REPORT: SPDC’s Militarization and Impacts to Women in Mon Area

I. SPDC’s Military Deployment and Impacts

In 1995, the New Mon State Party (NMSP), the largest Mon armed resistance party, entered into a cease-fire agreement with the Burmese military regime with the aim of solving political problems through peaceful means. Burma’s State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) government, however, has not honored its ceasefire promises and refuses to hold political talks with the NMSP. Instead, the Burmese regime has increased the number of military battalions in Mon areas in order to fight against Mon rebel groups and also other ethnic armed groups in southern Burma. As a result of militarization in Mon areas, SPDC battalions have committed various kinds of human rights abuses including land confiscation, forced marriage, forced relocation, forced labor, rape, and murder.

Since 2000, the SPDC and the Southeast Command have deployed about 10 light infantry military battalions in Ye Township alone and about 5 Artillery Regiments in Thanbyuzayat and Ye Township with the avowed purpose of defending against foreign invasion. However, NMSP leaders believe that it is the military strategy of SPDC to surround NMSP strongholds and pressure the party to fully surrender its arms.

The military deployment is a burden on the local Mon people. First, when the battalions are deployed in the area, lands are confiscated...
Message From

Woman And Child Rights Project (Southern Part of Burma)

Woman and Child Right Project (WCRP) is a cooperative activity with Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) and it has a main activity in collecting the information related to the human rights violations of women and children in southern part of Burma (Myanmar). It also aims to get world community’s awareness for the protection of the rights of women and children.

The Burma’s military regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 to guarantee the rights to women in Burma. Similarly the regime also ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991 to guarantee the rights to children in Burma. However, the regime has failed in their implementation of the conventional rights and the human rights violations against women and children systematically.

WCRP is dedicated to inform the world community what happens to general women and children in Burma and plans to educate them to know about their rights as the following objectives.

1. To monitor and protect the woman and child rights, by collecting information about their real situation by referencing the CEDAW and CRC, and distribute information to the world community.
2. To strengthen women and children community, by providing on their rights accordingly to CEDAW and CRC ratified by regime and encourage them to participate in the struggle in the protection of their own rights.

and the people are forced to work as unpaid laborers for the battalions. The Burmese soldiers also use the local villagers as porters and human minesweepers. The local military battalions not only make trouble for men, they also make trouble for women.

In 2004 and 2005, when the Burmese Army troops launched a military offensive against a Mon splinter group that has been active in southern part of Ye Township, women were used as a weapon to win the war. The Burmese Army troops believed that the local villagers in the area including women are strong supporters of the splinter group, and as revenge against the rebels women were raped and many of them were sexually harassed.

Moreover, after the offensive, the local Burmese Army military battalion also used tactics of Burmanization to assimilate ethnic Mon women through marriage, sometimes forcing Mon women and girls in unwanted marriages. The Burmese Army used ‘marriage tactics,’ by encouraging soldiers to marry ethnic women and trying to get the women and their relatives to support the Burmese Army.

Based upon field reports from inside Mon areas, this report describes the situation after increased military deployment in 2000, especially in terms of sexual violence against Mon women and girls, and ‘manipulated marriages.’

II. Sexual Violence and Harassment

In 2005, the Woman and Child Rights Project (WCRP) published a report focused on sexual violations committed by soldiers in southern Burma. The report, called Catwalk To The Barracks, documented 37 cases of sexual violations against women and girls in Mon State, Karen State, Tenasserin Division, and Pegu Division. Due to the report and international campaigns condemning sexual violence against ethnic women by Burmese Army troops, sexual violence and harassment against Mon women and girls has decreased.

However, a few women and girls were still raped in 2006 and 2007. In 2008, a few women and girls under 18 years old suffered from rape and sexual violence committed by active and retired Burmese Army soldiers. As in previous cases, the victims face difficulties finding justice because local authorities are under the influence of the Burmese Army.

Case 1: 17-year-old girl raped in Yebyu Township

Burmese Army troops from Infantry Battalion (IB) No. 107 based in Yebyu Township of northern Tenesserim Division forced all residents of Ah-mae (Mae-taw in Burmese) village to abandon their homes and plantations on November 11th, 2008. On the same day, the soldiers also raped a 17-year-old girl and severely beat a young boy.

Captain Pan Zar and 80 troops from IB No. 107 entered the village on November 11th. After accusing the residents of supporting an armed Mon rebel group in the area, the troops ordered the villagers to relocate from the villages. Each household was also ordered to pay the soldiers 50,000 kyat, and the residents were prohibited from visiting farms and plantations in the area.
The villagers were given virtually no time to prepare for their departure. Local sources said they left the next day, bringing only what they could carry and leaving behind the majority of their belongings, as well the timber and other valuable construction materials in their homes.

The soldiers assaulted at least one villager as they ordered the villagers to relocate. “One young man from the village asked the captain, ‘if you do like this, where will we go to live?’” said an eyewitness from Ahmae. “The captain replied, ‘you can go and live anywhere, but not in this area.’ After that he grabbed the young man and hit him in the head with the butt of his rifle. Once the young man had fallen down, the captain hit the young man’s leg and it broke.”

According to another source, soldiers also raped a 17-year-old girl as she worked on a betel-nut plantation nearby. The resident, who spoke with the victim’s mother and then quoted her to HURFOM field reporters, said that she was crying the whole time she told the story. “My daughter is only seventeen years-old. She was raped by seven soldiers,” the source quoted the mother. “Those soldiers are not humans. They are like animals. They are the same evil, both the captain and his soldiers. My daughter nearly died, and now she has tried to kill herself many times.”

The 60 households now find themselves in extraordinarily difficult circumstances. “Now we are in a very bad situation because we could not take much food or household things. And we have not much money. We also have to find land to live on and all new materials for building a home. It is so expensive we cannot afford it,” said a former resident. “Now I am staying at my friend’s house, but I cannot stay there for a long time. I have to find a way to solve the problem – I want to migrate to Thailand to find a job, but I have no money even for transportation. My wife, my two sons and I have no idea where we will go.”

Case 2: 10-year-old girl raped by ex-soldier in Ye Township

A 10-year-old girl in Han-gan village, Ye Township, was raped by an ex-soldier in December 2008. The ex-soldier is under arrest after he escaped his initial detention and was re-captured at the railway station in nearby Ye Town.

The victim was staying at the perpetrator’s house along with approximately 50 other students attending evening tutoring sessions with his wife. On December 14th, the wife left to visit her parents in Moulmein, the capital of Mon State. The children, unsure of whether she would return in time for the lesson, came to the home anyway to study and then sleep.

According to an account published by the Independent Mon News Agency (IMNA), the ex-soldier picked the young girl up as she slept, carried her to his room, covered her mouth with his hand and raped her. The next day, he came to the victim’s home to tell her to attend the evening class again, though he kept his wife’s continued absence a secret.

The girl told no one of the incident at first, but her grandmother grew suspicious after the young girl acted strangely and appeared afraid of the perpetrator. “After I found out I immediately informed the Han Gan village Peace and Development Council and demanded they arrest and put him [the perpetrator] in lockup,” a WCRP source who spoke with the grandmother quoted her as saying. “However, he escaped from lockup but was again arrested and is in jail now.”

According to the WCRP source, the girl was taken to the hospital the next day, where doctors confirmed that she had been raped. “My girl was sent to the hospital for one day and the doctor told us that she will be ok soon,” the WCRP source quoted the grandmother, who added that she is receiving free treatment.

The girl and her 3-year-old brother live with their grandparents because their mother and father are away working in Thailand. “Her parents don’t know yet and the grandparents dare not to tell to them. They feel ashamed and took her out of the school,” said the WCRP source. According to the source, the girl was an outstanding student in grade four. Last year, she won a second place price for being an exceptional student and was aiming for first place this year.

The perpetrator, who is ethnic Burman, lived in Han-gan village because his wife is posted there as a government school teacher. He left Light Infantry Battalion No. 586, based in Kayen Kapo village, one year ago and retired in the village.
Case III: Mon woman gang raped by a group of Burmese Army Soldiers

On August 13th 2008, A group of 25 Burmese soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No. 282 raped a 50 year old woman in Yebyu Township. An anonymous migrant worker in Yebyu Township confirmed that “Mi Jay Son [name changed for the source’s protection] was arrested for being affiliated with a rebel army group.”

Mi Jay Son is the wife of a village leader in their village. Mi Jay Son, along with her family and five other villagers, were accused of helping Nai Chan Dain, the leader of an armed rebel group, to fight against the military government.

Nai Chan Dain’s rebel army group has an informal cease-fire with LIB No. 282. Despite the ceasefire agreement, the Burmese military troops arrested Mi Jay Son and five other villagers. After her arrest, a group of military soldiers brutally raped her every day for five days. The other five villagers arrested were also seriously beaten by the soldiers.

The villagers were stricken with fright when the soldiers arrested their community members. While the villagers did not approve of the arrests, they ran away from the village out of fear of any repercussions if they showed any defiance against the military.

According to the neighbor of Mi Jay Son, “she and the other five villagers are still under arrest, and since the 7th of September, we have not heard from them. We are hoping to hear some information from them soon.”

The three cases described above show how women and girls in Ye and Yebyu Townships are very unsafe. In Case 1, the rape by soldiers from IB No. 107 appears as if it is the common habit of Burmese soldiers. When these soldiers went into ethnic villages in the conflict zones, if they suspected the villages are the bases of rebel-groups and the villagers are rebel-supporters, they took revenge against the villagers. In many cases, the men fled out of the villages in order to escape the arrests when the soldiers came into the villages.

When there was an absence of men or fathers and husbands, some women and girls were threatened with guns and raped. These women and girls were gang-raped as many soldiers came into the village and followed the same suit as their friends. Fortunately, WCRP documented no gang-rapes of young girls under seventeen years-old in 2008. In 2006, however, three Burmese soldiers based in Khaw-zar Sub-Town’s military base also raped a 14-year-old schoolgirl when she and her mother went outside of the village to their plantation.

By looking at Case 2, the bad habit of raping women and girls is seen to remain with many ex-soldiers of the Burmese Army even after they are married and leave the army. Many retired Burmese soldiers do not return back to their homes in upper Burma, and instead settle in Mon State where they can get more incomes and resources in comparison to their native areas. These retired Burmese soldiers are often involved in rape cases against the local women and girls when they have the opportunity.

Raping a 10-year-old girl who was studying at primary level school was seriously inhumane. Although this ex-soldier was arrested and detained in a police station, he escaped in circumstances that could only have included outside help; he was locked in stocks and only village authorities had the keys. He was eventually re-captured after protests from villagers, but the question remains: who released him from the police station? This is a serious question, yet the SPDC authorities have launched no investigation. His ultimate punishment and the location of his detention, if he even remains detained, has also not been publicized by SPDC officials.

In Case 3, the gang rape is an act of revenge and intimidation directed against the Mon rebel group. This case shows how Burmese Army troops use women as weapons to win the war against Mon rebels. The gang rape serves as a threat to the whole community, for it shows that the rebels cannot protect the villagers.

III. Burmanization Policy: Manipulated and Forced Marriage

For decades since General Ne Win seized political power in 1962, abolishing a democratically elected government and the 1947 Constitution on Federal Union of Burma, the regime has used ‘assimilation’ and ‘reintegration’ policies against non-Burman ethnic peoples.
The regime has effectively used assimilation policies not only in schools but also in general public administration – in courts, administrative offices, hospitals, and other locations. Ethnic children who live in cities and towns are encouraged to abandon their mother languages and their parents always have to speak Burmese when they deal with the government.

Moreover, both past military governments and the current military regime have effectively used ethnic Burman soldiers to further their assimilation project by encouraging marriages with ethnic women. In the Burmese Army, the majority of soldiers are ethnic Burmans from middle Burma. The army registration office maintains and analyzes the biographies of all these soldiers and commanders and uses them to implement its assimilation policies while they are in the conflict zones or ethnic areas.

Since the 1980s, a group of extremely ethnic-nationalist Burmese Army commanders have distributed statements and pamphlets to Burman soldiers encouraging them settle in non-Burman ethnic areas and marry ethnic women. During the 2000s, the Burmese Army distributed a 4th round of pamphlets among the Burmese soldiers in battalions that agreed to not publicize the project and promised to keep secret the group of Burman commanders who are implementing the assimilation project.

WCRP Reporters who have seen the pamphlets distributed to ethnic Burman soldiers described the following points from the assimilation policy. They are:

**Top Secret Order**

La Wa – No. Ba La Wa, Ya – 104, 88

Appealing Letter to all Burman Comrade

Oh, Thakin (master) Burman comrade (soldier) in the whole land of Burma,

We, all Burmans, as loving this land of Burman and have an intention to maintain the race of Burman, we all need to help our motherland. We need to help in every sector such as economics, social, education, literature and arts, and culture.

It is a duty for all our Burman comrade that we can use in many ways to attract all non-Burman ethnic people to become Burmans, like the economics and social offensives; by using money or materials and purchasing them; and by letting them appreciating our arts, literature and culture.

For the profits of all Burman people, we need to separate our influence with various education, social, arts, literature and culture offensives against the non-Burman ethnic people, and organize them to become Burmans in legal forms or system.

The easiest ways to keep the sustainability of all Burman people and to have progress of our nation are:

1. To occupy the non-Burman women with an offensives of mixing blood in race.
2. We, the comrade Burman soldiers, if the jobs are not available in our motherland, proper Burma, we must work in ethnic nationalities’ areas if an opportunity occurs, so that we must organize ethnic women to our side.
3. Unfortunately since the ethnic women had low civilization, and as they are easily appreciating the Burman men or the men came from proper Burma, it is good opportunity to organize them to Burmans accordingly to our traditional Burmanization policy.
**NEWS**

**Police harassing Mon women legally working in Thailand**

WCRP: Thai police or men posing as Thai police are harassing migrant workers from Burma, say workers in Mahachi, Samut Sakorn Province, Thailand. Workers are arrested, sexually assaulted and made to pay bribes for their release regardless of whether they have visas or work permits.

In November, Thai police arrested Mi Su, 27, as she walked to work at 4 am. According to Nai Aie Lawi Mon, from the Labor Rights Promotion Network, the victim possesses a work permit but, unfortunately, forgot it that morning.

“They took Mi Su to another location and ordered her to make a friend bring her work permit document. They told the friend to bring the document to one place and hid Mi Su in another place,” said Nai Aie Lawi Mon. “They searched Mi Su for money, but they didn’t see any so they took only her phone. If they found money they surely would have seized it.”

Also in November, a group of police arrested 3 women, from whom they seized 4,000 to 5,000 baht as well as molested. According to one of the victims, the group all had work permits. “Even though we held the legal documents, we were arrested and also sexually abused by them. They said that they were police, but they didn’t wear police uniforms,” said the victim, age 30. “We are mothers and have children, but the police touched our breasts and our bodies. I think not only us but also young ladies face sexual abuses like that.”

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**Mon Woman Raped by Mon Migrant Worker**

WCRP: In November 2008, Mi Kyi Kyi (not real name), a 16 year-old Mon women, was raped by a Mon migrant worker.

Mi Kyi Kyi was sharing a room temporarily with a friend in the house of 18 year-old Nai Chan, when he found her alone in her room and raped her.

When Mi Kyi Kyi’s roommate shifted to another house, she was left alone in the previously shared room. Once alone, Nai Chan entered her room uninvited, and asked her to marry him. When she refused, Nai Chan raped the young woman. Nai Chan is employed to sell oranges and lives in Wanka village, Sangkhlaburi district, Kanchanaburi province, Thailand.

According to Mi Kyi Kyi: “At night time he came to me and asked me to marry him, and when I refused his request he raped me. When other people questioned him, he said I was his wife, when actually I am not.” She went on, “I’m now hiding because I am afraid of him and I’m really worried that he will find me again and abuse me.”

Mi Kyi Kyi is from Karen State. Since the age of 14, Mi Kyi Kyi has been working as a migrant worker in factories in Thailand to support her six family members living in Karen State. She said, “My parents do not yet know about the rape, and I don’t want to go back to my village, as I am ashamed of what happened”.

Mi Kyi Kyi is now living with a 31 year-old man, who learned of her situation and offered her a safe place to stay.

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4. We did not implement this project, all other non-Burman ethnic are dangerous people to us. Thus, all Burmans must be united, and to take over the bases of ethnic area as much as possible. Finally even if we have to leave from ethnic area alone, we must leave our blood connected relatives, and our generations – children in the area.
**Mon woman lured to Malaysia, raped**

**WCRP:** A woman from Mon State was repeatedly raped by a Burman man who had promised her a job at his guesthouse and clothes store on Penan island, Malaysia. The woman became pregnant to the man, and was then forced to abort the child.

In May 2008, the Burman man persuaded a 24 year-old single woman from Thanbyuzayat Township, to migrate to Malaysia to work in his store. Upon arrival in Malaysia, she was told that he could no longer afford to employ her. She was instead, everyday, held down with robes and raped by the man. “After three months of this horrendous abuse, she became pregnant to her perpetrator,” said her uncle. The man then forced her to abort her pregnancy using a medical treatment that caused her much physical pain.

The persecutor, a 46 year-old man, is married to the victim’s cousin. The man is from Rangoon and has two children. “He both rents out rooms and sells clothes on Penan Island,” said the victim’s uncle.

Faced with this ongoing abuse, the victim made repeated attempts to contact her family in Mon State. She eventually made contact with them. When her family learnt the totality of her abusive situation, they approached the wife of the persecutor, ordering her to release their daughter and threatening to “take the case to the New Mon State Party Township authority if she was not released.”

Only after extensive pressure from the victim’s family did the persecutor and his wife release the victim and send her to join relatives living in Mahachai, Samut Sakhorn Province, Thailand. When she arrived in Thailand her relatives found her to be both mentally and physically distraught. According to her uncle, “She received 20 days of medical treatment in the Mahachai hospital for injuries incurred through forced sexual intercourse, severe torture and a forced abortion.”

After receiving medical treatment, and gaining some strength, the victim was employed by a Shrimp Company in Mahachai, where she earned enough money to pay for her transportation to return home to Mon State.

In December 2008, her uncle confirmed that his niece had arrived home safely and that her family is contemplating legal prosecution of the Burman man.

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**Immigration raid frees eight human trafficking victims near Bangkok**

**WCRP:** Eight Burmese human trafficking victims were freed during a raid by Thai immigration authorities in Mahachai, Thailand, yesterday. The victims include 2 women and 6 children, ages 15 to 17.

The eight victims had been forced to work 7-day workweeks of 19-hours per day, for the last 3 months. Though they had agreed to work off a 25,000 baht debt to the trafficker who transported them to Thailand, they were only being given a fraction of a legal or fair working wage.

According to the victims, they were receiving only 1,000 baht per week, far below the salary their long days should have been earning. Thai law sets the minimum wage at 203 baht.

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5. **We must ensure, all non-Burman women are attracted to Burman men as we can purchase them with money in any time, or they can be organized by us with personal attraction of Burman men, until these women become nearly ‘prostitute’**.
6. Oh dear Burman comrade, now it is a good time for all of us to organize women with cash or by marrying them and mixing blood with them.

7. If the Burman comrades can marry the ethnic women and girls, the State will provide the following monthly salaries as present: (a) 500 Kyat for an ordinary people; (b) 1000 Kyat if the relatives of a village headmen or respected persons in cities and towns; (c) 1500 Kyat if the woman gets a degree from universities and (d) 2700 Kyat if the woman is educated, she is from rich family or relatives to leaders in their communities.

As we Burmans, have a high civilizations, all our Burman comrade need to notice organizing the people by the people is the most effective ways. Only when we can assimilate other non-Burman people becoming Burmans, then we can sustain our race.

Our Burman comrades do not need to worry for financial affairs. The State also allocates a special fund which equal to 5 Million Pound Sterling for our comrades to implement this project.

In order to have success in the implementation and to get financial support you must have to inquire the source of this letter or pamphlet. The high authorities are ready to help our comrades.

This secret pamphlet is distributed only to trusted Burman comrades and Burman people who promise they must not break out any information about this project.

This is fourth time appeal letter urging to all generation of all Burmans, who love our race even they can sacrifice their life, to uphold our race, language, and religion. (Translated by NKM, copy of order given to us by field reporter who got it from a friend who got it from a family member of a soldier in Battalion No. 209 in Kamarwat village, Mudon Township)
From learning secret orders to the Burman or Burmese soldiers from various battalions, successive military regimes have worked continuously to implement this assimilation project especially in areas of non-Burman ethnic nationalities. The secret authorities also contacted Burman military commanders in the battalions and they have pushed their subordinate ethnic Burman soldiers to marry ethnic women.

It is believable that the Burman military officers and administrative authorities have organized the Mon women and girls in the rural areas where they deployed military battalions. Local villagers frequently hear about marriage ceremonies between young Burman soldiers and Mon girls or young women, which was always arranged by local battalion commanders. Villagers and community leaders think they are just normal affairs, nobody realizes it is manipulation of deliberate assimilation policy.

In many cases, the married life of these Burmese soldiers and Mon women is unstable. Sometimes, the Burmese soldiers try to live with Mon women before marriage and then abandon them in the end. In some situations, even after they have children the Mon women are abandoned. In order to prove the above arguments, we can learn from the following cases:

**Case 1:**

Mi Aye (not her real name), age 35, ethnic Mon from Ye township, Mon State. One day, a Burmese second lieutenant from Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) No. 591 told her that they should live together and he would marry her soon. She believed him and lived with him. Before she married him, she became pregnant. After she was four months pregnant, the officer said he had to go to the front lines but he would return to her soon. He did not return and he did not marry her. As her pregnancy grew more noticeable, she became embarrassed and went to Ye Town for an abortion. After the abortion, she became depressed and ashamed and now no longer speaks to her neighbors, said a source close to the woman’s family.

**Case 2:**

A soldier of Burmese Army LIB No. 31 disappeared after being married for two years to Ma Aye (not her real name), 18 years old, from Khaw Zar Sub township. Ma Aye is a daughter of Daw Win (not her real name) 45 years old and her family now moved to the new village Krooke-pi village, which is next to Khaw-zar Sub-township.

“At the age of 16 years, I got married to him and now it has been almost two years. I don’t know his hometown and his background. He left me with a one-year-old child and no way to contact him. So I have to rely on my family to survive,” she said. She works on a farm and her child is cared for by her mother.

**Case 3:**

A Burmese commander lied to a 35-year-old Mon woman in Mudon town, Mudon Township, and convinced her to marry him when he was in fact already married. A few months later, the man brought his first wife, two children and mother into the Mon woman’s home without her knowledge or permission.

According to the policy of the Burmese Army, the battalion commanders or second commanders have to report to higher commanders in order to receive permission for marriage. However, in this case, the commander married the victim without asking higher commanders for permission. He was also high rank commander and arranged for himself to marry the Mon women.

According to source close to the victim, “He [the commander] lied to her and said that he was single and that he already had permission from higher commanders. Therefore she believed him and decided to marry him.”

The woman is a wealthy rubber trader. After the couple was married, they bought a house in Moulmein. A few months later, the commander’s secret family moved into the house. The woman was understandably distraught, and demanded a divorce. The husband refused. At the end, the woman left her home and entered a meditation center as a nun.

**IV. The Community’s response on Assimilation policy**
These three cases show that there is a secret agenda in SPDC military battalions in ethnic areas to encourage Burman soldiers to marry Mon women. Some soldiers who have no genuine love toward Mon women marry the Mon women as they have to listen to orders from the higher authorities.

According to a Mon historian:

“Assimilation policy by mixing the blood of ethnic Burman soldiers with women of other ethnicities has been implemented for a long time. This is an old strategy. However, the Burmese Army does not declare their plan officially but in secret ways. I believe this is totally the government agenda. They think, if they can assimilate all ethnic nationalities they think they can rule the country more easily. Since this political philosophy is totally against the ethnic people it divides among the ethnic Burmans themselves. In this way we can say that even if all ethnic people are assimilated, the military cannot rule the country.

As they attempt to assimilate ethnic people, the Burmese military has to extend the armed forces and fight against ethnic armed groups. So, the government had to use more of the budget for the Burmese Army and then the country became poor. Then the Burmese people themselves feel unhappy toward the Burmese Army and problems occurred. But the root cause is because of wrong policies initiated since [the coup in] 1962.”
Invitation for Feedback to Our Publication
“The Plight”
of Women and Children in Southern Burma

Dear Readers,

With objectives to monitor the situation of women and children in southern part of Burma and to empower them with the rights described in CEDAW and CRC, which are both ratified by the current military regime in Burma, our “Woman an Child Rights Project (Southern Burma)” came into existence since 2000.

Under this project, “The Plight” Newsletter is produced quarterly and this newsletter especially describe the general situation of women and children in Burma and how their human rights are violated by the ruling regime and its army.

In a plan to evaluate our publication, we wish to get the FEEDBACK of our readers. Hence, you can kindly send your feedback. If you know anyone who would like to receive the newsletter or if you wish to send your feedback, please feel free to contact the following mailing and e-mail address.

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With regards,
Project Coordinator
Woman and Child Rights Project - Southern Burma

Although the ordinary Mon people or Mon villagers are not always aware of the assimilation policies of successive ruling regimes, Mon community leaders including Buddhist monks, youth leaders and women leaders understood about the plans of the Burmese Army. However, they have to keep quite and can only secretly inform to some women and families to not trust SPDC soldiers.

However, the successive ruling regimes’ assimilation policy has been working for many decades. They have forced the children to learn Burmese at schools and they have encouraged the soldiers’ and government servants’ families to recognize themselves solely as ethnic Burman. In Mon areas, most of the children in cities and towns never speak in Mon and their parents also agreed they should prefer speaking Burmese. Many Mon also try hard to speak fluent Burmese because they always have to deal with administrative activities for their lands, properties, children’s education, health care, etc. These are all successes of the regime’s assimilation policy.

V. Conclusion

Since 2000, the current ruling regime has deployed more and more military battalions in non-Burman ethnic nationalities’ areas. The militarization has two main purposes. The first purpose is to gain complete control of ethnic areas and destroy armed ethnic opposition groups. As a result, conflict has escalated and human rights continue to be savagely violated.

The second purpose of militarization is to effectively further the assimilation policy of Burmanization in ethnic areas. Along with soldiers, the regime installed local administrative projects and built barracks with the forced labor of ethnic villagers. Through this administrative apparatus, it can implement assimilation policies and use soldiers to marry ethnic women and girls.

Some non-Burman ethnic people know the plans of extreme Burman nationalism used by the military regime. They are always against such projects and so they support armed insurgent groups and opposition political parties. Because of the political and armed conflicts, both ethnic Burman and other ethnic nationalities suffer economically. Ethnic nationalities, meanwhile, are not treated as humans and suffer human rights violations as well.
Mon and Karen communities
Joining International Stop Violence against Women Day in Thai-Burma border
(Read Activities on Page 10)

Burmese migrant workers arrested by Thai Department of Special Investigation in Mahachai
(Read News on Page 7)