

# Displacement and causes of displacement in Arakan State

## Documents

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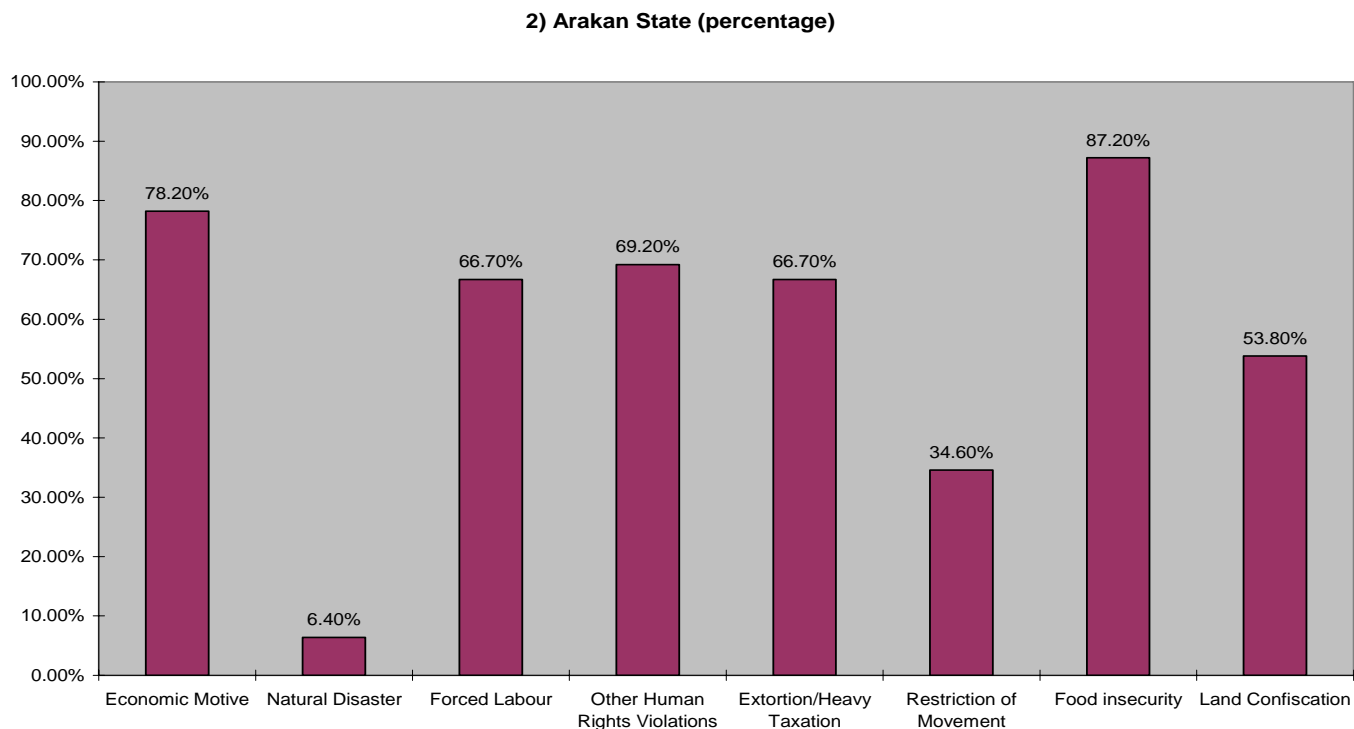
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## Survey results

(77 respondents, mostly Rakhine Buddhists)



## Forced relocation/evictions (rural)

### Establishment of new Model Villages/Forced Evictions

-- Arakan Project, February 2007

In 2006, four new model villages have reportedly been built by the NaTaLa to resettle Buddhist villagers from Arakan State and other parts of Burma with incentives. One such model village was established in Nyaung Chaung, South Maungdaw, in early 2006.

In North Maungdaw, two new model villages have or are being constructed involving the forced eviction of Rohingya villagers. In the past, the construction of model villages used to involve confiscation of land, but not eviction. This is therefore a new development. One hamlet of Loun Don village tract was compelled to move out in the beginning of 2006 and to relocate at the foot of the hills. 80 new settler families were

brought in in October 2006. Currently, another model village is being built with forced labour in Taung Pyo Let Wah, and about 150 households have been evicted without any compensation. The dispossessed families were not assigned any other site to relocate. Some went to take shelter in relatives' houses but a number of them fled to Bangladesh. Reportedly, this new model village will accommodate 120 families, and 20 houses have so far been completed. The villagers also had to flatten a hilltop to build a pagoda.

Another new model village is about to be constructed in North Buthidaung (Upper-Bagali) and land has already been marked out for this, but it is not known yet whether Rohingya families will be forcibly evicted. However, villagers were compelled to buy lottery tickets in order to contribute to the construction of a pagoda.

In June 2006, 30 houses in Ba Da Nar village tract, North Buthidaung, received an eviction order after a monk had a vision that a Buddha statue had been buried in that area and that a pagoda should be built there. At first, the villagers did not obey the order but, at the end of October, they were summoned to the NaSaKa camp and forced to sign a declaration that they had agreed to move voluntarily. By now, a pagoda has already been built as well as a new police station at the location where the evicted families used to reside. These families were not provided with a relocation site and went to stay temporarily on someone else's land from where they will need to move soon.

In early 2007, the authorities also indicated that they plan to set up another model village in a hamlet of Kyauk Chaung village tract (North Maungdaw) inhabited by 180 Rohingya families and that half the existing dwellings would be dismantled.

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### **Nasaka searches for photographer**

-- *Narinjara News*, 13 February 2007

Nasaka, Burma's border security force is on the lookout for a photographer who took pictures of a village in Taungbro forcibly demolished by the authorities. The government had prohibited taking photographs of the village, said a village chairman.

The authorities are suspecting a staff member of a UNHCR regional office based in Maungdaw Township, and they are looking for clues to pin point whether the person took the photographs.

Over the last couple of weeks the Nasaka has been demolishing a Muslim village in Taungbro, in order to build 120 new houses for model villagers to be shifted from Burma proper.

A village source said 22 houses in the village were demolished without compensation to the owners, who were forcibly displaced by the Burmese regime.

An unidentified photographer visited the area and took snapshots of the demolition.

Nasaka personnel rushed to the area when they received word that someone had taken photographs, but the photographer had already fled. Since then, the Nasaka has been suspecting a staff member of the Maungdaw UNHCR office.

The village chairman said that Colonel Thein Thay from Military Operation Planning Bureau based in Buthidaung came to the area on February 9, soon after the incident.

The Burmese junta is now building a sub-township near the Burma-Bangladesh border to promote border trade with Bangladesh, and many Burmese settlers will be moved to this new sub-township from Burma proper.

The construction of new houses on the demolition site was started on February 8, and 120 houses will be built for new model villagers from Burma proper, said a source in the area.

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### **Forced labor for model village in northern Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News*, 12 February 2007

**Maungdaw, Burma:** Sarapa (Military Intelligence) forces accompanied by police have been forcing villagers to build modern villages for new settlers since February 2, said a village elder in Taungbru Left.

On February 1, Sarapa camp accompanied by police **destroyed about 30 houses of Rohingya villagers** of Ward No.3 and 4 in Taungbru Left in Maungdaw Township to build model villages for new comers, he added.

Sarapa has been forcing people from 11 nearby villages into labor. Every day the villagers have to provide 50 villagers from each village to cut the hillside to build model villages. About 550 villagers have been engaged in forced labor since February 1. But, Sarapa provides Kyat 500 a day per head as wages to avoid complaints to the international community, although, the daily labor rate is Kyat 1,000 to Kyat 1,500 per day in the open market, said a former village chairman of the area.

But, the **villagers whose houses have been destroyed do not get any compensation from the concerned authorities and are not provided new sites for re-settlement.** The uprooted villagers asked the concerned authorities to give them permission to cut wood and bamboos from the dense forests to build new houses, but were not granted permission.

A villager close to Sarapa officials said, "The concerned authority intends to use this place to build a model village for Rakhines or Marmas calling them in from Bangladesh. They plan to build about 120 houses for new comers."

Another villager said, "They (Sarapa) will bring new comers from Burma proper and other parts of Arakan State and will resettle them here as it is very close to the Bangladesh border."

Taungbru is a place, which is being connecting with Bangladesh land. A Burma-Bangladesh friendship bridge has been built through this place sine 14 years ago. This place was also declared a sub-township area within the Maungdaw Township jurisdiction. It will have five quarters in terms of residence including a jail, a police station and a health centre on confiscated land of Rohingyas. At Present U Chit Maung is the Sub-township officer.

A dispute broke out between Sarapa and the army over the model village on February 10. The army and Nasaka does not want to set up a model village after relocating Rohingya villages, as there are places available to build a model village. This model village is being constructed by the Sarapa without the knowledge of the army and the Nasaka, said a man is close to the army.

Regarding the matter, the Tactical Operational Commander (TOC) of Buthidaung visited this area on February 10, and ordered the concerned authorities to stop the building of model village.

Besides, the Western Command Commander will visit today this place to see the matter, said a source close to Nasaka.

A man from Maungdaw town said," The SPDC authorities have been encouraged after the vetoes of China and Russia in the UN Security Council last month to commit more human rights violations across the country against minorities." ##

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### **Households Forced to Relocate for Model Villagers**

-- *Narinjara News*, 29 January, 2007

The Burmese authority has forced several households in the new Taungbro Sub-Town, which is currently being built to upgrade border trade with Bangladesh, to relocate for the construction of houses for new model villagers from Burma proper.

A local source said the Burmese military authority recently ordered the villagers to move from Taungbro to another location to make way for construction of the new homes for model villagers.

Many of the houses, mostly belonging to Muslim communities, were recently destroyed by the authorities. A source close to the authority said the junta has already allocated 50 million kyat to build 120 houses for model villagers this fiscal year.

The border authority is expected to finish building the houses before the rainy season, with construction on new houses starting at the end of this month, following relocation of the current villagers' and their houses.

The Burmese authority will bring 120 families from Burma proper, making this the thirteenth time a wave of model villagers have been brought into settle in Arakan State from Burma proper.

A border source said after the villagers were given word that they had to relocate, many Muslim families tried to enter Bangladesh territory for refuge. After the information spread, a Bangladesh newspapers published a story reporting that over 1,000 Burmese Muslims had formed an encampment on the banks of the Naff River in December with the intent to enter Bangladesh, reported border sources.

The government authority is now setting up the new sub-town in northern Maungdaw Township with four quarters, but is likely to make it a Muslim-free town, stated one local Muslim villager.

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**Villages destroyed. *Humanity Under Attack: Human rights abuses in Arakan State,***  
-- Arakan State Human Rights Commission, January 2006

“...She told us that two villages are presently being relocated and others are being used for forced labour. In the villages that were forcibly relocated, there were about three hundred households, and two thousand people are currently being relocated in total. The government already is giving the order to destroy the villages. They do not tell people where they have to move to, and they are being given absolutely no compensation. The order to move came in June 2005, and the villagers have until March 2006 to leave. After March, no one should be in the village. The SPDC told villagers that the gas pipeline will be built in this area...”  
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**Extracts from *the Human Rights Yearbook, Burma 2005***

-- Human Rights Documentation Unit of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma

Displacement in northern Arakan State typically occurs as villagers flee human rights abuses by SPDC forces or are forcibly relocated to make way for the construction of ‘model’ villages. (Source: Forum-Asia, 26 May 2005).

In May 2005, Rakhine villagers abandoned their homes as a consequence of a SPDC ban on hillside cultivation in northern areas close to the Bangladesh border. Those who fled



included members of the Mro, Mru and Khami ethnic groups, many of whom relocated to areas further inside Arakan State such as Kyauk Taw Township. (Source: “Arakanese Desert Border Homes After Hillside Cultivation Prohibited,” *Narinjara News*, 24 May 2005).

On 18 July 2005, SPDC troops ordered local hill farmers living in border areas to relocate following a battle between the ALA and the SPDC military which resulted in the death of a SPDC officer. (Source: “Armed Clash Occurs Between Arakan Liberation Army and SPDC,” *Narinjara News*, 12 August 2005).

The forcible relocation of villagers for the purposes of securing land for the construction of ‘model’ villages continued in 2005. For example, in June 2005, it was reported that SPDC authorities were constructing over 30 more ‘modern’ villages in the northern part of Arakan State (source: “Villagers from Government's 'Modern' Villages Suffer Famine,” *Narinjara News*, 23 June 2005). Rohingya villagers, in particular, were frequently told that their houses had been built on land not assigned for residential construction. They were therefore required to abandon their homes, which were subsequently destroyed. Mosques and other village infrastructure were similarly destroyed. The cleared area was then designated as the location of a new ‘model’ village where Buddhist residents from central and northern Burma, members of ceasefire groups or surrendered armed resistance fighters were to be resettled. The ‘model’ village program serves to dilute the ethnic makeup of northern Arakan State and, in turn, lessen the social cohesion of any local opposition movements.

In some cases Rohingya villagers who had been displaced from their homes were made to porter construction materials for the new houses. In his August 2005 report to the UN General Assembly, Special Rapporteur Pinheiro said that he “remains very concerned about reports of ongoing discrimination against the Rohingya ethnic minority in northern Rakhine state, including the destruction of mosques by Regime forces and the forced labour practice of ordering civilians to construct “model villages” to resettle Buddhists onto Muslim land” (source: “Interim Report of the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights in Myanmar,” *Sixtieth session of the UN General Assembly*, Item 73(c) of the Provisional Agenda, 12 August 2005).

As of April 2005, 160 acres of land had been confiscated for the construction of around 80 houses in Nu Ru Lah, a new model village in Central Maungdaw Township. As of late May 2005, 12 houses had been built for 25 families who had already taken up residency. Although the materials used to build the houses were brought by the regime from outside the area, villagers had to provide porters to carry the construction material to the site. (Source: Forum-Asia, 26 May 2005).

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## **Official robberies and bullying in Burma**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 26 May 2004

The local authorities of SPDC throughout the country are stopping people and demanding them money with the excuse of security for the ongoing 'National Convention'.

They have been increasingly stopping passenger buses, trucks and motorcycles at checkpoints on Muse-Mandalay Road and demanding them 'protection money' causing the price of goods to soar throughout the country.

At some places, in order to build new roads and develop new projects, the authorities have been destroying and **relocating the homes of the people with the excuses of preventing natural disasters**.

Meanwhile, at the capital of Arakan State Sittwe (Akyab) in western Burma, local people are forced to clean gutters **on the pain of forced relocation if they refuse** despite the fact that it is the duty of the government's municipal department to do such a job.

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## **Land confiscation, forced eviction and house destruction**

-- *Myanmar - The Rohingya Minority: Fundamental Rights Denied*, Amnesty International, 19 May 2004 (extracts)

"...The confiscation of land in Northern Rakhine State is related to the establishment of "model villages"; the construction or expansion of NaSaKa, military, and police camps; and establishing plantations for the security forces and also for new settlers. More recently, a number of forced evictions have taken place when people were accused of having built houses on land that local authorities claim is officially registered as farmland or rice fields, not residential land...

The building and the extension of military camps, mainly for the *NaSaKa*, have also led to land confiscation. Moreover the *NaSaKa* has on numerous occasions confiscated land for commercial purposes, mainly to establish shrimp farms but also rice fields for themselves.

People reportedly receive no compensation, and are sometimes also forced to work on the same fields that were confiscated from them. In other cases the *NaSaKa* has rented out confiscated land as shrimp farms or rice fields to the local population.

A 25 year old Rohingya man from Rathedaung described the confiscation of his land:  
"My father is a farmer and we used to have 47 kani of land, but now we only have seven kani left and this is not enough for our subsistence. The Myanmar Army confiscated most of our land in the early 1990s to make shrimp farms for themselves. After that, we survived with our cattle... There was grazing land in our village for our cattle but this was also confiscated three years ago just before the authorities built a NaTaLa village for new settlers. After that, we could no longer graze out cattle... There are four shrimp farms near our village, two belong to the *NaSaKa* and two to the army. Every year, before the monsoon, we must repair

*the embankments of those shrimp farms. This year [2003] I had to work for three days in one of the NaSaKa shrimp farms. ”*

A 25 year old Rohingya man from southern Maungdaw also had his land confiscated recently:

*“Most of the shrimp farms in our area belong to the military, the NaSaKa and other government agencies. Originally all this land belonged to our Muslim villagers, but it was confiscated by various government agencies. Then again they rent it out to our people on a yearly basis.”*

In 2002 the NaSaKa reportedly began to strictly implement land use policies and this has led to number of evictions of Rohingyas. Due to population growth, some families built their houses on land registered as paddy fields decades ago. Recently they have been issued with expulsion orders and forced to dismantle their homes. Similarly, many local shrimp farms were ordered to be destroyed or to be planted with paddy because they were established on land registered for other purposes.

A 27 year old Rohingya man from central Maungdaw reported in early 2004:

*“The eviction process started about two years ago. First they evicted 40 houses in [a village] near Maungdaw. Eighteen families protested and refused to dismantle their houses. They were arrested and sent to Buthidaung jail. They are still there. They detained mostly the head of the family but they also jailed some women, even one pregnant woman. She gave birth inside the jail. 18 people are still in jail about this case. After that, they evicted 15 houses in [another village], also near Maungdaw. Then they evicted 60 houses in my village. My house was among them. This happened one year ago [2003]. I did not receive any written order from the NaSaKa, but the NaSaKa called our Chairman and provided him with a list of houses with the name of each family head. The Chairman summoned all the people mentioned in the list. He ordered us to vacate the land and explained: ‘The land where your houses stand is registered as paddy land. So, you must leave.’ Nobody dared to protest after what happened in the other villages. I was given five days time to leave my house and dismantle it. We were not given any other place to go.”*

A 35 year old Rohingya man from northern Maungdaw reported extreme impoverishment as a result of land confiscation:

*“I had a house and one kani of paddy field. But in 1995, my land was confiscated together with other people’s land. After I lost my land, I started renting a plot to do cultivation but I did not have any oxen, so I had to hire oxen to plough. Because of this, I could not make any profit. Then I decided to work as a labourer on other people’s land in order to make ends meet. But now jobs have become very scarce and I felt compelled to leave my village and come to Bangladesh... Apart from forced labour there was no work in my village. My family spent many days without even one meal a day. My children became sick due to malnutrition and I also became ill. I had nothing to sell except my utensils and a few chickens.”*

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### **Rakhine (Arakan) State: forced Relocations, displacement and abuse of Muslims**

-- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, December 2004

- In 2001 certain townships in the Arakan State had become "Muslim-free zones", where Muslims were not permitted to live, mosques were destroyed, and lands confiscated

- Riots during February 2001 in Arakan capital Sittwe, where over 50 Muslim homes burned to the ground
- Governmental policy to move and concentrate the Rohingya population in the northern part of the districts of Maungdaw and Buthidaung
- Construction of model villages for Buddhist settlers and new military camps forces Muslim Rohingya to move to less fertile lands
- During 2003, violence between Muslim communities and Buddhist Rakhine increased, resulting in the displacement of thousands of Rohingya. "North Rakhine State (NRS) is one of the remote border regions of Myanmar. Geographically separated from the rest of the country by mountains in the east, the inhabitants of NRS share close ethnic and cultural links with neighbouring Bangladesh. The NRS has a population of 800,000, 82 percent of whom are Muslims of Indian sub-continent origin. The area has one of the highest population densities in all of Myanmar and is subject to seasonal heavy rainfall and tropical storms, all of which can adversely affect livelihoods. The economic and social indicators in the NRS show the local population as being some of the most vulnerable in the country..."

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### **3 Muslims arrested in Arakan State**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 28 December, 2003

Three Muslims at **Maungdaw Township, Arakan State**, in western Burma were arrested by the local SPDC (State Peace and Development Council) authorities for protesting against the decision to force them out of their homes.

The three put up papers on the walls voicing their grievances on the relocation of 30 Muslim homes by the local authorities on 27 December.

The local authorities accused the residents of being squatters and forcibly moved them out of their homes by the police and local militia.

The protesters requested the authorities not to evict them from their homes and to find them a new location to live if they were to be forced out.

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### **Burma: repression, discrimination and ethnic cleansing in Arakan,**

-- FIDH, 7 April 2000 (extract)

The Burmese authorities regularly resort to forced relocations of Arakanese. Villagers are

warned at the very last moment. They do not always get compensation and when they do, it usually is far from the actual value of what the villagers lost as they were displaced. The most common cause of forced relocations in the last decade is the installation of a new military camp. As in Maungdaw and Buthidaung, the government, concerned with controlling the whole population, has also displaced the small minorities of Arakan (notably the Mro) from their mountainous and remote areas towards the plains. Finally, the recent development of tourism has caused the displacement of people living close to historical sites which the government wanted to highlight. These forced relocations always entail an impoverishment of the population, for whom moving is expensive, especially because of the cost of rebuilding a house.

Furthermore, any displacement also means an agricultural loss: most often, the land the villagers get (provided they get some) is smaller and less fertile than what they had. The villagers also lose their trees, the source both of income and of food.

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## **Punishment for non-compliance with orders**

### **Farmers in Mrauk U Forced to Cultivate Dry Season Paddy**

-- *Narinjara News*, 22 February, 2007

Many farmers in Mrauk U Township have been forced by the township authority to cultivate paddy during the dry season, even though the farmers have tried to resist the government pressure, said a farmer from Mrauk U who wished to remain anonymous.

"We would like to accept the government's program to cultivate paddy during the dry season to promote our yearly earnings, but it is impossible to cultivate paddy in the dry season in our area because we have no mechanisms to completely undertake such a project," he said.

Many farmers from several villages in the north of Mrauk U Township, including Paung Duck, Pauk Taw Byint, Tean Nyo, Sin Owe Gri, have been facing pressure after Mrauk U Township Chairman U Hla Yee ordered the cultivation of paddy this dry season.

A village teacher who belongs to a few farms in the area said farmers can not profit from the dry season paddy project because they will have to spend a lot of money to cultivate, but will not be able to regain the cost in sales.

He added that if someone wanted to cultivate paddy in the dry season, they would have to borrow a water pump to provide water for the paddy. In the market, the price of diesel is 5,000 kyats per gallon and engine oil is 9,000 kyats per gallon. Moreover, a bag of fertilizer is 15,000 kyats. Farmers would be unable to recover their costs or earn a profit

if they undertake a dry season paddy project. Because of this, farmers do not want to follow the government's plan.

**The Mrauk U Township chairman**, however, has pressured farmers to carry out the project, and **has told farmers that if anybody refuses to follow his order, their paddy farms will be transferred to other people** who are willing to cultivate dry season paddy.

A village source said after the order came out, many farmers were afraid to lose their farms to other villagers, and they are currently facing the dilemma of whether to follow the orders or not.

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### **Refusal to work or supply goods to troops is not an option.**

-- *Supply and Command*, Shwe Gas Movement, July 2006, (p26)

Refusal to work or supply goods to troops is not an option. When asked if he had ever seen anybody refuse forced labour, one interviewee replied: *"In September 2004 I saw six young men, aged 20-24, refuse to work. First soldiers beat one of them in the head and kicked his back...they all worked in the end."* (Interview 1). Another simply said: "I didn't want to work for them but I could not deny their order. They have power and guns." (Interview A7)

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### **3 Muslims arrested in Arakan State**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 28 December, 2003

Three Muslims at Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, in western Burma were arrested by the local SPDC (State Peace and Development Council) authorities for protesting against the decision to force them out of their homes.

The three put up papers on the walls voicing their grievances on the relocation of 30 Muslim homes by the local authorities on 27 December.

The local authorities accused the residents of being squatters and forcibly moved them out of their homes by the police and local militia.

The protesters requested the authorities not to evict them from their homes and to find them a new location to live if they were to be forced out.

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# Other threats to human security

## Land confiscation

### Villagers Attack Chinese Oil Company in Arakan

*Narinjara News, 1 May 2007*

Some 40 Arakanese people attacked an oil-drilling site run by Chinese company CNOOC in Kyauk Pru Township, Arakan State, on 28 April, according to local reports.

"The villagers destroyed the Ranan Daung (Oil Mountain) oil-drilling site with sticks and swords after intruding on the compound during the night, when guards of the site were absent," the report stated.

An anonymous source said during the attack, villagers hacked all the connecting wire cables, and punched holes in all the chemical liquid tanks and gas cylinders with thick knives.

The villagers did not assault any workers, including Chinese workers and local officials, during the attack at the site.

Villagers say at least five people, who are reportedly suspected of connection with the incident, have been arrested by police from Min Byin police station, which is situated near the oil-drilling site.

A police officer from Kyauk Pru police station confirmed the incident and the arrest of five people but he declined to disclose any details or facts about the attack.

It has also been learned that many of the villagers who had traditionally owned the land being drilled attacked the Chinese and Asia World Companies out of dissatisfaction with the confiscation of their land by the Burmese military authority without any compensation.

In the area of Ranan Daung, about 150 people from the Chinese consortium and 600 workers from Asia World are currently working at the drilling site, which measures 3,007 square miles and is located between Kyauk Pru and Rambree Townships.

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## **Unidentified People Torch Army Rubber Plantations**

*Narinjara News*, 9 April 2007

Unidentified individuals set an army rubber plantation on fire in Kyauk Taw Township, Arakan State, in an apparent effort to show their dissatisfaction with **the Burmese army, which confiscated lands for the plantation.**

About 100 acres of rubber plantation were damaged in the fire, with most of the plants having burned, according to local reports.

The rubber plantation is located in Lin Mwe Daung mountain range, which runs for about 10 miles between Kyaktaw and Mrauk U Township, and belongs to Burma army battalions 377, 378, and 540 based in Mrauk U Township.

A source said army officials are now enquiring as to who torched the rubber plantation and many villagers are being interrogated by army officials at the site of the blaze.

Before the army battalions were stationed in the area, the mountain of Lin Mwe Daung was owned by local people in the area, who harvested raw materials such as bamboo, timbers, and firewood from the mountain, as well as using pasture lands for grazing cattle.

A villager said the mountain was most useful for local villages surrounding the mountain, including the villages of Tin Nyo, Taung Oo, Thapree Gan, Whree Gan Byint, Thitk Wa Byint, Kan Souk, Shar Ray Byint, and Kyauk Kat. However, people lost their opportunities for such livelihoods that were dependent on the mountains when the land was confiscated by the army.

Since many people in the area were dissatisfied with the army's confiscation of the mountain land, there are many who could have believably set fire to the rubber plantation.

According to a source, the Burmese army is not only operating a rubber plantation, but also cultivating teak and pepper on the mountain.

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## ***Burma: Country Report on Human Rights Practices - 2006***

-- US State Dept. 6 March 2007 (extract)

There were several credible but unverified reports that the government confiscated property without paying compensation, and there were several reports of government mistreatment and exploitation of farmers. In December authorities in Ponnagyun Township, Rakhine State, reportedly confiscated 5,000 acres of land from local farmers



for the army to raise crops. Colonel Ne Win from the Western Region Command reportedly oversaw the land confiscation.

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### **Establishment of new Model Villages/Forced Evictions**

-- Arakan Project, February 2007

In 2006, four new model villages have reportedly been built by the NaTaLa to resettle Buddhist villagers from Arakan State and other parts of Burma with incentives. One such model village was established in Nyaung Chaung, South Maungdaw, in early 2006.

In North Maungdaw, two new model villages have or are being constructed involving the forced eviction of Rohingya villagers. In the past, the construction of model villages used to involve confiscation of land, but not eviction. This is therefore a new development. One hamlet of Loun Don village tract was compelled to move out in the beginning of 2006 and to relocate at the foot of the hills. 80 new settler families were brought in in October 2006. Currently, another model village is being built with forced labour in Taung Pyo Let Wah, and about 150 households have been evicted without any compensation. The dispossessed families were not assigned any other site to relocate. Some went to take shelter in relatives' houses but a number of them fled to Bangladesh. Reportedly, this new model village will accommodate 120 families, and 20 houses have so far been completed. The villagers also had to flatten a hilltop to build a pagoda.

Another new model village is about to be constructed in North Buthidaung (Upper-Bagali) and land has already been marked out for this, but it is not known yet whether Rohingya families will be forcibly evicted. However, villagers were compelled to buy lottery tickets in order to contribute to the construction of a pagoda.

In June 2006, 30 houses in Ba Da Nar village tract, North Buthidaung, received an eviction order after a monk had a vision that a Buddha statue had been buried in that area and that a pagoda should be built there. At first, the villagers did not obey the order but, at the end of October, they were summoned to the NaSaKa camp and forced to sign a declaration that they had agreed to move voluntarily. By now, a pagoda has already been built as well as a new police station at the location where the evicted families used to reside. These families were not provided with a relocation site and went to stay temporarily on someone else's land from where they will need to move soon.

In early 2007, the authorities also indicated that they plan to set up another model village in a hamlet of Kyauk Chaung village tract (North Maungdaw) inhabited by 180 Rohingya families and that half the existing dwellings would be dismantled.

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### **Army's Castor Oil Project Fails in Arakan**

-- *Narinjara News*, 18 February, 2007

The army's castor oil project in Arakan State was not successful in 2006, as many castor plantation projects were damaged by bad weather last year, said an official from the agricultural department.

"As far as I know, the castor project conducted by army authorities in Arakan State was only 45 percent successful, and many of the projects were damaged due to bad weather and lack of knowledge about castor oil plantations," he said.

The army high authorities last year issued an order to all battalions stationed in Arakan to cultivate the castor oil plant to promote state revenue in Burma. Since the order was issued, battalions stationed in the western state have been implementing castor oil projects, after people's lands were confiscated without any compensation.

A source said each battalion in Arakan was allocated 30 acres of land to cultivate castor oil plants last year, and each acre was targeted to produce about 1,200 plants.

The official said, "36,000 castor oil plants were cultivated by each Burmese army battalion throughout Arakan last year but most of the plants have not grown and were damaged."

The high authority is expected to re-issue an order to army battalions to again cultivate the castor oil plants in Arakan State.

The agriculture department said even though the army's castor oil project failed in Arakan in 2006, the army's rubber plantation projects in the state were successful.

About 50 Burmese army battalions stationed in Arakan have confiscated large areas of land from Arakanese people in order to cultivate many agricultural products such as castor oil and rubber plants.

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### **Forced labor for model village in northern Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News*, 12 February, 2007

Maungdaw, Burma: Sarapa (Military Intelligence) forces accompanied by police have been forcing villagers to build modern villages for new settlers since February 2, said a village elder in Taungbru Left.

On February 1, Sarapa camp accompanied by police destroyed about 30 houses of Rohingya villagers of Ward No.3 and 4 in Taungbru Left in Maungdaw Township to build model villages for new comers, he added.

Sarapa has been forcing people from 11 nearby villages into labor. Every day the villagers have to provide 50 villagers from each village to cut the hillside to build model

villages. About 550 villagers have been engaged in forced labor since February 1. But, Sarapa provides Kyat 500 a day per head as wages to avoid complaints to the international community, although, the daily labor rate is Kyat 1,000 to Kyat 1,500 per day in the open market, said a former village chairman of the area.

But, the villagers whose houses have been destroyed do not get any compensation from the concerned authorities and are not provided new sites for re-settlement. The uprooted villagers asked the concerned authorities to give them permission to cut wood and bamboos from the dense forests to build new houses, but were not granted permission.

A villager close to Sarapa officials said, "The concerned authority intends to use this place to build a model village for Rakhines or Marmas calling them in from Bangladesh. They plan to build about 120 houses for new comers."

Another villager said, "They (Sarapa) will bring new comers from Burma proper and other parts of Arakan State and will resettle them here as it is very close to the Bangladesh border."

Taungbru is a place, which is being connecting with Bangladesh land. A Burma-Bangladesh friendship bridge has been built through this place sine 14 years ago. This place was also declared a sub-township area within the Maungdaw Township jurisdiction. It will have five quarters in terms of residence including a jail, a police station and a health centre on confiscated land of Rohingyas. At Present U Chit Maung is the Sub-township officer.

A dispute broke out between Sarapa and the army over the model village on February 10. The army and Nasaka does not want to set up a model village after relocating Rohingya villages, as there are places available to build a model village. This model village is being constructed by the Sarapa without the knowledge of the army and the Nasaka, said a man is close to the army.

Regarding the matter, the Tactical Operational Commander (TOC) of Buthidaung visited this area on February 10, and ordered the concerned authorities to stop the building of model village.

Besides, the Western Command Commander will visit today this place to see the matter, said a source close to Nasaka.

A man from Maungdaw town said, "The SPDC authorities have been encouraged after the vetoes of China and Russia in the UN Security Council last month to commit more human rights violations across the country against minorities."

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### **Model village on Rohingya land in Northern Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News* 8 February, 2007

Buthidaung, Burma: The Nasaka recently set up a model village on Rohingya land after confiscating it for Buddhists from southern Arakan.

To build the model village, Nasaka confiscated about 37 acres of arable farm land from three Rohingyas namely Abu Ahamed (40), son of Noor Hussain, Ahamed (60), son of Sayed Noor and Mostafa (60), son of Khasim Ali. They all belong to "Ywet Nyo Daung (Longa Daung) village of Buthidaung Township in Arakan State, said a former village chairman.

On January 21, about 55 families were resettled on land belonging to Rohingyas of Longa Daung village in Buthidaung. They are poor people and came here hoping to get some facilities from the authorities, he added.

The Burmese military regime has been engaged in ethnic cleansing for demographic changes in Arakan by increasing Buddhist settlements and pagodas in predominately Rohingya areas of northern Arakan. It is planned and done in a systematic manner to convert Rohingyas into a minority with the help of Buddhists settlers by setting up the so-called "model villages", said a schoolteacher on condition of anonymity.

There are already over 50 such model villages that have been set up in northern Arakan. Rohingyas are compelled to build houses for the new settlers.

Besides, farms have been confiscated and people have to provide forced labor. This makes Rohingyas landless crippling them economically where they are forced into a hand-to-mouth existence.

In Arakan, the military junta has implemented policies of exclusion against Rohingyas, while attempting to forcibly assimilate the Rakhine community through "Burmanization", said Rohingya elite in Buthidaung town.

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### **Nasaka seizes farm from villager**

-- *Kaladan News*, 17 January, 2007

Buthidaung, Burma: The haplessness of Rohingyas is a boon for corrupt authorities in Burma. Bent on making money Nasaka (Burma's Border Security Force) extorted Kyat 350,000 from a villager by confiscating his five-acre farm.

The Nasaka based in the Taung Bazar camp in Buthidaung Township confiscated a five acre plot of arable land from a villager on the pretext of converting it into a plantation on January 10, 2007, said a relative of the land owner who requested anonymity.

The landowner is Abdul Amin (68), son of Rahaman Ali, hailing from Darbine Sara village in Buthidaung Township, Arakan State, Burma.

After the seizure of the land, the farm owner complained to the Nasaka area No. (9) Headquarters in Taung Bazaar, Buthidaung Township with the documents he had in his possession. He also drew attention to the problems he would face in the future if the concerned authority did not return the confiscated farm.

Expressing sympathy, the commander of the Nasaka area No.(9) returned the seized farm to the owner on January 13, after taking a bribe of Kyat 350,000.

Often, the authorities the Nasaka and the army, on the pretext of conversion into a plantation, or construction of army camps, or building model villages—confiscate many farms, grazing land and strategically important lands from the villagers, said a local elder.

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### **Nasaka confiscates farmland from Rohingya**

-- *Kaladan News*, 5 December 2006

Akyab, Burma: Nasaka (Burma's Border Security Force) confiscated arable farm from a Rohingya for a plantation.

The land owner is Ibrahim (80), son of Sirazul Haque hailing from Kamanchi Para of Akyab, the capital of Arakan State, Burma, said a trader from Akyab, on condition of anonymity.

Ibrahim is a farmer who had some arable land. On November 28, the Nasaka seized most of the farm, about two acres for a plantation.

Ibrahim is now facing acute difficulty in looking after his family. He has no more land to fall back upon.

After confiscating land, the Nasaka is pressurizing villagers to shell out money for buying a variety of plants to grow on these lands.

Nasaka has been collecting Kyat 1,000 per family from the villagers of Kamachi Para to buy seedlings. If they don't comply they will be harassed physically and mentally.

The very poor in the village, cannot afford to pay Kyat 1,000 to Nasaka. "We don't know exactly, what kind of action, the Nasaka will take against them" a villager elder said.

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### **Army confiscates land for setting up camp**

-- *Kaladan News*, 24 November 2006

Buthidaung, Arakan State , Burma : Land grabbing by the Burmese Army from the Rohingya community seems to be an unending process. Arable land belonging to the community villagers is being confiscated for setting up an army camp.

On November 10, the army confiscated 3.2 acres of arable land for construction of an army camp from a Rohingya, Mohammed Yousuf (84), son of Bashar Meah of Kyang Bo village in Buthidaung Township . There will be more confiscation of land from the villagers for extension of the army camp and for new comers from Burma proper and southern Arakan State , a relative of the land owner said.

There are sites available places to set up an army camp, but the army wants to have an army camp on arable land belonging to Rohingyas's. There are hill sides for building an army camp, but they chose land owned by Rohingyas. This is because they want Rohingya villagers to become landless and jobless leading them to abject poverty, said a local shopkeeper.

The villager whose land has been grabbed has become landless. He has six family members and he does not know what will happen to his family.

To make matters worse there will be increased forced labor for construction of army camps, a villager said.

The junta's hidden agenda is to rid Arakan of Rohingyas once and for all. The ruling junta is trying to turn north Arakan into a Buddhist majority area which is leading to a serious demographic imbalance with more and more settlers coming in. Hasty establishment of military installations and new Buddhists villages on Rohingya land have been on since the beginning of 1998. The army does not hesitate in confiscating land, cattle, and food grain from Rohingyas, said a retired schoolteacher of Buthidaung Township .

In Buthidaung town alone there are 15 battalions of the army stationed permanently. At present, there is no insurgency in the area. So the huge presence of the army is not to curb insurgency but to harass and terrorize Rohingyas so that they flee their mother land. The greater the military presence in northern Arakan, the harsher the lives of the Rohingyas, the teacher added.

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### **More camps and soldiers following attack on Burma Army**

-- *Kaladan News*, 18 November 2006

18 November 2006: A surprise attack by an Arakan armed group on a military outpost on the Indo-Burma border has goaded the Burmese Army to go on an overdrive. The military is now gearing up to expand its existing force and army camps in the region.

The Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No.(55) recently set up eight temporary barracks and are preparing to construct army camps. It also plans to deploy another battalion in the area around Meihwah village in Paletwah Township, southern Chin state, Burma.

Meanwhile, people, residing in nearby Meihwah village, are apprehensive that they may be forced into labour for constructing the army camps.

“I am sure that there will be forced labour for the construction because the soldiers are taking a head count of people for forcing them to work for the army’s construction activity,” said a villager from Meihwah village who requested anonymity.

The Arakan Liberation Army, the armed wing of the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), on October 22 attacked an army post of LIB (55) while troops were on patrol duty. But there was no casualty, according to a Meihwah villager.

Immediately after the attack was launched about a 100 soldiers from ILB (55) stationed in Trol Ai village arrived in Meihwah village. They interrogated a village headman and reportedly tortured him accusing him of helping the rebel outfit.

“The soldiers accused him of informing the armed group of the absence of soldiers from the army camp. They beat him up him in an inhuman manner,” said a villager.

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### **New settlers brought to Northern Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News*, 15 November 2006

Maungdaw, Arakan State, Burma: A group of 140 Rakhine families, all from southern Arakan State were brought to Maungdaw Township on October 4 as new settlers.

They were brought to Kyikan Pyin village of Maungdaw Township, where Nasaka, Burma’s border security force’s headquarters is based, The move relates to settle them on Rohingya land, said a resident of Kyikan Pyin village who preferred anonymity.

All the 140 families are temporarily sheltered in the middle school of Kyikan Pyin village and Rohingya villagers have to feed them by turn.

Now Nasaka officers are gearing up to seize land, collect money and household materials from Rohingya villagers for the new comers. The villagers are scared stiff of being harassed.

The ruling junta plans to turn north Arakan into a Buddhist majority area which will lead to serious demographic imbalance. For this, Rakhines and Burmans are being invited from southern Arakan, central Burma and even from Bangladesh as a part of a systematic plan to exterminate Rohingyas, according to a school teacher who declined to mention his name.

With a view to disturbing the law and order situation in Rohingya areas, the junta had resorted to bringing in anti socials. The authorities are inviting former convicts and their families and people of immoral character along with poor families.

Under the so-called Border Area Development Program, the ruling junta has established over 50 model villages on confiscated Rohingya land and uprooted Rohingya villages in north Arakan with forced labor by Rohingyas.

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### **Fifty Chakma families settled on Rohingya land**

-- *Kaladan News*, 5 November 2006

Buthidaung, Burma: Fifty Chakma families from the hill side of Northern Arakan, were settled on land belonging to the Rohnigya community by Nasaka, Burma's border security force in Arakan State, Burma.

The land stretching to 12 acres were owned by Mohammed Siddik (40), son of Ali Ahammed, Nazir Ahammed (30), son of Nur Ali and Biaya (40), son of Noor Mohammed hailing from Tan May village-tract of Buthidaung township, said a village elder.

The 50 Chakma families were living on the hill side before. But, they are being settled on Rohingya land which was confiscated by Nasaka which built a pagoda on it for the model village.

On October 7, 2006, the Chakmas were brought from the hill side and resettled. Now, the new settlers are creating problems for Rohingya villages, killing Rohingya cattle grazing near the new model village. After killing cattle they take the meat to their new village, a villager of Tan May said.

When Rohingya villagers complained to the concerned authorities, no action was taken against the culprits, he added.

According to a villager, the land owners are facing many problems in Arakan as they are unable to do any farming on their farmland and are finding it difficult to eke out a living.



On November 2, about 112 families of new settlers arrived from Akyab to Northern Arakan by the vessel Danyawadi 2 to Buthidaung township of Northern Arakan. The 112 families comprise 223 men and 185 women. All of them are from areas surrounding Rangoon, the former capital of Burma, according to an official source.

Nine families will be settled in the model village of “Ain Ginmyint” in Rathidaung Township, 43 families in “Aungthaya” model village, and 60 families will be settled in “Longdon model” village in Maungdaw Township.

In northern Arakan, the military regime has been setting up a number of model villages to settle Burman people from Burma proper since they came to power in 1988. Now there are over 40 model villages that have been set up by the Burmese military authorities.

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### **Land grabbing resumes in Arakan State**

-- *Kaladan News*, 4 October 2006

Buthidaung, Arakan State, Burma: Nasaka Burma's border security force and the army have resumed grabbing of arable farms from Rohingya farmers in Arakan State, Burma .

On September 26, the army confiscated about 20 acres of arable farmland from Mohamed Salim (55), son of Mujib of “Sab Bazar” of Buthidaung Township for construction of a police camp, according to villagers.

Similarly, on September 27, Nasaka from the Taung Bazar camp grabbed about 37.2 acres of farmland including hillside areas from Jaffor (77), son of Jamal Hussain of “Bada Nar” village of Buthidaung Township for construction of a Nasaka camp, said a close relative of Jaffar.

Moreover, on September 30, the army seized about 48 acres of arable farms from Abdur Rahman (56), son of Khalil of “Oak Daung” (Khadir Para) of Buthidaung Township to establish a military camp and build a pagoda.

With the land being confiscated by the army and Nasaka, the Rohingyas are now facing many kinds of problems and are becoming landless and jobless. “We don't have any other option to look after our families except begging,” said one of the land owners who did not want to be named.

Earlier, most of the arable farms were confiscated by the concerned authorities for model or Natala villages who were brought to Arakan State from Burma proper, within Arakan State and even neighboring Bangladesh.

If the confiscation of farms from Rohingya farmers continues, in the next 10 years, there will be no farmland in the hands of Rohingyas, said a schoolteacher from Buthidaung town.

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### *Supply and Command*

-- Shwe Gas Movement, July 2006 (extracts)

[S]ince about 1990, SPDC officers have joined with wealthy businessmen to develop large-scale commercial shrimp farms. This has resulted in confiscated lands, a decrease in water resources for local people, and fewer grazing grounds for buffaloes and cows.  
P16

Since 1988, the number of infantry battalions<sup>16</sup> based in the Western Command, an area that includes Arakan State and Paletwa Township of Chin State, has increased from 3 to 43 battalions. In addition, there are ten specialized battalions (such as engineering and communications), three tactical command centers, and three navy bases. The Western Commander, headquartered in the town of Ann in Arakan State, controls many of the lucrative businesses in the state as his permission is needed for any licensing and procedures.

As in other areas of Burma, the arrival of more battalions has brought increased forced labour and land confiscation to make way for barracks, outposts, and other military infrastructure. Extortion and violence have also increased. The following section outlines the various human rights abuses currently being committed by Burma Army troops in the areas of the proposed pipeline routes. These abuses are *already* part of daily life in the Kaladan valley. The construction of gas pipelines will bring in more troops with strict orders to ensure security. (P22)

It has been well-documented that the Burma Army steals land, food, and timber from areas near its bases.<sup>21</sup> Evidence is mounting that land confiscation in particular is increasing with troop deployments throughout the country<sup>22</sup> This is largely due to the military moving towards a mode of 'self reliance' in which foot soldiers must provide for their and their families' basic needs.

Locally-owned lands have been confiscated in the Kaladan River valley to make way for military-run paddy farms, cash crop plantations, and other projects, or for being "too close" to roads. For example, in July 2004, 1,000 acres of paddy farms were confiscated for a new military teak plantation. No compensation was given to the land owners (NarinjaraNews Service). In 2001, land was confiscated from villagers in Site-tway Township to build a bus station. Authorities promised compensation but to this day no one has received any (Narinjara).

Land is often confiscated from local villagers when a military battalion moves into the area so that the troops have space for their camp. Additional acreage is then taken to provide food and income to the troops and their families at the expense of villagers: *"Most of the land confiscation seems to be ordered on the eastern side of the Kaladan River when SPDC battalions build new outposts. They take surrounding land for their own living. Even when they move away they maintain ownership and villagers have to pay rent to use the land that was once their own."* (Interview 3)

Similarly, authorities from IB (Infantry Battalion) 20 and LIB 550 are forcibly occupying paddy fields and gardens in three villages of Ponnagywan Township. Authorities told

villagers that they would have to plant paddy for army basic rations. Some gardens were ploughed by army tractors and turned into paddy fields. Said one interviewee: *"The owners have no chance to get back their lands."* (Interview A3)

There are already indications of potential increases in confiscations and fears of relocations that may come as a result of the gas project:

*"I have heard that villages on the eastern side of the Kaladan River will have to move to make way for the pipeline in the future. Some government officials came to take measurements in Saichaung and Krarnegan last year. I learned this from villagers travelling to the area."* (Interview 3)

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### **One family's story**

*"The authorities occupied our family's paddy fields (about 6 acres) in 2002. When they took our land my mother was so upset she couldn't eat for 2 days.*

*Now we need to get permission from the authorities to plough in our own fields. If they agree, we have to pay them 60 baskets of paddy per acre. We cannot get enough food for ourselves after paying them that much, so we don't want to grow paddy anymore. In order to try to make money my older brother and I now sell dried fish, salted fish, and fish paste.*

*There are 150 houses in our village on the eastern side of the Kaladan River. Most people depend on farming and trading but many village farms were taken over by Military Operation Command 9 in 2001-2002. If you are able to forward this news to any international organisation, it will be good for our villagers and a lot of other villages from Kyauktaw Township in Arakan State."* (Interview A4)

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### **Burmese farmers arrested and their farms seized**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 17 August, 2005

10 Rohingya farmers from Buthidaung Township, Arakan State in western Burma, were arrested on 24 July by local Burmese authorities who accused them of being dacoits.

The farmers who were used as 'whipping boys' were then told to pay 2 million kyat each for their freedom or they would face a 12 year prison term each if they failed to do so, according to Kaladan News.

Meanwhile, an acute shortage of rice within Arakan State is causing untold miseries to local people because of restrictions on the sale of rice within the region which cause inflation and slowdown in sale. Rice has been smuggled into the state from Bangladesh by bootleggers who make big profits.

Similarly, local authorities at Ma-U Pin District in the delta region of Irrawaddy Division, confiscated more than 70 acres of paddy fields from farmers with the excuse that natural

gas was found on them. The landless farmers received no compensation from the authorities and some of them had moved to Rangoon to be day labourers.

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### **Land confiscation, forced eviction and house destruction**

-- Myanmar - *The Rohingya Minority: Fundamental Rights Denied*, Amnesty International, 19 May 2004 (extracts)

The confiscation of land in Northern Rakhine State is related to the establishment of "model villages"; the construction or expansion of NaSaKa, military, and police camps; and establishing plantations for the security forces and also for new settlers. More recently, a number of forced evictions have taken place when people were accused of having built houses on land that local authorities claim is officially registered as farmland or rice fields, not residential land.....

The building and the extension of military camps, mainly for the NaSaKa, have also led to land confiscation. Moreover the NaSaKa has on numerous occasions confiscated land for commercial purposes, mainly to establish shrimp farms but also rice fields for themselves.

People reportedly receive no compensation, and are sometimes also forced to work on the same fields that were confiscated from them. In other cases the NaSaKa has rented out confiscated land as shrimp farms or rice fields to the local population.

A 25 year old Rohingya man from Rathedaung described the confiscation of his land: *"My father is a farmer and we used to have 47 kani of land, but now we only have seven kani left and this is not enough for our subsistence. The Myanmar Army confiscated most of our land in the early 1990s to make shrimp farms for themselves. After that, we survived with our cattle... There was grazing land in our village for our cattle but this was also confiscated three years ago just before the authorities built a NaTaLa village for new settlers. After that, we could no longer graze out cattle... There are four shrimp farms near our village, two belong to the NaSaKa and two to the army. Every year, before the monsoon, we must repair the embankments of those shrimp farms. This year [2003] I had to work for three days in one of the NaSaKa shrimp farms."*

A 25 year old Rohingya man from southern Maungdaw also had his land confiscated recently:

*"Most of the shrimp farms in our area belong to the military, the NaSaKa and other government agencies. Originally all this land belonged to our Muslim villagers, but it was confiscated by various government agencies. Then again they rent it out to our people on a yearly basis."*

In 2002 the NaSaKa reportedly began to strictly implement land use policies and this has led to number of evictions of Rohingyas. Due to population growth, some families built their houses on land registered as paddy fields decades ago. Recently they have been issued with expulsion orders and forced to dismantle their homes. Similarly, many local shrimp farms were ordered to be destroyed or to be planted with paddy because they were established on land registered for other purposes.

A 27 year old Rohingya man from central Maungdaw reported in early 2004:

*“The eviction process started about two years ago. First they evicted 40 houses in [a village] near Maungdaw. Eighteen families protested and refused to dismantle their houses. They were arrested and sent to Buthidaung jail. They are still there. They detained mostly the head of the family but they also jailed some women, even one pregnant woman. She gave birth inside the jail. 18 people are still in jail about this case. After that, they evicted 15 houses in [another village], also near Maungdaw. Then they evicted 60 houses in my village. My house was among them. This happened one year ago [2003]. I did not receive any written order from the NaSaKa, but the NaSaKa called our Chairman and provided him with a list of houses with the name of each family head. The Chairman summoned all the people mentioned in the list. He ordered us to vacate the land and explained: ‘The land where your houses stand is registered as paddy land. So, you must leave.’ Nobody dared to protest after what happened in the other villages. I was given five days time to leave my house and dismantle it. We were not given any other place to go.”*

A 35 year old Rohingya man from northern Maungdaw reported extreme impoverishment as a result of land confiscation:

*“I had a house and one kani of paddy field. But in 1995, my land was confiscated together with other people’s land. After I lost my land, I started renting a plot to do cultivation but I did not have any oxen, so I had to hire oxen to plough. Because of this, I could not make any profit. Then I decided to work as a labourer on other people’s land in order to make ends meet. But now jobs have become very scarce and I felt compelled to leave my village and come to Bangladesh... Apart from forced labour there was no work in my village. My family spent many days without even one meal a day. My children became sick due to malnutrition and I also became ill. I had nothing to sell except my utensils and a few chickens.”*

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### **Peoples’ land confiscated for sale in USDA fund drive**

-- *Burma News International* 10 December 2003

State Peace and Development Council authorities have seized the land owned by the locals and are planning to sell these in pieces for a fund drive for the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), the local people said.

The land owned by the local people is situated along the bank of Sat Rogya creek, in the Sittwe downtown. The locals earlier used to sell bamboo, firewood and water palm leaves (material used as roofing). The army confiscated the land in 2002 and to build an office for the military Intelligence, No 10, and Nazi Quarter police station.

The two acres of surplus land was in the process of being sold to raise funds for USDA and Women’s affair Committee (WAC) led by Dr Daw Khin Win Shwe, wife of Prime Minister General Khin Nyunt.

In the past too cases like this have taken place, for instance the police department after having built a long building comprising 10 stalls, the department sold each stall for 5,00,000 kyats to raise funds for its

department.

The estimated current value of the plot is 2 million Burmese kyats said local reliable sources.

After confiscation, the owners were forced to shift their business of selling, bamboo, fire wood and water palm leaves to the upper reaches of Sat Rogya creek, far away from Sittwe downtown, causing inconvenience to the Sittwe dwellers in purchasing the commodities mentioned, local people complained.

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## **Implantation of settlers**

### **New Settlers Reach Destination**

-- *Narinjara News*, 5 April 2007

A number of new settlers from Burma proper arrived Wednesday at Taungbro model village via the northern town of Maungdaw on a number of ferryboats, reports a local official.

The official confirmed that a total of 447 new settlers arrived at Taungbro model village around 12 pm on Wednesday from Maungdaw aboard five ferryboats. Among those 447 new settlers are 230 males and 217 females.

The Burmese military authority allocated 120 houses that were recently constructed in the model village to the new settlers on a ballot system.

The settlers will also be receiving a number of possessions, including three cattle and two acres of farmlands, from the government authority in order to assist them in their move to the western border area from their homes in Burma proper.

An official report said the settlers first came to Akyab, the capital of Arakan State, from Rangoon aboard an ocean liner. On Tuesday the settlers came to Maungdaw from Akyab via Buthidaung by Danyawaddy ferry ships.

In the north of Arakan there are 37 model villages that have been set up so far by the Burmese military government, with a total of 2,692 families having relocated from Burma proper. According to a government report, the new settlers consist of 6,211 males and 6,128 females.

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### **Over 500 new settlers arrive in Akyab**

-- *Narinjara News* via *Burma News Online*, 3 April 2007

An ocean liner brought over 500 new settlers to Akyab, the capital of Arakan on Sunday from Burma proper. They are on their way to a new model village being set up in the new sub-town in Taungbro on the Burma-Bangladesh border, people in the town said.

Akyab town folk were forced by the Burmese Army officials to welcome the settlers at the Akyab seaport jetty with a reception ceremony. There are many women and children among the settlers.

The Rakhine State Merchant's Association donated medicine and clothes worth about Kyat 1 million to the new settlers through the army at the reception ceremony.

A businessman from Akyab alleged that the authorities forced the Rakhine Merchant's Association to donate the medicine and clothes to the new settlers.

The settlers are now staying at the hall of the Agricultural Department. They are likely to shift to the model village in the next few days.

The Burmese military regime has set up a number of model villages in northern Arakan for Burmese people brought from Burma proper. Currently there are 36 model villages that have been set up by the military in northern Arakan State.

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### **Clash Erupts Between Model Villagers and Local Muslim Community in Arakan**

-- *Narinjara News*, 26 March 2007

A clash erupted on Saturday between model villagers from Shwe Yin Aye and the local Muslim community in Naungchaung, with many people from both sides suffering injuries from the conflict, reported a local village chairman on condition of anonymity.

The clash broke out at 7 pm on the day, as the model villagers were looting chickens and vegetables from a house in the Naungchaung Muslim Village, the source said.

In the clash, both sides attacked each other with swords, sticks, and slingshots. At least 50 people, including a Muslim religious leader, were injured in the clash.

32 people have been hospitalized in the Maungdaw district hospital in critical condition. Among them, eight are Muslim villagers from Naungchaung, and 24 are model villagers from Shwe Yin Aye model village.

A source said soon after the clash broke out, the local Nasaka force rushed into the villages and controlled the outbreak of violence.

Many local Muslim villagers are now fleeing from their homes due to fear of action being taken by the Nasaka authorities.

A village source said a team of high officials from Maungdaw visited Shwe Yin Village yesterday and interrogated many of the villagers there about the clash.

In Shwe Yin Aye model village, there are 86 homes that were built by the Burmese military authorities for settlers from Burma proper, in order to balance the population between Buddhist and Muslims in the region.

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### **300 Carpenters Forced to Construct New Model Village**

-- *Narinjara News*, 26 March 2007

Some 300 carpenters from Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships have been forced by Nasaka authorities to construct 120 houses in a model village located in the north of Arakan's western border township of Maungdaw for new settlers from Burma proper, according to local reports.

"Yes, we had been working at the model village construction site in Taungbro, but the government authority pays the wage for construction at a deserving rate," said a carpenter on condition on anonymity.

However, many of the carpenters have cancelled their contract with the local people on the construction of their houses, and some carpenters have left the construction of local houses incomplete around the two townships after the authority forcibly summoned the carpenters to construct the new model village settlers' houses in Taungbro.

The carpenter said, "We have postponed all construction work for local people in the area as the government authority ordered us [carpenters] to come to the Taungbro model village for the construction of 120 houses."

A number of new houses belonging to locals that were being constructed by the carpenters have been left unfinished in Maungdaw and Buthidaung as all carpenters had to leave for the model village after being summoned by the local government authority, said one villager.

A source said the government is expected to open the model village in Taungbro before Thungram, the New Year in Burma, as the authorities will bring 120 families from Burma proper to settle in the model village before the Burmese New Year festival begins.

According to a local source, the authorities thought it would be impossible to complete the model village before Thungram due to a shortage of carpenters and construction workers, among other problems. The authorities then summoned all the carpenters from Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships to work on the model village in Taungbro.



Another villager source said the government authority also sent 700 tons of timber for the buildings in the model village from central Arakan on a ship via Buthidaung, and many local people have been used as forced labor to carry the timbers to the model village.

Narinjara is currently collecting facts and details regarding the government authority's use of forced labor of local villagers in carrying the timbers to the model village.

It has also been learned that not only many carpenters, but also local day laborers are working at the model village construction site to complete the village before the New Year festival that runs from 13 April to 17 April this year.

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### **Establishment of new Model Villages/Forced Evictions**

-- Arakan Project, February 2007

In 2006, four new model villages have reportedly been built by the NaTaLa to resettle Buddhist villagers from Arakan State and other parts of Burma with incentives. One such model village was established in Nyaung Chaung, South Maungdaw, in early 2006.

In North Maungdaw, two new model villages have or are being constructed involving the forced eviction of Rohingya villagers. In the past, the construction of model villages used to involve confiscation of land, but not eviction. This is therefore a new development. One hamlet of Loun Don village tract was compelled to move out in the beginning of 2006 and to relocate at the foot of the hills. 80 new settler families were brought in in October 2006. Currently, another model village is being built with forced labour in Taung Pyo Let Wah, and about 150 households have been evicted without any compensation. The dispossessed families were not assigned any other site to relocate. Some went to take shelter in relatives' houses but a number of them fled to Bangladesh. Reportedly, this new model village will accommodate 120 families, and 20 houses have so far been completed. The villagers also had to flatten a hilltop to build a pagoda.

Another new model village is about to be constructed in North Buthidaung (Upper-Bagali) and land has already been marked out for this, but it is not known yet whether Rohingya families will be forcibly evicted. However, villagers were compelled to buy lottery tickets in order to contribute to the construction of a pagoda.

In June 2006, 30 houses in Ba Da Nar village tract, North Buthidaung, received an eviction order after a monk had a vision that a Buddha statue had been buried in that area and that a pagoda should be built there. At first, the villagers did not obey the order but, at the end of October, they were summoned to the NaSaKa camp and forced to sign a declaration that they had agreed to move voluntarily. By now, a pagoda has already been built as well as a new police station at the location where the evicted families used to reside. These families were not provided with a relocation site and went to stay temporarily on someone else's land from where they will need to move soon.

In early 2007, the authorities also indicated that they plan to set up another model village in a hamlet of Kyauk Chaung village tract (North Maungdaw) inhabited by 180 Rohingya families and that half the existing dwellings would be dismantled.

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### **Western Commander reverses Sarapa decision on Taungbru**

-- *Kaladan News*, 15 February 2007

Maungdaw, Burma : The Burmese Army has scrapped the decision of the Sarapa (Military Intelligence) to build model villages on demolished Rohingya village in Taungbru Left in Maungdaw Township . It has also promised some compensation for the destroyed property. A dispute broke out between the Sarapa, which demolished the village on the sly, and the Burma Army and Nasaka.

The decision to put a stop to constructing a model village followed the Western Command Commander's visit to Taungbru Sub-township in Maungdaw Township on February 14 to survey the demolition of a Rohingya village for putting up model villages, said our correspondent.

The Commander accompanied by the Technical Operation Commander (TOC) of Buthidaung, the Second-in-Command of TOC, District Peace and Development Council (DPDC) Chairman and Township Peace and Development Council (TPDC) Chairman of Maungdaw township arrived in Taungbru yesterday by speedboat from Mungdaw town.

After surveying the situation in Taungbru Left, the Western Command Commander ordered villagers whose houses were destroyed for the model village to reconstruct their homes again in its former place. He promised some compensation for the destroyed property.

On February 1, Sarapa (Military Intelligence) accompanied by police destroyed about 30 houses belonging to Rohingya villagers of Ward No. 3 and 4 in Taungbru Left in Maungdaw Township to build so-called model villages for new settlers.

A dispute broke out between the Sarapa and the Burmese Army over the model village on February 10. The army and Nasaka do not want to set up a model village by destroying Rohingya villages, as there are places available to build a model village very near the Bangladesh border.

The Sarapa, without the knowledge of the army and the Nasaka were constructing this model village.

Earlier, the Tactical Operational Commander (TOC) of Buthidaung visited this area and ordered the concerned authorities to stop building the model village.

In the evening, the team left for Maungdaw Town by speedboat after instructing the concerned authorities, said a source close to Nasaka.

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### **Nasaka searches for photographer**

-- *Narinjara News*, 13 February 2007

Nasaka, Burma 's border security force is on the lookout for a photographer who took pictures of a village in Taungbro forcibly demolished by the authorities. The government had prohibited taking photographs of the village, said a village chairman.

The authorities are suspecting a staff member of a UNHCR regional office based in Maungdaw Township , and they are looking for clues to pin point whether the person took the photographs.

Over the last couple of weeks the Nasaka has been demolishing a Muslim village in Taungbro, in order to build 120 new houses for model villagers to be shifted from Burma proper.

A village source said 22 houses in the village were demolished without compensation to the owners, who were forcibly displaced by the Burmese regime.

An unidentified photographer visited the area and took snapshots of the demolition.

Nasaka personnel rushed to the area when they received word that someone had taken photographs, but the photographer had already fled. Since then, the Nasaka has been suspecting a staff member of the Maungdaw UNHCR office.

The village chairman said that Colonel Thein Thay from Military Operation Planning Bureau based in Buthidaung came to the area on February 9, soon after the incident.

The Burmese junta is now building a sub-township near the Burma-Bangladesh border to promote border trade with Bangladesh, and many Burmese settlers will be moved to this new sub-township from Burma proper.

The construction of new houses on the demolition site was started on February 8, and 120 houses will be built for new model villagers from Burma proper, said a source in the area.

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### **Forced labor for model village in northern Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News* February 12, 2007

**Maungdaw, Burma:** Sarapa (Military Intelligence) forces accompanied by police have been forcing villagers to build modern villages for new settlers since February 2, said a village elder in Taungbru Left.

On February 1, Sarapa camp accompanied by police destroyed about 30 houses of Rohingya villagers of Ward No.3 and 4 in Taungbru Left in Maungdaw Township to build model villages for new comers, he added.

Sarapa has been forcing people from 11 nearby villages into labor. Every day the villagers have to provide 50 villagers from each village to cut the hillside to build model villages. About 550 villagers have been engaged in forced labor since February 1. But, Sarapa provides Kyat 500 a day per head as wages to avoid complaints to the international community, although, the daily labor rate is Kyat 1,000 to Kyat 1,500 per day in the open market, said a former village chairman of the area.

But, the villagers whose houses have been destroyed do not get any compensation from the concerned authorities and are not provided new sites for re-settlement. The uprooted villagers asked the concerned authorities to give them permission to cut wood and bamboos from the dense forests to build new houses, but were not granted permission.

A villager close to Sarapa officials said, “The concerned authority intends to use this place to build a model village for Rakhines or Marmas calling them in from Bangladesh. They plan to build about 120 houses for new comers.”

Another villager said, “They (Sarapa) will bring new comers from Burma proper and other parts of Arakan State and will resettle them here as it is very close to the Bangladesh border.”

Taungbru is a place, which is being connecting with Bangladesh land. A Burma-Bangladesh friendship bridge has been built through this place sine 14 years ago. This place was also declared a sub-township area within the Maungdaw Township jurisdiction. It will have five quarters in terms of residence including a jail, a police station and a health centre on confiscated land of Rohingyas. At Present U Chit Maung is the Sub-township officer.

A dispute broke out between Sarapa and the army over the model village on February 10. The army and Nasaka does not want to set up a model village after relocating Rohingya villages, as there are places available to build a model village. This model village is being constructed by the Sarapa without the knowledge of the army and the Nasaka, said a man is close to the army.

Regarding the matter, the Tactical Operational Commander (TOC) of Buthidaung visited this area on February 10, and ordered the concerned authorities to stop the building of model village.

Besides, the Western Command Commander will visit today this place to see the matter, said a source close to Nasaka.

A man from Maungdaw town said,” The SPDC authorities have been encouraged after the vetoes of China and Russia in the UN Security Council last month to commit more human rights violations across the country against minorities.”

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### **Model village on Rohingya land in northern Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News*, 8 February, 2007

**Buthidaung, Burma:** The Nasaka recently set up a model village on Rohingya land after confiscating it for Buddhists from southern Arakan.

To build the model village, Nasaka confiscated about 37 acres of arable farm land from three Rohingyas namely Abu Ahamed (40), son of Noor Hussain, Ahamed (60), son of Sayed Noor and Mostafa (60), son of Khasim Ali. They all belong to “Ywet Nyo Daung (Longa Daung) village of Buthidaung Township in Arakan State, said a former village chairman.

On January 21, about 55 families were resettled on land belonging to Rohingyas of Longa Daung village in Buthidaung. They are poor people and came here hoping to get some facilities from the authorities, he added.

The Burmese military regime has been engaged in ethnic cleansing for demographic changes in Arakan by increasing Buddhist settlements and pagodas in predominately Rohingya areas of northern Arakan. It is planned and done in a systematic manner to convert Rohingyas into a minority with the help of Buddhists settlers by setting up the so-called “model villages”, said a schoolteacher on condition of anonymity.

There are already over 50 such model villages that have been set up in northern Arakan. Rohingyas are compelled to build houses for the new settlers.

Besides, farms have been confiscated and people have to provide forced labor. This makes Rohingyas landless crippling them economically where they are forced into a hand-to-mouth existence.

In Arakan, the military junta has implemented policies of exclusion against Rohingyas, while attempting to forcibly assimilate the Rakhine community through “Burmanization”, said Rohingya elite in Buthidaung town.

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### **More camps and soldiers following attack on Burma Army**

-- *Kaladan News*, 18 November 2006

18 November 2006: A surprise attack by an Arakan armed group on a military outpost on the Indo-Burma border has goaded the Burmese Army to go on an overdrive. The military is now gearing up to expand its existing force and army camps in the region.

The Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No.(55) recently set up eight temporary barracks and are preparing to construct army camps. It also plans to deploy another battalion in the area around Meihwah village in Paletwah Township, southern Chin state, Burma.

Meanwhile, people, residing in nearby Meihwah village, are apprehensive that they may be forced into labour for constructing the army camps.

“I am sure that there will be forced labour for the construction because the soldiers are taking a head count of people for forcing them to work for the army’s construction activity,” said a villager from Meihwah village who requested anonymity.

The Arakan Liberation Army, the armed wing of the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), on October 22 attacked an army post of LIB (55) while troops were on patrol duty. But there was no casualty, according to a Meihwah villager.

Immediately after the attack was launched about a 100 soldiers from ILB (55) stationed in Trol Ai village arrived in Meihwah village. They interrogated a village headman and reportedly tortured him accusing him of helping the rebel outfit.

“The soldiers accused him of informing the armed group of the absence of soldiers from the army camp. They beat him up him in an inhuman manner,” said a villager..

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### **New settlers brought to Northern Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News*, 15 November 2006

Maungdaw, Arakan State, Burma: A group of 140 Rakhine families, all from southern Arakan State were brought to Maungdaw Township on October 4 as new settlers.

They were brought to Kyikan Pyin village of Maungdaw Township, where Nasaka, Burma’s border security force’s headquarters is based, The move relates to settle them on Rohingya land, said a resident of Kyikan Pyin village who preferred anonymity.

All the 140 families are temporarily sheltered in the middle school of Kyikan Pyin village and Rohingya villagers have to feed them by turn.

Now Nasaka officers are gearing up to seize land, collect money and household materials from Rohingya villagers for the new comers. The villagers are scared stiff of being harassed.

The ruling junta plans to turn north Arakan into a Buddhist majority area which will lead to serious demographic imbalance. For this, Rakhines and Burmans are being invited from southern Arakan, central Burma and even from Bangladesh as a part of a systematic plan to exterminate Rohingyas, according to a school teacher who declined to mention his name.

With a view to disturbing the law and order situation in Rohingya areas, the junta had resorted to bringing in anti socials. The authorities are inviting former convicts and their families and people of immoral character along with poor families.

Under the so-called Border Area Development Program, the ruling junta has established over 50 model villages on confiscated Rohingya land and uprooted Rohingya villages in north Arakan with forced labor by Rohingyas.

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### **Fifty Chakma families settled on Rohingya land**

-- *Kaladan News*, 5 November 2006

Buthidaung, Burma: Fifty Chakma families from the hill side of Northern Arakan, were settled on land belonging to the Rohingya community by Nasaka, Burma's border security force in Arakan State, Burma.

The land stretching to 12 acres were owned by Mohammed Siddik (40), son of Ali Ahammed, Nazir Ahammed (30), son of Nur Ali and Biaya (40), son of Noor Mohammed hailing from Tan May village-tract of Buthidaung township, said a village elder.

The 50 Chakma families were living on the hill side before. But, they are being settled on Rohingya land which was confiscated by Nasaka which built a pagoda on it for the model village.

On October 7, 2006, the Chakmas were brought from the hill side and resettled. Now, the new settlers are creating problems for Rohingya villages, killing Rohingya cattle grazing near the new model village. After killing cattle they take the meat to their new village, a villager of Tan May said.

When Rohingya villagers complained to the concerned authorities, no action was taken against the culprits, he added.

According to a villager, the land owners are facing many problems in Arakan as they are unable to do any farming on their farmland and are finding it difficult to eke out a living.

On November 2, about 112 families of new settlers arrived from Akyab to Northern Arakan by the vessel Danyawadi 2 to Buthidaung township of Northern Arakan. The 112 families comprise 223 men and 185 women. All of them are from areas surrounding Rangoon, the former capital of Burma, according to an official source.

Nine families will be settled in the model village of “Ain Ginmyint” in Rathidaung Township, 43 families in “Aungthaya” model village, and 60 families will be settled in “Longdon model” village in Maungdaw Township.

In northern Arakan, the military regime has been setting up a number of model villages to settle Burman people from Burma proper since they came to power in 1988. Now there are over 40 model villages that have been set up by the Burmese military authorities.

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### **Forcefully relocated settlers said causing trouble in Burma’s Arakan**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 24 December, 2005

Local people in Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships of Arakan State, western Burma near Bangladesh, are suffering because of bullying tactics by Border Areas Development (BAD) officials and township authorities of Burma’s military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

This is the result of the authorities forcefully resettling illegal squatters from Mandalay and Magwe Divisions in central Burma in villages of Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships. Local people are also forced to provide cash and food for the new settlers, and the authorities are not taking any action in case of disputes between the locals and the new settlers.

“I have just received news today that the authorities have brought former convicts and squatters from Central Burma to Maungdaw and resettling them in (Nyaung Kyaung) village of Arakan State’s Maungdaw Township,” said the chairman of the Human Rights and Democratic Party in exile, Hla Aung, said the authorities are violating human rights. “The local authorities collected contributions and have built some 200 homes there. Each household is required to contribute at least 5,000 kyats to the building funds and 2,000 kyats to feed the settlers. We have learned that people are already facing economic hardship in Maungdaw Township especially since rice production is not good because of bad weather this year.”

“We have been receiving information that there has been a lot of trouble because the new settlers are stealing from the local people, openly taking cattle away from them, and also threatening them. The local authorities are not taking any action at all. In other words, these are acts of human rights violations committed against the local people who are living peacefully.”

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### ***Human Rights Yearbook, Burma 2005***

-- Human Rights Documentation Unit of the National Coalition Government of the Union



of Burma (extract on model villages)

Between June and October 2005, large tracts of land were confiscated in several areas of Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships ostensibly for new model villages. There are reports that a large area was confiscated along the river between Taung Bazaar and Ba Da Gar, and the authorities stated that 8,000 families would be brought from other parts of Burma. (Source: The Arakan Project, June to October 2005).

On 7 August 2005, local SPDC authorities revealed that a total of 110 NaTaLa villages were to be constructed with 50 in Buthidaung Township and 60 in Maungdaw Township. The villages were reportedly going to be constructed east of the May-yu River. A VPDC chairperson indicated, "One village will be constructed on the roadside near the ferry harbor east of Buthidaung and another village will be constructed near the Da-blu River Bridge. There are 22 villages to be constructed east of the May-yu River and 25 villages to the west of the May-yu River." (Source: "The SPDC Carry Out Na-ta-la Village Construction Project in Northern Arakan State," *Kaladan News*, 25 September 2005).

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### **Villagers from Government's 'Modern' Villages Suffer Famine**

-- *Narinjara News*, 23 June 2005

Several villagers from the government's modern villages in Northern Arakan state are now suffering from famine due the sky-rocketing prices of rice recently, said a village chairman from the region.

The villages facing famine are; Aung Thapray, Thupan Naga, Rankha Zadi, Mun Khamong, Nanra Gai, Bandu la, Tight Chaung and other Mro and Dainet tribal villages. All villages are located in the northern part of Maungdaw, close to Bangladesh.

The village headmen from several villages complained about the problem to local army officials from LIB 538, asking them to take emergency supplies to the famine victims immediately, he said.

A battalion commander and local departmental officers visited the areas to look over the crisis in the last two days after they received information of the famine. But there has been no official action to help the famine victims.

There have been no deaths from starvation, but some are suffering illnesses and malnutrition due to the famine, said another villager.

According to local village sources, some villagers are now asking for rice from nearby army camps as well as nearer local villages for their daily survival.

Market sources said, in Maung daw, the price of Pawsan Mwe brand rice (high standard) has increased from 15,000 kyat to 18,500 kyat per bag (50 kg) while the price for normal rice has increased from 12,500 kyat to 13,500 kyat per bag (50 kg) within a week.

People from Maungdaw said that the prices may go up further in the rainy season. The people from border areas must be able to face the famine crisis, said a trader from Maungdaw.

It was learnt that in the northern part of Arakan there are over 30 modern villages

being built by the Burmese Military government. In the modern villages most people were brought from Burma proper by authorities to adjust the population ratios with local people.

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## **Forced labour**

### **Forced labor for physic nut plantations**

-- *Kaladan News*, 12 April, 2007

Buthidaung, Burma: The need for forced labor for physic nut plantations has entailed a meeting by the military government authorities.

A meeting was held at Buthidaung town, Arakan State, Burma, on April 1, where government officials together with village chairpersons and members by TPDC Chairman met to discuss forced labor for physic nut plantations.

At the meeting, the Township Peace and Development Council (TPDC) Chairman talked about physic nut plantations across Arakan State, particularly in Buthidaung Township. The authorities told villagers to clean weeds from physic nut plantations owned by the government. Village Chairmen were asked to collect money to buy physic nut saplings, said one of the invitees at the meeting.

The authorities also told the people that the cultivation of physic nuts would be a useful contribution to the economy. Physic nuts produce oil that can be added to diesel, reducing the country's dependence on petroleum.

In 2006, villagers were forced to buy seeds or plants of physic nuts and grow them wherever they had space. Similarly, this year also villagers are compelled to buy physic nut plants, a villager said.

The village Peace and Development Council (VPDC) members have been collecting money since April 2, from the villagers. They have to pay Kyat 5,000 to 20,000 per family according to the size of the family and its status. It will be completed by the end of this month, he added.

After the meeting, the authorities ordered the villages of each family to provide labor for cleaning weeds from the physic nut plantations.

It was generally agreed that bio fuel such as physic nut oil can eliminate the emission of greenhouse gases and sulphurous contaminants, while physic nut plantations help control soil erosion, sources said. Each village has to provide 10 laborers every day for cleaning weeds.

In Arakan State, the government is planning to grow many acres of within the next three years and the target is seven million acres nationwide, according to sources.

Villagers all over the country—from southern Karen and Mon States to western Arakan State, northern Kachin and eastern Shan States—are reportedly forced to grow the plants.

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### **Burma Army uses locals as porters in military operation**

-- *Narinjara News*, 29 March 2007

Many local residents in border areas are being used by the Burmese Army as military porters in its operation against an insurgent group on the western Burmese border. This has come to light from local people who fled to Bangladesh to avoid being forced into porter duty.

The army operation was launched on March 25 in the western border area between Pelatwa and Buthidaung Townships after a group of about 25 armed insurgents entered the western region of Arakan State to carry out activities under the cover of deep forests.

During the operation, many local villagers from several villages including Letpanwa, Tookpi, Sitaung, and Pyin Zaw were forced to work as military porters to carry army material and food from one location to another along the border.

At least five army battalions are taking part in the operation. They are LB 20, LB 34, LIB 289, LIB 354, and LIB 376, a source said.

Another report said the Burmese Army is now trying to block all the border points along the Burma-Bangladesh border between northern Buthidaung Township and southern Pelatwa Township in Chin State, in an effort to trap and neutralize the insurgent group inside Burma preventing their escape to their hideout.

A villager said he had heard that a group of the Arakan Liberation Army has entered the north of Buthidaung and Kyauktaw Townships recently to ambush Burmese army patrol near the border.

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### **Extracts from The Arakan Project**

The main forms of forced labour in Arakan are: Paddy cultivation for the military & NaSaKa; Clearing jungle and tree plantation; Road and bridge repair; Camp repair and renovation; Bamboo and wood collection for the authorities' own profit; Compulsory crop procurement; Sentry Duty, Camp maintenance; Portering; Brick baking (collection of

firewood + labour + taxes); Road and bridge construction (supply of gravel/stone + labour + taxes); Model villages construction (building material + labour) .  
[...]

In Northern Arakan, activities using large numbers of forced labourers such as brick-baking, construction work and the collection of forest products stopped with the coming of the rainy season, but have been replaced by cultivation and tree plantation for the authorities. The numbers of days of forced labour performed by the villagers have somewhat decreased during this monsoon but it should be noted that the rainy season corresponds to a period when farmers are busy cultivating their own fields and farm work is available to day labourers. Access to such work is critical for the survival of the poor and allows them to overcome the lean season till the next harvest.

The slight decrease in forced labour observed during this monsoon is only due to seasonal patterns and there is no sign that the authorities have taken any measures to address the problem. Demands for sentries, porters and camp labour remain exactly at the same level.  
*The Arakan Project – Labouring in the rain – 10 August 2006*

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### **Nasaka still forces Rohingya villagers into labour**

-- *Kaladan News*, 23 August 2006

Rathedaung, Arakan State, Burma: Nasaka the Burmese border security force has been using Rohingya villagers in Rathedaung Township, Arakan State, Burma for forced labour since August 8, said Abul Kalam (not real name) of Rathedaung Township. Sayed Karim (43) son of Khasim, Boshor, Sultan, Fayas (45) son of Mohamed Hussain, Kala Meah (35) son of Kala San, Jamal (53) son of Nasir Hussain have been providing forced labour in a Nasaka camp since August 8. All the villagers hail from Zaydi Pyin village of Rathedaung Township. The villagers have to go to the Nasaka work site for four days each week. If they do not comply with the order, they will have to pay Kyat 4,000 per day as a fine, said a close relative of one of the labourers. For refusing to provide forced labour to Nasaka, the five villagers were punished and are being made to work in the Nasaka camp. It is not known when the forced labour will end, said a brother of one of the victims. Though the international community and particularly the International Labour Organization (ILO) have been pressurizing the Burmese ruling military junta to stop forced labor for a long time, it has paid no attention. According to the villagers of Rathedaung Township, the Nasaka and the army have been stepping up persecution of the Rohingya people since the beginning of this year. The authorities are also into increased malpractices against the Rohingya community in the western-side of Rathadaung Township, where Rohingyas are a majority. The State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) had already uprooted some Rohingya villages from the southern-side of the Rathedaung Township during the 1978 Naga Min Operation or Red Dragon Operation and in the 1991-92 refugee exodus.

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### ***Supply and Command***

-- Shwe Gas Movement, July 2006 (extracts)

*There is forced labour in every village in our area In 2003, I had to plough a military farm for three days and work in a stone quarry for six days near Kyaukseik village together with 17 other people. This year [2005] I was also forced to gather and transport stones for a bridge at a stone quarry for five days."* (Interview 1)

Forced labour also includes portering, or being forced to carry things without payment. A trader from Paletwa Township explains his experience:

*"I was asked to porter several times. I had to carry basic rations from our village to the military camp either by hand or using my boat. I had to do that once or twice a month, however they demanded. "* (Interview A12)

Interviews indicate that several villages have been forced to purchase, plant, and maintain tree seedlings alongside car roads in Ponnagywan and Kyauktaw townships. No one was paid for their work, nor provided with food or water while they worked. Some had to walk more than one hour to get to the work site. According to one interview:

*"I had to plant trees for four days. There were a lot of people at the work site. There were children aged only nine and ten years old working, as well as elderly villagers and women. "* (Interview AI) p25

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### ***No rest from Forced Labour***

-- The Arakan Project, 31 May 2006 (extracts)

The SPDC's unwillingness to eradicate forced labour is not only apparent in the negotiations with the ILO but is also reflected in the deteriorating situation in Northern Arakan State, where forced labour is becoming more systematic and widespread. It is used for all types of activities and with total impunity by both the military and the civilian administration. During this dry season, forced labour has reached such an unbearable level that, combined with other abuses and the high price of rice, it has the potentiality to trigger a new refugee outflow to Bangladesh.

....

In Northern Arakan, the coming of the dry season always announces new patterns of forced labour. Forced labour for paddy cultivation in the military and NaSaKa fields (from ploughing to harvesting) characterises the monsoon season and occurs at a time when farmers are busy with their own cultivation. After harvest, new demands for forced labour emerge for activities such as brick baking, all sorts of construction work and collection of timber, bamboo and other building materials. These forced labour exactions are added to year-round demands for sentries, labourers for camp maintenance and porters. During the 2005 monsoon, increased forced labour, arbitrary taxation and skyrocketing rice prices prompted a food crisis. A refugee exodus was only averted thanks to international emergency food relief.

"I cannot remember that we have ever experienced such bad times. The NaSaKa and the Army joined together to suck all our energy and money. How will the poor survive with so much forced labour? When will this end? Soon we won't be able to stay in Burma. Another famine is already looming."

-- A villager from North Buthidaung, 2 May 2006 , cited by The Arakan Project

### Seasonal Patterns of Forced Labour in Northern Arakan

-- *No rest from Forced Labour*, The Arakan Project, 31 May 2006

Rainy Season	<u>ALL SEASONS</u>	Dry Season
Paddy cultivation for the military & NaSaKa	Sentry Duty	Brick baking (collection of firewood + labour + taxes)
Clearing jungle and tree plantation	Camp maintenance	Road and bridge construction (supply of gravel/stone + labour + taxes)
Some road and bridge repair	Portering	Model villages construction (building material + labour)
Camp repair and renovation		
Bamboo and wood collection for the authorities' own profit		
Compulsory crop procurement		

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### *Humanity Under Attack: Human rights abuses in Arakan State*

-- Arakan State Human Rights Commission, January 2006

#### **Interview #2**

- 30 year old man
- Originally from: Tha Wan Taiv village, Kyauk Taw township, Arakan state
- Currently in Malaysia as a refugee

He left Arakan state because he was forced to labour as a porter for the military. He also suffered economic hardship, and a military sergeant was trying to arrest him. He was charged with having connections with student activists, and he also refused to take a job as a porter, so he had to escape.

When he was a porter, he was forced to clean the forest by cutting down trees for a military base, to build roads for military barracks and to dig holes for ground toilets. He was beaten by soldiers for trying to drink water that was reserved for military personnel. Porters had to look for their own drinking water. They had to go to the river in the morning, and if they had no time to get it, they would not have water to drink. This water was unsanitary.

He told us that Battalion #237 operates in Ra Tha Dong and Bu Thee Dong, collecting porters and forced labourers. One day in April 1997, fifteen forced labourers were collected. He and fourteen other men were on their way to western Arakan by boat when their boat was stopped and they were arrested and forced to make bricks for a military post. They had to use tools already on their boat to cut wood and make a fire to bake bricks. One of the men was very sick and could not cut the wood. For this he was beaten and received a broken arm. p36

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### **Forced labour in Burma's Arakan State capital Sittwe**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 14 November, 2005

The local Burmese authorities at Arakan State capital Sittwe (Akyab) have been subjecting forced labour practices by forcing the children to clean the streets and wards of the town every weekend.

The children find it hard to find time to participate in the forced labour practices as they have been busy helping out their parents for the survival of their family. But the authorities are threatening to fine their parents if they do not take part in the 'volunteering' activities.

"They force them to clean (stinking) gutters," a local resident from Sittwe told DVB. "As the parents have to do their jobs, mainly the children have to do those works. If they could not afford to pay 500-1000kyat, they (the parents) have to let their children be exploited thus. It is a deliberate action (from the part of the authorities). They are doing that deliberately so that the children have no time to have discussions and the like." At the same time, civil servants from the municipal department have not been given holiday but forced to work overtime, and those who refuse to do so are threatened with a cut of 200 kyat each day from their salary.

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### **Arakanese Villagers Are Being Forced to Aid in the Construction of the Gas Pipeline Between Burma and India**

-- *Narinjara News*, 8 January 2005

Arakanese villagers, 500 in total, from the northern parts of Arakan state, have been forced to work on clearing a path for the construction of a gas pipeline between Burma and India.

The villages being forced to partake in the labor are from the northern regions of Kyauk Taw Township and the southern regions of Palatwa, according to local sources.

Over 30 villages in the Kyauk Taw Township fell victims to the Construction of the Gas Pipeline. Those included are Shwe Pray Tha, Tha See Roa, Kyauk Guu Zuu, Thone Soang Zuu, Myauk Taung, A Laee Kyan, Kyauk Tan, Watt Mine, Tha Htae Khaung, Paut Taw, Minn Tha Taung, Shwe Hlaing Roa, Sein Chrong, Late Ma, Kroan Ma, Kha Maung, Mala Thit, Sinn Owaoon Khaung, Yarla Roa, Sai Aung Roa, Sonn Kaing, Pada Chait, Paut Taw Phalong, Mahamuni, Thara Tapon, Kyaukta Lone, Thein Tan, Shwe Ta Hlay, Roa Ma Prin, Sien Kraone, Late Ma Roa and War Ma Kya.

The villages have to clear the forests on the path of the future pipeline, level the path by cutting the hills and filling the earth with hand tools and to build temporary bridges to cross creeks, says a villager from the region who was forced to participate in construction.

The villages located on the path of the Pipeline have been ordered to relocate by the military personals by the end of this raining season. Sein Krone, Late Ma Roa and Paut Taw will have to be relocated. There will be no compensation or any assistance for the relocation, says a villager.

Battalions of the Burmese army, the light infantry battalions (374), (375) and (376) involved in forcing the villagers to work on the construction of the pipeline are based in the Kyauk Taw Township.

It was learned that the forced labor is conducted under the direction of the Commander of the Western Command of the Burmese junta, and foreign tourists are not allowed to come near the area.

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#### **Intervention by the ILO with the SPDC dated 8 December 2004**

-- International Labour Organisation

According to the allegation made by three individuals from the area, people from a number of villages in Toungup township (Rakhine State) were required to collect large quantities of firewood for the army's Military Operations Command No. 5, for use in brick kilns it was operating as an incomegeneration project. No compensation was provided, and any household that could not collect its quota had to pay a fine.

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#### **Intervention by the ILO with the SPDC dated 12 October 2004**

-- International Labour Organisation

According to an allegation from persons living in Ramree township (Rakhine State), labour was being requisitioned by the authorities from 40 villages in the area for the repair of a road. The villagers had been forced to work on the repair of this road every year for several years; the most recent incident began in July and was ongoing at the time the complaint was made in early October. The timing of this latest incident placed a



particular burden on villagers as it was the peak agricultural period. Vehicle owners also had their vehicles requisitioned for the project, without compensation. Villagers were threatened by the police that action would be taken against them if they did not provide their labour. One student had been prosecuted by the local authorities during a previous incident in March for allegedly refusing to work on the project.

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#### **Intervention by the ILO with the SPDC dated 23 July 2004**

-- International Labour Organisation

According to an allegation from persons living in Maungdaw township (Rakhine State), labour was being requisitioned by the authorities on a large scale from several villages in the northern part of the township for the construction of a number of bridges. Muslim villagers were particularly affected, but Rakhine Buddhist villagers were also being requisitioned. In addition to labour, the villagers were also required to provide gravel for the construction.

Approximately 45 persons per village had to work on these projects each day. The allegation pointed out that the timing of the work at the end of the planting season meant that the impact on individuals was particularly great, as this was the most critical time for work in their own fields or, in the case of landless labourers, the time when they were able to earn the most from casual agricultural labour.

#### **Intervention by the ILO with the SPDC dated 8 July 2004**

-- International Labour Organisation

According to an allegation received from a number of alleged victims, labour had been requisitioned for at least three years by Military Operations Command No. 5 based in Toungup (Rakhine State), for the cultivation of its farm land. According to the information provided, the land in question had been previously confiscated from farmers for the establishment of this military command, after which farmers were required to continue cultivating the land on behalf of the military, using their own cattle and tools.

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#### ***Forced Labour in Myanmar (Burma)***

Report of the Commission of Inquiry appointed under article 26 of the Constitution of the International Labour Organization to examine the observance by Myanmar of the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) -- extract

339. The portering required of the Rohingyas must be placed in the general context of their situation. The Rohingya witnesses claimed to have left Myanmar because of the burden of forced labour imposed upon them, which prevented them from providing for their own basic needs.(426) Many Rohingya witnesses were requisitioned to do portering more than ten days per month or so many times that they could no longer estimate the

exact number.(427) Portering is just one other of the many exactions to which the Rohingyas are subjected, along with, among other things, arbitrary taxation, confiscation or seizure of their possessions and land, the result of which is to deprive them of all means of livelihood.

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## **Robbery, extortion, arbitrary taxation**

### **Military taxation a way of life in Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News*, 26 March 2007

Sittwe (Akyab), Burma: The Burmese military is forcibly collecting taxes on the use of rickshaws transporting firewood, kitchen ware and passengers in Sarki Para of Akyab, Arakan State, Burma.

The army's infantry battalion No. (20), is based in Sarki Para village in Akyab west. The gate manned by the military is located at the entry and exit points for villagers. Villagers have no option but to cross the gate to go to markets, farms, paddy fields, the river and the sea front, residents of Sarki para said.

Each rickshaw or bull-cart has to pay at least Kyat 100 to the army during the day and Kyat 150 at night, according to villagers.

Rickshaws and bull-carts are the main means of transport for villagers and they are being compelled to pay taxes to the military since 2006.

The battalion is also using forced labor and confiscating land. Military taxation in villages has become a way of life, Ziaur Rahaman (25), son of Sirazul Haque from Zadi Parang village of Akyab (Sittwe) said.

Strangely, the army collects tax from only Rohingyas exempting other communities such as Rakhines, Rahaman added.

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### **Fees and fish to Nasaka for fishing in Naf River**

-- *Kaladan News*, 21 February, 2007

**Maungdaw, Burma:** Fish is also in the extortion list of the Nasaka, Burma's border security force. Fishermen in Maungdaw Township, Arakan State have to pay weekly, monthly and yearly fees to Nasaka to be able to fish in the Naf River.

In addition, Nasaka personnel grab fish of their choice, off the boats.

The fees are Kyat 200 per week, Kyat 500 a month and Kyat 25,000 a year and have to be paid to the concerned Nasaka camp for permission to fish in the Naf River, said a fisherman who paid money to Nasaka.

Naf is a big river, which divides Burma and Bangladesh and serves as a border. It flows from north to south into Bay of Bengal. It has an abundance of fish and many people in Maungdaw Township support their family by fishing in this river.

Fishermen are only allowed to fish in the river from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Anyone flouting the Nasaka order is punished.

The Nasaka takes away the good quality fish from the fishing boats without paying any money.

A fisherman in the locality said, "It is a big problem for us because Nasaka forcibly takes away the good quality or big fish. It affects us badly."

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### **Nasaka snatches eight goats from businessman**

-- *Kaladan News*, 19 February, 2007

**Maungdaw, Burma:** Eight goats worth Kyat 280,000 were looted by the Nasaka, Burma's border security force from a Rohingya businessman when he was crossing the Burma-Bangladesh border on February 1.

The businessman Jaffar Alam (22), son of Kalam, hails from Dankhali (Pa Nyaung Pin Gyi village) of Maungdaw Township in Arakan State, Burma, said a relative of the victim.

Jaffar Alam transports and sells cattle and goats in Bangladesh taking it from Burma legally and pays taxes to the Nasaka camp No. 5.

On February 1, he was taking eight goats to Bangladesh. The Nasaka personnel were present at the border crossing. He was stopped by the Nasaka and tied up with a rope despite having relevant permission from the concerned authorities.

After tying his hand, Nasaka asked him to show the documents for the goats. He showed them documents he had obtained from Nasaka to ferry the goats but they did not give it cognizance. He was instead taken to their camp where he was tortured and detained for two days. He was critically injured.

"It is surprising that first they gave permission yet they seized the goods of businessmen. It means might is right," said a former Chairman of Village Peace and Development Council.

However, he was set free on February 3 but his goats were seized, said a family member of the victim

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### **Army loots goods worth Kyat five million in Arakan**

-- *Kaladan News*, 8 February 2007

Buthidaung, Burma: Soldiers of the Burmese Army looted goods worth Kyat five million from a businessman and his associates on January 30. They were transporting the goods to Buthidaung town from Akyab.

The businessmen Muktul Hossain (50), son of Noor Mostafa was accompanied by two other Rakhines of "Hoya Sori village" of Buthidaung Township in Arakan State , Burma .

Muktul Hossain and his three Rakhine partners have been ferrying goods from Akyab to Buthidaung town after taking permission from the concerned authorities. They trade in onions, potatoes, chilli, among other items in Buthidaung.

On January 30, the army unit Dabyu Chaung camp received information that some businessmen from Akyab had arrived with goods on the Mayu River bank in Buthidaung town. At about 4 p.m. a section of army personnel went to the spot.

The army men asked the businessmen to show the documents from the authorities. After taking all the documents, they arrested the businessmen and seized all the goods on the boat. Some goods were thrown into the river by the soldiers.

The troops looted goods worth Kyat five million and then the businessmen were released, said a relative of Muktul Hussain.

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### **Army kills cattle for ration**

-- *Kaladan News*, 7 February 2007

Buthidaung, Burma : The Burmese Army has taken to killing cattle belonging to the people for the army's rations in northern Arakan , Burma .

On January 23, a cow was killed by soldiers for meat when it was on its way back after sun set from a grazing ground near a hill side. After killing it, the troops carried it to the nearby army camp, said a relative of the cow's owner on condition of anonymity.

The cow's owner Boshir Ahmed (26) is the son of Mohammed Karim, hailing from "Hoya Sori village" in Buthidaung Township , Arakan State .

The following day, after receiving information, the cow's owner went to the army camp and complained to the officer in charge. But, the commander told him that he would investigate the matter and then call the owner to the camp to solve the problem. But he is yet to be summoned.

"The Army and the Nasaka --- Burma 's border security force have been confiscating our farms for a long time, and now they are killing our cattle for meat," said villagers.

Another relative of the cow's owner said, "The owner is a poor man and only had a pair of cows that helped him support his family. Now, he is helpless and does not know how he will look after his family.

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### **Extortions and forced relocations in Burma**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 5 September, 2006

The local authority secretary of Pyinchaung Village, Taungup Township in Burma's western Arakan State, Tin Aye has been forcibly collecting money from local farmers for his own benefits.

According to local residents, Tin Aye issued loans to some farmers for garlic growing project last year, but he is now demanding the money back from not only those who received the money from him but also from those who didn't. He threatened to sue those who refuse to pay and confiscate their lands and properties prompting farmers to demand for his resignation.

At the same time, more than 250 homes from Okepho and Ywahaung Wards at Chauk, Magwe Division in central Burma have been ordered by the divisional authority chairman Phone Hmaw Shwe to move out to areas close to an army base and the authorities also confiscated the farmlands belonging to nearby Zeegyopin Village, to resettle the victims of forced relocation.

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### ***Supply and Command***

-- Shwe Gas Movement, July 2006 (extracts)

In addition to outright confiscation without compensation, various forms of extortion are practiced at every level of authority. The constant harassment by troops and government authorities to "donate," "contribute" or pay "taxes" wears down families bit by bit, leaving them with few resources and little option but to send a family member away from home to seek income. Villagers must provide rice, firewood, and other materials to military battalions on a regular basis. In one village in Ponnagywan Township, residents even have to provide one bottle of oil per household to the local battalion's stone crusher. In the same village, the township-level SPDC chairman recently ordered a total of 70 million kyat from surrounding villages to build a temple. He later changed his mind about the construction and kept the funds to himself.

A trader from Paletwa Township recalls:

*"Everyone in my village was forced to pay "ration money" to the military camp of IB 289. I cannot count how many times our village had to pay rice and money to the Burmese soldiers."*  
(Interview A 11)

One interview illustrates how natural resources are sold off and their use is then rented or taxed to local villagers:

*"I am from Kyauktaw Township. I am a fisherman and very poor - my family depends on me catching fish. But fishing is getting harder and harder. I have to pay a tax for my catching baskets of about 7,000 kyat to the local buyers each year. Sometimes I have to pay two times per year.*

*"Some rich men paid about 20 or 30 million kyat to the officers of the Fishery Sector Department in Site-tway in order to "own" parts of the Kaladan River and charge fishermen taxes. One man bought Pi Kauk brook (a tributary of the Kaladan River) and now every fisherman who catches fish there - with small nets or big nets - has to pay money to him.*

*"I use about 100 catching baskets. In August 2005, the brook "owner" came to me with soldiers from LIB 375 and confiscated all of my baskets. They took me away and police beat me many times so that I was senseless. They put me in Kyauktaw jail for 2 months because I could not pay the tax for catching fish in his brook.*

*"You know, I could not pay that amount of money because I cannot collect that much money. It is a very difficult situation for us. There are 180 households in our village, and most people survive by fishing in the brooks and rivers. Very few people depend on the farms. " (Interview A2)*

Arbitrary taxation at every turn impedes traders along the Kaladan River as well, as increased numbers of Burma Army and police checkpoints have been set up. One trader explains:

*"From my village to the [Indian] border, I have to pay boat owner fees and taxes at over ten military and police customs gates. I cannot get good profits from trading. They charge money for everything; the boat fee is 1-2,000 kyat and they even demand 500 kyat for very small pigs that I transport. " (Interview A1)*

Extortion of all kinds impacts farmers, fishermen, and particularly traders, further restricting the local economy. Fishermen and traders may also face new obligations of transporting supplies or troops during the construction of pipelines:

*"I just wanted to do my own work as a fisherman. The problem with fishing is that we have to provide passenger boats to the military....we had to provide military supplies and food from place to place. "*

Extortion by soldiers and wealthy business interests is already occurring in the valley.

Undue taxation for use of rivers, confiscation of assets and property, and violence related to "debt" collection are likely to be exacerbated by an increase in troop presence to secure a pipeline(s).

The abuses described above are carried out in an atmosphere of violence in which Burma Army soldiers go unpunished. For example:

*"In 2001, a 23-year old woman was raped in the village by three drunk soldiers from Butheudaung battalion 18. They were personal assistants of the commander. The woman screamed very loudly and nearby families could hear her. In the morning she complained to the commander. He said that he would punish the assistants but he never did. " (Interview 1)*

There is precedent of corporations being held liable for human rights abuses carried out by the SPDC, who are their partners in these projects. Unocal and Total corporations both settled lawsuits to compensate villagers in the Yadana/Yetagun pipeline area who had suffered human rights abuses under the junta's soldiers. In addition to the settlements, the impact on these corporations due to bad publicity surrounding their partnership with the military in Burma is immeasurable. Pp 29-30.

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## **Forcefully relocated settlers said causing trouble in Burma's Arakan**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 24 November, 2005

Local people in Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships of Arakan State, western Burma near Bangladesh, are suffering because of bullying tactics by Border Areas Development (BAD) officials and township authorities of Burma's military junta, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC).

This is the result of the authorities forcefully resettling illegal squatters from Mandalay and Magwe Divisions in central Burma in villages of Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships. Local people are also forced to provide cash and food for the new settlers, and the authorities are not taking any action in case of disputes between the locals and the new settlers.

"I have just received news today that the authorities have brought former convicts and squatters from Central Burma to Maungdaw and resettling them in (Nyaung Kyaung) village of Arakan State's Maungdaw Township," said the chairman of the Human Rights and Democratic Party in exile, Hla Aung, said the authorities are violating human rights. "The local authorities collected contributions and have built some 200 homes there. Each household is required to contribute at least 5,000 kyats to the building funds and 2,000 kyats to feed the settlers. We have learned that people are already facing economic hardship in Maungdaw Township especially since rice production is not good because of bad weather this year."

"We have been receiving information that there has been a lot of trouble because the new settlers are stealing from the local people, openly taking cattle away from them, and also threatening them. The local authorities are not taking any action at all. In other words, these are acts of human rights violations committed against the local people who are living peacefully."

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## **Food Insecurity**

### **Extracts on Deprivation of Livelihood in Arakan State from the *Human Rights Year Book Burma 2005***

-- Human Rights Documentation Unit of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma

The economic situation in Arakan State deteriorated throughout 2005 due to continued arbitrary taxation, land confiscation and restrictions on trade and travel. While the measures that deprive civilians of an adequate livelihood are imposed on all ethnicities residing in Arakan State, including the majority Rakhine Buddhist population, most of the severest restrictions are directed towards the Muslim Rohingya populace. The abuses suffered by the Rohingya stem, in part, from the fact that they are denied access to citizenship. Under the 1982 Citizenship Law, the Rohingya are deprived of citizenship as

they are not included in the list of the 135 “national races” of Burma and most are unable to provide evidence of their ancestors residing in Burma prior to British annexation of the country in 1923. The Rohingya are therefore identified as illegal immigrants in Burma and consequently suffer unparalleled restrictions on movement, excessive taxation, land confiscation and demands for forced labor. These human rights abuses have severely impeded the Rohingya's ability to access an adequate livelihood.

Following the removal of Gen. Khin Nyunt from office on 19 October 2004 and the subsequent purge of NaSaKa, there were initial reports that human rights abuses, including arbitrary taxes, marriage fees, travel authorization fees, extortion and corruption had declined in Arakan State. However, in January 2005, NaSaKa border forces and local authorities now under full control of the military, reasserted control over Arakan State. Throughout 2005 excessive arbitrary taxation and land confiscation impeded peoples' ability to maintain their livelihoods. Meanwhile SPDC battalions in Arakan State raised substantial funds during 2005 by monopolizing profitable industries and engaging in various corrupt practices, such as demanding arbitrary fines and taxes, as well as through land confiscation programs. Although troops stationed in Arakan State used to make money by leasing back to farmers confiscated land, in September 2005, it was reported that troops in Kyauk Taw Township had been prohibited from engaging in this practice, raising concerns for farmers fearing a loss of income and the potential for forced labor. Forced labor concerns came to a head according to a 12 September report when SPDC troops forced Rohingya villagers to cultivate rice on confiscated paddy land. (Sources: “Burmese Army Turns to rice Growing on Land Confiscated from the People,” *Narinjara News*, 7 September 2005; “Army Plunders Paddy Seedlings,” SHAN, 12 September 2005).

In November 2005, SPDC authorities officially banned the transport of rice between Arakan townships leading to a significant increase in rice prices and shortages throughout the region. According to a public servant from Buthidaung Township, the cost of a bag of rice in July was between two to three times a public servants' monthly salary (source: “Phenomenal Rice Prize in Western Burma Threaten Social Unrest,” *Narinjara News*, 5 July 2005). It was reported in September 2005 that rice prices in the region had reached almost four times that in the Arakan capital of Sittwe (source: “Junta Restrictions Cause Food Shortage Among Rohingyas,” *Irrawaddy*, 23 September 2005). Rice smuggling into Bangladesh, with the complicity of the SPDC authorities, also contributed to food security problems throughout the region (source: The Arakan Project, 9 November 2005). The situation was further exacerbated by the junta's three-month delay in issuing a permit to the World Food Program (WFP) to transport food aid into the area. A permit was finally granted in September 2005 and WFP provided some relief to the area. However, villagers were required to pay for a travel pass to collect WFP rations (source: The Arakan Project, 9 November 2005). During the late 2005 rice harvest period, a further ban on the transport of rice between townships was issued, effectively preventing farmers from accessing profitable markets outside their township. It was reported that junta intervention in the transportation of rice was designed to keep rice prices low so rice could be purchased cheaply to supply the army. (Source: “Rice Transportation Between Townships in Arakan State Banned,” *Narinjara News*, 15 November 2005).



The food crisis in northern Arakan State, together with other human rights abuses perpetrated by the NaSaKa, severely undermined both the Rohingya and Rakhine population's ability to access an adequate livelihood. Furthermore, in November 2005, it was reported that daily labor wages had fallen from 1,000 to between 700 and 800 kyat with very little work available in the area. (Sources: The Arakan Project, 9 November 2005; "Phenomenal Rice Prize in Western Burma Threaten Social Unrest," *Narinjara News*, 5 July 2005).

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### **Junta Restrictions Cause Food Shortages Among Rohingyas**

-- Clive Parker, *The Irrawaddy*, 23 September, 2005

Claims by an ethnic Rohingya organization that restrictions from the Rangoon government are causing food shortages in Arakan State were confirmed by the head of the World Food Programme in Burma today.

Bhim Udas, the head of WFP's operations in Burma, said his organization had had to wait more than three months for a permit to transport food aid to Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung, three predominantly Rohingya townships in Arakan State.



WFP has been operating in Arakan State for the past 11 years, providing food for an estimated 300,000 people. Despite this, the Burmese authorities have given no explanation for the recent delay in granting access, Udas said. Rangoon's Department of Relief and Social Welfare was unavailable for comment.

The Arakan Rohingya National Organization said today the situation in these three townships is grave, claiming a 5-year-old girl died this month from starvation and that others are on the brink. "The Rohingya villagers are in [a] famine-like situation," a statement said.

A late monsoon this year has delayed the rice harvest, Udas said, while food aid has been disappearing across the border into Bangladesh recently, exacerbating food shortages.

Udas explained the junta is practicing what it calls a “limited supply” of food aid to the Rohingya population as it is fearful supplies will continue to move across Arakan’s border with Bangladesh in the future.

However, Udas told *The Irrawaddy* that WFP had not witnessed any signs of starvation in northern Arakan State during the latest food shortages.

Having this month finally received the necessary permit to transport rice and food aid from Rangoon to Sittwe, the capital of Arakan State, the WFP says that two weeks ago it was able to offer some supplies to vulnerable groups including young children.

“There is progress,” Udas said. “When our food starts moving from Sittwe to Northern Rakhine [Arakan] State [and then] to the three townships in which we are working—Maungdaw, Buthidaung and some parts of Rathedaung—and at least in those three areas... I can say that the food situation will improve and the prices will go down.”

More than 200,000 tonnes of food has already reached Sittwe, Udas added.

ARNO has accused the Burmese military of controlling the rice market in Rohingya areas and forcing the price up to nearly four times that in the capital of Sittwe. It also cites examples of Burmese military personnel arresting those trying to transport rice or offer it to hungry Rohingyas.

This latest example of restrictions on WFP efforts to offer food aid in Burma follows a call by the head of the organization, James Morris, during a trip last month to Rangoon, for the junta to change its ways.

Following the visit, Morris issued a statement in Bangkok saying: “Current agricultural and marketing policies, and restrictions on the movement of people, make it very difficult for many of those at risk to merely subsist.”

Muslim Rohingyas are unable to move freely and are denied Burmese citizenship by the junta, making it difficult for them to secure sources of food from outside their villages.

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### **Rice shortage in western Burma Arakan State**

-- *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 23 August, 2005

An acute shortage of staple rice at villages within Sittwe (Akyab) and Ponnakyun Townships, Arakan State in western Burma, caused by the monopolisation on rice trade

by the Burmese army and a merchant organisation, is leaving many people at risk of hunger.

A local resident told DVB that the restrictions on rice transportation from towns to surrounding villages by the army are also causing rice price hike in rural areas making poor villagers harder to survive. Rice merchants have to bribe army checkpoint controllers hundreds of thousands of kyat for the permission to transport rice to villages, prompting unnecessary price hike.

At the same time, people living in the towns are also facing starvation due to lack of jobs, the resident added.

The mountainous Arakan State is rich in natural resources, especially, offshore natural gas, seafood and forest produces, but large amount of rice has to be imported from neighbouring regions.

A severe rice shortage in 1967 caused a major uprising at the state capital Sittwe and up to 100 hungry rice 'looters' were reportedly shot dead by Burmese soldiers on Aug 13. Arakan political activists insist that they were not looters but only peaceful protestors who were caught up in the ploy of the military authorities.

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### **Villagers from Government's 'Modern' Villages Suffer Famine**

-- *Narinjara News*, 23 June 2005

Several villagers from the government's modern villages in Northern Arakan state are now suffering from famine due the sky-rocketing prices of rice recently, said a village chairman from the region.

The villages facing famine are; Aung Thapray, Thupan Naga, Rankha Zadi, Mun Khamong, Nanra Gai, Bandu la, Tight Chaung and other Mro and Dainet tribal villages. All villages are located in the northern part of Maungdaw, close to Bangladesh. The village headmen from several villages complained about the problem to local army officials from LIB 538, asking them to take emergency supplies to the famine victims immediately, he said.

A battalion commander and local departmental officers visited the areas to look over the crisis in the last two days after they received information of the famine. But there has been no official action to help the famine victims.

There have been no deaths from starvation, but some are suffering illnesses and malnutrition due to the famine, said another villager.

According to local village sources, some villagers are now asking for rice from nearby army camps as well as nearer local villages for their daily survival.

Market sources said, in Maung daw, the price of Pawsan Mwe brand rice (high standard) has increased from 15,000 kyat to 18,500 kyat per bag (50 kg) while the price for normal

rice has increased from 12,500 kyat to 13,500 kyat per bag (50 kg) within a week.

People from Maungdaw said that the prices may go up further in the rainy season. The people from border areas must be able to face the famine crisis, said a trader from Maungdaw.

It was learnt that in the northern part of Arakan there are over 30 modern villages being built by the Burmese Military government. In the modern villages most people were brought from Burma proper by authorities to adjust the population ratios with local people.

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## **Compulsory (and frequently ruinous) cropping and marketing policies**

### **Farmers in Mrauk U Forced to Cultivate Dry Season Paddy**

-- *Narinjara News*, 22 February, 2007

Many farmers in Mrauk U Township have been forced by the township authority to cultivate paddy during the dry season, even though the farmers have tried to resist the government pressure, said a farmer from Mrauk U who wished to remain anonymous.

"We would like to accept the government's program to cultivate paddy during the dry season to promote our yearly earnings, but it is impossible to cultivate paddy in the dry season in our area because we have no mechanisms to completely undertake such a project," he said.

Many farmers from several villages in the north of Mrauk U Township, including Paung Duck, Pauk Taw Byint, Tean Nyo, Sin Owe Gri, have been facing pressure after Mrauk U Township Chairman U Hla Yee ordered the cultivation of paddy this dry season.

A village teacher who belongs to a few farms in the area said farmers can not profit from the dry season paddy project because they will have to spend a lot of money to cultivate, but will not be able to regain the cost in sales.

He added that if someone wanted to cultivate paddy in the dry season, they would have to borrow a water pump to provide water for the paddy. In the market, the price of diesel is 5,000 kyats per gallon and engine oil is 9,000 kyats per gallon. Moreover, a bag of fertilizer is 15,000 kyats. Farmers would be unable to recover their costs or earn a profit if they undertake a dry season paddy project. Because of this, farmers do not want to follow the government's plan.

The Mrauk U Township chairman, however, has pressured farmers to carry out the project, and has told farmers that if anybody refuses to follow his order, their paddy farms will be transferred to other people who are willing to cultivate dry season paddy.

A village source said after the order came out, many farmers were afraid to lose their farms to other villagers, and they are currently facing the dilemma of whether to follow the orders or not.

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### ***No rest from Forced Labour***

-- The Arakan Project, 31 May 2006 (extract)

In January 2006, the Burmese government announced a new ambitious “national project” exhorting the people throughout the country to grow physic nuts on a wide scale to produce an alternative to diesel fuel that would save the government millions in foreign exchange in the wake of rising world crude oil prices (“Physic nut oil, source of farmers’ income”, *The New Light of Myanmar*, 15-01-2006 – see below). The physic nut plant is a shrub or small tree often planted as fences to protect gardens or fields. The physic nut can grow from seedlings or be propagated from cuttings. There are two species of physic nut in Burma: *Jatropha* (*Jatropha Curcas*) and *Castor* (*Ricinus Communis*), the first giving the best results. The SPDC claims that crude oil extracted from physic nuts milled by hand or by machine can be used directly as fuel to run engines and vehicles. The Burmese government plans to put 500,000 acres of land under physic nut cultivation in each State over the next 3 years.

In Northern Arakan, as elsewhere in Burma, this government-imposed agriculture project has already started to cause new hardships: forced labour, extortion as well as land confiscation. To date, the authorities have only confiscated small plots of fertile land in every village tract in order to establish physic nut nurseries and they mostly use tree cuttings as the planting method. In a few areas only, the villagers were instructed to plant cuttings around their own houses and gardens.

The villagers are made to provide cuttings for the nurseries or pay a fine. This shrub is often found in graveyards but, by now, available branches have already been cut and many were fined as they could not fulfil their quota. Simultaneously, forced labourers have been recruited to fence, plough and prepare the plot of land for the nurseries as well as to plant the cuttings. Thereafter, more villagers are forced to water the seedlings every day, guard the nursery, repair the fence and report daily growth progress to the authorities.

Once the saplings are mature, it is feared that large areas of land will then be confiscated and that forced labour will be used extensively to look after physic nut plantations. At present, it is unclear whether such a venture would be viable and villagers doubt that they would draw any profit from it

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## **Other coercive measures**

### **Girl paraded by police without clothes, except 'Tami'**

*Kaladan News*, 30 April, 2007

Buthidaung, Arakan State: A girl was forced to walk without her clothes by the police except for the 'Tami' covering her private organ on April 7. The girl was paraded around three villages for marrying without permission.

The victim is Liala Begum (18), daughter of Gura Meah hailing from Nyaung Chaung village in Buthidaung Township, Arakan State, Burma, said a relative of the victim.

Mohamed Islam (23), and Liala (18) applied for a wedding permit to the Nasaka---Burma's border security force but they were not granted permission because they were unable to pay bribe. Both of them are from same village in Buthidaung Township.

They married secretly with the permission of their parents. But, this came to be known to the authorities after four months. Thereafter the police from "Nyaung Chaung" police station went to the house of the bridegroom to arrest him but could not find him. They arrested the bride Liala Begum. Later, she was brought to the camp, another relative of the victim said.

At the camp, she was ordered to walk without her clothes and her brasserie except a Tami, which covers the lower parts.

It was a shameful thing for the police to have done to a woman and is strictly forbidden in Islam. It is abuse of the Islamic religion, said a village elder.

The Nyaung Chaung Village Peace and Development Council (VPDC) Rakhine Chairman complained against the kind of punishment meted out to a young girl but to no avail. The authorities threatened the Chairman, said a villager preferring anonymity.

Later the girl was released.

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### **Three Arakanese Youth Flee to Bangladesh to Avoid Forced Recruitment**

-- *Narinjara News*, 9-10 October, 2006

Three Arakanese youths, all aged around 20 years old, from Kyauktaw Township recently arrived at a border village in Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tract after they fled their home to escape local army officers' attempts to recruit them into the military.

"We did not have time to choose which country to go to for sheltering - Bangladesh or Thailand or India. Bangladesh is a Muslim country but is close to our land so I fled here to avoid arrest," Said 21-year-old Ko Nyo Shwe Myint from Apauk Wa Village of Kyauktaw Township.

Ko Nyo Shwe Myint was arrested by a patrol team of Burmese soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion 376, based in Kyauktaw, while he was visiting a village with his two friends Maung Win Tinn and Zaw Win Tun.

Maung Win Tinn is from Tin Ma Village, but Zaw Win Tun is from Apauk Wa Village.

Ko Nyo Shwe Myint said that after the arrest the army team brought them to their headquarters and detained them in a room. After that, the army personnel accused them of being criminals and threatened to send them to jail for illegal activities.

"However, we denied their accusations and we told them we were innocent," Ko Nyo Shwe Myint said.

A few hours later an army officer came to the room where they were being held and asked them if they preferred the army or the jail. He told them, "You can choose yourself which one is better between the two chances for your life," reports Ko Nyo Shwe Myint.

Afterward, the army officer left the room. At that time a sergeant came to the youths and attempted to lure them into joining with the Burmese army, said Ko Nyo Shwe Myint.

A day passed after their arrest, and the three youths decided to agree to join the army and informed the officers of their choice.

After they voiced their agreement, army personnel released them from the detaining room, and they were allowed to go to other parts of the base and were given space in the 'bachelor barracks'.

During the night, an Arakanese corporal came to their room and told them about his bitter experiences with army life. The corporal also advised them to flee as soon as possible from the camp and to avoid joining up with the army. He said that private soldiers have no opportunities and are just slaves for the Burma's army high officials.

He also told them that many ordinary soldiers want to resign from Burma and no longer serve in the army. However, they continue to serve as their only means of survival.

The next morning, the three youths requested an army official to allow them to visit their respective houses so they could fetch clothes and longyi, as well as to meet with their families.

After they received permission, the three youths went to their respective villages and then left for the neighboring country, Bangladesh.

The three are currently looking for work in the hill tract area of Bangladesh.

One youth among them said he had heard that his family is now planning to come to Bangladesh out of fear of arrest by the army. He also worries for all their parents' security, but there was no alternative to finding refuge in Bangladesh territory.

Many Arakanese are currently sheltering in Bangladesh to avoid such army activities, and are living in remote areas of Bangladesh with neither food nor accommodation, nor security.

Arakanese social worker, who is working with internally displaced people, said that along the borders of India, Bangladesh and Burma, there are about 10,000 internally displaced Arakanese who are roaming the area without any help from international organizations. #

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### ***The Rohingya: Discrimination in Burma and Denial of Rights in Bangladesh***

-- Refugees International, 21 July, 2006 (extracts)

The Burmese military regime carries out systematic repression and human rights violations against the Rohingya ethnic minority living in Burma's northern Rakhine State.

The Rohingya also continue to be denied Burmese citizenship under the 1982 Citizenship Law which renders them stateless. Consequently many Rohingya asylum seekers flee to neighboring Bangladesh where the government, fearing a "pull-factor," has become increasingly reluctant to harbor them.

[...]

Recent Rohingya arrivals living outside the camps reveal that they continue to flee from Burma because the situation for them has not improved much since the early 1990s. They report coming to Bangladesh to escape arbitrary cases launched against them by local authorities. They also cite an inability to make a living due to severe travel restrictions that prevent them from leaving their villages to access employment, markets, education and medical care. The Rohingya are required to carry out compulsory sentry duty at night, for which no compensation is provided, and have to do forced labor during the day. For Rohingya youth getting married is a huge problem as they first need permission from local authorities. The permission is usually granted after payment of large bribes of 50,000-100,000 Kyats [US\$ 50-100], which are too much for most people to pay, and sometimes after a promise that the married couple will have no more than two children. The ability of the largely Muslim Rohingya to practice their religion is also limited....

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### ***Humanity Under Attack: Human rights abuses in Arakan State***

-- Arakan State Human Rights Commission, January 2006 (extract)

He left Arakan state because, since 2002, Battalion #537 has ordered his village and another two villages to provide two men to the military in a draft. People that could afford to paid 50,000 kyat if their names were called and were exempt. He did not have money, though, so he had to join the military. He was in that battalion for one week before his training, but did not want to be in the military because it has a bad reputation, so he ran away and escaped to Malaysia. p54

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## **Discrimination**

### **International Religious Freedom Report 2006**

-- US Department of State, 15 September 2006 (extract)

Muslims in Rakhine State, on the western coast, and particularly those of the Rohingya minority group, continued to experience the severest forms of legal, economic, educational, and social discrimination. The Government denies citizenship status to Rohingyans because their ancestors allegedly did not reside in the country at the start of British colonial rule, as required by the country's citizenship law. The Muslims assert that their presence in the area predates the British arrival by several centuries. Rohingya Muslims, although essentially treated as illegal foreigners, were not issued Foreigner Registration Cards. Instead, the Government gave some of them "Temporary Registration Cards" (TRC). UNHCR estimates that only 50 percent of the approximately 700 thousand Rohingyas possessed TRCs. Authorities have insisted that Muslim men applying for TRCs submit photos without beards. The authorities did not allow government employees of the Islamic faith, including village headmen, to grow beards, and dismissed some who already had beards. The authorities also did not consider many non-Rohingya Muslims to be citizens. In order for these Muslims to receive National Registration Cards and passports, they must pay large bribes. Ethnic Burman Muslims pay less than Muslims from ethnic minority groups (primary those of Indian or Bengali descent).

In 1988, the Government permitted only three marriages per year per village in the primarily Rohingya townships of Maungdaw and Buthidaung in northern Rakhine State, and required the approval of the Regional Military Commander. In 2005, the Government extended this edict to Kyauk Pyu and Ramree Townships in central Rakhine State. Following the ouster of Prime Minister Khin Nyunt in October 2004 and the demise of his military intelligence apparatus, marriage restrictions were temporarily lifted but were reportedly reinstated in 2005. After a backlog accumulated of nearly 3 thousand unapproved marriage applications, the Regional Military Commander reportedly agreed to allow some Rohingya Muslims who possessed TRCs to marry.

Muslims in the country had difficulty obtaining birth certificates. A local official in Sittwe, Rakhine State, reportedly issued a verbal order in 2005 prohibiting the issuance of birth certificates to Muslim babies born in the area. In Rangoon, Muslims can usually obtain birth certificates for newborns, but local authorities refused to allow them to place the names of the babies on their household registers.

Muslims across the country, as well as some other ethnic minority groups such as Chinese and Indians, were required to obtain advance permission from the township authorities whenever they wished to leave their hometowns. Authorities generally do not grant permission to Rohingya or Muslim Arakanese to travel from their hometowns for any purpose. However, permission sometimes can be obtained through bribery. Non-Arakanese Muslims are given more freedom to travel; however, they must also seek permission, which is usually granted after a bribe is paid. Muslims residing in Rangoon can visit beach resort areas in Ngapali, Rakhine State, but cannot return to Rangoon without the signature of the Regional Military Commander. Those with money are able to bribe local officials to return. Muslims residing outside of Rakhine State often are barred from return travel to their homes if they visit other parts of Rakhine State.

The Government reserves secondary education for citizens only. Rohingyas do not have access to state-run schools beyond primary education and are unable to obtain employment in any civil service positions. Muslim students from Rakhine State who completed high school were not granted permits to travel outside the state to attend college or university.

Many of the approximately 21,000 Rohingya Muslims remaining in refugee camps in Bangladesh refuse to return because they fear human rights abuses, including religious persecution.

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### ***Human Rights Yearbook, Burma 2005***

Human Rights Documentation Unit of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (extracts on the persecution of Muslims)

The SPDC imposed various restrictions and demands on Muslims in Arakan State celebrating Eid-ul-Adha on 21 and 22 January. Prayers were not allowed to be conducted at the Eid-Ghah, an open area of worship, and religious ceremonies in Mosques were restricted. The SPDC also extorted money and meat during Eid-ul-Adha. Muslims had to furnish payment of a “tax” of 1,000-1,500 kyat in addition to 300 kyat for each goat and 10 kilograms of meat for each cattle slaughtered. Furthermore Muslims in Maungdaw, Buthidaung, Rathidaung and Akyab Townships were prohibited from moving or gathering in large numbers. (Source: “Muslims Complain of Military Extortion During Religious Festival in Arakan,” *Kaladan News*, 25 January 2005).

In June 2005, 8 Muslims including the local imam were arrested for holding group prayers at the imam's house in Shwepitha Township, Rangoon Division. By November 2005, they still had not been released. (Source: *International Religious Freedom Report-2005*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, 8 November 2005).

In June 2005, the local authorities banned a Muslim private tutor from continuing his teaching activities in Rangoon Division. Although he was teaching only the public school curriculum, he was charged with conducting free courses to convert local children to Islam. (Source: *International Religious Freedom Report-2005*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, 8 November 2005).

On 26 August 2005, Rashid Duhul, a 22-year-old Muslim student from Sittwe University, Arakan State, was attacked by a group of USDA members and died 3 days later from his injuries (source: "Burma Arakan Muslim Student Killed by 'Unknown' Thugs," DVB, 4 September 2005).

On 8 November 2005, it was reported that a Muslim cleric in South Dagon, Rangoon Division was arrested for holding Qur'an courses for Muslim children at his house (source: *International Religious Freedom Report-2005*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, U.S. Department of State, 8 November 2005).

On 26 November 2005, a Rohingya, 55-year-old Oli Ahmed, was arrested for failing to conclude a religious lecture held on 10 November 2005 within the permitted time period. The lecture went overtime by only a few minutes. As a result, Oli Ahmed was sentenced on 29 November 2005 to 10 months imprisonment with hard labor under Police Act No.49, Raki 932/05. In addition, following the violation, the use of loudspeakers to broadcast the Azan (call to prayer) was banned. (Source: "A Rohingya Elite Jailed for Not Concluding Religious Lecture Within Fixed Time," *Kaladan News*, 19 December 2005).

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