

4. Forced Portering and Labour

4.1 Background

Forced labor remains in all part of Burma, including those areas where a cease-fire has been agreed upon. Throughout the country, the SPDC routinely continues to force civilians to work on infrastructure construction and military purposes. Forced portering and forced labor as practiced in Burma are in contradiction with international standards on forced labor. The 1930 Convention concerning forced Labor (ILO Convention No. 29) requires the suppression of the use of forced labor or compulsory labor in all its forms. The Convention defines forced or compulsory labor as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily.”

Since 1964, ILO Committee of Experts for the Application of Conventions and Recommendations has addressed the practice of forced labor in Burma. Following the lodging of a representation by the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in January 1993, the ILO Governing Body had urged the SPDC in November 1994, to ensure that the relevant legislation, in particular the Village Act and the Towns Act, would be brought into line with the Forced Labor Convention, as had already been requested by the Committee of Experts, to ensure the formal repeal of power to impose compulsory labor be followed up in practice and to ensure that those resorting to coercion in the recruitment of labor be punished. AT the International Labor Conference in June 1996, the Committee on the Application of Standards noted the persistent failure of Burma to implement the Convention and 15 worker-delegates lodged a complaint against Burma under article 26 of the ILO Constitution. On March 27, 1997, the ILO established a Commission of Inquiry chaired by Sir William Douglas (Barbados), to investigate a complaint brought by workers’ delegates to the 1996 ILO Conference. The Complaint addressed SPDC’s continued and active use of forced labor in Burma and its apparently unwillingness to repeal legislation allowing the use of forced labor. The commission’s mandate is to consider whether, and to what extent, the alleged violations exists or existed and to make any recommendations it deems appropriate. The Commission held its first meeting in June 1997 to establish its rules of procedure. In September 1996, following an investigation of the forced labor practices in Burma, the European Union Commission revoked benefits under the Generalized System Preferences.

In the course of its inquiry, the Commission received over 6,000 pages of documents and heard testimony given by representatives of a number of non-governmental organizations and by some 250 eyewitnesses with recent experience of forced labor practices during the hearing in Geneva and in the course of the Commission’s visit to the region. A comprehensive report on “Forced Labor in Myanmar (Burma)” by the commission was released on July 2, 1998. Summaries of the testimony given by these witnesses, including women and children who had fled from forced labor, are appended to the Commission’s report. SPDC abstained from attending the hearings and did not authorize a visit by the Commission of Inquiry to Burma arguing that “such as visit would not contribute much towards resolving the case”

and “would interfere in the internal affairs of the country.”

As was noted by the Commission of Inquiry, its report “reveals a saga of untold misery and suffering, oppression and exploitation of large sections of the population inhabiting Myanmar by the Government, military and other public officers. It is a story of gross denial of human rights to which the people of Myanmar have been subjected particularly since 1988 and from which they find no escape except fleeing from the country.”

In its conclusion on the substance of the case, the Commission stated “there is abundant evidence before the Commission showing the pervasive use of forced labor imposed on the civilian population throughout Myanmar by the authorities and the military for portering, the construction, maintenance and servicing of military camps, other works in support of the military, working on agriculture, logging and other production projects undertaken by the authorities or the military, sometimes for the profit of private individuals, the construction and maintenance of roads, railways and bridges, other infrastructure work and a range of other tasks.”

On June 17, 1999, the ILO Conference suspended Burma from receiving ILO technical assistance or attending ILO meetings due to the SPDC’s “flagrant and persistent failure to comply” with Convention 29 on forced labor.

Laws which permitted the use of forced labor in Burma were promulgated by the colonial rulers. Following independence in 1948, successive Burmese governments have continued the practice of forced labor, citing legal authority the “Village Act of 1908” and the “Town Act of 1907”. The two laws require that laborers be a) otherwise not employed, b) physically fit, and c) paid a reasonable fixed wage that is agreed upon beforehand. On June 17, 1999, SPDC Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a press release stating that the SPDC would “cease participation in activities connected with Convention 29.”

Whether the status or use of these laws, overwhelming evidence shows that the SPDC enforces a strict regime of forced labor throughout the country. However, the SPDC denies allegations of all forms of forced labor. It has responded a number of times that there is a tradition in Burma going back centuries, according to which people voluntarily contribute labor in the belief that it is a noble deed. On some occasions, the SPDC has described this as a Buddhist cultural tradition. The SPDC reported in 1993 that for the previous years, local people had been voluntarily contributing their labor for the construction of roads and bridges, and that there is no coercion involved. These voluntary contributions, according to the SPDC, should nor be considered as forced labor. The SPDC-controlled newspaper has reported that “the people of Myanmar are always aware of these development projects and welcome them wholeheartedly, and they are willing to take part in them whether they benefit from it directly or not.”

After 1996, when the SPDC announced that military personnel would provide labor for infrastructure projects, the use of unpaid civilian labor on physical infrastructure projects, especially for irrigation projects and railroad building, diminished. Nonetheless, the use of forced labor on such projects has remained widespread. During 1999, over 1,000 civilians were herded into a “Voluntary labor camp” and forced to work to build a railroad; at least 17 people reportedly died of malaria.

In truth, tens of thousands of men, women, and children all ages are forced each year to work without compensation at construction sites, military of camps, or as porters for the military. The SPDC recruits forced labor by means of intimidation, coercion, and naked

kidnapping. Laborers are taken away from their harvests and other forms of wage-earning only to spend weeks on uncompensated hard labor. They are not even provided with basic necessities like food or tools. If a person refuses to work on SPDC's labor projects, he must pay exorbitant fine, pay a substitute workers, or worse he is beaten or killed. Indeed, beating, rape, and even murder are common even if a villager agrees to cooperate with the military's round-ups.

Civilians in rural and ethnic areas in Burma are called for '*wontan*' ('servants'), which usually means porters or military camp labor, or '*loh ah pay*' (translated here as 'voluntary labor'); these are SPDC's terms for forced labor. The villagers who have to go are used as porters, messengers, road laborers, and doing military camp labor such as sentry duty, cleaning, and building and maintaining barracks, fences and booby-traps. Since 1996 the SPDC has been building a large network of roads throughout the ethnic controlled-areas in order to consolidate military control over the region. All of these roads have been built with forced labor, and villagers continue to be ordered to maintain these roads, most of which are destroyed every rainy season, to clear wide 'killing grounds' along both sides of the roads to minimize the chance of landmines or ambushes, and to stand sentry along the roads. When the porters or military camp forced laborers who have run away or gone home without permission; the village is charged a fine in food or cash, and the village head is ordered to immediately bring replacements or turn in the villager(s) who fled.

Villagers who own bullock carts are also forced to take a cart and team to haul supplies for SPDC troops, and elephant owners are ordered to work their elephants to haul logs for the SPDC with no compensation. Demands for rice, food and building supplies continue to come from both the SPDC and the DKBA, while extortion of money by both the SPDC and the DKBA is increasing so much that it is a major factor causing people to flee their villages. Sometimes an order of forced labor or other demand comes along with a chili pepper, bullet or piece of charcoal. It is a direct threat that the troops will punish the village for failure to obey, possibly by killing all the livestock.

The labor the SPDC calls voluntary is the most degrading, backbreaking, and inhumane kind that exists anywhere in the world. Villagers used as porters must carry packs for the military that amount to half the villagers' weight. In conflict areas, they are sent ahead of troops to act as human mine sweepers or human bullet shields. Often the SPDC sends children ahead to sweep for mines to deter neighboring villagers from supporting oppositions of the SPDC. This work is done without compensation. The porters are meagerly fed and sometimes not fed at all. If they get sick from disease, malnutrition, or exhaustion from their work they are offered no medical assistance and are often beaten and even killed.

Forced labor on roads, railways, and other infrastructure projects is becoming even more prevalent as the SPDC pushes forward with its "development" agenda. For these projects, the SPDC usually sends written orders to villagers demanding a quota of one or more laborers per household for shifts of one or two weeks; usually a family's turn will occur once per month on each project in their area (this is in addition to all other forced labor requirement such as porters and work at military camps). The villagers must perform forced labor and their parents must stay home to work the fields to provide some food for the family. Meanwhile, local battalions sap community finances and food where they are stationed.

No excuses are accepted for evading SPDC's labor requirements. If adults in the

household are sick or if the household consists only of a grandmother caring for her orphaned grandchildren, the SPDC still requires that someone from the family go to the labor site; alternatively, the family must hire a substitute, the fee for which has increased dramatically over the past year. Sometimes, people can bribe a soldier by paying heavy fines or “porter taxes”, but usually the only option is to send a labor or flee the area and risk being captured and beaten. On some projects, the military assigns each village or family a specific work task; in these situation, parents often take their children with them so they can finish their work assignment as quickly as possible and return home.

Some of the ‘fees’ which villagers have to pay are called ‘porter fees’ but really have nothing to do with porters; it is simple extortion, and all the money is taken by the local military officers. Other ‘fees’ are those used directly by the villagers, or paid to the village or village tract authorities, and used to hire people to go in place of the villagers to fill the military’s regular quota of ‘permanent porters’ and frontline porters. The ‘permanent porters’ are demanded monthly by each military camp and kept at all times on a rotating basis, while frontline porters are taken by mobile columns for as long as two or three months at a time. The going price for a replacement for a shift of ‘permanent’ portering is normally 4,000 *kyat*, plus 250 *kyat* or more to pay for the porter’s transportation to the military camp. If villagers cannot pay the required ‘fees’ to avoid this labor then they must go themselves. However, even if they manage to pay all the fees they are still forced to go as porters whenever the SPDC says it has ‘emergency’ or ‘urgent’ need, such as every time the supply convoys come in and supplies must be carried to outlying camps. The military summons porters directly for this *ad hoc* forced labor by grabbing them in the villages or the fields, or by sending written orders in which they say they ‘urgently’ need porters for ‘emergency purposes’. Usually it can occur once a month or so, though it can happen at any time. Villagers are especially afraid of being grabbed by the mobile columns on long patrols, and for this reason are always afraid when working in their fields and will flee if they can from any troops they see.

In some areas, villages must send forced laborers and must also pay “servants’ fees”, money which is supposedly to pay for the hire of laborers. However, this money only goes to the military officers and officials. The only time laborers are hired is when villagers pay others to go for forced labor in their place. Most villagers cannot afford to pay any of these fees anymore. In these cases, the military officers summon village heads to meetings to ‘discuss’ the paddy from their villages. These meetings are to assign paddy quotas which villages must hand over to the military for free or for 10 per cent of market price, even in bad crop years like this one.

It is abundantly clear that these laborers are not working voluntarily; coercion and forced are used to make people work on these labor activities. The “system” for recruiting labor is well-established. Typically, a local SPDC commander contacts a village headman, or in urban area, a council chairman, by written order. The order describes the number of laborers needed by a certain date for a particular infrastructure project. The consequences for not fulfilling such an order are not explicitly stated, rather they are intimidated through the enclosure of a bullet, chili, or a piece of charcoal that often accompanies an order. The enclosures are meant to be symbolic of the consequences that await those who will be follow SPDC’s orders; bullets mean that they will be shot and killed; a chili means they will be in “hot water” or that their animals will be cooked; and charcoal means that their village

will be burnt down. The village headman or council chairman then has to select families to work on a rotating basis. Sometimes, village headmen intercede or try to reduce the demands put on their communities, despite the implicit threats, but this can be fatal for them, especially in ethnic areas where on failure to cooperate with the military, the headmen would probably be accused of aiding ethnic armed groups.

4.2 Portering

The most notorious form is front-line portering, whereby the military raids villages and towns for porters to carry its supply and ammunition for offensive in the border regions.

Given the lack of good roads and other infrastructure throughout Burma and the ruggedness of much of the terrain, the SODC military, very often moves its troops and supplies on foot. Civilian forced labor is always used to do this. Even in many cases where mules or trucks could be used, the SPDC troops are in the habit of using civilians because it saves trouble and expense. Porters are conscripted in a variety of ways depending on the circumstances. The best known form is "operation portering", which occurs where SPDC mounts a major military operation. These operations involve up to 2,000 troops at a time, and on average two to five porters are required for each soldier in order to carry all the required ammunition, rations, heavy weaponry and other supplies. To capture the required number of civilians, SPDC troops, police, local authorities and sometimes even the fire department begin surrounding public places, such as crowded markets, railway stations and video cinema halls, rounding up all able-bodied men and piling them on trucks to be taken to holding cells in local police and military detentions, from where they are combined with other captured groups and sent on to frontline units. Local town authorities swoop on houses in the middle of the night using any excuse, such as an unpaid local tax or an unregistered houseguest, to arrest all the occupants and send them off as porters. Troops surround rural villages and storm them to capture anyone who will be able to carry a load. People are often sent to be porters halfway across the country from where they have been captured. Families of those captured are not notified in any way. Local authorities are assigned a numeric quota of how many porters they have to round up, and in their desperation to get the number they often take women, small children and people as old as 70. They often take two or three times as many people as required, make money by accepting bribes to release all those they do not need.

People in the villages and relocation sites have to regularly do many kinds of forced labor as ordered by the military units throughout the area. One of the most common and feared forms of forced labor is portering, which involves both carrying rations and supplies to outlying military camps and carrying munitions, equipment and rations with SPDC patrols heading into the hills to "mop up" the villagers living in hiding there. Portering assignments to carry supplies between military camps usually last a few days to a week; villagers have to take their own food, and are not usually treated too brutally as long as they are not kept beyond the originally specified period. However, it takes them away from their farmwork and there is always the risk of being beaten or killed, so people try to pay instead of going if they can. Portering with SPDC patrols heading into the hills can last for months, and people avoid going at all costs because many never return from this brutal form of forced labor. These porters are forced to carry 20 to 40 kilogram loads of shells and rations through the

hills, barely fed and left behind or beaten to death if they can no longer carry.

Doing work for the military not only prevents people from being able to do what little work they can to support their own families, but it also puts people in harm's way. The villagers doing forced labor are routinely beaten if they haven't finished their work, have been taking a short rest or simply don't do a "good enough" job. If villagers are found hiding in the jungle and are lucky enough not to be killed on the spot, they are often forced to work and porter for the military as well, and people caught in this manner are treated particularly brutally. Porters, drawn both from the relocation sites and the jungle, are expendable to the military. If they are suffering from one or more of the many ailments that plague the area or are not able to carry their load they are subjected to abuse and are either killed outright or beaten and left to die in the jungle. With no medicine to speak of and no help, it doesn't take long to die when left alone in the jungle.

Once at the frontline, operation porters are assigned to units and given a load to carry over the mountains. The soldiers generally carry nothing except their personal weapon and a small personal kitbag, while each porter is forced to carry 30 to 50 kilogram loads in woven bamboo baskets which rip the flesh off their shoulders and backs. They generally have only the clothing in which they were captured. They are given little or no food, often just one or two handfuls of rice per day, and are often forbidden to drink water en route because they soldiers say it will slow them down. They are not paid in any way. They are often sent in front of the column as human minesweepers and used as human shields; in some cases they are even forced to switch clothing with the soldiers in order to draw enemy fire. In battle, they are forced to stay with the soldiers, and many are wounded or killed. Those who are wounded or fall sick are generally not treated but simply left behind. Medicines are reserved for the soldiers. While carrying loads, if porters are slow they are usually kicked, prodded with bayonets or beaten to keep them moving, and if they collapse and cannot continue they are left behind, often after being beaten unconscious. In especially sensitive areas, they will be executed by cutting their throats, kicking them down a mountainside or tying them and throwing them in river in order to prevent them from giving information if found by resistance groups. Soldiers open fire on any porters trying to escape, and if captured after escaping they are tortured or executed in front of the others as an example. They are usually kept as porters for the duration of the operation, which can be three months or longer. Many escaped operation porters testify that by the time they escaped, half of the original porters had died. Even if the operation ends, they are just told they are free to go and given no assistance to get home, even if it is halfway across the country. They generally have no money for the trip, and even if they go they face re-arrest along the way for having no travel papers, so many end up as internally displaced people far from homes or as refugees.

Arrests of Hundreds of Porters in Mon State and Karen State

After the Burmese Embassy in Bangkok was seized on 1st October and the five students returned to their bases, the Burmese Army prepared to launch a new offensive. In mid-October, the Burmese Army sent about 2,000 troops from LID No. 33 and LID No. 88 and started offensives against armed oppositions who were taking base in the border area. During this offensive many hundreds of Mon and Karen villagers were used as civilian

porters in the dangerous front-lines to carry ammunitions and food supplies.

On October 15 1999, about 2,000 troops of LID No.33 and LID No. 88 arrived Moulmein. Before these large numbers of troops arrived, each village had been ordered to provide about 2-5 porters for the army.

In demanding porters, the troops from LID No. 33 and LID No.88 themselves have not asked for porters in the White Areas (the area under government's firm control) and let the local battalions in every Township take this responsibility. However when those troops entered into Black Area (the so-called free fire zone), the troops arrested all men to be front-line civilian porters.

According to experience of a village headman of Koedokwae village, when a column of LID 33 troops entered into his village, he had agreed to provide 20 porters for the army for three days. Although the army promised they would take the villagers for three days and then release them, the villagers were taken for more than 10 days. During the time these 20 villagers were serving as porters for LID 33, another column of troops went into the same village and requested another 30 porters. When the headman could not manage this request, they arrested women and used them as porters. (*Source: HURFOM*)

4.3 Forced Labour for military bases

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

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

Each village also has to send several people on rotating shifts of three to five days to each military camp in their area for miscellaneous forced labor, which is sometimes referred to as 'patrol'. This labor routinely includes clearing scrub and grass in and around

the camp, maintaining barracks, digging and maintaining trenches and bunkers, building fences and man-traps, cutting firewood, carrying water, cooking, cleaning, and delivering messages to other military camps and order letters to local villages.

In areas where there is any possible of conflict, villagers must undertake sentry duty at military camps; often most or all the soldiers sleep, leaving only unarmed villagers as sentries with orders to wake them up if anything happens. Villagers must also clear roadsides of scrubs and trees for anywhere from five to 100 meters on each side of military supply roads in order to decrease the chance of ambushes. They also have to do unarmed sentry duty, both outside military camps and along vehicle roads which are used by the military. If anyone is seen on the road, they are supposed to send a signal up the line by beating on bamboo sticks. Villagers in northern Mone Township, Karen State report that they now have to do nightly sentry duty along the roads from Kyauk Kyi to Mone and northward to Toungoo. Three villagers have to man each sentry post, which are closely spaced along the road, for rotating 24-hour shifts, and are supposed to report any strangers on the road to the local military. It costs 150 *kyat* to avoid one 24-hour shift, and villagers are also punished if they are not seen at their post during the shift. Under normal SPDC practice, villages assigned to do sentry duty along a length of road are held fully responsible for any resistance activity (such as landmines or ambushes) which occurs there. In the morning and near the conflict areas, village women and children are often forced to sweep roads with branches to detect landmines. In addition, in March 1999 the *Sa Thon Lon* Guerrilla Retaliation group reportedly began ordering several villages in Kyauk Kyi and Tantabin Townships to build fences around their own village, with only two gates allowed for access.

4.4 Forced Labour for the Army's 'Income Generation Projects'

In some rural areas, thousands acres of land are confiscated and the villagers must perform forced labor on a variety of projects undertaken by the SPDC military. These projects include cultivation of rice and other food crops, cash crops such as rubber, shrimp farms, kilns for producing bricks and logging activities. These projects are often promoted in the media as "local income generating projects", but all proceeds go the military. Officers also steal the wages and rations of rank-and-file soldiers and then order their soldiers to survive by looting the villages. All farmers who still have land must hand over 20-25 per cent of their crops as a quota to the military and are paid only 10-20 per cent of the market price. The quotas increase every year, even when there are bad crops and natural disasters, and farmers often have to sell their belongings to buy rice at the market price so that they will have enough to pay the quota and avoid arrest. Many of the crops grown by forced labor, as well as crops handed over in government quotas are used to support the military. However, local officers take and sell a great deal of it, and it is likely that much of it is also sold to foreign companies for "counter-trade" exports," a practice whereby foreign companies convert profits earned in *kyat*, the local currency which cannot be exported, into exportable goods by buying agricultural products from SPDC agencies.

In forest areas, villagers are also regularly ordered to cut and haul prime quality hardwood logs to local military camps or sawmills, where other villagers or sawmill owners are then forced to cut the logs into timber without compensation. The timber then disappeared into market with all profit going to local military officers, while orders are issued forbidding

the villagers to cut any trees for the own use. Also many military officers nationwide have also established brick-baking kilns at battalion camps. The villagers are forced to cut and deliver all the wood required to bake the bricks, while the rank-and-file soldiers are forced to bake bricks for eight to ten hours a day in addition to their normal military duties. The officers then sell the bricks on the market for their own benefit and pay no compensation to anyone.

Starting in late 1998 and during 1999, the SPDC has began to use large amounts of forced labor on a project to double the amount of cultivated land in Burma by developing 22 million acres of wetlands and virgin lands. This involves the establishment of “labor villages” to help private entrepreneurs, including foreign investors, to develop wetlands. In December 1998, SPDC instructed each village tract from eight Township in Sagaing Division to provide two villagers to work on 500 acres of land per Township for a project to reclaim about 4,000 acres of virgin land. In addition, each household was required to give 200 *kyat* each to the authorities to buy food for workers on the projects. During the first half of the year, officials of the SPDC’s Northwest Command forced villagers in Sagaing Division’s Yinmabin Township to provide uncompensated labor or else pay more 1,000 *kyat* per person to reclaim 2,000 acres of fallow land.

In addition to the conscription of villagers to work on the army projects, HURFOM reported that in 1999 in Moulmein city and Kyaikmayaw town, Mon State, the authorities were arresting ordinary laborers and ordering them to work in army rice-farms as a punishment. In both towns, the police and municipal officers were arresting trishaw drivers, truck drivers, and horse-cart drivers for breaking minor municipal laws and regulations related to traffic. In addition, ferry drivers were arrested if the look and structure of their ferries was not up to the authorities’ standards. Normally, the drivers are quite poor, and can not properly fix their passenger ferries, and therefore they were at risk of being arrested. If they were arrested, they were forced to work in the authorities’ farms at least for one day, usually for up to three days.

4.5 Infrastructure development and maintenance

Civilians are used in the infrastructure and “development” projects such as construction and maintenance of the roads, railways, bridges, airports, hydroelectric schemes and tourist-oriented places. Although in 1996, the SPDC announced that civilians would not be used any more in the railway construction and irrigation, there are credible reports that the use of forced labor remained widespread throughout the country. The SPDC has claimed that the infrastructure projects in the remote regions are part of its Border Areas Development Program and that will improve access to markets, schools, and health care. However, there has been little indication that road construction has facilitated social development, and the existing schools and hospitals in the region remain woefully understaffed and under-equipped. The SPDC frequently claims these projects are being undertaken for the villagers’ benefit, admonishing villagers to uphold their responsibilities to their district and the nation by participating in them. In fact, as these infrastructure projects are implemented almost entirely with forced labor, rather than improving their living conditions, they cause greater hardship for local people.

Authorities in Nga Thain Chaung Township, Irrwaddy Division forced villagers to

build an embankment or pay 500 *kyat* per person, and detained a woman for 17 days who protested, citing SPDC's statements that there was no forced labor in the country. Similarly in April, SPDC local authorities in Htan-ta-bin Township, Rangoon Division ordered villagers to work on a road between Hle-Seik and Kyu Ngu villages. After some villages failed to work, the authorities sent a letter to village ward leaders threatening to fine if they failed to come on the next day. In May, authorities ordered civilians to work on a road from Insein to Nyaung Don or pay a fine 300 *kyat* per household. The Police threatened the residents with beatings or detention if they refused and arrested those who did not comply.

People might have to travel considerable distances to work sites, particularly for more extensive projects requiring large numbers of laborers. In May 1999, SPDC local authorities in Hser Lin Gyi Township, Sagaing Division forced civilians from 42 village tracts to work on the Taung Tama dam near Mwe-Tone village, or pay a fine of 700 *kyat* per house. Similarly in June 1999, SPDC forced all villagers including children to build a 20-mile road between the towns of Myo Tha and Tada-U. About 1,000 civilians worked on the road everyday. Civilians had to work several hours to reach a work site. When a village, household or individual is required to complete a given amount of work, people are not able to leave until that work is completed. Often a time period is specified within which the work has to be completed. If the work is not completed to the satisfaction of the soldiers supervising the work, that village, household or individual would not be allowed to return home, and those involved might be beaten or otherwise punished. People always have to bring their own food and necessary tools. If they become sick, they are not treated, and usually have to pay a fine or arrange a replacement to enable them to return to their village to seek medicine attention.

4.6 Prison Labour

There are about 200 prisoners detained in prisoner detention centers in Kyaikparan village tract, Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State. With the beginning of the rainy season in May/June, 1999, those prisoners were used as unpaid labourers in the farms owned by the army, government departments, intelligent units and police departments, which are based in the Kyaikmayaw and Moulmein Townships areas. In November, those prisoners were forced to reap the paddy produced from the authorities' farms. Those prisoners were mainly brought from Moulmein jail and a prisoner camp called No. (6) New Life camp. The prisoners from this camp were sent to two places in one village tract, and forced to work in the farms of different departments. According to a source from the authorities, they only prisoners for farming who have been determined to be released after six months.

According to villagers who work close to the labour camp or near the authorities, the prisoners were forced into farms inhumanely and were treated like animals. During the period the prisoners are working in the farms, they are heavily locked and tied with chains and forced to work about 10-11 hours a day. At night they are put in detention cells. In addition, the authorities, apparently lacking enough equipment and animals such as oxen and buffaloes, also used the human prisoners to draw the land ploughing equipment. Whenever the prisoners could not work well, or to the satisfaction of the authorities, they were severely beaten. (Source: *HURFOM*)

The number of prisoners in Burma increased considerably after the military coup

de'tat in 1988. Since then, prisoners, including political prisoners and students activists have been used not only in labor camps but also as laborers at military bases. Prisoners are also regularly sent from prisons and labor camps across the country to be used by the military in major offensives. They continue to wear prison uniforms and are usually kept separate from the other porters.

Prisoners serving relatively short sentences are preferred to prisoners serving longer sentences because it is thought they are less likely to attempt escape. Thus, those doing forced labor are often those who are in jail for "non-crimes" such as curfew violations, selling goods without a SPDC license, or cursing SPDC soldiers. However, political prisoners are sometimes sent to the hard labor camps where the access to their friends or families is more difficult.

In many cases when used as operations porters, convicts are held and continued to be used as porters well after the expiration of their prison sentences. Convicts doing forced labor are generally treated much more brutally than ordinary civilians and are routinely used in very dangerous work, such as blowing up rock faces or digging at cliff-sides, in which many of them are killed. They are beaten and otherwise abused on the slightest provocation. Food is inadequate and medical treatment is virtually nonexistent for them should they fall ill.

As a result of the increase in the prison population since the military coup, and in order to cope with the shortage of prison facilities, the SPDC has established at least six new Win Saung battalions (porter battalions). These 'Win Saung' battalions are mainly used to create a ready supply of porters to the frontier; prisoners are kept ready for porter duties while working at the military battalions. According to eyewitnesses, the treatment of prisoners at prison battalions is barbaric, as one might expect. Only those prisoners who can afford to pay bribe (from 50,000- 70,000 *kyat*) can avoid being recruited into these porter battalions.

SPDC Home Minister, Lt-Gen. Mya Thin in July 1997 said in his meeting with the prison department, "Convicts serving sentences are also members of the Burmese public and constitute a 'considerable labor force' that should be used effectively instead of being left idle." He also thanked the prison department for "the participation in national projects therefore, constitutes a milestone in history" according to the Nation newspaper, published on July 24, 1997.

4.7 Partial List of 1999 Forced Labour Projects

Rangoon Division

Hle Seik - Kyn Ngu motor-road, Htantabin Township, Rangoon Division

Insein - Nyaungdon motor-road, Rangoon Division

Kin-mon-chone creek embankment, Kayan Township, Rangoon Division

Sae-ma creek embankment, Kayan Township, Rangoon Division

Kayan creek embankment, Kayan Township, Rangoon Division

Danoke pagoda renovation, Twantay Township, Rangoon Division

Sagaing Division

Repair of Katha Road, Sagaing Division

Chin-su Labour Camp, Sagaing Division

Hanthawaddy land development project, Kalay Township, Sagaing Division

Tama dam, Hsar Lin Gyi Township, Sagaing Division
Land developing project, Yinmabin Township, Sagaing Division
Canal construction, Monywa Township, Sagaing Division

Shan State

Keng Tung to Tacheleik motor road, Shan State
Kung hing to Nam Zarng motor road, Shan State
Kung hing to Kaeng Tung motor road, Shan State
Nam San to Pilon motor road, Shan State

Karenni State

Loikaw to Shadaw motor road, Karenni State
Sesai- Loikaw motor-road renovation, Shan-Karenni State
Bae Ngaw Concentration Camp, Loikaw Township, Karenni State

Tenasserim Division

Tenasserim to Manorgone motor road, Tenasserim Division
Tenasserim to Moetaung motor road, Tenasserim Division
Repair of the Ye-Tavoy Railway, Tenasserim Division
Widening of the Nabule-Kanbawk Motor Road, Tenasserim Division
Widening of the Ye-Tavoy Motor Road
Singu, Hmaw-Gi, Kwe-tho-nyima, and Mintha Dikes and Agriculture Project
Bongti-Tavoy Motor Road

Karen State

Kya In Seik Gyi to Khoh Ther Pler (Three Pagodas Pass) Motor Road, Karen State
Saw Hta to Lay Po Hta Motor Road, Karen State
Kyaikdon to Kawkareik Motor Road, Karen State
Na Than Gwin to Mone Motor Road, Karen State
Development of Grazing Grounds, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State
Kam-Ma-Maung to Ka-daing-ti Motor Road, Karen State
Canal Project, Mayaw Township, Karen State
Kyaikdon - Kyo G'Lee Road, Karen State
Chaunghtitkwe-Kya Inn Seikyi Motor Road

Arakan State

Canal construction projects, Myan-aung Township, Arakan State
Mrauk U town renovation, Arakan State

Magwe Division

Canal Project, Myit-chay Township, Magwe Division
Canal Construction Project, Myaung Township, Magwe Division
Ye Nan Chaung and Nat Maut to Myo Thit Motor Road, Magwe Division

Chin State

Hriphi to Vaungtu Motor Road, Chin State

Vaungtu-Thantlang Road, Chin State

Sabawngtte - Lailenpi Road, Maputi Township, Chin State

Repair of the Fakam to Rihkhawdar Motor Road, Chin State

Irawaddy Division

Paechaung to Kadone ka-ne Road, Irawaddy Division

Thayet Gone to Set Thar Canal, Irawaddy Division

Mandalay Division

Yeway to Mahlaing road, Mandalay Division

Mandalay International Airport project, Mandalay Division

Myotha - Tada-U motor-road, Mandalay Division

Tada-U temporary International Airport project, Tada-U Township, Mandalay Division

Mon State

Paung to Ngarlepoh-taung Motor Road, Mon State

4.8 Incidents of Forced Labor by Region

Chin State

Hriphi-Vaungtu Road

From February 1 to the first week of June 1999, over one thousand villagers were forced to construct a 13-mile road from Hriphi army camp to Vaungtu army camp in Chin State. The labourers had to bring their own food and tools and worked from dawn until night. Major Khin Maung Ye, from Company 2 of Hriphi Camp and 2nd Battalion Commander of LIB 268 stationed in Falam, was directed to supervise the construction.

Among those forced to work were 3 elderly men over 65 years, 3 widows and 5 school children from ZaBung village; 4 elderly men (around age 50) from Zephai village; 1 elderly man and 4 middle school students from Nga Lang village; children and Christian religious teachers from Hriphi village. Two youths, Ni Awi, 23, and Ram Cung, 17 who were seriously injured on the worksite received no medical treatment.

The newly constructed road crossed and destroyed private farms owned by Hram Thang, Sui Mang, Lian Te and Hre Cem of Hriphi (B) village but the farmers received no compensation

Although 500,000 *kyat* and an additional 140,000 *kyat* for bulldozer diesel were allocated, none of it was used in the construction, only the forced labour of the villages was spent.

(Source: *CHRO*)

Vaungtu-Thantlang Road

In early 1999, SPDC forced people from villages in Thantlang area, Chin State to build a 50-mile road between Vaungtu village and Thantlang. The villagers, including men

and women, old and young, pastors, teachers and students, were forced to work from dawn to 11:00 PM without rest, and nothing was provided for them. Students who did not attend class were also ordered to do forced labor as punishment by the authorities. They were ordered to complete the road before June. Pa Za Kung, from Vomkua village, who took a rest at the work-site was beaten to death by the army on May 5, 1999. Another man, a school teacher of Salen village, was beaten by the army and sent to the hospital for treatment due to the serious wound he received. (*Source: CHRO*)

Sabawngte - Lailenpi Road, Maputi Township, Chin State

In January 1999 Major Maung Maung and Lt. Myo Swe, of the Sabawngte village Army camp issued an order to Capaw village, Maputi Township, Chin State to construct a road between Sabawngte and Lailenpi villages. The work lasted through the entirety of 1999, and the villagers were required to carry their own rations, medicines and all the tools necessary. They were forced to work through dangerous, mountainous terrain in horrible conditions from dawn to 9 or 10 PM. The sick were not cared for, and the villagers were not allowed to leave even to go to church. SPDC troops guarded the site. Many fell sick, and some died. Major Maung Maung and Lieutenant Thin Lin Aung of Sabawngte army camp issued an order on December 9, 1999 for the following five villages to reconstruct the road: Capaw, Sabawngte, Sabawngpi, Darling and Hlungmang

1. They demanded 60 workers from Capaw village but only 15 people could show up.
2. They demanded 80 workers from Sabawngte village but only 40 people could show up.
3. They demanded 80 workers from Sabawngpi village but only 38 people could show up.
4. They demanded 80 workers from Darling village but only 40 people could show up.
5. They demanded 60 workers from Hlungmang village but only 12 people could show up.

The army demanded 340 people to reconstruct the road from five villages but only more than a hundred people could work. While working, the soldiers punched, kicked and beat the villagers, who were not even allowed to go to their villages to celebrate Christmas. (*Source: CHRO*)

River Embankment, Kayan and Thanlyin Townships, Chin State

Kayan Creek Embankment - The embankment of Kayan creek situated below the villages of A-ley-ywa and Pa-gan-taung in Kayan and Thanlyin Townships, respectively every household in the village tracts of (1) Ta-man-gyi, (2) Kyone-two, (3) Yo-gyi, (4) Ma-gyi-gan, (5) Pein-kan, (6) Hla-be-lu, (7) A-ley-ywa, (8) Aye-ywa, (9) Swe-ka-taw was forced to dig one and a half pits (total 6,000 approximately) between the 10th and 15th December, 1998, and although the project has been completed, the demand for labour from the villagers continues. In default, payment to the authorities of between *kyat* seven hundred and fifty to one thousand five hundred had to be made. Embankments were also built in December for Kin-mon-chone Creek, near Kin-mon-chone village (Kayan Township), and Sae-ma creek situated close to Pauk-pin village (Kayan Township) with the labour from the nearby villagers and the money received from taxing them. (*Source: NLD*)

Irawaddy Division

Paechaung to Kadone ka-ne Road

Bogalay Township, Irawaddy Division

In early 1999 every individual of every household in Bogalay Township was ordered to give forced labour for the construction of a 32-mile long road linking Paechaung and Kadone Ka-ne villages. The road will cross six large river tributaries, five rivers, 10 small streams, jungles, forests, and mangrove swamps. Substitute labour will cost a household between five to ten thousand *kyat*. Sayadaw U Kawlatha, assisted by the army and the Township authorities initiated the road so pilgrims could travel to the Sayadaw's new pagoda, located in an area already easily linked by waterways. (*Source: NLD*)

Magwe Division

Canal Construction Project, Myaung Township

From August 1998 to date, the authorities have required the forced labor of one person per household for a canal construction project in Myaung Township, Magwe Division from the villages Ma-gyi-boke, Twin-gyi, Shwe-pan, Kya-o, Pa-rein-ma, Shwe-pan-gyun, Thi-ri-zay-ya, Oke-hne-boke, Mya-san, King, Boo-gaing, Ko-pin, Kyauk-yit, Na-set, Ta-ma-say-gan, Za-yat-kone.

In addition to this arduous, and lengthy service with no remuneration the authorities have collected by force a total of approximately five million *kyat* at the rate of 50 *kyat* per acre. This is a total acreage of fifty thousand comprising 85 villages in 52 village tracts. Again, those workers who do not own any land have to pay an average of one hundred *kyat* per household, those who are in service have to pay one hundred *kyat* per head and those traders or brokers have to pay two hundred *kyat*. The Township authorities have issued orders threatening action against those who fail to make payment within the prescribed period. (*Source: HRDU*)

Kachin State

Industrialization Project - Indwgyi region, Kachin State

The SPDC has required householders in every village to participate and give forced labour for this project to industrialize agricultural land in the Indawgyi region, Mohnyin Township, Kachin State. In addition to the residents of 20 villages situated on the eastern and western banks of Indawgyi, elephants, buffaloes, and cows are used to clear the vegetation. In the process, two elephants and 14 cows and buffaloes have died. Claims for compensation of the losses have been made but nothing has resulted to date. The forced laborers are denied medical attention. Maung Soe and Maung Naing, from Mogoung Township, have died as a result. (*Source: NLD*)

Mandalay Division

Yeway to Mahlaing road

In 1999 the Thaphanchaung-Yeway Development Road in Mandalay division which

was built by forced labour from 1996-98 is being extended to Mahlaing. Residents from villages that lie to the north of the Meiktila-Kyaukpadaung road are required to find and dig one and a half units (one unit = a hundred cubit ft. of rock) per household and place the rocks at designated spots on the road construction site. This operation takes about 15 to 20 days which prevents the cultivators from attending to the cultivation of their crops. Using their own tools, the men dig and the women carry these rocks in baskets on their heads, trudging through rough and steep grounds to their own fields where they are stacked. Then motor vehicles are hired at their own cost so the rock can be transported to the designated spots on the road site. Elderly men and women are not exempted from this task. The minimum fine to those who are totally incapable of giving labour is 3000 *kyat*. (*Source: NLD*)

International airport Road, Ta-da-Oo Township, Mandalay Division

For the first half of 1999, villagers living in the Township were required to transport crushed granite from the vehicles transporting the rocks to designated road sites. Whenever the rock-carrying vehicle arrived, villagers were forced to leave whatever work they were doing to perform this task. These villagers are day to day wage earners and this forced labour is causing untold hardship. In Ze-gyo village, in addition to the forced labour required of them, villagers were evicted from their homes and forced to dig up the soil in their compounds because the road cut through their village. (*Source: NLD*)

Rangoon Division

Kayan Creek Embankment, Kayan and Thalyin Townships

In December 1998, very household from Ta-man-gyi, Kyone-two, Yo-gyi, Ma-gyi-gan, Pein-kan, Hla-be-lu, A-ley-ywa, Aye-ywa, and Swe-ka-taw village tracts in Kayan and Thalyin Townships, Rangoon Division was forced to dig one and a half pits (for a total of approximately 6,000 pits) for the embankment of Kayan creek. Those who were not able to supply labor were fined 750- 1,500 *kyat* by the authorities. The project was completed in 1999, but the demand continues. (*Source: NLD*)

Mon State

Paung to Ngarlepoh-taung Motor Road

From October 1998 until May 1999, the Paung Township PDC authorities in Mon State conscripted forced labour from local town civilians to build a motor road, 30 kilometers long, from Paung town to Ngarlepoh-taung. The authorities required at least 20 civilians from each of about 13 town wards, and used them everyday in the construction site. In building this new road, Paung Township authorities not only conscripted forced labour from local town civilian but also collected tax from over 10,000 households in the Township. Each family had to pay 200 *kyat* to the authorities in January, 1999 for a fund to be spent on the road building. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Saigaing Division

Repair of Katha Road, Sagaing Division

The inhabitants of the wards and villages in Katha Township, Sagaing Division, are forced to collect big and small rocks from a point about 2 miles from Katha, then transport the rock to the main road to deposit it. Households that cannot provide labour are forced to pay *kyat* 250 to 400 to the Ward PDC. Motor vehicles owners have to pay *kyat* 5000 per vehicle in tax for the road repair. Trucks from the town are forced to transport rocks excavated from the two pits without payment. Any resulting damage to the trucks is not compensated. Horse-drawn vehicles are also used by force for this purpose. It takes 3 horse drawn vehicles to transport 1 pit-full of rocks. Each ward/village tract must dig and transport 42 rock pits. (*Source: NLD*)

Chin-su Labour Camp, Sagaing Division

Over three thousand acres of land originally cleared and cultivated by ethnic Chins was confiscated in Kalaymyo Township, Sagaing division. Service personal from Kalaymyo and places in Chin State were brought to the camp, but had no experience in cultivation. The original cultivators were then forced to sign bonds undertaking production at the rate of thirty baskets paddy per acre. (*Source: NLD*)

Hanthawaddy land development project, Kalay Township, Sagaing Division

In February 1999, about 1000 civilians from Monywa, Cahugn Oo, Ayadaw, Depeyin, Butalin, Yinmapin, Salingyi and Pale Townships in Sagaing Division were summoned to provide unpaid labor for the Hanthawaddy land development project in Sagaing Division. They were paid no wages and no medicine. Due to the harsh weather condition and hard work, 17 people got malaria and one committed suicide. (*Source: HRDU*)

Hantharwaddy Labour Camp (Land Development Program), Sagaing Division

In 1998, the authorities confiscated over three thousand acres of land in Kalaymyo Township, Sagaing division where Chin villagers and their ancestors had traditionally cultivated beans and pulses for many years. Since then, about 1,000 cultivators from 8 Townships (Monywa, Chaung-oo, Ayadaw, Depaeyin, Butalin, Yinmarbin, Salingyi, and Palei) have been conscripted, brought to the camp, and forced to labour without payment of wages, with inadequate food and medicines from 7 AM to 5 PM.

Due to the hard labour and climate, 17 have died of malaria. A man Maung Tin, aged 32, from Than-bin-kan village, Chaung-oo Township, committed suicide because although he was suffering intensely from malaria, he was not replaced, never allowed to rest, and denied access to medical treatment.

In early 1999 people were being conscripted to build an irrigation embankment at the camp. Villagers in Monywa District refused to go, so the authorities ordered all the village administrators from that district to work themselves. Failing to comply would result in heavy penalties. The village tract administrators in Butalin Township, Thee-bin-kha-yine district also went to work in place of the villagers. Therefore, 15 villagers from Butalin travelled the 300 miles to the Hantharwaddy site at their own expense to relieve their village elders. (*Source: NLD*)

Canal, Myaung Township, Sagaing Division

Villagers from Ma-gyi-boke, Twin-gyi, Shwe-pan, Kya-o, Pa-rein-ma, Shwe-pan-gyun, Thi-ri-zay-ya, Oke-hne-boke, Mya-san, King, Boo-gaing, Ko-pin, Kyauk-yit, Na-set, Ta-ma-say-gan, and Za-yat-kone villages, Myaung Township, Sagaing division, are being forced to construct a canal. One person from each household must labour for free to the neglect of his/her own work. In addition, villagers from 85 villages of 52 village tracts in the Township, owning a total of 50,000 acres, have had to pay a tax of 50 *kyat* per acres. Villagers who don't own land have been forced to pay an average of 100 *kyat* per household. The construction began in August 1998 and is still continuing. (*Source: NLD*)

Shan State

Kun-hing to Nam Zarng and Kung Hing to Kaeng Tung Roads

Since April 1999, Kun Hing-based IB246 and LIB524 have been forcing people to break rocks and stones to be used in paving the Kung hing-Nam Zarng and Kung Hing-Kaeng Tung main roads. People are required to work in groups of 150-160 persons, for 10 day shifts. The SPDC troops said that the children of the relocated people were useless and had nothing to do, and as they could not go to school they must be made to work. Almost 200 children, including 7-8 years old, are being forced to split stones. The stones were earmarked to be used in paving roads in the area, yet they are often trucked away to be sold elsewhere. They usually truck them away when there are enough broken stones to fill 5-6 six-wheeled trucks. The people being used for the labor were forcibly moved to the outskirts of Kun-hing town from the areas such as Sai Khao, Kaeng Kham and Kaeng Lom over the last 2-3 years. (*Source: SHRF*)

Ta Kaw - Tachilek Road

In early 1996, Khin Nyunt ordered local commanders in eastern Shan State to pave the road from Ta Kaw via Kengtung to Tachileik within two years so that it would be usable throughout the year. Today, the road is still under construction and the locals are being forced to work on it without any payment, and have little chance to work in their own fields. The people also must contribute 100 cubic feet of broken stones to the authorities or pay 1,600 *kyat*. The price of 100-cubic-feet of broken stones has risen gradually from *kyat* 1,600 to *kyat* 2,000, then *kyat* 3,000 and now it is more than *kyat* 3,500 because of corrupt officers, who steal broken stone and resell it to the villagers at 3X the price. Many young soldiers also forced to work on road's construction have defected because of the hardship and the brutality of their officers. (*Source: HRDU*)

Tenasserim Division

Repair of Ye-Tavoy Railway

Because of heavy rain and flood in Yebyu Township of Tenasserim Division from the last week of July to second week of August, some parts of railway and bridges in near Malawe-taung area were destroyed. Initially, villagers from Paukpingwin were conscripted as forced labourers to work in rebuilding the railway embankments and repairing the bridges. From Paukpingwin village alone, there are about 60 households and the military from LIB 9,

404 and IB 9, 406 ordered the headmen to send one person from each house to the construction site. Later when the road was in worst conditions, about 500-700 villagers from 30 villages from Natkyisin, Kwethonyima, Mintha, Eindayaza and Kalein-aung village tracts were forced to work in re-building the railway's embankment. The soldiers shared work-duties, and the villagers were required to bring their own foods and tools. The headmen of the villages were responsible for sending the villagers to the work-sites on a rotation basis of 7-15 days per round. Some villagers had to work 2 to 3 rounds.

The villagers worked until the end of August, digging earth, carrying it to the embankments and filling in the holes. They also had to find and collect the iron rails that had been washed away, carry the iron rails to the embankment and the railway engineers will fit them again. In the initial construction of the railroad, which was built with forced labour, the government railway authorities and soldiers had not used machines to compress the embankment. Instead, they used human means to compress the dirt, and as a result, it is not strong enough to protect the railroad embankment from floods. Paukpingwin villagers have suffered more than other villagers, because their village is close to railway and whenever something happens in the railway, the villagers from this village are the first conscripted to contribute unpaid labour. As a result of constant conscription of forced labour from this village, about 80% of the total villagers have fled from the village. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Bongti-Tavoy Highway

The Bonti-Tavoy highway or Kanchanaburi-Tavoy highway project is being built and is upkept in cooperation between Thai businessmen (Kanchanaburi Tending and Development, KTD) a private Burmese company (Kyaw Lain Naing, KLN co.ltd.) and Burma's Army. The highway will connect Tavoy, Burma and Kanchanaburi, Thailand. The two countries plan to develop tourist business and agricultural industries. The road project passes through the indigenous Karen area. Burmese army offensives and relocation operations have destroyed all of the Karen villages in the area for this road project. The road is not paved yet, and is quite rough.

After the Bongti-Tavoy Road was damaged by floods in August 1999, the military authorities forced villagers from 4 Townships in eastern Tavoy to reconstruct the highway. At least 800 to 1000 forced laborers from the Townships worked on the Bongti-Tavoy highway construction. Each village had to provide 30 to 50 laborers to work in 10 day rotation shifts. The villagers had to clear bushes beside and on the road, rebuild the embankment, fill the eroded sides of the road, and other projects. The villages were required to take along their own food and tools. Those who failed to go had to pay 5000 *kyat* to hire a substitute. (*Source: HRDU*)

Widening of the Nabule-Kanbawk Motor Road, Tennasserim Division

In March 1999, the Coastal Region Military Command ordered LIB 402 and 273 to widen the Nabule-Kanbawk Road, located in the southern part of the Kanbawk/Ohnpingwin area. The road is very close to the TOTAL oil company's project site, and to the Yadana pipeline, and is of importance for transport and communications between the project site and the outside. About 100 villagers from 10 villages, including Zadi, Paya, Dike-Ta-Kaw, Kyain-Chaung, Kyaing-Pyan, Bwe-Tutwa, and Nabule, were required to provide free labour for 5-7 days at a time. LIB 402, led by Major Soe Lwin was the main force in conscripting the

labor. The villagers were required to clear 100 meter of bushes, trees, grass and rock from both sides of the road, find stone in the surrounding area, break the stone into gravel, and then lay the stone over the cleared area. In addition to the labor, the villagers of Nubule village tract were forced to pay a 500 *kyat* tax per house to LIB 402 and 273 for food and transportation costs. The column of troops stationed along the road also required food and travel expense from the villagers, and the villagers had to pay for the hiring of a 6-wheeled trailer to carry stones and other materials to the construction site. *Note: Villagers from Kanbauk, Ohnpingwin, and other villages where TOTAL company field personal are residing were not conscripted for labor. (Source: HURFOM)*

Forced labour on army camps in Ye Township

In June, 1998, after each battalion received the order that each battalion must support themselves or to find their own farmlands, Ye Township based military battalions, IB 61, 106, and LIB 343 confiscated about 150 acres of farmland without compensation. These confiscated lands are situated in the northern part of Ye Township between two Mon villages, Tamortkanin and Taungbon. In both the 1998 and 1999 years rainy seasons, the soldiers have conscripted the local farmers to do the farming. About 30 farmers from the nearest villages must work daily, on a rotation basis. The farmers also must bring their own oxen to plow the lands and tools to do other work. In September, 1998, IB No. 61 and LIB No. 343, also confiscated about 40 acres of salt producing farms in the west of Ye town. They put up the battalion signboard declaring these lands were owned by the battalions, without first informing the landowners. The soldiers then ordered the landowners to keep working in the salt farms, but that all salt produced from the farms was owned by battalions. The land owners did not receive any compensation or labor costs from the army. In 1999, the battalions hired additional villagers to work in these farms. *(Source: HURFOM)*

Forest cleared for Army Plantation Land in Yebyu Township

From June to September, 1999, villages under the control of Operation Control Division 8 were forced to clear about 4,000 acres of forest from the "Layin-Gwin" area near Yapu village, Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division. Villagers from over 20 villages in Yapu, Mintha and Kalein-Aung village tracts were ordered to clear the trees, bushes, bamboo groves, bush and grass from the area. The work was divided between the villages, with an average of 50 people clearing 10 acres of land in one week. The work was quite difficult, and coincided with the time of harvest for most villagers. The local battalions intended to use the land for rubber, betel-nut, cashew-nut, lime and other fruit tree plantations. *(Source: HURFOM)*

Forced tree planting and repair of the Ye-Tavoy Motor Road

From July until the end of September 1999, local villagers were forced to grow trees along the Ye-Tavoy motor road as instructed by the Military Operational Control Command No. 8, and ten military battalions from LIB No. 401 to No. 410 under this command. The battalions based along the motor road brought many thousands of hardwood trees and forced the villagers from about 15 villages from Yapu and Kalein-aung village tracts to plant them along the road. Each family was provided with 50 trees, and was ordered to plant them 50 feet from the road, a part 12 feet. After the trees were planted, the family then had to make

a 3 feet square and 3 feet height fence round all the trees. The villagers were also instructed to clear all the small wild trees and grass from the road to the newly grown trees, so that the trees could be seen easily. Each family had to send at least one member, and this project usually took 20 days to complete.

From the beginning of December 1999 to the end of January 2000, SPDC battalions under the control of No.8 Operation Control Command forced the local villagers from Ye and Yebyu Township areas, to contribute free labour in Ye-Tavoy Motor Road. The villagers were from villages along the road and near the road including Kyaukadin, Kywethalin, Yapu, Mayan, Mintha, Legyi, Hamaw-gyi, Sin-swe, Sat-taw, Yengan-gyi, Sein-ponne, Natkyisi and Paukpingwin villages

The army battalions forced the local villagers to rebuild some parts of the road, which were ruined because of floodwater. The villagers had to dig out 2 feet of dirt from the water canals. Each family was instructed to dig a half-kilometer long portion of canal. In addition, members of that family were forced to clear 50 ft. from both sides of the road, removing grass, bush and small trees. The battalions required for the clearance of the road, because they worried for the ambush of rebel soldiers. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Reservoir and Land Clearing Projects in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division

From December 1998 to June 1999, troops of LIB 273, 406, 409, and 410 forced villagers from 20 villages, mostly from Mintha, Eindayaza, Kywethonyima and Natkyisin village tracts in Yebyu Township to build 4 dikes flow for the army's planned agricultural projects. The four water dikes are (1) Singu, (2) Hmaw-gyi, (3) Kywethonyima and (4) Mintha. In construction of the dikes, the villagers were first forced to clear the grass, bushes and small trees along the route where the battalion planned to construct the dikes. Then they built the dikes, which were designed to retain water for irrigation on one side, and leave the land dry on the other side to prepare for cultivation. The 7000-ft-long Kywethonyima dike was constructed between Kywethonyima and Sattaw villages and people from Kywethonyima, Sattaw, Mae Thantaung, Chapon, Byu and Byeik villages were ordered by LIB 273 to work on the construction. About 200 villagers were conscripted for each round of work. The battalion was provided with 6 millions *kyat* fund from the Border Area Development program, and they collected another 3.5 millions *kyat* from the villagers. Similarly, the 3 other dikes were built in Mintha and Eindayaza village tracts. The dikes were completed in June 1999 but the villagers were required to repair them after the rain had destroyed some parts of it during the rainy season.

Then, from June to September 1999, about 30 villages from Mintha, Eindayaza, and Kwethonyima village tracts were ordered by the local battalions to clear the land on the lower side of the dike in order to create farmland for the army. The work was divided between the villages, requiring that each family had to send about 2 people every month to work for 15 to 20 days. The villagers had to cut all the small trees, clear the bush and grass, burn all the rubbish to ash, and level the land. In Kwethonyima village tract, LIB 273 expected to get 400 acres for farmland. (*Source: HRDU*)

Karen State

Na Than Gwin to Mone Road

In January 1999, construction of a road between Mone and Na Than Gwin, Kyauk Kyi Township, Pegu Division, Karen State began under the supervision of the special intelligence unit SaThonelone, led by Shan Bpu. Villages located along the entire length of this road have been given the responsibility for its construction. Villages further away have been ordered to build bridges or give money for the purchasing of supplies. In addition, the road has crossed and destroyed the farmlands of many villagers. The villagers, from about 20 villages, were each given a 54-ft. section of road and had to bring their own food and tools to the worksite. They were also forced to work at night, using their own lanterns. The families had to stay at the work site until the completion, sleeping on the road. They had to dig earth with which to build a road embankment 4½ feet high and up to 24 feet wide, clear the ground along both sides of the road, then they had to haul sand, and pack it on top of the embankment to smooth the roadbed. Some villagers were forced to make drainage ditches. A villager from southern Mone Township reported that he and other villagers had tried to gather money to hire a bulldozer to help them, but permission was denied by the *Sa Thon Lon* officer in charge. Most of the road construction was finished by April 1999, and the villagers were then responsible for building approximately 10 bridges. For the bridges, the villages were ordered to cut logs for the timber, as well as pay 500 or 600 *kyat* per family to “buy materials for construction.” A villager who fled to Thailand at the end of April 1999 reported that SPDC troops had confiscated all the wood people had cut for their own houses, took it away and then forced the villagers to buy it back from them and use it to build the bridges. (*Source: KHRG*)

Thaton Township: Army Plantation

Many villages in Thaton Township must send one person from each family every day to work in the local SPDC Army plantation from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., and any family which cannot send someone must pay a forced labour fee instead. The plantation, run by LIB 8, covers about 100 acres, and all villages in the area must send people every day to work on it. This includes the villages of Ma Aye Cha, Ka Law Kher, Lah Aw Kher, Ma Ya Gone, Mo Kyaw Eh, Wah Lu, Noh Pa Leh, Kaw Kya Ther, and Kaw Ler. The SPDC troops confiscated this land from local farmers and told them that “This land belongs to the government, not to you”. Villagers in the area must also pay “obligation” paddy to the local military at the rate of 15 to 20 baskets of paddy for each acre of land they own. (*Source: KHRG*)

Convict Labour on the Kyaikdon - Kyo G’Lee Road, Karen State

A group of convicts escaped from Po Yay camp near Kyaikdon when the local SPDC unit was attacked by the KNLA. They told KHRG that they had been transferred from Moulmein prison in Mon State and Insein prison just outside Rangoon to the Kyaikdon area in January 1999 specifically to build the section of road between Kyaikdon and Kyo G’Lee. These men described treacherous working conditions, and said that by the time they escaped only 100 out of the original 450 convicts remained, the others having escaped or died from the forced labour, physical abuse, malnutrition, and disease at the forced labour site. Even so, the SPDC continued to use convicts on this road at least until the rainy season

of mid-1999. Since that time we have not been able to obtain further information regarding whether the convict camps still exist in the area. (*Source: KHRG*)

Chaunghtitkwe-Kya Inn Seikyi Motor Road

Since May 26, 1999, to widen about 100 kilometers of the Chaunghtitkwa-Kya Inn Seikyi motor road, many hundreds of local inhabitants from over 8 village tracts in Kya Inn Sei Kyi Township have been conscripted by local troops from IB 32, led by Maj. Win Bo. Many Mon and Karen villagers in Kya Inn Seikyi Township area were ordered by the commander to contribute their labour in this road construction for at least three days on a rotation basis. In every round, at least 50 villagers were working in the construction and they have work-duties such as clearing the bushes outside the road and widening the roads. They have to clear 3 feet in each side of the road and fill the stones in the new tract. Sometimes, the villagers also have to repair the bridges.

On June 1, 1999, when the villages from Hteepauklo village tract were conscripted, about (123) villagers went and contribute labour in the construction for three days. When they went to construction site, they had to bring their own food and tools. At night, these villagers had to go to the nearest villages and slept there. Soldiers also guarded the villagers and the villagers were ordered to work for the whole day except to take lunch. The commander also came very often for the surprise check. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Forced labour on army farms in Pa-an Township

Local villagers from Than-hlae and Krone-sot villages, Pa-an Township have to work in the local army farms, under the supervision of LIB 22. They are forced to grow two paddy crops in the year. Work-duties are shared on a rotation basis, about three days each round. The farms consist of 200 acres of land that were confiscated from 20 local farmers in June of 1998 by LIB 22 under the authority of Karen State PDC. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Forced labour for army paddy fields in KyaEinSeik Township

The soldiers of LIB 284 force villagers from Wabogone, Kyotan, Thaketchaung, Natchaung and Kasat villages to contribute unpaid labour every day in the 100 acres of battalion farms. These farms were previously confiscated from local villagers without compensation. About 5-10 villagers from each village must go every day for three days on a rotation basis. The army requires over 20 villagers to always be in the battalion farms. In addition to growing paddy, the soldiers also force the villagers to clear forests and grow rubber. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Forced Labor for army camps in KyaEinSeikKyi Township

In July 1999, with purpose to build a military camp for IB 32 in KyaEinnSeikyi town, the villagers from the villages close to the town were instructed to send a requested number of labourers to the construction site. The villages that were affected from the conscription of forced labour were Kyat-tu-yaw-taung, Kyaukpon, Bada-ye, and Dayae-gwin.

Three battalions, IB 32, LIB 283 and LIB 284 have taken base in Taung-bauk village, KyaEinSeikKyi Township on a rotation basis in every three months. The villagers from Taung-bauk, Hlaing-kani, Winkapa, Nan-parae, Myin-war-gone, Palaw-gone and Naung-pauk villages have been forced to work in the outpost. Every battalion demands at least 20

labourers from all villages to contribute unpaid labour in building their new barracks, making fences, digging trenches and bunkers and other work. The villagers are required to work in the outpost for at least for three days.

Also, a surrendered Karen group, the so-called Karen Peace Organization (KPO) under the leadership of Saw Thamu Hae, also took base in Than-paya village and demanded forced labour from the rural villages in Than-paya village tract. From July until September, when KPO built a military outpost in Than-paya village, about 50-60 villagers from villages including Nanpahpaw, Hteepauklo, Shwe-la-inn, Dayae-gwin, Thayet-gone and Kha-thwin-suu were forced to build the KPO army camp. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Forced Labor on fields confiscated by the army and police in Kawkereik Township

In 1999, villagers living near Nabu village, Kawkereik Township were forced to do the farming on 500 acres of army land. The land had been confiscated from about 40 farmers near Nabu in June, 1998 by the local battalions mainly based in Kawkereik Township, LIB No.547, 548 and LIB No. 549. The former landowners were not compensated, but were hired to farm their land for the soldiers. However, when the crops were harvested in January 1999, the farmers received only 100 baskets of paddy in payment, even though they had been responsible to pay for all the costs of the cultivation themselves. They were exempted from the yearly paddy tax, but as a result of this forced conscription to work their own farms for the army at their deep loss, some farmers abandoned their lands and fled to other areas to escape. In their absence, the soldiers have forced the nearest villagers to do farming in these lands.

These three battalions also confiscated about 200 acres of villagers' farmlands and another 250 acres of wild land near the Kawkereik-Myawaddy motor road in the area of the Kyonedoe to Thingan-nyinaung village tracts. The battalions are growing paddy on the 200 acres of confiscated farmland, and decided to develop a rubber plantation on the 250 acres of hilly land. In both the paddy cultivation and rubber plantation, local villagers from Kyonedoe, Kanni, and Thingan-nyinaung village tracts have been forced to work without payment.

In addition, villagers have been conscripted to serve as forced labourers in land confiscated by police officials. In July, 1998, 2nd. Class Warrant Officer Than Hteik Shein confiscated 5 acres of lands from Kawbein village, Pol. Segeant Ba Thein confiscated 5 acres of lands from Kawgo village and another 2nd. Class Warrant Officer Min Thu confiscated 5 acres of lands from Kharitkyauktan village. The villagers have been forced in 1998 and 1999 to plant the paddy and reap the crops for those officers. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Forced labor for army projects in Kyauk Kyi Township

In January 1999, troops from IB 60 and LIB 351 began their demands of the villagers in Kyauk Kyi Township, Karen State. They ordered 5 to 8 people from each village around the army camp to come and repair their barracks and fences. Villagers had to cut down trees and bamboo for construction, then build and reconstruct the whole camp. In addition, two villagers per day are required to work in the camp, doing things such as cleaning the compound, carrying water, cooking and so on. Also, if the soldiers patrol around the area, they demand 2 villagers from each of the nearby villages to carry food, supplies and ammunition. This is demanded about once a month and it lasts around 10 days. Sometimes soldiers demand that villagers carry them to Shwegyin on bicycles for their shopping. Villagers have almost no time to work for themselves and they are getting poorer. (*Source: KHRG*)

Forced Labor for army projects in Kyauk T'Ga Township

In January 1999, several Battalions began forcing villagers to clear land for Battalion agricultural projects; they were told that each Battalion would clear 1,000 acres. One villager who had to grow these beans explained that they then had to sell the beans and pay the Army 20,000 *kyat* per acre for the proceeds; when the villagers asked if they could just pay the money rather than grow the beans they were refused because the local Army needs to show beanfields to their superiors as evidence that they are producing their own food. West of the Sittaung River in Kyauk T'Ga Township, villagers are also being forced to travel all the way to Pegu to dig fishponds for another Army food production project. (*Source: KHRG*)

Arakan State

Canal construction- Arakan State

In mid 1999, villagers of Myan-aung Township, Arakan State were forced to supply labourers for the construction of two irrigation canal embankments; one near Khone village and another in Za-la-pyin village. In addition, a total of 10,800,000 *kyat* was collected from 36 village groups. The workers were not released till completion of the project. (*Source: NLD*)

Karenni (Kayah) State

Sesai- Loikaw motor-road renovation, Shan-Karenni State

Since December 1998, people from twenty village including Loilin, Yebyu, Naungmae, Naung El, Naung Yinton, Naung Kalauk, Kan Daw Lay and Mai Thaunt villages were ordered to work unpaid laborer at the renovation project of motor-road between Sesai and Loikaw. Every household had to provide one person each and had to work fifteen days per month. People required to bring their own food and materials. (*Source: HRDU*)

Bae Ngaw Concentration Camp, Loikaw Township, Karenni State

The villagers living in the relocation site at Bae Ngaw are continuously used as sources of forced labour and porters. The site is required to send people daily to the military outpost of IB 54 in Daw Ta Hae village, where people work mostly for a 1-day shift at a time. Work includes digging trenches, repairing barracks, cutting trees, and collecting firewood. The work is hard, with only one hour allowed for a break at midday and constant verbal or physical abuse by the soldiers. The villagers are required to bring their own food. Some children as young as 10 years old are forced to work. In mid 1999 the army outpost was moved to Htee Sakhon village, which was a longer distance (about 3 hours) from Bae Ngaw village. When the army post moved, villagers from Daw Pa Pa village of Loikaw Township, also a 3 hour journey from the base, were also forced to continually give free labour. (*Source: HRDU*)

Loikaw-Shadaw motor road, Karrenni State

The construction of 30-mile-long motor-road between Loikaw and Shadaw in Karenni State began in mid-1999 with the use of forced labor and prisoner labor. First, local people were used for the construction, though there was a fund of over 40 million *kyat* allocated for

the construction. The fund was misused by deputy commander Major Win Myint from LIB 531. The work resumed just before the end of 1999 so that it could be used for emergency military purpose and the transportation of military supplies. Since that time, about 400 prisoners from Loikaw, Myingyan and Meikhtila prisons have been ordered to serve as hard laborers. In addition, local villagers from the villages along the route are being ordered to give free labour for the construction. Due to the extremely hard labor and insufficient food supply and medicine, many prisoners have died while working on the construction. (*Source: HRDU*)

4.9 List of Individual Incidents in 1999

◆ In January 1999 Major Hla Ko Oo, Shinletwa Army Camp Commander, ordered the 9 village tracts in Paletwa Township, Chin State to bring 1,500 cane sticks from each village tract to the army camp by February. The 9 village tracts are: Para tract, Shewlake, Ponemoo, Gonepyine, Shiao, Patheinplan, Maobin, Sineowa and Shinletwa. The canes had to be carried a long distance and then sold in Akyap 50 *kyat* per cane for the army's profit. The forest where the cane plants are available is very far away from the village, and therefore many villagers were forced to pay money instead. In the end part of March 1999, Major Hla Ko Oo was transferred and Capt. Than Naing Oo from LIB 233 Bothitaung Battalion replaced him as company commander. He ordered the villagers to give *kyat* 4,000 instead of the canes. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ In January, 1999, Commander Aung Kyaw Nyein from LIB 324, based in Nam Tu Township, northern Shan State ordered villagers from Man San, Nam Tong Kong, Pang Lin, Mar Ma, Ner Seang, Maine Yu and Maine Yin villages to reconstruct the motor-road between Nam Tu-Lashio. Each village had to send thirty people for three weeks. Villagers were ordered to bring their own food and materials. Anyone who refused was fined 8000 *kyat* per week. The Lashio SPDC authorities had received 20000 *kyat* from the government to reconstruct the road, but the villagers received nothing. (*Source: Palaung Youth Newsletter*)

◆ In January 1999, SPDC IB 57 confiscated 20 acres and LIB 349 confiscated 100 acres of land in Kyoung-chaung and Nyaung-tha-ya, Shwe-Kyin Township, Nyaung-lay-bin District, Karen State in order to develop grazing grounds. The troops have since then been forcing the villagers nearby to abandon their own work and give free labor for the projects. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ In January 1999 villagers from Mindon Township, Magwe Division were instructed to complete sowing the summer paddy crop by the month of April because the Chairman of the SPDC was scheduled to inspect the works sometime during the year. A labour force of approximately 2000 people from 100 villages with 100 pairs of cows were forced to reinforce the embankments of irrigation canals, pump water with water pumps, plough the fields and transplant seedlings which had to be fetched from Aunglan and Pwintbhyu Townships. In addition, houses by the roads which was on the scheduled route of the Chairman of the SPDC had to be either white-washed or coated with earth oil and weeds and wild plants had to be cleared. Fines were imposed on villages where such instructions were not followed out as per schedule. It cost the cultivators *kyat* 3500/- per acre for the water pumped into their fields in preparation for the visit of the Chairman of the SPDC but his visit was cancelled and since that time water supply was cut. The farmers had to arrange for their own water and reap their own crops for which the authorities took no responsibility. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ In January 1999, troops from IB 60 and LIB 351 began their demands of the villagers in Kyauk Kyi Township, Karen State. They ordered 5 to 8 people from each village around the army camp to come and repair their barracks and fences. Villagers had to cut down trees and bamboo for construction, then build and reconstruct the whole camp. In addition, two villagers per day are required to work in the camp, doing things such as cleaning the compound, carrying water, cooking and so on. Also, if the soldiers patrol around the area, they demand 2 villagers from each of the nearby villages to carry food, supplies and ammunition. This is demanded about once a month and it lasts around 10 days. Sometimes soldiers demand that villagers carry them to Shwegyin on bicycles for their shopping. Villagers have almost no time to work for themselves and they are getting poorer. **(Source: KHRG)**

◆ In January 1999, after an attack on LIB 282 along the Yadana pipeline area, SPDC formed a new special security force with troops from LIB 408, 409, 410, 267, 273, and Armored Battalion 324. Throughout January and February, the new combined Battalion performed a series of military operations to clear the area around the pipeline. During these operations, hundreds of local civilians from Yebyu, Tavoy, and Thayet-Chang Townships of Mon State and Tenneserim Division were conscripted, arrested or seized to be frontline porters. **(Source: HURFOM)**

◆ On January 1 1999, villagers living in the area between Pa-kko-ku Township and Myit-chay Township, Magwe Division were ordered to clear all their crops (without compensation) and give voluntary labour in digging canals for the implementation of a new army project. The villages involved are those in western side of Pakkoku Township such as Koke-ko-hla, Ywar-thit-kone, Sei, Sin-lan, Tha-phan-pin, Kyun-nyo, Kan-hla and others extending up to Myit-chay Township. Their losses:

(a) Cost of land	<i>kyat</i>	150,000
(b) Cost of tobacco seedlings		4,000
(c) Cost of ploughing		3,600
(d) Fertilizers (2 bags)		5,000
(e) Cost of pumping water		4,800
(f) Cost of labour		300
	Total <i>kyat</i>	167,700

There are approximately 40 to 50 households in one village tract. **(Source: NLD)**

◆ On January 2 1999, SPDC troops summoned villagers and forced them to construct a road from Kam-Ma-Maung to Ka-daing-ti, Karen State so that food supplies could be transported for the army. A total of 49 villagers were sent - 16 from Lay-kaw-hti, 11 from Kyo-day, 16 from Tha-gaw-play and 8 from Mae-kyi-hta. **(Source: KIC)**

◆ As of January 4 1999, SPDC LIB 18 had arrested all male villagers between the ages of 12 and 60 from 19 villages in Karen State to be used as porters. The villages included Maepu, Maechon, Lagonpyo, Ngalay, Wakharhta, Bolowkhee, Pa-new-law, Htee Paw Law, Maewine, and *Kyattaung*, in Bee Lin Township, Karen State. **(Source: ABSDF)**

◆ On January 4 1999, SPDC LIB (324) column (3), led by Captain Aung Myint Tun, based in Nam Tu Township, Shan State forced villagers in Man Kang, Nam Lang, and Na Lin villages to bring their own food and materials and re-construct the road between Man Kang and Na Lin. They were ordered to complete the road within one week. **(Source: Palaung Youth Newsletter)**

◆ On January 7 1999, 100 SPDC troops from LIB515 led by Commander Soe Hpyu

took 37 trucks in Lai-Kha and 40 men labourers from Ta Phui and Ta Mark Larnng villages to the deserted village of Ter Leng Hai Seng, Ter Leng tract, Lai-Kha Township, Shan State. They forced the villagers to dismantle the unused school and hospital buildings and truck the corrugated roof iron and lumber still in good condition back to Lai-Kha. The materials were then used to build houses for the wives and children of the soldiers at the military base in Lai-Kha. In addition, the villagers were forced to provide materials and labour to build a fence by the end of January. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On January 9 1999, SPDC Colonel Ye Win issued an order to each village tract in Ta Kreh Township, Pa-an District, Karen State. He demanded 6 porters and one Tin (16 kgs.) of rice for 3 days or 6000 *kyat* in porter fees and 600 *kyat* for the cost of one tin of rice. He then sent soldiers to arrest porters, instead of asking the village head to supply them. (*Source: KNLA*)

◆ On January 10, 1999, the SPDC authorities from IB 22 based in Man Pa village, Mahn Tong Township, Shan State ordered every house in Man Pa village and Man Kang village to cut firewood for their army. The army then sold the firewood collected by the villagers to the black-market. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On January 10 1999, SPDC LB (22) column (3), led by Aung Too, based in Man Pa village, Man Tong Township, Northern Shan State, ordered every house in Man Pa village and Man Kang village to cut firewood (two “lan” each). The army then sold the wood to a coffee company in Nam Tu Township at 3,000 *Kyat* per “lan”. (*Source: Palaung Youth Newsletter*)

◆ On January 16 1999, Commander Sein Hla of LIB334 issued an order to the villagers of Murng Yu, Murng-Yawng Township, Shan State demanding 4 Pyi* of bean seeds from each house. Then the villagers were forced to use the bean seeds they had provided to grow beans for the military. Furthermore, the villagers were required to take care of all the work needed to be done at the bean plantation, from beginning to end, until the harvested beans reached the military base. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On the nights of January 25 and 26, 1999, SPDC troops rounded up over 400 people in Kawthaung. The troops arrested who failed to report the guest registration and who were on the street after 10 p.m. Many of them were arrested on their way back from video show at Shwe Zinraw, Shwe Pyitha and Eiteik Nyein wards. All those arrested were taken to Lon Phaw village and ordered to do forced labor by SPDC IB 265. People were forced to clear the land and collect materials for the building of new barracks for new battalions. Since January 20, an order was issued that one household has to provide one person for forced labor in the building of the new battalions. Those who fail to go are subject to give 200-500 *kyat* as compensation. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ From January to March 1999, LIB 401, led by Lt. Col. Ta Kha Mun forced villagers from 10 villages of Kalein-Aung and Natkyisin village tracts, Tenneserim Division to provide daily laborers for the Battalion camp, which is located near the Yadana pipeline route near Zimba village. About 30 villagers were required to work at the camp per day, on 5-7 day shifts. They were forced to build fences, grow vegetables, cook food for the soldiers, make charcoal, and also sell charcoal and vegetables for Battalion profit from time to time. (*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ Beginning in February 1999, the villagers Paletwa Township, Chin State were forced to build a police station and an army camp. Villagers from Shinletwa built the police station

in Shinletwa, while villagers from Para, Shewlike, Yayitaung, Gonepin, Pondmao, Kyupyahtin, Pyiwa and Khone villages were assigned to build the army camp. Under a watchful eyes of the guards the villagers were forced to work from morning 6:00 until 5:00 p.m. without rest. No medicine was provided and the villagers had to sleep at a place specified by the authorities. The villagers were warned that anyone who escaped from the work field would be severely punished. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ In February 1999, village and ward administrators from 26 village tracts (Kyun-ngu to Hlei-hseik) in Htantabin Township, Pegu Division demanded 1500 to 4000 *kyat* from every household to re-enforce canal embankments with laterite. The families were threatened that if they didn't pay by February 27 1999, severe action would be taken. A very poor family in the Tha-baw-chaung village tract had to sell their children's clothing to meet this demand. In addition, if a person is unable to carry the laterite due to illness or being out of the locality, penalties are imposed. This penalty in Thabawchaung was 300 *kyat*, in A-lein-lei, 150 *kyat* and in Yay-dwin-gone it was 400 *kyat*. On 26 February, 1999, each person had to give the authorities an impost of 40 *kyat* in addition to this forced labour with their own provisions. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ On February 2 1999, the Chairman of the Nam-Kham PDC called a meeting of 20 village headmen and 15 town-quarter headmen ordered that embankments be built on the banks of the Nam Mao (Shweli) river, requiring the villagers in Nam-Kham Township, Shan State to provide labour and building supplies such as stone, wood and bamboo. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ On February 22 1999, LIB 310 ordered a village in Waw Raw Township, Karen State to supply wood and bamboo to provide a fence for the army. They were threatened that if they failed the village sawmill / rice mills / other commercial activities of the village would be stopped, and the army would force the village to relocate. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ On February 10, 1999, about 120 civilians were arrested in Kawthaung, Tenasserim Division and later sent to the frontline to be used as porters. They were randomly arrested on the street at night and detained one night at the Nayarat Sport Stadium. All of them were at Kamaukkyi village, Kawthaung Township. (*Source: ABSDF*)

◆ Since early March 1999, SPDC troops based in Kaeng Tawng, have been forcing the civilian population in Murng-Nai Township, Shan State to work for the military. The villagers have been forced to transport teak lumber by oxcart to faraway Kun-hing Township, as well as dig trenches and build fences around the military camps in the area. The people are also required to continually supply 5 porters for 5-day shifts. It is very difficult for the people to find time to work for themselves. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ In March 1999, villagers in Kyauk Kyi twonship, Karen State who were being forced to build the Na Than Gwin to Mone road were forced to cut down trees for bridge construction. The special intelligence unit led by Shan Bpu also confiscated wood from houses in the villages and ordered the villagers to give 500 *Kyat* per house to buy materials. Each family had to send one person to work for three days on the bridges. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ In the beginning of March 1999, the Coastal Region Military Command launched an attack against KNU Brigade 4, and ordered the local Battalions in Tavoy and Mergui Districts, Tenasserim Division to gather civilian porters for the campaign before the 3rd week of March. Therefore, in the first two weeks of March, over 700 civilian porters were arrested from Mergui District, and over 800 from the Tavoy district area. About 20-30 boats were

arrested at sea, and nearly 80 fishermen and traders were sent to the frontline. Arrests also took place in town public places, such as movie theatres, markets and coffee shops. In addition, about 350 prisoners from Mergui and Tavoy prisons were also sent to be used as frontline porters. These porters were used to carry ammunitions and supplies, were given 1/2 of the food they needed for the day, and were abused. They were also forced to walk in front of the troops as human minesweepers. (*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ On March 3, 1999, SPDC troops from IB 432, 556, 437 and 557 rounded up the civilians from Ban Pyi, Yebu and Kawmapyin villages in Tenasserim Division. Around 200 civilians were arrested and then used as porters. (*Source: THRF*)

◆ From March 15-25 1999, LIB 330 forced villagers in Murng Phyak village tract to cultivate 10 acres of peanuts for the military. The villagers had to provide food for themselves, and for the 4 SPDC guards who were overseeing the project. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ Since April 1999, villagers from Man Aung village and nearby villages in Ye Township, Mon State, were ordered to provide unpaid labor for LIB 299. 25 laborers from each village were summoned to work for cleaning the site for the construction of the new army base. After the cleaning, each household was ordered to collect bamboo, thatches and other necessary things for the construction. People were also ordered to work free at the cultivation land of the military in the area. (*Source: Yoma-3*)

◆ On April 4 1999, troops from SPDC IB 59 seized 25 villagers of Gor-theh-doe village, Toungoo District, Karen State and forced them to carry supplies to Bu-hsa-kee military camp. (*Source: KNU*)

◆ From April 6, 1999, villagers from Thamin Gone village, Thapaung Township, Irrawaddy Division were forced to work for the construction of a 5-mile-long-channel between Thayet Gone and Sat Thwar villages. The authorities ordered them to bring their own food and tools for the work. Those who failed to work as ordered were fined 3,000 *kyat* per household. (*Source: Inside*)

◆ On April 9 1999, the Chairperson of the Moulmein District PDC informed the villagers of Kyaik Mayaw Township, Karen State of a canal project. They were ordered to collect 500 *kyat* from each family, and 350 *kyat* per acre from all the Township except Let Pan, Kayan, Kyone Sein, and Babu Gone villages, which were required to collect 500 *kyat* from each family and 1,050 *kyat* per acre. They were told this money was for the hiring of tractors and ordered to have the money collected by April 12. The villagers were also ordered to commence work on the digging of 14 canals on April 18. These canals would then irrigate 50,000 acres of paddy fields the villagers would be required to cultivate. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ On April 9 1999, 12 SPDC troops from LIB330 entered Wan Hai Nur village, Murng-Phyak Township, Shan State, seized 15 villagers and took them to the army base. For 5 days, the troops forced the villagers to clear land near Wan Hai Tai village in order to grow beans for the military. The villagers were not paid, and were not given enough rice or anything to eat with it. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ From April 9-15 1999, villagers from Murng-Nung, Nam Wok, And Nawng Hoi villages, Murng-Khark Township, Shan State were forced by IB 227 to dig fishponds and ditches. One person from each house was required to work daily, and bring their own food. After the project was completed, the authorities forcibly collected money from the villagers in order to buy fish and fish food for the newly built fish farms. (*Source: SHRF*)

- ◆ From April 18-25, 1999, Shan villagers from Murng Phyak, Shan State were forced to clear a farm for the military that was 12 miles from town. They were ordered to work by the Tactical Commander in Murng-Phyak as a punishment for performing a dance 'poorly' at the Water Festival the week before. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ On April 30 1999, about 60 SPDC troops from LIB331 led by Maj San Tin went to the following villages and seized 12-13 villagers from each of Nam Kat, Phak Hi, Paang Kaw and Maak O villages in Loi Taw Kham tract, Ta-Khi-Laek Township. With the 40-50 porters they had gathered, the troops continued to the area of Phak Tu Murng village where the boundaries of 3 Townships, Murng-Sart, Murng-Phyak and Ta-Khi-Laek, meet. Each porter was given only 3 milk-tins of rice per day and nothing else. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ On April 30 1999, villagers from Saing-te, Moutala, Oh-pho, Ka-twin-chan, Shwebo-su, Taungthu-su and Pjun-pauk villages, Pegu district, Pegu Division were forced to bring tools and food and gather at the sound of an iron bell at certain sites. Every household in these villaages was ordered to dig 10 pits for the excavation of a silted up dry creek, or pay 200 *kyat* per pit they didn't complete. It was during the rainy season, and the villagers were busy preparing to cultivate their own crops, but feared the further action of the village PDC. (*Source: NLD*)
- ◆ In May 1999, people from Pan-khoo, Mu-le and Hair-tha villages, Pin-le-bu Township, Sagaing Division, were ordered to chop down bamboo trees. Those who could not do the job themselves had to provide substitute labourers or purchase and deliver the bamboo at the military depot in Wuntho. (*Source: NLD*)
- ◆ In May 1999, farmers from 11 villages including Kyaik-pe, Htee-pale, Thoung-dan, Tha-lun-sa, Bamaw, and Sa-noun-paik were forced to cultivate the land that was confiscated for the military unit 534 in Moulamyain-kyun or pay *kyat* five hundreded per head. (*Source: NLD*)
- ◆ In May 1999, every household from Magyibin village tract, Nankhan sub-Township, Wuntho Township was forced to pay 300 *kyat* or give five days of labour for the erection of a pagoda (162' high) in. (*Source: NLD*)
- ◆ On May 11 1999, villagers forced to work on the Vaungtu- Thantlang road in Chin State were ordered to dynamite through a rocky hill, then pick up the fallen stone, even as rock was still falling. When the villagers complained of the danger, the army guards beat them and forced them to continue to work. Subsequently, 3 men (one from Vomkua, one from Ze Phai, and one from Hriphi) were hit by rolling boulders. The army forcefully prevented their friends from helping them, and the men were sent to hospital in serious condition. (*Source: CHRO*)
- ◆ On May 13, 1999, IB No. 81, which is based in Pa-an, Karen State, began the construction of a new military barrack. Many villagers from Mon villages, such as Zathapyin, Thanhlae, Khyaya-ahtwin, Khayar-apyin, Kawlamu and Kronebar, were forced to work for free on the construction. One village was required to send about 50 villagers in one round of duty to stay at the construction site for at least for three days. If the villager failed to work, they had to pay about 1,000 *kyat* When the villagers went they had to bring their own tools and food. (*Source: HURFOM*)
- ◆ In June 1999, the Chairman of a village branch USDA in Nawng Paan village, Yaang Kaeng tract, Keang-Tung Township, Shan State, ordered the villagers to cut bamboo and build a fence around his garden. The USDA Chairman, Pu Long, threatened the villagers

that if they did not comply, they would be reported to the higher authorities as being enemies of the USDA and arrested. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ In early June 1999, the Nam-Kham Township PDC ordered the people in Nam-Kham Township, Shan State to build embankments on the banks of Nam Mao (Shweli) river. A shift of 30 laborers were required to provide free labour every day from Haad Hin, Khae Khun, Kun Hai, Nawng Khing, Nawng Khaang, Kawng Waeng, Maan Kaawng, Kung Sa, Zae Hai, Maan Kham, Maan Nawng, Kawng Tap, Paang Tho Lin and Ho Naa villages. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On June 4 1999, troops from IB 227 ordered all the villagers of all 7 villages in Murng Noong tract, Murng-Khark Township, Shan State to reap rice for the military. The villagers had to work all day without pay and had to provide their own food. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On June 6 1999, troops from LIB 330 ordered several villagers from Murng-Pak, Murng Kham tract, Kaeng-Tung Township, Shan State to carry their things from Murng Pak to the army base in Murng-Phyak. 15 villagers were forced to go, and had to provide their own food and other expenses for the 2 day journey there and the 2 day journey back. Some hired others to go for 3,000 *kyat*. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On June 7 1999, LIB 526 ordered the thousands of people from Wan Mong, Sri Ngawk, Sri Naw, San Saai, Murng Hi, Paang Hat, Wan Pang, Ho Yaang, and Kawng Kat villages in Murng Ko Tract, Taichilek Township, Shan State to harvest rice for the military. The villagers were given one day to harvest the 360 acres that they had already been forced to cultivate. In addition, they were required to buy the paddy seeds for the next year's cultivation. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On June 9 1999, SPDC LIB 507 issued an order requiring the villagers from all 8 village tracts in Murng-Yai Township, Shan State, a cease-fire area, to take full responsibility for what needed to be done to cultivate rice for the army. One person from each house was ordered to work in 16-17 day shifts.

Pa Karng tract had to cultivate 70 acres

Ho Ter tract had to cultivate 90 acres

Wan Zarng tract had to cultivate 90 acres

Kerng Zong tract had to cultivate 30 acres

Nam Sawm tract had to cultivate 30 acres

Wan Kyawng and Parng Sim had to cultivate 30 acres

(*Source: SHRF*)

Since July 1999, soldiers from LIB 508 and IB 292 of Mong Pieng have forced the people to work for them every day in the army corn fields: ploughing, reaping and storing. Anyone who fails to work is fined 500 *kyat* per day. Also, one villager from each village must be sent to the SPDC garrison to serve as a porter for a three-day period, or else pay 500 *kyat*. The people are complaining that everything, including themselves, are not their own. (*Source: SSArmy News*)

In July 1999, LIB 311 ordered the villagers of Hawng Zaang and Hawng Koe villages, Murng Yawng Township, Shan State to cut a large amount of firewood for them. Because firewood had become so scarce in the area, the villagers were not able to find enough and so were forced to pay 30,000 *kyat* from each village. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ In July 1999, some parts of the Aungdawmu pagoda in Rihkhuadar, Falam Township,

Chin State crumbled and fell. The people of the village, who were all Christian, had been forced by a Buddhist monk and the army to build the pagoda in 1997 at a place where they had worship God for many years. The military regimes sanctioned 1,000,000 *kyat* for the repair. However, the Buddhist monk, Baddandah Ta Wa Yah and the authorities forced the villagers to labour for free again and reconstruct the pagoda. None of the allocated money was used in the construction. The army officials and the monk shared the money. As the villagers were forced to spend months of their time and their labor for the repair of the pagodas, they don't have time to work on their farms. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ On July 4 1999, 25 SPDC troops from LIB 330 led by Lt. Kyaw Htin came to Hai Tai village, Murng Hai tract, Murng Phyak Township, Shan State and forced the villagers to catch 20 viss of fish and cook it for them. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On July 21 1999, the Than Daung Township PDC ordered the villagers in the Township to clear the overgrown road from Than Daung to Than Daung Kyi as well as the Baw Ga Li - Maw Chi - Ko Chaung road. (Over 100 miles of road) They were required to cut the scrub and clear the forest along the roads by the deadline of July 31. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ On July 27 1999, SPDC Maj. Than Maung, of LIB #285, demanded that every household from Pa Kyaw Ain village either provide a porter or pay a fine of 100,000 *kyat* in cash. (*Source: MOJO*)

◆ From July 29 - August 29 1999, 60 women from Murng-Khark Township were required to provide free labour at the army soya bean and peanut farms. This was during the season of rice cultivation, but because the military had threatened that they would personally come to take someone from their home if they didn't show up, the women were forced to abandon their own work or else hire a substitute for 1,500 *kyat*. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ In August 1999, Commanding officer Kyaw Lwin of #4 Armored Car Regiment in Magwe Division took possession of 40 acres of villagers' land in Ma Gyi Kan village for army use. He then demanded seeds for sesame and beans for the "regimental fund". Finally, the villagers were forced to clear and plow the land, and plant, harvest, and store the produce in their barns. (*Source: MOJO*)

◆ In mid 1999, SPDC confiscated land for road construction from Ye Nan Chaung and Nat Maut to Myo Thit, and then demanded forced labor from the local villagers to build the road. Myanmar Television announced that the road had cost three million *kyat* to build, but the workers had received nothing. Many came with their families and all suffered from lack of food, as only small amounts of poor quality rice were available. Families who lost their land are now in dire conditions, because they can no longer even sell their labor, which is continuously demanded by the army. (*Source: MOJO*)

◆ In mid 1999, SPDC Industry and Farming Department in Meiktila Township, Mandalay Division, called for 270 workers for their earth-moving project at the Green Gold Company. They promised salaries, training for tractor driving, and other assistance. Conditions, however, were not what had been promised. Food was poor at the work camp, often just boiled rice, and sometimes they had no dinner. As a result, many became ill, but no health services were provided. Over 70 workers contracted malaria, one died in the forest, one on the train, another in Meiktila hospital and a fourth died upon returning home. Due to the hardships, only 1200 acres of the 3000-acre project were completed. The workers could not finish their training nor get their certificates. In addition, Green Gold Company failed to pay any wages to the workers, so the job became forced labor through government-

conspired deception. (*Source: MOJO*)

◆ Since August 1999, villagers from Pauk Pin Kwin village, Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division have been ordered to provide one person from each house to work on repairing the Ye-Tavoy railway. During the rainy season, the section of railway in the Malaway south area was flooded and ruined. In order to repair this damaged part of the railway, the SPDC ordered the villagers from Pauk Pin Kwin village to work without pay. Each time they must work between 5-15 days. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On August 1, 1999, Captain Min Zaw, new Camp Commander in Shinletwa, Paletwa Township, Chin State summoned a meeting on a Sunday, despite the fact that the Chins in the area are Christian. He ordered the villagers to build a house for the army in the center of each of the 9 villages around Shinletwa, to be completed within one month. He also ordered that 18 people, two each from the 9 villages, must be reserved to serve the soldiers, and that 6 villages have to serve, in 7-day rotations, in the army camp for emergency needs and to serve as porters. The villagers were ordered to bring their own food, and threatened that if they did not serve as ordered, they would be fined 1500 *kyat*. Also, the villagers were ordered to reconstruct the roads and clean even dried leaves and branches on the roads between villages. In addition, all the VPDC's Presidents were ordered to attend a monthly meeting at a place 5-days' walk (to and fro) from their own village, during which time they would pay for all incurred expenses. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ On August 24, 1999, SPDC troops from IB 65 stationed at Murg Harn camp issued an order requiring 4 people at a time to guard a military rice farm around the clock for 1 day and 1 night. Moreover, the villagers were warned that if any cattle happened to get into the farm, the villagers on guard would be fined 2000 *kyat* each. The villagers had been forced, beginning in early May, to clear and cultivate the land for the rice farm and Major Shwe Myint had refused to build a fence around the farm, instead insisting there should be guards. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ In September 1999, LIB 8, 357 and IB 231 ordered the villagers from Mayagone, Shwe Yaung Pya, Michaung Ain, Kalaw Bel, Awegyi and Sangone villages in Thaton district, Karen State to provide one person from each household to work for the military-owned sugar-cane plantation project. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ Since September 1999, when SPDC troops confiscated land from the villagers around Aryu Taung village, Ye Township, Mon State, the local people have been forced to provide 100 person per day to work on the preparation and construction of the new army base for IB 229. The base is being built on the confiscated land. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On September 1, 1999, Myo Kyaw, Commander of Battalion 268, Company 2, based in Falam, Chin State ordered the villagers in the area to build his army a camp. Later he ordered that one person from each family must see him or pay a fine. Most villagers were too busy to see him timely, as it was the crucial period for their farm work. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ From September 7-12, 1999, SPDC troops from LIB359, stationed in Tachilek for extra-security during the 9999 period, ordered the village headmen to collect 600 Bath (Bath is Thai money) from every house in all 6 quarters of Tachilek to buy food for the troops. They were also forced to provide laborers to cook and prepare 3 meals a day for the troops. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On September 25 1999, Company 3 Commander of Battalion 268 based in Falam Township, Chin State ordered 20 villages along Falam-Rihkhawdar road to repair the road.

The number of laborers required from each village ranged from 15 to 30 depending on the size and the population of the village. The villagers were ordered to bring their own tools and food for three days, and were not paid for their labor. The soldiers warned them that any village that failed to contribute “unpaid laborers” would be considered supporters of CNF, and severe action would be taken against them. No village dared to defy the order. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ In the first week of October, 1999, villages along the Than Taung motor-road in Taungoo district, Karen State were ordered to provide forced laborers for a construction of new military bases for LIB 124 at Than Taung town. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On October 9, 1999, a military column led by Commander Than Shwe from LIB 357 entered Ta Ywe Khee, Ta Ywe Wah, Ta Maw Taw and Naung Ka Toke villages in Thaton district, Karen State and conscripted one villager from each village for their military column. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On October 11 1999, soldiers from LIB No. 120 entered Kyone-sein village, Karen State and took about 20 women from the village. Most of them had babies at their homes and some of them had pregnancy. They took those women for nearly two weeks and forced them to carry ammunitions and food supplies. (*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ On October 14 1999, 4 runaway porters were found in central Shan State. They were:

- (1) Aung Ko, age 17, son of U Maung and Daw Mya of Pale Township, Sagaing Division.
- (2) Khin Maung Tint, 24, from May Myo.
- (3) Maung Tu, 27, from Mogok.
- (4) U Mya Kyi, 52, from Mya Yait Nanda, Myothit, Mandalay.

They were weak, tired and covered with bruises and wounds when they were found, due to continuous beatings of the SPDC soldiers and lack of food during their porter service. They reported that prisoners and civilians captured on their way were used by the troops as porters and human minesweepers. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ On October 15 1999, troops from LIB 120 entered Palaw-toki village and arrested five women and used them as civilian porters. They soldiers took these women for nearly 7 days and nights and fed them with insufficient food. Among the women porters, one woman was about about three months pregnant. However the soldiers forced the women to carry 20-25 (about 30-40 kilograms) of supplies or ammunitions in the battlefields. When the troops went into Htee-pat-kat village, they arrested an additional six women from that villages and used them as porter. The women were used to carry ammunition and food supplies.

Name of victims	Age	Children
1. Naw Noe La Soe	32 years	unknown
2. Naw Dar Pu	21 years	unknown
3. Naw Ae Ar Htoo	20 years	4 months pregnant
4. Naw Tu	25 years	Two children, (a 1 year old and a 5 month old baby)
5. Naw Da Baleh	19 years	One child, aged 2 months
6. Naw Mu See Soe Mu	30 years	Two children, (a 2 year old and a baby 5 months old.)

(*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ On October 20, 1999, SPDC troops from IB227, manning the checkpoint in Murng-Khark, stopped 2 civilian buses from Murng-Yarng that were heading for Kaeng-Tung. One bus was heavily loaded and was able to pay 20,000 *kyat* to continue on. The other bus, however, was forced to unload and its passengers were taken to the military compound where they were forced to work for the military all day until 6 PM. They all had to spend the night in Murng-Khark because it was not safe to travel at night. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On October 26, 1999, 75 civilians were taken as porters by the troops from IB 343. They were forced to carry the belongings of the soldiers of IB 343 on their return back to their base in Te town. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ In November 1999, the Fire Brigade in Murng-Sart Township, Shan State issued an order requiring every village in the area to provide 5 people to be enlisted as members to serve as fire fighters. The villagers of Wan Tap asked for the number to be reduced to 2 people in their village, since their village had only 20 families. The angry authorities then reported to IB 227 that the villagers were NLD sympathizers who were against the SPDC. IB 227 then ordered the villagers, as punishment, to provide 15 stacks of firewood for them. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ From November to December 1999, villages around Mokekala village, Pegu Division were ordered by the authorities to send laborers for the construction of water channel at Mokekala. Every household from the villages was assigned to dig between 5-10 ditches for the construction without pay. Those who could not provide labor had to pay for substitute labor, which cost 200 *kyat* per ditch. Households from other villages in the region also had to pay 900 *kyat* each for the construction but the money did not get into the hands of forced laborers. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On November 10 1999, an anti-insurgency people's militia group in Murng Yawng, organized by SPDC and formed mainly with ethnic Chinese members of MTA, led by Commander Kyeo Saang, together with troops from LIB 334, ordered the villagers of Murng He, Murng Khan, Murng Kaai, and Murng Ngawm to dig trenches and build fences for the camp of the people's militia. The villagers were required to work for 15 days with great difficulty because the time coincided with the rice harvest. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On November 11, 1999, Commander Swe Myint of Murng-Ton-based IB65 and Commander Pan Hle of Murng-Sart-based IB226 ordered the 108 villages in Murng-Ton Township to provide the following materials and labour:

1. Every village would have to provide 30 pieces of hardwood to be used as fence-posts. Each piece must be 4 elbow-lengths (about 2 yards) long and 2 finger-spans (about 2 feet) in girth and must be finished by November 15.

2. People in the areas of Naa Kawng Mu and Murng Harn tract would have to make 3,000 raw bricks for IB65 and people in Me Ken tract were required to make 7,000 raw bricks, also for IB65, which must be finished by Dec.5

3. Apart from the 2 village tracts mentioned above, all the rest were required to dig holes along the sides of the main roads starting from BP-1 (Border Point No.1 on the Thai-Burma border) up to the Salween river crossing point of Ta Saang, and up to Murng-Sart in the other direction. The holes, which must be completed by Nov. 30, must be 2 elbow-lengths deep and equally wide and only 4 arm-spans apart from each other. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On November 15, 1999, ten persons from each quarter of Three Pagodas Pass in Mon State were ordered to work as porters for IB 28. These people were used to carry the food and belongings of the IB 28 soldiers who were transferred back to their base from

Three Pagodas Pass. The quarters provided the required numbers, but the soldiers seized still more civilians to be used as porters. They randomly rounded up the people they found on the street after 8 P.M. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On November 19 1999, an anti-insurgency people's militia group organized by SPDC LIB 331, ordered the villagers of Murng Hai Tai and Murng Hai Nur villages, Murng-Phyak Township, Shan State to cut bamboo and build a fence around their camp. When the people begged them to postpone the demand until the rice harvest was complete, the militia group told the villagers if they did not do it immediately, they would tell the Burmese soldiers to seize their rice fields. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On November 30 1999, a combined patrol of IB 99, IB 295, and IB 332 captured 9 porters from Wan Nong Mai village, Shan State. Ing Tar, aged 38, was beaten during his porter service until he lost consciousness and then was thrown in a valley and left. He was found later and rescued. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ In early December 1999 SPDC troops informed village heads from Plaw Toh Kee village tract that they would soon be called for forced labour to construct a road from Kya In Seik Gyi to Khoh Ther Pler (Three Pagodas Pass). Maintenance of other forced labour roads continues, such as in the Saw Hta (Azin) area, where a new road connecting Saw Hta to Lay Po Hta was begun in late 1998, and construction of the car road from Kyaikdon to Kawkareik is also still in progress. In the southwestern part of the district, villagers in Ye Township have been forced to fence the car road from Thanbyuzayat to Moulmein, the main north-south coastal road. They must then place bamboo spikes and traps along the road to prevent the KNLA from planting landmines and ambushing SPDC supply caravans. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ On December 3, 1999, the joint military column of SPDC IB 59 arrived in Kaw Thay De village, Taungoo district, Karen State and rounded up 30 villagers. These villagers were arrested for use as porters and taken to Naw Htoo. As of the end of year, none of them have been released. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On December 28 1999 forced labour was required from about 6000 inhabitants (one per household) from 23 village tracts to build a motor road near the Okkan creek to the west of Kawlin town., Saigaing division. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ On December 28, 1999, a boy named Khai Tlua drowned while delivering a letter for the military in Matupi Township, Chin State. The army did not comensate the family. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ In January 2000, Katha, Htechain, Pin-le-bu, Wuntho, Indaw, Banmauk and Kawlin Townships, Saigaing division were ordered to sell the army 500,000 bricks each at 2 *kyat* per brick. The bricks are for a 408-ft. pagoda to be built under the supervision of the District PDC on the hill near Taw-Shaw village, Wuntho Township. The market price is 6 *kyat* per brick. The loss for the whole district (7 Townships) was 14,000,000 *kyat*. Motor vehicle owners were required to transport free of charge the sand and wood to the kilns in Kawlin Township, then to the pagoda site in Wuntho Township. Penalty for default or inability is 100,000 *kyat* per vehicle. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ On January 29 2000, troops from IB 195, led by Sgt. Than Myint Aung forced local villagers to stand and guard the highway at Sop Huay, Sao Waa, Mong-pan Township, Shan State. They were told this duty would last 150 days, and that if they failed to work, there would be a 300 *kyat* fine. Also, they were ordered to cut 360 logs for construction use. In

addition, the villagers were ordered to supply 70 cartloads of water, 1 quarter basket of rice, and one bottle of cooking oil every day to the army camp. (*Source: SSA*)



(10) Villagers are forced to provide forced labour at SPDC LIB (3) military base.
(Photo: NLD-LA)

(11) A Porter showing his wounds caused during his portering with the SPDC LIB
(230). (Source: NLD-LA)

