

6. Deprivation of Livelihood

6.1 Background

Karen, Karenni and many Shan areas are looked upon by the SPDC as areas of active or potential resistance, and their policy in all such areas (particularly in the last two or three years) has been to “drain the ocean so the fish cannot swim”; in other words, undermine the ability of the civilian population to survive until they can no longer support any opposition. This is characterized by mass forced relocations, destruction of villages and the village economy, and completely unsustainable levels of forced labor. The current SPDC plan for consolidating control over areas where there is resistance appears to consist of the following steps: 1) mount a military offensive against the area; 2) forcibly relocate all villages to sites under direct Military control; 3) use the relocated villagers and others as forced labor, portering and building military access roads into their home areas; 4) move more Military units in and use the villagers as forced labor to build bases along the access roads; 5) allow the villagers back to their villages, where they are now under complete military control and can be used as a rotating source of extortion money and forced labor, further consolidating control through “development” projects, forced labor farming for the Military, etc. If resistance attacks still persist or if villagers fail to cooperate at this last stage, retaliation is carried out against villages by executing villager elders, burning houses and other means.

Since September 1998 the SPDC has introduced a new strategy in areas just east of the Sittaung River in eastern Pegu Division. They already essentially control this area despite some small scale resistance activity, but in order to try to bring the population under complete control they introduced the ‘*Sa Thon Lon*’ execution squads in September 1998. This unit of approximately 200 soldiers is divided into small sections of 5-10 troops each which go from village to village with the self-stated purpose of executing anyone and everyone who has ever had any contact whatsoever with the resistance, even something as minor as paying a tax to the Karen armed forces ten or more years ago. They carry lists of people to execute and have already killed anywhere from 50 to well over 100 villagers in a small region since their introduction. They kill brutally, cutting the throats of villagers and often beheading them to display their heads along the pathways as a warning. Their clear intention is to systematically strike terror into the entire population so that no one can even think of having any contact whatsoever with any form of opposition. Their victims have included both Burmans and Karens, and many are now fleeing the area even if they have never had contact with the resistance because the *Sa Thon Lon* can execute people on the slightest suspicion. This unit is not under control of the local Military and there is even evidence that the local commanders are afraid of them. They are under control of the Directorate of Defense Services Intelligence (DDSI) commanded by Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt, Secretary-1 of the SPDC. Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt has often been labelled a ‘moderate’ by the international community simply because he can speak more coherently than most SPDC Generals; however, a study of his past actions rather than his words shows that the *Sa Thon Lon* execution squads are entirely consistent with his regular tactics. The most worrying aspect of the *Sa*

Thon Lon phenomenon is that it may be an experiment which the SPDC could spread or move to other regions as a means of psychologically subjugating the population.

The effect of these strategies on rural subsistence farmers is devastating. Anywhere from 1 to 4 million people are internally displaced within the country, over 100,000 are in refugee camps outside the country, while at least a million more (many of whom fit the definition of refugees) are working illegally in neighboring countries. These people have not fled their villages because of fighting; if there is fighting around their village they just run to the forest for a day or two and then return. They flee because they can no longer survive. Those who are ordered to move to military sites find that nothing is provided, that they are used for forced labor almost daily and that they eventually have to flee or starve to death. Knowing this from experience, most villagers flee into the hills when ordered to relocate and live in hiding, while SPDC patrols come through to burn their villages and food supplies, uproot their crops and shoot villagers on sight if they find them. This is currently happening to the people of an estimated 1,500 villages in Shan State, 200 villages in Karenni (Kayah) State, 200 villages in northern Karen State and eastern Pegu Division, 50-100 villages in central Karen State, and 100 or more villages in Tenasserim Division.

People in villages which are under complete SPDC control and are not forced to move are also fleeing, even from areas where there is no fighting whatsoever. They flee because they are ordered to do so many forms of forced labor for all of the different military camps in the area that they can no longer grow their own crops or earn their own living. For example, villagers in an SPDC-controlled village in Karen State are typically forced to send one family member for 3-5 days of forced labor each month as servants and sentries at the military camp, one week per month of road labor, five days to two weeks per month of forced labor as porters, 24 hours each week as road sentries, and *ad hoc* forced labor as messengers and for other purposes. They also have to pay miscellaneous 'fees' of 500-1,000 *kyat* per family each month to the military and must regularly supply building materials and food to each nearby military camp. At the same time they must hand over crop quotas to the military and the authorities each year either for nothing or for 20-25% of market price; if the crop fails (as it did in both 1997 and 1998 in many areas), they must buy the food in the market to pay the quota or face arrest and confiscation of their land.

Initially the local Battalions issue orders to the Village Tract PDC demanding numbers of forced laborers for a specific purpose. Knowing that the villages do not want to do the labor and will be slow to comply, the Village Tract PDC often hires day laborers, pays for their transportation costs to the military bases, and supplies them to the SPDC military. The Village Tract PDC then issues orders to the villages under their administration to pay their share of the cost based on the relative size (number of households) of their village; for example, a village may be ordered to pay for 10 of the 80 people hired by the Village Tract PDC. The amounts are often not specified in the orders because they are already understood; for example, 4,000 *kyat* for each short-term porter plus 250 *kyat* for his 'car fee'.

Under this system even small villages must pay 30,000-80,000 *kyat* per month, and many simply do not have the money to do so because of all the other SPDC demands they have to meet. As a result, most villages are delinquent in their payments, and once payments fall behind by a couple of months the Village Tract PDC often tells the village 'we will no longer take any responsibility for you' and reports the village to the military for failure to 'perform their duty'. A military column might then storm the village to loot and burn houses as punishment.

In addition to these fees, villages are faced with direct orders to provide forced laborers, sometimes when the military says it is for 'emergency' purposes, meaning that they need laborers right away for one-time work. At the same time, they face constant demands for rice, meat, vegetables, fruits, cheroots, condiments, and building supplies such as bamboo and roofing leaves.

Because of all of these demands, most children are pulled out of school as soon as they are big enough to work. Families sell their valuables to pay the fees and pay to avoid forced labor so that they can work in their fields or do day labor to make money. However, there are so many fees that the money does not last long, and many families send small children to do the forced labor so that the adults can still work the fields. Eventually they sell all of their belongings and livestock to pay all of the fees, and when they are still ordered to go for forced labor or pay money they have no option but to flee the village or face arrest, torture and possible summary execution. Trials are not held in rural areas, villagers are simply tied up and taken to military camps where they are held in mediaeval-style leg stocks or pits in the ground, tortured and interrogated until the military officer decides what to do with them. They are often held for ransom, held for months under torture without charge, or simply executed without any record existing of their arrest. To avoid this, villagers in areas all over Burma have fled to the Towns where they become beggars or cheap labor, to the hills, or to neighboring countries.

In northern Karen State some villages in conflict areas have tried to appease the SPDC by making their own 'peace' agreements; they promise to abide by all SPDC demands and not contact the resistance if their village is not forced to move. They are subsequently labeled 'peace' villages, but even in these villages the demands for forced labor, money, food and materials usually become so intense that the village elders cannot keep up with them all. They are then arrested and tortured for failure to comply, houses are sometimes burned and many villagers flee just as though there had never been any agreement.

Most of the SPDC units posted to Karen and Karenni areas are not motivated to fight the opposition. If they know an opposition unit is in a particular place they will generally avoid that place, and if ordered to attack they will often deliberately attack the wrong village, burn houses, kill civilians and report it as 'combat with the enemy'. The officers focus on making as much money for themselves as they can before being rotated out of the area, and there are sometimes turf battles between SPDC units fighting for control of the most lucrative villages.

Many of the rank and file soldiers are teenagers who have been conscripted by lottery or coerced into joining the military at age 14 or 15, while most of the older soldiers would like to get out if they could, but are never allowed to leave unless they bring in five or 10 new recruits; to accomplish this they hang around the markets and schools and try to coerce young boys into joining. The desertion rate is high, but many are afraid to desert because the SPDC takes action against the families of deserters and executes anyone caught after deserting. In the military, officers steal over half of the salaries of the rank and file soldiers in the name of various 'fees'; they also steal most of the best rations and sell them, then order the soldiers to steal their food from the villages. In the last 2 years, the SPDC has severely cut its deliveries of rations to most field units and has ordered them to either produce food for themselves or take it from the population. This has resulted in increased looting of food from villages as well as increased confiscation of farmland and

forced labor as villagers are ordered to grow food for the military on what used to be their own land.

The rank and file soldiers are also ordered to obtain forced laborers, extortion money, food and materials from the villages for the officers, and are severely punished for any failure to do so; in this way they are drawn into the human rights abuses. In the meantime their officers make as much money as they can during their time in the field. The average village in rural eastern Burma pays 100,000 *kyat* or more per month in arbitrary extortion fees to local Military units in cash alone, not counting extortion of crops, food, materials and labor for personal profit of the officers. Looking at all of Burma, this amounts to a drain of several billion *kyat* every month on the rural economy. All of this money goes to the military officers and corrupt officials at various levels. The Military officers have few or no expenses while in the field because they can steal everything they need from the villagers, so they send most of this money to their families in the cities. Their families use it to start small and large businesses, thereby financing a façade of ‘economic improvement’ in the cities which is entirely financed by stripping the rural people of their means of survival. (*Source: KHRG*)

In addition to these difficulties, from the first week to the third week of August there were big floods and accompanying storms in the southern part of Burma, which destroyed many houses in Mon and Karen States and made thousands of civilians to be displaced. From villages located along Gaing River, 11, 846 villagers became homeless. Thousands of acres of farmlands were also destroyed, putting further hardship on the people.

Again, in the last week of October 1999, due to big storms in the Andaman Sea and unusual rain and floods, there were landslides along the rivers in Mon State and Karen State. Htone and Kaw-hlein villages and about 100 villagers were displaced. Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State, was totally destroyed and about 60 villagers from 10 households were displaced. About 10,000 acres of paddyfields in Paung Township, and 5,000 acres in Chaungzun Township were under the water and many farmers lost their crops. In Kya-Inn-Seikyit Township area of Karen State, the authorities issued an order to the all farmers in the Township to dry out their crops as quickly as possible yet did not help them bring the crops to dry places. At the same time, the authorities sent another order to farmers to prepare to sell their paddy at a low price to the government’s set paddy-buying centers, but did not reduce the rice quota to be sold, even under the circumstances of the flood. In November, the Karen State and Mon State PDC called various rounds of meeting with local village headmen and instructed them to force the farmers to sell their paddy to the set paddy-buying centers.

The flood victims did not receive any assistance from the government relief program and most of them had to find new settlement places by themselves. (*Source: HURFOM*)

6.2 Situation of farmers in Burma

The cultivators in Burma have lost the right to own farm lands in spite of the existing law promulgated in 1953 know as “Land Nationalization Act” (Section 38, Part 16 Use of Agricultural Land) which clearly confers the rights and privileges to farmers.

Notification 4/78 of the Trade Ministry not only prohibited the cultivators from trading their produce freely but also adversely affected the cultivators’ rights and the economy of the country. The laws and regulations enacted after independence are based on principles

leading towards socialism in respect of land ownership and restricting free trade of agricultural products. In applying the Land Naturalization Act 1953 and bye-laws of 1954 pertaining thereto it was possible to achieve the grant of ownership and distribution of over 3,300,000 acres of land only. Yet a cultivator was not permitted to decide on one's own to pawn-sell, transfer or partition his allotted parcel.

Under section (9) and (10) of the agricultural lands Act 1953, landowners can transfer or partition their land only on receiving permission from the authorities. Under section (11) and (12) of the same act, they are not permitted to cease agricultural work, let the land lie fallow or lease the land to others. These are clear indications that cultivators do not really possess the land they own.

The Revolution Council promulgated (1) Tenancy Act 1963 (2) Bye Laws relating to Tenancy Act 1963 (3) Protecting the right of cultivators Act 1963 and (4) Tenancy Amendment Act 1965. According to section (3) of the Tenancy Act 1963 the government by notification order any land to be leased to tenants and thus the state usurps the right of landowners to lease their land. Section (6) also stipulated that the state had the authority to issue regulations for the tenants working on the lands leased from the state. The cultivators who under the Land Naturalization Act 1953 possessed the right to own land became lessees under the new laws.

The State Law and Order Restoration Council, SLORC, has continued to exercise the same powers and the cultivators have not gained any relief from the state. The cultivators not only lost their basic rights but also suffered under the additional burdens imposed by SLORC.

Notification No. 4/78 dated 18 September 1978, stated that any failure to sow the allotted land with the earmarked crop to obtain optimum results or failure to sell the full quota at the stipulated price during a determined period would result in confiscation of the land. Presently such drastic powers are entrusted to village and Township administration and the cultivators are compelled to follow their dictates without voicing any protest.

The 'Protection of the Right of Cultivation Act, 1963,' stated that the following were protected: (1) agricultural land (2) cattle and ploughing implements (3) tractors and machinery (4) other implements whether animate or inanimate (5) prohibition from confiscation for any reason of agricultural produce and arrest of cultivators. However, at the same time it was stipulated that such protection would not apply in the case of (a) non-payment of dues owing to the state (b) disputes arising from inheritance cases or actions taken by the state for security reasons.

Cultivators are therefore in the position of "Given but not received." At the present moment, village and Township administrations are misusing the powers given under these regulations by arresting land workers, forcing them to stand under the scorching sun, canceling the right to work the land, as well as prosecuting and jailing them.

According to existing laws dealing with grazing grounds near villages, these places have traditionally remained as pastures for the cattle nearby but recently the village and Township administrations in collusion with land records officials changed the designation from grazing land to agricultural land. They then either sold the cultivation rights or worked the land themselves and as a result there is no pasture for cattle. This has created great difficulties for cultivators. Every year about 3,000 to 5,000 acres of land are formed in river areas. There are rules and regulations how such land should be allocated. However, it is

learnt that the village and Township administrations ignored the regulations and allocated such land to relatives, people who offered bribes, veterans, or among the members of the administrative bodies. Some obtain over 50 acres, which they then sell at high prices to others. The real farmers are unable to do anything but just accept the situation.

Under the socialist regime, which took power in 1962, rice production was nationalized. The government attempted to redistribute productive lands under nationally administered, locally managed collective farming. The general ineffectiveness of this program, combined with the fertility of Burma's soil, meant that the changes posed little threat to food security, despite populations growth from 17 million just after World War II to 24 million in 1962. Trouble in the rice market triggered the end of the socialist-styled agriculture economy. By 1987 another food crisis loomed, and the government abandoned its strictest controls on the rice market. Fearing possible famine, in September 1997, the SPDC lifted the ban on harvest-time rice trading, in place in 1962. The market price of rice was cut in half.

The SLORC/SPDC era has retained central planning and control of food production. Farmers are still required to sell a percentage of their rice to the government at discount prices. The paddy procurement system is implemented by Myanmar Agricultural Produce Trading (MAPT), a state agency which, along with other arms of the bureaucracy, inherited the duty from its socialist predecessor. MAPT's national structure reaches down to the village, where it designates paddy land and collects a fixed quota based on land area. This quota rose steadily from 1988 until 1995, when it was fixed at 12 baskets per acre in high rice-producing areas such as Irrawaddy Division.

An inherent flaw in this system is the government's quota calculation based on arable land area rather than amount of rice actually planted or harvested. Farmers who work poor land, or for other reasons produce an imperfect crop, are not exempt from the quota. They fulfill their obligation by supplying paddy bought on the market. In these cases, the difference between the relatively high market price and the low government purchase rate results in a net loss for farmers.

Households that fail to fill the quota face a variety of consequences. For households unable to sell the earmarked quota to the government, the local authorities, with the help of the armed forces and police, often forcefully confiscate the households entire supply of paddy including that used for consumption and seed paddy. If even after such confiscation the quota is still not achieved, the defaulting cultivators are arrested and their rights to cultivate prohibited. While arrests and beatings have been reported, more common is the confiscation of paddy land, for redistribution to other farmers more likely to produce. Farmers have also been sent to labor camps to work off their debt. In Irrawaddy Division, local military authorities are said to have ordered the rice mills to close, preventing the milling of harvested rice for consumption or trade until entire villages filled their quotas. Lastly, farmers have been threatened, scolded and publicly abused by government rice procurers dissatisfied with their quota. The authorities also force cultivators to leave their work unfinished and use them in army projects such as road building, railway track laying, and digging canals. In addition, farm workers are forced to guard railway tracks day and night for so-called security reasons. Another shameful and despicable act is the use of agricultural workers and their families as "porters" by the armed forces during their operations. Many lives have been lost as a result of exhaustion, torture, etc. The unfortunate cultivators are also required to attend so-called political rallies organized by the authorities whatever their feelings and whether

their daily routine is adversely affected or not. Those who are unable to join these rallies due to sickness are compelled to give bribes to village authorities. The cultivators also are forced to provide dry provisions to the army unit posted near them and when one unit moves out and another takes its place the poor farmers are called upon to pay "moving expenses". This is another factor causing them a lot of difficulties and financial distress. If a cultivator is unable to perform forced labor he has to pay whatever charges are required, however harsh such charges may be. When performing the labour requirements of the troops, the farmer does not receive any payment, and on top of that is often required to shoulder numerous expenses relating to such things as porter duties. During the period of forced labor the cultivator does not get any medical attention, food, accommodation, or welfare and because of lack of such facilities the cultivators suffers from malnutrition, diseases, wounds from accidents, loss of limbs and in several instances, death. Without abiding by the provisions of the Tenancy Act 1963, farm lands confiscated from cultivators and newly developed land plots are re-allocated by land survey clerks and village officials to those who bribe them.

The rice obtained by the government from the farmer's rice quotas is used not only to provide rice to the military and civil servants, but also sold on the international market. Although Burma was once the world's largest rice exporter, the country currently exports less than 100,000 tons a year, which is even lower than the period of 1990 -1993, when rice exports reached a historically low average of 193,000 tons per year. Burma's 1999/2000 rice crop is projected at 9.55 million tons, up nearly 3 percent from the year before, as result of greater area, but the export amount will still be comparatively low. Inability to increase output from its dry season crop, difficulty in acquiring government rice quotas from farmers, and higher domestic consumption are behind the poor export performance. Since 1988 there has been a renewed emphasis on agricultural production for export. The main strategies are to increase the land area under cultivation, increase productive capacity through a variety of irrigation and agricultural development projects, and license commercial ventures to grow rice for export.

In 1994, the SLORC/SPDC announced a major new drive to increase rice exports fourfold, but in the first years of its plan it was forced to buy rice at market value to make up for the short-fall of MAPT-procured quota rice. The World Bank estimates that in 1994-95 rice farmers lost about one quarter of their gross income because of MAPT procurement. This mass purchase of an additional three percent of the nation's rice over and above the quota raised its domestic market value.

The SPDC has launched agricultural development schemes throughout the country, but especially in the Irrawaddy Delta area. The centerpiece is the summer paddy program, in which the traditional single rice crop per year, sown in the rainy season and reaped in the cool season of October-December, is followed by another crop raised and reaped in the hot season. The summer paddy scheme has several elements: development of irrigation systems such as dams and canals, introduction of high yielding hot-season rice strains, and use of new fertilizers, pesticides, and machinery to cope with the technical complications of the new crop.

These tactics have created two new burdens for farmers. The first is the labor needed to build roads, small dams, and irrigation ditches. State-directed, uncompensated labor is common practice in Burma. Farmers who work on these development projects have less time to tend their crops or other subsistence activities. Secondly, the chemical ingredients

of the summer rice program are not distributed free to poor farmers, but are sold to them. Farmers who do not buy the necessary materials cannot participate in the program; their unproductive land, officially designated for double cropping, is reassigned to a more able household. Insufficiency of water added to the fact that inclement weather and unsuitability of crops to be cultivated on certain types of land are proving to be real deterrents to the country's agricultural development. In some parts of Irrawaddy Division, farmers who could not meet the required quota had to pay the market price in cash for the shortfall to the authorities. In some places flood prevented cultivation. There were some areas where crops failed all the three times they were cultivated. These cultivators not only wasted their efforts and suffered losses but also because of their ability to fulfill their quota were arrested by the hundreds.

In some localities the cultivators who could not sow the hot weather crop had to make payment at the rate of *kyat* 300 per acre to Township and village authorities that lined their pockets with these fines. Those farmers who do not have ready cash had to pawn or sell their cattle, carts, houses, etc., to pay the fines. The poor cultivators had to face lots of difficulties.

Over 100 men and women cultivators from Syrium Township, Rangoon Division were prosecuted because they could not fulfill their quota. In Hmawbi Township cultivators who did not achieve 75 percent of the quota had to give *kyat* 300 to *kyat* 500 in addition to which they had to make up the difference at the rate of *kyat* 3 per basket of paddy. The reason given by those collecting the "levy" was that the money was to be used to come to an understanding with Land Records Department and Agricultural Department officials. Moreover, the farmlands of those who failed to provide the required quota were confiscated and transferred to those who were close to the authorities. The original owners were therefore compelled to lease back these paddy lands from the newly authorized farmers for sums ranging from *kyat* 3000 to *kyat* 6000.

In Taungdwingyi Township, Magwe Division the Township sugarcane purchasing committee sent a letter through village and Township officials threatening sugarcane growers. The letter stated that sugarcane growers who failed to supply their produce would have their land confiscated and transferred to the army training unit and they themselves would have to proceed at their own expense to the Ann Valley Road building project and work there. This caused great alarm among sugarcane growers.

The socialist-era reassignment of arable land to productive farmers has taken a new twist in the late 1990s: corporate rice farming. In January 1999, the SPDC announced that 200,000 acres of paddy land in Irrawaddy, Rangoon, and Magwe Divisions had been transferred to nine unnamed entrepreneurs licensed by the SPDC to reclaim "wetlands and vacant, fallow and virgin lands."

6.3 Labor Situation in Burma

Even though Burma has been opening up to a market economy system in recent years, agricultural products are still the primary economic markets of the country. Burma's population of 44.74 million (1996) includes 26.34 million people who are between 15 to 59 years of age and being as such have productive capacity. This figure includes 11.72 million farmers, out of a total productive population of 17.59 million. Therefore, the labor force

amounts to 39.3% of the country's total population and 66.8% of the population that has productive capacity. Grassroot workers and farmers, that is, the human resources, are the main forces for the country's potential economic, political and social success under Burma's developing market economy. Matters of industrial peace, decent living standards, social justice and employment regulations are the main problems facing workers in the current circumstances. The labor laws used for many years are far from perfect. Moreover, given current levels of inflation and excessive policy emphasis on the market economic system, some laws are no longer conceptually or practically acceptable, causing workers to have lost their rights. Under the market economic system imposed during the period of SPDC governance, workers in foreign investment and joint venture projects and factories have had to suffer the following;

(a) According to job appointment rules, the employer has the right to dismiss any worker from employment without giving a month's advance notice, as outlined in existing labor laws. This grants excessive opportunities to the employer and prevents a stable workforce from forming at work sites.

(b) There is no process or system by which worker's grievances can be aired, no mechanisms for demanding labor rights, no trade unions permitted at workplaces and departments, no clear mechanisms for resolution of cases where a worker was forced to resign (or rather, workers are afraid to complain) and no step by step appeal programs (for negotiations, interventions and plenary discussion) therefore, workers suffer considerably.

(c) Foreign employers and investors establish factories in Burma as well as in Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. Although the products are of the same quality, Burmese workers receive much less money than other countries' minimum wages, because of the non-application of the minimum wage law. Some employers who are willing to raise salaries have to first consider workers' salaries in nationalized factories, and in circumstances of inequality there can be conflict between private and government enterprises. Thus, they cannot raise wages even if they wish to and so the workers are unable to attain a fair income.

(d) According to Burma's "Leave and Holiday Act", shift workers must work a maximum 48 hour week, and for offices and service industries 42 hours per week. However staff and workers in supermarkets and factories, which have appeared as a result of the developing market economy, have to work about 10 hours a day in defiance of labor protection laws. Working on Saturday and over time duties are also required, but there is no appropriate recompense, the employees are sometimes paid a small amount of money or issued some food. Social welfare laws are also ignored. Although the wage rates set are not equivalent to the current pace of inflation, there have been no changes and improvements. For example, the Labor Compensation Act excludes by definition workers earning over 400 *kyat* per month, so employers can claim that their workers are not covered by the Compensation Act.

Existing labor affairs laws are not suited to the present situation and system. There are weak points that need to be revised. Legal mechanisms to protect workers have dwindled away, so a worker, who independently demands his or her rights, will not succeed and can be threatened with his or her job. Medical assistance, social assistance and job security programs are not systematically organized.

6.4 Health Situation in Burma

While the SPDC is to be commended for its goal of spending five per cent share of its GDP on health by the year 2000, such goal is likely to remain unmet. According to the WHO, the SPDC is estimated to spend US\$ 9 per person per year on health care, while the basic minimum health care system requires expenditures of US 12 \$ per person. By choosing to allocate resources to bombs and not beds in hospitals, missiles and not medicines, the SPDC is waging war against its civilian on the battlefield of health care.

Although Burma's economy continues to register moderate-income growth (GNP growth was 5 percent in 1998/99), the benefits of this growth are poorly distributed since most poverty and human development indicators are unsatisfactory. At \$300 per capita, Burma is one of the poorest countries in the World. Life expectancy at birth is 60 compared with an average in East Asia of 68; infant mortality is 79 per thousand births, compared with the East Asia average of 34; child malnutrition rates are very high and represent the "silent emergency" in Burma. Wasting affects 30% of children under age 10, reflecting long term deprivation. Education is also a major concern. Official statistics indicate that a quarter of school age children never even enroll in primary school, and that drop out rates are very high. Of those who begin the primary education program, only a third complete the full five years. (*Source: World Bank report, 2000*)

According to a SPDC's determined poverty line, about one quarter of the population of Burma lives below minimal subsistence levels. Poverty rates are approximately the same in urban and rural areas, but most of the poor (71 percent) live in rural areas. There is considerable regional variation in poverty rates. The highest rates of poverty are in the Chin State, Magwe Division, and Karenni State, and the lowest rates are in the Tenasserim Division and Shan State.

Burma has the second worst HIV/AIDS epidemic in Asia, after only Cambodia where an estimated four per cent of the adult population is infected, according to the report of United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) in 1999. UNAIDS estimated there were at least 440,000 cases of people infected by HIV/AIDS in Burma, where intravenous drug use is widespread and there is an active cross-border sex trade with neighboring Thailand and China. The SPDC claims to have only 21,503 confirmed HIV cases and 2,854 AIDS cases in 1999. The SPDC could not address the extremely serious AIDS problem in Burma because it refuses to even recognize the epidemic's existence.

6.5 Education Situation

The Education system of Burma has rapidly deteriorated after the junta came into power. 90 per cent of the universities and colleges in Burma have been closed since 1988. Some of them were opened on and off in last twelve years. From 1988 until now, the schools and universities of Burma have been opened for a mere 40 months. The educational system is continuing to deteriorate beyond comprehension, and several generations have missed out on their chances for education. The closures of schools has been a systematic objective of the military to deprive the youth of knowledge, thereby sealing the fate of the students' future.

Since the bloody military coup in 1988, the SPDC has systematically been ruining

the education system of Burma. Students are the most affected group in the country because not only have they been denied their education, but they also have been denied fundamental rights such as freedom of speech and expression.

The military's main objective has been to prolong its power. Militarization has been top priority for the SPDC instead of providing education for the population. Students have always been viewed as a threat to the military regime and are considered the most vocal group of opposition. Therefore, the SPDC is sacrificing the youth's future in order to prolong its tyrannical reign. Since the closure of universities, colleges and schools, the regime has opened several military institutes in order to produce well-qualified and loyal personnel. By opening these facilities, the military has admitted the poor state of the educational situation. These institutes were prioritized, well equipped and despite the closure of other schools, they have remained open. Due to these circumstances, there have been only two options for Burma's youth: either join the army and receive education or stay idle with no future. Although small numbers of colleges were reopened in 1998-99, students are forced to attend the classes under the closed surveillance by the Military Intelligence. All students were required to sign an agreement in which they promised that they would not involve in any political activities or they would be expelled. It is a frightening ordeal for Burma when considering its future. Schools have been closed so often that the number of educated people within Burma is significantly decreasing. The curriculum has also repeatedly been changed to fit the government's needs, thereby reducing the standard of the student's education. The Burmese Education system has deteriorated to the point where it is no longer recognized by world standards.

The SPDC claims a strong commitment to develop human resources as they prepare to integrate into the global economy, a commitment that will be difficult to meet under the present spending limitations. It is impossible to provide good quality education services with the substantial erosion in education spending over the past decade, SPDC's spending in education as a share of national income is among the lowest in the world. Official data shows that real public spending per child has fallen from about 1200 *kyat* per child (5-9 years) in 1990/91 to a dismal 100 *kyat* in 1999/2000. Education financing is further confounded by the lack of affordability at the household level. The cost barrier is compounded by the poor quality of infrastructure and little adaptability of schooling (including schedules and curricula) to local conditions. The gap between SPDC spending on defense as compared to education is enormous by Asian standards. While the UNDP in 1998 said that education spending rose from 1.4 per cent of GDP in 1986-87 to 2.6 per cent in 19991-92, it has been in steady decline since then, to just 1.1 per cent. With the exception of military universities, the universities in Burma have been open for only three out of past eleven years, and many four-year curriculum have been reduced to two-to-three month courses. The SPDC's refusal to reopen the schools on the pretext that they must maintain "political stability" calls strongly into question their commitment to education.

6.6 Unfair Levies and Taxes

Tax for Disabled Veterans

The SPDC's financial crisis, a result of poor economic management, corruption,

and international sanctions, has deteriorated to the point that they are not able to make payments to workers and the armed forces. However, this dilemma has not stopped them from implementing a special program to raise funds for their numerous disabled veterans.

70 million *kyat* have been earmarked in Mon State alone to fund this program. Owners of vehicles must pay a special tax of 30,000 *kyat* when they renew their vehicle licenses. Rubber plantation owners must contribute 2,000 *kyat* per acre. Even those making only subsistence living — snack shop owners, rickshaw drivers, and horse-drawn cart drivers — must pay 250 *kyat* each. The imposition of such a tax adds to the evidence of the economic desperation of the regime. (*Source: Voice of Burma radio - January 18*)

Situations In States And Divisions

6.7 Situation in Tenasserim Division

High taxes and Extortion From the villages in the Yadana Pipeline Area, Tenasserim Division

LIB 273 and IB 106 have been securing the pipeline project site in the seaside area north and south of Hpaungdaw village, and unfairly taxing the villagers in the region. Fishermen from villages including Hpaungdaw, Ohnpingwin, Kywe-tho-nyima, and Kyachattaw are required to pay a yearly tax for their fishing boats, from 4,000 to 20,000 *kyat* depending on the boat size. Also, whenever they go out to sea they are required to get a permission letter from the local military post, which costs 250 *kyat*. When the fishermen return from the sea, SPDC troops often take whatever fish they want.

Every household in the area is also required to pay 500 *kyat* per month for the transportation and food costs of the army pipeline security force. The troops of the 2 Battalions also take whatever they want, such as soft drinks, pigs, chickens, and alcohol from the shops and villagers homes whenever they desire. In addition, families usually have to pay an extra 300 to 1000 *kyat* every month for other food costs and fines demanded.

These Battalions have also ordered the village headmen to be ready to provide porters whenever the army needs them. If a family cannot provide a porter, the replacement fee is 1,000 to 3,000 *kyat*.

In addition, when farmers go to their farms or plantations they must obtain a permission letter from the village headman or military commanders, which costs 50 *kyat*. Without the permission letter, the farmers are seen by the troops as rebel forces and are severely punished or killed. (*Source: HURFOM*)

The Situation of Farmers in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division

Most of the rural areas of coastal Yebyu Township are recognized as “Black Zones”, or “Free-Fire Zones” by the SPDC. Therefore, farmers face great difficulty. A farmer must pay 20-50 *kyat* per day, and 100-300 *kyat* per night to get a permission letter from the authorities to go to their farms. Often, even if they have the permission letters, they are accused of being rebels and persecuted or killed by the troops. Farmers are often required

to work on government infrastructure projects, leaving less time for their work. Yet despite the hardships incurred by the army, the army still require the rice paddy tax. The Battalions in this area set the amount and prices for the paddy quotas, and in addition, this year they looted more paddy from the villagers. From January to March 1999, there were several instances of soldiers looting the farmer's paddy. The soldiers were short on rice because they had been instructed to grow a rainy season crop and had failed due to their inexperience. The farmers in this areas are given no opportunity to report the looting to the higher authorities. With all the taxes, and looting, and difficulties to grow their crops, many people have been left with nothing and forced to flee their farms and live in hiding. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Plantations Destroyed by power line from the Yadana pipeline area to Ye, Ye Township

In 1999, the army put electric wires and poles through several private properties as they were providing electricity to the Yadana pipeline area from Ye Township. When they erected the wooden electricity poles near Kyaukadin village, the poles passed through the property of a Mon family, Nai Daing and Mi Hla, and the soldiers ordered the whole family to immediately move from their house and garden. Their house was destroyed to make way for the power poles. In total, the family lost about 1 million *kyat* for their house and garden. Then, at a betel-nut plantation owned by the Nai Char and Mi Hla Kyi, the soldiers looted all the betel-nut fruit, cut all the trees and burnt them down to make way for the power poles. This family lost about 600 betel-nut trees, which had the earning potential of about 2 million *kyat*. The poles crossed many other betel-nut and fruit plantations and another six families from Kwethalin villages also lost their lands and fruit. These families were (1) Nai Lain-Mi Hla Din, (2) Nai Pho Sein- Mi Khin Nyunt, (3) Nai Pha-Mi Nyi Ma Lay, (4) Nai Thaung Nyein- Mi Khin myint, (5) Nai Myint-Mi Khin Aye, and (6) Nai Kit-Mi Khin Nu. All of these families who lost all or some parts of their plantations did not receive any compensation payment from the government authorities or the Yadana gas and oil companies. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Land confiscation for new military battalion and air base in Ye Township

In March 1999, many hundreds acres of fruit and rubber plantation lands were confiscated by IB 61 at the east side of the Ye-Tavoy motor road, in the southern part of Ye Township area. Due to this forced confiscation, many local villagers from Hangan and 9-mile villages have lost their land and regular income from these plantations. The villagers were given a compensation of 7 *kyat* per tree, and 2,000 to 3,000 *kyat* per plantation. (A tree can produce thousands of *kyat* per year, and the usual worth of a plantation is between 200,000 and 500,000 *kyat*)

In April 1999, after the land confiscation by the authorities, the local people from Hangan and 9-mile villages were also conscripted to be forced laborers in constructing military buildings for LIB 299, the new battalion. Later in May and June, the villagers from the whole southern area of Ye Town were forced to clear the ground, build fences, dig trenches and build quarters.

Not only were the people subjected to forced labor for the new military battalion,

but they also had to provide cash to buy planks and wood for the construction. IB 61 was responsible for collecting funds from every village in the southern part of Ye Town and villages on Ye riverbank. The military officials from IB 61 ordered the headmen to provide 3,000-20,000 *kyat* from the each village depending on the size of the village.

Then, in September 1999, according to the SPDC plans to repair an old Japanese air base in the northern part of Ye Township, and turn it into a strategic air base, another 800 acres of land was confiscated by government troops under the direction of the Southeast Region Military Command. The government also seized local forests and mountains in the area, as it plans to deploy a new battalion, an artillery regiment to secure the air base. The lands were previously rubber, durian (fruit) and betel-nut plantations, owned by Mon villagers from Aryu Taung and Kun-dune villages. Altogether, 51 farms were forcibly taken from Aryu-Taung, with a total value of approximately 64,800,000 *kyat*, and 19 plantations taken from Kun-dune, with a total value of about 24 million *kyat*. No compensation was given. (Source: HRDU)

Tax for the construction of the Kwethonyima dike

For the construction of the Kwethonyima dike in Yebyu Township, Tenneserrim Division, LIB 273 was provided with 6 millions *kyat* of funding from the Border Area Development program. In addition, they collected another 3.5 millions *kyat* from the villagers. The village headmen were responsible for collecting that fund and asked the villagers to give a tax in four increments. The families who were considerably rich had to pay about 10,000 *kyat* while poorer families had to pay about 500 *kyat*. Although the battalion had raised such funds they also required the villagers to give free labour in the construction of the dike. (Source: HURFOM)

6.8 Situation in Rangoon Division

Sentry fees in Twante Township, Rangoon

People from the following villages that surround the ancient Da-noke pagoda in Ya-Khine-gyaung, Twante Township, Rangoon division are being forced to pay 400 *kyat* per month in sentry fees to the army that safeguards the pagoda, or else go themselves to serve for free. As a result of a death at the pagoda last year, the villagers mostly resort to paying the fine. Those villages are:

(1) Yakhine-gyaung (south), (2) Yakhine-gyaung (north), (3) Tone-tin-kan (south), (4) Tone-tin-kan (north), (5) Shan-kan, (6) Taung-gyaung, (7) Thet-kae-gwin, (8) A-noe-gyaung, (9) Koe-daung, (10) Sut-chaung, (11) Po-phyu-gyaung, (12) Lade-gon and others. (Source: NLD)

Various taxes in Htantabin Township

During the rainy season of 1998, village and Ward administrators from the 26 village tracts from Kyun-ngu to Hlei-hseik in Htantabin Township, demanded that 1,500 to 4,000

kyat from every household be paid by February 27, 1999. The collections from the village tracts were made on various pretexts. The authorities in Yebyu village tract claimed the collection was for a census, another pretext was that the collection was for the Myawaddy Television Station, at another village it was alleged that the contribution was for the United Nations, and for most it was claimed the money was for re-enforcing local embankments with laterite. The villagers were threatened that if payment was not made by February, action would be taken, such as arrest and detention, or the families would be forced to dig rocks from the ocean. One very poor family in the Tha-baw-chaung village tract had to sell their children's clothing to meet the demand on them for 1,500 *kyat*. The villagers were also required to give free labour for the reconstruction of river embankments with laterite, the digging of laterite pits, and the carrying of the laterite to the embankments. If the villagers were unable to carry the laterite due to illness or being out of the locality, penalties were imposed. This penalty in Thabawchaung was 300 *kyat*, in A-lein-lei, 150 *kyat* and in Yay-dwin-gone it was 400 *kyat*. On February 26, 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*)

6.9 Situation in Mon State

Situation of Farmers in Mon State Forced to Grow 2 Paddy Crops

In November 1998, after the rainy season paddy harvest, the farmers of Kyaikmayaw, Moulmein, and Paung Townships intended to grow their normal dry season crops of peanuts and sesame. However, the authorities forced them to remove all the peanut and sesame plants that were already growing, and replace them with paddy in order that the farmers would grow a dry-season paddy crop. However, as it was the dry season, and no irrigation assistance was given by the authorities, the crops were unsuccessful. Therefore, in early 1999, the farmers suffered from the loss of both their normal sesame and peanut crops, as well as the rice due to the wrong instruction of the authorities. Those who were not able to give their quota for the harvest were fined, detained, or their land or belongings were confiscated.

Then again, in November 1999, the authorities issued an order for the farmers to grow a dry-season paddy crop, putting the farmers once more in a difficult situation. The government has still neglected to assist the farmers to get such necessary things as fertilizer, irrigation equipment, and water sources. Local battalions have, however, confiscated hundreds of acres of land to start their own cultivation projects. Since they are able to produce 2 paddy crops every year (both a rainy season and a dry season crop) due to government assistance and the conscripted labor of nearby villages, they expect the farmers to be able to do the same. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Agricultural Department Program in Mon State

In July 1999, although floods destroyed crops in Mon and Karen State, the authorities forced the villagers to sell 15 baskets of paddy per acre to the government paddy-buying

centers. If the villagers were unable to pay, the farmers were detained until they could pay, or their belongings were confiscated. Also in July, the SPDC instituted a new program for collecting the rice quota.

Under the new plan, the Agricultural Products Trade Department (APTD) in Mon State, in cooperation with the Myanmar Agriculture Bank, forces farmers to take an advance payment loan from the bank and sign contracts to sell their paddy back to the government at a low price. The APTD formed "Paddy-buying management committees" in all the Townships, which loan 2,000 *kyat* per acre to the farmers, contingent that they sell 15 baskets per acre to the government at 350 *kyat* per basket. If the farmers refuse or fail to sell the set amount of paddy to the centers, they will be arrested and detained as usual.

1)Mudon Township: In Mudon Township, there are 4 Town sections, and 42 villages, with 11 paddy-buying centers. The managing committee, led by U San Hlaing, the 2nd manager of the Township APTD, stated in September that they intended to buy 1.3 million baskets of paddy from the Township.

2)Thanbyuzayat Township: There are 4 Towns and 38 villages, with 6 paddy-buying centers. The managing committee, led by U shwe Yin, the manager of the Township APTD, stated in September that they intend to buy 800,000 baskets of paddy from the Township. The situation in the other Townships is similar. (*Source: HURFOM*)

The Paddy buying Plan for Year 2000 in Mon State

In year 2000, the authorities decided to increase the amount of paddy tax from farmers in Mon State. The authorities decided to buy 15 baskets of paddy per acre from farmers in Mudoen and Chaungzon Townships and 12 baskets of paddy per acre from farmers in Thanbyuzayat Township. In 1999, the authorities had set the quota at 8 baskets per acre in Ye Township area, 10 baskets per acre in Thanbyuzayat Township and 12 baskets per acre in Mudon and Chaungzon Township areas. Thus, in 2000, the quota increased about 15-20% from the last year. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Civilians pay for Military Agriculture Projects in Mon State

In 1997 over 1000 acres of land between Kayon Taung and Kaw Bwee Taung villages, Kyeikmaraw Township, Mon State were confiscated by the South-eastern Military Commander. The land was allocated to the military Battalions under the command of government departments, the Navy and the police force for self-reliant agricultural projects. However, the military battalions were unable to do the work themselves for the cultivation. So the military assigned civilians from the village tracts in the area to cultivate for them. Every village in Kyon Wan, Kyeik Paran, Mae Karo, Kaw Panaw, Kaw Bwee, Kadon See, Kwun Ngan, Hnee Don, Kaw Thatm Tarana, Than Galaung, Karon Letpan and Yaung Pin Seik village tracts were assigned to work ten acres of land each. Civilians were assigned all the work responsibility from plowing to harvest. As the civilians also have their own land to work for their survival, the village headmen collected money and hired people who were able to work on the military run projects. Therefore, each tract spends approximately 300,000 *kyat* every year for hiring people and other expenses. After the harvest every year, the military comes and takes the paddy away, leaving nothing for the civilians. (*Source: HRDU*)

“Social Tax” in Paung Township, Mon State

The residents of Paung Township are required to pay taxes to the Township PDC on a monthly basis. The tax is called a “social fund” by the authorities, but the funds are used only by the army and government officials. The amount of tax depends on the village size, but even a small village with only 100 houses is required to pay 15,000 *kyat* for this tax per month.

In addition, on September 22 1999, the PDC authorities of Paung Township, Mon State ordered the village headman of all villages and Towns in the Township to collect a fund, supposedly to support the Township Buddhist Association and the Township USDA. Small villagers were required to provide about 20,000 *kyat* and large villages up to 200,000 *kyat*. The Township headmen also collected a TV tax to go toward the same fund, forcing the owners of TV sets to pay 1,500 - 4,500 *kyat* per TV, depending on the TV size. The Township PDC received about 3 million *kyat* from the villagers. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Huge Taxation for 1999 Student Sports Festival in Mon State

Following the instruction of Southeast Region Military Command to collect funding for the celebration of 1999 Student Sport Festival in December held in Moulmein, Mon State, the local battalions of Mon State collected unusual taxes from **the local population**. The Southeast Command required a bout 80 millions *kyat* to celebrate this sport festival in Moulmein as planned. The higher authorities could only provide 20-25 per cent of this required fund and the rest was collected from the local populace in Mon State by force.

In June 1999, local SPDC military battalions, police and Township authorities organized concerts, traditional boxing and women football competitions, and aggressively coerced people to buy tickets. A great amount of funds raised in this way went into the pockets of military officials, according to the source. Millions of *kyat* went to the military battalions, while the local people suffered from the incredible taxes imposed upon them.

From June 5-6, SPDC IB 210 led by Lt.Col. Tin Hla staged a traditional boxing competition in Mudon Town sport stadium. Before the competition, the commander called a meeting with local village headmen and ward leaders. He instructed them to sell 100 tickets in each village or ward without fail. Some big villages were ordered to sell 300-500 tickets. Each ticket cost 500 *kyat*. He also ordered the leaders to collect 100-300 *kyat* from those who did not buy the tickets. By selling the tickets by force, the IB 210 was able to earn about 5 million *kyat*. A small percentage of the raised funds went to the boxers, but a huge amount went to the military.

Similarly in June, a concert was organized in Mudon by the No.2 Mechanical Engineering Battalion led by Lt. Col. Ye Din. The commander forced the local headmen and ward leaders to sell 10,000 tickets at price of 300 *kyat* per ticket in their areas without fail. Using the same fund-raising methods as the student sport festival, many other fund-raising concerts, sport competitions and traditional boxing competitions were held through Mon State. The local people did not have a way to escape from the forced buying method of all these events, but had to buy all these tickets even though they lived far from the event and could not go. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Illegal Tax Collection in Paung Township, Mon State

In Paung Township, Mon State, the authorities collect taxes, including portering fees from the people of the Township, under the name of “social expenses”. Through these taxes, the authorities are able to receive about 600,000 *kyat* every month. (*Source: HURFOM*)

6.10 Situation in Karen State

Situation in Taungoo District, Karen State

For two to three years now the villagers in the western plain of the district, Karen State have faced heavy burdens of forced labor on roads, army camps and the Pa Thee dam project, while some of their villages just east of Taungoo Town were forcibly relocated to make way for the dam. Things have been even worse for the hill villagers in the east of the district, as over the past two to three years the SPDC has steadily increased its troop presence in this previously inaccessible area. Several villages in the region were destroyed to force the people to move to SPDC-controlled areas, and villagers throughout the hills of Tantabin (Taw Ta Tu) Township were forced to build a road from Baw Ga Li Gyi (Kler Lah) to Bu Sah Kee, opening up much of southeastern Taungoo District to the SPDC troops. Several military camps were subsequently established along this road, at Kaw Thay Der, Naw Soe, Si Kheh Der and Bu Sah Kee. The new road is not passable during rainy season, so villagers have to do forced labor as porters carrying supplies to and from all of these Army camps, then they have to do forced labor rebuilding the road after every rainy season. They also face regular demands for Army camp labor from these units, and suffer from regular looting and extortion of money.

Battalions operating in the area include SPDC IB 26, 30, and 48, and LIB 535 and 707, all under the Southern Regional Command, and LIB 234 from the Western Regional Command. Their troops rotate every four months, and the Battalions are regularly changed; IB 39 was there in 1998 but was replaced by IB 48. There is one Strategic Command (usually consisting of 3 Battalions) from the *Na Pa Ka*, which is the Western Regional Command based in Arakan (Rakhine) State of western Burma, and there have been reports of troops from the Rangoon Military Command in the area as well. The Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), a Karen armed forces, is active in the hill areas of most of the district, performing guerrilla operations, harassment and ambush of SPDC columns. The Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) and other SPDC proxy armies are not present in the region.

Like in other areas, the SPDC forces try to undermine the KNLA activities by targeting the villagers. Most villages which do not have an SPDC camp and are not along vehicle roads have been ordered to relocate; more than ten villages have been ordered to move to Baw Ga Li Gyi (Kler Lah) alone since the beginning of 1998. Rather than move as ordered, most people still stay in their villages or the surrounding forests, dodging the SPDC patrols which come through the area. Those who moved as ordered were provided with nothing at the relocation sites and could only build small bamboo huts in which to live. Unable to farm or earn a living and with no support, many of them have fled back to the

forests around their villages. People found hiding in areas around the outlying villages and villages which are perceived as uncooperative have been treated brutally. Villagers found in their fields in outlying areas are either grabbed to be porters, shot dead or brutally executed and robbed on the spot. (Source: *KHRG*)

Situation in the “Peace Villages”

Whenever the SPDC troops are attacked or otherwise suffer military setbacks in the ‘black’ areas, they tend to retaliate in the easiest way possible: by going back to the ‘brown’ villages and demanding cash compensation, arresting elders, executing villagers, or burning houses. After suffering this for years on end, having no control over it and seeing no end in sight, the elders of many villages in the ‘brown’ areas made their own informal agreements with local SPDC commanders: they gave promises not to help the resistance forces in any way, to report on all movements and activities of the resistance forces and to fully and quickly comply with any and all orders of the SPDC, and in return they were given assurances that they would not be arrested, their villagers would not be tortured or executed, their village would not be forced to move and their homes would not be burned. Villages which have made such agreements are generally dubbed ‘*Nyein Chan Yay*’ (‘Peace’) villages by SPDC commanders. In Taungoo District this includes most of the villages along the road from Taungoo to Kaw Thay Der, such as Thit Say Taung, Kler Lah (Baw Ga Li Gyi), Ler Ko (Kyaut Pon) and Kaw Thay Der (Yay Tho Gyi). The ‘Peace’ villages are ordered to live under all kinds of restrictions which make it difficult for many of the people there to tend their crops and earn a living.

Larger villages along the vehicle roads, such as Kler Lah (Baw Ga Li Gyi), Kaw Thay Der (Yay Tho Gyi) and Naw Soe, are under tight SPDC control and have Army bases adjacent to the village. These villages are known as ‘*Nyein Chan Yay*’ (‘Peace’) villages, in reference to an informal agreement existing between the village elders and the local military that they will cooperate with all SPDC demands and in return will not be forced to relocate or have their houses burned. The leaders of these villages receive constant demands for ‘porter fees’ and other forms of extortion money, food and materials. The Army also sends regular demands for porters, and to avoid sending people on long-term frontline portering duty the villages have to pool their money and pay labor agents to hire itinerant laborers from Taungoo Town to fill the Army’s demands. However, even after paying all this money the villagers regularly have to go for *ad hoc* forced labor portering Army rations to outlying camps; women often do this forced labor because the men fear that they will be held for several months if they go. The villages also have to provide rotating forced laborers for Army camp labor and as messengers. All vehicles transporting goods or passengers to and from Taungoo have to pay bribes to all of the SPDC checkpoints along the way. This causes the price of rice to be 1,000 *kyat* more per sack in Kler Lah than it is in Taungoo, and has also led to a shortage of transport because some drivers have left to find work elsewhere. Villages which are slow in complying with demands for money and forced labor are threatened with having their people and vehicles prohibited from travelling to Taungoo, or with having their homes burned, despite their designation as ‘Peace’ villages.

People in the ‘Peace’ villages have also had to do forced labor clearing the route for a new road from Taungoo to Mawchi, over 100 kilometers to the southeast in southern

Karenni (Kayah) State. A road already exists from Taungoo to Kler Lah, and they are now continuing this road towards Mawchi along the route of an old pre-war road. Much of the actual road construction is being done with bulldozers, but villagers have been forced to do all the initial clearing of the road route by hand. Many farmers with fields along the route could not plant a crop in 1998 for fear of being taken for additional forced labor by the soldiers along the road. Construction is still ongoing and is far from complete, and there have been reports that construction is also ongoing from the Mawchi end of the road using the forced labor of Karenni villagers.

The SPDC is currently intensifying its clampdown on the outlying areas of the district, and this results in even further restrictions on the 'Peace' villages. Even sleeping away from one's house at night can result in arrest for 'contact with insurgents'. In the brown areas of Taungoo District, the 'appropriate action' taken against such people usually means execution, or at the very least prolonged detention under torture. The prohibition against sleeping in farm huts makes life very difficult for villagers in the cropping season, especially those whose fields are a significant distance from the village. The restrictions on travel to Taungoo make it very difficult for traders to bring any goods into the area or for villagers to shop for required items in Town. In practice, this restriction is used to extort money from traders before allowing them to travel and to 'tax' everything they transport. In addition, there are at least six military checkpoints along the road from Baw Ga Li Gyi (Kler Lah) to Taungoo, and every checkpoint demands money or goods from passing drivers. To further worsen matters, the few vehicles in the villages are often commandeered by the military or banned from travelling the road whenever there are military operations ongoing, and whenever a village fails to send money or forced laborers as demanded one of the most frequently used punishments is to ban the people and vehicles of the village from travelling. There are very few vehicles in the villages to begin with, but some of the vehicle owners have already left to move to the plains because they can no longer face all these restrictions and pay all the extortionate fees required to transport people and goods to and from Baw Ga Li Gyi.

Education and health services available in the region are minimal. In the 'Peace' villages people have access to primary school, and to some higher levels in large villages such as Baw Ga Li Gyi, but all the costs must be paid by the parents and the curriculum is strictly Burman. People in the SPDC-controlled areas have access to basic medical facilities at Baw Ga Li Gyi and a few other places, but while these 'hospitals' have a doctor or two the villagers have to buy the medicines at high prices which most of them cannot afford. In addition, when people from the village are injured or killed during forced labour it is not the SPDC which pays to treat the injured or compensate the families of the dead, but the villagers themselves.

Situation in Nyaunglebin Township, Karen State

Nyaunglebin District (known in Karen as Kler Lweh Htoo) is one of the northern Karen districts, straddling the border of Karen State and Pegu Division (see maps on pages 4-5). It covers an area about 110 kilometres from north to south and averaging 40 kilometres from east to west, bounded by the Sittaung River in the west and the upper reaches of the Bilin River in the east. To the north lies Toungoo District, to the south Thaton District, to the

east Papun District, and to the west the heartland of Pegu Division and the Pegu Yoma hills.

Finding itself unable to suppress Karen resistance activity in the hills, in early 1997 the SPDC began a campaign to wipe out all Karen civilian villages in the Destrict. Where villagers could be found they were ordered to relocate westward into the plains; where they could not be caught, their villages were shelled without warning, looted and then burned to the ground, while villagers found afterwards were shot on sight. Most villagers fled into the hills to live in hiding in small groups of families while trying to grow small patches of rice, and many others moved westward as ordered into SPDC garrison villages in the plains, or to stay with relatives in the comparative safety of larger villages.

Many of those who fled to the plains found they could not survive there; they had no land to plant and there was little work to be found, because villagers in the plains were suffering heavily under the heavy extortion fees and crop quotas imposed by the SPDC military and civilian authorities. At the same time, the hill villagers found they were being used as forced labor by the SPDC much more in the plains, both at Army camps and on local infrastructure projects. Unable to survive under these conditions, many have fled back to their home villages in the hills, only to find that the clampdown on the hill areas is continuing. In most cases the hill villages have not been rebuilt because SPDC patrols continue to move through the area destroying whatever structures they find, destroying rice stockpiles and crops in the fields, shooting livestock and shooting villagers on sight. Those living in the hills and those who have returned from the plains have no choice but to live in hiding in small groups, usually near their home villages or their old hill fields. They try to grow small crops, forage for food in the forest and flee further into the hills whenever SPDC patrols come near.

The SPDC has increased its military presence in the area in an attempt to increase its control in the hills to the east, and these troops are placing ever-increasing demands for extortion money, crop quotas and forced labour on the civilians. The SPDC in Rangoon is no longer sending them full rations and has ordered them to grow their own food or take it from the villagers; as a result, not only are they taking food from the villagers, but they are also taking their land and forcing them to work to grow food for the Army. At the same time, crop quotas which all farmers must hand over to the SPDC have increased and the corruption of the civilian authorities who collect the crop quotas has grown worse. The farmers might be able to survive this in good years, but most of them have suffered partial or complete crop failures for the past two years running due to droughts when they need rain, followed by floods once the crop is planted. The combination of the crop failures and the increased demands has made it impossible to survive. As though this were not enough, many have found they have to flee a new SPDC force which has been introduced in the area: the *Sa Thon Lon* Guerrilla Retaliation death squads.

The *Sa Sa Sa*, or *Sa Thon Lon*, is the Bureau of Special Investigations of the SPDC's Directorate of Defense Services Intelligence (DDSI), and its Guerrilla Retaliation squads have been handpicked from Battalions based in the region, reportedly under the direct orders of DDSI chief Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt. They began operations in the region in or around September 1998, and currently operate in the plains area east of the Sittaung River, covering Shwegyin, Kyauk Kyi and Mone Townships. The Guerrilla Retaliation squads operate secretly in small groups, but with a clearly stated purpose: to execute without question everyone suspected of any present or past connection with the KNU or KNLA,

regardless of how long ago or how slight that connection may have been. Their obvious purpose is to deliver a message to villagers that any contact whatsoever with resistance forces will be punishable by death, if not now then 10 or 20 years from now. They have already executed dozens of villagers both in the plains and the hills, both Karens and Burmans, guilty and innocent, and the terror they create is now driving many to flee their villages even if they have had no contact with the opposition. Recently they have expanded their operations northward into Tantabin Township of southern Toungoo District, and they have also begun searching for people on the western side of the Sittaung River. This combined with all the other forms of oppression the villagers are suffering has driven them beyond their endurance, and villages in the plains as well as the hills are now breaking up.

It began appearing in the villages of western Nyaunglebin District in September 1998. The force only consists of an estimated 200 troops but they have been handpicked and specially trained. Operating in small sections of 5 to 10 soldiers, they are very secretive, moving by night from village to village. Their self-stated purpose is to summarily execute every villager who has ever had any kind of contact with resistance forces, whether at present or long in the past. They have been carrying out this function brutally, shooting, stabbing, and often beheading their victims and dumping their bodies in the rivers.

As in the rest of Burma, villagers in the plains near the Sittaung River all have to hand over a portion of their crops to the SPDC authorities. This applies both to people still living and farming in their home villages and to those living in relocation sites but commuting to farm their own land. For the crop harvested at the end of 1998, the quota rate was 15 baskets of paddy (unhusked rice) per acre of flat irrigated paddy field, and 12 baskets per acre of hillside ricefield (one basket of paddy weighs approximately 20 kilograms, and when milled produces about ½ basket of rice, which weighs 16.5 kilograms). The SPDC paid 300 *kyat* per basket for this quota paddy, while local market price at the same time was 520-600 *kyat* per basket. In a good year, one acre of flat paddy field can produce only 40-50 baskets, so this is a sizable portion of the crop. However, in the 1998 season many farmers lost over half their crop and some lost almost their entire crop due to early lack of rain followed by floods; others only had enough seed to plant part of their fields because of debt caused by 1997 crop failures and SPDC extortion, and some lost part or all of their crop because of restrictions on movement or fear of SPDC and *Sa Thon Lon* Guerrilla Retaliation units. No exceptions or reductions were made for any of these farmers, with the result that many had to sell their livestock and valuables or go even further into debt in order to buy paddy at market price and then hand it over as their quota. When they asked for quota reductions because of the failure of their crops some were told by SPDC officials, "We don't care if your bucket has a hole in it, just bring us the water." In the end, many have been left with no valuables, large debts, and nothing to eat but boiled rice soup - a thin gruel which families eat to try to make what little rice they have last longer.

To make it worse, the local quota collection officials are extremely corrupt and the Army demands additional quotas from some farmers. The written law in Burma decrees that all land belongs to the state. A farmer from xxxx explained that his field to the west of the Mone - Kyauk Kyi road was designated as property of the Township Peace & Development Council, while his field to the east of the road was designated as property of the Army; for the Township land he had to give 12 baskets per acre at 300 *kyat* per basket, but for the Army land he had to give 10 baskets for an acre to the local Battalion with no

payment whatsoever. In addition, the Township officials use several transparent tricks to steal much of the villagers' paddy and money. When farmers bring their 12 or 15 baskets per acre, the officials often claim that it's not 'clean', i.e. that it contains bits of straw and impurities, and either winnow it a second time or calculate a reduction in the number of baskets to be paid for. They then deduct a portion of the paddy which they say will be a 'donation to the temple', and reduce the payment appropriately, though it is very unlikely that this paddy will ever be given to any temple. An additional 4 bowls (a quarter basket) of paddy or husked rice per acre is then demanded for the Township Peace & Development Council without payment, and a cash service charge is deducted from the amount to be paid to the farmer. Sometimes even more deductions are made. In the end, most farmers are paid for no more than two thirds of the paddy which they are forced to bring, and at only 300 *kyat* per basket. The officials take all the paddy, probably log it as all having been paid for, and can keep the extra rice they confiscate for the Township as well as one third or more of the cash for themselves. The villagers are fully aware that this is simply corruption, but they do not dare complain for fear of arrest. They have no choice but to pay the quota as demanded, and they must do so before the deadline of April 1 each year.

Some villages are also paying heavy monthly or yearly fees to local Battalions to hold off orders for forced relocation. Ter Bpaw and Po Thaug Su villages in Mone Township paid 300,000 *Kyat* each to avoid being forced to move several years ago but could not pay again, so they were forced to move to Thit Cha Seik. Yay Leh village, a larger village also in southern Mone Township, is reportedly still paying to avoid being moved, as is Zee Byu Gone in Tantabin Township. Whenever fighting between SPDC and resistance forces occurs, nearby villages are also heavily fined as part of the punishment. In January 1999, *Sa Thon Lon* Guerrilla Retaliation troops called a meeting and told villagers in Kyauk Kyi Township that they would be fined 100,000 *kyat* for each gun lost by the *Sa Thon Lon* in fighting in their area, in addition to other punishments such as executions and forced relocation.

Fees are usually demanded through the village headperson, who must distribute the burden of the extortion fees among the households of the village. Usually only the village head and a few others are exempt, such as the village secretary and the pastor. The burden is so heavy that all other households must pay, even widows and others who have great difficulty supporting themselves. When troops take livestock, food, alcohol and other such things, money is often collected from all the villagers to compensate those who have been robbed, though often it is the village head who must provide these things and pay for them out of his/her own pocket. Whenever demands are not met, it is the village head who is immediately arrested, detained and physically punished. The expense and physical risk of being a village head make it difficult to find people who are willing to do the job, so some villages have implemented a system to rotate the headman's duties every week or every month between themselves. In some Burman or part-Burman villages the situation is more stable for the village head, and here the village heads often become part of the corruption; if the troops demand 1,000 *kyat* from each household they will demand 1,200 or 1,500 *kyat* and keep the balance for themselves.

In order to make it impossible for the villagers to survive or to support the resistance, the SPDC columns are also systematically trying to destroy their food supplies. After villagers harvest their paddy, they winnow it, dry it and then store it in paddy storage barns, which are small sheds measuring about 2 metres square, raised on posts and filled entirely by a woven

bamboo paddy storage bin. In recent decades, their fear of Burmese troops and the regular need to flee to the forest has caused most of them to hide their paddy storage barns deep in the forest, only keeping a portion of their supply in the village at any given time. When SPDC columns approach the village, people have no time to save their rice or paddy, so the troops take it or deliberately destroy it when they arrive in the village. They also hunt for the villagers' paddy storage barns in the forest, and whenever they find them they either burn them along with all of the paddy, or tear them down and scatter the paddy on the ground to be destroyed by dirt and animals. Sometimes if the owners return from their hiding place soon afterward they can salvage some of the paddy which is scattered on the ground, but usually only a small portion of it.

The SPDC columns also shoot the villagers' livestock whenever they see it in the village or the fields, and either eat it or leave it to rot. One villager from a hill village in Kyauk Kyi Township told KHRG that in his area the troops cut open one side of the cattle and buffaloes they had shot, just to make sure the meat would be destroyed by insects or rot before the villagers could get to it. During the rice growing season, SPDC columns which see rice crops growing in the hills often go into the fields and pull up the plants or beat and stomp them down with machetes and Army boots in order to destroy the crop. In Khoh Lu village of Kyauk Kyi Township in August 1998, an SPDC column cut and bundled the entire crop of several farmers, then threshed the unripe grain from the stalks onto the ground to destroy it. Another Column used the same method to destroy much of the crop at Kler Kee village in November 1998. The hillside rice fields are impossible to conceal, though fortunately for the villagers the Columns often do not have the time to stop and destroy more than a portion of the crop. When harvest time comes the Army columns seem to step up their activities, possibly with the intention of driving the villagers away from their crop at this crucial time. It is common for villagers to lose much of their crop because SPDC Columns are too close to their fields just when the rice is ready for harvest.

For the villagers in hiding in and around their hill villages, the key factor is food. As long as they can somehow obtain food they feel that they can survive, even if they regularly have to avoid SPDC patrols. For this reason they try to stay near their farmfields unless it is absolutely impossible, and if they cannot then they try to establish new fields elsewhere. Unfortunately, rice fields are very visible to SPDC patrols and very vulnerable, and the villagers often have their crop destroyed by an SPDC patrol or they have to flee at a crucial point in the crop cycle. Even after the harvest is in, there is always the danger of SPDC troops finding the hidden paddy storage barns and destroying the food supply. For these reasons, villagers in the hills often have little or nothing to eat.

The Situation of Farmers in KawKareik Township, Karen State

In the Kawkareik Township area, farmers were instructed to give a paddy tax to the government of 8 baskets per acre. They were instructed to take this amount of paddy to the paddy-buying centers, and the officials of these centers set the deadlines for the farmers to bring in the tax. In the Township area, as the local farmers had been ordered to work on farmlands owned by government officials, they had little time to work in their own fields. The farmers had been instructed since June of 1998 to work, on a rotation basis, on the government farms. The farmers and their oxen were forced to work at least 3 days a week.

Therefore, the farmers were forced to hire people to help them work on their own farms, incurring more cost for the farmers. There was also a flood, so for the January 1999 harvest, the farmers were unable to give the full amount of the paddy tax to the government. Subsequently, many farmers were arrested and detained until their families gave the tax. Often the family members were forced to sell belongings in order to buy paddy to give for the tax. (*Source: HURFOM*)

The Situation of Farmers in Kyer-Ein-Seik-Kyi Township, Karen State

In the last dry season (from December 1998 to June 1999), the local farmers were required to grow a dry-season paddy crop. Two Battalions in the area, LIB 284 and IB 32, cultivated a dry season harvest with the material assistance of the government and the labor assistance of the Township people. The Township was also required to provide them with fertilizer. In the Township area, however, many poor farmers are unable to cultivate such a crop as the soil is poor in the dry season, and they have no irrigation equipment or assistance from the government. For the rainy season harvest, the authorities required 30,000 baskets of paddy from the entire Township area, and ordered about 30 Mon villages between the Zami and Winyaw rivers to give 20,000 baskets of paddy. In February 1999, the authorities sent an order complaining that the full tax had not been given, and demanding the remainder be sold at once. Then on May 5, 1999, the Township authorities ordered the 30 Mon villages to give 5,000 baskets as their dry season paddy tax, which they didn't have due to low crop production and the difficulties of a dry season crop. The villagers then had to pay 750 *kyat* per basket in substitution for the paddy. [*However, when the authorities buy paddy from villagers, they pay only 350 kyat per basket*]. (*Source: HURFOM*)

The Situation of Farmers in Pa-an Township, Karen State

In the Pa-an Township area, there are about 20 Mon villages and 30 Karen villages. For the 1998-99 rainy season crop, the authorities required that 80,000 baskets of paddy be sold to them at low prices from the Township. They also required that the farmers give them 10 baskets per acre in tax. In addition, the farmers in the area are required to give a rice tax to the local SPDC Battalions as well as the DKBA troops in the area. The DKBA tax is illegal, and amounts to about 1 basket of paddy per family per month, but is allowed by the SPDC in order to keep good relations with their DKBA allies. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Heavy Tax Collection on the Pa-an- Myawaddy Motor Road

Beginning in November 1999, the Karen State's various departments including army, police and intelligence unit created a check-point between Kawkareik and Paan Towns to collect tax from ferry trucks. About 1500-2500 *kyat* from each truck, which passes their checkpoint, and all trucks, which run forth and back between Myawaddy and Paan have to pay this tax. Besides the official tax paid to the checkpoint to the authorities, the ferry trucks also have to pay each army or militia outpost along the road. There are about 20 outposts along this road, each ferry truck has to pay tax 100-300 *kyat* for each outpost. Thus, according to the truck drivers, one truck has to pay about 5000-10000 *kyat* in total taxes to both

checkpoints and many other security outposts. As the ferry trucks have to pay huge amount of tax, they have again increased the ferry fares for passengers. Therefore, passengers travelling on the road have to pay higher fares, and also waste their time because of the many stops made by soldiers and militias. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Unusual tax collection in Gyaing River area

When the SPDC ordered its local battalions to raise funds by their own means, in November 1999, a new tax collection method was introduced to the fishermen of Gyaing River.

Fishing is a traditional way of life for local people along the Gyaing River that flows from Karen State, passes through Mon State and flows into Andaman Sea. Now, since November 1999, a huge amount of tax has been demanded from the fishermen for fishing permission in the Gyaing River by SPDC's Kawkareik Township authorities of Karen State.

The amount of tax varies depending on the size of fish-boat and types of fishing nets. Fishermen in the region are required to pay between 1000-2,500 *kyat* per month to the police officer, Major Min Tun, whose base is the Karit village police station. About 250-300 fishermen from villages such as Kawbein, Kaw Pauk, Kawgu, Karit, Kaw Kataw, Thayetaw, Kanni, Gyaing and Than Hlae villagers were ordered to pay the required tax. The amount of this new tax has put a big burden on the fishermen because most of them only earn 3,000-4,000 *kyat* per month.

After the fishermen pay the tax to the police, they are given a permission letter to fish in the river. Those who are arrested without permission are punished with confiscation of their fishing nets and boat. Under this condition, the poor fishermen who don't have enough cash to pay the tax must stop their traditional occupation and face hardship for the survival of their families. Some of them have abandoned their work and migrated to Thailand to seek new jobs. (*Source: HURFOM*)

DKBA tax in Pa-an Township

Many villagers from Mon villages, such as Zathapyin, Thanhlae, Khyaya-ahtwin, Khayar-apyin, Kawlamu and Kronebar in Pa-an Township, Karen State are forced to pay taxes to the DKBA. For much of 1999, DKBA battalions No. 3 and 4 collected 200 *kyat* per household per month for the expenses of their office and troops. (*Source: HURFOM*)

Taxes for the army in KyaEinSeikKyi Township

In July 1999, when IB 32 built a camp in KyaEinSeikKyi Town, Maj. Nyein Chann Aung, of IB 32 issued an order which forced the villages close to the Town to provide free laborers for the construction. For the villages that were far from the Town, such as Win-yaw-seikyi, Miparan, Hteepho-naing, Phaya-nga-su and Naung-tae villages, the village headmen were instructed to send bamboo, tree poles, or money to the army for the construction. For the villages quite far from the construction site, the villagers were instructed to pay money instead of bamboo, at the substitute rate of 30 *kyat* per bamboo tree required.

In early September, IB 32 had asked for 4 laborers from Winyaw village, but later

the commander Lt. Col. Ko Ko Aung instructed the village headmen that they would take only 2 laborers, and they wanted the headman to pay money for the other 2 laborers at 8,000 *kyat* per head. In addition, IB 32 has regularly demanded porter fees, with the amount of the fee depending on the size of the village. A village with 300 households, such as Than-baya village has to pay 20,000 *kyat* in porter fees every month.

Also in the Township, when the so-called Karen Peace Organization (KPO) took base in Than-paya village they forced the local villages to build their camp. In addition to the labor, the villages, including Nanpahpaw, Hteepauklo, Shwe-la-inn, Dayae-gwin, Thayet-gone and Kha-thwin-suu were instructed to provide a regular tax. Since June, each village in the Than-paya village tract has been required to pay 4,000 - 10,000 *kyat* per month, supposedly so that the KPO can hire labourers to take the security of the bridges along the road from Chaung-htitkwa to Kya Inn Seikyi Town. (*Source: HURFOM*)

6.11 Situation in Shan State

Villagers With Dry Fields Forced To Sell Rice In Murng-Su, Shan State

SPDC authorities in Murng-Su Township, Shan State have been diverting water from Nam Su river to gem mines nearby. Previously the Nam Su river had been the main source of water that fed the rice fields in the areas of the following villages in Murng-Su Township:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Murng Zaang | 10. Na Wai |
| 2. Ho Pung | 11. Nawng Aep |
| 3. Huay Hoe | 12. Pha Ya |
| 4. Ho Seng | 13. Wan Saw |
| 5. Nam Tawng | 14. Hai Pa |
| 6. Maw Mae | 15. Paang Zoi |
| 7. Wan Loi | 16. Na Zaam |
| 8. Loi Naa | 17. Kung Kyawng |
| 9. Murng Awt | |

Because of the severe shortage of water, the farmers in the areas were not able to cultivate the land and more than 700 acres of rice fields have been abandoned. However, the SPDC authorities are still demanding that they sell their rice quotas to them. The farmers in the areas are obliged to sell 15,000 baskets of rice at a price of 350 *kyat* per basket while the market price is over 560 *kyat*. (*Source: SHRF*)

Land Confiscation In Mu-Se

In early 1999, a wide area of rice fields on the border with China, belonging to the people in Mu-Se Township, was confiscated by the SPDC military authorities in the name of Ngwe Sin (Silver Elephant) Company for a high tech building project. At least 51 families in Mu-Se Township lost hundreds of acres of their ancestral land to this project alone. (*Source: SHRF*)

Land Confiscation And Extortion In Kaeng-Tung

In early 1999, SPDC troops of IB245 confiscated 60 acres of rice fields from the Shan villagers of Wan Pawm, Tin Thaath and Waeng Sun villages in Kaeng-Tung, Shan State. After that, the troops forced the villagers in the area to lease the land to grow rice at the rate of 2,000 *kyat* per acre per year or for one harvest. (*Source: SHRF*)

6.12 Situation in Karenni (Kayah) State

Between April and July 1996, relocation orders were issued by the SLORC (renamed the SPDC in November 1997) to at least 182 villages in Karenni (Kayah) State. The villages affected by the forced relocations account for well over half of the geographic area of the State and are home to at least 20,000-30,000 people. The orders demand that the villagers move to military-controlled sites within 3-7 days. The main reason for the gathering of the villagers into these relocation sites was to bring the civilian population under tight military control and to prevent the villagers from being able to provide any support to the Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP). The other resistance groups in Karenni, the Karenni Nationalities People's Liberation Front (KNPLF), the Kayan New Land Party (KNLP) and the Shan Nationalities People's Liberation Organisation (SNPLO) have already made ceasefire agreements with the SLORC. The KNPP, a notably larger and older resistance force than the others, made a ceasefire agreement with the SLORC in March 1995. However, the SLORC used the premise of the ceasefire to move its troops into offensive positions and then broke the ceasefire in June 1995 by launching an offensive against the KNPP. By the end of March 1996 the SLORC had taken all of the main KNPP bases near the Thai border. The KNPP reorganised and sent guerrilla columns throughout Karenni to disrupt SLORC forces, and the SLORC responded by commencing the mass forced relocations. Fighting has been ongoing ever since, despite the false SLORC/SPDC claim that the KNPP surrendered in 1995 and that there has been no fighting in Karenni since then. Currently the bulk of the fighting is located in the southeastern part of the state.

At least 20,000-30,000 people have been displaced, forced to move into military-controlled camps where many of them have been starving and dying of disease, or to flee into hiding in the forest where they face similar suffering as well as the possibility of being shot on sight by SLORC/SPDC patrols. Some have escaped to Thailand but the vast majority are still struggling to survive in the relocation sites or in hiding in the forests near their destroyed villages. There is no sign that their situation will improve anytime soon, as the SPDC continues its campaign aiming at the complete military control of Karenni State and the obliteration of all possibilities of resistance.

Immediately following the largest of wave of forced relocations in June/July 1996, about 3,000 people made their way to existing Karenni refugee camps in Thailand. After the following few months of the rainy season another 1,300 arrived. Since then there has only been a slow trickle of refugees coming into the camps, 1-3 families at a time. In January 1998 some larger groups, consisting of 60 or 70 people, reached the camps. Groups of this size came again in March of the same year. However, since January 1999 over 1,500 refugees have arrived in the Karenni refugee camps in Thailand. The overwhelming reason for this sudden, large migration seems to be a shortage of food as a result of the unpredictable

weather and inability to work farms out of fear of being shot or enslaved by the Burmese Army.

The only immediately available option to slowly starving to death in the relocation sites is to flee to the jungle where life can be even more difficult. The perimeters of the relocation sites are largely left unguarded and the fences that the villagers are often forced to build are primarily around the army camps and not the actual relocation sites. The troops are lax in securing the camp perimeters mainly because they realise that the villagers have no choice but to go and forage for food outside the camps. This opportunity is often used by the villagers to flee the relocation site and go into hiding in the jungle, usually near their old villages.

However, the only alternative is to flee into the jungle and jungle life offers up many new problems. Not only is food still a difficulty, but also the same problems of health care and education are greatly exacerbated while hiding in the jungle. Army patrols sweeping out on “clean up” missions must be watched for at the cost of lives. If the villagers are found in the jungle they are often killed immediately or abused first and then killed. This often results in the villagers living in small groups of 1-4 families to be less detectable.

A KNPP officer has informed KHRG that the military patrols that once swept regularly through the Mawchi area killing anything and anyone they saw have now been reduced to approximately one patrol every three months. This reduction in the number of patrols may indicate that even the SPDC soldiers are aware that the people remaining in the jungle can only be few and hardly pose any threat. According to the same KNPP source, these “mopping up” patrols are still going out on a weekly basis in the Shadaw area. When patrols come near the villagers must quickly move to a new hiding place, so the villagers have to move a few times a month or even a few times a day depending on the number of patrols. Often when two groups of villagers see each other moving in the jungle they mistake each other for SPDC troops and flee in fear. Even when they meet and talk, they sometimes do not dare share the location of their hiding places for fear that SPDC troops may capture and interrogate them. These factors make it difficult for villagers to get together or pool their resources, such as food and knowledge of escape routes, in any way.

Most villagers are determined to survive as long as they can near their land but that often proves to be futile. One of the major problems in getting from the jungle to the Thai border is that people simply don't know which way to go. In particular, the people in the southwest corner of Karenni, around Mawchi, have a very long way to go to get to the Thai border and the threat of being seen and killed is all too real. The fear and distrust that the Army patrols have engendered in the villagers living in the forest also poses a problem for those wishing to find refuge in Thailand. The villagers are afraid to confront or join with one another for fear of informers or detection and this reduces their options when looking for people to help lead them towards the Thai border. KNPP soldiers often help the villagers to find their way, but there are a lot of areas which the KNPP soldiers can't reach. Often villagers will follow merchants who have been previously to the Thai border. Some of the villagers in the north of Karenni State head into Shan State to find their way to Thailand, but that route is no easier to travel. The trip offers many obstacles which pose a particular problem for the sick and elderly. There are many hills on the way to the border, rivers have no bridges, and the boats that were once available to ferry people across are gone. When the villagers are fleeing to the Thai border, they have to travel at night and away from roads

to avoid detection by the Army. One common meeting point for villagers who are fleeing seems to be along the banks of the Salween River. Many villagers have reported joining larger groups of people by the river and then continuing to Thailand together.

The trip to the Thai border can take up to 3 weeks, and in the case of villagers coming from the Mawchi area it can take up to 2 or 3 months. However, many villagers from the Mawchi area don't dare to make the dangerous trip to the Thai border and are instead taking their chances holding out in the jungle, a choice which is resulting in many deaths from starvation and disease. People often run out of food on the way, but there is no access to additional food along the way except by sharing with other people who are in the same circumstances or borrowing food from villages which they happen to pass. Most of the villagers arrive at the refugee camps in a state of malnutrition and very poor health.

The future of the villagers, both in the relocation sites and in the jungle, looks bleak if the situation continues in its current direction. The SPDC has made it clear that nothing less than unconditional surrender will be accepted from the KNPP and so the fighting continues. With the weather patterns in the region continuing to be erratic, it is difficult to predict whether the rice crop in 1999 will be successful, or a complete failure as it has been for the past two years. Even with good growing weather it is very unlikely that villagers in most of Karenni will have the required seed paddy or safe access to their fields, both of which are essential if they are to produce any crop at all. All of their villages have been destroyed and all of the food reserves are long since used up. Food is scarce and the death rate due to starvation and minor illnesses is only likely to increase unless something is done soon. The SPDC appears to have no intention but to continue on with business as usual. There are even indications that they may start building more new roads, which would all be built with forced labour and would therefore put further strain on the already very desperate situation for the villagers. The villagers are starving and aren't able to move anywhere without the risk of being arrested and forced to work or simply shot on sight. Fundamental political change in Burma still seems to remain the only hope, albeit remote, for these people.

6.13 Situation in Saigaing Division

Situation for Rice Cultivators in Kawlin Township

The 1999 paddy crop in Kawlin Township, Saigaing division had to be sold at *kyat* 350 per basket calculated at 10 baskets per acre. An additional cupful (measured in one condensed milk tin) had to be given free for every basket. Kawlin Township harvested 60,000 acres, so over 600,000 baskets of paddy had to be sold and a total of 4600 baskets had to be supplied gratuitously. Calculated at *kyat* 600 per basket (open market rate), the loss totals over *kyat* 2,760,000. (*Source: NLD*)

Land Confiscation for the Mandalay-Myitkyina Highway

Lt.-Col Than Han (Chairman of District Administrative body) has visited the villages in Kant-ba-lu Township, Saigaing division 5 times in order to threaten and persuade people to sign over their land for the construction of the highway. The authorities have plans to acquire by force approximately 6300 acres of land in the villages of Pay-gyi, Kha-ohn-bar,

Nge-pyaw-taing, Phoke-kone, Htauk-sha-ain in Kant-ba-lu Township. (*Source: NLD*)

Extortion for a Fire Engine in Wuntho Township

In early 1999 U Than Tun, the previous Chairman of the PDC in Wuntho Township, Sagaing division, demanded 300 *kyat* from about ten thousand households to purchase a fire engine. However, the fire engine was never bought, nor the money accounted for. The new chairman, U Khin Maung Swe then claimed that money collected from the people was in fact not collected, as there was no fire engine or evidence of the collected money. He then proceeded to collect 100 *kyat* from each household in order to repair an old fire engine that was donated from Katha Township. (*Source: NLD*)

Situation for Wheat Farmers in Myaung, Sagaing Division

In 1999, wheat farmers in Myaung, Sagaing Division were ordered (by authorities who claimed that they were acting under instructions of the area military commander) for the 3rd year in a row to cultivate 5000 acres of cotton instead of wheat. This crop is significantly less productive than wheat, with losses of up to 40,000 *kyat* per acre. (*Source: NLD*)

Villagers in Haikhal village, Sagaing Division Pay to get their Confiscated Land back

In 1999, Chin villagers, consisting of over 200 households from Haikhawl village, Sagaing Division, had to pay 50,000 *kyat* per household to make a request to the Falam District PDC to cultivate their land again. 6000 acres was confiscated by the military in 1997. The military tried to cultivate the land by using convicts labourers and soldiers, but due to their inexperience, the hardship, and malaria, they were not successful, and the land had been lying unused. (*Source: CHRO*)

Extortion in Myaung Township

The authorities have collected by force a total of approximately 5 million *kyat* at the rate of *kyat* 50 per acre from 50,000 acres of 85 villages in 52 village tracts in the Township. What they have done with the money no one knows. Those who do not own any land, and those who are in service have to pay an average of 100 *kyat* per household, and traders or brokers have to pay 200 *kyat*. The Township authorities have issued orders threatening action against those who fail to make payment within the prescribed period. (*Source: NLD*)

6.14 Situation in Chin State

Villagers Threatened With Land-Mines

Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) from IB 274 Lungler camp, Thantlang Township, Chin State are roaming around villages, threatening to plant land mines on the

main roads and surrounding areas. When the villagers plead against this, the army demands money from them. Soldiers from IB 274 are using this tactic to get money from the villagers. (Source: CHRO)

6.15 Situation in Mandalay Division

Tax for the International airport Road, Ta-Da-Oo Township

A collection of *kyat* 15 per horse drawn cart, *Kyat* 20 per bicycle, *kyat* 50 per motor vehicle (small), *kyat* 100 per motor vehicle (big) travelling on the road is taken allegedly for the construction of the road, which is in reality being built, in part, with the use of forced labour. (Source: NLD)

6.16 Situation in Magwe Division

In January 1999, the authorities ordered villagers living in the western side of Pakkoku Township to clear all their crops (without compensation), within a month, and give voluntary labour in digging canals for the implementation of a new project. The villages affected included Koke-ko-hla, Ywar-thit-kone, Sei, Sin-lan, Tha-phan-pin, Kyun-nyo, Kan-hla and others extending up to Myit-chay Township. Another burden that has to be born by these cultivators in the Pakkokku district is the compulsory requirement to grow sunflowers for sunflower seeds. The seeds harvested has to be made over to the authorities for a nominal price which is then sold at a much higher price resulting in a loss of *kyat* 170 a *pyi* for the cultivator. It is the authorities who enjoy the profits. Any view expressed is considered as obstructing the project for which one could be arrested. One such action was against U Tin Shwe, chairman of the administrative unit of Nyaungbin village, Myit-chay Township. (Source: NLD)

Situation in Wakhem Township

In Wakhem Township, cultivators are forced to buy fertilizer from authorities at 2,000 *kyat* per bag, and diesel at 480 *kyat* per gallon, then pay an additional 200 *kyat* tax to the district PDC. Also, when cultivators do not want to sow a summer paddy crop, they have to pay from between 3000 and 5000 *kyat*. In addition, the authorities confiscate land at will, for whatever reason they choose. In early 1999 the Education department confiscated seventy four acres in Thar-yar-gone village, Wakema Township for their Welfare General Fund. (Source: NLD)

6.17 List of Incidents

◆ In January officers from Infantry Regiment 273, based in The Chaung, Yephyu Township, Tenasserim Division, ordered that each household in 11 villages in the area sell two baskets of rice to the army. The army paid only 100 *kyat* per basket. The requirement was particularly difficult for non-farmers to meet, as they had to buy rice at inflated prices

to sell to the army. (*Source: ABSDF*)

◆ In January 1999, despite the drought that caused farmers in Padaung Township, Pegu division the authorities forced the farmers to sell their quota of rice to the army. They were required, at great hardship and personal cost, to sell 12 baskets of rice per acre at a price of 32,000 *kyat*. The market price is 60,000 *kyat*. The farmers were threatened that if they did not deliver the paddy by a fixed date, they would be arrested. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ In January 1999, around 2000 acres of land between Chin Su village, Kalay Township and Tantat village, Tunzan Township, Chin State were confiscated by the Kalay Township Chairman Major Thein Htun. (*Source: ABSDF*)

◆ In January, the Commander of Burma Army North Western Command Brig-Gen Sein Win issued an order to the battalion commanders in Chin State- LIB 538, LIB 309, IB 274, IB 266, IB 268, and IB 269 to collect whatever rations they needed from the Chin people. The villagers have to deliver the orders to the army camp or where the patrolling troop is posted by fixed time. Sometimes the soldiers impose a fine of *kyat* 1,000 to 1,500 for late delivery or if they claim the food is not fresh. They also demand the villagers buy alcohol from Thantlang which is a 3 day walk from the village. The villagers do not have time to work in their farms because they are busy hunting, fishing and buying alcohol for the soldiers. Consequently, the villagers are extremely disappointed and are waiting for the opportunity to flee to Mizoram in India. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ In January 1999, in addition to the regularly collected water tax from 12 wards in Kyaukpadaung Township, Mandalay Division, 3000 *kyat* was being demanded for every water hydrant. The people do not know why this is being done. Despite payments of the tax, there is no water supply. Also in Kyaulpadaung Township, every household has had to pay 100 *kyat* for the Miss Beauty contest and 100 *kyat* for military training at the 78th Infantry Battalion. This military training is compulsory for four USDA members from every ward. Owners of toddy palm gardens have to pay 5 *kyat* for every tree, notwithstanding immaturity, or lack of yield. Payment had to be made to the Agricultural Bank by January 22, 1999. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ In January 1999 the villagers of Mindon Township, Magwe division, were ordered to sell 3 baskets per acre of split peas at the very low rate of *kyat* 150/- per basket. This had to be fulfilled without regard of crop failures due to pests and other causes. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ In early January 1999, Shan Bpu of the Sa Thone Lone troops burned down Lu Ah village, Mone Township, Karen State. He burned down the village because it was where his wife was from. He had ordered his wife, whom he forced to marry him in December of 1998 and had fled, to return to him. When she did not return, he first burned her father's house, then the entire village. The villagers are now in hiding. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ On January 1, 1999, troops from SPDC army IB 38,2 and a company led by Commander Than Htun went into Lay-Po-hat village, Karen State and forcibly collected 1,000 *kyat* from every household to make a devotional offering to Maw-lor-klo pagoda. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On January 3, 1999, troops from LIB 401, led by Major Thaw Min, entered Chabone village, Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division, and looted about 250 baskets of paddy. He entered every house in the village and instructed the farmers to put 10-20 baskets of paddy in a location in the middle of the village, then ordered the village headman to send the paddy to Kwethonyima village. The headman had to arrange oxen carts and boats in order to send

the paddy. The Major had promised 300 *kyat* per basket, but he did not pay. Later, the Commander of the Battalion ordered the villagers to send more paddy, but as they could not, they had to send 500 *kyat* per house instead. (*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ On January 4, 1999, SPDC LIB 442 issued an order imposing heavy taxes on farmers who grew sesame, peanut and other vegetables but rice on Laikha Township, Shan State. The farmers were required to give thirty percent of their farm product to the local military in the region. That order made things very difficult for many farmers who were already barely able to subsist on their vegetable farms. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On January 9, 1999, SPDC troops burned down eleven villages in Wan Ngaw village tract, Loikaw Township, Karenni State. The villages were destroyed following fighting between SPDC and Karenni rebel forces that had taken place in the area. (*Source: Karenni*)

◆ On January 9, 1999, SPDC army officer, Major Tin Hlaing arrested Saw De Taw Nor 32, of Ta-gor-kyo village, Pa-pun district, Karen State, and accused him of being a cattle trader. The Major released him after extorting 10,000 *kyat* from him as a fine. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On January 10, 1999, a patrol of about 25 SPDC troops from LIB316 led by Capt Myint Thu robbed 3 villagers of 2 buffalos at a place called Parng Mark Kawk in Murng Ko tract, Takhilaek Township, Shan State. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On January 16, 1999, SPDC's IB 227 ordered the villagers of Murng Nung, Murng Khart Township, Shan State to collect funds for the purchasing of a car for the commanders to use it making periodical and monthly inspection rounds in the area. All the 65 houses in Murng Nung had to provide 3,000 *kyat* each. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On January 18, 1999 2nd in command Than Htun of DKBA Battalion 1 demanded 1,000 pieces of thatch from each of Pah-hat, Pah-khee, Htee-wah-kalay, Htee-wah-pu, Plaw-po, Ta-roai-wah, Naung -ka-dok and Taweh-ban villages, Thaton district, Karen State. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On January 18, 1999, the 2nd Commander of LIB 504 based in Murng Wee Township, northern Shan State, led his troops about 30 km. from their camp. They met 2 trucks, stopped them, and found 6 tons of wood, owned by a local cease-fire group. He beat up the drivers and then ordered them to drive the wood to the military camp and pay the army 800,000 *kyat* within 2 days, or he would kill them and burn their truck. After the Commander received the money he released the men, but kept the wood and later sold it. (*Source: Palaung Youth Newsletter*)

◆ On January 19, 1999, 12 SPDC troops from LIB328 came to Murng Phen village tract in Murng-Yarng Township and shot dead 2 pigs belonging to the villagers of Wan Lom village and ordered the villagers to carry the carcasses to the military base in Murng Yarng. Murng Phen was in the territory of UWSA (United Wa State Army), a ceasefire group in control of the area which was supposed to be free from SPDC troops' oppression.

The villagers who lost their pigs were:

1. Loong Long, aged 45, lost 1 pig worth 6,000 *kyat*

2. Sai Num La, aged 39, lost 1 pig worth 7,000 *kyat* (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On January 20, 1999, Pah Ni Tho from DKBA went into Law-pa-waw village, Thaton district, Karen State and destroyed 2 villager's boats which were 6 metres long each, owned by You Po and Kwe Po respectively worth a total of 50,000 *kyat*. (*Source: KIC*)

- ◆ On January 23, 1999, Troops SPDC army IB 73 shelled the villagers who were hiding at Bway-baw-doe and Si-daw-kho area, Toun-goo district, Karen State with heavy weapons and burned down 4 huts at the villager's hide out and also destroyed 200 viss of betelnut. (*Source: KIC*)
- ◆ On January 25, 1999, Pah Ni Tho from DKBA for a 2nd time robbed Law-pa-waw village, Thaton district, Karen State. This time he looted 50,000 *kyat* from Naw Ka La and killed and ate 2 pigs owned by Saw Maung Nyo and also looted 33,000 *kyat* from him. In addition, he and troops with him burned down Saw Maung Nyo's hut. The DKBA troops also destroyed villager's crops in the fields nearby. (*Source: KIC*)
- ◆ On January 25, 1999, troops from IB 96 led by Battalion Commander Than Sein Win ordered 100 pieces of palm leaf thatch from each of the 200 households in Rai-thaw-khee, Ta-ya-day, pa-na-deh, Htee-pa-doe and Mae-praw-hta villages, Naung-le-bin Township, Karen State. Later the troops sold the thatch at 5 *kyat* per piece. (*Source: KIC*)
- ◆ On January 27, 1999, SPDC troops came to Kyo-mu-lay-doe village, Pa-Pun district, Karen State and burnt down 4 rice barns, destroying 322 baskets of paddy. These troops confiscated all the villagers' rice found and destroyed the amount they could not eat or carry. (*Source: KIC*)
- ◆ On January 31, 1999, SPDC troops came to Lay-baw-hta village, Pa-Pun district, Karen State and burnt down 2 rice barns, destroying 80 baskets of paddy of Win Khin Pa, and 10 baskets of paddy of Saw Hla Oo. (*Source: KIC*)
- ◆ In February, Major Myint Aung from BI 307 and the army camp commander from IB 274 based in Lungler, Chin issued an order to 29 villages nearby to deliver 4 big chickens, 2-viss of fish or pork, 2 legs of deer, any other wild animal and vegetables. (*Source: CHRO*)
- ◆ In February 1999, Kyee-gan-thaik field, which serves as a grazing ground for cattle in Yay-nek-kwin, Baw-lei-kyun village tract, Htantabin Township, Pegu Division was sprayed with weed killer in order to kill the grass so the field could be cultivated by a company. The villagers were not informed, and as a result about fifty of their cows and buffaloes died. (*Source: NLD*)
- ◆ In February 1999, troops from five battalions including LIB 538 and 309, stationed near Tantalung Township, Chin State demanded food and other goods from the 29 villages in the area. The demand included meats, vegetables, fish, salt and alcohol. Those who were late or who failed to meet the demand were charged 1000-1500 *kyat* by the SPDC authorities. (*Source: ABSDF*)
- ◆ In February 1999, U Kan Sa, chairman of the village administration unit of In-daing village, De-pae-yin Township, Sagaing division, ordered farmers in the area to pay 400 *kyat* per acre, or give 8 baskets of paddy per acre. The farmers had previously signed an agreement in which they would sell their paddy conditional on crop success. An investigation of their fields had proved their crops failure due to the weather, and the farmers who had not been able to plant everything had been exempted. However, after this order, the farmers were forced to pay 31,200 *kyat* for 78 acres. (*Source: NLD*)
- ◆ On February 2, 1999, SPDC troops from LIB 439 came to the farm of villagers, Par Ohn Myint and Saw Hla Oo, of Meh-paw-hta village, Pa-Pun district, Karen State. They had worked on the farm with the permission of LIB 439. The troops confiscated all the belongings found in the two huts, on the farm, and all the chickens, worth about 10,000 *kyat*. (*Source: KIC*)

- ◆ On February 3, 1999, troops from SPDC LIB 546 ordered Ta-rweli-kee and Htee-pu-wah villages, Thaton district, Karen State to give 1 goat per village and 10 log poles, having 8 inches in diameter and 6 yards in length, per household. The villagers were ordered to deliver the demanded items to Pa-nweh-kla military camp. (*Source: KIC*)
- ◆ On February 6, 1999, two columns of LIB 273, led by Lt.Col. Kyaw Soe entered Chabone village, Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division and forced the villagers to give them 120 baskets of paddy. The villagers had already lost 300 baskets of paddy to LIB 401, but the soldiers forcefully took the rice from people's storage areas, put them in the middle of the village, and ordered the paddy to be carried by oxen cart to the LIB 273 headquarters. The commander promised to pay the villagers 400 *kyat* per basket, but they received nothing. (*Source: HURFOM*)
- ◆ On February 8, 1999 Capt Ant Maw, Chairman of the Nam Kham Township SPDC, ordered each Town quarter to sell tickets for the Union Day celebrations in Nam Kham. The large Town quarter had to sell 300 tickets and each small quarter had to sell 200 tickets at the price of 30 *kyat* each. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ On February 9, 1999, a group of traders returning from the Thai border by boat were stopped near Moulmein, Mon State. A group of police and customs officers searched the traders, 4 men and 11 women, and then took 15 kg. of gold-wares the villagers had been trading. They looted the boat, saying the traders were engaging in illegal business. (*Source: HURFOM*)
- ◆ On February 8, 1999, government authorities including Township secretary, U Soe Myint from Mudon Township, Mon State, entered Kwan-hla village and forcibly took paddy from over 10 farmers who had failed to give their full rice quota after an insect plague had destroyed most of their crops. They also entered the home of a widow farmer, Mi Thee (62 years old), who owned about 5 acres of land. As she was out of her house, hospitalized in Moulmein, they did not meet her. However, they climbed into her house and looted every valuable thing they found. Two valuable mats and one bicycle were stolen by the authorities. (*Source: HURFOM*)
- ◆ Between February 10 and 14, 1999, a DKBA group commanded by Moe Kyo burned 56 houses in the 4 villages of Tee Bper, Dta Wih Ko, Dta Greh Ni and Tee Pa Leh in Dta Greh Township after accusing the villagers there of being 'relatives of KNU'. These troops also burned all the family paddy supplies they could find and the piles of rice straw, which are used as fodder for the cattle. The villagers have fled into hiding in the forests. (*Source: KHRG*)
- ◆ On February 12, 1999, officials from the paddy buying center entered the farm of a Mon farmer, Nai Noe (56 years old) from Kwan-hla village, Mudon Township, Mon State. The farmer had lost most of his crop due to an insect attack, but had gone to the paddy buying center, explained about his situation, and paid 48 baskets of his rice quota, appealing to the authorities not to take the tax for the other 4 acres. When the authorities arrived at his farm, they did not find any paddy, so they confiscated his belongings that they found in his house. They took: A steel food container, one cassette tape recorder, some polished rice and sticky rice the farmer had kept for his own family's consumption, and a bicycle. Now, this family has no more food. (*Source: HURFOM*)
- ◆ On February 15, 1999 DKBA Battalion Commander Po Maung demanded 30 baskets of rice and 150,000 *kyat* from each village tract in the plains of Kyauk Kyi Township. This

was for the completion of the Klaw Maw pagoda that the DKBA wanted to celebrate on the full moon of March 1999. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ On February 19, 1999, in Nyaung-tae village, Tha-byay-gone village tract, Myan-aung Township, Irrawaddy Division a group led by the head of the Township police raided the homes of the following cultivators and confiscated paddy stored for household use. They claimed that they had failed to supply their full quota of paddy:

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. U Ko San | 7. U Than Tin |
| 2. Ko Kyauk | 8. U Htun Khin |
| 3. Ko Maw Thein | 9. U Kyi Thaung |
| 4. U Kan Hla | 10. U Htoon Yin |
| 5. U Tin Pay | 11. U Saw Win |
| 6. U Sein Thaung | 12. U Thaung Shwe |

The police group, including U Than Lwin, U Aung Soe and U Hla Tin also demanded 640 *kyat* per basket for the short fall and threatened to arrest and confiscate the lands of those who defaulted. Some had to sell their cattle, lands and belongings to pay the money demanded. Other farmers in Seit-phu-gone and In-gwae villages, Tha-byay-gone village tract were arrested for the same reason. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ On February 25, 1999 there was a skirmish between SPDC LIB 351 and the KNLA near Ler Wah village in Kyauk Kyi Township, Karen State. As retaliation, the Battalion shelled Ler Wah village, then entered after the villagers had fled and looted and destroyed their belongings. They also went to Htaw Ee Soh village nearby on February 27th, but they couldn't catch any villagers there so they destroyed the paddy storage barns of 15 families, a total of 715 baskets of paddy. The troops took some of the paddy to eat and destroyed the rest. The villagers fled into hiding in the fields and forests, and some continued on to refugee camps in Thailand. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ In late February 1999, Major Win Naing Oo of LIB 547 ordered 44 villages in Pa-an district, Karen State to "donate" a total of 141,250 *kyat*, 44 tins and 128 *pyi* of rice, 44 *viss* of chicken, 44 *viss* of cooking oil, 132 *viss* of vegetables/produce, and 33 cartloads of firewood. This donation was said to be for the Nabu Aung Teik Dee Monastery 'Buddha Zaniya Worship Celebration'. The donations were to be sent "quickly", before March 2. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ Since the establishment of a military camp for Nam-tu based IB 22 between Nam Tu and Mang Thon in northern Shan State March 1999, villagers around the area have been ordered to sell 10 sacks of rice at a cost of 2,800 *kyat* per sack. This is around 1000 *kyat* lower than the current market price. Those refusing to sell rice had their rice confiscated. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ In March 1999, each household from Taung Pyauk and Son Sin tracts in Thayet Chaung Township, Tenasserim Division was ordered to pay 700 *kyat* by the IB 403, 404 and 405. This money was for the re-cultivation of a military-owned rubber plantation damaged by fire. The soldiers stated the money was for buying new rubber plants and building fences around them. Although the people paid the money levied on them, the soldiers ordered each household to provide five logs and ten bamboo poles for construction of the fences. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ In March 1999, officials of the Yephyu Township Peace and Development Council in Tenasserim Division forced local farmers to sell 10 baskets of paddy to the state, which

was the rice the farmers had been keeping for consumption. There are 280 areas of paddy field in The Chaung village tract in Yephyu Township, although up to two-thirds of this land yields very little crop output because it is affected by seawater. Crop production has further dwindled after last year's drought. Despite this, the authorities maintained their quota demands. *(Source: ABSDF)*

◆ On March 1, 1999, SPDC LB 22 led by Major Aung Myint, set up a camp between Nam Tu and Mang Thon in northern Shan State. Villagers in Mang Thon who came to sell rice in Nam Tu, at a cost of 3,800 *kyat* per small sack, have been forced to sell 10 sacks to SPDC troops at a cost of only 2,300 *kyat*. Those refusing to sell rice have had it confiscated from them. The SPDC troops claim the rice is for their own troops, but in fact they sell it to villagers near their camp at a cost of 3,800 *kyat*. *(Source: Palaung Youth Newsletter)*

◆ On March 5, 1999, troops led by Captain San Lone from SPDC LIB 202 came to Mae-kor-kee village, Toungoo district, Karen State and looted from the villagers. They stole:

1. A gold chain, 73,060 *kyat* in cash, 10 rice cooking pots, 20 dinner plates, 16 condensed milk tins, 3 viss of sugar and clothes from Par Nee Kay, M, 38.
2. 5 cooking pots, dinner plates, and clothes from Naw Tor Ku Poe, F, 59.
3. 6,000 *kyat* cash from Saw Cut Kyay, M, 32.
4. 40,000 *kyat* cash from Saw Dit Dee, M, 36.
5. 6 cooking pots and 6 dinner plates from Par Htwi Dee, M, 32.
6. 10 cooking pots and 13 dinner plates from Par Dit Oo, M, 32.

(Source: KIC)

◆ On March 8, 1999, SPDC LIB 324 Commander Aung Kyaw Nyain, based in Namtu Township, northern Shan State, ordered Pang Long villagers to cut 5 tons of wood within 2 months to build more high schools in Namtu Township. He said he would buy all 5 tons. After the Pang Long villagers had cut all the wood and were transporting it in two trucks through a checkpoint near Namtu, they were arrested by the Second Commander of LIB 324, Lin Lin. The wood owner and drivers tried to explain that they had cut the wood on the orders of Aung Kyaw Nyain, but Lin Lin did not listen. He confiscated all the wood, and ordered everyone back home, threatening to shoot them if they did not obey him. During the next two weeks Lin Lin sold the wood himself in Namtu and gave half of money to Commander Aung Kyaw Nyain. *(Source: Palaung Youth Newsletter)*

◆ On March 12, 1999, LIB 327 based in Murng-Khark ordered the people of Murng Yarng, Shan State to provide money for the repair of a market place. Each house from the 9-10 quarters and village tracts was ordered to give 1,000 Chinese RMB (about 9,000 *kyat*). Some had to borrow the money to give. *(Source: SHRF)*

◆ On March 15, 1999, 3 cross-boarder traders were forced to pay 30,000 *kyat* tax per truck by the officer in charge, Bo Ni, of the Ta Ping bridge checkpoint, Kaeng Tung Township, Shan State. The drivers had protested the unreasonably high tax and explained that each truck only made 20,000 *kyat* profit. They were forced to give the money when Bo Ni threatened to burn their trucks. The drivers were from Murng Ma tract, Shan State. They were: Sai Peng, 35 from Wan Tong, Sai Oon 31, from Wan Long, and Sai Law, 31, from Kaeng Law. *(Source: SHRF)*

◆ On March 18, 1999, 7 SPDC groups entered the Palaung village of Wan Pui, Murng Ma tract, Shan State and looted the village, which was supposedly under the protection of a

cease-fire agreement. The following villagers lost their livestock:

1. In Saw, male, aged 45, lost 1 pig worth about 18,000 *kyat*.
2. Loong Ping, male, aged 36, lost 3 chickens worth 2,300 *kyat*
3. Ai Noong, male, aged 41, lost 6 chickens worth 4,600 *kyat*.

(Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On March 26, 1999, 12 troops from LIB 331 accused A-Pe, a Lahu man from Ai Long village, Loi Taw Kham tract, Tachilek Township, Shan State of collecting information for SSA-East. They burned down his house, and A-pe lost all his property, worth 12,000 *baht*. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On March 27, 1999, SPDC authorities in Murng Phyak Township, Shan State ordered each family in the area to pay 2,000 *kyat* for the repair of the Murng Phyak- Phak Tu Murng road. Those who did not have the money were forced to sell their property in order to pay. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On March 28, 1999, 3 women who had worked in Thailand were stopped at the Murng-Phyak checkpoint as they were returning home for the water festival on the Tachilek-Kaeng Tung highway. They were accused by the SPDC search team of carrying illegal money and threatened with arrest. They were allowed to go, but the troops confiscated their money.

The losses of the women were as follows:

1. Naang Seng Non, aged 21, lost 21,000 *baht*
2. Naang Aam Non, aged 19, lost 30,000 *baht*
3. Naang Dui Dip, aged 19, lost 7,000 *baht*

(Source: *SHRF*) * Note: This contradicts the 22-4-99 statement made by Deputy Foreign Minister Khin Maung Win that stated migrant workers could return safely.

◆ On March 29, 1999 Captain Sein Win of Murng-Sart-based IB 49 promised 24 villagers from Naa Kawng Mu, Murng Haang tract, Murng-Ton Township, Shan State that he would help them to acquire land for rice cultivation. He explained that first, a dam would have to be constructed at Nam Haang in order to provide water for the cultivation, and that the government intended to give 15,000,000 *kyat* to build it. Then he told the villagers that they would have to begin to build the dam, so they should pay 15,000 *kyat* and be reimbursed later. The construction of the dam has yet to begin, and the villagers are still without land, and had to borrow the money from others to give to the Captain. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On March 29, 1999, Troops from SPDC IB 232 extorted a bag of rice, 15 viss of pork and a viss of chicken from Thaw-pweh village, Toungoo district, Karen State. (Source: *KNU*)

◆ During March and April, 1999, when SPDC Mon State authorities planned to build a field hospital in Kyaung-ywa village of Ye Township, an area under the NMSP- SLORC ceasefire, the Mon State PDC authorities confiscated land owned by villagers without compensation, and ordered the local Ye Township authorities to collect 3.3 million *kyat* from the civilians of over 30 villages and Town wards. According to local villagers, even a poor family had to pay at least 1,000 *kyat*. (Source: *HURFOM*)

◆ On April 6, 1999, Major Moe Kyaw Soe and troops from SPDC LIB 3 issued orders to the villages in Shway -yaung-bya village tract, Tha-ton district, Karen State to send in paddy to the soldiers in Pan-aung-gon village, at the rate of 6 baskets per acre. (Source: *KNU*)

◆ On April 6, 1999, 30 troops from LIB 330 led by Lt. Kyaw Htin shot 2 cattle. The cattle belonged to Loong In Kham, aged 49 and Loong Saam Taan, aged 40 of Murng Pak, Murng Phyak Township, Shan State. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On April 7, 1999, a force of 95 troops led by Capt. Knin Maung Htwe from LIB 422, who were camping in the area of Kaeng Tawng, ordered the villagers of Waeng Kao to gather at the military camp. The villagers had been forcefully relocated, but had returned and settled back in their original village with the permission of Capt. Than Htun from IB 246. The troops did not believe the villagers and told them if they wanted to stay, they must help them. They demanded 5,000 *kyat* from the village tract headman, 90 tins of rice from the village headman, 60 tins of rice from the assistant village headman, and 2 tins of rice from every other family in the village. After giving the 5,000 *kyat* the village headman left for the Thai border, considering that this kind of extortion would occur again and the village might be forced again to move. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On April 9, 1999, Capt. Sein Htwa of IB 221, the leader of the search team at the Murng-Phyak checkpoint, forcibly took 10,000 *baht* from a group of monks and villagers, saying it was illegal. The money was part of the charity money the group had collected from relatives in Thailand to build a new temple at Hawng Koey village, Murng Yawng Township, Shan State. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On April 10, 1999, 5 troops from LIB 526 entered Phak Hi village, Murng Phong tract, Tachilek, Shan State and shot and took away a pig, shouting to the villagers to complain to the company commander if they were unhappy about it. The pig belonged to a woman, Pa Laeo, aged 51. It was worth 2,600 *baht*. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On April 13, 1999, SPDC troops from LIB 316 burned a civilian truck loaded with garlic at Fa Kaang village, Murng Laen tract, Tachilek Township, Shan State. The troops had ordered the driver to unload the garlic and transport the belongings of their commander, but as he had been about to leave to sell the garlic in Tachilek, the driver pleaded to be excused from the duty. The soldiers became angry and burned the garlic, which also damaged part of the truck. The damage was estimated at more than 100,000 *baht*. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On April 19, 1999, Captain Shway Yaung Por and troops from SPDC LIB 230 stole from Ber-wah-hta-hser villagers, in Thaton district, Karen State. They took in extortion:

1. Maung Kyaw Par - 5,000 *kyat*
2. Naw Ma Chaw a pig weighing 20 viss
3. Naw Khin Win 2 chickens, 2 bottles of cooking oil, a basket of rice, and a dinner plate
4. Naw Ber Li 2 bottles of cooking oil
5. Naw Than Myint a basket of rice
6. Naw Mu Nor a tin of rice and a chicken.

In addition, they beat up villagers Waw Par Bo 22, and Saw Mor Kway 26, until their heads turned red with blood. (*Source: KNU*)

◆ On April 13, 1999, troops led by Battalion Commander Hla Win from SPDC IB 62 came to Saw-plaw village, Kaw-ka-reik Township, Doo-pla-ya district, Karen State in the evening, and burnt down all the houses, together with the belongings of the villagers. (*Source: KNU*)

◆ On April 14, 1999, troops from SPDC LIB 201 burned and destroyed 5 houses and a bullock cart in Raw-ka-kya village, Doo-pla-ya district, Karen State. On the same day, the troops summoned the villagers of Meh-ka-taw and Set-ka-wet villages and extorted 50,000

kyat from each village in porter fees. (Source: *KNU*)

◆ On April 22, 1999, Kyaik Mayaw Township PDC ordered that 52, 444 acres of paddy must be cultivated for the summer 1999 season. (Source: *KHRG*)

◆ In late April 1999, SPDC Commander of the Golden Triangle Special Regional Command, Brigadier General Thein Sein and District and Township PDC authorities in Kaeng-Tung Township, Shan State called a meeting. They ordered the chairmen, headmen and leaders of the 5 zones and 10 village tracts solicit 2,000 *kyat* from every house in their respective areas. They were told the money would be in developing Loi Muay area into a tourist destination and recreation resort for SPDC officials. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ From April 20, 1999 until the end of May, the local SPDC battalions, such as LIB 343 and 106, in cooperation with other government departments such as the police stations and the local USDA collected huge amounts of tax on the road between Ye and Moulmein. They demanded payment from all passengers, buses and trucks that travelling between Ye and Moulmein on that road, giving the explanation that they were providing security along the road. Bus and truck drivers had to pay between 2,00 and 5,000 *kyat* depending on the numbers of passengers in the buses and weight of the load in the trucks. (Source: *HURFOM*)

◆ Beginning from April 30, 1999, SPDC's Kyaikmayaw Township authorities collected 500 *kyat* from each household in the Township area, in order to build a water canal (15-20 feet wide and 4 miles long) to distribute water to the nearest government rice farming lands. This water canal connects two Mon villages; Khayone and Kawbawe. (Source: *HURFOM*)

◆ Villagers from Oh-pho village, Pegu division, were ordered to contribute 3000 *Kyat* per household for the construction of a moat by May 15 1999. (Source: *NLD*)

◆ In May, 1999, SPDC battalions under the command of Strategic Command (7) confiscated the plantation land owned by the villagers from Lwe Pi village, Pin Laung Township, Shan State. According to the information from the local people, villagers had already planted crops on the land when the troops forcibly took it. The land was then handed over to Khun Sa, a drug warlord. (Source: *HRDU*)

◆ In May 1999, around 100 acres of fertile land were confiscated in Kasake, Minlan, Yaelein and U-kyun village tracts, Wakaema Township, Irrawaddy Division by the SPDC authorities. The authorities claimed that the farmers did not obey an order to cultivate rice and grew chilies instead. (Source: *ABSDF*)

◆ From May 4, to the beginning of June 1999, SPDC Battalion Commander Major Aung Win and his Second-in-Command, Aung Thet, began gambling near Kheway village, Karen State. Villagers were forced to play cards with the officers, and were not allowed to leave until they had lost all their money. If the villagers did not come to play cards, light and heavy weapons were fired near the village. Both SPDC officers drank whiskey and raped four women (ages 20-27) from Kheway village, 2 single and 2 married. The village elders had been told they must find 4 women or they would be punished. On June 6, these two officers demanded one loud speaker and one gun each. Not having any, the village elders had to pay a 70,000 *kyat* fine instead (Source: *MOJO*)

◆ From May 3, 1999, U Khin Maung U (village chairman) and Sergeant Tun Hlaing of Infantry Unit 534 collected 600 *kyat* from all 761 households in Ma-bay village tract. The collection was allegedly for the cultivation of fields confiscated for the army. (Source: *NLD*)

- ◆ On May 6, 1999 troops from Co.4 of LIB 520 led by Capt Kyaw Thein robbed gold jewelry and 1,465,000 *kyat* in cash from the house of Loong Thun La in Murng-Pan, Shan State. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ On May 6, 1999, about 30 SPDC troops from LIB 330 led by Lt Kyaw Htin shot for meat 2 cattle belonging to the villagers of Murng Pak, Murng-Phyak Township, Shan State. The 2 villagers that lost their cattle were Loong In Kham, male, aged 49 and Loong Saam Taan, aged 40. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ On May 11, 1999, two columns of SPDC troops, one with soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion #355 under commander Than Soe and the other with soldiers from LIB #9 under commander Mya Htun, entered Way Raw, Ta Noh, and Kaw Ler village tracts in Thaton Township, Karen State. They ordered the villagers in those 3 village tracts to give them 150 logs, each 3 handspans in circumference and 10 *taun* [15 feet / 5 metres] long, as well as 300 bamboo poles each 12 *taun* [18 feet / 6 metres] long. When the villagers gave it to them, they sold all of it for their own profit. (*Source: KHRG*)
- ◆ On May 19, 1999, SPDC troops from Light Infantry Battalion #355 under commander Soe Aung entered Ta Rer Kee village and demanded two baskets of rice, one pig weighing 20 *viss* and worth 17,000 *kyat*, two chickens, and one bottle of cooking oil. The commander told the villagers, "The KNU came and gave you money but you didn't inform us, that is why you must give us whatever we demand now. If you do not give it, your village will see problems". (*Source: KHRG*)
- ◆ On May 23, 1999, troops of IB 279, led by the Commander of Company #3 Captain Sein Myint, demanded 12 *viss* of chicken from the headman of Yarng Lao village, Yarng Lao tract, Murng Yarng Township, Shan State. When the headman couldn't find the required amount, the Captain shot his gun into the air, until the headman brought a pig. The Captain was satisfied after he made the villagers kill it, cut it into pieces, wrap it properly, and then carry it to the military base in Murng Yarng. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ In June 1999, SPDC military authorities of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Battalion #6 ordered the villagers of Paang Law and Murng Zaem tracts, Keang-Tung Township, Shan State to provide 2,000 *kyat* per household. The villagers, consisting of 560 households from the 12 villages of the 2 tracts, were told the money would be used to hire labour for the military corn, peanut and soya farms. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ In June 1999, SPDC authorities in Kaeng-Tung Township, acting under the instruction of the Brig Gen Thein Sein, Commander of the Golden Triangle Special Region Command, confiscated 3 acres of land from the villagers of Yaang Law. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ Since June 1999, villagers from Aindan Ywathit, Aindin, Hnee Kayok, Yebaw Thaug, Tha Garan, Hneenu and Palain Thein coastal villages at Palein Taung coast, near Ye, Mon State have been suffering excessive demands of food and taxation by the troops from IB 31. Troops from IB 31 are demanding one basket of rice, two bottles of cooking oil and two packs of seasoning powder from every village per month. In addition to this monthly taxation, the troops levy two bottles of patrol from every fishing boat going out to sea for fishing. Also the fishing boat are required to give fishes and prawns to the military everytime they come back from the sea. (*Source: HRDU*)
- ◆ On June 1, 1999, 12 troops from LIB 334 shot a cow in Hawng Koey village, Murng Yawng Township, Shan State and then ordered the villagers to cut it up and carry the meat to the military camp. The cow belonged to Aai Zawm, aged 39, and was worth 65,000 *kyat*.

(Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On June 2, 1999, troops from LIB 316 led by Commander Yan Naing, burned a civilian motor boat with consumer goods on it at one of the Mae Kong river crossing points at Kaeng Laap village in Kaeng Laap tract, Ta-Khi-Laek Township, Shan State. The troops burned the boat because the boat owner protested when they ordered him to unload his full boat and take them downstream. The boatman, Sai Oon Peng, aged 36, lost his boat and all the goods on it. The boat was worth 270,000 *baht* and the goods, 36,700 *baht*. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On June 3, 1999, LIB 8, Brigade 44, led by Major Aung Soe patrolled through Paing Kyone Township, Pa-an district, Karen State and forcibly took whatever they desired. In Htee Pae village, they took one pig; in Haw Htoo Kaw village, 2 chickens and 3 large tins of rice; in Htee Maw Kee village, they took 32 chickens, one goat, 3 large tins of rice, 2 pots, and 2 chopping knives. (Source: *MOJO*)

◆ On June 5, 1999, the LIB 314 issued an order demanding money from the people in the village tracts of Kaad Fa, Yaang Kaeng and Yaang La, Kaeng-Tung Township, Shan State for fixing the road between Kaeng-Tung and Ta Ping, leading to Murng La. Each of the 3630 houses in the 3 village tracts was ordered to bring 3,000 *kyat* to the army base within 5 days. Many people who could not afford that much money had to sell their rice or cattle or other possessions and some had to borrow from their relatives to pay. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On June 22, 1999, troops led by Capt Myint Lwin of Company #4, LIB 292, issued an order to the farmers in all the villages of Wan Zit tract, Larng-Khur Township. They were required to sell 14 baskets of rice per acre of land, at the price of 300 *kyat* per basket. When the village leaders and headmen tried to ask for mercy, as the required amount was unrealistic, the Captain said that 800 *kyat* would have to be paid to substitute 1 basket of rice. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On June 24, 1999, SPDC Maj. Aung Aung, of LIB 356, Company 3, entered Leikon village, Karen State with his troops and stole goods from villager Mu Kyaw Naw. Items taken were a gold ring and chain, seven pots, 15 garments, and 37,000 *kyat* in cash. They later entered Tathukhee village and took two pots from villager Naw Dha Yet and 15 garments from villager Naw Ma Aye. (Source: *MOJO*)

◆ In July 1999, SPDC troops of LIB 526 confiscated land belonging to a villager, Loong Saam, male, aged 49, of Hawng Lerk village, Hawng Lerk tract, Ta-Khi-Laek Township, Shan State. The confiscated lands, which included a plot of farm or garden and 2 patches of rice fields, were said to have been given to the families of the soldiers to use as their farms or gardens. The lands were worth, according to the estimate of the villagers in terms of current market rates, as follows:

1. The farm or garden was worth 65,000 *baht*
2. Each of the rice fields was worth 200,000 *baht*.

Altogether, Loong Saam lost 465,000 *baht* worth of land. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On July 1, 1999, 12 troops from LIB 311 forced villagers at the Nam Luay river crossing point in Murng-Yawng Township, Shan State to pay 300 *kyat* in order to cross the river. (Source: *SHRF*)

◆ On July 7, 1999, SPDC police in Mu-Se set up a checkpoint at two major intersections and forced travelers to buy tickets for a fashion show at prices of 1,000, 1,500 or 2,000 *kyat*.

Ignition keys of the vehicles whose drivers refused to buy the tickets were simply taken away by the police, or the drivers were fined. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On July 15, 1999, 6 traders from Kui Thang village, Tiddim Township, Chin State sold 10 pigs and 18 chickens to Zote villagers in Mizoram State, India across the border. On hearing the news, 12 Burmese soldiers of LIB 268 based in Falam, Chin State and led by Lt. Myo Kyaw and Srgt. Tin Oong immediately chased the Indian villagers who just bought the pigs and chickens up to one mile inside the Indian Territory and forcibly took one pig worth 20000 *kyat*, one chicken worth 1000 *kyat* in Burmese currency, and Rs.500 in Indian currency in cash. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ On July 18, 1999, SPDC Maj. Thein Shwe, of LIB 540, took 20,000 *kyat* cash, one radio, one cassette, one fishing net, and other items from villager Saw Tun Khin, Kadephe village, Htawtalu District, Karen State. (*Source: MOJO*)

◆ On July 24, 1999, LIB 285 Commander Aung Naing demanded a pig for food at Pa Kyaw Ain village. (*Source: MOJO*)

◆ On July 27, 1999, DKBA Saw Maung Kyi and his group went to Yaw Pho Pale village, Bihla District, Karen State and took more than two bushels of rice and 12 chickens from the villagers. (*Source: MOJO*)

◆ On July 29, 1999, SPDC Cpn. Ba Thein, LIB 285, demanded 50,000 *kyat* from Payhsa village. (*Source: MOJO*)

◆ On July 29, 1999, Captain Soe Myint of LIB 508 forced all the villagers from every village tract of Mong Pieng, Lawkzawk Township, Shan State to attend the opening ceremony of his new market place in Mong Pieng. Each family had to bring one viss of chicken for his battalion. After the ceremony the villagers were again forced to go and trade in this market daily for two weeks. Whoever failed to do so, was fined 5 viss (18 pounds) of chicken for each family. (*Source: SSArmy News*)

◆ In July and August 1999, a total of 77 cows had to be supplied to the army by 36 village tracts in Man-aung Township of Arakan State (72 cows at 2 per village tract and 5 cows by the wards in the Town). The cows had to be sold at the price of 20,000 *kyat* per cow though the real value was 50,000 *kyat*. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ From July to October of 1999, MI Unit 10 as well as soldiers from the army units stationed at Gau and Thama villages, Man-aung Township, Arakan State, exploited the residents by forcing them to regularly supply rice, chicken, pigs, goats, cows, fish, and other types of food. Even prawn sellers, who can receive 7000 *kyat* per viss of prawn were required to give a large portion of their catch to the army. Women who went out collecting firewood or vegetables were raped and when reports were made no action whatsoever was taken against the offenders. Motor vehicles had to be supplied on a daily basis for transportation of army personnel, and the front compartment of busses was reserved for the army. Even monks are not given that preference. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ An order was issued in mid 1999 to the villages and quarters in Ta-da-oo Township, Mandalay Division to cut down all banana trees by November 16, 1999. Villagers from Aye-kyi-gone, Po-lin-htoung, Wun-pa-te, The-maung-kan, Zaga-in, Pin-ya, Ma-gyi-taw, Mwa-kyaw-da, Zegyo, Ba-le, Oak-kyut-pho, Wei-hto-kan, Hanthawaddy, Oo-te, and No.1, 2, and 3 wards were required to cut down their banana trees because they had not been planted on classified land. The divisional authorities, and the Kyaukse district authorities headed by the Township chairman ended up chopping down the trees themselves and fined the owners 5

kyat per tree. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ In August 1999 soldiers from LIB 268, led by 2nd Lt. Khin Than ordered Mangkheng, Rialti, Lungpi, Lungrang and Thlanrawn villages, Falam Township, Chin State to provide two chickens per week to the soldiers without fail. When the villagers complained to the Battalion Commander that they could not afford to provide the chickens, he sent a group of soldiers to the villages who took the chickens by force. In addition, the soldiers ordered the villagers to weave baskets to keep the chickens in, and collected porters by force to carry the chickens that they had looted. When the villagers complained again, the Battalion Commander told them it was their responsibility to feed the army. (*Source: CHRO*)

◆ During August 1999, SPDC battalion 273 has changed Kyauk Htayan village into a detention center by fencing the village in Ye Phyu Township. Kyauk Htayan is a big village with 200 households and a population of about ten thousand. The only exit the army left open was the seashore.

Kyauk Htayan is controlled by Captain Htun Naing and Lt. Maung Maung Lay of LIB 273. They restricted the villagers from going out of the village so the villagers had to leave their cattle out of the village for grazing. The soldiers of LIB 273 took advantage of it, slaughtering the cattle for their meals. They also stole fruits from the orchards outside the village. They are making money by selling fruits such as Durian, Coconuts and Betel nuts. (*Source: THRF*)

◆ On August 2, 1999, SPDC troops from LIB 518 went to rob and burn the farm houses of the villagers in Huay Yaeng, Mong Khun tract, Mong Kung Township, Shan State. The losses of the people were as follows:

1. Loong Sarng Saw lost 100,000 *kyat* worth of household belongings
2. Sai Luu lost 70,000 *kyat* worth
3. Nang Nu lost one basket of polished rice and 1,700 *kyat* in cash
4. Loong Karn lost 160,000 *kyat* worth of goods and was also beaten by the Burmese soldiers
5. Loong Ling lost about 60,000 *kyat* worth of goods

(*Source: SSArmy News*)

◆ On August 7, 1999, Captain Soe Myint of LIB 508, summoned all the village headmen in Mong Pieng tract, Lawkzawk Township, Shan State and demanded that since he was going to be transferred to another post, as a present, every villager had to give him one viss of chicken each. (*Source: SSArmy News*)

◆ On August 9, 1999, Brig Gen Thein Sein ordered all military units in Kaeng Tung Township, Shan State to grow different kinds of fruit bearing trees at their respective locations. The troops subsequently ordered the villagers in their respective areas to provide the seed for the fruit trees, or provide money to buy the fruit seeds. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On August 9, 1999, troops from LIB 526 led by Capt. Tint Lwin forced a group of cattle traders in Tachilek Township, Shan State to pay a tax of 2,000 *kyat* per head of cattle, or else lose their cattle. The group had to pay 150,000 *kyat* for their 75 cattle. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On August 15, 1999, Captain Htun Aung of IB 508 summoned every village headman from Mong Peing Township, Shan State to his meeting. Each village headman had to bring 5 chicken (which had to include one cock and four hens, each should be at least 80 ticks: about 2.9 pounds). Every headman who sent a representative instead of attending this meeting

had to face extra fine of 5 chicken, 2 bottle of cooking oil and 50 pieces of bamboo. (*Source: SSArmy News*)

◆ August 27, 1999, Major Kyaw Moe led SPDC soldiers from LIB 524 to buy paddy from the people in Kunhing Township. The villagers had to sell to them as follows:

1. Kun Muong tract 3,000 baskets
2. Ton Hung tract 3,000 baskets
3. Nong Hee tract 3,000 baskets
4. Nong Tao tract 1,000 baskets

The Burmese soldiers purchased the rice at 120 *kyat* basket, while the actual price was 650 *kyat* per basket. (*Source: SSArmy News*)

◆ On August 27, 1999, a column from IB 66 (Namzarng) to rob the people of Wan Loi Kang, Loi La tract, Mongnai Township, Shan State. The people's losses were as follows:

1. Loong Su 14,749 *kyat* worth
2. Nai Mu 1,000 *kyat* worth
3. Loong Wi 4,000 *kyat* worth
4. Singta 2,425 *kyat* worth

(*Source: SSArmy News*)

◆ Since early September 1999, about 30 SPDC troops from LIB 519 led by Capt Hla Hpe, stationed at Naa Pa Kaa, Mae Ken tract, Murng-Ton Township, Shan State have been catching cattle which the villagers let graze in the nearby forests and demanding 500-600 *kyat* for each head from the owners. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On September 5, 1999, a patrol of about 60 SPDC troops from LIB 329 met a group of 6 cattle traders with about 30 head of cattle in Murng Hai tract, Murng-Phark Township, Shan State. The troops shot at the cattle when they could find no fault after interrogating the cattle owners and the cattle owners had refused to give them a cow. The troops cut up the one cow they had killed and left the cattle owners to chase after the rest of the cattle. According to the head of the traders, Loong Mi, one head of cattle was worth 95,000 *kyat*. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On September 8, 1999, a patrol of 12 SPDC troops from IB 279 led by Lt. Khin Nyo shot a pig at Wan Hu Tai village, Wan Waeng tract, Murng-Yarng Township, Shan State and took it away. The pig belonged to a poor widow named Pa Naang Peng, aged 46, and was worth 5,600 *kyat*. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On September 16, 1999, Private Hlaing Win from SPDC's IB 279 was caught by the villagers while stealing a tape recorder valued at 25,000 *kyat* from a villager's house in Mawn Ke village, Murng-Yarng Township, Shan State. The villagers took Hlaing Win, together with the stolen tape recorder as evidence, to the office of the Township Peace and Development Council. However, the Township authorities not only let the Private soldier go without doing anything to him, but also scolded the villagers because the private was the nephew of the Battalion Commander's wife. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On September 17, 1999, a military column from LIB 101 led by Captain Aung Kyaw Latt entered Taphokhee village, Tenessarim Township, Tenessarim Division and burnt down 16 houses in the villages. Fifteen buffaloes, six bullock carts and three pigs were forcibly taken away by the soldiers. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On September 19, 1999, Major Kyaw Moe from LIB 524 demand 100 coconuts from the villagers in the Keng Tong tract, Shan State. They said these coconuts were to be

used as seedlings to be planted in Lower Burma. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ On September 19, 1999, SPDC troops from LIB518 threatened to conscript 130 villagers of Naa Khaan, Naa Khaan tract, Murng-Nai Township, Shan State to serve as militia and porters. He arrested and detained them until their families paid 5,000 *kyat* per head. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On September 25, 1999, the Thaton Township PDC, Mon State, ordered the village headman from the 59 villages in the Township to collect 250 *kyat* per household for a fund to support the military training of village militias. The PDC received about 2.5 million *kyat* from the villagers. (*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ On September 27, 1999, SPDC troops of LIB 528, in charge of the Salween bridge at Ta Kaw, closed the bridge without any apparent reason and extorted money from the vehicles that wanted to cross over. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On October 1, 1999, local military authorities ordered the villagers of Napakao, Mongton Township, Monghsat District, Shan State to sell part of their new harvest to the government at a rate of 200 *kyat* per half basket of paddy. The market rate is 600 *kyat* per half basket of paddy. (*Source: SHAN*)

◆ On October 2, 1999, village headmen from the villages around Aryu Tang village, Ye Township, Mon State were summoned by the military commanders of IB 229 and ordered to provide 1,000 of bamboo, 10,000 of thatch and 500 of wood before the end of October. The materials were for the new army base being built on land confiscated from the villagers. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On October 3, 1999, when troops from LIB 120 entered Kyone-sein village, the soldiers not only took rice, vegetables, chicken, pigs and ducks, but they also took some valuables, such as gold-wares, cassette recorders, and house-hold materials such as pots, spoons, from the whole village. (*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ On October 7, 1999, troops from IB 233 and LIB 534 came to Ko Haw Dae village, Thandaung Township, Karen State and cut down all coconut trees in the village. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On October 10, 1999, officers from LIB 515, IB 64 and the Laikha Township PDC met the local people from Laikha Township, Loilem district, Shan State and instructed them to sell their unhulled paddy at 1 lang and 6 kwais (7 baskets) per acre, at 1,200 *kyat* per lang. The market price per lang is 2,500 *kyat*. Those whose paddy crops had failed were not exempted from this quota. All the local rice mills were forbidden to open shop until the farmers' quota had been fulfilled (*Source: SHAN*)

◆ On October 15, 1999, troops from LIB 329 shot 2 cattle at Murng Kok village, Nam Naang tract, Murng-Phark Township, Shan State then forced the villagers to cut up the meat and carry it.

The following 2 women lost their cattle:

1. Pa Lu (f), aged 51, lost 1 cow worth 13,000 *kyat*
2. Pa Naang (f), aged 48, lost 1 cow worth 10,000 *kyat*

(*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On October 15, 1999, troops from LIB 120 entered Htee-pat-kat village, arrested many women porters, took cash and looted the villagers' belongings. The soldiers took rice, vegetables, chicken, pigs and ducks raised by villagers. The commander also requested about 25,000 *kyat* from the wife of Christian Pastor, as a ransom when they could not meet

the priest in the village. (*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ On October 18, 1999, an SPDC traffic police officer, roaming the streets of Ta-Khi-Laek, stopped and extorted money from motorbikes which happened to be on or passing his way. He would find fault with one thing or another and forced them to pay a fine of 400 *baht* each. He had been doing that with ease for some time because people did not want to argue with such an authority.

But when he stopped a couple, Maung Soe Naing and his wife, they asked for a relevant document and said they would pay the fine either at the law court or police station. However, the police officer angrily said that he was fully in charge and fully authorized to do as he pleased and the fine would have to be paid to him. He then snatched up the motorbike key and did not let it go until they paid the demanded 400 *baht*. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On October 19, 1999, SPDC troops from Murng-Phyak-based LIB 330 robbed and beat 4 Akha villagers at Sarm Pi village, Loi Taw Kham tract, Ta-Khi-Laek Township, Shan State. Since food has become so scarce due to the closure of the Thai-Burma border, many people on the Burma side of the border have been trying to get food from the other side. The 4 Akha villagers were returning from buying food across the border in Thailand when they ran into a group of SPDC soldiers who were on security at Sarm Pi village. The soldiers arrested them and seized all the food they had bought from Thailand, including cooking oil, salt, sugar and other food stuff, and beat them 5 times each with a stick as punishment.

The 4 Akha villagers were:

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Ar Pe (m), aged 29 | 3. Pu Pur (m), aged 45 |
| 2. Ar Mi (f), aged 16 | 4. Ar Lu (m), aged 39 |

(*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On October 25, 1999, soldiers from LIB 120 went into Palaw-toki village and looted rice, vegetables, ducks, chicken and pigs from every house in the village for their own food. In addition to the looting of food from the villagers, the soldiers asked cash from some houses. (*Source: HURFOM*)

◆ On October 29, 1999, 3 Shan women from Murng-Yarng who were returning from working in Thailand were robbed by SPDC troops from LIB327 at Ta Purn bridge checkpoint in Murng-Khark Township, Shan State. The 3 women had gone to work in Thailand for sometime and had managed to bring home some of their savings. But the SPDC troops stopped the car they were riding from Kaeng-Tung to Murng-Yarng, searched them and took all their belongings, leaving only 5,000 *kyat* for each of them. The 3 women were:

1. Naang Mon, aged 21, from Tong Le village, Tong Le tract, Murng-Yarng Township
2. Naang Pan, aged 25, from Wan Waeng village, Wan Waeng tract, Murng-Yarng Township
3. Naang Kham La, aged 19, from Wan Paeng, Tong le tract, Murng-Yarng Township

(*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On 27, October 1999, 180 troops from Battalions 55, 99, and 196, made a cleansing campaign in the kharms (farm huts), at Wan Has Harmg, Keng Lom tract, Kun Hing Township. They captured:

1. Loong Waling (age 46)
2. Loong Kang Hseng Mong (age 56)
3. Sai Wunna (age 32)

They were released the following day, after they had been beaten and stripped of their belongings. They lost:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. 2 baskets of polished rice | 4. All their clothes and bedding |
| 2. 39 chickens | 5. One cassette recorder |
| 3. All their kitchen utensils | 6. 5 heavy cutting knives |

In total they lost about 19,000 *kyat* worth of belongings. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ On October 30, 1999, 30 SDPC troops entered a village in T'Nay Hsah Township, Karen State and stayed until November 6. They killed and ate all the pigs and chickens in the village and took some paddy with them for their rations. They also gathered much of the paddy together in one place and burned it, and they laid landmines around the paddy which was left [*in the fields*] so that people couldn't dare reap it to get food. The owners [*of the fields*] are Po Kway, Po Gyi, Tan Pya, Po Lu Kay, Po Tad, Po Ko, *kyat* Han, Po K'Law, Po Ka Hser, Po Ket and Hsah Mu. Some of them lost 5 baskets of paddy, some lost 3 or 4 baskets. Then they laid landmines around there so the villagers wouldn't dare go back. Two people stepped on these mines, and later died. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ On October 31, 1999, a military column led by battalion commander Nyunt Lin and deputy commander Moe Aung from LIB 415 looted four shops at Za Mi stream near Kyunchaung village, Kyar-ein-seik-kyi Township, Karen State. In total, 17,000 *kyat* worth of belongings were looted and destroyed by the soldiers. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On October 31, 1999, cotton cultivators from Sin-baung-wei Township, Magwe Division had to pay 8000 *kyat* in advance crop payment. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ Since November 1, 1999, the Township authorities have forced at least 2 or 3 adolescent boys from every village in Sin-baung-wei Township, Magwe Division to attend the army Red Cross training. The cost for such training (*kyat* 20,000 to *kyat* 30,000 per 100 boys) has to be born by the villagers. Pay-le village has paid over *kyat* 30,000 and Kanchaung village over *kyat* 25,000. (*Source: NLD*)

◆ In early November 1999, SPDC authorities in Murng Yawng Township ordered all the rice farmers in the Township to provide their quotas of 15 rice baskets per acre. The villagers of Wan Nim and Wan Thom Mon had begged the authorities to reduce their quota to 7 baskets, as their fields had been mostly destroyed by flood, but they were forced to sell their property in order to buy rice from other sources to fulfil the quota. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On November 3, 1999, 2 Shan villagers of Wan Pung village, Murng Phong tract, Ta-Khi-Laek Township were robbed and extorted by a mixed group of SPDC soldiers, police and militia at the Thai-Burma border. The 2 Shan villagers were returning from buying food in Thailand when they were arrested and robbed of all their things. Further more, they were forced to pay a fine of 600 *baht* each for 'illegally' crossing the border.

The 2 victims were:

1. Ai Sung (m), aged 21
2. Ai Taan (m), aged 23

(*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On November 4, 1999, troops from LIB 322 robbed the people of Mong Tom tract, Tang Yan Township, Shan State. The losses were:

1. Loong Sarngt Keng of Wan Peing Lin lost a gold chain
2. Wi Mala of Wan Peing Lin lost 2 baskets of polished rice.
3. Sarngt Saw of Wan Peing Lin lost 5 chickens.
4. Hsi Aw of Wan Nong lost 1 duck, 1 viss of cooking oil, half a kg of seasoning and large box containing snacks for sale. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ One November 4, 1999, troops from IB 33 led by Major Win Nyunt, robbed the people of Kharm Kung Hsa, Wan Nong tract, Mong Nai Township, Shan State. The losses were:

1. Loong Ti Ya lost 20,000 *kyat* worth of household belongings.
2. Loong Ta lost 1,200 *kyat* worth of household goods.
3. Loong Sing Khae lost a cow worth 8,000 *kyat*. (**Source: SSA**)

◆ On November 9, 1999, an army commander, Lt.Col. Aung Maw Maw of Southeast Region Military Command went into Tarana village, Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State and called a meeting. In the meeting, he explained that the government had planned to widen the water canals in the area to provide water to grow dry season crops, and the civilians must provide funds for that important project. He instructed that a family without farmland must pay 500 *kyat*, while farmer families must pay 1,200 *kyat*. The army also instructed the villages in the area that they required another 100 acres of paddy growing lands. Villages in the Township area, such as Kyone-wan, Kyaikpayan, Thangalaung, Nyaung-oin-seik, Babugone, Khayongu, Kawkareik, Kaw-swe, Tarana and Damathus villages were instructed to give 10 acres from each village. (**Source: HURFOM**)

◆ On November 11, 1999, Commander Swe Myint of Murng-Ton-based IB65 and Commander Pan Hle of Murng-Sart-based IB226 told the 108 villages in Murng-Ton Township that in 1999 the military would buy 30 baskets of unhusked rice per acre of rice-cultivating land at a price of 200 *kyat* per basket. (The market price was 450 *kyat* per basket). Everyone who grew rice was required to sell it and the lands of those who failed to do so would be confiscated and people from lowland Burma would be brought to cultivate them. (**Source: SHRF**)

◆ In mid-November 1999, SPDC authorities, acting under the order of Brg-Gen Thein Sein, confiscated 30 acres of pineapple farms belonging to the villagers of Kaeng Ka village, Kaeng Tung Township, Shan State. The villagers were given 3 days notice to gather their pineapple crop, but this was insufficient time, and as a result, when the military ploughed the acres with a tractor to prepare for a military rice crop, the villagers lost over 1 million *kyat* worth of pineapples. (**Source: SHRF**)

◆ On November 18, 1999, troops from LIB 322 robbed the people of Wan Keow Sai, Mong Tom tract, Tand Yan Township, Shan State.

1. Khing Saw lost 1 basket of polished rice and some clothes.
2. Khing Nay lost 16,000 *kyat* worth of provisions.
3. Khing Sarng Toon lost his household belongings and some clothes.
4. Khing Leng, a grocer, lost 6,000 *kyat*.

In addition, the villagers had to give them 10 viss of chicken.

(**Source: SSA**)

◆ On November 21, 1999, 15 troops from IB 221 led by Lt. Yan Naing stopped every car attempting to cross Murng Ngaam bridge in Murng Phyak Twonship, Shan State. They forced each driver to pay 1000 *kyat* before they allowed them to cross the bridge. (**Source: SHRF**)

◆ On November 22, 1999, combined SPDC troops from Battalions 423, 426, and 427 operated a cleansing campaign in the Townships of Mong Kung and Kaesi, Shan State. They robbed livestock and provisions from the people, Those who had lost their chickens and provisions were: (a) Loong Pang, (b) E Lort, (c) Nang Kham, (d) Wiya, (e) Sarng Hsu,

all from Wan Nam Oon, Ho Khai tract. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ On November 22, 1999, troops from IB 45 robbed the people of Wan Kaw Kom, Nong Leng tract, Tang Yan Township, Shan State. The villagers who lost their properties were:

- | | |
|----------------------|------------------|
| 1. Pu Kae Loong Pang | 5. Pa Sing |
| 2. Ko Nyo | 6. Loong Has Oon |
| 3. Loong Ong | 7. Loong Ku |
| 4. Loong Korn | 8. Sai Yawd |

(*Source: SSA*)

◆ In November 1999, LIB 273 troops took the buffaloes and cows belong to Mayan Chaung village and neighboring villages, while they were grazing in Mayan Chaung village. The owners of the cattle from Mayan Chaung are:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. U Pan Shwe, age 64, Tavoyan | 1 buffalo |
| 2. U Thee Shwe, age 58, Tavoyan | 1 buffalo |
| 3. U Kyaing <i>Kyin</i> , age 72, Mon | 3 buffaloes |
| 4. Ma Win Kyi, age 36, Tavoyan | 3 buffaloes |

IB 408 troops took the buffaloes and cows of the owners from the other villages are:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1. U Hale, age 58, Mon | 2 buffaloes | Kywe Thone Nyima village |
| 2. Ma Hla Aye, age 42, Tavoyan | 2 cows | Byu Gyi village |

(*Source: THRF*)

◆ On November 25, 1999, Operation Commander Myint Thein from Strategic Command #881 (under #88 LID) summoned village heads from 70-80 villages in Kya In Township, Karen State for a meeting at Kya In Seik Gyi. There he announced that instead of imposing their current rice quota per village, the SPDC would begin confiscating all the villagers' rice in December 1999, at the end of the annual rice harvest. All villagers were required to bring their harvested paddy to SPDC-controlled storage barns at Ta Mi Ni, Plaw Toh Kee, Ter Noh, and Da Nu (near Kya In Seik Gyi). The villagers were told that they would then have to come to the storage location, regardless of the distance by foot from their villages, to collect enough rice for their family before each meal. The SPDC explained to the village heads that strictly regulating the food supply was the only way to break the resistance, since villagers would be monitored to ensure that no surplus rice could be hoarded for the KNLA. The SPDC imposed a deadline of December 20th to complete the harvest and hand over the paddy. Any paddy left in the fields after that date would be seized, and any villagers caught in their fields or huts once the deadline passed would be shot, no questions asked. (*Source: KHRG*)

◆ On November 27, 1999, troops from IB 11, 12 and LIB 108 destroyed houses and paddy from the villages of Ne Khee, Mae Hut Lu, Lay Hta and Hay Pu in Papun district, Karen State. In total, about 10,000 baskets of paddy were destroyed by the troops. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On November 28, 1999, Lt-Col Ko Ko, Chairman of the Tachilek PDC instructed members of the Tachilek USDA to collect 200,000 *baht* for the SPDC senior official inspection of the hotel and casino business in Tachilek planned for January 2000. Therefore, the USDA members forced each house in Town to pay 800 *baht*, and each house in the rural area around Town to pay 600 *baht*. Many villagers had to sell their rice paddy to pay the USDA. (*Source: SHRF*)

- ◆ On November 29, 1999, Paung Township authorities and the deputy manager of the paddy-buying managing committee closed a paddy-husking mill in Kyone-hor village tract, which was owned by Nai Par. They instructed the manager of paddy-buying, U Myint Kyaw, to carefully watch the activities of that paddy-husking mill and take action if the mill owner did not follow the order. Due to this order, the villagers in this village tract faced insufficient food, and the farmers had to buy polished rice at high price from Town traders. The village tract leaders informed to Township authorities about the situation of the villagers, and requested to re-allow the husking of paddy. The authorities gave permission to only the farmers who had already sold their quota and had gained permission from the village leaders, which cost a farmer 10 *kyat* per basket. (*Source: HURFOM*)
- ◆ On November 30, 1999, troops from SPDC IB 246 based in Nam Awe village, Kun Hing Township, Shan State robbed the villagers who were threshing their paddy in their fields near Wan Pae, Ho Yan tract, Kun Hing Township. About 10,000 *kyat* worth of property was looted from the villagers. (*Source: SHRF*)
- ◆ On December 1, 1999, three houses from Walo Klo village, Papun district, Karen State were burned down by the SPDC troops under the command of Division 66. In total, 33,000 *kyat* worth of property were destroyed. (*Source: HRDU*)
- ◆ On December 2, 1999, troops from LIB 608, upon returning from battle, entered Wan Nong, Mong Tom tract, Tang Yan Township, Shan State. They captured 2 villagers and robbed 10,000 *kyat* in cash. Later they went to the house of militia leader Sao Khun Yawd Mong and robbed about 200,000 *kyat* worth of precious and household goods. From there they went to rob the house of Sao Khum Pang, another militia leader, and took 50,000 *kyat* worth of goods. (*Source: SSA*)
- ◆ On December 2, 1999, troops from LIB 296 led by Major Moe Hein, burned the paddy of the people of Wan Weing Phwee, Weing Phwee tract, Kun Hing Township, Shan State. They lost at least 120 lang (about 600 baskets) of paddy which were burnt. The villagers who lost their paddy were Santaka, Teing Nyo and Maha. In addition, about 40 lang (200 baskets) of paddy threshed by the people of Wan Weing Phwee were robbed by the same troops later that day and carried to their garrison at Ho Tang, Ta Kaw tract, Kun Hing Township. The villagers who lost their paddy were Saw Singna, and Nan Ta. (*Source: SSA*)
- ◆ On December 3, 1999, 22 bullock carts from Mee Tai Taung village, Mone Township, Karen State, were summoned to carry the logs for the construction of SPDC IB 26 military camp. (*Source: HRDU*)
- ◆ On December 3, 1999, every household in Kaw Tun, Kaw Pauk, Kadoe and Kaw Hlar villages, Moulmein Township, Mon State were forced to purchase various kinds of fund-raising calendars. The calendars, such as the Students' Sport fund-raising calendar, cost 500 *kyat* each. The villagers were threatened that if they did not buy the calendars, their rice mills would be forcibly closed. (*Source: HRDU*)
- ◆ On December 5, 1999, SPDC military column led by battalion commander Aung Kyaw Hla from LIB 101 arrived in Wah Tho Hta village, Nyaunglebin Township, Karen State and proceeded to destroy and burn down five houses from the village. They also looted 80,000 *kyat*. worth of belongings from the villagers. (*Source: HRDU*)
- ◆ On December 7, 1999, SPDC troops from LIB 336 from Loikaw, led by Major Aung Gyi looted properties worth of 30,000 *kyat*, from villagers of Kharm Koong Loi

Khwang, Loi La tract, Nam Sarng Township, Shan State. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On December 8, 1999, troops from the 102nd IB butchered 2 water buffaloes from Khing On Long, a villager of Wan Kung Has, Wan Lao tract, Kun Hing Township, Shan State. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ On December 9, 1999, a military column led by commander San Win from LIB 357 came to Tadawmaw village, Thaton Township, Karen State and beat a villager named Maung Soe Mya. The troops also took 40,000 *kyat* and a watch from him. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On December 11, 1999, troops from LIB 264 came to Thay Nar-u village Papun district, Karen State and burned four houses in the village. (*Source: HRDU*)

◆ On December 13, 1999, troops from IB 45 robbed the people of Wan Huay Oarng, Nong Leng tract, Tang Yan Township, Shan State. Loong Kae Sarng Yi and his son were tied up while their house was searched. Altogether they lost about 40,000 *kyat* in cash and provisions. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ On December 14, 1999, troops from Battalion 514 and Myo Tint, chairman of the Township PDC forced the people of Harm Ngai tract, Mong Kung Township, Shan State to sell their paddy at a loss. They had to sell 500 baskets to the Township PDC and 300 baskets to the battalion. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ On December 14, 1999, troops from IB 46 demanded that the people of Harm Ngai tract, Mong Kung Township, Shan State give them 300 viss of oranges or pay them 80 *kyat* per viss in cash. The people were told that if they failed to give what they had been ordered to, the indigenous people would have to surrender their lands to Burmese settlers from lowland Burma. (*Source: SSA*)

◆ On December 15, 1999, troops from LIB 264 burned down 4 houses in Thay-Ner-Oo village, Papun District, Karen State. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On December 16, 1999, troops from IB 32 entered Maw Kee village, Doo-Pla-ya District, Karen State, shot their guns into the air, drove people from their houses, and then stole a gold necklace and 1,000 Baht from a villager, Naw Ta Nu. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On December 22, 1999, Major Saw Shwe and major Hla Myint of IB 248 from Mong Nai Township, Shan State forced the people in the region to sell the maize at a knocked down price. The military paid 400 *kyat* per basket while the actual price at the market was 1,000 *kyat*. The amount of quota to sell was as follows:

1. Naa Kharn tract 400 baskets
2. Ka Hae tract 100 baskets
3. Wan Yae tract 100 baskets
4. Kun Naa tract 300 baskets
5. Loi Kaew tract 200 baskets
6. Nam Maw Som tract 50 baskets
7. Paw Mong quarter 100 baskets
8. Nong Kaeo quarter 50 baskets
9. Nar Hong quarter 50 baskets
10. Oo Yean quarter 50 baskets
11. Mai Hai tract 300 baskets

(*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On December 22, 1999, Battalion Commander San Win of IB 545 entered Mae-Thet-Ywa-Gyi village, Thaton District, Karen State and stole 5 baskets of paddy, a tin of

rice, and 17 chickens from villager Naw Ma Aye. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On December 23, 1999, Captain San Win from LIB 357 killed a pig worth 4,000 *kyat* owned by Saw Kyaw Mya of Noe-Ber-Baw village, Thaton District, Karen State. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On December 25, 1999, U Soe Tint and U Thein Than Htun, both were Lankho Township SPDC officials in Shan State ordered the people to sell them paddy at knocked down price. For a total of 120 acres in Nong Long tract, the villagers were required to sell 8 baskets of rice per acre. The military paid 300 *kyat* per basket, while the local price was 1,000 *kyat* per basket. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ During the month of December 1999, the SPDC authorities of Laikha Township, Shan State forced the people to pay highway taxes for every vehicle entering or exiting from the Town. Each bullock-cart had to pay 100 *kyat* for entry and 125 *kyat* for exit. Each tractor had to pay 500 *kyat* for entry or exit. Each truck had to pay 1,000 *kyat* for both entry and exit. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On December 25, 1999, soldiers from IB 246 forced 200 people to attend the ceremony of new pagodas in Kun Hing Township, Shan State. Although the authorities said the people were invited, they were forced to donate 100 *kyat* each for admittance to the authorities. (*Source: SHRF*)

◆ On December 28, 1999, troops from IB 35 led by officers Mya Win, San Hla Htun, and Myint Htay shot at villagers hiding in the jungle in the Bway-Baw-Doe area, Toun-goo District, Karen State. They burnt down 5 houses and the household items. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On December 28, 1999, SPDC troops burnt down Hser Kee village, Tavoy-Mergui District, Karen State. (*Source: KIC*)

◆ On January 10, 2000, every household from Daw Tamagyi, Daw Pu, Daw Nge Khu, Daw So Pya, Daw Pha, Daw Tacha, Daw Be Soe and Daw Bo Lae villages in Demawsoe Township Karenni State were ordered to supply material for the building of fences and a military outpost at Daw Tamagyi village. Each village was ordered to give 50 pieces of bamboo and 50 strips of thatche. (*Source: HRDU*)

