Burma for a number of reasons. Rampant inflation, a deteriorating economy and general lack of employment and educational opportunities are factors that cause many people to emigrate. In addition to these hardships, many people living in rural areas are forced to pay heavy taxes to local officials and the military and to sell a large percentage of their crops to the government at below-market prices. For these reasons, many Burmese view their migration as less of a decision than an economic necessity.

Ethnic minority people living in civil war zones often have no choice about emigrating, as they are forced to flee their homes to avoid brutal campaigns of violence against them by the Burmese Military. Every year thousands of people flee across the border, primarily into Thailand, to escape these human rights violations which include mass forced relocation, arbitrary arrest, torture, rape, and extra-judicial killing. Some of these people are able to seek asylum in refugee camps in Thailand and Bangladesh, however many of those fleeing human rights violations are not recognized as refugees by the Thai and Bangladeshi Governments. These individuals are left with the choice of trying to enter refugee camps illegally or else trying to survive as migrant workers.

Migration from Burma is facilitated by the fact that 7 of Burma's 14 States and Divisions share borders with neighboring countries. In the west, Burma borders Bangladesh and India, in the north and northeast China, and in the east Laos and Thailand. In a 1999 report by Save the Children UK, *Small Dreams Beyond Reach: The Lives of Migrant Children and Youth Along the Borders of China, Myanmar, and Thailand*, the authors note that in the past ten years the largest flow of migrants in the Mekong region has been concentrated along the borders of China, Burma and Thailand, with Burmese people making up the largest percentage of the population migrating. The report goes on to note that while China, India, Bangladesh and Thailand have collectively reported hosting over two million Burmese migrants, the actual population of people from Burma living in these countries is likely to be much higher. However it is extremely difficult to obtain accurate estimates as to the number of Burmese working abroad, as many are illegal, and the population as a whole is highly mobile. In addition, some migrant groups are ethnically similar to indigenous populations of neighboring countries, making them difficult to identify as non-natives.

Situation for Women Migrant Workers

Women make up a significant percentage of migrants from Burma. In neighboring countries, most notably Thailand, there is a strong demand for female labor. Women who emigrate are more likely than men to work as undocumented or illegal workers. This is partly due to the fact that many women take jobs that are in the informal sector and not included in government registration. While women are subjected to the same poor conditions and abuses as men who are migrant workers, women also suffer abuses specific to their gender. Of greatest concern is the fact that Burmese women working outside their country are extremely

vulnerable to sexual abuse by their employers, human traffickers, local officials, or others. Many women face sexual harassment and/or sexual assault in the workplace, while they are in government detention centers, and/or in their homes and communities. Women migrant workers who are undocumented have little recourse when they are abused, as their abusers often threaten them with arrest and deportation if they complain to the authorities or try to escape their situation. As a result of this situation, a number of young migrant women report feeling pressure to get married in order to have some protection against unwanted sexual advances from others.

As in Burma, most migrant women also suffer from a lack of access to reproductive health care, and information on STDs and contraceptives. In *Gathering Strength*, a report by Images Asia, the authors note that in Mae Sot, a town on the Thai/Burma border, some health workers have reported that it is more difficult to negotiate with factory managers than brothel owners about provision of reproductive health information to employees. One health worker reports the following situation in Mae Sot:

"Our patients come from the Mae Sot area, factories, refugee camps, some from inside Burma, and some from the border....We see pregnant women who don't want their babies, and they induce abortions. When they arrive here they already have infections. Especially in the factories in Mae Sot, there are many women who get pregnant but don't want to have babies. Some induce abortions themselves, some get TBAs [Traditional Birth Assistants] to do it. After an induced abortion, there is increased chance of an ectopic [tubal] pregnancy, which is very dangerous and can be fatal for the woman.

In Burma, women are very shy, and no one gets any sex education. But here, in the factories, men and women are together. Maybe they will sleep together, and afterwards, the woman is pregnant and she may not even know why. Families never talk about sex. In our culture, it is very secret. Mothers will not tell their daughters anything about sex. This year, there are more young women. Some have even graduated from university, but they all must come to work in Thailand. We have seen two rape cases this year, and many cases of STD's, including HIV/AIDS. Now we see more patients who already have AIDS; they die after only one or two months. Last year, two or three people died in our clinic of AIDS. This year, we have seen more than 10 people die of AIDS, including a pregnant woman. In the past one to two years, we have seen many STD's in women....

A woman came in who had an incomplete abortion. I explained that she needed to stay in the clinic, because the tissue hadn't come out yet. If we treated her for two or three days and she did not get better, we could send her to Mae Sot Hospital. She said, "No, I cannot take a holiday. My manager will not agree. Just give me medicine because I must continue with my job." I explained to her that we could take care of her here and it would not cost any money, but she could not afford to stop working. So finally, I gave her medicine and told her to come back immediately if she had any problems...I sometimes feel very sad about our people. Now with the arrests [of illegal migrants], people have even more problems. The army is shooting at them in Burma, and they cannot stay here safely. I don't know what the situation will bring. In the [refugee] camps, we can see the same people repeatedly, and problems are dependent on the season. But here [working with migrant workers], it is different. We often see people only once, and we urge them to come back. But they have problems with transport and arrests by police. We cannot always help like this, you see. Ultimately, change will depend on political changes, not on the clinic or our staff. Political changes must happen step by step. Changes must happen inside Burma, on the borderline, and in Thailand. We can do so many

things, but it depends on the situation." (Belak, Brenda, *Gathering Strength Women from Burma on Their Rights*. Images Asia, January 2002)

In January 2002 the situation for migrant women further deteriorated when the Thai Labour Ministry issued a regulation stating that female foreign workers would be given a medical checkup and those found to be pregnant would not have their licences to work in Thailand renewed. While this regulation was later overturned following protests from human rights groups, many women report that they continue to be dismissed by their employers if they become pregnant. As abortion is illegal in both Thailand and Burma, many women resort to traditional methods to induce abortions which can seriously damage their health.

In 2002, Suzanne Belton, a PhD Candidate at Melbourne University's Key Centre for Women's Health, conducted research in Thailand focusing on reproductive health issues of migrant women. Her report notes:

"The preliminary findings of recent research of abortions in Tak [province of Thailand] reveal a serious situation, which is getting worse. In the local Thai hospitals in 2001-2002, twelve Burmese women died from lack of antenatal care, post abortion complications or delivery complications and more than 300 Burmese women were seen with post abortion complications. One woman from a refugee camp died during her 16th pregnancy.

In 2001 at the Mae Tao Clinic, established by Dr Cynthia Maung from Burma to treat Burmese migrants, there were 457 post abortion cases, more than double from 2000. The clinic performed 563 birth deliveries, a comparable number to post abortion cases. However, the numbers are likely much higher as most women still give birth and perform abortions at home with community midwives or abortionists. Of the women interviewed, more than half had been living in Thailand for more than 3 years. This demonstrates the need for long-term intervention strategies and care.

Forty percent of the women interviewed induced their own abortion before going to the clinic or hospital with home-type remedies, massage (pounding and compressing the uterus), high dosages of contraceptive pills or went to an abortionist who puts sticks, nails, etc into the womb. Some women get massive infection of their reproductive organs and lose the ability to ever become pregnant again. Abortions are particularly dangerous since they are illegal in both Thailand and Burma and the abortionists do not appear to be well trained. Legal reforms to liberalize access to clean abortion in both Thailand and Burma would decrease the sickness and deaths.

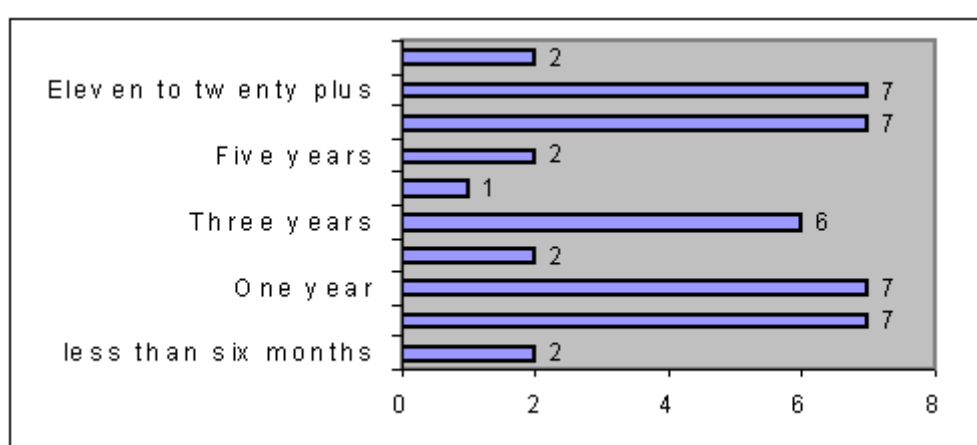
It costs approximately US\$53 for a woman who is hospitalized for post abortion complications in a Thai hospital and about US\$230 if she dies from pregnancy related causes. Burmese women in Tak earn about US\$45 per month, making hospital fees far beyond their reach.

The research sampling showed that 25% of the women having an abortion experienced five or more pregnancies, which is a serious health risk for the woman. It was found that most women do not receive family planning information while they are inpatients being treated for post abortion care in local Thai hospitals. The availability of information and services could reduce abortions as well as being economical for the women, the Thai health system and NGOs providing services. A one-year contraceptive injection costs US\$2.10 and female sterilization costs US\$11.60. It was noted that the women were 'very interested' in talking

about family planning. It was also noted that the women interviewed had little to no education and nearly 25% could not read or write, so alternatives to written information needs to be provided.

Poverty, domestic violence, job retention, ill-timing and community pressure were reasons cited for ending the pregnancy. Abortions and maternal health must be dealt with in the framework of these underlying causes in order for assistance and intervention to be effective and sustainable." (Source: Suzanne Belton, PhD Candidate. Melbourne University Key Centre for Women's Health in Society Faculty of Medicine. Research conducted through the Mae Tao Clinic. Full report will be published during 2003)

Table 1. Years lived in Thailand of Burmese women experiencing a miscarriage or induced abortion.



Situation for Migrant Children

From April 1999 to March 2001, Save the Children UK conducted research along Burma's borders with China and Thailand on the situation of Burmese children living in these countries. In the study, researchers found that the majority of migrants from Burma were young people. Beginning at age 13, children from Burma migrate on their own to search for work in neighboring countries. While some children under 13 also migrate on their own, the majority of children this age migrate with their parents or other relatives. The report goes on to note that:

"The interviews in this study revealed extensive debt-bondage, sexual abuse, illegal confinement, confiscation of documents, arrest and extortion, forced overtime, few basic resources and poor living conditions that were overcrowded, insecure and often violent. Sexual abuse was commonly reported among girls and young women, particularly among those involved in sex work and domestic service. The general health problems impacting children and young people were identified as malaria (the most common illness reported), tuberculosis (TB), dengue fever, diarrhea and malnutrition. Reproductive health issues were a major concern among youth and adults at all the project sites....

Along all the borders, most of the children did not attend school and among those who did only a very few had finished primary level education. Those who were displaced or had migrated across the borders cited constant mobility, remoteness, insecurity and lack of

documentation as the reasons why their children did not attend school. Economic instability and language barriers were other important factors. There was also an attitude among participants in several of the study sites that formal education would not lead to a good life, even if young people were to finish higher levels of schooling. Cross-border migration was seen as an opportunity to obtain experience and develop practical skills. Consequently, many children reported not going to school or dropping out of school early. These children began working at an early age and were vulnerable to exploitation as a result of their limited knowledge and skills.

Drug production, trafficking and addiction were critical issues identified by the communities at all of the research sites along the borders. Participants noted the problem of drug addiction, particularly among young people, with children as young as nine and ten years old considered vulnerable to experimentation and addiction. Young migrants also reported being introduced to amphetamines by their employer in order to work harder and longer hours. In addition, migrants along all three borders noted the ease of recruiting migrants into the drug trafficking business, and expressed frustration with the inability to deal with drug-related problems in their families and communities.

Child labour was found in all three countries, particularly along the border areas and among migrant populations. This was largely a result of extreme poverty and of children left orphaned or abandoned by their parents. Many young children were observed working largely in the service and entertainment sectors (such as teashops, restaurants and hotels that often included direct and indirect sex work), in agricultural related jobs, or as day labourers or beggars. In addition, child soldiers, both in the army and with armed opposition groups, were found in Myanmar. According to the attitudes and perspectives of those in this study, children were of a 'workable age' as early as six or seven years old...

Orphaned children along the border areas were found to be the most vulnerable, often living without assurance of their most basic needs. These children were the most likely to be exploited and trafficked. Abandonment was a common problem, related to drug trafficking and addiction, HIV/AIDS, and loss of contact with family during migration. In addition, migrants' illegal status often leads to arrest, detention and deportation, with children reporting being treated as adults during this process, often separated from their family and communities." (Source: Caoutte, Therese. *Small Dreams Out of Reach, The Lives of Migrant Children and Youth along the Borders of China, Myanmar, and Thailand*. (Bangkok: Save the Children UK, 2001)

Another concern with increasing numbers of families migrating from Burma is the situation for children who are born outside of Burma to Burmese parents. In both Thailand and China the respective governments refuse to grant citizenship to children of both legal and illegal immigrants and refugees from Burma. This is highly problematic, as these children are also denied Burmese citizenship under the Burma Citizenship Act, because they were born outside the country and because their parent(s) left Burma illegally.

At present in Thailand there are no clear regulations about how hospitals should deal with the birth of babies born to parents who have illegally entered the country. Usually hospitals simply do not record the births of these children. In Ranong and Samut Sakhon, it has been reported that hospitals remove the birth records of these babies from the last page of the doctor's appointment books, to prevent the children from claiming Thai nationality in the future. Stateless children suffer discrimination both in the country of their birth as well as in

Burma, if and when they return. Without a national ID, people in Burma are unable to access educational opportunities, government employment, or to travel freely within the country. (Source: BLC)

15. 2 Burmese Migrants in Thailand

Throughout 2002 people from Burma continued to flee to neighboring Thailand to escape a deteriorating economy and widespread human rights violations by the military regime. While the SPDC officially closed border crossings with Thailand from May to October, large numbers of people continued to enter Thailand at unofficial crossing sites along the border. According to some estimates there are currently as many as 2 million migrants from Burma and other neighboring countries working in Thailand. Migrant workers from Burma come from a variety of geographical locations and ethnic groups. There are both push and pull factors at work when people make the decision to migrate to Thailand. The pull factors include the close geographical location of Thailand to Burma as well as the demand in Thailand for cheap labor. The push factors include the poor state of the Burmese economy and ongoing human rights violations that are specifically acute in areas along the Thai border. Many workers also report that they have come to Thailand to escape the SPDC's demands for forced labor in their home states and divisions.

As most people emigrate from Burma due to factors that are both political and economic, it is difficult to make absolute distinctions between economic migrants, political asylum seekers, and refugees. The Royal Thai Government maintains a strict and sometimes arbitrary policy on classifying Burmese who arrive in Thailand, which means that in many cases victims of direct human rights abuses are refused access to refugee camps and international humanitarian aid. These people are faced with the choice of trying to illegally enter the refugee camps or else becoming migrant workers. The more than 100,000 Shans currently working in Thailand as migrant laborers are visible examples of these policies. While human rights abuses by the Burmese military in Shan State, including forced labor, forced relocations, arbitrary arrest, killings and rape have been widely documented, the Thai government continues to deny any Shans refugee status.

An 18 December 2002 article in Irrawaddy magazine included an interview with a corn farmer from southern Shan State, who had recently fled to Thailand. This man said: "We can't survive due to the authority's taxes and extortion." The article also reported that farmers in Mon State have also been leaving for Thailand following floods that wiped out their rice crops. These farmers reportedly fled not only because of a lack of food, but also because they were unable to supply the government with the required rice quotas. Other regional analysts predict that due to worsening economic conditions, rapidly increasing prices for basic commodities, and widespread flooding, thousands more people will flee to Thailand in 2003. (Source: Irrawaddy)

Thai Migration Policy and Legal Registration of Migrant Workers

Thailand's policy on migration prioritizes economic development and national security, sometimes at the expense of protecting the rights of migrant workers. For the past 7 years, Thai migration policy has been drafted through a series of cabinet resolutions which reflect the attitude of whatever administration is currently in office. Contradictions between these resolutions have inhibited the formation of a coherent policy on migration and thus hindered the development of a consistent strategy for implementation.

Thai law defines an illegal alien as a person without Thai citizenship who has entered the Kingdom in violation of section 12 of the Immigration Act of 1979. According to this Act, migrants found to be in the country illegally, will be repatriated to their countries of origin. In March 1992 the Thai cabinet passed the first of a successive number of resolutions which have allowed migrants to pay a fee and apply for a work permit which allows them to work legally in Thailand. The permit limits work to specific industries in designated parts of the country. Migrants with work permits are protected under the 1997 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand and covered by most of the provisions in the Labour Protection Act of 1998. The work permit also gives migrants access to the 30-baht health scheme, where each visit to a doctor or clinic costs only 30 baht plus the cost of medicine. Unfortunately enforcement of these protections for migrant workers has been lax, and many workers are not aware of what rights the permit entitles them to and how to respond if these rights are violated.

In addition, Burmese migrant workers often find it difficult to obtain a work permit for a number of reasons. The permit costs 4,450 baht for one year, which makes it too expensive for many workers, who make an average salary of 1,500-2,000 baht a month. In addition, a worker has to be guaranteed by a factory owner or other Thai employer in order to register for a permit. In the past, a key complaint with the work permit system was that registered workers were not allowed to change jobs without losing their legal status. During the September 2002 registration period, changes were made in the regulations which allowed legal workers to change jobs and register with a new employer. These new regulations stated that if and when a registered worker is fired or leaves their job for any reason, they are required to find a new job (and employer to guarantee them) within 7 days or they will lose their permit. This process is still problematic, as in order to register with a new employer, the worker has to first obtain a signature of consent from his or her previous employer. In practice, employers rarely give consent for their workers to switch jobs, as they don't want employees to move to other factories or businesses which may pay higher salaries. As a result, even with the change in regulations, most workers remain unable to change jobs while retaining their legal status. Due to this, employers can prevent workers from striking or complaining about salaries and working conditions by threatening to fire them.

In some areas of Thailand, specifically in areas on the border with Burma, employers of Burmese workers withhold their employees' work permits. In these cases, workers are only given a photocopy of their work permit, which is often not accepted by police as valid identification. Workers report that when they are stopped by officials, they are either forced to give bribe money, or else wait for their employer to be contacted to come and vouch for them. In these cases, employers often don't bother coming to the police station or detention center and the arrested workers are deported and their copy of the work permit confiscated.

Migrants in areas where this practice is common are as a result increasingly choosing not to renew their permits. For example, in Tak province during the November 2002 registration period only 30, 260 Burmese workers registered, compared to the 50, 235 who had registered in 2001. (Source: Bangkok Post)

During the registration renewal period for migrant workers that ran from September 15 to October 15 2002, Thailand instituted a new form, the Tor Dor 13, which migrants had to fill out. This form required that applicants provide their addresses in their home countries, leading some workers to fear that their families in Burma might face harassment from the SPDC which actively discourages illegal migration. Migrants were also afraid that if they gave a false address then they would be banned by the SPDC from returning to Burma in the future.

In a report released in July 2002, Amnesty International noted concerns of illegal migrants being forcibly returned to Burma as many have a "well-founded fear of persecution if they were to be returned."

Working and Living Conditions

In July 2002, Amnesty International released a report, "Myanmar: Lack of Security in Counter-Insurgency Areas," which noted that migrants in Thailand face many difficulties and abuses. AI researchers interviewed 100 Burmese migrants in Thailand who reported that they had paid between 4,500 and 10,000 baht (US\$104 to 233) to be brought to Thailand by human smugglers.

Once in Thailand, Burmese migrants work in a number of industries and service sectors, often in dirty and sometimes dangerous conditions for pay that is far below the Thai minimum wage. Workers in factories report that there are many injuries that occur and that workers rarely receive any compensation for work related accidents or deaths. A number of agricultural workers suffer from respiratory or other problems as a result of long-term exposure to chemical pesticide spray. These workers typically are not given masks, gloves or other protective gear even when they are in contact with chemicals that are known to be harmful.

All migrant workers face a common fear of arrest and deportation. This fear keeps many migrants from moving freely and impedes their access to health care and other social services that may be available. For this reason migrants suffer in silence from easily treatable diseases. The spread of communicable diseases is facilitated by lack of access to health care facilities and medicine, cramped living conditions and poor sanitation. Lack of knowledge of the local language also prevents migrants from seeking help when they face unhealthy or dangerous situations. This combination of fear of arrest and lack of knowledge about the laws, customs and language of their host country means that migrants are easily exploited and abused by their employers, Thai officials and others.

Repatriation of Migrant Workers

Before February 2002, illegal migrants deported from Thailand were often simply dropped off at some point on the border, after which they often returned to Thailand.

In late 2001, the Thai and Burmese Governments entered into negotiations about the repatriation of illegal workers. The SPDC agreed to set up a number of holding centers or reception camps directly on the border inside Burma. In February 2002, following a three day visit to Burma, Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai said that the SPDC had agreed to accept back thousands of undocumented workers and had "assured [him] they will not be prosecuted." (Source: Bangkok Post)

Following this, a reception center for returning migrants was established in Myawaddy. While the Thai government has actively encouraged international organizations to assist with the repatriation process, at present there are no international organizations regularly monitoring conditions at this center.

The reception center in Myawaddy (In Burmese *Ke Say Yee Sa Kan*) is run by the Directorate of the Defense Service Intelligence (DSI) of the Ministry of Defense. Between February and May 2002, over 19,000 migrants from Burma were repatriated and 3,681 people were processed through the Myawaddy Reception Center. (Source: Bangkok Post, New Light of Myanmar) At the reception center, deportees are reportedly placed under a combined police, military and DKBA guard. All returned migrants are screened through a series of interviews with immigration and public health officials, and members of military intelligence.

Thai authorities do not conduct any screening before deportation to determine if any among those deported are refugees or asylum seekers. Instead, local Thai officials regularly assume that all people without ID documents outside the refugee camps are illegal immigrants. This arbitrary definition ignores the fact that although many people do migrate to Thailand for economic reasons, many others are also refugees, political exiles and activists. Often an individual falls into more than one, if not all categories. For example, many refugees attempt to supplement their inadequate diet by leaving their assigned refugee camps illegally, and working for short-term contracts. Others come to Thailand as either refugees or illegal immigrants, and then become involved with some of the many Burmese opposition groups based in Mae Sot. Often people became refugees because they were politically active inside Burma.

SPDC officials specifically screen returned migrants for those who may be affiliated with political opposition groups. Thai authorities also submit personal data on deportees to SPDC officials at the time of repatriation. These officials then cross-check this information with their own files to search for dissidents. As most political activity is criminalized in Burma, this process places past and present politically active deportees at severe risk of arrest, interrogation, torture, and arbitrary detention.

In addition to political screening, returned migrants are also tested for a number of communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Malaria, TB, and Sexually Transmitted Diseases. A number of human rights organizations have protested this mandatory HIV/AIDS testing, and the reported separation of at least 20 individuals who tested positive for HIV/AIDS. Such mandatory testing contravenes UN HIV Principles and Guidelines to which Thailand and Burma are signatory.

Deportees have also reported that as part of an ongoing campaign to discourage illegal emigration, SPDC officials at the reception camp are now photographing and maintaining records of personal data on all deportees. Those deported are informed that if the SPDC officials collect three photographs of one returnee, (i.e. if someone is deported through the reception camp three times) then that person will be arrested for illegal emigration. According to SPDC regulation 367/120-(b)(1), these individuals can be sentenced to up to 7 years imprisonment.

At the end of the screening process it appears that people are dealt with in one of two ways; those who are able to find a resident of Myawaddy prepared to vouch for them are simply released after paying between 2,000-3,500 kyat; while the remainder are transported by truck back to their home districts. Individuals transported back to their home districts are required to pay a transportation fee which varies according to distance. It costs for example, only 150 kyat to be transported to nearby Moulmien but 1400 kyat to be deported to Arakan State. People who have no relatives or friends in Myawaddy to vouch for them and who cannot afford to pay this transportation fee sometimes have to stay in the area working as lookouts to guard train tracks, bridges and government buildings until they can save up the cost of the repatriation fee.

Many people attempt to evade the screening process and/or forced transfer to their home districts by paying bribes to officials. Other deportees apparently are able to bribe their way out at the customs checkpoint on arrival, or else manage to run away during transfer back to their home districts. Having escaped or bribed their way out of official custody, it appears to be a relatively simple matter for migrants to secretly cross the border and re-enter Thailand illegally. Many people wade across the Moei River, which separates the two countries, everyday.

The SPDC actively discourages people, and especially women from migrating abroad. One reason for this is that the regime fears that migrants will report on human rights abuses inside the country to opposition groups or other human rights organizations. Major General Kyaw Win has stated that part of the SPDC's "Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign" includes efforts to "teach people about negative consequences of working abroad." This campaign appears to focus less on education than on threats and punishment of people found to have worked, or planning to work, abroad. In a number of states and Divisions the SPDC is creating "Human Trafficking Prevention Committees" which have been ordered to collect data on everyone between 16 and 25 years of age, and to investigate anyone traveling to border areas. (Source: Altsean)

Women and girls have been specifically targeted in these campaigns. Some women who return to their villages in Burma have reportedly been made to sign documents pledging to the authorities that they will not return to Thailand. The Myanmar Women's Affair Association chairperson Dr. Daw Khin Win Shwe, wife of Gen. Khin Nyunt issued an order that young women be prohibited from working in Thailand in order to prevent trafficking. Young women are further prohibited from traveling to Thailand except in the company of a guardian. Women who are found to have disobeyed this order can be put in prison for one to three years. Male deportees have reported that if they were returned to their home towns they also would have been required to sign such a pledge. After doing so they then are in jeopardy of a seven-year prison term if arrested attempting to return to Thailand or upon deportation.

2002 Timeline of Events for Burmese Migrants in Thailand

January

On 2 January, Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai reported plans for Thailand and Burma to establish a task force aimed at repatriating illegal workers back to Burma. The task force scheduled a meeting at the end of February or in early March to decide what should be done about the approximately 100,000 Burmese workers who had not yet registered with Thai authorities. In the meantime, some of the workers would continue to be held in a holding centre on Burma's side of the border in Myawaddy, across the border from Thailand's Tak province. The Thai Foreign Minister reported that both countries would be responsible for managing repatriation of illegal workers. Paisarn Preutiporn, secretary-general of the Office of the Administrative Commission on Irregular Immigrant Workers, noted that the Thai government plans to ask the SPDC to arrange two more sites in addition to Myawaddy: Phaya Thongsu town opposite Kanchanaburi, and Kawthaung (Victoria Point) opposite Ranong, to process illegal migrant being repatriated. The secretary-general also stated that immigrant workers found to be suffering from tuberculosis, leprosy, elephantiasis, syphilis, alcoholism or mental illness will not have their work permits renewed. (Source: News Summary/ Burma Issues)

On 26 January the bodies of 14 Karen migrant workers were found with their throats cut near the border with Burma in Mae Ramat district, Tak province. The bodies of seven men and seven women aged 14-45 were found floating near the banks of Huay Mae Lamao stream in tambon Mae Jarao. An autopsy found they were murdered more than 10 days ago, some from stab wounds to the body. The killer cut their throats later. On 28th January two more bodies were found, and Thai police the next day reported that the death toll had risen to 20 after four more bodies were pulled from the Moei river blindfolded with their hands and feet bound, their throats cut and beyond recognition. Police stated that they suspected the murders were connected to either conflicts in the drug trade or human smuggling. However, Thongmuan Sitthikaew, head of Wang Pha village in the district, said the recent victims were illegal workers. He believed they might have been killed by a local employer who did not want to pay them wages. (News Summary/Burma Issues)

February

On 1 February following a visit to Rangoon, Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai, reported that the SPDC requested that Thailand submit a list of illegal migrant workers to be sent back to Burma so their nationality can be verified. As part of this list, the SPDC stated that they wanted Thailand to record migrants' names and home addresses in Burma, and also submit the workers' photos and identity cards for verification by Burmese authorities. The ministry's permanent secretary, Tej Bunnag said that [regarding repatriated migrants] "If all of them hold Burmese nationality, they should have house registration documents. But if they are ethnic minorities, they will be investigated and reports will be sent to Burma." Mr. Tej also stated that Burmese officials had been instructed not to subject returnees to punishment for having left Burma illegally. (Source: "Rangoon to verify status of migrants," Feb 9. Bangkok Post/Burma Issues)

At the beginning of February, Police announced that they will launch a four-month campaign, to crack down on illegal foreign labourers in big cities. The campaign will run from February 10 to June 10 in nine provinces: Tak, Ranong, Phuket, Samut Sakhon, Bangkok, Chiang Rai,

Chiang Mai, Samut Prakan and Sa Kaeo. Paisal Pruthiporn, head of the labour ministry's office of alien workers, said illegal migrant workers who are arrested face a maximum jail term of three months and a maximum fine of 5,000 baht (\$113.60) followed by deportation. Employers found hiring illegal workers also face a maximum penalty of three years in jail and a 60,000-baht fine. (News Summary/Burma Issues)

On 9 February more than 200 Burmese illegal workers were arrested in Mae Sot, Tak Province at the start of a three-month long crackdown against illegal workers. The arrested workers were sent back to Myawaddy the next morning and were detained in the newly built detention center near the Friendship Bridge in Myawaddy. (Source: Network Media Group)

On 11 February, Thai army commander, Lt-Gen Udomchai Ongkhasing, shut border checkpoints in Mae Sot and Mae Ramat districts while inquiries continued into the unexplained deaths of 20 people whose bodies were found in a stream the previous week. Crossings at Wang Kaew and Mae Kit Mai villages in Mae Sot district and Wang Pha village in Mae Ramat district were temporarily closed. News sources reported that a major investigation had been set up into the murders, involving hundreds of police from Mae Sot, Mae Ramat and Tha Song Yang districts and border patrol police from the 345th and 346th companies. Reportedly, both the Thai military and Burmese authorities in Myawaddy were co-operating in the investigation. (Source: "Thailand shuts Myanmar crossing in murder probe," Feb 11. Reuters/Burma Issues)

On 20 February, Five workers from a lead melting factory in Mae Sot, were fired and many other workers were arrested by police, following an argument between the workers and their employer. The argument allegedly began when the workers asked for their salaries. One worker from the factory explained the cause of the workers' complaints: "some workers are working with monthly salary of 600-700 while others get 1200 baht. They were not paid for 7 months and the owner owed them 5000 to 8000 baht each. The problem started when the owner paid them only 100 baht although they asked for 500 baht each for general expenses. The majority of workers are ethnic Karen and Pa-O nationals and they had to handle lead without any protection resulting in skin diseases and stomach ulcers." (Source: "Burmese workers expelled from work for asking their salaries," Feb 20. Network Media Group/Burma Issues)

On 20 February one hundred workers were sent back to Myawaddy from Thailand, amongst them was a migrant from Pegu who was found to be infected with HIV and was refused permission to return to his home. According to a source in Myawaddy the man was detained there by the military regime. The other workers, including 64 men and 35 women, were sent on to Pa-an that same night at 8:00 PM in two trucks. What happened to these workers when they reached Pa-an is not yet known. A multi-departmental investigation team, lead by Major Ye Kyaw Thu under supervision of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, checked and interrogated all the workers when they reached Myawaddy. The check up and interrogation included an interview, personal data recording, a photo and medical check up, including a blood test. The SPDC officials have not made clear what action they plan to take against the worker who tested positive for HIV. (Source: "Migrant worker with HIV not allowed back home", February 22, Network Media Group/Burma Issues)

On 26 February Thai police arrested over 500 illegal foreign workers in Tak province. It was reported that most of the illegal workers came from Burma. They were arrested when the police inspected local firms and factories in the province along the Thai-Burma border. Many

of the arrested workers were found to be infected with malaria and other infectious diseases. The crackdown followed the closure of the official nation-wide registration of illegal alien workers from Burma, Laos, and Cambodia late last year. Police said illegal alien workers who failed to turn out for this registration as legal workers would be sternly cracked down upon. Their employers would also be fined and would be responsible for deportation costs of the illegal workers. (Source: "Thai police arrest 500 Illegal Alien Workers", February 26, Xinhuanet/Burma Issues)

March

On 5 March police discovered the bodies of 13 migrant workers from Burma in sandbags in a deserted quarry near the Thai-Cambodian border. Police reported that it appeared that the victims had been murdered at another site and then brought to the quarry by truck. Some of the bodies of the five male and eight female victims had broken necks. Several bodies carried Burmese identification cards or border passes for entering Thailand via Mae Sot on the Thai-Burma border on March 2. Autopsies have found that the 13 died from suffocation after they were covered in vegetables and rice to escape detection from border patrols. Police have apprehended two suspects and are looking for four more believed to be involved in this case. The arrested are believed to be part of an illegal people smuggling ring. (Source: News Summary/Burma Issues)

On 25 March the one month worker registration period ended. During this registration more than 200,000 of the 500,000 registered alien workers failed to have their six-month work permits renewed. Supat Kukhun, deputy secretary-general of the alien labour management office, said the number of alien workers who reported for work permit renewals between Feb 24-March 25 was only around 350,000. (Source:"200,000 fail to renew their work permits", March 26, Bangkok Post/Burma Issues)

April

On 9 April it was reported that Burma and Thailand had agreed on a plan to repatriate more than 500,000 Burmese illegal immigrants in Thailand. As part of the deal, Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai told the BBC, the Burmese workers will be screened for HIV. Mr. Surakiart said those workers who were diagnosed as HIV positive would be separated from the other illegal immigrants and would be treated as part of a special repatriation scheme. (Source: "Burmese migrants face HIV test", April 9, BBC/Burma Issues)

May

On 4 May a Thai official reported that more than 700 workers from Burma suffering from communicable diseases including HIV will be deported soon back to Burma. The workers were identified during medical checkups, which are mandatory for foreign workers at the time of renewal of their work permits, Dr. Winai Withoonkija, permanent secretary of the Public Health Ministry, told reporters. He said 737 Burma workers among the 40,000 tested during the last two months would be deported. (Source:"Thailand to deport 737 Myanmar workers because of disease", May 4, Associated Press/Burma Issues)

On 21 May the SPDC ordered all border crossings with Thailand closed. This order followed a skirmish the day before which involved the SSA, UWSA, as well as some Thai and Burmese army troops. Following the attack, the SPDC accused Thailand of aiding the SSA

opposition army troops. Thai Deputy Defense Minister Yuthasak Saaiprapha denied this allegation saying: "Thailand was not involved in the border fighting and it did not back any ethnic faction in Myanmar." The SSA also released a statement saying that attacks on May 20th had been part of an anti-drug campaign, and that SPDC army camps had been included in the attack because they in close proximity to targets. The statement went on to note that UWSA camps and drug refineries were under the protection of SPDC troops. Residents in Mae Sot report that following the order to close the border, the SPDC erected barbed wire on the Mae Sot/Myawaddy Friendship Bridge and placed soldiers along the bridge on standby. (Source: "Junta Issues Directive, May 2002, Irrawaddy)

June

On 10 June Thailand's Interior Ministry forbade staff from issuing birth registration documents to children of undocumented migrants, although it is permissible under Thai law to issue the papers. Without this registration, children are barred from access to welfare, health and education services. Many illegal migrants fear arrest and thus don't attempt to register their children. (Source: BLC)

July

On 17 July a Burmese woman died of burn injuries she suffered after being set on fire allegedly as punishment for stealing from her Thai employer. 18-year-old Ba Suu died in the hospital nine days after she was found lying on a road by a passer-by in Uthai Thani province. Ba Suu had told police that she worked as a maid at the house of a factory owner, who accused her of stealing a gold necklace. When she denied the accusations, she was beaten up and taken away by two men who doused her with gasoline and set her on fire. She suffered burns on more than half her body, including her chest, back and both arms. Police say that because the woman was kept a virtual prisoner in the house, she was unable to tell police details about its location. (Source: 'Myanmar woman dies of burn injuries blamed on Thai employer', AP, July 18/Burma Issues)

August

On 5 August a 12-year old Burmese girl was raped by a 47-year-old man who acted as a volunteer outreach worker for the international aid organization, World Vision. The incident occurred in the victim's neighborhood in the Islam Bankalone slum in Mae Sot. After consulting with religious leaders the girl's parents reported the case to police the following day, despite fearing their actions would prompt Thai authorities to deport them as illegal migrants. Both the family and the accused, a Burmese citizen identified only as Salawut, are members of the Muslim refugee community living in Thailand. Police took the victim for an examination, which confirmed she had been sexually assaulted. The family said that a World Vision staff member visited their home shortly after the incident and promised to take responsibility for the case and provide assistance to the victim, but after that they heard nothing from the agency. The police investigation has also made no progress, they say. Social workers stated that they believed the family's case was being ignored because they are illegal migrants. (Source: 'Myanmar migrant family complain daughter's rape has gone ignored', Agence France Presse, August 22/Burma Issues)

On 22 August it was reported that illegal migrant workers had won two million baht compensation after filing a lawsuit against their employer. Saranya Chandchuay, of the

Foundation for Women, said 30 ethnic Karen women, many aged under 18, were rescued from the Bang Bon Garment factory in October 2000. Ms Saranya said that at the factory, the women worked from 7am to 9pm without a holiday. Sometimes, work carried on until after midnight. The factory gate was locked to prevent them leaving. The workers were paid 40 baht a month. Women who lasted a year would get small extra payments of 1,200 - 1,500 baht a month. Meager food, mainly chicken bones and vegetables were provided. The foundation, together with the Foundation for Child Development, took the case to the central labour court. Criminal charges were finally dropped by the attorney general, and the company was told to pay 2.1 million baht of the 41 million baht demanded in a civil suit. The payment was to be made in instalments, starting in November last year. Fifteen per cent interest was to be charged on delays. The company, however, suspended payments after surrendering only a small amount. The foundation had to pursue the case with the Legal Execution Department, as the workers had been sent back to Burma. This was the first case involving labor exploitation of migrant workers to go to court. The court decision was seen by academics and activists as a sign of progress in the legal system. (Source: 'Slave Workers Win Historic Court Battle', Bangkok Post, August 22/Burma Issues)

On 29 August DVB reported that earlier in the month a Burmese female illegal migrant in Thailand was raped while in police custody. Ma Tin Tin Moe and her husband Ko Maung Soe, Mon State residents had been arrested in the town of Prakyub, Prakyub Province, South Thailand and charged with working illegally. After the arrest, husband and wife were held in different rooms. During the night, Ma Tin Tin Moe (age 27 years) was raped, first by a single Thai male, and then gang raped. Her husband Ko Maung Soe in the adjoining room could hear everything that was happening. Both husband and wife hanged themselves the next morning with one longyi. (Source: DVB)

September

On 20 September, 20 Burmese workers, including 5 women, escaped from a cell in the Mae Sot Police Detention Center. One resident who went to the police station reported that police found the iron sieve that cover the windows of the women's cell on the first floor had been cut by a hacksaw. According to a leader from a Burmese workers' association, the escapees had been detained for 3-4 months in the detention cell in order to serve as witnesses against their factory owner who was on trial for hiring illegal workers. (Source: Network Media Group)

October

On 1 October Mizzima News Group reported that human trafficking from Burma to Thailand had been increasing due to worsening economic conditions in Burma. The Mizzima article reported that two gangs of human traffickers were operating from Kyaikto town, and one gang from Kyaikmayaw town, both in Mon State. Reportedly, these traffickers smuggle between five and twenty people per day to Mae Sot town, Thailand, and onwards to Chiangmai, Bangkok and Malaysia at a cost of 100,000 Kyats per person. The article stated that it is common for human traffickers to deceive their customers, take their money and then kill them, or else sell them into forced labor or sex work.

The article went on to name the Yetuingung village headman in Kyaikmayaw town, U Aadu, and the son of the principal of the Islamic college, Aadu Sein, as being involved in human trafficking. Allegedly the leaders of the Kyaihtthu town human trafficking gang are Mon

nationals U Kyaw Oo and Ma Tin San. While human traffickers in Burma are prosecuted and sometimes arrested on military orders, lower ranking military officers reportedly regularly ask for bribes and then release them. On 25 September, local Military Intelligence personnel arrested U Kyaw Oo and Ma Tin San in Kyaikto town while at the same time, other human traffickers were arrested in Kyaikmayaw. However local residents reported that all those arrested were immediately released after paying 1 million Kyats to the police. According to locals, human traffickers give 100,000 kyats to the Police and Village Peace and Development Authorities, which allow them to continue their work unimpeded. (Source: Mizzima)

On 15 October the Thai-Burma border reopened after a 5 month closure. The Bangkok Post reported that the closure cost Burma around 300 million baht or close to US\$ 7 million in lost revenue. The closure also led to increasing devaluation of the Burmese kyat. "In the five months the border remained closed, the Mae Sot checkpoint has lost 2.1 billion baht on import and export taxes. The total losses for all checkpoints equals about five billion baht," reported Boontian Chokewiwat, Mae Sot customs chief. He further reported that when the border was opened, the daily value of goods crossing the Myawaddy-Mae Sot checkpoint alone was 18 million baht (around \$800,000). Burma closed its borders with Thailand following a skirmish involving Thai and Burmese soldiers. The incident also involved armed opposition groups whom the SPDC claims were being supported by the Thai military. (Source: 'Counting the Cost of Closure,' Irrawaddy, November 2002)

December

On 14 December approximately 600 hundred Burmese garment workers in Mae Sot were fired after demanding that 40 employees be reinstated who had been terminated for requesting overdue wages as well as a raise. The workers from Rian Thong Apparel factory said that they were also protesting the amount of monthly leave granted to them by the factory's owner, Yan How, who is from Taiwan. Mr. Yan How said that he dismissed the workers after they took more than the allotted half-day off per month.

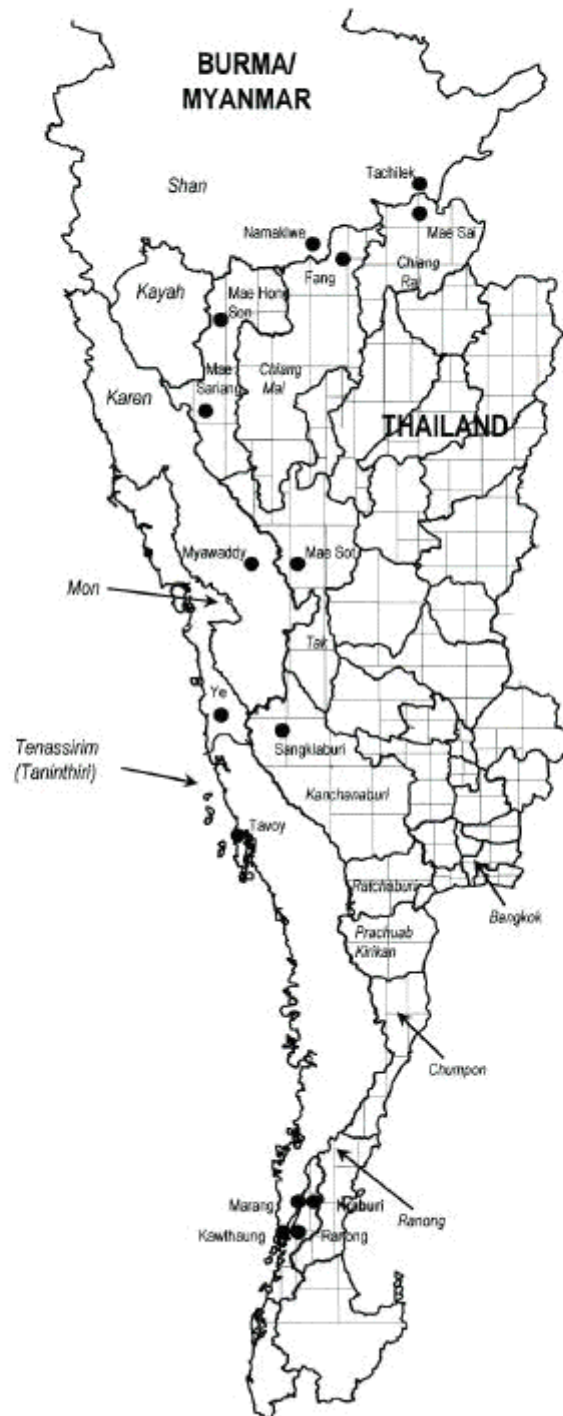
Workers complain that a half-day off per month is insufficient to allow them to buy monthly rations or to remit money back to Burma. Workers have also reported that Mr Yan was taking 3 percent of their wages each month for unknown reasons and that he never paid overtime or set a piece rate for knitters. On Saturday, Mr Yan's son paid the workers a ten-day deposit as well as back wages in front of local police, who had been called to maintain security at the factory. But workers said they were not given their work permits despite paying for them. Some workers said they would like to sue Mr Yan, but without work permits they did not think that was possible. Others said they were going to return to Burma and look for work despite the low wages. "We can earn enough for food in Burma, but the income is not enough for clothes, medicine or anything else," said one worker. (Source: 'Hundreds Fired in Mae Sot,' Irrawaddy, December 16 2002)

From 29 December onwards, Thailand instituted new visa rules for Burmese passport holder. Previously, Burmese passport holders were granted visas upon arrival to Thailand. Following these new regulations Burmese are now required to apply for visas inside Burma. This new rule has made it extremely difficult for Burmese refugees and political dissidents to maintain a legal status in Thailand as many cannot re-enter Burma except at great risk to their personal security. (Source: Altsean)

See to Appendix A Figure 1,2 & Map

The Thailand - Burma (Myanmar) Border: Major Points of Interest

produced by the Asian Research Center for Migration
Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok



15.3 Situation of Burmese Migrants in Singapore

For decades, Burmese migrants have worked legally in Singapore. The number of Burmese in Singapore began increasing in the mid 1980's as a result of the country's construction boom and simultaneous labor shortage. Some Burmese migrants in Singapore are highly educated and have obtained work as doctors and professors. However the majority of Burmese workers labor in low-level jobs including construction work, carpentry, welding, and painting.

Before January 1998, travel to Singapore was facilitated by the fact that Burmese could get a visa-on-arrival for a seven-day stay. Currently however Burmese must apply for visas from the Singapore embassy in Rangoon. People who wish to get a work visa must provide a work permit and a sponsor letter, documents that are only available through naturalized Singapore citizens, Burmese with Permanent Resident (PR) status, or to those who already have been granted an official Employee Pass (EP).

Only educated individuals are eligible to receive Singaporean work visas, and the prerequisites for an EP include a university degree from Burma or enrollment in one of Singapore's polytechnic schools. Visa applicants who have no one to sponsor them have to leave a deposit of 2,000 Foreign Exchange Certificates (FECs) in addition to the 18 FEC visa fee. (One FEC is approximately 960 kyat). Individuals who overstay their visa lose this deposit.

For many people, these fees are only part of the money they must spend to obtain a permit to legally work in Singapore. In Rangoon, job broker agencies connected to Singapore businesses charge high fees to facilitate the bureaucratic process of obtaining a work visa. These agencies charge between 1,000,000 to 1, 200, 000 kyat to arrange for applicants' passports, air tickets, and job training that can last up to six months. Some migrants find that it can take up to 8 months after this initial payment before they arrive in Singapore and begin to work off this debt. There are also a large number of fly-by-night brokers who frequently swindle people out of their money. For the majority of Burmese citizens, these high visa costs effectively prevent them from being able to pursue the option of working legally in Singapore.

While legal workers in Singapore earn vastly more than they could in Burma, their expenses can also be very high. Legal workers make an average of about S\$16 (9,200 kyat) per day, while more skilled workers earn slightly more. Burmese workers make about S\$600 (345,000 kyat) per month, with basic living costs running from S\$80-100. In addition The SPDC charges citizens a 10% tax on overseas earnings and workers must also pay a flat tax of S\$30 to the Singapore government. If workers need to renew their passports they must pay the Burmese government S\$300 and replacing a worn or lost passport costs S\$1,400.

The majority of illegal Burmese migrants arrive in Singapore as stowaways on ships. These workers generally undertake menial labor in restaurants, factories, and on construction sites. Without legal status they are often forced to pay inflated rent costs from corrupt landlords and can be subjected to arbitrary arrest by officials, even in their own homes. Burmese arrested in Singapore for illegal entry are repatriated back to Burma, provided they have the money to pay the transport costs. If arrested migrants do not have this money, then they're forced to stay in prison and work until they are able to earn the money needed. It has been reported that migrants caught working illegally have also been subjected to caning, a legal

form of punishment in Singapore. (Source: "Laboring in the Lion City," *Irrawaddy*, October 2002)

15.4 Situation of Burmese Migrants in Malaysia

According to the Malaysian Government, in August 2002 there were approximately 16,000 Burmese working legally in the country. The majority of Burmese migrants work in Malaysia's construction, garment and food processing industries, and are reportedly paid more than 700 ringgits (about 184 US dollars) per month. (Source: Xinhua)

SPDC and Malaysian Government Continue Agreement to Issue Work Permits

On 2nd August the *Irrawaddy* reported that: "Burmese residents who are either active soldiers or sons of retired or presently enlisted soldiers will have the opportunity to work in Malaysia as part of a bilateral agreement between the two governments, according to residents of Rangoon. Fifty-thousand work permits are to be issued in the deal, and the distribution of the permits is to be handled by the Myanmar War Veterans Organization (MWVO). The first batch of Burmese workers was sent to Malaysia in June. According to *The Myanmar Times*, the recent program is a continuation of a work program that was first implemented last August.

Individuals selected for this program will have to pay 50,000 kyat (US\$ 55) to the MWVO in Rangoon. The MWVO, however, will cover the cost of their passport, airfare to Malaysia, a deposit fee of 1,800 Malaysian Ringgits (1 USD=3.8 RM) as well as the cost of an initial medical check-up, according to a MWVO official in Rangoon. The workers are to receive 18 RM per day and 3.5 RM for each hour of overtime. However, employers are reportedly garnishing 270 RM per month from the workers in order to reimburse the MWVO for arrangement fees, according to residents in Rangoon. It remains unclear how long their wages are to be garnished. The workers will also be provided with accommodation.

Individuals who have already been accepted in to the program are reportedly taking a training course at the former Technical High School (THS) in Rangoon's Aung San Township, according to a township resident. He added that the course does not involve training for the workers new jobs, but on how they should properly discipline themselves once in Malaysia. In Mae Sot, Thailand, across from Myawaddy, Burma, a spokesperson from the Aurora staffing agency told *The Irrawaddy* that over the last three months, Burmese workers living in Thailand had returned to Rangoon in hopes of receiving a Malaysian permit. He said most of the workers, however, had already returned to Thailand, after feeling that the Program was more of a scam than anything else.

Burmese have been heading to Malaysia since early this year as part of another program established between the Malaysian government and the regime's de facto political party, the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA). The Malaysian government announced last October that it would issue 30,000 work permits to Burmese workers. The permits, however, were not available to Burmese workers who were already living in Malaysia. The USDA allegedly sold the applications for 500 kyat each. The USDA also opened language schools in Rangoon, Mandalay and Pegu for workers heading to Malaysia.

Both programs have been highly criticized for only being open to individuals with connections to the military. Thousands of Burmese currently live and work illegally in Malaysia, but are not eligible for either program." (Source: "Malaysian Work Program Begins", The Irrawaddy, August 2)

Five Workers Drown in Attempts to Avoid Arrest

On 6 August a Burmese worker died in Kuala Lumpur after jumping into a disused mining pool in an attempt to escape arrest. The incident occurred while police were conducting an operation against illegal immigrants. Yunos Yakob, age 20, and his brother Yusof Yakob, 26 had worked at the Selayang wholesale market as vegetable sellers for several years. Yunus's death occurred on the same day that he and his brother were planning a return visit to Burma. Yunos is among five other illegal immigrants, mostly Burmese and Indonesians, who are believed to have drowned after they jumped into the pool beside the Selayang wholesale market to escape arrest. A total of 50 people reportedly jumped in the pool during the police operation. (Source: 'Tragedy mars plan to return to Myanmar', The Star, August 09/Burma Issues)

Illegal Migrants Face Fines, Imprisonment and Whipping

On 6 February the Malaysian Government reported that it will sanction the whipping of illegal immigrants and their employers, in response to the growing problem of foreign aliens. Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi stated that the government will amend immigration laws in March 2002 to allow for tougher penalties against illegals and those who hire or rent houses to them. (Source: "Malaysia says it will whip illegal immigrants,"Feb 6. Reuters/Burma Issues)

On 21 August the Malaysian national news agency, Bernama reported that Five men from Burma had been sentenced to six months in prison in the northern state of Perlis. Four of the men were sentenced to two strokes of a cane. The fifth man was not caned because he was over 50 years old. Amnesty International urged the Malaysian government not to impose further whipping sentences, calling them "cruel, inhuman and degrading." The group released a statement urging that: "International standards make clear that such treatment constitutes torture..Such a punishment should have no place in today's world."

These arrests occurred as part of a nation-wide crackdown on illegal workers in Malaysia which has caused hundreds of thousands of illegal migrants to flee the country. On August 1st, Malaysia began enforcing laws where illegal migrants could be fined up to 10,000 ringgit (\$2,600 US); issuing mandatory prison terms of up to five years; and sentencing illegals to up to six strokes of the cane. (Source: 'Prison builders sent to prison', Agence France Presse, August/Burma Issues)



16. Landmines in Burma

"On January 14th, 2002, one Muslim (a cattle trader from Shwe Gun) stepped on a landmine at Taray Poe Kwee village. SPDC and DKBA troops had planted landmines when they arrived at that village tract. Villagers from Taray Poe Kwee managed to send the mine victim back home, but he died on the way at Mae Tha Mu village. On January 31st, 2002, one of Kyaw Wah Hser's cattle stepped on a land mine and was killed."

(Source: FTUB.)

16.1 Background

Anti-personnel landmines are victim-activated weapons that indiscriminately kill and maim civilians, soldiers, elderly people, women, children and animals. They can cause injury and death long after the end of hostilities. In Asia, Burma is currently second only to Afghanistan in the number of new landmine victims, surpassing even Cambodia. Contrary to trends in the rest of the world, the SPDC has not signed the Mine Ban Treaty and abstained from the 1999 UN General Assembly vote on the treaty. Of Burma's 14 states and divisions, 9 of them are affected by landmines. Evidence suggests that in Karen State there is one landmine victim everyday. Civilians become landmine victims in two ways: when they are forced by the military to act as human minesweepers (see below); and when they accidentally step on mines planted in areas where civilians reside. More than 14 percent of mine victims in Burma stepped on landmines within half a kilometer from the center of their village.

In efforts to block supply routes for armed ethnic organizations, the SPDC plants mines on supply and escape routes used by villagers and refugees. Villages from which people have fled or have been forcibly relocated from are also mined to prevent the villagers from returning, as well as to block access to food, supplies and intelligence to opposition groups. Landmines have also been planted along streams, paths, roads and passes that are used by civilians, including those fleeing Burma. It is estimated that there is one civilian death for every two military casualties associated with landmines. (Source: Landmine Monitor report-2002.)

16.2 Human Minesweepers

Throughout 2002 some units of the Tatmadaw continued to use villagers as human minesweepers. This specific targeting of civilians is contrary to the claims of the SPDC that landmine use has not been directed against civilian populations. Civilians conscripted for forced portering in conflict areas are sometimes sent ahead of the troops so that they will detonate mines. The Landmine Monitor Report from 2002 notes that: "a newly reported practice demands those taken to porter for the military to manually clear mines without adequate training or tools. A former porter who escaped from Burmese Army service told the Landmine Monitor researcher that he was forced to seek mines using a long sharpened bamboo prod, piercing the ground and removing any found mines by hand." (*For more information see list of incidents at the end of this chapter.*)

16.3 Situation in Border Areas

The border states and divisions of Burma are the most heavily mined areas in the country, due to the civil war being fought with ethnic groups living in these areas. The border areas already have problems with security and adequate health care, and mine pollution only compounds these problems. The presence of landmines means that ethnic minority people cannot engage in everyday activities, such as farming, gathering food or traveling, without fear of being killed or losing limbs due to landmines. In addition, as previously mentioned, villagers who have been forcibly relocated cannot safely return to their original villages to collect property, food supplies or check on their homes.

It is thought that the majority of people injured by landmines die before they get medical treatment. Mine victims often have limited or no access to healthcare facilities and may have to walk for days to find medical care. Sometimes the security situation can mean that no treatment is available for a long period of time. In some cases, landmine victims have been turned back by the SPDC before they could reach a hospital. The Landmine Monitor reports that: "to go from mine-affected Pa-an district [Karen State] to Mae Sot, Thailand, a distance of 40 kilometers, costs 5,000 Kyats (around US\$5) each way, which is more than two months wages for farmers. In some cases, those who could not reach any medical attention try to treat themselves with herbal leaves. Some Burmese migrants to Thailand who are landmine survivors cannot access official assistance offered by international organizations if they are not accepted into an organized refugee camp. Since April 2001, the Mae Tao Clinic in Thailand, which specializes in assisting Burmese migrants, has operated a prosthetics section." (*Source: Landmine Monitor Report 2002.*)

16.4 Mine Deployment

The 2002 Landmine Monitor Report stated that at least thirteen ethnic armed groups, both pro and anti-SPDC, are believed to use antipersonnel mines. These groups include: Pao People's Liberation Front (PPLF); All Burma Muslim Union; and Wa National Army; Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO); Chin National Army (CNA); Shan State Army (SSA); United Wa State Army (UWSA); Karenni Army (KA); Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA); Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA); All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF); People's Defence Forces (PDF); and Myiek-Dawei United Front. (*Source: Landmine Monitor report-2002.*)

Mines are force multipliers and thus have been used by numerically weak combatants on the defensive throughout history. Usually they are deployed to maximize the advantages of terrain, to deny territory and/or to force an enemy into pre-organized fields of fire. In mountainous, heavily forested territory, such as the Dawna Ranges, along the Thai/Burma border, mines are especially efficient at denying an attacking force access to territory along narrow jungle trails. Currently however, most of the mines used by opposition groups are improvised explosive devices (IEPs) and are usually deployed to defend territory at specific points. They are usually battery operated and incorporate perishable local materials such as bamboo and thus have a finite active life span. "The KNLA states that the mines are necessary to protect internally displaced Karen people (estimated to be in the hundreds of thousands) from attacks by the Burmese Army." (*Source: Landmine Monitor Report 2002.*)

The mines used by the SPDC Army are usually industrially produced from non-perishable, waterproof materials and remain active indefinitely. Mines from China, Israel, Italy, Russia and the United States have been used in Burma. Burma produces at least three types of antipersonnel mines. The MM1, MM2, which are copies of Chinese mines and "claymore-like" mines such as the MM3. The Indian LTM-76 anti-personnel mine is also still a significant part of the Tatmadaw's landmine inventory despite its' age. (Source: *Landmine Monitor Report 2002*)

Although the SPDC uses mines defensively around military outposts, the majority of mines laid by the Tatmadaw are deployed to achieve an offensive objective and are targeted primarily against the local civilian population. The SPDC throughout 2002 used mines as part of its' four cuts strategy to cut off intelligence, supplies, recruits, and funds to the opposition armies.

16.5 De-mining

In Burma today, mines are seldom if ever marked and their position is rarely recorded. This presents great problems for any future de-mining effort. At present, villagers are forced to resort to two improvised methods of mine clearance. One is to sacrifice their valuable livestock by running them through a suspect area. The other method is to literally sweep the area with an extremely long handled bamboo rake. To date in Burma, no humanitarian de-mining activities have taken place. Although mine clearance by the SPDC for some commercial ventures is believed to have occurred, no international aid agencies have been permitted to set up programs in mine affected areas. (Source: *Landmine Monitor Report 2002*.)

16.6 Thailand-Burma Border

In 2002 the Tatmadaw continued laying landmines along its borders with Thailand. As part of a plan to "fence the country," troops in Tenasserim division were ordered to lay mines along the border. (Source: *Landmine Monitor report-2002*.) Mines have also been laid between all military camps along a cross-state route in upper Karen State from Kyankkyi in the west to Hsawhta on the Salaween River at the Thai border, as part of an attempt to cut off the travel routes of insurgents. However, these mines have also effectively blocked refugees from using these routes to seek asylum in Thailand.

The Landmine monitor reports that: "DKBA combatants also alleged that they purchased mines and components from Thai businessmen who operate logging concessions in DKBA-controlled areas close to Myawaddy. The DKBA also controls a timber concession area by surrounding it with antipersonnel mines. Thai businessmen obtain permission to cut the forest from the DKBA, and the DKBA place mines to deter attacks upon their revenue base by the rival KNU, while simultaneously preventing the businessmen from unilaterally enlarging their concession area." (Source: *Landmine Monitor Report 2002*.)

In Karenni State, mines are allegedly laid in paddy fields which forces villagers to grow opium instead. Mines are also used by drug-traffickers to protect methamphetamine manufacturing factories, specifically in Shan State at Namsan and Hsi Hseng. The Shan State

Army [South] reportedly mined areas around its bases straddling the border between Thailand and Burma. (*Source: Landmine Monitor Report 2002.*)

16.7 Bangladesh-Burma Border

The Bangladesh-Burma border, with 270 kilometers comprised of dense forests, hills and 60 kilometers of sea, is the longest minefield in the country. Mines have been laid on this border since the 1991 mass exodus of 250,000 Rohingya Muslims from Arakan State. The SPDC has said that the minefields are necessary to stop cross-border movement by armed ethnic opposition groups. However they also prevent or make it extremely dangerous for refugees to cross the border and impede cross-border economic activities. There were reports that the Na Sa Ka (village militia) has continued laying mines along this border in 2002.

16.8 Landmines – partial list of incidents 2002

Shan State

On the morning of 25 January 2002, at about 8:30 am, 2 mine victims died in the Ho Murng area just near the Thai border opposite Mae Hong Son province. They were:

1. Nang Ing, female, age 22, daughter of Loong Htun of Wan Pat Yen village, Laikha township, and
2. Sai Ku, male, age 19, son of Loong Artiya of, Laikha township, central Shan State.

The villagers were trying to enter Thailand in order to find a job. Since 13th January 2002, Thai check points along the border refused to allow people who could not show their identity cards to enter the country. Thus in order to avoid check points, Nang Ing and Sai Ku had to followed a jungle track, where they stepped on land mines. (*Source: Freedom*)

Karen State

Nyaung-lay-bin District

On 2 June 2002, Paw-pi-doe villager, Mang Kyi stepped on a land mine planted by SPDC troops at Po-deh and was severely wounded. (*Source: KIC*)

On 3 June 2002 Noh-nya-la villager, Maung Day stepped on a land mine planted by SPDC troops and was severely wounded. (*Source: KIC*)

On 3 July 2002, Kwe-lay-kho villager Saw Tu Tu was killed on the spot by a landmine planted by troops from SPDC LIB-92, Column-2 led by Bo Min Thein. (*Source: KIC*)

Pa-pun District

On 4 July 2002, Naw Nge (F,18) from Oo-pu-tu village, Hlaing-bwe Township, was wounded by a land mine planted by DKBA 999 Ka Ba Min (aka) Lweh Ka Paw. Naw Nge lost one of her legs when she steppen on a landmine while walking to the field hut to get a basket she had hidden and collect buffaloes she had left grazing, after the departure of DKBA troops. (*Source: KIC*)

On 23 October, 2002 troops from SPDC Tactical Command 3, LIB 1, column 2, led by battalion second in command, Kyaw Shwe came to Bwa-doe area, Bu-tho township and planted land mines which killed a villager and a buffalo. (Source: KIC)

On 10 November 2002, Kyaw Myint Than, commander of SPDC IB 98, of South West Command summoned the village heads of Noh-lah, Htee-saw-meh, Pway-htaw-ro, Noh-gaw, Po-khay, Bler-per, Thwa-kho-lor, Ma-htaw, Khaw-kla and Ta-dwee-kho villages and instructed them to have each of the villages build a hut along the bank of Yun-za-lin river and to send two villagers from each village to stand sentinel, both day and night, for security of the motor road from Htee-saw-meh to Koo-seik villages. He also instructed them to get a bullock cart, fully loaded with logs, to drive back and forth on the road for clearance of land mines, every morning. (Source: KIC)

On 12 November 2002, Company commander Aung Than of SPDC IB 98 ordered Thwa-kho-lor village head and villagers to search and clear land mines on the motor roads from 7 am to 10 am, each day, using 10 villagers with two hoes. (Source: KIC)

Doo-pla-ya District

On 27 December 2001 at 9:40 am, Htee-moo-ta villager Saw Yin Aye (M, 28) of Kaw-ka-reik Township, lost a leg to a land mine planted by SPDC controlled DKBA Battalion 907. He did not get any compensation or treatment. (Source: KIC)

On 7 February 2002, Htee-moo-ta villager, Pah Tweh Htee (M,48), stepped on a landmine planted by DKBA near his farm hut and died immediately. (Source: KIC)

On 18 February 2002, at 4:00 am, Noh-po villager Maung Soe Myint, (M, 25) son of Saw Maung Heh, was seriously wounded by a DKBA landmine, at the foot of the hill to the east of Noh-po village, Kaw-ka-reik township. (Source: KIC)

Toungoo District

From the beginning of January 2002 up to now, the SPDC Southern Military Commander, Aung Min and No. 1 Operation Commander Soe Thein ordered battalions IB 39 and IB 53, to seize villagers from Kaw-soe-ko, Ler-ko, Wah-tho-ko, Baw-ga-li and the other villages near the motor road. These troops forced the villagers to cut bushes, dig earth and clear landmines, for a distance of 2 yards, on both sides of Kaw-thay-doe and Bu-hsa-khee motor road. Any family, which could not give labor, had to pay 10,000 Kyat. (Source: KIC)

On 3 January 2002, four cattle were killed by landmines, as the SPDC troops chased villagers they wanted to round up for forced labour in Baw-ga-li area of Tah-da-bin Township. (Source: KIC)

On 1 March 2002, a column of SPDC IB 264, led by battalion second in command Min Thaw took Ga-mu-doe villager, Saw Ah Khee from the west of Ka-law-wa area, with the column. Saw Ah Khee stepped on a landmine and lost his leg. (Source: KIC)

On 5 March 2002, troops from SPDC IB 53, led by battalion commander Thu Rein Naing, came to Hsaw-wa-doe village and planted landmines. Hsaw-wa-doe village Saw Pu Doo Lu, M-35, son of Saw Hsa Po, who had been arrested by these troops was released on 6 March

2002, and on his return home he stepped on one of the landmines and lost his right leg. (Source: KIC)

On 6 March 2002, troops from SPDC IB 53, led by second in command Kyaw San and Bo Tin Maung Win planted landmines near Kaw-Thay-doe village. Kaw-thay-doe villager Saw Poo Loo Lu, M-35, stepped on land and lost his right leg. (Source: KIC)

On 22 March 2002, troops from SPDC IB 264 planted landmines on the road of Baw-ga-li village and Maw-ko-doe villagers Saw Aung Pay Htoo (M, 40) son of Saw Ka Baw and Saw Hser Wah (M, 14) son of Saw Chit Maung stepped down a landmine and died on the spot. (Source: KIC)

On 2 April 2002, troops from SPDC IB 30, led by Lieutenant Colonel Ko Ko planted land mines, on foot paths. At 11:46am Naw La Lu aged 25, from Kaw-thay-doe village, daughter of Saw Neh Neh was killed by one of the land mines, while Naw Heh Kree, daughter of Saw Htoo Pwe was severely wounded. (Source: KIC)

In April 2002, SPDC IB 39 battalion commander Win Soe, ordered villagers in Baw-ga-li area to clear the Pet-let-wa-Kaw-thay-doe motor road. Troops from SPDC IB 26, led by battalion commander Khin Maung Cho forced Leik-tho villagers to clear to a distance of 150 yards around the electric pylons and also planted land mines close to the foot of these electric pylon. On 5 April 2002, at 4:15 pm, Saw Than Myint aged 52 of Leik-tho village, son of Saw Thein Maung was seriously wounded by one of the land mines. (Source: KIC)

In April troops from SPDC No. 3 Tactical Command, led by commander Thet Oo ordered Baw-ga-li villagers to make 500 home-made land mine switches and ordered the cease-fire group to plant land mines one foot paths and in plantations. As a result, it had become a serious problem for the villagers to go out and find vegetable or work on their farms and plantations. (Source: KIC)

On 14 April 2002, Thet Oo, commander of No. 3 Local Operation Command, under SPDC Southern Command, seized Baw-ga-li villagers:

1. Saw Kwe Htoo, son of Saw Maung Kri,
2. Saw Hso Soe Gyi, son of Saw Pah Ta,
3. Saw Kwe Kaw, son of Saw Maung Kyaw,
4. Saw The Nay, son of Saw Maung Po,
5. Saw Ko Thlee, son of Saw Kwa Htoo and
6. Saw Ta Ta, son of Naw Htaw Lay

and sent them to Tha-aye-hta to go in front of the bulldozer as human mine detectors. (Source: KIC)

On 25 April 2002, Za-yat-gyi-nor-ka-la villager Saw Maung (M, 27) son of Ka Lagyi and Daw Ma Oh stepped on a land mine between Hti-lo and Tha-pa-kyaw, planted by the SPDC troops and died on the spot while his brother Saw La Pay (M, 25) was severely wounded. (Source: KIC)

On 26 April 2002, Mau-thay-doe villager Saw Kee-ku-htoo (M, 16), son of Saw Klo Toe stepped on a land mine planted by SPDC IB 264 troops at Klay-klo-ni and died on the spot. (Source: KIC)

On December 3 2002, troops from SPDC LIB 351 planted hundreds of landmines on the footpaths in Maw-nay-pwa area. (Source: KIC)

Pa-an District

On 24 December 2001, combined troops of an SPDC army unit led by column commander Tin Win and DKBA Brigade 999 led by Moe Joe, totaling about 100 troops, demanded 30,000 Kyat from Lo-baw village, 30,000 Kyat from Mae-plet-wah-khee village and 30,000 kyat from Day-law-pya village. These troops also looted 78 chickens, 7 goats, 4 pigs, 21 tins of rice and 6 Pyi of chili, and planted 40 landmines in Mae-plet-wah-khee area. On 26 December 2001 these troops burned down Mae-plet-wah-khee village and looted from Day-law-pya villagers 20 chickens, one goat and one pig. (Source: KIC)

On 1 July 2002, combined troops from SPDC LIB 205 column 2 led by major Kyaw Naing and DKBA 999 troops led by brigade second in command Kya In burned down the village of Ka-law-lu. As troops led by DKBA Ko Win and Bo Lweh Ka Paw from the combined troops planted land mines on hill ridges, near forest edges and the paddy field huts, said to be on the order of General Pah Nwee, the villagers had to stop working on their paddy fields. On that day, these troops fired heavy weapons at the hill paddy fields saying that the Karen resistance groups could hide in those places, making the villagers flee. (Source: KIC)

On 2 July 2002, combined Troops from SPDC LIB 205 column 2 led by Major Kyaw Naing and DKBA 999 troops led by Brigade second in command Kya In burnt down the village of Si-pah-day-khee. Later they planted land mines inside and outside of the village and around the paddy fields to discourage the villagers from going back and staying. Currently, there are eight villages, whose residents have been prohibited from working on their paddy fields. (Source: KIC)

On 4 July 2002, Naw Nge (F,18) from Oo-pu-tu village, Hlaing-bwe Township, was wounded by a land mine planted by DKBA 999 Ka Ba Min (aka) Lweh Ka Paw and lost one of her legs while she was going to the field hut after the departure of DKBA troops to get back her basket she had hidden and collect the buffaloes she had left grazing. (Source: KIC)

Mergui-Tavoy Division

On 10 May 2002, Maung Win Mying 25, son of U Sa Lay, of Zee village, Ye-buy Township, a cattle trader, stepped on a land mine planted by SPDC LIB 103, at Myin-kwa-nyo place in the Thai territory, and died on the spot. (Source: KIC)

Karenni State

On 12 August 2002, at 9:50 am, a Pswadoh villager named Tarmaw Mee, 48, was out looking for vegetables. He stepped on a landmine planted by Burmese troops from LIB No. 428. He died near Mawchi-Taungoo car road. After a friend of his informed his family, his wife Naw Nae Neh, accompanied by four villagers, went to look for his body the following morning and found it at 11:30. When they moved his dead body, another landmine exploded. The explosion seriously wounded two and left three others slightly injured. (Source: KNAHR)

On 14 September 2002, at 9:15am, a Hosakee villager, Saw Tarpae Leh (son of Saw Ne Hsei and Naw Marli), age 20, stepped on a landmine on the Mawchi-Taungoo road at Leh Laeper Point No. 78. The landmine had been laid by Burmese troops from LIB No. 307. (Source: KNAHR)

On 15 September 2002, a group of Pwadoh villagers were ordered by the Burmese commander from LIB No. 302 and 307 to work on the Mawchi-Taungoo Road. Tarmaw Pae, 35, stepped on a landmine that had been laid by the Burmese troops. Saw Thatu Meh, 30, lost his left leg, Saw Thar Paw, 35, was wounded in his right leg, Saw Lekee, 28, was hit in a left rib, both Saw Kaw Ba, 20, and Saw Tudu, 18, were wounded in the face. Tarmaw Pae's wife, who was 5 months pregnant, was wounded in the groin and calf and Naw Eh Paw was killed. (Source: KNAHR)

16.9 Interviews

Names: Three male and two female villagers aged 22 to 78 years
Residence: Mae Tha Mu tract, Haling Bwe Township, Pa-an district, Karen State
Occupation: Farmers
Nationality: Karen
Religion: Buddhist, Christian

(Source: FTUB)

On October 19th, 2002, a large army of about 400 SPDC troops, arrived with DKBA guides at our village. They demanded our village, Mae Tha Mu village, to select 45 male villagers to work as porters. The huge column then patrolled Ka Mar Hta, Kyaw Ta Lay Kho, Taray Poe Kwee, Htee Ta Blu Hta, Daw Ka Kyar, Mae Taw Khee, Paw Baw Khee, Wa Mee Klah, Haw Thoo Khee, Htee Par Rah and Htee Mu Khee villages collecting other villager porters, as well as 10 prisoners who wore blue shirts and sarongs. We were not allowed to talk each other during the trip, so, we did not know each others' names. The loads we had to carry were of shells/munitions, rice, pots, and other foodstuffs. Each load was between 15 to 20 viss¹. The troops ordered us to walk in front of the column as they were afraid of being ambushed.

Unfortunately, a porter from Wa Mee Klah village stepped on a landmine on October 20th, 2002, and the ball of his foot was injured. A DKBA soldier took a machete and cut off the leg from the calf down. He was then sent to the Myaing Gyi Ngu to be treated. His wound had not healed when he came back to his village, so he later went to a refugee camp in Thailand to get proper treatment. Along the same journey, two other villager porters stepped on landmines and both of them were immediately killed.

At that time the weather was still cold, and villagers hadn't brought their blankets with them. We had to follow the troops for one and a half months until December 2002, when we were released. At that time, the harvest season was almost over, and villager porters had by then lost some of their crops. The three land mine victims are-

1. Par Ngar 30 ys amputee 4 Children
2. Par Dee Doh 40 ys died 5 Children
3. Par Ngeh 25 ys died single.

From FTUB Htee Moo Hta area, Thingan Nyinaung, Karen State, Situation Report:

"Compared with previous years, our villages have suffered the most since November 2001. There were many landmines (around 1,000 landmines) laid by SPDC and DKBA soldiers at this time, the harvest period of the year. Because of a landmine, a monk who was invited for a Buddhist ceremony from another village was killed. A female villager (a former teacher) was killed by a landmine planted on her rice field. The last land mine victim was Pah Shwe Htee (48 years) from Htee Moo Hta. He stepped on a landmine on 7th February, 2002 and died. Landmines killed villagers' livestock too.

Later, Karen guerrillas arrived around our village and assisted to clear the landmines but they could not find all the mines. The SPDC and DKBA not only brought landmines to our village but also yar mar (Methamphetamine) when they started stationed in November. They have been selling villagers at a cheap price² or exchanging with the harvest."

A villager interviewed by Christian Solidarity Worldwide (CSW) reported:

"On 2nd March, the SPDC troops came to my home village in Karen State, just a few hours walk from the Thai border. The villagers tried to escape to the forest, taking with them what they could. When the troops arrived, they caught the chicken, killed the pigs and burned down some houses. They also destroyed the rice stocks.

"One villager was killed and two others maimed by the landmines planted by the soldiers. Three other villagers were forced to work as army porters, to walk ahead of the troops in the front line." (Source: CSW 8-5-2002)



"Premeditated Depayin Massacre"

Brief Background of Event

After her freedom from 19 months house arrest on May 6, 2002 Daw Aung San Suu Kyi began her organization trips outside of Rangoon. Her release from house arrest was unconditional and as approved by the SPDC she could freely travel throughout the country. Her first Rangoon precinct trip was to Shwe Pyi Thayar Township NLD head office on 17-5-2002 followed by trips to Daw-bon township NLD head office on 22-5-2002, on 24-5-2002, Kamayut Township NLD head-office, on 13-6-2002, as her fifth trip in Rangoon precinct, she visited Thakayta NLD head office.

Throughout the trip mentioned, she received overwhelming support from the people. She later made her upper Burma trips from 20-6-2002 to 29-6-2002 visiting (16) township in Mandalay and Magwe Divisions continued by trips to Mon and Karen States visiting 12 Townships from (14-10-2002 to 17-10-2002). She then visited 14 townships in Pegu Division from (13-11-2002 to 27-12-2002), 17 Townships in Shan States from (16-12-2002 to 24-12-2002), and 15 Townships in Arakan States, Magwe Division and Irrawaddy Division from (3-4-2003 to 13-4-2003). Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had experienced harassment from SPDC since 1996. The USDA had interrupted Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and caused her trouble throughout her journey in many ways.

Such plot against Daw Aung San Su Kyi had since been arranged in 1996 and was revealed by the SLORC/ SPDC Minister of Railways Transport Ministry and secretary of the USDA U Win Sein. On 1-11-96 at 14:00 hrs, in the compound of the Le Pyin village primary school which is about 1 mile away from Inndaw Township of Sagaing Division, the entire village USDA members' proposals submitting ceremony was held. U Win Sein who participated in the ceremony, delivered a speech to the attending villagers making strong personal attack on Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Furthermore he stated that the creator of the internal political disturbances, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, must be eradicated. **"Do you understand what is meant by Eradicated"? "Eradicated means to kill",** and added, **"Dare you kill Daw Suu Kyi?"**. He repeated this 5 or 6 times, but no one answered him. In addressing the people by microphone and raising the question dare you kill Daw Suu Kyi was heard not only by those attending the ceremony but also villagers in the village and by monks in the monastery. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was injured when she was brought by force back to Rangoon from above roadside. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car was put off the road by the authority during her trip to Irrawaddy Division in August 1998. Regarding this matter, NLD chairman U Aung Shwe informed Senior General Than Shwe by letter with letter No: 179/Cee (Nyein)/96 of 20.12.96.

Therefore it is obvious that since 1996 responsible personnel of USDA have been instigating the assassination of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and making verbal personal attacks on the General Secretary of the National Language for Democracy. The Depayin incident is indeed a practical move to bring about their intention. On 9.11.96, Saturday afternoon at about (15:35) hrs, leader of the NLD U Tin Oo, U Kyi Maung and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi left the entrance gate of Kanbawza manor and slowly headed southwards in 3 motor vehicles. Just about (15) feet from the entrance gate, at a bus stand, on the road, and on either side of the road was a group of people estimated to be round about (200). They had with them rocks, iron chains, iron rods that can kill people and attacked the motorcade in the manner of following

instruction from someone else. In the presence of the security members and in broad daylight, the attack was carried out like a country in anarchy.

Due to the attack, the back windshield of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car was cracked and the car of U Tin Oo and U Kyi Maung, the glasses on both sides of the back doors and the back windshield were totally damaged. The second attack had taken place at the intersection of the University avenue road and Than Lwin Road. The time was about (16:45) hrs. At that place were an army major, a police inspector and 10 motor vehicle police blocking the University Avenue road. The NLD cars in turning towards the Than Lwin Road, two men from near the officers rushed out throwing stones at the leader's cars moved close to the cars and stabbed with daggers. As the cars were moving no one was hurt, but it was a formidable plot. The attackers after committing a brutal and barbarous attack calmly went back towards the security officers. On 20-7-98, about (9:10)hrs, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and Central Executive Committee member and Chairman of the Irrawaddy Division organization Committee U Hla Pe set out on a trip by motor vehicles to Pantanaw Township, Irrawaddy Division to encourage and console the family of MP Dr. Tin Min Htut who was under detention. On the way at telegraph post No (106) of Rangoon-Bassein highway near Pandaing village her journey was disrupted by the authorities. At about (11:40) hrs on resuming her journey, she was again stopped at a place about 4 miles from where she was first halted near Anyarsu and Pandaing villages.

Round Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car was damaged in (9-11-96) attack by SPDC's thugs in Rangoon. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's motorcade was blocked by SPDC during her trip to Dala township in August 2000. about (14:10) hrs, the authorities brought Dr. Tin Min Htut to meet with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. With the consent of the authorities Dr. Tin Min Htut was taken back to Rangoon by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. On 24-7-98 at about (09:05) hrs Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, CEC U Hla Pe and party travelled to Bassein by motor vehicles to give moral support to the families of MPs who were detained under the 1961 Restriction of Movement and Probation of Habitual Act. They were halted at the thoroughfare near Pandaing and Anyarsu villages.

On 29-7-98 about (21:50) hrs at the place where they were stopped, security members of the authorities by using force mauled her into her car against her will and took her back to her home. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car was driven back by a member of the authorities without her permission. The remaining CEC member and 2 NLD staff were treated the same way as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and were taken back. Again on 12-8-98 Daw Aung San Suu Kyi with U Hla Pe, Central Executive Committee member and the chairman of the Irrawaddy Division Organization Committee, traveled by car peacefully on the public road to Bassein. On nearing Anyarsu-Pandaing villages of Htantabin Township, they were stopped on the way. After (13) days her health deteriorated, the CEC and other NLD members became anxious and on 24-8-98 took her back and arrived in Rangoon about (15:20) hrs.

On 24-8-2000 while Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and party were on their way to Dala Township in two motor vehicles, they were stopped by a group of policeman on the way. After detaining them for 9 days they were forcibly made to return by the authorities, on 1-9-2000. Within a matter of an hour, the NLD Headquarters was raided by the authorities. On 21.9.2000, while Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, and her colleagues were preparing to depart for Mandalay, they were halted by the authorities at the Rangoon Railway Station. After which she was put under house arrest until 6 May, 2002.

In 2002 of May 6th, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest and the SPDC declared that a new chapter had been opened in the history of Burma and every citizen could take part in political activities. And that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had passed the period of confidence building between the NLD and the SPDC. After receiving her freedom from house arrest and in her travels throughout the country, the support she received from the people was gaining momentum and in the same manner her harassments from the USDA was also rising. From 6.5.03 Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her entourage were on an organizational tour by motor vehicles according to schedule, from Rangoon to Mandalay. And then to Shwe Bo, Khin U, Kaw Lin, Wun Tho, Indaw, Katha, Mohnyin, Mogaung, Pa Kan, Tanaing, Namti, Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Bamaw, Shwe Gu, Momeik, Mogok, Thabeikkyin, Singu, Madaya, Mandalay, Myintmu, Monywa, Butalin, Depayin. During the tour, party signboards were put up at one State office and 12 Township offices and were able to form 9 Township youth organizations. While they were travelling on the road from one town to another, USDA member with posters shouted slogans and opposed them. On 16-5-03 when they were entering Myitkyina Township, about 300 people carrying 2"x 1" clubs, catapults and short choppers surrounded the motorcade of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her colleagues with hostility. The USDA had interrupted Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and caused her trouble throughout her journey in many ways. On 30-5-03 about 7:30 PM at a place two miles from Depayin a little further from Kyi village intersection at Phayarpyet village, a group of ruffians led by the authorities made a violent attack on her motorcade. The incident had been systematically premeditated by the authorities and carried out by their minions the USDA thugs.



Depayin Massacre site (Photo contributed by US Embassy in Rangoon)

Depayin Massacre

After her release from house arrest on May 6, 2002, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi journeyed to 95 townships during the time from June 11, 2002, to April 13, 2003, and reopened NLD offices. Beginning from May 6, 2003, she traveled to Mandalay Division, Sagaing Division, Kachin State and Shan State, and presided over the installation of signboards and opening of NLD offices. On May 29, she began the Mandalay-Monywa trip. Trips to Upper Burma were made, only after she had obtained prior permission and agreement from the SPDC1 and township election commissions. On May 29, at 9:00 a.m., a party of more than 100 persons in a convoy of 7 vehicles of NLD members, vehicles of supporters from Mandalay and more than 20 motorcycles set out for Sagaing, from due west of the 38th Street and south of the 84th Street of Mandalay. At the front, a scout car for security drove at a distance ahead of the convoy, and the car of Daw Suu, 2 cars of NLD members and those of the others, followed. The convoy reached the Sagaing Bridge at about 10:00 a.m. While it was passing the bridge and at the entrance to Sagaing Town, 800 members of the USDA3, on the left and right sides of the road, were holding placards with slogans "We don't want people who don't support USDA." They were also chanting the slogans exactly as they were written on the placards. After the convoy had passed these protesters, about 2,000 people from Sagaing who greeted the NLD leaders with, "Long live Daw Aung San Suu Kyi" and "Long live Ba Ba U Tin Oo." The entourage continued their journey after leaving Sagaing and arrived at Myinmu at about 12:00 noon. In the whole length of the journey, the traffic police and military intelligence unit members followed from behind the convoy and took pictures with video and still cameras. In Myinmu, signboard for Myinmu Township NLD office was installed and the Upper Burma Youth officer as well as MP-elect of Leway Township constituency, Ko Tin Tun Oo, presided over formation of Myinmu Township NLD Youths.

Then, the convoy left Myinmu for Monywa after 3:00 p.m. Before reaching Chaung U, a group assembled for protest against Daw Suu near Yeposar Village was seen by the security scout car. It tried to turn back so as to inform the convoy about the matter. However, as the crowd prevented it from turning back, the scout car had to go on to Monywa. When the scout car, on reaching Chaung U, related about the incident at Yeposar to a crowd of students and people from Monywa, who had come to welcome Daw Suu, the crowd riding on about 3,000 motorcycles rushed to Yeposar village. As there were about 6,000 supporters, the protesters were not able to do any mischief, and Daw Suu and the party was able to reach Monywa safely at 6 p.m..The town's people of Monywa and the local population warmly welcomed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD members. Though the government authorities had cut off power to the whole town, there was a rousing candle-lit welcome by the people, with shouts of " Long live Daw Suu; Long live Ba Ba U Tin Oo!" Daw Aung San Suu Kyi addressed the welcoming crowd in Monywa Town for about 40 minutes. After that, she retired for the night at the house of a former military officer and owner of Sein Hmyar Store of Monywa, U Kyi Soe.

On the morning of May 30, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi presided over the installation of signboard and reopening of Monywa Township NLD office, and then the formation of Monywa Township NLD Youths. Though Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her party members later went to Zawtika monastery of Monywa to pay respect to the abbot, they did not have a chance to do so, as the abbot had been invited away by the Army Northwest Command headquarters. After that, Daw Suu and the party went to Okkan Tawya monastery briefly. At about 10: a.m., departure was made for Butalin Town through the Circular Road of Monywa. When Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and party arrived near Zeedaw Village, military authorities

from the Northwest Command headquarters stopped the convoy including cars of the people of Monywa, who came along to send off Daw Suu and party. When Daw Suu and party arrived at Butalin, the ceremonies of installing the signboard and opening of Butalin Township NLD office, and formation of Butalin Township NLD Youths were performed. After that, the supporters from Monywa who came along with the party returned to Monywa. When they arrived at Zeedaw, which was near the Army Northwest Command headquarters, the police waiting in readiness beat them up and put them under arrest. At about 4:30 p.m., the entourage left Butalin for Depayin Town.

When it arrived at Saingpyin Village, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi went to the house of U Win Myint Aung, who was an MP-elect and who had been in prison, and gave a word of encouragement to the family members of U Win Myint Aung and NLD members of the village. On the way to Depayin, as the scout car for our convoy did not return, motorcycle riders were sent to find out about the situation. However, they also did not return. Then, the entourage continued the journey, and reached Kyi Village at about 7:30 - 8:00 p.m., where the massacre took place. From there, Depayin was only about 2 miles away. At Kyi Village, the villagers and local population came out to welcome Daw Suu and the NLD members. After passing Kyi Village for about 100 yards, the car with registration number Ar/5415 in which Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was riding, was at the forefront of the convoy, and behind that was the car in which U Tun Win (from Zaygyo) and U Khin Maung Thaung were riding. The third car (Hilux model, green color) was that of members of Mandalay Township Youths, who had the duty of providing close security. Behind that was the car of Sagaing Township MP-elect, Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt (Sunny, white color). Behind Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt's car was the car of members of Rangoon Division, NLD Central Youths security detail (Hilux model, white color) and behind the car of the Central Youths was the car of NLD Vice-Chairman U Tin Oo (Town Ace model, micro-bus) and behind U Tin Oo's car were cars of the NLD members, all in a line.

After passing Kyee village for about a hundred yards, by blocking the way in the front, two monks stopped Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car. When Central Youths security officer Ko Tun Zaw Zaw got off the car and asked about the reason, the two monks said, "We have been waiting for a long time. Ask Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to give a speech." In reply, Ko Tun Zaw Zaw explained that it was not possible because of lack of time. At that moment, attackers on 2 Dyna trucks and 2 Torlagi cars, altogether 4 vehicles, which had been tailing the convoy, repeatedly shouted "Relying on external forces, axe handles; people with negative views, we don't want!" So shouting, they alighted from their vehicles. In response to that, Kyi villagers, who had come out to welcome Daw Suu and the NLD members, shouted, "We the people, in turn, don't want you!" At that, the USDA members, their mercenaries, and the faked monks, who had got off from the Dyna and Torlagi asked, "What are you saying?" So asking, they started to attack the Kyi villagers with pointed iron rods, iron bars, bamboo sticks and wooden bats, which they had brought in advance with them.

As one of the attackers' Dyna trucks attempted to run over the people seen in the light of the cars, the villagers had to run in disorder. Then they gradually approached the convoy of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. At the mean time, about three thousand thugs holding the similar lethal weapons, who were laying in wait to attack beside the road appeared immediately. They joined the previous perpetrators and attacked the people in the cars of the convoy, including that of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, NLD supporters who were taking motorbikes, and the people who came along to send off the NLD, systematically. The killing field could be seen in the light of some Dyna trucks numbered at least four, that had been tailing the convoy.

The faked monks with red arm band and people in civilian clothes with white arm band while beating the women, they shouted, "Race destroying women; You want to be wives of Kala (A derogatory word for Indians and Westerners.) ; Before you make yourselves wives of Kala, become our wives." Shouting such unspeakable abuses, they beat on violently without ceasing. From the women victims who had fallen to the ground, they pulled their NLD uniform jackets and sarongs, and they wrapped the hair around their hands and bumped the faces against the tar road.

They rudely and savagely attacked until causing fatal injuries. They looted ornaments and cash from the victims. The attackers concentrated their savage assault on the right side of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car, where members of the Youths responsible for security stood, with linked hands, in tiers. Many members of the youth security detail were seriously injured. As they hit violently and repeatedly on the head, NLD photographer Tin Maung Oo and Ko Thein Toe was killed on the spot.

To terrorize the victims, the attackers violently struck the cars with iron bars and broke car windows by stabbing with pointed iron rods. In the vehicle, with registration number Ar/5415, were Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Ko Tun Zaw Zaw, the NLD Central Youths security officer, and car driver Kyaw Soe Lin, member of Mandalay Division NLD. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car had to rush out while members of youth security detail, giving close protection to Daw Suu's car, came under intense and violent attack. At the same time, the attackers launched a violent assault on the car of NLD Vice-Chairman U Tin Oo and then they seized U Tin Oo at the place of attack and took him away.

The victims who escaped from the first killing field near Kyi Village and fled towards Depayin were attacked again by more than 1,000 attackers, who were waiting ready on the left and right sides of the road, at a place near the compound of local Irrigation Department. It was a second killing field. It could also be seen with the spot lights already installed in the big rain trees beside the road and in the light of many Dyna Trucks that had been positioned by the authorities. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt narrowly escaped attack at the second killing field, because their cars rushed through the waiting crowd at high speed.

The reliable sources indicate that the authorities gathered and trained these terrorist attackers numbered about 5,000 comprising the USDA members and other criminals from the prison. [New Light of Myanmar, June 1, 2003 (SPDC, May 31 press conference)]

They attacked Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and party, as well as the local population, who came out to welcome her and the accompanying NLD members, using violence and terror, with the intention of causing grievous injuries and death to a large number of the innocent, defenseless and the unsuspecting civilians. It was learned that on the night of attack, after 11:00 p.m. about 80 riot policemen, with shields and sticks, in 4 Dyna trucks and 2 cars, that looked like Pajero jeeps, arrived at the scene of the attack. Two officers got off from the 2 smaller cars and inspected the scene of the attack. The policemen threw the bodies of the dead and the injured, as if they were garbage, into the trucks. The two Hilux pickup trucks left at the scene were pushed down into the rice field and then they set them up as if they had overturned. The other two Hilux pickup trucks were set up to look like as if they had had a head-on collision. Then they took pictures of them with video and still cameras, for the record. On the morning of May 31, an emergency police station was set up near the compound of the Irrigation Department not far from the place of the incident. In order to eliminate all the evidence, water

was brought in with municipal trucks and bloodstains and other marks were washed away by the policemen, using brooms.

Affidavit of Wunna Maung



I, Wunna Maung, hearby swear under oath that:

1. I am a citizen of Burma, holding National Identification Card No-9/MCS- (N) 003840. I was born on March 16, 1977. My parents are U Kyaw Maung and Daw Tin Win. I live in Htundone Myo Thit, Chan Mya Thar Zi township, Mandalay. I make this affidavit in support of my statement on Depayin Massacre, Burma, took place on May 30, 2003.
 2. I had applied for a membership in the Mandalay National League for Democracy (NLD) Youths. The NLD Vice-Chairman U Tin Oo himself said that we had been accepted as members. He continued to say that membership cards had not been issued to anyone due to prevailing situation and told us to continue to implement the Party's programs. As I had been elected by youths of Htundone Ward, I had to serve as Htundone Township Youth Organizer.
 3. For the organizing trip of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to Upper Burma, I had to serve as a youth security officer, according to the duty entrusted to me by Mandalay Division NLD. By security duty, it was meant that, the ones holding the duty had to take the responsibility of keeping a close watch on the travelling party during the whole journey in order to guard against any danger that might befall. Daw Suu entrusted security duty for the organizing trips within Mandalay Division to Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt, an elected MP of Sagaing Township Constituency No.2 in Mandalay Division.
- Accordingly, Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt, in turn, entrusted Youths of Mandalay Northeast, Northwest, Southeast and Southwest Townships, the duty to serve as reserve security units. For the security of Daw Suu, there were 17 members of Central Headquarters Youths who had accompanied Daw Suu from Rangoon. Whenever there was a break in the journey for rest, the Central Youths members took up position as the inner tier of security while Mandalay Township Youths members took up position as the outer tier.
4. Even before we started on the journey, we had learned that bamboo clubs troops units had been formed at the township USDA offices and training was being given with Ya-Ya-Ka chairmen serving as battalion commanders. We also learned that villagers were ordered, under a different pretext, to furnish meal packets for these trainees. For that reason, before departure on the journey, Daw Suu advised us to absolutely avoid any words or behavior that might lead to confrontation with the dictators.
 5. On May 29, at about 9 am, the long line of cars and motorcycles started out in a convoy from the back of 38th Street and drove along the 84th Street. In the car I was riding in, there were Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt, Ko Aye Win, Ko Wunna, Mandalay Northwest Township Secretary U Hla Than, Ko Aung Ko, Daw Khin Aye Myint, Daw Nyunt Nyunt, and Ko Thein Zaw. To serve as a scout, a car drove at a distance ahead of the main party. The party arrived at Sagaing, at about 10: 30 am.

6. At a bend before entering Sagaing Town and after passing over Sagaing Bridge, we saw, on both sides of the road, a group of about 600 people, holding placards with slogans, "We don't want people, who don't support USDA," and they were also chanting the slogans. At a moderate distance behind the group was a large crowd of people who were welcoming Daw Suu. When we saw the people in strength welcoming and supporting us enthusiastically, we also joyously responded to their greetings. To the shouts of "Long live Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Ba Ba U Tin Oo," we shouted in response, "Long live the people," and so on. The party did not take time to enter Sagaing Town and went on straight to Myinmu Town. The party reached Myinmu at about 12 noon and Daw Suu presided over the ceremony of installing the signboard and opening of Myinmu Township NLD office. After that, the Upper Burma Youth Organizer, Ko Tin Tun, presided over formation of Myinmu Township NLD Youths.

7. At about 3 pm, the party started to leave for Monywa Town. On the way we found more and more people in cars and on motorcycles coming to meet us. The party drove on in an orderly way and started to reach the entrance to Monywa at about 6 pm. As the crowd of people, coming to meet Daw Su in the town was so big that we could not reach the clock tower in the center of town, until 9:30 pm. In Monywa Daw Su addressed to the town elders and people for about 45 minutes and then the party retired for the night in Monywa Town. Daw Su slept in the house of one of the MP elects and the rest of the party found other places to retire.

8. On May 30, the party started to leave from Monywa for Butalin Town at 10:30 am. At the beginning of the journey, 10 cars and about 150 motorcycles from Monywa escorted the party. On reaching Butalin, the ceremony for installing the signboard and opening Butalin NLD Township office was held and Butalin NLD Youths was formed. At about 4:30 pm, the party started to leave Butalin for Depayin Town. On the way at Saing-pyin, Daw Su stopped to meet local NLD members and family members of U Win Myint Aung, an MP-elect, who had been held in prison, to give a word of encouragement and comfort. Before reaching Depayin, as the scout car going ahead of the party failed to return, motorcycle riders were sent to find out about the situation. However, the motorcycle riders also did not return.

9. At the exit of Monywa, our group, including Chairman U Tin Oo and Daw Su, went in to Zawti-ka Monastery of Monywa for paying respect to the abbot. However, the abbot was away and we continued our journey to Butalin. As we continued our journey, it was about 8:30 pm when we reached a place, near Kyi Village, between Saingpyin and Depayin, where the incident took place. At that time, there was only a car between the car we were in and Daw Suu's car. Daw Suu's car was at the forefront and in the middle was a car in which U Tun Win (from Zaygyo) and U Khin Maung Thaung were riding. Ours was the third car, which was (Hilux model, green color). Behind our car was that of MP-elect, Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt's (Sunny, white color). Behind that was the car of Central Youths (Hilux, white color) and behind the Central Youths' car was that of Vice-Chairman U Tin Oo's (micro-bus), and then cars of the NLD members, all in a line. After passing Kyee Village for about 300 feet, two Buddhist monks blocked the way stopping the vehicle in which Daw Suu was riding. At that moment, Ko Tun Zaw Zaw got off from the car and, when he inquired about the reason, the two monks said, "We have been waiting for a long time. Ask Daw Suu to give a speech." In response, Ko Tun Zaw Zaw explained that the "request could not be complied with as there was no time." While he was still explaining, two Dyna and two Torlagi trucks, altogether 4 trucks, full of people, came towards us from Monywa side. The people in the trucks, shouting over and over, the slogan, "Oppose those Relying on external forces, act as

stooges; holders of negative views," alighted from the vehicles. At that moment, villagers from Kyi shouted, "We, the people in return don't want you!" At that, the USDA members and their cohorts from the trucks shouted, "What are you saying?" And with that, they started attack on the villagers with irons spike, iron bars, bamboo clubs and wooden clubs, which they had brought with them, and we had to witness the incident helplessly with a bleeding heart. At that time, as a Dyna truck also was trying to run over anyone in sight, the Kyi villagers who had come to receive us, had to run in disorder. When the two monks, who blocked Daw Suu's car for a speech, were asked to stop what was happening, they said, "We won't be able to do anything," and "You may also drive on." Just at that moment, our cars started to come under attack. I took responsibility for security on the right side of Daw Suu's car. The disposition for security was that I was close to the right side of the body of Daw Suu's car. There was no one behind me. We were standing in a line side by side. As the cars were parked close to the right side of the road, there were only one or two of us on that side. Two monks, with red cloth wrapped around the arm down to the elbow, were standing close to us. They were not the initial two monks who had blocked the way. At that moment, we saw that all the cars behind were being battered by packs of attackers. We, members of security unit, were standing from two to three tiers on the left side to cover Daw Suu's car. All the USDA members and their hired hands, attacking our cars were drunk. We learned later that from the time of departure from Monywa, a half-drum, full of liquor, was put on their car, and anyone in the car was allowed to drink as much liquor as he wished.

10. For that reason, when they attacked our cars they did it inhumanly and they shouted also, "Are you death-defying force for Kala woman? If so die!" So shouting, they brutally struck down the youths. As there were few people on the right side of the car, the attackers concentrated their attack on the left side, and thus I escaped from the beating. When people on the other side of Daw Suu's car fell, the attackers struck down glass windows of the car. When the glasses were broken, they jabbed into the cars with the rods they were carrying. At that time we who remained shouted, "Daw Su, do run, run!" In the car, there were the driver, Kyaw Soe Lin, Ko Tun Zaw Zaw and Daw Su, only three. In the rear also, they attacked U Tin Oo's car in a pack, and I saw them seizing and taking away U Tin Oo. At that time, U Tin Oo was wounded on the head. Daw Suu escaped beating, because she did not get out of the car. If she did, the attackers would beat her to death, because the Sketch of the scene of the first killing field near Kyi village. attackers were totally drunk. They did not look like they were drunk on liquor but they looked like as if they were high on drugs. While the situation was in confusion, the attackers arrived near our car and in a pack, they rushed on to attack Daw Suu's car. They knew that we would not resist and I think, for that reason, they beat up with greater force and killed more.

11. They also beat up women in the third car (Hilux, green color), after pulling off their blouses and sarongs. When the victims covered in blood fell to the ground, I saw the attackers jumped on to them and wrapped the hair around their hands and pounded the heads against stone surface of the road, with all the force. I saw them behaving most inhumanly. I saw with my own eyes, earrings being forcibly taken from a woman who had fallen to the ground (Thanda Soe, second year student). The attackers uttered such base and sordid words like "You woman, wanting to be Kalas' wives, go ahead die! Before Kala, we will make you our wives. We have to build roads, repair roads, repair bridges and you want to be wives to Kala - die, die!" and went on brutally beating and attacking until the victims were dead. As the cars in the back kept their full headlights on, we saw all that happened. From my mind, I still cannot get rid of the sight of people, covered in blood, being beaten mercilessly and inhumanly.

12. After Daw Suu's car left, we also ran away. There were people fleeing on motorcycles and on foot. We were three, including a young monk. After running for a considerable distance, we could no longer continue to run. At that time, as we saw a car coming from behind and flagged it down. It happened to be a car from our group. All the three of us climbed onto the bonnet of the car.

Before we drove for long, we saw a group of USDA members and their henchmen waiting for us on the way. We also saw about 40-50 motorcycles being beaten. Hence, we had to turn around and run back. It was only about 10-minute drive from the place we were first beaten and to the place where they were waiting. We also saw traffic police from a distance. As there was no escape for us going forward or backward, we wheeled down to the side of the road at a place that seemed to be a branch road. However, it turned out to be a ditch. The car got stuck in the mud. All the people got off and gave a push. At first, it moved a bit. After moving forward for a while, the car got stuck entirely in a ditch. No amount of pushing moved the car. As we had not had our meal and as we had to run from the killing, we became completely exhausted and could no longer push the car. There were about 18 of us who had been in the car. We were members of Youths from Mandalay who had taken responsibility for security, including the Upper Burma Youth Affairs Officer Ko Tin Tun Oo, Deputy Officer Ko Myo Naing, Joint Officer Ko Hla Oo and Central Youth Ko Thein Soe. We could no longer care about the car and all of us tried to flee, away from the danger. Fortunately, the place we came to turned out to be a big bush. In our flight, Ko Tin Htut Oo and Ko Myo Naing failed to come with us. We saw there the people, who had fled before us. We find ourselves to be a total of 97 persons and 49 motorcycles. The ones we met were girl and boy students from Monywa and Sagaing, who had come with our convoy. The counting was done, of course, only in the morning. Two among the group turned out to be members of the gang that had attacked us, supposedly on the bidding of the USDA. They told us about themselves not because we asked them. They revealed their identity on their own volition. They explained, "We had never done such a thing in our life and since we could not bear to do such a thing, we came fleeing with you."

13. After counting all the persons and motorcycles, on the morning of May 31, we all went towards the main road at 5:00 am. At first, the motorcycles were forbidden from getting on to the main road but without success. They stubbornly went on to the main road. Ko Chit Yin and I remained behind. Among those who went on to the road was Ko Hla Oo. His head was fractured and his hand was broken. The police from their car fired guns to stop the motorcycles, which got on to the road. We could see from a distance the motorcycles that ran on to the road. At that time, we heard 7 gunshots. The one who saw all the happenings was Thanda Soe, as she had been on a tree near the road, in the flight from danger, starting from the previous night. From her place in the tree, she was able to see all that happened on that morning. Three novice monks and Thanda Soe were about to get on to the road, but as I called out to them, they turned around and returned to us. Ma Thanda Soe was from Mandalay and we had been in the same car. She was a second-year student. There were about 20 women who came all the way from Mandalay. At the time of reassembling, we found that the car, in which Pone Pone and Khin Ma Ma Tun were riding, was missing. We did not know where the rest of the women were.

14. As we did not get on to the road and just walked across the paddy fields, we reached a village called Yin-dwai. As the villagers fed us, we ate and took rest for a while. At that moment, as a child who came back from outside said to us that the village headman was asking about us, we started to set out from the village. After leaving the village and walking

in the fields for about 30 minutes in time, we met six other villagers. Those people took us to their field huts and looked after us for a night.

15. On June 1, at 5:00 am, we started out from a villager's field. I put on clothes of the farmers I met on the way, with which I exchanged my Kachin sarong and white shirt. A villager showed us the way, until we reached Hsin Inn Village in Shwebo Township. That villager had sent us for about 15 miles, and until we got to Hsin Inn, we had to walk through villages. We rode in a car from Hsin Inn to Shwebo. At Shwebo, I put up at a friend's house, temporarily. While in Shwebo, I met 8 persons who had come back from Depayin attack. They said, "While we were looking for jobs, a person took us to the USDA office. We were told that we would get 800 Kyat as daily wages, meals and liquor, and the job was to gang up and beat up a group of people." "As we were afraid of the officers in that office, we said 'Yes,' and gave our promise," explained the participants in the attack.

16. With regard to furnishing liquor, we saw about it from the time we got to Saingpyin. I left Shwebo at about 1:00 pm by bus to Mandalay, and reached Mandalay at about 3:30 pm.

Dated: July 4, 2003

Bangkok, Thailand;

Wunna Maung

Sworn to before me on this 4th of July, 2003

Affidavit of U Khin Zaw on Depayin Massacre



I, U Khin Zaw, hearby swears under oath that:

1. I am a citizen of Burma. I was born in Min Hla Town of Tharawaddy District, Pegu Division in the year of 1315 B.E., and now I am 50 years old. I am the third child among seven brothers and sisters of us. My father was Artist U Khin Soe and my mother is Daw Sein Than. In 1968, I appeared in the eighth standard school examination. In 1969, I moved to Rangoon. In Rangoon, I learned about gems from my uncle and I made a living as a gem trader and broker. I had never been in politics and had never been to jail. During the BSPP Era also, I never did anything in connection with government. I had been only a simple gem dealer.

2. I joined the NLD in 1998. The reason for joining the NLD was that after voting in the 1990 election, the whole family moved to Mandalay. There I met U Hla Win (AKA) Bo Mee Khae, who was related to me. U Hla Win was a native of Moenyo and he was with Gen. Aung San in the struggle for independence, during the British and Japanese times. He was working as a patron of the Mandalay Division NLD. We lived in the same compound and, through inquiry about each other's backgrounds, we came to learn that we were related. As a result of inspiration gained through this uncle U Hla Win's persuasion and my discontent with the military regime in power, there was a welling up of political courage in me and in 1998, I became a member of the NLD in the Southwest Township of Mandalay. Now, I am a full member of the NLD.

3. Responsibility in the Mandalay Division NLD: In September 2002, I started to perform my duty as Southwest Township Organizer. I had to attend regularly the township meetings. I attended without fail the ceremonies for special days such as the Martyrs' Day, the Union

Day, the Resistance Day etc. I also participated in literary functions. I had also participated in stage plays for raising social and political awareness. At ceremonies on such days as Union Day, I had the experience of reciting limericks. As there were difficulties, relating to our party in the domestic situation, even members who had joined the party before me did not have membership cards. I am included in that.

4. Our leader Daw Suu¹ was released from house arrest on May 6, 2002 and her first trip after the release was to Mandalay. When she came to Mandalay, the Mandalay Division NLD gathered the Township branches and we were given the responsibility for the security of our leader. The person supervising security arrangement was Chief of Mandalay Division NLD as well as MP elect, Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt, and we joined hands with him in taking responsibility for security. How did I have to perform my responsibility? ---Well we had to clear the way for our leader. We have to walk in front of the leader's car and clear people from the way. When our leader went to pay respect to Masoeyein Abbot, I had to personally assist her in alighting from the car. There were such little acts of responsibility constantly. At the lecture meeting held at the house of Ko Par Par Lay, I had to hold the footstool on which Daw Suu stood and gave a speech, to kept it steady from the beginning to end. If Daw Suu walked among the people, we had to link up our hands or arms and give protection. Of course, all the members who were on duty, had to stand on the sides, about two yards from the path of U Tin Oo and Daw Suu, and link up our hands or arms for giving protection. If some thing happened, if there was some one attempting assassination on Daw Suu, we had to give protection so that the danger might not to reach Daw Suu. In giving protection, we did not mean to use violence against a suspect as our leader did not like it and our party rules also banned the use of violence. For that reason, we had to find a way to prevent danger in advance as soon as there were signs of it, in conformity with the laws laid down by the military regime in power.

5. Due to the health situation of my wife, I could not participate in the earlier trips of our leader to Mogok and Maddaya, in the last Upper Burma organizing trip. As there had been no problem during the first Mandalay trip, I thought that there could not be any problem in Maddaya trip. When I heard that there were problems during Mogoke-Maddaya trip, I became worried. I decided to go on the next trip, which was the trip to Monywa. So, I was on the trip that started out from Mandalay on the 29th. According to what I had heard about the Maddaya trip, I decided not to go on the trip as part of the Northwest Township security detail but as a person in the guise of a civilian, in order to be able to size up the situation of the trip and so, I went riding on a youth's motorcycle, remaining at a distance behind the car-motorcycle convoy. I started out from Mandalay office on the 29th at 9 am.

6. On the day the trip started, there were quite a number of Mandalay Division top NLD leaders, going with Daw Suu. As far as I remember, there were Myingyan MP-elect U Paw Khin, Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt, who took responsibility for security together with me during the first Madalay trip, as to the women, there were Daw Win Mya Mya, Upper Burma Youth Affairs officer as well as Division-level leader Ko Myo Naing, and then Division-level leader who drove the car for Ba Ba U Tin Oo, U Aung Soe, Laeway MP-elect U Tin Htut Oo who was also Upper Burma Youth Affairs officer, and Joint Upper Burma Youth Affairs officer Ko Hla Oo. From Rangoon NLD, the central level leaders were Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Ba Ba U Tin Oo. These two were the main figures. There were also members of the Central Youths, who took responsibility for security. I do not know their names. There were people I know among members of the Youths, who were close to Daw Suu and responsible for security. From the Southwest Township, there were Ko Min Lwin, Ko Khin Oo from the

central headquarters, who had recited limericks with me, and photographer of central headquarters Ko Thein Soe. There were also women, but I do not know where they came from. I knew Ko Wunna Maung. When I went on an organizing trip to their township, he was on the list of 58 persons. I initially did not know that Wunna Maung was among members of the Youths who were responsible for the security during this trip of Daw Suu.

7. When we started out from Mandalay, there were a little more than 10 cars, including the cars of Daw Suu, U Tin Oo, ours, those of Mandalay Division and the cars of the ordinary people. There were a little more than 10 motorcycles. There were some Mandalay Sanghas² and some ordinary people. The strength was only about 400, when the travelling party started to leave from Mandalay. There was a Dyna truck-full of Snaghas, - about 40-50 monks. They were hired cars. I was on a motorcycle. When the party was about to depart from the Division office, Daw Suu talked for about 15 minutes. As I was at a distance, I could not hear clearly and did not know what was spoken about. After departure, the party crossed over the Sagaing Bridge at 10:00 am. At a bend near the entrance to Sagaing Town, there were about 600-700 people standing on the left and right sides of the road and holding placards. On the placards were slogans saying, "We don't want people who don't support USDA." The people were also chanting the slogans. I realized that they had started to provoke us with harassment and disruption. But there was no problem. After departure from Sagaing, we reached Myinmu at about 11:00, 12:00 am. In Myinmu, there were ceremony for installing NLD office signboard and other activities relating to the party. Daw Suu herself supervised the activities. The Sanghas of Mandalay had made arrangements with Sanghas of Myinmu, to protect Daw Suu's trip to Monywa. The Myinmu Sanghas came with the convoy, while Mandalay Sanghas returned to Mandalay.

8. As far as I know, we started to meet sizable number of people from Monywa at Chaung U. The party reached the entrance of Monywa after 3:00 p.m. At that time, the size of the party had increased considerably, because the people from Chaung U, Monyin Thanboddhay etc., including people on motorcycles and in cars, had joined the party, on the way from Myinmu. It was 9:00 p.m., when the party arrived at the center of Monywa. As the electricity had been cut off, the whole town was in darkness. When people started to light the candles, the size of the crowd was astonishing. I estimated it to be 3-4 hundred thousand. If we combined the people from Mandalay and about 400-500 people who came to meet us, after setting out from Myinmu, there would be about 700-800 people. There were people coming to join us in cars and on motorcycles on the way and the strength of the party gradually increased. When the party was headed for Monywa, our leaders' cars, cars of the security details, and the cars and motorcycles which came to send the party off, kept well to one side of the road and drove systematically.

When there was overtaking, of course, the whole road became full. There was no problem for the cars coming from the opposite direction. Sometimes, cars coming from the opposite direction even stopped to give way to the convoy. When we arrived at Monywa, hundreds of thousands of people gave us a candle-lit reception. We were given candles. Of course, we were among those who lighted the candles. The people, unceasingly shouted, "Long live Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo." I heard that in Monywa, Daw Suu slept in the house of an retired Col. U Kyi Soe. As I was separate, I went to sleep at a monastery.

9. Next day, in the morning, I got into town at 9:00 am. There, I heard that Daw Suu herself presided over formation of Youths in Monywa, and some pro-SPDC elements attempted to disrupt the ceremony. At about 10:00 a.m., Daw Suu went to two monasteries in Monywa, to

pay respects to the senior monks. After that, we started the journey for Butalin. Something unusual after the departure from Monywa was that when we arrived at Zeedaw Village, which was near Army Northwest Command headquarters, army personnel from the Command stopped the convoy. About 14-15 cars and 20-25 motorcycles carrying Sanghas, ordinary people and students, who had accompanied us, were not allowed to proceed with the convoy. The 10 plus cars and 20 plus motorcycles that had come from Mandalay were allowed to proceed. As a result, the cars and motorcycles which were not allowed to go further had to return to Monywa and the remaining strength of our party continuing the journey, including the leaders, was about 3-4 hundred persons.

10. On arrival at Butalin, we installed the signboard of Butalin Township NLD office and Leway MP-elect Ko Tin Htut Oo, who was the Upper Burma Youth Affairs officer as well as Division level leader, presided over the formation of the Butalin Township NLD Youths. Daw Suu had allocated four Youth Affairs officers for Upper Burma and four for Lower Burma. The four for Upper Burma were Ko Tin Tun Oo, U Myo Naing, Ko Tayza Naing from Sagaing Division and Ko Hla Oo from Mandalay Northeast Township. I had heard that U Tin Tun Oo and Ko Kyaw Soe Lin, who drove Daw Suu's car, were arrested.

11. After leaving Butalin, we reached Kyi Village at about 7:30 - 8:00 p.m.. To reach Depayin from Kyi Village, we still had to cover a distance of about 2 - 2 1/2 miles. The place we had arrived at was a jungle. However, it was not a jungle like those of Pegu Yoma. In the upper land, jungle meant clumps of bushes and thickets. The bushes were good for hiding. About 20- 25 persons could hide in a bush. Even a standing man in the bush could not be seen, as it was so thick. The motor road was on a flat land and the road was wide enough for two cars to easily pass each other. As it was about 8:00 p.m. when we arrived at the place where the incident took place, the surrounding was in pitch darkness. We could see in the headlights of our cars about 1,000 Kyi villagers, who had assembled to welcome us near the junction where the village road met the main road. At that time, the car in which Daw Suu was riding and about 10 other cars had already gone passed the village. The motorcycle I was riding on was at the end of the convoy. There were Dyna and Torlagi trucks following behind my motorcycle. While our motorcycle was passing the villagers by, cars in the convoy suddenly stopped.

12. At the time the cars stopped, I noticed that the group, which was going to disrupt Daw Suu's trip, was behind us. The people in the group held up iron bars, pointed iron rods, bamboo sticks and wooden bats, which they had brought with them and shouted, "You, destroyers of race, whores, who want to have Kalas as husbands; Don't become Kalas' wives, become my wife!" etc. At the same time, I heard Kyee villagers countering by shouting, "You are the real destroyers of race, wreckers, act as stooges!" Then the people with weapons jumped down from their trucks and started attacking the villagers, who were welcoming Daw Suu. I did not notice exactly when the attackers started to tail the convoy. I think, these Buddhist monks were faked monks who had followed us from the Army Northwest Command, because most of the Sanghas who were accompanying us had been sent back to Monywa, as I have mentioned earlier, by personnel of the Army Northwest Command headquarters, based near Zeedaw Village. At first, we thought the monks on the Dyna and Torlagi trucks were the ones who had been accompanying us. However, we saw them taking out red cloths and wrapped them around their arms down to the elbow level. Accordingly, it was clear that they had planned in advance for the attack. I think, wrapping red cloth around the arm was an arrangement to prevent mistaken attack and to make them distinct from the monks who had accompanied us. While the commotion was thus taking place, the thugs, who

had hidden in the bushes in advance, came to join forces with those who had come in the trucks. They were also armed with iron bars, pointed iron rods, bamboo sticks and wooden bats. They numbered about three thousand and the weapons they were carrying were the same as the ones carried by those who had come in the trucks. As the cars in the rear kept their headlights on, we were able to see the actions going on and the sounds and voices. We could not see the people clearly, as we were looking from a distance of about 100 yards. It was a gigantic mass of people. Kyi villagers were near the scene and they were the first who had to bear the beating, as they were the ones who exchanged hostile words with the attackers coming down from the Dyna and Torlagi trucks. For that reason, the USDA members beat them up with malice. The place where Daw Suu car was parked was quite a distance from where I was.

13. While the attack was taking place, those who came on motorcycles took flight after abandoning their bikes. Some were struck down in their attempt to flee. At that time, no one could care about his motorcycle any longer. It was a time when everyone had to run for his life. At first, I did think about helping our leaders and our NLD members. On second thought, I realized that I would surely die before I got to my leaders and my NLD members, because I had first to pass through the killing ground. It was frightening even to imagine. Before my own eyes, people were being beaten savagely. I was hearing the wounded, dying victims moaning and wailing in pain, shrieking in agony, and crying out for help. At that time, as the attackers from the Dyna trucks were shouting unspeakable abuses, it was just like the hell boiling over. I saw with my own eyes the attackers striking down the victims with all the force and stabbing viciously with pointed iron rods. Truly, it was a murderous attack. The beating was done until the victims died.

14. I heard that U Tin Maung Oo of Southwest Township, Mandalay, was suffering from bleeding in the ears, as a result of the beating. Now, his name is on the list of those who died. He was Organizer for our Southwest Township as well as Mandalay Division headquarters photographer. Another one was Ko Thein Toe Aye, who was Candidate Organizer for our Township. His name also is on the list of those who died. It appeared that the attackers were systematically trained. They mainly aimed and struck on the head. Even when I was at a hundred yards, I heard with anguishing pain, the popping sounds of heads being broken by savage blows.

15. At about 9:00 p.m. on that night, two elders from Kyee Village came to me and one of them said, "My lad, you'd better come with me. You should not remain here." So saying they took me to the village, and from there I was sent, stage by stage, to Monywa. I had to sleep 2 nights on the way. I avoided going into Monywa and instead, I stayed in Kyaukka, a village outside of the town. From there, on June 4, I traveled back to Mandalay by bus. When I reached home in Mandalay, I saw my wife laid up in bed, as she became debilitated with illness, after hearing the news of us being beaten and slaughtered. For that reason, I took my sick wife and left urgently on the same night for Rangoon by 8:30 p.m., mail train. When I reached Rangoon, I stayed in hiding at a friend's house.

16. On the morning of June 13, my friends informed me that my father U Khin Soe, aged 76, passed away at 11 p.m., on the night of June 12. After deciding to send off my father on his last journey, even if I got arrested, I left Rangoon in the evening of June 13, by 5:00 p.m., express train, for Mandalay. I reached Mandalay on the morning of June 14, at 9:00 am, well in time for the funeral of my father. My relatives told me that my father died of grief caused by the arrest of his brother and the uncertainty as to whether I was dead or alive.

17. As soon as I arrived in Mandalay, my close relatives and friends told me that the military intelligence men had the intention to arrest me and they had subjected some of my friends to interrogation. At 2:00 p.m., the remain of my father was taken from Htundone Ward to Dagundaing Taung Myint cemetery for cremation. On return to Htundone, as I learned on the way that the military intelligence men were waiting for me at my house, I went and hid in a friend's house. From there, I arrived at a place in the liberated area, on the Thai-Burma border, on June 16.

Dated: July 4, 2003

Bangkok, Thailand;

U Khin Zaw

Sworn to before me of this 4th of July, 2003

Affidavit of Maung Po Zaw on Depayin Massacre



I, Maung Po Zaw, hearby swear under oath that:

1. I, son of U Than Maung and Daw Mya Kyin, am a citizen of Burma, holding National Identification Card No Ma Ma Na (Naing) 139877. I am 23 years old residing at Ba Ba Lay Ward, Mya-yi-nanda Myothit Town, Mandalay, Burma.

2. I had never been involved in politics. I applied for membership in the NLD only two weeks before Daw Aung [San Suu Kyi's trip to Mandalay. While Daw Suu was staying in Mandalay, I was given nighttime security duty for two nights. Daw Suu came to Mandalay on May 26.

On the next day on May 27, she went to Dada U. During Dada U trip, persons who took security duty with me included Ko Win Kyi, Ko Pone Myint Zaw, Ko Wunna Maung, Ko Aye Win, Ko Yeh Min San, U Myint and Ko Soe. I went together with Zaw Zaw Aung, Ko Tin Aung Myint and U Tway from Southwest Township on May 29 for Mandalay-Monywa trip. On that trip, I did not take security duty for Daw Suu. Due to shortage of vehicle, only two from each township were allowed to come for security duty. However, responsible persons explained that some could come on their own expenses. Accordingly, some went with the traveling party on their own arrangement. On the Mandalay-Monywa trip, the main responsibility for Daw Suu's security was taken by members of the NLD Central Youths.

3. The Mandalay NLD members and the people who went with Daw Suu on the trip were transported in a total of about 20-30 cars and motorcycles. The car I rode in was a 'Sunny', pickup truck. In the journey from Mandalay to Sagaing, there was nothing particular, initially. However, after passing Sagaing Bridge, we started to see a crowd of about 100 people and heard them shouting, "We don't want Daw Aung San Suu Kyi." We continued to travel from Sagaing to Myinmu. We reached Myinmu after 12:00 noon. In Myinmu, the activities of installing the signboard and opening of Myinmu Township NLD office, and formation of Youths were made. We continued our journey from Myinmu at about 3:00 p.m. Before reaching Chaung U, we saw a crowd of about 170 to 180 people, holding placards, near Ye Bu Sun Village. That crowd started to hurl abuses and provoke by poking placards into the cars. On the placards were the slogans saying, "Relying on external elements, acting as stooges, NLD we don't want" etc. Consequently, the people from Myinmu who had come with the party and the Sanghas² from Monywa who had come to welcome us, requested them not to do like that. However, the placard bearers did not listen. They even started to increase

their behaviors of provocation. At that time, there were police cars and authorities were among the bushes on the left side of the road. They did not try to settle the squabble between the Sanghas and the placard bearers, and just kept on watching. When the Sanghas could not prevent the acts of provocation, they started punching the placard bearers, who then turned around and departed. At the place of that incident, there were no villagers or other people. As we continued on our journey, the noisy protesters followed behind us in their own cars. At a village (name unknown) on the way between Myinmu and Monywa, we learned from the villagers that the authorities had ordered the local population not to go out and welcome Daw Suu, when she came. At that village, we saw a number of people who were systematically lined up for protest against Daw Suu. Behind the line of people, there were two policemen in uniform, keeping watch. On the village entrance road, we saw a number of traffic policemen. Though the villagers were ordered not to come out to the road and welcome Daw Suu, they ignored the order and the entire village came out to welcome her. At that time, when the protesters saw the villagers and Sanghas in force, they remained silent, put down their placards and kept their heads bowed. I saw that, persons in the cars tailing behind our convoy were taking, with video and still cameras, pictures of the villagers clapping their hands and greeting us.

4. From Chaung U to the entrance of Monywa, I saw people on 200-300 motorcycles from Monywa coming out to welcome Daw Suu. Those cars and motorcycles drove systematically keeping to their own lanes. In Monywa, as the authorities had cut off power for the whole town, the people gave our party a candle-lit welcome. We reached Monywa at about 6:00 p.m. At about 10:30 – 11 p.m. ceremony for installing the signboard and opening of Monywa Township NLD office was performed. At about 9:00 am on May 30, the party went to Zawtika monastery of Monywa to pay respect to the abbot, but as the abbot was away, we failed to see him. Therefore, we left for Butalin Town. Before our cars left Monywa, I saw on the left of our car, a police inspector and people with meal packs, in a Mandalay-Monywa bus (converted Dyna truck), who were going to hold protest against Daw Suu. According to a schoolteacher of Monywa, people who offered themselves to protest against Daw Suu were given free meals and 500 Kyats per day. At the time of departure from Monywa, there were about 12 cars of Daw Suu and NLD members. Behind our car was the car, in which the women NLD members were riding, and in the front seat of it was Daw Win Mya Mya and about 12 men and women were in the back. Monks and novices were in the last car.

5. When we left Monywa, there was still nothing unusual. On arrival in Butalin, the ceremonies for installing signboard, opening Butalin Township NLD office and formation of NLD Youths were performed. From there, we left for Saingpyin at about 6:00 p.m. In Saingpyin, Daw Suu gave a speech for about 30 minutes. Then, we left for Depehyin. At that time, there were 9 cars in front of our car and 2 behind. When we arrived near Pyankya Village, I saw about 20 busses, each of which could carry 40 persons, trailing at a moderate distance behind our convoy. When we arrived near Kyi Village, 2 monks stopped the car in which Daw Suu was riding and advised Daw Suu to give a speech. Then I saw Central Youths security detail leader appealing for pardon, as no speech could be given due to lack of time. Then, the cars moved on a little. At that time, protesters trailing at a distance behind us got off their cars and started to attack the local people with wooden bats, pointed iron rods, iron bars and bamboo sticks which they had brought with them. Daw Suu told our cars to stop. While the attack was in progress, 3-4 villagers shouted, "Daw Suu please help us!" and arrived at the place where our cars were. At that time, when Dr. Hla Soe Nyunt asked help from the two monks, they replied that it was impossible. On that day, the local authorities had come in advance and forbidden, with threats or with a promise to make offerings, all monks

of the monasteries near Kyi village, to go out and welcome Daw Suu and NLD members when they arrived, give assistance or come out even if any problem arose. The monk explained that as they were forbidden like that help could not be obtained and that all communication lines had been sealed.

6. In order to document the beating of villagers on the video, attempt was made to line up the motorcycles and light up the area with their headlights. In the light from the motorcycles, we saw the attackers holding up wooden bats, iron bars, pointed iron rods bamboo sticks and shouting. At that moment, the sound of a whistle was heard, and led by monks in red armbands, they shouted and charged towards us. While we were still dumbstruck on seeing the charge, they started attacking the last pickup truck, in which the monks and novices were.

7. After that, I saw them attacked almost simultaneously the car in which Daw Win Mya Mya and the women were riding. As things were happening like that, some got off from the cars and ran into the fields and some along the road. As people were running in all directions, our convoy of cars, including the car of Daw Suu, remained behind. At the same time, there was shouting that Daw Suu's car was under attack, and the crowd of people, which was in the front turned around and came back. While the crowd reached near Daw Suu's car, I saw the car dash out from the pack attacking it. On the car, I saw 8-9 members of Central Youths standing on steps on the sides of the car, facing one another with linked hands, and giving protection. As others cars started to follow Daw Suu's car immediately, those running jumped on to the nearest car. As the car was full, I climbed on to the roof. As we drove on for about 10 minutes, because of the sound of our cars, the cars systematically parked in the fields on the left and right sides of the roads, turned on their headlights simultaneously. As I was on the roof of the car, I could see in the light from the headlights people with bats, iron bars, bamboo sticks and pointed iron rods, waiting ready for us. When Daw Suu's car reached among the waiting attackers, they flung at the car with sticks, brickbats and iron bars they were holding in their hands and shot at it with catapults. In a pack, the ones in range also hit at it.

8. At the time when Daw Suu's car passed through the attacking crowd, our car started to enter it. Just as our car tried to rush through the crowd, a Dyna truck parked on the side of the road for the purpose of blocking charged in to hit our car. While trying to avoid collision, our car fell off the side of the road and arrived at the front of the crowd. While our car was veering, I jumped off from the roof on to the ground. While our car veered round to get back on the road, I managed to get in at the back of the car, after catching the rails on the sides. While I was trying to get back in the car, a stick thrown at me hit me in my back. The canvas sheets covering the sides of the car were taken down while the car was driving on. We were beaten for about 2 minutes by the attacking crowd. As people in the back of the car were lying flat on the floor, only persons on top got most of the beating. After driving for a few minutes, we reached Depayin hospital. The members of the NLD Youths did not respond in kind the terrorist attack made by the crowd waiting in readiness. Daw Suu had told us that if we were wearing the NLD uniform of white shirt and Kachin Sarong, we had to bear with a bowed head, whatever was done to us, and must not retaliate.

9. When we arrived at Depayin hospital, from our group Ko Soe (arm, knee, foot), Ko Myint U(head fractured), A student from Monywa, name unknown, (head fractured), Rev. Ashinpyinnya Depa, a monk from Yankin monastery (fractured head and elbow), 2 women NLD members from Monywa, names unknown (wounds in the head), Ko Myint Soe of Saingpyin Village, who had run away from the incident, and a person from Mandalay

Southwest Township. All had to be treated as in-patients as the injuries were serious, except the one from Mandalay Southwest Township, whose injuries were light. On the second day of having treatment at the hospital, May 31, 2 traffic policemen came and took away the car driver. Then a police inspector and a policeman arrived on a motorcycle. They came to get the list of in-patients at the hospital from township hospital doctor. The patients were checked against the list and addresses of the patients were noted down.

10. After the list of patients was taken, Ko Soe said to me, "They've taken the patient list, but your name is not on it. So, you'd better leave and inform responsible persons." At about 5:00 p.m., the police inspector and 5 policemen came again to the hospital, in a car. All the people on the list were taken for detention. After sleeping 2 nights and staying 3 days, on June 1 at 3:00 in the morning, I left the hospital, with a friend, for Depayin railway station. On arrival at the station, my friend and I bought train tickets and took the train to Monywa. We arrived at Monywa at 10:00 a.m. After arriving in Monywa, I went round and inquired about the bus to go on to Mandalay. I found out that busses were banned for 10 days from going to Mandalay starting from May 30, and there was night time curfew in Monywa. I arrived back Mandalay on June 1 at 6:00 p.m.

Dated: July 4, 2003

Bangkok, Thailand;

Po Zaw

Sworn to before me on this 4th of July, 2003

Affidavit of Ko Chit San on Depayin Massacre



I, Ko Chit San, hereby swear under oath that:

- 1.** I, son of U Kyaw Hla and Daw Thein Tin, am a citizen of Burma, holding National Identification Card No Ma-Ya-Ta (Naing) 084649. I am 36 years old residing at Yatanabonmi Quarter, Maha Aungmyay township Mandalay. I am a car driver.
- 2.** On May - 28 about (8) a.m. in the morning car owner Ko Myint came and asked me to help drive his car No B/5671. He has applied NLD membership for 4 months already but was not issued membership card as yet due to security reason. I accepted his request.
- 3.** On May – 29 about 8 am in the morning, I arrived at the Mandalay Division NLD office which is situated at the corner of 38 and 79 street and reported myself. I then went to the car which I was to drive. At 9 am we left by the Mandalay-Sagaing Road. When we left Mandalay, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi' car, NLD Central Youth's car, NLD V/Chairman U Tin Oo's car and cars from Mandalay came along as security, 5 cars were in front of me. Altogether there were about 20 cars and many motorcycles. Before reaching Sagaing there was no disturbance.
- 4.** After crossing the Sagaing Bridge and on entering the town, there was about (50) people on either side of the road standing with posters, "We don't want Daw Aung San Suu Kyi – We don't want Kalar's wife". As there were monks in the motorcade the protestors did not cause trouble.

5. We resumed our journey from Sagaing and arrived at Myinmu town at 11: 45 am. In front of the Myinmu NLD office by the roadside under a tree I saw USDA leader sitting in seats waiting and (50) USDA members with loud speaker in a Dyna car. They wore USDA uniforms, green sarongs and white shirts. As there were monks who came along from Mandalay and monks from Myinmu, they could do nothing. The opening of Myinmu office and the putting up of NLD signboard ceremony was held. I was in my car and did not know about the ceremony in detail.

6. We left Myinmu about 3 pm and arrived Chaung U about 4:30 pm. We took rest for a while and then continued our Journey to Monywa. On reaching Chaung U, I began to see people from Monywa came to greet us with about (70) or (80) cars and motorbikes. As there were cars in front of me, I did not know for certain. We entered Monywa at about 6 pm. As there was a black out in the town, I could see the welcoming people had lighted candles with them. After reaching the Monywa NLD office, those who were with me in my car went to put up for the night at a monastery. As I had taken the duty of a driver, I had to be with my car all the time.

7. On May 30 at about 9 am, we resumed our journey from Monywa to Butalin. In reaching Saingpyin village, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi gave a speech to the villagers, who came to welcome us and then continued the journey to Depayin at about 6 pm. We arrived at Kyi village, the place of the incident about 8 pm. After a few moments in passing Kyi village, the cars going in front stopped. Then from behind the motorcade shouting and swearing voices could be heard. "You walked on the road we built, you crossed the bridge we built, wives of Kalar, we will kill you with clubs. We have watched Chinese martial arts movies". With these barbarous words, they began to beat the people in the motorcades. They also beat our car. I witnessed through the rear view mirror in my car that the two victims, who were in my car, fell down to the ground as they were stabbed with iron spikes. The thugs were those who were rather tall. They were wearing gray-headed clothes. Their eyes were red in colour.

8. I did not know that the person sitting at my left side was attacked with which weapon. Yelling loudly, he fell on me. At the mean time, the thugs attacked the right side of my car in which I was sitting. They also struck down the window and front mirrors of my car. Then, I attempted to leave my car. As I energetically kicked the door of my car with my two legs, the attacker who was beating my car fell down to the ground. Then, I got off the car and attempted to drag the injured out. Unfortunately, it failed. The body of that victim could not respond anything. At that time, the attacker, who fell down to the ground, beat my right leg. As such, I could not continue my efforts to take the body of that victim out. At the time of the attack, I saw the killing field manifestly in the light of Dyna trucks. Then, I had to run away through the fields, where car spot lights could not reach. Subsequently, I wondered whether I had to continue running or get back to see the killing field again. After that, I decided to get back to that incident area. I watched the scene of crime from a distance. The thugs repeatedly beat the victims until they died. I also heard shouting, swearing, crying and asking for assistance. It took for such a long time. I could not estimate how long it was as I did not have my watch.

9. Then, about 80 policemen, holding shields and wooden clubs, got to that area in four Dyna cars. After that, the two cars, that were rather similar to Pajero Mitsubishi, chased the previous convoy, and arrived at that areas. The two officers got off the car and checked the killing field. Hiding under cover of night, I witnessed that the 80 policemen threw the bodies of the dead and the injured, as if they were garbage, into the trucks. I could clearly see view

in the lights of trucks, that had been to that area before, and others that got to there later, although I could not discriminate the persons who is who. The two Hilux pickup trucks left at the scene were pushed down into the rice field and then they set them up as if they had overturned. The other two Hilux pickup trucks were set up to look like as if they had had a head-on collision. Then they took pictures of them with video and still cameras, for the record. After that, I left that area so that I could find a venue to hide for a night.

10. After three hours walk, I reached Shwe-ku-ni monastery in Kyaukka village. With the permission of abbot, I slept there. In the morning of the next day, May 31, 2003, I returned to the killing field again. I saw that an emergency police station No 2 was opened near the campus of irrigation department, that was closed to the killing field. In order to eliminate all the evidence, water was brought in with municipal trucks and bloodstains and other marks were washed away by the policemen, using brooms. At the mean time, except those official cars, I did not see any vehicle passing through the tar road. I took a walk from Kyaukka to Monya town. After that, I got to Mandalay from Monywa on June 5.

11. I provide the abovementioned statements from paragraph (1) to (8), based on my personal experience at the scene of crime. I did it on my own free will, without being forced, threaten or persuaded by any influential person or persons.

Dated: July 4, 2003

Bangkok, Thailand;

Ko Chit San

Sworn to before me on this 4th of July, 2003

Appendix I

Translation of interview with Zaw Zaw Aung, head of NLD Youth Wing, Mandalay Division about the brutal attack on May 30, 2003



He was together with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi when they were attacked.

If you would like to listen the interview in Burmese, please visit (<http://www.nldla—australia.org>)

Q. You were in the midst of the attack on Daw Suu's motorcade at Depayin township in Sagaing Division and escaped luckily. What time did you leave Butalin for Depayin?

A. Round about 5 pm.

Q. At about what time did you reach Kyi Ywa village?

A. About 8 pm.

Q. Where there people on the road to greet Daw Aung San Suu Kyi?

A. Yes, We responded and spoke to the people.

Q. Were people who shouted and opposed Daw Aung San Suu Kyi there?

A. I heard on such shouting.

Q. It was 8 pm. when you arrived at KyiYwa [Kyi village]. How large a number of people were there to greet and welcome you all?

A. I estimated about 3000. Could be 4 or 5 thousand.

Q. Is it a big village?

A. Yes, it is.

Q. Aer there jungles surrounding Kyi Ywa?

A. There are paddy fields.

Q. Did you hear any opposing voices in the crowd that was out there to welcome you all?

A. No, I did not hear any opposing voice.

Q. Were there any posters etc. of dissent?

A. No.

Q. For how long did Daw Suu address the people?

A. Nearly 10 minutes.

Q. Again, all went on from there?

A. We had not gone very far. About 200 yards from the villagers – the car behind had not caught up with us as yet. We were not far from the villagers. They had not yet dispersed. Then, two monks and three laymen stood in front of Daw Suu's car stopping it from proceeding. They asked Daw Suu to speak to the people.

Q. Instead of coming to place where the people had already assembled?

A. They could have joined the people, instead they stood and waited at a distance.

Q. Stood and waited, then asked for a speech?

A. Yes, they asked her to step out and speak. It was getting late. We had to go on to Depayin also. So, the NLD member who was in Daw Suu's car said "Revered monk, it is very late and there is no time. Please excuse your disciples." But the monks did not leave. They were looking back and said. "The people in our group are worthless." We got out of the car and stood around to protect Daw Suu. Then the monk said, "My people will be following up. Listen to a monk's words. "Give your speech to them". We requested them to let us pass through but they insisted that we stay. Then, the place was lit up by light from car head light and we saw about 7 cars.

Q. For how long did they do this?

A. It could have been not less than two hours. They went around all the cars and vehicles and watched to see if there were any movement and looked on at those with injuries.

Q. What about Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car?

A. Very soon after all this started five cars, including Daw Su's and U Tin Oo's car drove off to them front. The Youth Wing Security car and our Mandalay Division car too.

Q. So they escaped from Kyi Ywa and you were left behind? So the beating took place for about two hours after they had driven off?

A. Yes, it was more than two hours.

Q. Can you estimate how many died or wounded as a result of that attack?
posing voices.

A. More than 20 persons. I am talking about what happened at Kyi Ywa. What happened after that I am not sure.

Q. So, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's car got away. Then again at Depayin the same thing happened?

A. Yes, the young people from there fled and I met them. They were attacked with spears, wooden, bamboo clubs and irons rods. They saw students with hands tied up being led away and their cycles confiscated. This person's cycle was taken but he managed to escape.

Q. Information had been received that gunshots were heard there.

A. Yes, we heard the gun shots. It was between midnight and 1 am. We were deeply worried for our Auntie Suu and Uncle U Tin Oo. Without any shooting here about 20 or so died and sustained injuries. With shooting it could be worse. More could die.

Q. Did these attackers go forward or did they retreat?

A. It appears to be a separate group. They turned and dispersed.

Q. When was that?

A. After 10 pm.

Q. Then, how did you escape?

A. I was lucky. I escaped without any injury. I fled and crossed the paddy fields to Monywa.

Q. When you escaped what did the USDA do after they retreated?

A. Even though I was not hurt, I was shaken and very distressed. It was about 10:30. I saw person on a cycle. Likely he came to see the spectacle. He stood and looked at the dead and after some time he departed. Then about 10:45, three Hino buses arrived without any passengers. They saw the injured and the dead, the line of cars. They turned back and left.

Q. So, those injured and the dead were left lying there?

A. Yes, I saw some being taken away on cars.

Q. In the end what happened?

A. I was not steady on my feet. I looked on. At about 12:45 (I had my watch on so I knew the time) members of the police force, the fire brigade, local authorities put the injured and dead bodies onto the motor vehicles. Then what astonished me most was that our car that was heading west for Depayin was pushed so that it appeared to be heading south and shoved down the ditch. Another car was pushed into the ditch. This was a deliberate act to create a different scene. I witnessed this with my own eyes.

Q. To look like two cars collided?

A. Yes, to appear that away. I couldn't believe my eyes. I remember this very clearly. Then some cars with injured people drove off towards Depayin. Some cars went in the other direction. About 30 persons remained. I couldn't say definitely if they were the police or the USDA because they all wore the same uniform. They pushed the cars towards Ye U side.

Q. Were these cars in which NLD members traveled?

A. Yes, They pushed them. Then we could hear them removing steel parts from them.

Q. All these happened in Kyi Ywa? You don't know what happened in Depayin?

A. I have no idea.

Q. Earlier you said that you heard gun shots from the place towards which the cars were heading after this incident. Some did not say so. Some said they saw. It looked like there was another party of attackers.

A. Yes, that is definite. Because we heard those shots and eyewitnesses had spoken about it.

Q. Thank you for giving us this information.

A. It is an account of what we know. If they fired guns many would have died. It must be worse than what happened here.

Q. Later even must have been worse.

A. Yes, we have experienced a very serious attack.

Thank you.

Daw Nyunt Nyunt's evidence relating to the Depayin episode.

Name:	Daw Nyunt Nyunt
Age:	51
Race:	Burmese
Native of:	Maymyo
Religion:	Buddhist
Name of spouse:	U Aung Naing U (Mandalay)

I became a member of the National League for Democracy in 1989 and a member of the organizing committee of Mandalay North West township.

During Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's recent political tour of Northern Burma, I was with the group that joined her entourage from Mandalay on her return from Mogok.

1. We started to leave Monywa at about 10 a.m. There was a big crowd at the place where Daw Suu paused so she gave a short address and departed. She paused at Gyobyukyaung monastery to do obeisance to the monk. A lot of people had followed her. We all call Daw Aung San Suu Kyi Ahma (big sister). So that we would not have such a big crowd with us we decided to split. We were with Daw Suu in one group. Uncle U Tin U formed the other group. We went towards Butalin junction. We had to run through the crowd. We had to run because if we had the crowd following us, we could be delayed. That is where we split up and traveled separately. At Butalin junction I saw (USDA) cars with loud speakers. I saw posters. We had a lot of cyclists and people behind us so they did not give us trouble. They (USDA) watched us from the side of the road. It was about 1:30 or 2 when we arrived at Butalin.

2. At Butalin, Ahma established the Youth Wing. We had food and rest for about two hours. The cyclist groups also rested in the vicinity. The area was small so we went to the cemetery area and rested. That was the place where U Thein Pe Myint was buried. It could have been about 4:30 or 5.00 p.m. when we left that place. On every road we saw those SPDC cars. Every one of those cars had two or three mobile phones. Wherever those cars were there were traffic police. Those cars were DYNA truck cars. I saw about 10, 11, 12 such cars. We left that place and arrived at Saipyin village. Arrests had been made because the residents were planning to welcome Daw Aung San Su Kyi. So we stopped at "Heart's Desire Teashop" which was in the vicinity.

3. They said that this teashop was operated by brothers. While resting there, the crowd became bigger so Daw Suu's speech took a little longer. We left only at 7:00 pm. We had also noticed those saloon cars at the junction. Between Butalin and Depayin there was no other vehicle on the road. We traveled from 7:00 non stop. This is the order in which we traveled. There was a SUNNY car in front. Next was Uncle U Tin U's car and the car behind him was driven by U Tun Win. I don't know the make of those cars. After that was the car from our North West Aung Myethazan township. The driver was Ko San Myint. We all call him Kalarlay. Behind that was a SUNNY car in which were the video cameras and operators.

Behind that was Daw Suu's car. After that there were two or three cars with Monywa people who joined the party at Sagaing. Behind that was the car in which there were the monks (3 or 4 monks and about 8 novice monks). All these cars traveled in one group.

4. All these folks from Saipyin village and other distant villages gathered there. They were poor starving people. I saw amongst them old grandmothers quivering and waving neem tree sprigs to welcome us. I saw about 150 cyclists by the side of us. When we went to Saipyin those 150 cyclist were in front and on the side. I even told them to move to the side because they could be scraped and run down. There were so many young people, both boys and girls. When we arrived at the little village of Kyiywa after leaving Saipyin the crowd greeting us was getting bigger. The cars slowed down and Daw Suu put out her hand and waved to the people. We had traveled about one and a half to two miles from there. We could see the people in the dim light. At that point we saw that the people in that crowd were being beaten up. Bright car head lights lit up the place. I saw from the distance that the villagers were being beaten up.

5. These were big cars with glass on all sides. Not small HINOs. Then a cycle came near me and asked if we could do anything for them. The villagers were being beaten up. The I saw three cycles pass us. There was a driver and a monk with yellow head bands. Just before they overtook us, Daw Suu's car drove past our car. It was a dark place and they said they had better speed away. So our car which was in the front was left behind. After they had passed us I saw that cycles block the road in front of Daw Suu's car. I saw from a distance Uncle U Tin Oo get out of the car. Our cars stopped. We could see the villagers shouting out because they were being beaten. The young people and cyclists did not know whether they should go on or retreat. Their spirits were being aroused and they were confused. They were told not to get involved and that they could be mistaken for the villagers.

6. At that time U Tin Htut U (leader of the Youth Wing in the office) came near me and told me not to loose my temper and say bad things. Be patient; don't say things to make them angry no matter what. Every time we go out we are reminded this way. Then we were told to get into the car so all those who went out to see what was happening came back into the car. We crouched. I looked into the distance. Those big cars had their lights beaming on to us. They had changed positions around us – 3 to 4 cars. During that time some of our cars had passed us, some were running. Our car could not get away because those cars were blocking us. Each car had four lights and there were 3 or 4 cars. Suddenly we had been beaten up. I thought we were just being threatened because it happened the same way, there was much confusion when we were going to Madaya. The uncle who was beside me was U Chit Aye. He threw his body across us three women and he was hurt the most. There were three females in our car.

7. The name of one was Daw Khin Aye Myint and the other was the daughter of U Ko Gyi. We called her A-thay-lay. Altogether there were 14 of us as far as I recall. We were from different wards so I do not know their names. We met here for the first time so I only know the names of 2 or 3. While we were being beaten up, those in the front car were also being assaulted. That car had no roof. I could see them being beaten up, there could have been about 15 in that car. Since I was underneath the others, I could look into the distance. I saw that they were shouting and the more they shouted, the more beatings were given. Every one of us was moaning. U Chit Tin from our car was dragged out and they knocked his body against the car. Then they held my back and pounded it with a brick. They slammed the brick full face on my back. If they did it edgewise my hip would be disjointed.

8. Only then I realized that we were really being attacked. My body was soaking with blood, blood that flowed from Uncle and the youth who were all crouching. My whole sarong was soaking. My head was not injured at that point. Then from the back I heard them say, “These female creatures parading around with their pinni jacket- take off these pinni – look at your mugs!” They pulled off our jackets, tore them off. Then one person came up and snatched our sling bags which contained our money. Not satisfied, they snatched the chains we were wearing, and tugged at our legs and backs. I was dragged by the hair out of the car to the ground. When I fell to the ground they went on beating me. I looked up and saw two monks; one man had his sarong slung across one shoulder. He wore a shirt, and knee length pants. His cap was back to front.

9. They pulled me and pushed me. Then one voice said “ hpoun, hpoun (Monk) catch her quickly, this creature will run away. What has your Indian’s wife, Aung San Suu Kyi done for you? We have built bridges and roads on which you all can walk.” Then they uttered some obscene words I cannot mention. Then again we were beaten up. I was struck on my ribcage and my ears. I felt like my ears had burst open. The three of them struck me on the buttocks and my back one after the other. Then they struck me on the head. One blow cut open my head. The other blow struck the back of my ear and my neck was covered with blood. They beat me up to their hearts content while abusing me. Then one of them said that should be enough beating for a woman. After that they called out “ ” Fire, Water, Fire, Water, Backing, Backing ” – as a symbol and boarded the car and left in the direction of Saingpyin.

10. I lost consciousness then. Two monks and about 5 people were asking all of us what happened. Was there a collision? No, there was a beat up. If that is so, who is responsible? Is it the USDA or anyone else? Behind me I could hear them taking off Athaylay’s clothes. All I know is that she was lost. I do not know where she was taken to. No one was left in the car. I was about the second last to be dragged out. After the monks arrived and I regained consciousness I asked them to take me away. I had no jacket on. I wore my sarong tucked around under the arms. Even in that state those animals wanted to lift up my sarong. My sarong and shirt were caked in blood and they could not lift it or take it off. As for my jacket they had ripped it off from the back and it remained hanging at the top. They demanded that I take all that off so I did so. I was left with the sarong wrapped around and tucked under my arms. After that I fainted.

11. When I regained consciousness, I asked the monks I spoke about just now to save me. While the men were trying to save me I again lost consciousness so they left me behind. They had been talking about sending for a car and a doctor. I did not know when the monks left. I was unconscious again. When I regained consciousness, I was embarrassed because I did not have a jacket on. I thought I was about 10 feet away from the car so tried to get there. Then I saw one monk in a sitting posture not moving, Aung Ko who was on the car with me was on his back, another novice monk was on his back and another person unknown to me on his back. I crossed over all of them and collected the pile of clothes. I had brought my glasses which I put down and put on an under sarong. I could not button the jacket and lost consciousness again. After quite some time, five people arrived.

12. Maung Min Thein Lay and Ma Kyi Kyi Myint who were passengers in the car that was in front of us were asking to be taken away or for a Burmese Traditional medic to be brought here. Ma Kyi Kyi Myint then said, “Young brother, just take us to the village monastery”. I said “I will also come along, I will also come along” and I crossed over everything and lost

consciousness when I came down from the car. There was one stout person who had his sarong slung across one shoulder. The man with a torch held me and I regained consciousness. I told that boy “let me call the others - please wait – I want to call the women”. Then I called out to them by name. “Ma Tin Myint, Ma Aye Myint, come, come. We are going along with these villagers”. Not one of them could be found. While calling out I saw blood spilling out of the three big cuts on U Chit Tin’s head. It was like a burst water pipe. Never seen anything like it in my life. He was also vomiting blood. Uncle U Chit Tin then said “My duties have been fulfilled. Tell them at my office. I have fulfilled my obligations.” I saw him vomiting blood.

13. When I got to the front of the car I saw the driver Ko San Myint’s body half fallen out. He was dead. His left eye was protruding. That car was from our North West region. I lost consciousness here. The boy who was with me put my hand on his shoulder with one arm around me. With a torch in the other hand he showed me the way. I looked out and again went blank. He said Ahma to me and then I became aware and told him that I was aware and when I looked around I saw so many people, cannot say how many. I broke out in a clammy clammy sweat, with blood from my head. I did not know what. I was terrified. I did not feel the pain in my body. I was very giddy and went blank off and on.

14. When I looked I saw our car, then the car which U Htun Win drove, then at this side there was a small SUNNY car which had plunged down. On one side there was a yellow car that had been pushed down. When I was conscious I heard them say something about the keys of the car and whether it was pushed or burnt I am not sure. I was loosing consciousness off and on. When I went and looked there was no person on the cars. But on the cart track, there were bodies in an indescribable state. In some places, there were groans and mutterings. I went to call them but there was no response. Ma Kyi Kyi Myint told me not to be calling them because another bunch could be arriving. So I clung to her and arrived at the village entrance. (I thought it was the entrance to the village. At this point there was the beginning of a road). That youth pulled me and brought me from there. I had forgotten to take the bundle of clothes. From there on I lost consciousness. They said the distance was about a mile. Of the five people who had accompanied us from monastery, one stayed with us and the other four disappeared into the village.

15. There was a youth behind me. He said he had lost his cycle, and was afraid to return. He asked if he could follow me. He was a stout youth. Then there were two students. We were five altogether. When we arrived at the monastery junction, there was a small bridge about one and a half feet wide which crossed a stream. When they told me there was a bridge, I was blacking out off and on. I had no slippers or anything. Someone had slipped a pair on to my feet to avoid stepping on glass. My legs were not responding. All this was hurting badly. When we entered the monastery, the monk was in a sitting posture. He said he did not know what to do. He could not hire a car, the villagers were not to give any assistance, medics could not be sent for. “Come, come” he said to me and took me to a building at the back of the monastery where guests are housed. I was kept in one room. There I was sweating and loosing consciousness off and on. I did not hear anything at that time. It was about 8 or 8:30. The monk spoke to us and gave us healing water to drink. I was going blank off and on.

16. They said it was 2 O’clock when we heard the sound of motor vehicles. The monk was afraid they would be set their lights in this direction so he made me hold on to a small bag and took me outside to hide in the thicket that was between a small pond and the

monastery. I think those were custard apple trees. He forced me hide there. He was afraid because I had on a white jacket and would be easily detected. The monk, the three youths and another monk went to see what was happening. I heard them saying how many were in which car. When I regained consciousness, some cars went towards the east; some went back towards the west. By this I mean towards Saipyin. In these cars there were dead people and those who had lost consciousness and those who needed blood. Our car, four other cars and one that was burnt were left. The monk's car was burnt. I was not too far away and could hear some words and could not hear other words that were being shouted out. I cannot remember the car number or the number of cars.

17. When they were transporting the people, the monk came back and told us to sleep awhile. Just before that I heard the departing cars shout out "Mandalay Hill, Yankin Hill, Backing, Backing ". This is their battle cry/symbol just like "Water, Fire, Water Fire" which they were yelling out while we were being beaten up. When the monk came to fetch me back, I could hardly move. Blood was sticky. One lady there brought two sets of clothes. She helped me to change into another sarong. I came out of the thicket with that on. It was very dark. I could not see if my clothes were wet or not. The candle was flickering and the light was not enough. Then at 3:30 the monk said we could not stay there. We better run. I told him to send us to a suitable place because my whole body was stiff, my hip was hurting very badly and my legs could not walk. But he insisted saying that he was anxious and this was not a safe place. He sent one monk to see us off. Of the three youths who were with me, only the boy who has asked me to let him follow me remained. I found the other two had left while I had a little sleep.

18. I said "Hpoun Hpoun (monk), all our money was stolen. Please assist us with some travel costs". I don't know if that monk belongs to the sect that will not handle money but he went and looked into the boxes in the monastery and produced about 1700 or 2000 Kyats and gave it to me. A young monk was told to see us off. When we got to the middle of the road, I asked and was told that I looked disheveled. My hair was all matted with dried blood. It could not be combed or tied. I put a clip into it. I was given a small scarf which I wrapped around my head. She also had a scarf around her head. Though she had no head injuries, the scarf was stained with another's blood. My blue jacket was stained with blood. There was no blood on my sarong because I had changed it earlier. The blood on my jacket was from my head injuries. So I took off my jacket and threw it in the ditch near by and wore the shirt with a small collar that was given to me.

19. The youth who said he wanted to follow me pulled me along. We arrived at the train station at about 5 am. He said that we would not go into the station but sit in the bush nearby. I said that we could be recognized easily so let us mingle with the others in the station. We went to the vicinity of the station. We were hungry because we had not eaten from 2 pm the day before. we had not had a drink of water. "Sister, will you have tea?" he asked. I said our appearance was so dishelmed, I won't drink. I asked him to buy me a banana. It was so hard to eat. I was choking. Our mouths smelled of blood and our bodies smeared with stale blood. It was not comfortable. I was in pain. To sit down, two youths had to assist. To stand up it was the same. I could walk. But to stand up or sit down I could not without help because of the pounding on my hip with the red brick. My head was spinning when I was sitting on the road and I blacked out often.

20. I told my companion " Little sister. I cannot manage anymore. I will move over to that hut over there." She did not want me to go. If I remained here and collapsed, it would be damaging. When I reached the hut, the people there could have been from the USDA. I am not sure. They were staring at me. I said I was sick and wanted to rest a while. I sat on a reclining chair... At that time these women were staring at me and I pretended not to see them. If this is the case these women might interfere. Last night there was an episode at Kyiywa. So I got up from there and went and sat on the road. The sun was getting hot, and I was still bleeding from the head wound. Flies were all over the place. My head was dizzy. The youths were talking to keep me aware and awake. Only at 8 the train arrived. It was a goods train. People around us were carrying bananas to put on the train. They came in carts. The door into the carriage is very high. It was as high as my chest.

21. They did not know how to get me into the train. My hand was alright so I clung to the door with my hand and young boy pushed me from my buttocks. That youth hugged me and helped me in. I could not sit like them on the floor. There was a seat at the side of me. Auntie is not well I said and placed myself on the seat. I was covered with flies all over my head. They were commenting about the smell. I was really unwell though I was not sick. I went blank - off and on. This train that left after 8 arrived at Monywa after noon. These youths said that they would go to the office. It will not be wise to do so. At the front of the office they will arrest us. We will go to the monastery; we said and hired 2 trishaws. One youth and I rode in one trishaw and the other two (let's say, brother and sister) rode in the other. We arrived there.

22. When we arrived I said I would go. When I asked if the monk was in, they said no. The resident monk was not in. So I asked to see the monk that was in charge. We had not seen the monk from last night. They took us to a place in the monastery precincts and we had to go into the building straight away. We did not see the monk. When I met the monk I addressed him "Hpoun Hpoun (monk), please rescue your disciples. We were beaten up last night. Many of our party members have been killed." the monk was shocked to see us. Then he said "Wait, wait". The building where we were housed can be seen from the entrance gate. It is in a straight line. So it can be seen from the road. I was limping badly so we were taken into the monastery and concealed. The door was also locked.

23. We were in there, the four of us like brothers and sisters. We asked for food. The monk asked us what we wanted. Two of us had on large and damaged slippers, not our own. Don't know how we got them. The other two also had no change of clothes and asked for help. A doctor was brought to us and we were also given clothes and food. The doctor attended to me that evening.

24. They all thought I must be very tough to be able to survive all this. I was beaten up by 3 people, two monks and 1 other person. I was not only beaten. My flesh was broken because I was poked with a stick. The joints in my hands were aching. In my ear, something burst. When I lifted my clothes and showed the doctor all the injuries, he was shocked and surprised at my stamina to have made it back so far. I was given two injections. He did not stitch the wounds in my head because it happened last night and it was now the evening after. He gave me medicine. Then a female nurse was sent to help us. We did not need that much attention and thanked them all and they went back. The doctor came on two days. We were 6 days at the monastery. After four days two others who escaped arrived.

25. We fled towards the north while they fled in this direction. But it was not a good thing. So they took shelter in one village after another and finally arrived at this monastery. They took about 3 to 4 days. They were also given medical treatment. After 7 days of our stay, the monk said not to come back, that Razali would come to Burma. If he should come here there will be lots of arrests and interrogations. Will we go back or we could return only after all that is finished... Monk would take responsibility. Our stay here would be too long. We did not know how many days Razali would stay. We said we would leave. So the monk said to take the last evening bus. After we had the daybreak meal one policeman came to the monk and told him that there was an interrogating team coming . There is a wanted woman and they will be searching for her till they find her. If you have her here, quietly remove her. The monk then told us to leave straight away and gave us 3000 Kyats.

26. One of the monks fetched a trishaw and instructed the driver how to get to the bus. It was raining so I was even given an umbrella and taken to the wicket gate to depart. The monk was anxious so he followed us in another cycle and helped us. From there we were taken to another place. At this time I thought about our plight. We were the victims who had been assaulted, and now facing arrest. We had no information about the cars that went ahead. Now we are afraid to return to our homes.

27. "This is something I have to say". When we were at Madaya, our cars were stoned and the youth blood was spilt. Daw Suu reported it at the police station to open a case. Daw Suu gave a speech. She said that in one murder case, the offender is punished, but in another murder case, the offender gets away Scot free. She said she would pursue this matter in Rangoon and consult the lawyers. Now I look back at what she said. Here we did not commit any offence, our lives were at risk, some died and now I have to run like an absconder from justice, this is very distressing. Up to now they have taken no action against the culprit gangs but only picking on us. This is really astonishing. This is all I have to say.

28. Question –From where do you think were the people who beat you up?

I forgot to tell you this. When we were being beaten they said " we are building the bridges, and the roads on which you all are walking. Do you want to defy us the *Soon Ah* (Powerful and Strong). Is your Indian's wife Aung San Suu Kyi making roads? What have you all done? You all walk on the roads that we built and do you want to challenge us." *Soon Ah* was among those who beat me. There could be some from USDA. I do not know. They said they were *Soon Ah*.

Then she showed us her wounds.



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