

**BURMA'S WOMEN AND CHILDREN:
THE SUFFERING AND SURVIVAL!**

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**Woman and Child Rights Project
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Preface

During the course of the fifty year civil war in Burma, which is primarily a conflict of ethnicity and political ideology, successive military regimes have tried to solve Burma's problems by means of war, rather than political dialogue.

Since Burma regained Independence from British in 1948, the size of the Burmese Army, under successive governments, has gradually grown with the aim of winning the war against the ethnic armed oppositions and Burma Communist Party. In 1962, the Burmese Army gained State Power and has continued to wage war against ethnic armed opposition until today.

In the civil war, not only soldiers have suffered but so have many thousands of civilians in the conflict areas, especially ethnic community people. Countless number of men, women and children have been displaced, and even been killed. Since the 1970s and 1980s when the Burmese Army launched "four cuts campaigns", to cut all support from the civilians to ethnic rebel organizations, many ethnic civilians have suffered, inhumane and cruel torture, forced relocation and dislocation and other human rights violations.

These violations of human rights, including women and children's rights, have been committed by all ranks of the Burmese Army. Although the current military regime the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) ratified the "Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against "Women (CEDAW)" and the "Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)", the regime has failed to ensure that members of Burmese Army respect the rights of women and children in the ethnic rural areas.

Women and children in the southern part of Burma have constantly

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suffered from human rights violations committed by the members of Burmese Army and SLORC/SPDC regime authorities in recent years. The Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM)'s regular publication on human rights, "The Mon Forum" has recorded these information.

Last year, HURFOM established a separate "Woman and Child Rights Project", to monitor the rights of women and children in Burma. This document is a report on various types of human rights violations committed by members of Burmese Army and authorities in the southern part of Burma, covering Pegu Division, Karen State, Mon State and Tenasserim Division during 1997 - 2001.

The report describes the use of forced labour, violations that related to suspicions that villagers are rebel-supporters, sexual violations and the plights of women and children during displacement on the battlefield and elsewhere.

The main aim of this report is to direct international attention to the real conditions in Burma and to put pressure to the current military regime to respect the rights of women and children, according to the conventions that they have ratified and to enforce their agreements so that the ethnic rural communities may live in peace.

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I. Plight of women and children in rural area

The Burma, a country of under the rule of military regime, the people in the whole parts of the country have been denied for their rights to access for politics and decision making process. Additionally, the regime also denies for their rights to economics, cultural and social rights. Burma has been in the worst record of human rights conditions in the world and both regime authorities and its armed faction, Burmese Army or *tatmadaw* have constantly violated these rights systematically.

In 1988, after the Burmese Army seized the State power from pro-demonstrators in Rangoon, it was constantly condemned for killing of civilians, students and Buddhists. The regime drove hundred of thousands of civilians into all parts of border areas in which the various ethnic rebel controlled. Then some thousands of students and civilians who escaped the systematic persecution by the regime had sought political refuge in Thailand and India under the refugee recognition of UNHCR

With a purpose to save their face from the constant and intensive condemnation by the international community, the regime, SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991 and guarantees for the protection of child rights in Burma. Later in 1995, SLORC also ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 and promises to protect the women from violations and abuses.

At the same time, Burmese Army has constantly continued launching the military offensives against ethnic and student rebel groups along the border and rural areas to uproot the rebellion activities. However, the Burmese Army's various military battalions and military commands

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have not much the principles of CRC and CEDAW. The violations against the women and children have constantly occurred in rural when the army arrived. Human rights violations such as sexual harassment, forced portorage, torture, killing, detention and other inhumane treatments against women and children in rural area with suspicion.

The regime also formed their control women organization to assist protection and guarantee for women rights in the country. "Myanmar National Committee for "Women's Affairs (MNCWA)" was formed by SLORC/SPDC, but it does not full authorities and independent mandate to monitor the women situation in countryside because it is totally under the control of the regime.

On the other hand, SPDC has not allowed any independent women's organization to investigate the violations of women rights committed by *tatmadaw* members or local authorities. MNCWA also does not have any opportunity to come to the rural areas as the regime names those areas, "black areas". This organization even have not come to this to do some women development education.

Accordingly to traditional in Burma, young people under 18 years old are referred as "children" and they are generally under the care of their parents and most of their parents need them to study in school. However, due to economic deteriorated conditions in Burma, many parents have to withdraw their children to help at homes or at works. Parents decided to withdraw their children from schools when they faced difficulties to pay for schooling cost or lack of labour at homes and at works.

In most reports on human rights, although they have recorded the plight of general population, how the regime authorities and Burmese Army violated their rights in general. However, there is less specific focus how the women and children are constantly violated their rights in these reports.

II. Human rights violations in general: violations against women and children

In Burma, as the ruling military regime is illegitimate for its seizure of the political power from the people and disagreement to transfer power to democratically elected people representatives, the civilians have remained under strict rule of regime. The people lose their rights to involve in politics to elect their own leaders, the rights for freedom of expression, the rights for freedom of association and other rights.

After SLORC refusing political power to democratically elected people representatives, it has been constantly condemned by the international community. Hence, the regime has attempted to get some legitimacy from domestic and international communities by implementing many community development projects including road and bridge construction, creating new satellite towns, creating new farms and building dykes, etc.. In most case, although the regime has claimed that they are doing "community development" for the people, but these infrastructure projects also useful for regime and Burmese Army for their military purposes and self-reliance program of their soldiers.

For example, when there are more roads built in rural area in where the ethnic people inhabit the Burmese Army's military battalions have more chance to launch military offensives the concerned ethnic armed force. Another example is that while the regime is planning to explore new lands for farming, they always distribute these lands for their authorities and soldiers as first priority.

In most development projects, the regime has constantly used *forced labour* during they are building roads or bridges, creating new lands for farming or building dykes and many other types of works. The

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concerned authorities or military commanders in the local area concerned always have responsibility to conscript forced labour and town ward leaders and village headmen have to force the civilians to bring the set number of labourers to work sites.

While the authorities and army are conscripting the civilians to be labourers to do these development projects, in most cases, they do not mention in their verbal or official documented orders that to not conscript any women or children under 18. When the children came and worked for project, they have not barred the children under 18 years, but forced all civilians to contribute their labour in hard works.

After SLORC seized power from pro-democracy demonstrators in 1988, it has intensified its military offensives against many ethnic and democratic armed oppositions along border with Thailand. In most offensives, the concerned military battalion of Burmese Army has constantly used both women and children in their *porter service* carry ammunitions and food supplies in appalling and hard conditions in jungles and forests.

Although many armed political parties including their armies, like New Mon State Party (NMSP) and its military faction Mon National Liberation Army, deal for ceasefire with the current military regime, with expectation to solve political problems by means of politics and implement border area development program, however, many groups still are waging war against the regime and Burmese Army.

In this decade-long civil war, while the Burmese Army's military columns suppressed the rebels who launch military activities in rural area, the concerned local ethnic rural civilians have been constantly accused as *rebel-supporters or sympathizers* for their supports to rebels.

With this accusation, the rural community people including women faced *killing, arbitrary arrest and kidnap, rape and torture* in general. In many cases, women are raped and then killed by soldiers of Burmese Army inhumanely and cruelly. Sometimes with this accusation, the soldiers kidnapped women and brought with them to be hu-

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man shields or force them to show the way or to show the base of rebel soldiers. When the soldiers brought these women, these women also have to carry their small babies along appalling roads in forests. Even some pregnant women are also brought by soldiers while they were kidnapping.

Rape or sexual harassment also occurred when the soldiers are kidnapping women and while the soldiers or authorities forced the women to work in their works. *Torture* against women and children also occurred along with men when the regime soldiers heard about the rebels' activities in villages or in surrounding area.

Because of armed conflict between Burmese Army and rebel armies, there have been more *population displacement* occurs in rural area and border areas with Thailand. Due to Thai government's strict policy toward refugees and asylum seekers, hundreds of thousands of civilians in rural areas have displaced and faced dangerous conditions in the life. Considerably, among displaced persons, women and children faced great suffering.

Another type of population displacement occurs in cities and in some villages controlled by the regime. The authorities or army relocated civilians from a specific place where the government to deploy infrastructure projects, such as for construction of dam, gas pipeline, road, bridge, etc. For these types of project, some hundreds or thousands of villagers are forcibly relocated by regime authorities concerned and they are provided with some space of lands in which they could not survive. These civilians retry to get place where they could make some income and survival. In this type of population displacement, many women and children faced hardship and starvation until they could find the places where they could make income.

Under the rule of military regime, because of economic mis-management, the civilians in the whole country faced unemployment condition and migrate into Thailand to seek jobs and better income in various industries as *migrant workers*. Among these hundreds of thou-

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sands of migrant workers, there are many women who try to enter into Thailand illegally. When these workers migrated into Thailand, they were always disturbed by regime authorities and army.

During the course of civil war, the women and children in rural area have less opportunity for education. For several years, the Mon and Karen ethnic revolutionary organizations established schools with objective to provide education to rural children. In these schools, most female teachers have taken responsibility to teach children. As these schools are accused as rebel school, the authorities or army in the concerned area always disturb the operation of these schools and barred for the *education* of the students.

Even in government schools, the students have to pay various expenses to teachers or schools for their education. For majority women who have less education opportunity still lose chance to have good works and better income. Rural women who have to work in farms or fruit plantations faced harder conditions for their survival and they also have to take more responsibility in hard works, because their husbands are forced by soldiers to be porters and busy with conscription of forced labour for various projects.

When the civilians have less and less income and the commodity price in the country become more expensive, these also effected the basic *health* of them. If compared with the people in town, the rural villagers, including many women and children, faced more terrible health in their villages where no sufficient health care services are provided.

Although SLORC/SPDC ratified CEDAW and CRC to save their face, or to retain legitimacy from international community, actually the government authorities and its army, Burmese Army or *tatmadaw* have not respected woman and child rights mentioned in conventions.

On the other hand, the regime itself has less interest and initiative to educate their local authorities and *tatmadaw* members about general principles of human rights, women's rights and child rights. Even in Burmese Army, if still recruits *child soldiers* and used them at

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front-lines in fighting against rebel armies. Many child soldiers died in battle fields and the command or military battalions concerned have never informed to these soldiers' families or relatives.

'The violations and abuses committed by the regime authorities and Burmese Army have been documented well and details of these issues are categorized section by section as below:

III. Conscription of forced labour

III. A. Unpaid labour contribution for security reason and development projects

After Burmese Army seized political power and renamed themselves as SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council), it has constantly implemented many road construction projects for convenient communication and transport. These road communications also support the SLORC and Burmese to obtain easy access to launch military offensives in rural or border areas or to provide security for foreign investment.

As an example, in 1993, when SLORC and Burmese Army planned to build 110 miles long Ye-Tavoy railway construction, the regime aimed to provide security for Yadana gas pipeline that connects to Thailand border from off shore of Andaman Sea, west of lower part of Burma (*See map on Page 87*). After this road is built, the Burmese Army could also launch offensives easier than before against rebel armies in Tenasserim Division.

About 12 military battalions of Burmese Army had administrated the construction and they conscripted many thousands of civilians to contribute unpaid labour. The construction of this railway took over 5 years, which started in late 1993 and completed in early 1998. In this construction, every family in Yebyu Township and Ye Township needed to send at least one family and had to work for 10-15 days within one month. The authorities or army who took responsibility for construction and guarding the labourers did not provide any foods to those who worked in hard and appalling conditions.

During this railway road construction, as the authorities and army had

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forced the local villagers continuously for several months, the civilians had no time even to work in their farms or fruit plantations. Traditionally, most men work in farms and women stay at homes to do domestic works and take care children. Due to massive conscription of forced labour, the men could not go and work all the times in construction works. When the order came, the men were away from homes, women and children (*under 18 years and over 10 years*) had to go to construction site and worked instead of women. According to many victims, they said over 60% of the total labourers were women and children in this railway construction.

Later from 1999 until now, the conscription of forced labour including some number of women and children have continued, but it does not have huge number like in Ye-Tavoy railway construction. However, the use of forced labour still occurred although SPDC issued Order 1/99 to halt all practices of requisition of forced labour.

- From mid-November 1998 until May 1999, when Second Commander of Coastal Region Military Command, Brigadier Maung Oo, instructed to construct and widen Ye - Tavoy motor road, the concerned local authorities from Ye, Yebyu and Tavoy Townships and Burmese Army's LIB No. 408 and LIB No. 410 forced the civilians from several villages along Ye-Tavoy motor road to contribute unpaid labour. The villagers were instructed to clear bushes and small trees alongside of the road, fill extent route with small pieces of stones, collect stones and brought to designated places and dig water canals alongside the roads. In harvest season of November and December, as many men were busy at their farms, many women and children under 18 years old had come and worked in the construction. Accordingly to a victim, she found only about 20% of men among labourers,

and expressed that even pregnant women and children under 18 years old came and worked many times in the construction. Each time, they had to work for 7 days in construction and brought foods from their homes.

- From October 1998 to April 1999, when Paung Township (*Mon State*) authorities built about 30 miles long motor road from Paung town to Ngwe-le-phoh-taung in township area, the authorities forced the civilians from 10 villages and town residents. For over 6 months, the authorities forced 30 civilians from town and 6 villagers from each village to work in this construction. They had to leave to construction site in early morning and return to their homes in late evening. The civilians had to take their foods along with them and the authorities had not provided any assistance. As most men were busy in harvest season and many other works at the farms, women and children came and worked instead of men. About half of labourers are women and children said by a witness.
- SLORC's Railway Minister U Pan Aung celebrated opening ceremony of Ye - Tavoy railway road in March 1998 and testified for the running of train after ceremony. However, when the monsoon heavy rain fell in June and July 1998, many parts of the road were collapsed and embankments were destroyed. Some bridges were also thrown away by flood. When the regime built this road for over five years, they had constantly used manual labour of forced labourers and less use of machines to press embankment or build strong bridge. However, because of this destruction, about 3000 ci-

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vilians from villages close to Ye - Tavoy railway road were forced by railway authorities and local army battalions along the road. The civilians were forced to repair the road for the whole rainy season until October of that year. Accordingly to villagers, during this confiscation of forced labour on the repairs of railway road, about 60% of total labourers were women and children. In the appalling working conditions during rainy season, these women and children were forced to complete their work-duties.

The civilians in rural area of southern part, of Burma are not only forced to work in the regime's planned infrastructure projects, they were also forced to contribute unpaid labour for the local army battalions or commands in their self-help program and deployment of their troops. These battalions do not select women and children for prohibition of working in their battalion compounds or in their farms or plantations.

Since 1997, the regime has introduced for self-reliance program to their local military battalions in rural areas and encouraged them to raise their own battalion fund, or to produce their owns foods. During these years, the local military battalion in most areas confiscated paddy growing farmlands from farmers, exploring new lands to grow some fruit trees and paddy, involving in business activities.

Most soldiers who do not have enough skill for paddy cultivation or planting fruit or rubber trees have constantly forced the local civilians to cultivate or plant trees instead of them. On the other hand, as the soldiers have no spare time to work in farms or plantations, they have constantly relied on the local civilians to contribute unpaid labour.

- In July, 2000, a military outpost of IB No. 32, which bases in Htee-paukha-lo village forced the villagers from that village to grow paddy and plant rub-

ber trees. On July 4, Lt. Col. Win Maung ordered the village headmen to send 20 villagers to grow paddy in battalion farm. On July 9, he again asked 50 villagers from village to plant rubber trees. On July 19, he asked 50 villagers from village to grow paddy in another space of land. On July 20, another commander, Maj. Than Oo forced asked 30 villagers from Kyauk-kya, a village near their base, to grow paddy plants in battalion farms. In July, most men or farmers were too busy in their farms because they also had to grow small plants when the rain and water in their farms are available. When the military commanders asked to contribute labour in their farms, many able-bodied men could not go and women and children went to work places instead of men. Among the forced labourers, about 80% were women and children.

- Similarly, LIB No. 708 that bases in Mudon township also had one space of paddy growing land in the west of town. In June and July of every year, the commanders from battalion conscript the villagers from Kwan-tar, Bae-yan and Naing-pa-raing villages to plow their lands and grow paddy plants. Then, in November and December, the battalion commanders again forced the civilians from those villages to reap paddy crops in harvest season.
- In September, LIB No. 282 bases in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division, also forced the villagers from Aleskan, Kywe-ta-lin, Law-taing, Yapu and other villages along motor road in northern part of township area to plant palm trees, which fruit could produce cooking, in their plantation. Village headmen had to manage the villagers on a rotation basis

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and each village had to send 25 villagers and worked in the plantation for 4 days. Normally, most village could send more women than to do works for army. Kywe-ta-lin village headmen 12 men and 13 women to workplace.

In some cases, the Burmese Army's battalions have not only used the villagers to contribute labour in their self-reliance program's farms and plantations, they also forced the civilians to do daily works in their military battalions. In these cases, the soldiers asked only women who could make foods, carry water, find firewood, etc. Additionally, when the Burmese Army's new battalion deployed in one area, the villagers including many women are also forced to build military barracks, dig bunkers and trenches, fence the base compound, etc.

- IB No. 32 headquarters bases in Kya-inn-seikyi town and the battalion commander conscripted five women everyday in July to September 2000 to do domestic works in battalion. The commanders ordered to village headmen that they only needed women to come and work. The soldiers forced these women to cook foods for soldiers in the whole battalion, to find firewood near the battalion, to carry water for the use in battalion and do other domestic works. Sometimes, the soldiers also forced these women to fence the battalion compound like men.
- While LIB No. 408 and No. 410 took responsibility for widening Ye - Tavoy motor road in 1998, the base commanders always asked village headmen to send some women to their bases to make foods, carry water and find firewood.
- In May 1999, when a new military battalion IB No. 81, under the command of Southeast Military Command, deployed in Pa-an township, the battalion

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commander forced 70 villagers from every village to come and work everyday. The villagers from the villages namely Zathapyin, Than-hlae, Khayar-atwin, Khayar-apyin, Kaw-lamu and Kyon-phae were forced to work. According to a victim, there were about 10-15 women among 70 villagers who contributed labour in building military barracks, digging bunkers and making fence.

- In April and May 2001, when the Burmese Army planned to deploy new battalions and artillery regiment in Kalar-gote island in northwestern part of Ye Township, it used huge number of forced labour including women and children. LIB No.343 that based in Ye Township took responsibility in conscripting forced labour from three villages in island to clear trees and bushes in set place to build barracks. The villagers were also forced to build a road from sea coast to the base. During these two months, LIB No. 343 conscripted 2000 civilians to do these works. Among these conscripts, about 10% were boys and girls under 18 years old and 60% were married and unmarried women.

In Mon and Burmese tradition, women like to stay at their home peacefully to domestic works, home business and raise their children. However, under the rule of military regime, women could not stay peacefully and they have to replace with their husbands or fathers to contribute labour for army and authorities. Sometimes, when the work-duties shared by army or authorities are too much or too hard, women also brought their sons or daughters to work-site to help. Thus, in every workplace instructed by authorities or army, there were constantly more number of women and children.

III. B. Porter service and the plight of women and children

Unpaid labour in porter service used by Burmese Army is the most terrible and inhumane violations against the rights of civilians. When there are more military offensives against the rebel armies in rural or border areas, the Burmese Army arrest or recruit more civilians to be porters. The life of a porter is more terrible than a soldier, because he/she has no gun to protect himself/ herself or sometimes they were also used as mine-sweepers or human-shields.

Generally, the Burmese Army always recruits porters by arresting men to carry their ammunitions, food supplies and other equipment. Depending on the measurement they could control an area, the Burmese Army makes request to obtain villagers from villages and the village headmen had to arrange to send the set number of porters. But in the so-called by regime, the army always suddenly enters into a village and arrests all men in there without prior knowledge.

From many year experience, all men in rural area know how horrible and appalling during the porter service. Whenever they heard about the activities of Burmese Army, most men tried to escape from the arrest and the use of porters during military operation. Hence, after men escaped, most women, elderly persons and young boys and girls remained in villages.

Even though some military columns required only men when they went into village and do not make trouble women and children, but some battalion recruit women and children when they could not get men in village. This recruitment always occurs as punishment against the villagers or the husbands of women for their escape.

- During September to November 1999, the Burmese Army's IB No. 120 led by Lt. Col. Maung Maung Oo, operated military operation in east-

ern part of Kya-inn-seikyi township of Karen State. Because of the accusation of rebel-supporters and following inhumane treatment against the Karen villagers, most Karen men escaped from their villages before the Burmese soldiers arrived into their villages. Thus, IB No. 120 suspected that all men are KNLA soldiers. So when the troops arrived into village, they arrested women and interrogated them about their husbands. Then the soldiers brought them for many days as porters to carry their ammunitions and food supplies. On October 3, 1999, when the troops went into Kyone-see village, they brought 20 women along as porters and as guides to show the ways for 9 days. On October 24, the same troops went into another Karen village, Palaw-toki and arrested six women and used them as porters for one week. One pregnant woman was also included among six women. Among the women porters, one woman had three months pregnancy.

- On November 15, 1999, the same battalion troops led by Lt. Col. Maung Maung Oo also entered into Htee-phar-kut village, Kya-inn-seikyi Township, arrested six woman and used them as porters. They were: Naw Noe La Soe (32 years old), Naw Dar Pu (21 years old), Naw Ae Ar Htoo (20 years old with 4 months-pregnancy), Naw Tu (25 years old, mother of a baby with age 1 year and 5 months), Naw Da Baleh (19 years old, mother of 2 months old baby), Naw Mu See Soe Mu (30 years old, mother of two children, 2 years old and 5 months baby). The soldiers took these women for one

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week along their military operation to carry food supplies and ammunitions.

When LIB No. 343's 60 troops led by Maj. Lin Oo, launched the military offensives against a Mon splinter group in eastern part of Ye Township, the soldiers also arrested some Karen women and took them as human shields and as porters. On June 16, 2001, when the military column arrived into Kalate-toke village, all men fled outside of the village and the troops did not get any men for porters. The commander was too angry and accused the villagers as rebel-supporters to Mon splinter group and KNLA. Then they arrested five women in village and brought along with troops. These women were taken for over one month and the commanders released them in third week of July. One woman had to abandon her one-year-old baby with relatives because she was forced to be a porter by commander. Sometimes, the army also used them to walk in advance in where they suspected that the rebel soldiers could make ambush attacks against them. These women were also forced to carry food supplies and ammunitions, and were also tied up at nighttime.

In the porter service, women are similarly treated like men. The soldiers never consider to give less load to women than men. Women have to carry much weight and were forced to walk many hours like soldiers in one day. They have to work for 12-14 hours a day.

In some cases, when the women are forced in porter service for logistic of Burmese Army, fighting break out and some women are also killed by bullets of rebel soldiers. Normally, as the women have no any expe-

rience how to avoid the bullets or how to hide, they are very vulnerable to be shot and killed in battle fields.

- On July 14, 2000, when Burmese Army's LIB NO. 703 troops moved from Three Pagoda Pass, a well known border town with Thailand, to a Karen village called Apalon along Three Pagoda Pass - Thanbyuzayat motor road, the soldiers also arrested one Mon man, Nai Ah Maung (*about 34 years old*) and two Karen women, Naw Phar Tu Klaing (*31 years old*) and Naw Swe Nyunt (*30 years old*). The soldiers forced them to carry some food supplies along with them. On the same day in the evening about 6 o'clock, before Burmese troops entered into Apalon village, they faced with an ambush attack from Karen (*KNLA*) troops. In the fighting, the Burmese soldiers pushed some porters to stay in front of them and used as human-shields. So, some bullets hit to Naw Phar Tu Klaing. After 10 minutes ambush attack by rebels, the fighting ceased. But the soldiers did not take the injured woman porter and left her behind. She died at night because of serious injuries. On the next day morning, the villagers took her corpse back to village.

During the course of civil war, as the Burmese Army has not had modernized logistic system, the local civilians, including women and children were forced in porter service. In most cases, women who are brought by soldiers for this service are sometimes raped by soldiers. Because of community traditions and shame, most women closed the cases of rape if they are violated by soldiers.

IV. Suspicion of rebel-supporters and related violations

In southern part of the major population are non-Burman people, Mon, Karen and Tavoyan, Burman people are as minority. At the same time, because of centralized rule introduced by Burman dominated regimes or governments in Rangoon, many non-Burman ethnic people took up and have fought against central governments and its army, Burmese Army or *tatmadaw*.

The civil war took about fifty years since Burma retained Independence from British colony and no peaceful political solution is achieved. During the course of civil war, ethnic people in rural area are always accused as rebel-supporters. In 1970s and 1980s, when the Burmese Army launched military offensives against ethnic armed groups, it used "four cuts campaign" and tried to cut all supports from civilians to rebel armies.

Currently, the Burmese Army still uses this method in their operations against rebel armed groups. Some elderly people in rural area believe the battalions of Burmese Army now are more cruel and inhumane.

Although the current military regime, SLORC/SPDC has attempted to make peace deal with ethnic armed group under the title of "ceasefire" by ethnic opposition or "enter into legal fold" named by the regime, no promise for political solution is given to those ceasefire groups.

NMSP, the major armed organization of Mon people dealt with the regime for ceasefire in mid-1995 and this has protracted for over six

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years. Although NMSP and other ceasefire groups called for peaceful political dialogue that aims for national reconciliation, but the Burmese Army has never cared. But some the regime top leaders also made threatened to ethnic leaders to be "silent".

However, in southern part of Burma especially Mon State, Karen State and Tenasserim, the rebellion against the regime, except NMSP, has continued until the present day. Because of the delay for the political solutions for their own rights of ethnic people, some splinter groups split from NMSP and resumed fighting against the Burmese Army and regime.

Two Mon splinter group, including new group named "Monland Restoration Army (MRA)"; KNU/ KNLA; and MDUF (Mergui - Dawai United Front) are still operating military operations against the regime. Hence, the accusation of rebel supporters or sympathizers against the ethnic people, Mon, Karen and Tavoyan always occurs along with armed revolutionary groups' rebellion activities.

Related to this accusation, ethnic community people in Mon State, Karen State and Tenasserim Division are never treated by members of Burmese Army humanely. Gross human rights violations against these non-Burman civilians, such as arbitrary execution, arbitrary arrests, inhumane torture and kidnapping occur constantly in rural area. These violations are committed by regime soldiers not only to men but also to women at large.

Gross human rights violations by authorities and armed soldiers against women are described as below section by section.

IV. A. Arbitrary execution

IV. A. 1. Killing with accusation of rebel-supporters

In "four cuts campaign" strategy, the Burmese Army's military battalion cut any supports from families, relatives and civilians to rebel soldiers or rebel organizations' members. If the families, relatives and civilians have connection with rebel soldiers or leaders, they are normally killed by soldiers without trial. In most cases, although men are arbitrarily killed by soldiers, in some cases, even women are killed by soldiers.

- In May 1998, with accusation her husband, Saw Aor Naw, was a rebel working for KNLA's Brigade No. 4, his wife and other four of his relatives were brought by soldiers. After torturing for several rounds, at the end, his wife and his four relatives were killed by soldiers with accusation they tried to close information about activities of Karen rebel soldiers.
- In 1998, when the Burmese Army's LIB No. 432 troops led by Lt. Col. Htein Win launched a military activity against the KNLA troops around Boke-pyin township, Tenasserim Division, they also killed many Karen villagers in Pawa village including a woman. In the second half year of 1998, that battalion killed about 5 Karen men. Because of killing, most villagers fled when the Burmese troops came into their village. In the last week of December, when the troops came into village, while many villagers fled, the soldiers shot to villagers. Among the villagers, the soldiers shot at a woman, Ma Hla Aye (41 years old). She died with serious injuries.

- In second week of December, 1999, to arrest a suspected man, Nai Le Oh (45 years old) with accusation he was a Mon rebel, the soldiers from a military column of LIB No. 432 suddenly entered into Pa-ngar village, Yebyu township, Tenasserim Division. The man and his wife, Mi Aye (40 years old) attempted to escape from the arrest and run around the houses in village. The commander of military column, Lt. Col. Thein Win ordered to shoot at them. Mi Aye was shot at behind and died on the spot. She left her six children behind. The commander also angered to Nai Le Oh and so looted all of their belongings. After military column left, Nai Le Oh brought his six children and fled to another area.
- In May, when a Mon armed group launched a military activities in southern part of Ye township, the Burmese Army's LLIB No.408 also killed a Mon woman, Mi Khin Ye (42 years old) with accusation of rebel supporter. During that time, LIB No. 408, LIB No.273 and LIB No. 343 launched a joint military operation to uproot the Mon armed group's rebellion and they tortured many villagers. When the troops from LIB No. 408 passed through near a farm hut owned by Mi Khin Ye near her village, Mi-htaw-hla-kalay village, they found that some rebel soldiers took foods in that hut. So the commander ordered his soldiers to turn head to village and inquired the owner of that farm hut. Then they soldiers arrested Mi Khin Ye and interrogated her why she accepted the rebel soldiers and provided foods. She refused and said that she did not

know about rebel soldiers were taking foods at her farm because of she was at home for many days. The rebel soldiers managed their own foods and just took foods in her hut. She refused she did not any deal with them. But the commanders and soldiers did not believe her although village headman supported her complaint. Then the soldiers brought her outside of the village and shot her with gun by the order of commander. She died on the spot. She had five children when she was killed.

IV. A. 2. Killing for closing rape cases

In some cases, arbitrary killing also relates to rape or sexual violations. When the soldiers or commanders tried to rape women in villages, some women refused and the soldiers also killed them. Sometimes as the soldiers worried the rape would appear and would face punishment, they also killed women victims after rape.

- In June 1999, IB No. 25 troops entered into Mawkhani village, Yebyu township, Tenasserim Division, all men except elderly people fled outside of the village to escape from the arrest of porters. Hence, the soldiers climbed many house and raped both married and unmarried women. When a low rank commander, Corporal Myo Myint tried to rape Mi Myaing (25 years old), she refused and fought against him. He angered and killed that woman by stabbing with his army knife.
- In October, during the riot between Buddhist monks and Muslim (*then between Buddhist monks and SPDC authorities*) SPDC put many hundreds of troops in Pegu town rounding many monasteries. During the soldiers were guarding Pegu town to

halt the potential riot, some soldiers also tried to rape women who paid worship to pagodas in monasteries. On October 15, a soldier, Aung Win, from IB No.77 also raped a girl, Ma Kwar Nyo Thin (*24 years old, daughter of U Tun Myint and Daw Soe*) when he returned home after meditation in Shwe Kyet Yet pagoda. After rape, as the soldier worried the case could be emerged, he also killed the girl. Actually, the soldier had found the chance how to rape the girl and studied the time that the girl went to pagoda and returned for many days.

IV. A. 3. Rape and killing with accusation of rebel-supporters

In some cases, the women in rural area are accused as rebel-supporters because their relatives or neighbours or husbands join the concerned revolutionary. Without care about combat principles, the Burmese Army's soldiers arrested some women who are suspected. As punishment, the soldiers raped these women first or sometimes torture and then killed them inhumanely. By doing this way, the regime soldiers expected the husbands of those women would return to villages to take care the remaining children and surrender to them.

- In August, 2000, when about 60 troops of IB No. 31 launched a military activities against KNLA along Zami river in Kya-inn-seikyi township, Karen State, when they arrived Win-laung village, the soldiers arrested one woman, Naw Laung (*50 years old*). She was accused as rebel-supporters when the soldiers found some rice with her and they interrogated how she sent foods for rebel soldiers. She refused and said she returned from her farms. But the soldiers did not believe. Then, a group of soldiers from the sense and raped her one by one. As

they believed she was a relative to a rebel soldier who made military attack against them in the area, so they killed her by stabbing with army knives.

IV. B. Arbitrary arrest and Torture

During the course of civil war in Burma, there is no "rule of law" in the whole Burma. The regime authorities and army treat civilians without respecting any laws. If compared with civilians in cities or towns, the local people in rural area are oppressed by regime authorities and members of Burmese Army more.

The Burmese Army always claims there is "no justice in war", and because of this ideology, the soldiers never respect any laws and constantly violates arbitrary killing without trials and arbitrary arrest without any warrants. They always believe that the arrest of anyone who have connections with rebel is just and do not require any legal procedure.

When the Burmese soldiers arrested the villagers in rural area with suspicion of rebel supporters, they not only arrested men but also women. The purpose of the arrest is normally for interrogation about the activities of rebel soldiers. Sometimes, the soldiers also arrest wives and relatives of rebel soldiers as they think these groups of people are main supporters to rebel soldiers.

IV. B. 1. Torture during interrogation

After arrest or during interrogation, the arrested persons are normally tortured by soldiers. In most cases, many men are arrested with suspicion of rebel supporters and they are tortured during interrogation and sometimes they are killed by soldiers. However, some women are also arrested with the same accusation and are similarly mis-treated by soldiers.

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- In March 1998, the Burmese Army's IB No. 61 troops led by Maj. Aung Lwin went into Baround village, Ye Township's southern part, and arrested 14 villagers who were suspected as supporters to a Mon splinter group led by Nai Bin. Among 14 arrested villagers, 6 of them were women, Mi Tin Ye (30 years old), Mi Ei (25 years old), Mi Htwe (18 years old), Mi Tin Shwe (25 years old), Mi Hla Win (20 years old) and Mi Sanda (26 years old). After the soldiers also beat and tortured them how they have connections with Mon rebels and how they allowed the rebel soldiers in their farms. When the villagers said that because of the armed group has guns and they had no choice but allow them to stay at farms for one night, the commander ordered his soldiers to beat them more. The soldiers slapped these women, beat them with gun butts and kicked them.
- In October 1997, when a Mon splinter group started up armed rebellion against SLORC, LIB No. 273 troops led by Lt. Col. Myint Oo went into Mayan village, Yebyu township, Tenasserim Division and killed a rebel suspected villager, Nai Bue (28 years old) by shooting him. Nai Bue had a wife and a five-months old baby. After killing, the soldiers arrested his wife and brought with them but left the small baby at home. The soldiers did not give her enough time to take her baby. The soldiers interrogated for one day and one night in forest nearby to tell about her activities of rebellion against the regime. They also tortured her with various methods to tell other people names who involved in Mon armed group. After inhumane tor-

ture and serious interrogation, they released her. When she arrived home, she found her baby died because of cold weather and starvation for one day and one night. As the villagers are afraid of being killed and fleeing from village, no one had chance to take care her baby. As she lost both her beloved baby and husband, she became mad.

IV. B. 2. Rape and Cruel Torture

With suspicion of rebel supporters or relatives to rebels or wives of rebels, many ethnic women in rural area are cruelly and inhumanely suffered from the various types of torture. During the punishment committed by Burmese Army's soldiers, these women are repeatedly raped. After rape, they also destroyed the body or face of these women as a revenge to rebel soldiers.

- On June 6, 1998, about 20 troops of IB No. 61 led by Cap. Kyi Lwin Oo entered Ba-round village the soldiers arrested about 14 villagers including village secretary, 4 women and young girls with suspicion that they were receiving rebel soldiers in their village and fed them with foods. The soldiers all arrested villagers in the middle of the village and tied them up in trees. They soldiers them for three hours as punishment. After taking lunch from looting villagers' foods and livestock, the soldiers brought all of them outside of the village and forced them to show the rebel army's base. Then they separated men and women into two groups. They brought men group to show rebel army's base. A group of soldiers also brought all women and girl in another place and interrogated them about the activities of rebel soldiers. During interrogation, they let the women hold trees and beat their back with sticks and belts. They also

put ants on the back of women and let it bite. After cruel torture, the group of soldiers raped those four women repeatedly. Then the released women and girls and threatened to not tell about the rape to other people.

- On October 3, 1999 when the SPDC troops from LIB No. 120 led by Lt-Col. Maung Maung Oo went into Kyone-sein village and stayed there for one week to check who were the supporters of KNLA soldiers and wives of rebel soldiers. The Burmese soldiers arrested 12 villagers including two women. The soldiers all 10 men tortured various types including beating, kicking, burning with fire, cut some villagers' ears and other cruel methods. The soldiers also cruelly and inhumanely tortured two women, Naw B— B— (*16 years old*) and Naw M— K— (*17 years old*). These two women were married women and their husbands fled from village to avoid being arrest by Burmese soldiers. Thus, the soldiers accused their husbands were Karen soldiers. With this accusation, they tortured two women cruelly. First after beating during interrogation questioning about the activities of their husbands, the soldiers raped these two women repeatedly. As the women refused their husbands were not rebel soldiers, the soldiers also cut Naw B— B—'s breasts with knife. Because of serious injury, the woman lost consciousness. Again, the soldiers also pulled hot water into Naw M—K—'s noses. So, her whole face was burnt with hot water and skin in her face was spoil. Her face became totally red and severely pained. Naw M— had four months baby and although she asked to feed milk to her baby, but the soldiers did not allow. Her hungry baby cried for the whole day.

IV. B. 3. Non-physical torture, but mentally

Whenever there is a fighting or ambush attack happened near a village, the villagers from the whole village including men, elderly people, women and children are accused as rebel-supporters. When that happens, the soldiers believed that the village is used as rebel base and make looting from the villagers. They also tortured men physically, and tortured women, children and elderly people by non-physically, but mentally.

- On November 1, 2001, when a SPDC military column from LIB No. 378 led by Lt. Col. Sein Tin Aung, launched a military activity in southern part of Ye Township, they were attacked by a Mon splinter group near Mi-htaw-hla-kalay village and the soldiers believed the villagers from that village were supporting the rebels to fight them. On the next day, on November 2, the commander of LIB No. 278 ordered all villagers from every house to gather in village's football field including elder people, women and children. Some women also had to bring even 3 months old babies and many other children with them and gathered them in football ground in where no shady place. The soldiers put them about 4 hours in football ground in hot sun ray. Some children cried because of hot and tasty, but the commander did not allow them to stay under shady trees or to return homes.

During the soldiers were putting the villagers under hot sun as a punishment, the soldiers climbed every house in village to find evidence who had supported the rebel soldiers. However, the soldiers took villagers' properties including gold wares, home-used materials and others. After 4 hours of

gathering of villagers in football ground and completion of looting, the soldiers released women and children to their homes.

- On October 16, 2001, when SPDC soldiers from LIB No. 528 launched military offensive in southern part of Ye Township area, they also entered Magyi village and accused the villagers as rebel supporters because they heard the villagers were receiving rebel soldiers. Because of this accusation, the soldiers gathered all villagers including women and children in the middle of the village and threatened them that the ones who support the Mon rebel must be killed. While the soldiers gathered the villagers in the middle of the village for three hours under the hot sunray, the soldiers also climbed every house and looted the villagers' properties. But they said they climbed to find the evidence of any villagers having contact with rebel soldiers.

IV. C. Kidnapping and extortion

With accusation of rebel supporters or sympathizers, the Burmese Army's concerned military battalions always arrested some villagers and tortured them during interrogation as mentioned above. In some cases, the soldiers kidnap the villagers who they think rebel supporter and take them along with military operation for many days to show the rebel bases or the villages that the rebel armies normally use as bases.

In most cases, as the regime, SPDC, instructed most military commanders in every battalion to seek their own fund or to create self-reliance, the battalion commanders always need fund to feed their soldiers. During the battalion's troops are launching military offensives, the commanders have no opportunity to seek fund for the use of various expenses and foods for soldiers. In finding the way to get battal-

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ion fund, the commanders tried to take ransom for the kidnapped villagers.

After they kidnap the villagers and take them for many days, they accuse those villagers as rebel supporters and inform to those villagers' families that they would not release them. Additionally, the army also adds that these villagers must be imprisoned. The remaining families, especially women, and relatives always worry for the detention of their husbands and try to negotiate with the concerned commanders for release. Normally, on behalf of the remaining families or women, the village headmen have to negotiate for the ransom for release of the men. If they have agreement, the wives of arrested men have to find money to pay the army battalion commanders.

In most situation, the women face difficult to find some amounts of money that needed to pay military battalion commanders. In the poor village community, it is not easy to get available money to give for ransom cost. When the ransom delayed, the concerned commanders also dissatisfied against the wives of arrested men.

- On November 3, 2001, when the Burmese Army's LIB No. 343 troops military activities to fight against the Mon splinter group in northeastern part of Ye Township area, the soldiers arrested three villagers who stayed in their fruit plantations. Those three villagers are (1) Nai Naung Aye (*44 years old*), (2) Nai Ha Lae (*30 years old*), and (3) Nai Kun Gho (*25 years old*) and accused them that they were rebel supporters. The soldiers tied up and interrogated them with many questions about the activities of Mon rebels in the area. When they could not get satisfied from the villagers, the soldiers brought with them along military column. After 4 days along with them, on November 7, the military commander, Maj. Lin Oo, informed to the families of arrested villagers about the kidnap and if they needed their husbands for

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release they would have to pay. The commander also informed to the wives of the men that they requested 100, 000 Kyat per man as ransom for release. The commander also ordered to give ransom within two days and to close the case after payment. Considerably, the poor families could not find the required money in a short period. Hence, the wives of three villagers had to find money by borrowing money from rich people in Ye town with high rate of credit. Then they went to set place appointed by commander on November 9 and paid 300,000 Kyat for three men for release. The commander also threatened them that if the news of ransom payment discovered they must be killed.

- In March 2001, the same commander of LIB No. 343, Maj. Lin Oo went into Kyon-kanya village, in southern part of Ye Township and arrested a village headman, Nai Sa Gong (*50 years old*) and accused him as rebel supporter. The commander kidnapped this man and brought him away. And, they requested a ransom of 100, 000 Kyat for release of this man from the remaining family. Thus, the wife of this headman found 100, 000 Kyat and paid to commander for release.
- Similarly, when this military battalion went into Kyon-ka-nya village, the commander also arrested another two headmen, Nai Uu and Nai Tha Aye on April 14, 2001. After the arrest, the commander took these two men along with them and interrogated them about how they were supporting the Mon rebels. Then, later the commander informed the families concerned and requested 400,000 Kyat ransom for the two men to be release. He added that if they did

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not agree to pay, they would kill the men. As the families were worried about the murder of their husbands or fathers, they had to find the money. After paying the ransom, the commanders released these two men.

In Mon and other ethnic communities, the men are the heads of the family and they have the main responsibility to get income to feed the whole family members. Normally in rural areas, most people are farmers and they get their main source of income only from their paddy farms or fruit or rubber plantations by selling their crops. When the Burmese Army requests ransoms after the arrests of their husbands most of them face difficulties not only in managing their work activities on the farms or plantations but also in raising the income. Otherwise, these women must totally rely on their relatives or families.

When they seek money to pay the army commanders, these women sometimes approach their relatives to borrow money. If their relatives are too poor, these women have to go and approach rich people in their villages or in towns to borrow money. Normally the poor people have to pay this back with high interest to the rich people. Sometimes, when the women cannot find any money from any sources, they have no choice but to sell their belongings and property. They might have to sell their houses or land or other belongings to get the amount of money for the ransom.

V. Rape and other sexual violations against women

Rape cases or sexual violations have occurred in rural areas not only during the SPDC era but for many years. During the course of the civil war, the Burmese Army (*tatmadaw*) troops and even their high ranking commanders had been involved in sexual violations against women in rural areas. The rapes or sexual violations always take place for many reasons.

In most cases, the Burmese Army's soldiers and commanders constantly accuse the rural villagers, including women, of being rebel-supporters because of their ethnicity. If the rural villagers are Mon people, the soldiers always consider that the women are supporters of the Mon army, which launched military activities in areas nearby. They think that most women are also relatives or wives of the rebel soldiers and treatment of these women was always abnormal. The soldiers complain that these women are involved in supporting the rebel army and they must be punished. The punishment can be many types: arrest and torture, interrogation and cruel torture, arrest for porter service and rape.

For young soldiers who have no wives or married soldiers who stay away from their wives, the demand for sex is the main reason they rape girls or even elder women in rural areas.

The punishments against women, including rape and other torture, are described in the section above.

When the soldiers punish men with the accusation that they are sup-

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porting the rebel armies, they also take women as victims they rape the women in front of their husbands or fathers, sometimes repeatedly, sometimes by a group of soldiers. This is the most cruel violation against community traditions. They aim to cause great shame to both the women and the village relatives for supporting rebel armies. By raping women, the regime soldiers also believe that these villages will not make support the rebels further.

- On August 27, 1997, one column of the Burmese Army troops from LIB No, 273 led by Maj. Lin Maung came into a Mon village, Nat-kyi, in north-eastern part of Ye Township. The commander of the troops, himself, raped a girl (Mi H—, 19 years old), to punish her father for the accusation that he had contacted the KNLA's local battalion. Soon after the troops arrived in the village, they arrested the father, Nai Paet (53 years old) and tied him up in the outer open room of his house. During the interrogation, the soldiers beat him and asked him how often he went to meet the KNLA soldiers. The soldiers also gathered other village leaders in front of Nai Paet's house during the interrogation. While the soldiers were torturing the man the commander, Maj. Lin Maung, went into the inner room of the house and pointed a gun at his daughter to rape her. The girl made a petition not to be raped and asked for help from her father, but still the commander repeatedly raped her. Although the father heard the suffering of his daughter, he could not help because of the gun pointed at him. Other village headmen also heard the voices of the girl, but they could not help. After the rape, the commander came out from the inner room and told to the man that if he continued contacting KNLA soldiers, he would again be punished and his daugh-

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ter would be raped. In this case, when the commander punished the man for his contact with KNLA soldiers, he used the girl as another victim, to stop the man from contacting KNLA soldiers in the future. The girl had never contacted rebel soldiers or knew whether her father supported the KNLA commander. Maj. Khin Soe raped a woman, Mi Khin Htee (*about 29 years old*) when her husband was away. When the troops arrived at the village, the commander found her house and thought she was single. At night time, when he went to her house, she refused to have sex with him and explained that she had a husband, but the commanders ignored her and raped her. She shouted to ask for help, but she was beaten. Even though many villagers in the surrounding houses knew about the rape, they could not help the woman because the soldiers were guarding their commander surrounding the house.

In some cases, the Burmese soldiers rape very young girls, who are virgins, when they are found in villages. These girls are young and attractive to the soldiers and so when they have the chance they also rape those young girls.

Psychologically, the soldiers who are away from their wives for several months during the military operations always have an appetite for sex and attempt to rape ethnic women in rural areas when they have a chance. Although village leaders know about these violations against women in their villages, they do not dare to complain to the commanders because they know that the commanders also encourage their soldiers and are involved in committing these abuses. In most cases, the village leaders who make complaints are beaten or tortured by soldiers. Thus, while the Burmese Army is launching an offensive or operating a military patrol, many ethnic Karen, Mon and Tavoyan women suffer

from sexual abuse.

- In September 1999, when troops of IB No, 103 went into War-ta village, Yebyu Township, Tena sserim Division, during their military patrol, some soldiers tried to rape a young girl. The young girl, Mi Than Aye (*only 16 years old*) was a beautiful girl in the village and the soldiers noticed her during the day time. In the evening a group of soldiers discussed raping her. After sun set, the soldiers went to her house and some soldiers took her parents away. They pointed their guns and tied her up. Then they raped her one after another until she lost consciousness.
- On July 26, 1998, when the troops of IB No. 61 led by Col. Than Win moved from Mon State to Three Pagoda Pass, a border town with Thailand, they went into a Karen village, called Mae-ta-bu and a group of soldiers raped two Karen sisters. Before the soldiers arrived at the village, they were attacked by KNLA soldiers and believed that the villagers from Mae-ta-bu supported these rebel soldiers. They quickly entered the village and arrested all the headmen and interrogated them about how the rebel soldiers had arrived so close to their village. While the commander and some of his soldiers were interrogating the village headmen, another squad of soldiers went into a house and arrested two sisters, Naw Mu Tu (21 years old) and Naw Mu Naung (26 years old) and took them to another place. Then the group of soldiers raped them repeatedly.

After interrogation, the headmen, also knew about the rape and complained to the commander, Col.

Than Win. But he ignored the headmen and the soldiers beat them again.

Sometimes, after studying the practices of soldiers and their commanders involve in sexual violations, the local militiamen or paramilitary using of the Burmese Army, also rape the women in rural areas. They gave the same treatment as when they raped the women, threatening, beating and stabbing them with knives and then raping them.

- On July 28, two members of Yapu village militia force raped two women and attempted to rape a woman in Aleskan village, Yebyu township of Tenasserim Division, after they were drunk. On the evening of July 28, the deputy-commander of the military force, U Aung Win and one of his followers, went to visit their friends in Aleskan village, which is about 10 miles away from their village. While they were with their friends, they drank a lot of local alcohol and were drunk by mid night. So their friends kept their guns and proposed giving them back in the morning.

After they got drunk, the two militiamen left their friend's house and tried to climb into other villagers' houses with only women while their husbands were away on farms or working on fruit plantations. When they climbed into these houses, they took their knives along with them.

First at mid-night, U Aung Win's follower climbed into Ma Mi's house who is about 50 years old. He tried to rape her by pointing his sharp knife at her. When the woman refused, he cut her hands with the knife, and pointed his knife at in her throat and other body parts and then raped her. As she worried about being killed by the militiaman, she could not cry for help.

At a similar time, U Aung Win also climbed into another house, where there was only one woman, Mi Pae (*about 40 years old*) and tried to rape her. When she refused the rape, he cut Mi Pae's hands, beat her, pointed his knife and raped her. After rape, she lost consciousness due to heavy blood-loss. Then, U Aung Win climbed into another house nearby, where there was only one young lady, Mi Kyae Lun (*about 20 years old*) and tried to rape her. When she realised the man tried to rape her, she cried for help urgently. When he tried to stab her with the knife, she ran around her house and escaped.

After crying loudly, the other villagers came to help her. When they found out that the two militiamen raped some women in the village and they went to help the other two women, Mi Pae and Ma Mi. When the villagers arrived, Mi Pae had lost a lot of blood and was in a serious condition. The villagers could not stop the blood flow from her and they sent her urgently by truck to Yapu village for treatment with a medic in the village.

As Ma Mi did not have serious injuries, the villagers did not take her to the medic for treatment. Then the Aleskan villagers arrested the two rapists and sent them to Yapu village and told the military commander about the rape cases and violence. However, the rapists did not receive any serious punishment as they were dismissed from the group and got permission for retirement.

As described above, when the SLORC/SPDC authorities and the Burmese Army commanders conscript forced labour for various types of development projects and in their self-reliance program, many women

are used as forced labourers. In many cases, when the men don't have enough time to work at these work-sites because they are busy on their own farms or plantations, women and children have to come and work instead of the men.

The Women who have to work for several days in the allocated work place, sometimes cannot return to their homes in the evening because the work places are far from their villages. When these women sleep at the work places with the guard of soldiers, they are quite vulnerable to rape by those soldiers at night. Depending on the situation, the soldiers sometimes drag girls and women from their temporary make-shift huts and rape them in a separate place. Sometimes, they take the women to their military barracks and rape them.

- LIB No. 282 was conscripting forced labour to grow palm trees in their own battalion plantation. Some Mon villagers from Kwe-tha-lin village in Yebyu township, Tenasserim Division were forced to work in the plantation during the last week of September, 2000. One SPDC commander, Sergeant San Win, attempted to rape a Mon woman, Mi San Htay (28 years old).
- LIB No.282 has its base in the southern part of Yebyu township, in the "52 Miles" area, near the Yadana gas pipeline and is the main battalion to take responsibility for the security of the gas pipeline. LIB No. 282 also seized some wild land around the battalion headquarters near the 52 Miles area and the battalion commanders constantly forced the local villagers from many villages in Yebyu township area to grow palm trees in these lands and create a palm plantation.
- On September 20, an army commander from LIB No. 282 asked the Kwe-ta-lin village headmen to

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provide 25 villagers to contribute free labour to grow palm trees in the plantation. The commander also instructed the village headmen that the villagers must contribute their labour for three days from 21 to 23, and they could return on 24 September. He ordered the villagers to carry their own food. So, the village headmen had to send the requested village labourers on the evening of 20th September.

Among the 25 villagers, there were 12 men and the remaining 13 were women. The group of villagers worked together in the plantation for three days. Their main job was to clear grass, dig holes and plant small palm trees. After the group of villagers completed their work-duties and before they returned to their village, an attempted rape happened in the workplace on the evening of September 23.

On that evening, at about 7 o'clock, after the group of villagers finished having dinner, the commander Sergeant. San Win told the group leader, Nai Maung Sein that he would like to meet Mi San Htay, to give some palm trees. But the leader said as night had already fallen, it was not good time for meeting a woman and suggested that he meet her the following morning. But, he refused. So the. group leader told Mm San Htay to meet the Sergeant and suggested taking a girl to accompany. When she arrived at the barracks, the commander ordered that girl to stay outside the barracks as he only wanted to meet Mi San Htay. Then the commander took Mi San Htay to a kitchen building near the barracks where he pushed her and raped her.

Not only the women in the villages or in the workplaces of the Burmese Army's set projects' are raped by soldiers, often women working

on farms or plantations are also raped by soldiers.

- On October 8, 2001, a low ranking commander of IB No. 61, Sergeant Kyaw Myint, who was responsible for the security of a bridge near Son-htit-tar village, about 10 miles from Ye town in the north, went to the village, drunk with liquor he had looted from a shop in village that evening.

When he returned to his temporary outpost by the bridge, he was alone and walked back in the dark. He entered a hut owned by Nai Htai on a plantation on his return journey and asked the farmers to give him 100, 000 Kyat as a ransom. He said he was from a rebel group. The farmers did not believe him because of his fluent Burmese and begged him that they had no money and to forgive them. The Sergeant also threatened to for kill them, but in the end, he agreed that the farmers had no money and told them to show him the way to get to his outpost.

The farmer took him along the way until he found another farm-hut owned by Nai Maung and he went into the hut. Then he released the first farmer. In the second farm-hut he met Nai Maung, his daughter Mi Htwe Yin and her husband Nai Maung Din. Mi Htwe Yin was about 30 years old and she had a small baby with her. The Sergeant told them the same story that he was sent by a rebel group and he needed 100, 000 Kyat ransom from that farmer. But the farmer said they had no money on them farm to pay him and so to forgive them. But this time, he took a long knife from the farm-hut and kidnapped the woman. He added that if they didn't give a ransom of 100, 000 Kyat he would take the

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woman with him. He put his knife to the woman's throat and threatened to burn down their i art]) hut. When he realized that he could not get the money, he took the woman with her by pointing a knife at her.

About 15 minutes after leaving the farm-hut, he shoved her down onto the ground and he demanded sex from her. The woman made several petitions not to rape her and explained she was the mother of a baby. But the Sergeant ignored her and punched her in stomach once and then raped her.

After the rape, he took the woman along with him down the slippery road in the dark. Whenever she could not keep her footing and fell down, the Sergeant beat her. Then, when they got near to the village cemetery, he took her into there and tried to kill her to close the case. She cried and made a petition that she would not tell anyone about the harassment. He changed his mind and took her to a farm-hut where there was no one.

He also warned her that there were land mines in the surrounding area, and if she tried to run, she would be blasted by a mine. The woman was too frightened and did not have any idea how to flee. In the hut, he tried to rape the woman again. But the woman pretended she had stomachache and appealed to him to not rape her again.

The hut was close to the soldiers' outpost for the security of the bridge and the Sergeant said he would go there to inform his friends. He warned her again not to run away and if she ran he would be killed by the land mines in the area. Then he left. The woman

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thought that if a group of soldiers came and raped her, she would similarly be killed so she decided to run. Although she was afraid the landmines, she was also worried about her small baby and hurried back to her farm-hut. She arrived back at her hut at about mid night.

Rape cases are a constant nightmare for all women in rural areas. After rape, some of them try to keep themselves hidden and avoid meeting people of the community. They withdraw themselves from the community and make them less confidence to communicate with other people. More seriously, if the troops of the Burmese Army come very often to their villages, these victimized women always have to hide and some women totally moved completely to another village or town because of their fear.

VI. Violations of Child Rights

Similarly to the experience of women in many rural areas of Burma, the SLORC/SPDC authorities and the Burmese Army have constantly violated child rights even though Burma has ratified CRC.

Because of the regime's mismanagement of the economy and administration, many children in the country are suffering from poverty and lack of opportunities for education. Over 50% of children left schools in the middle levels (from 5th Standard to 8th Standard) so that they could help their parents. In most cities and towns, after the children left school, they have to help their parents as vendors or as day-labourers.

The age of students who leave schools are normally dependent on the economic situation of their families. If their families face bad economic conditions, the parents encourage their children to leave school to help them in domestic work and other jobs outside their homes. As an example, there are many children under 18 years old struggling with difficulty to get an income by selling water and food in train stations in various parts of Burma.

The authorities have not conducted a survey about the numbers or percentages of these children who leave school at an early age with the objective of improving their life.

Despite the regime's apparent protection of child rights, the authorities and the Burmese Army still violate the rights of children especially with the conscription of child labour in projects implemented by the regime and the use of child soldiers in the extension of the Burmese Army.

VI. A. The conscription of child labour

In the southern part of Burma, the SLORC regime, has used many thousands of children in the construction of the Ye-Tavoy railway, which is about 110 mile long and connects the Mon and Tenasserim Divisions. During the construction of this railway, both authorities and the army took responsibility for building this railway with the help of many thousands of children from Ye Township in Mon State, Yebyu and Tavoy Townships of Tenasserim Division.

When the authorities ordered the village headmen and town quarter leaders to a set number of civilian labourers from their communities, they did not instruct them not to conscript children under 18 years old to go and work in these sites. And, the order of the authorities or commanders were normally very strict and always stated to go and work without fail.

The community leaders or headmen who have to manage the sending of the set number of civilians urgently had no time to exclude children from the group of unpaid labourers. When many villagers arrived at the worksite, the regime authorities and army commanders ordered all these villagers without selecting out women and children from the work group.

According to the experience of the village headmen who were managing the sending of villagers to contribute labour on the Ye-Tavoy railway construction, there were many children working on the hard construction hard work. Normally, during the paddy cultivation in June and July and the harvest season in November and December, many of the men were too busy and they did not have time to go and work on the site. Sometimes, the village headmen received orders from the authorities or army commanders within a few days and most families did not have enough time to ask their fathers or husbands to return and work on the construction.

- In 1997, when the SLORC's railway authorities and LIB No. 408 conscripted forced labour to con-

struct the Ye-Tavoy railway, they asked about 100 villagers from Pauk-pin-gwin village, Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division on a daily basis. As the use of forced labour continued for some years, many villagers from that village had fled to avoid the forced labour. Hence, the village, which had originally about 350 households, had about 200 households remaining in 1997. So, about 100 villagers from every household had to work in construction about 15 days total every month and most villagers had little time to work on their farms. Although the adults in the village tried to go to work all the time, it was impossible because the villagers relied on their farms and betel-nut plantations. In December, while many men and some women were busy on their farms for harvest, the authorities still forced them to contribute labour. In that month, according to a village section leader, about 50 children under 18 were among the 100 villagers conscripted by the authorities and soldiers who went to the construction site and contributed their labour in the construction of a railway embankment. He added that they had to build about 20 feet in height embankment when it passed the valley area. Boys and girls, dug earth outside the embankment route, carried it and climbed to the top of the embankment many times up and down. They had very limited time to rest during the day as the authorities and army allowed only had an hour to take lunch at mid day. These children have to work for 15 days like the men from our villages.

Understandably, climbing up and down a 20 foot- high embankment

for 15 days was too hard for children of 14-15 years old or for younger children. On the work sites, as the soldiers guarded the villagers all the time, the villagers could not help each other because they were forced to complete their work duties. As the work-duties were shared by a number of families, the children also had the same work duties as the other men. However, most village headmen managed to let the adults help the children after they had completed their work duties.

Disease may result from the hard work because of the hardship and appalling conditions on the work sites. On most sites, during the construction and enlargement of the Ye - Tavoy road, the villagers were overcrowded in one designated place and they had to stay for many longer days in there. During their temporary stay on work sites, they could not get enough water and faced sanitation problems. When there were diseases such as diarrhoea or malaria, the women and children were most vulnerable because of their physical weakness.

- In December 1998, when many hundreds of villagers along the Ye-Tavoy road were forced to enlarge the road by 3 foot on each side, about 100 villagers from Paukpmgwin village were forced to work on the construction for many days. While the villagers were working there was one boy, Mehm Par Lay (*17 years old*) who was becoming seriously ill. On the construction site of Malawetaung, the weather conditions were too bad and too hot in the day time and windy and cool at night time. And the villagers did not get enough water. When the road collapsed after the rainy season and the authorities urgently needed to use that road they forced the villagers to even work at night for some hours. After such hard work and cold nights, the villagers could not sleep well. So that the boy got more seriously ill. Although he was ill, the soldiers did not care and used him as a labourer until he

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completed his piece of work. When he arrived home he got a seriously high fever and as his parents did not have enough money for treatment at hospital they treated him with herbal medicine at home. But never the less he died.

Although the International Labour Organization (ILO) has taken against Burma for its authorities and army's requisition of forced labour, the local Burmese Army still uses the villagers to contribute their labour in development projects and military deployments.

- In Ye Township of Mon State, when the Burmese Army deployed a new military command called Military Operation Management Control No. 19 (*MOMC No. 19*) and deployed 9 military battalions, they have used many women and children as labourers. According to a villager from Kyone-paw village, about 17 villages in Tu-myaung village tract including his village were constantly forced by LIB No. 586, LIB No. 591 and LIB No. 583 to contribute their labour for the new military deployment. He also said, "our village has 70 households. In July and August 2001, our villagers had to work five days (*for LIB No. 586*). Other villagers had to work other days. During these five days, one person from one house had to go and work and so, in totally 70 villagers had to go and work in the battalion headquarters. As many of the men had to do their own works for the family income, there were 20 children and 30 women among the 70 villagers who went to work. We had to work from 7:00 a.m. to 11 a.m. every day. We did not receive any payment for our work and we were not fed with food or water for the work. Other villages also had to work like us for 5 days on a rotation basis that

included all the villages in the surrounding area. The main work we had to do was building the road in the battalion compound, clearing bushes, digging trenches and bunkers, and building the barracks and roofing them.

Besides the conscription of forced labour in government infrastructure projects, the army battalions always have children in their self-reliance projects such as paddy cultivation, vegetable growing, brick making and other projects that directly support them with some funds for their own battalions.

Additionally, whenever the Burmese Army launches military offensives against the ethnic armed forces the military battalions arrest some boys to be porters to carry ammunition and food supplies. The treatment of these porters is similar to that of other adult porters and the soldiers do not feed them adequately or provide enough time for resting. These boys carry heavy weights on their backs and walk for many hours together with the other porters. During the porter service many porters try to escape when they have the opportunity, but most boys cannot flee because they know little about the geographical area or cannot decide like adults.

- In February, 2000, when LIB No.408 operated a regular military patrol in the southern part of Yebyu Township area, the battalion commander instructed every village to provide them a set number of villagers, from 3 to 7 persons depending on the households in the village and must take those porters for 7 days. In the second week of the month, when the military column arrived at Sin-swe village, they requested the village headmen to provide them with seven porters. The village headman selected 7 villagers to be porters including a boy, Mehm Rot (*14 years old*) and took them for 7 days as planned. After three days of carrying ammunition and food sup-

plies, the porters were too tired because they were not fed with adequate food and were forced to walk about 14 hours per day. Three adult porters managed to flee. But the boy could not flee and was taken for 7 full days. After he was released he sustained some injuries to his back and neck because of the heavy load.

- From May 28 to June 6, 2001, when two military battalions of the Burmese Army, IB No. 61 and LIB No. 299 changed their temporary base in Three Pagoda's Pass, a southern border town with Thailand, the soldiers used about 40 villagers as porters who were provided by village headmen. Among these porters, about 10 of them are young boys who were believed to be under 18 years old. According to an eyewitness, he said, "when they arrived near our village, I saw both soldiers and porters. A long with 60 troops, there were about 40 porters and totally about 100 men I think. The porters were walking with the soldiers and I found about 10 of them too young and they were just boys. I think they were about 14-16 years old. They also carried very heavy loads. Some soldiers also put their army bags and boots in the back packs of those boys."

When the Burmese Army and the regime authorities use children to contribute to the labour on development projects or in porter service, these children never receive any payment from the authorities or soldiers. Besides this, they also have to bring their own food and tools to the work places at their own expense. When they get sick at the work place and are treated in a hospital or clinic or they buy some medicine they have to pay with their own money.

There is one difference between rural and urban areas. In rural areas

which are well known as "black area", the authorities and army used forced labour without any worry. But in urban areas, which foreigners have access to or where the ILO could easily arrive to monitor, the regime authorities have not dared to conscript forced labour as they like.

Hence, in towns or cities, when the regime authorities are implementing development projects or the army battalions are involved in self-help programs, the authorities or army commanders will pay for the hire of labourers with small amounts of money. However, when they hire labourers to do their work, such as road construction, bridge construction and factory workers in the army's production activities, they also hire child labourers to do this work. But they pay low wages to these children.

- Many roads in Moulmein city, the capital of Mon State, which were built during the British era have been destroyed and almost ruined. Since 1999, the SPDC have adopted a policy of self-help road construction in the city. Because of this policy, the regime authorities in the city who wanted to avoid the use of forced labour due to the ILO's complaint instead collected money from civilians. The authorities collected 15,000 Kyat from every household to build the Tha-main-bran road, which is in the Myaing-tha-yar section. Then when the authorities hired labourers to build this road, they hired many children under 18 years old. According to an eyewitness, she said, "that children, under 16 years of age are being used as labourers. She named two 12 year-old boy: Khin Lin, whose father rides a tricycle taxi, Naing Win, who attended 4 standard as hired by the authorities. The Children are earning about 150 kyats per day. Early in the morning the children start work on the con-

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struction site until midday. After one hour's rest, they work until sunset every day. These children are not of working age, but they are working to keep their families alive" she added.

Children under the age of ten are working at the brick factory in Moulmein city, the capital of Mon State, a local source said. Many children under age 16, both male and female are working at the brick factory. A local source confirmed that LIB No 525 and LIB No. 545 of the Burmese army operates this factory with the joint cooperation of a private firm. Children under ten earn only 150 Kyat per day. Children above the age of ten earn 200 Kyat and women earn 300 Kyat per day, while men earn 400 Kyat per day at the same factory. Workers must finish their duty of removing 3000 bricks from the ground to the stock place to earn this amount of money, a local source confirmed. The factory is located between the center of Moulmein and the Capital Electricity Station. The station is near the highway to Pa-an, the capital of Karen State.

VI. B. The Use of Child Soldiers in the Extension of the Burmese Army

In 1988, after the Burmese Army (Tatmadaw) led by Senior General Saw Maung seized political power from the pro-democracy demonstrators, it gave it self the new name of "State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC)". The SLORC praised itself as being the military regime which saved the country and maintained law and order from the chaotic conditions created by the pro-democracy demonstra-

tors.

After seizing State power by killing thousands of civilians on the streets of many cities, the Burmese Army intensified its military offensives against the ethnic and democratic armed opposition along the borders in northern, eastern and southern parts of Burma.

With the main objective of winning the war against over a dozen rebel armed forces, the Burmese Army extended the number of armed force from 180, 000 troops to 500,000 troops in 1988. It adopted a long-term plan so that the Burmese Army and its battalions would recruit more soldiers in many different areas in the whole of the country.

VI. B. 1. Recruitment:

Recruitment base and recruitment of child soldiers

Recruitment of new soldiers for the Burmese Army has occurred in many ways in recent years. With the constant demands of recruitment, the Burmese Army has set up many Soldiers Recruitment Bases in many parts of Burma and gives full authority to recruit new soldiers.

These bases use few criteria but recruit as many new soldiers as they can without setting the specific rules of age range of new soldiers. The important task of these recruitment bases is to recruit as many new soldiers as they can because the SLORC/SPDC military offices or military commands have constantly requested a set number of new soldiers to attend the basic military training schools. The schools mainly provide the required set number of soldiers to send to new extended military battalions or military commands.

In recruiting these new soldiers, the recruitment bases recruit thousands of children under 18 years old to be soldiers. In Burma, due to economic mismanagement by the regime, many children who left school or who have had no schooling at a young age can not seek work in their

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native places so they join the Burmese Army voluntarily at these military recruitment bases. The officers responsible from the recruitment base accept all new recruits even though they are only children in age to join the army.

Some children who do not like to stay under the control or care of their parents also join the Burmese Army voluntarily as they think they could have more independent lives or because of participation to look for adventure in their lives.

However, the recruitment base cannot provide the set number of soldiers to the military training schools and then, to new military battalions, with the number of new recruits who join voluntarily alone. As the Burmese Army tries to increase the new battalions or military commands with large numbers of soldiers, it always needs more soldiers urgently in large numbers.

The concerned recruitment bases also appoint 'soldier customers' (*from the direct translation of the Burmese language, Sit-thar Pwe-sar*) to recruit new soldiers on behalf of the recruitment officers. The officers give bribes to these soldier customers and give them some authority to recruit soldiers in any way they can.

Normally, the cities and towns or in Rangoon, are good areas for soldier customers to recruit new soldiers. They organize some orphans and street boys to join the army. If these boys refuse to join, they call police or soldiers to arrest these children and send them to the recruitment base.

Additionally, these soldier customers have always found boys from rural areas who come to the cities or towns or Rangoon to join the army without intending or desiring to. Some boys leave their native villages and try to go to the towns or cities to seek jobs to get some income to help their parents or for their own expenses. The customers always notice such boys and arrest them with some excuse, for example if these boys have no ID cards, and take them to the recruitment bases.

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These boy recruits never want to stay in the army to fight and always try to run away during military training school or after they are sent to the military battalions or while they are in the battlefields.

Note: See the interview with a young soldier on page (68), and how he was recruited by a soldier customer when he was a boy of under 18.

Recruitment via local military battalion

The Burmese Army never relies solely on its own recruitment bases to supply the required number of new recruits, and young or child soldiers. The military commands also instruct their military battalions to recruit new soldiers while they are taking a base in small towns or in rural villages. The commander and second-commander of each battalion have to recruit new soldiers for their own battalions and send these new recruits to basic military training schools.

These commander or second-commander of every military battalion always try to recruit new soldiers for their own promotion. While the military office in Rangoon or in the military commands concerned consider the rank for promotion of army officers, they always include a consideration about the ability of each commander as to how many new soldiers he can recruit for the military training schools. If a commander has no ability to recruit new soldiers, he can not achieve promotion and high ranks. Some battalion commanders are also dismissed if they cannot organize getting new recruits.

Because of this consideration, the commanders of all military battalions try to recruit more and more new soldiers for their own promotion. When they launch military patrols or military operations, the soldiers arrest some boys in rural villages and take them as soldiers.

- On other occasions, when the commanders have no ability to recruit new soldiers, they also order the village headmen to provide them with the required number of soldiers for their military battalions. On

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behalf of the military commanders, the village headmen have to take responsibility to recruit their own villagers and to send them to the concerned military battalions. In this case, the headmen also send many boys to the local battalions as new soldiers to attend the basic military training school.

- On October 28, 2001, the main military command in Ye Township of Mon State, Military Operation Management Command No. 19 called a meeting with all village headmen in Ye township for 3 days and ordered all village headmen to provide a list of men between 15 and 30 years old and demanded that these men must join the army.

The Burmese Army's MOMC No. 19 deployed in the eastern and northern part of Ye township with its 9 military battalions demanded about 2000 new soldiers for all battalions because they need to have full number of troops. Although these battalions had already deployed and constructed their military bases, MOMC No. 19 and its supervising command, Southeast Command, could not provide the full numbers of troops to battalions and so they ordered the village headmen to provide the set number of villagers to be soldiers.

As instructed, the commanders were ordered to provide the name list of young boys under 18 years old: they planned to recruit many child soldiers from the villages in Ye township area.

While the Burmese Army is increasing the number of its troops, it also recruits the local villagers and town residents as militiamen. Through these village or town section militiamen, the commanders recruit the villagers to be new soldiers.

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As an instance;

- On January 18, 2001, with the order of IB No. 31, the militia force from War-kha-ru village, Thanbyuzayat Township of Mon State, provided a list of male villagers between 9 and 30 years old to the battalion. The village has only about 69 people as many young people migrated to Thailand to seek work. The Village militia force and IB No. 31 forced these 69 villagers to attend the basic military training school near Thanbyuzayat town so that they could be recruited to be soldiers.

The commander of the militia force said that after the training, they could return to their homes. But when the battalion required them they must join army. However, most villager trainees worry that the commanders could break their promise and recruit them as soldiers soon after the training course.

The urgent need to increase the number of troops for the Burmese Army forces many thousands of children or boys in all of Burma to join the army whether they wish to or not. According to many defectors, they always say that although the young child soldiers in the military battalions are disappointed at being soldiers, they have no opportunity to escape from the army, because they would be severely punished or could be killed if they are in the battlefields.

VI. C. The plight of child soldiers in the army

Physically, child soldiers are weak if compared with able-bodied adult soldiers. According witnesses and some defectors, nearly 30-40% of troops in every military battalion are child soldiers who are under 18

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years old. In most military training schools, as the recruitment bases recruit mostly children, over 50% of the new recruits are boys under 18.

While they are provided with military training in the basic arms and military training schools, trainers treated cruelly them as they need them to have hard experiences before they are sent to the battlefields.

According to a 15 year old child soldier from the No. 4 Central Military School in Wae-ka-lee village, Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State, he explained:

- At training, the trainers treated us (*all child soldiers*) very cruelly and the training lasted about 6 months. Slapping the young soldiers and kicking them with army boots are the common daily abuses in the military school. And, the trainers did not allow us to stay clean and take a shower for several days as he said there would be no water in a battlefields and no time to take a bath. They (*the trainers and administrators*) did not feed us with adequate food, especially with rice as they said we could not get enough food to eat on the frontline. Yellow bean is only main food in training.

After the basic military training, the soldiers are sent to regular or light infantry battalions, which mainly operate in launch military offensives in the frontier areas. These child soldiers are sent to dangerous battlefields and many of them die because of serious diseases or being killed in the fighting.

In the battlefields, the soldiers like the porters are not fed with enough food and do not have enough time for resting. Sometimes, they have to walk many hours like other able-bodied men.

Because of the inadequate provision of food supplies to soldiers, these

young boy soldiers are also involved in looting the civilians' belongings and property. They loot vegetables, livestock and other property for sale in the rural villages.

After facing hardship, most soldiers try to flee from the battlefields when they arrive in areas close to the border areas. When they attempt to flee, sometimes, they are re-arrested and killed by their own commanders. Some child soldiers can flee across the border and seek work for many years and then return to their homes if they have the opportunity.

VI. D. The plight of young soldiers in the Burmese Army

VI. D. 1. Background of defectors during October and November 2001

In September 2001, a Mon splinter group split from the NMSP (New Mon State Party) and cooperated with the KNLA (Karen National Liberation Army) to fight against the Burmese Army and the SPDC. This splinter group moved to Three Pagoda's Pass area in early November and tried to collect fund from the civilians in that area. After the Burmese Army found out there were activities of the NMSP splinter group, it sent many military battalions including IB No. 62, IB No. 106, LIB No. 538, LIB No. 583 and LIB No. 591, to launch military offensives against the Mon splinter group and the KNLA troops.

In most situations, when the Burmese Army's military columns of various battalions arrive close to the border area, normally, the young soldiers or child soldiers who face hardship and terrible conditions in their own military battalions always try to escape. They surrender to rebel armies or flee into neighbouring countries.

Whenever, the Burmese Army launches military offensives against KNU bases and its military faction, the KNLA, along the Thailand-Burma border, the soldiers of the Burmese Army always try to escape.

Similarly, in October and November, 2001, when the Burmese Army

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launched military offensives against the Mon splinter group and the KNLA in Three Pagoda's Pass area (*See the location in map*), some of army members have fled into Thailand or defected to the KNLA.

An an instance;

■ On October 21, 2001, about 5 soldiers from military battalion, LIB No. 538, which was based temporarily in Three Pagoda's Pass town, escaped from their base and surrendered to KNLA troops. The group of defectors was led by Sergeant Than Soe and the reason they fled from the battalion was that they could not longer tolerate the hard conditions of operating military offensives, unfair duties in the battalion and the corruption of battalion commanders, according the source from Three Pagoda's Pass township authorities. They took their guns, grenades and ammunition along with them.

After the defectors' fled, a Burmese Army military column of LIB No. 538 followed these escapees and tried to get their weapons and ammunition. A fight broke out and LIB No. 538 got back two guns.

The headquarters of LIB No. 538 is in Arakan State, in the western part of Burma and they had come from a far place and thus, the soldiers fled when they had the opportunity.

Later, before the end of November, to reinforce troops in Three Pagoda's Pass area to operate military offensives, another military battalion, IB No. 106, which is based in Ye township, Mon State, came to the border area.

From that battalion, another two soldiers escaped after they could not longer tolerate hardships, starvation and mistreatment in their battalion. On November 30, 2001, *The Mon Forum's* Human Rights reporter was able to conduct an interview with one of them and the excerpt is as below:

VI. D. 2. Interview with a young soldier

Name: Maung Pho Aung
Age/ Sex: 19 years/ Male
Nationalities/ Religion: Burman/ Buddhist
Education: 8 Standard
Native place: Kyauk-chat village, Mate-hti-lar Township, Mandalay Division

When did you arrive here (to a Mon village in the border area) and how did you escape from your battalion?

I just arrived yesterday. I fled from my military battalion, IB No. 106, about two days ago. When we arrived at the Mon village, Tadein (about 15 kilometers from Three Pagoda's Pass town, on the border with Thailand), I decided to flee from the battalion. Our battalion was in Tadein area to launch a military fighting against Mon and Karen soldiers for; nearly one week before I left. My friend and I fled from the battalion and hid for two days in a highland paddy farm. Then, we met a Karen farmer and he brought us to this village. He said this village was safe.

Who were your commanders?

Our commander of military operation was Lt. Col. Thant Zin and the column commanders were Maj. Aung Thu and Maj. Myint Naing.

How many days has it taken you to arrive at the Tadein area from your battalion? And, what difficulties did you face?

We had to walk along jungle paths for more than 20 days. We did not directly come to this area. We went into Ye township for some days and entered many Karen and Mon villages to search for rebel soldiers. As we had not enough food, the commanders told us to catch chicken, pigs, ducks and gathered foods, especially rice, from villages. As we have about 150 soldiers we need a lot of food. But we could not carry much food.

So we also faced food-shortage problems. The commanders said to eat only

a small amount of rice each meal, or we would starve. For more than one week, we ate boiled rice. Because of the shortage of food, many soldiers and porters fell sick and had no strength to carry supplies and ammunition.

How many porters did the battalion take the during military offensives and what did they have to do for the soldiers?

The battalions took about 20 villagers from Mon villages in the northern part of Ye Township and they had to carry food supplies and ammunition along with the soldiers. It was quite a heavy load. Every porter had to carry 30 kilograms in weight of rice or motor shells on his back. When we climbed the mountains some porters could not walk up. They were beaten. Nearly all of them were inhumanely beaten and shouted at by the commanders. Although we sympathized, but we could not help each other. Some porters got sick and the commanders said to leave them behind. Two porters had high fevers when we marched to here and they were left behind. I don't know what happened to them.

Why did you escape from the battalion?

We were treated like the porters by the commanders. When we could not walk fast, we were also beaten or kicked by the commanders behind us. Normally, the commanders always shouted at us. We did not have enough food and felt very very tired going along with the operation. We starved for many days and we had very little food to eat. I had thought for a long time about how to flee. When we arrived at Tadein village, some porters and two of us discussed escaping quietly from the battalion. Then when we had a chance two of us (soldiers) and three porters fled while we were gathering forest vegetables. As we were concerned that we could be re-arrested if we fled in a group, we separated from each other.

When did you enter the army service and why did you decide to be a soldier?

I did not decide to be a soldier. I was taken by force. About one year ago (when he was about 18 years old), after I left school and had no work in

my native place, I decided to go to Rangoon to meet my brother who worked there. But unluckily, I was arrested by some "soldier customers" when I arrived at Da-nyin-gone Township (Rangoon Division) and they brought me to No. 1 soldier recruitment battalion.

I don't understand what you said, 'soldier customers'? Can you explain me?

Yes, actually, the commanders of No. 1 soldier recruitment battalion instructed the civilians near their base that if they met any strangers in the township, they could arrest them and bring them especially young boys like me who came from rural areas. These such people are called "soldier customers" for the recruitment battalion by the civilians in Rangoon. One soldier customer said he was a police man and confiscated my ID card. Then he brought me to the battalion base. When I arrived there, I knew he was not the police. The commanders paid that man 10,000 Kyat and one sack of rice (about 65 kilograms) as a reward. Then I knew I was to be recruited as a new soldier. There were many young boys like me recruited through soldier customers.

Did they send you to military school? Can you tell me your other experience?

Yes, I stayed in Rangoon only about one week. I was brought to Moulmein the capital of Mon State, to No. 9 basic military training school. There were about 250 new soldiers in the school and the trainers trained us for four months. They trained us both day and night. There were many hardships. We were not allowed to eat sufficient food and allowed to take a shower only once a week. After four months of training, they took us and other young soldiers to IB No. 106.

You said young soldiers. How old they are and how many of them in the battalion?

There were many soldiers younger than me. Some of them were only 12 or 13 years old. I thought over 50 soldiers in our battalion were quite young. Most soldiers were disappointed like me. They would like to resign, but

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the contract is for 10 years at least. So if they have a chance they will flee like me.

Do you want to go back to your home?

I wish to go back, but I worry I will be arrested again.

VII. Population displacement and the suffering of women and children

VII. A. Rebellion and forced displacement

During the course of the civil war for five decades, the local ethnic communities, who are far from the regime controlled areas have been constantly subjected to the Burmese Army's main strategy the "four cuts campaign", when it tries to eradicate the roots of ethnic insurgency.

When the Burmese Army seized power in 1988 and renamed themselves as the SLORC, they have launched more intensified military offensives compared with the BSPP era. These army offensives and the troops of the Burmese Army have still implemented the "four cuts campaign" to cut off the civilians' support to rebel troops such as food supplies, information, recruitment and others things.

Under these circumstance, the civilians in rural areas, where the rebel troops are launching military activities are always accused of being rebel-supporters and with this accusation. The related violations such as forced relocation, forced dislocation and forced resettlement of these rural civilians have been constantly committed by the regime soldiers and the Burmese Army because of this accusation.

In 1995, although the NMSP and its army, the MNLA agreed to a ceasefire with the regime, the SLORC/SPDC, however the rebellion in Mon areas has not ceased totally. More dissatisfaction among the local people occurred when the SLORC and its local army battalions under the command of the MOMC No. 8 in Tenasserim Division and some military battalions in Mon State used massive conscription of forced labour on the Ye-Tavoy railway and the Ye-Tavoy road construction from 1994-1998. While thousands of civilians were unceasingly used in this construction including retired Mon soldiers, firstly

they tried to fight against the regime and the army battalions in the area, and then they extended their activities.

In 1997, some MNLA retired commanders formed an un-named armed force and started their rebellion against the Burmese Army. Although this new Mon armed rebel group did not have the specific political aims, they arrange more attacks against the regime troops in southern part of Ye Township area and the northern part of Yebyu Township area or the Yadana gas pipeline.

When this Mon rebellion occurred, the regime was very concerned for their gas pipeline. The southern Coastal Region Military Command (CRMS) has prevented the growth of these rebellion activities and launched more offensives against them. The CRMS has reinforced many battalions in these areas including some battalions from Arakan State in late 2001 to fight these rebel troops.

Additionally, in late 2001, the MNLA troops led by Col. Pan Nyunt splintered from the main body of the Mon army and founded "Monland Restoration Army (MRA)" and declared a resumption of fighting against the SPDC and the Burmese Army. Because of this splinter group, the Burmese Army reinforced its military battalions in Mon State for further offensives.

These military activities have great impact on the Mon and other ethnic civilians in Ye, Yebyu, Kya-inn-seikyi and other townships in the southern part of Burma. Whenever, there is a violation of forced relocation or forced dislocation committed by the Burmese Army, the majority of victims are women and children.

VII. B. Forced relocation and dislocation in the Tenasserim Division

After the NMSP agreed to the ceasefire with the SLORC/SPDC, many parts of the Mon State, in which MNLA troops launched military

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activities became peaceful and the civilians faced less suffering and mis-treatment by the Burmese Army related to the suspicion of being rebel-supporters. However, in many parts of Tenasserim Division (see the map; Appendix - 4; page), the situation has not changed much.

As many armed forces, such as the KNLA's 4th Brigade, the Mon splinter groups and the army of Mergui-Dawai United Front (MDUF) have been active in many parts of this Division, the Burmese Army have used over 25 military battalions to launch offensives against rebels and coordinated with its naval forces in the sea to cut their communication. Meanwhile, the civilians in the whole area have constantly and inhumanely suffered from the accusations of being rebel-supporters.

In the Tenasserim Division, the splinter groups of the Mon army launched military activities mainly in Yebyu and Bokeyyin Townships, while the KNLA troops launched military activities in various parts of the Division, while the MDUF launched military activities in some parts of Tavoy and Mergui districts. Thus, the civilians, the majority of Tavoyan people, Karen and Mon people were forced to relocate from their villages, and a lot of internally displaced people (IDPs) moved in to many parts of the jungle areas. Some displaced villagers also crossed the border with Thailand and found a safe haven in Thailand's refugee camps.

Before the population displacement occurred in one area, there was some cruel and inhumane treatment against the civilians already committed by the Burmese Army's battalions. Killing, torture, rape and other violations forced the villagers to decide not to stay in their homes and to leave to other areas. Or, sometimes, the soldiers of the Burmese Army ordered the villagers to leave their villages and move to other places designated by the army.

During the displacements, women and children are the vulnerable persons who may starve and die. Over 70% of the total displaced people are women and children, they face much suffering from food-shortage problems and inadequate shelter.

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In the dry season of 1999 from February to June, the Burmese Army's LIB No. 432, LIB No. 355 and LIB No. 589 launched unceasing military offensives against the KNU's 4th Brigade, which had established bases in the eastern part of the border areas. These areas are in Boke-pyin Township. Following the offensives, some local villagers were also accused of being rebel-supporters and were arbitrarily executed. LIB No. 432 also relocated the villagers from Pawa village, which was suspected being a KNLA base and ordered them to stay in a village, which was under their control. In the third week of March, about 100 troops of LIB No. 432 went into this village and killed about 10 villagers by shooting them and ordered the villagers to move out from the village immediately. The soldiers also looted the villagers' belongings and burnt down many houses including a Buddhist monastery and a school in the village.

Similarly to Pawa village, other villagers from Kamawpyin village were also ordered by soldiers to move from their villages immediately and to stay in a Burmese Army designated village. In the orders, if anyone remained in the village, that man would be considered as a Karen soldier and killed.

However, many villagers refused to stay in the Burmese Army's designated villages because of the conditions of these resettlement sites and many of them moved to the eastern border area and were displaced for some months until the rainy season started.

- A 33 years old woman from Pawa village said, "most villagers including our families decided not to stay at the Burmese Army's designated place near Taninthayi (*Tenasserim*) town and tried to flee from them. If we are staying in their controlled places, we would be used as labourers for their porter service and as labourers to build the Taninthayi - Manawzone and Taninthayi - Moetaung motor roads. So, I decided to flee Thailand. But it was not easy. Before the Burmese Army arrived at our

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village, my husband also fled and so, I waited for him in one village to meet him. But he could not come back and so three of my children and I had to find a way to escape from the abuses. We were displaced for three months in forests. When we fled from the village, we could carry only a small amount of food along with us and so we ate it in only one month. I tried to borrow food from other villagers. But they also had little food and I could not get any from them. Then I went into a small Karen village and received a small amount of food from them. Over one month, me and my children had to eat forest products, such as banana trees and fruits, some leaves. Sometimes, we also found cassava in old plantations and ate it. Once, when we ate cassava, my youngest got seriously sick and he died because we had no hospital treatment. I was left with only 2 children, one son and one daughter during this displacement. When the rain started (*in June*) I decided to return as I heard unconfirmed news that my husband had already arrived in the village. When I arrived at the village, I met some villagers there who were afraid of Burmese soldiers if they went into the village. Unluckily, my husband did not arrive at the village and I heard other news that he was arrested by soldiers. So I prayed for many days for his survival. After two months he arrived back to the village. He had got malaria and was seriously ill. All of his skin had become yellow and faint. Our village's one and only traditional herbal doctor treated him for many days. He recovered after two months.

In some cases, the soldiers also confiscate all food belonging to the

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villagers in one village and gather it in their temporary military outposts. Then, they let the villagers depend on them for their daily food. They give a small amount of food for the villagers on a daily basis and do not allow all the villagers to move outside of their villages or to go to their fields to find food. Sometimes, the regime soldiers also plant land mines outside their villages and prevent the villagers from going outside of their villages. In this situation, women and children still face food-shortage problems even when they are in the village.

From 1997 until 2001, the Mon villagers in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division have constantly been displaced not only from the abuse of forced relocation, but also because of other violations such as killing, torture and other mis-treatment.

In 2000, following the activities of a Mon armed group in many parts of Yebyu township area, the Mon villagers in these areas were suspected of being rebel-supporters and one Mon village, *Paukpingwin*, was relocated by the SPDC army, LIB No. 273 and IB No. 25.

- On February 20, 2000, when the local headmen from Paukpingwin celebrated a "Mon National Day" ceremony, the commanders from the Mon splinter army attended the ceremony. But the Burmese Army troops in the area did not have time to stop them and they could not arrest the rebel commanders. After the ceremony, they were also angry with the village headmen from that village and from other villages. They were accused of being rebel-supporters, and the troops from LIB No. 273 and IB No. 25 suddenly came into the village, established a base there for over two months, and interrogated all the village headmen about how they involved in inviting the Mon rebel commanders to attend the ceremony. When the village leaders protested that they had not invited the Mon rebels, many of them were tortured inhumanely and cru-

elly. At that time, the battalions had not decided to punish all the villagers and just reported the situation to their military commands.

- Later, in May, LIB No. 273 troops led by Lt. Col. Htin Kyaw came into the village and ordered all villagers to move out from their village within one week, but did not instruct where they must resettle. He just stated that he did not want to see anyone in that village after one week. So, over 1000 villagers from the village, including 72% a women and children, had to move to whichever area they liked and some could not decide where to go and just moved into the jungles.
- According to a woman from the village, "when the Burmese commander ordered us to leave the village within one week, I didn't know where I should go and stay. I have no relatives in town or in another village. I have only a small space of land near our village. First I moved there first. But I felt that it was not safe and then I decided to move to a Mon village under the control of Mon party (NMSP), but it was too far. So, I remained near the village until the end of the one week period. Then the Burmese soldiers came back to our village again and tried to find any villagers still in the village. I was very afraid and when the troops left, our family (*she was a widow with two daughters*) moved into the jungle with a small amount of rice, fish-paste and salt. After 5 days of staying in the jungle in wet conditions because of the rain, my young daughter (*9 years old*) got sick. Then, we had also finished all our food and did not see anyone to ask for help. Then I decided to walk down a stream to

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get to a village or farm. I walked for one full day and found a farm hut but with no people and no food. Luckily, I got some bananas and vegetables grow on the farm. We ate only bananas and vegetables for another 5 days. My daughter had a high fever. Then, the farm owner arrived at his farm and I explained him about our troubled conditions. He was a good minded person and he brought us to a village under the Mon party. My daughter received medical treatment there.

Some population displacements are not directly related to forced relocation of villagers in rural areas. Whenever the troops of the Burmese Army go into the villages, they frightened the civilians by killing, torturing, raping them and other abuses. Additionally, the soldiers looted their belongings and food supplies. In the end, even though the soldiers did not order them to leave the villages, the villagers left anyway to escape these types of abuses when they lost their tolerance.

VII. C. Population displacement in Karen State

In the Karen State, the KNLA has launched many military activities against the regime and the Burmese Army. The situation in Kya-inn-seikyi township and Three Pagoda's Pass is also serious and Karen, Mon and Lao-Shan ethnic civilians in this area have greatly suffered from forced relocation and other abuses related to suspicion of forced labour.

Similarly to other population displacement, when there is a displacement, the majority of women and children have always suffered from food-shortage problems, terrible weather conditions and diseases in the forests, jungles or hidden places,

In the first week of April, 1999, the army battalions under the *South-east Command*, IB No. 977, IB No. 32, LIB No. 230 and LIB No. 284

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have launched military offensives against KNLA troops along the Three Pagoda's Pass - Thanbyuzayat road, and suspected that about 12 Karen and Mon villages on the road were the bases of the KNLA. Then the military battalions ordered those villages to relocate and settle into five designated villages, such as (1) Yetagon, (2) Anan-gwin, (3) Taung-zun, (4) Mae-za-lee and (5) Chaung-zon. These designated resettlement villages were under the control of the Burmese Army, the battalions forced other villagers to resettle under their control. However, the villagers who had to abandon their villages, land, livestock, fruit plantations were denied resettlement in these villages and so about 5,000 people were displaced. Most of them went into the forests and hid in the closest area to their villages until they found opportunities to return. A few of the villagers also fled to the Mon refugee resettlement camp or the Karen refugee camp near the Three Pagoda's Pass area.

During this population displacement, many thousands of women and children hid in the forests for several days without adequate food and safe shelter.

- According to a 39 years-old displaced woman from Khon-khan village, "the soldiers came to our village and gathered all the villagers. In meeting, the commander said our village was a KNLA base and ordered us to move out of the village within three days. When the village headman appealed to them not to move us from our village and promised that we did not accept Karen soldiers, he was ordered that we must leave the village anyhow. He added that the villagers must leave the village within three days. If anyone delayed and remained in the village after the deadline, he/she would be killed. On the next day, our family; me, my husband and four children decided to flee from the village. Then, my husband found a way to the jungle and we decided

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to stay in the jungle. About 5 families altogether moved into forest that was about 3 hours from our village. As we had to carry heavy loads including food supplies, we were very slow in walking. We stayed in the jungle for one week and when we had little food, my husband tried to go to the village to seek some rice. But when he arrived close to the village, he heard that the Burmese soldiers were in the village and so he could not enter. Then he came back without rice. And so we stayed deep in the jungle without eating rice for five days but my husband and one of my sons were getting sick. This time, I myself went back to the village to get some food. Luckily, there were no more Burmese soldiers in the village and so I went straight to my home. But when I climbed up into my house, I found that all of our rice had been looted by the soldiers and I did not have any rice anymore. Then, I tried to find some in another house but the rice had been similarly looted. I got about one tin of paddy from my uncle's house and put it in my bag and then left the village. When I arrived back to our hiding place, I found that my husband was getting better, but my son was quite seriously ill with a high fever. So, my husband went back to the village to find some leaves to feed him to relieve his fever. During these days, I and my daughter husked the paddy with stones to get the rice and ate only rice without other supplementary food. After two weeks hiding in the jungle, we heard the news that the Burmese Army were coming close to our place and then we had to move to another new place. In the new place, it took 7 days to get back to our village. We also faced food-shortages for one month until we could return

to our homes."

The villagers in Kya-inn-seikyí Township regularly suffered from population displacements in the dry season of every year. The period of displacement is totally dependent on the activities of the Burmese Army in the area nearby. The villagers who left their villages with the whole family could carry food along with them only for a one - two week period. After there remained only a little food they had to find more in dangerous and difficult situations. When many women and children suffer from malaria and mal-nutrition, they can not get only available medical care.

In late 1999, the Burmese Army battalion, LIB No. 120 led by Lt. Col. Maung Maung Oo went into the eastern part of this township area and committed various violations against the Karen villagers from Kyone-sein, Kyone-see, Ka-krat, Khaw-lee and Palor-tokee villages. They killed some of the men, raped some of the women and tortured, and looted the villagers' belonging.

Because of these inhumane treatments, many hundreds of villagers flee from their villages and try to escape from these types of abuses, relating to the suspicion of being rebel supporters. About 200 villagers, of which about 70% were women and children arrived at "Halockhani Mon refugee resettlement area", which is right on the border with Thailand.

VIII. Conclusion

From the human rights violations described above have occurred against women and children in most areas of southern part of Burma: Mon State, Karen State and Tenasserim Division. This evidence of violations occurred after the current military regime ratified the CEDAW in 1992 and the CRC in 1997 respectively. This clearly shows that the majority of women in conflict or rural areas, and children under 18 years old (according to the definition recognition of the CRC) have been deprived of fundamental human rights as declared in the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

The SLORC/SPDC have not respected the UDHR and even its ratified conventions, the CEDAW and the CRC. Many women and children in rural areas are still held in slavery in conscription of forced labour for development projects and in army deployment. Additionally, they are also treated as slaves during the military offensives as unpaid porters. Still, there is wide spread use of child labour in factories, development projects and farming, Continuing until the present time. In army recruitment, many children are still conscripted as child soldiers in the Burmese Army whose main duty is to launch offensives against the rebels in many parts of Burma. These child soldiers also have to encounter various troubles that endanger their lives in the battlefields.

Women and children who are not directly involved in armed rebellion are subjected to torture or to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment

by members of the Burmese Army as punishment for their relationship with rebel soldiers. With the suspicion of being rebel-supporters or sympathizers, many women are killed and tortured by soldiers in rural areas. "Rape" is also used as a tool by the Burmese Army for the repression of the ethnic rebellion, in their attempts to stop women from supporting the rebel armies or as punishment for their close relations with rebel soldiers.

Population displacement and the suffering of the Women and Children has gone hand in hand with the Civil War in Burma. Women and Children have been forced to face many different kinds of helpless situations and constantly found themselves homeless. Civil war creates internal displacement and a refugee flux in to neighbouring countries.

It is a prime question for the current military regime, the SPDC, which has ratified these two conventions: the CEDAW and the CRC, without respecting the fundamental rights of women and children outlined in the conventions. As a State party to these conventions, the SPDC fails not only by not implementing of these rights, but also it is violating many of the rights itself.

Meanwhile, these women and children do not have an independent forum or a legal proceeding body to seek justice for their rights. The SPDC, itself, has never enforced to the respect of the rights of women and children in conflict areas or in development projects to their soldiers and the authorities. Violators of women and child rights are never punished with the existing laws by the State courts.

Ratification of these conventions by the SPDC is just to save their face or to attempt to get recognition for their legitimacy to rule Burma. Violent treatment against the civilians by the State authorities and the army have taken place for so many years and so this has become common practice under the rule of military dictatorship.

Therefore, the international community must ensure the State of Burma (*Myanmar*) respects and implements the protection of the rights of the majority of women and children in rural and conflict areas. Under the

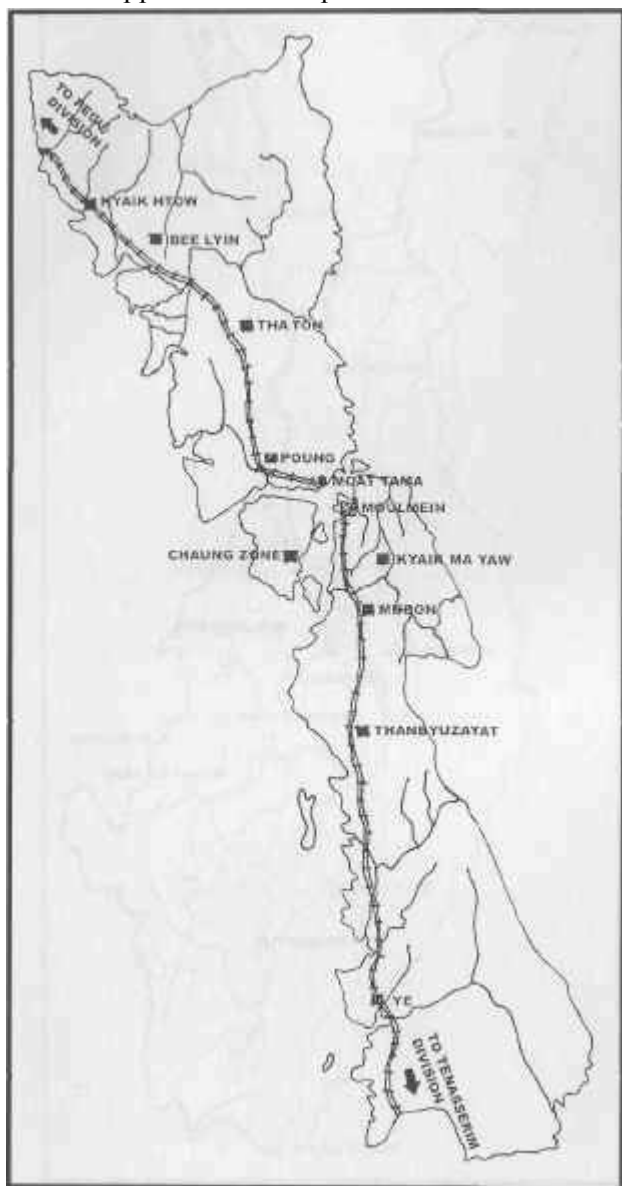
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rule of the military regime, women are not allowed to exercise their basic civil and political rights and are also denied social, economic and cultural rights. Condemnation alone is not enough, the international community, especially the Committees for the CEDAW and the CRC conventions, should adopt appropriate action for the practical protection of women and child rights in Burma.

Appendices
Appendix .1: Map of Burma



Appendix .2: Map of Mon State



Appendix .3: Map of Karen State



Appendix .4: Map of Tenasserim Division



Appendix .5: Photos

Forced labour

(1)



(2)



Forced labour

(3)



(4)



Displaced Persons

(1)



(2)



Displaced Persons

(3)



(4)



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Acronyms

CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CEDAW	Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CRMS	Coastal Region Military Command
HRP	Hongsawatoi Restoration Party
IB	Infantry Battalion (of Burmese Army)
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
KNLA	Karen National Liberation Army
KNU	Karen National Union
LIB	Light infantry battalion (of Burmese Army)
MNCWA	Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs
MOMC	Military Operation Management Comman (of Burmese Army)
MRA	Monland Restoration Army
MDUF	Mergui-Dawai United Front
NMSP	New Mon State Party
SLORC	State Law and Order Restoration Council
SPDC	State Peace and Development Council.
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UDHR	Univeersal Declaration of Human Rights