

# The Mon Forum

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## Contents

### News:

- (1) Conscription of forced labour in the construction of Hangan-Khawza motor road,
- (2) More IDPs in Yebyu Township area,
- (3) Levying tax from dry season paddy crop of the local farmers,
- (4) Repatriation of Mon displaced persons from Thailand

### Report:

- (1) Tax collection and other violations for battalion fund

## Some Acronyms in This Issue

- SPDC-** State Peace and Development Council,
- SLORC-** State Law and Order Restoration Council,
- BADP-** Border Area Development Program,
- IB -** Infantry Battalion (*of Burmese Army*),
- LIB-** Light Infantry Battalion (*of Burmese Army*),
- NMSP-** New Mon State Party,

## News

### Conscription of Forced Labour in the Construction of Hanga-Khawza Motor Road

(April, 2000)

Since the beginning of March, the government authorities and SPDC troops from LIB No. 299 have forced some hundreds of Mon villagers from 7 villages in southern part of Ye Township in constructing Hangan-Khawza road, which is long about 12 miles and connected two main Mon villages. In April, the road is still built with the use of forced labour in the various types of works for the construction. This road construction is under the SPDC's border area development program (BADP) and the government officially ordered the headmen to help the authorities in constructing this road.

Before the road construction started, the authorities from BADP also ordered the local villagers to give some fund and the government could allocate very limited amount of budget. In January, an officer from Department of BADP, Lt. Col. Myint Aye came to this area and called a meeting



**Forced labourers:** *Conscription of forced labour is widespread in Ye and Yebyu Township area.*

with villagers and explained them that the government had plan to build a more proper road that connected between Hangan-Khawza villages and all villages which are on the motor road, must help the government. After his explanation, the Ye Township authorities and LIB No. 299 have taken responsibility to build the motor road. Thus, the authorities have collected 2, 400 Kyat fund from every household in the villages and they received a lot of fund from over 2, 000 households in 7 Mon villages.

From the collection of fund, the authorities received nearly 5 million Kyat from villagers and gave back about 2.5 million Kyat to village headmen in 7 Mon villages to hire trucks and carried facilities and stones that required for the road construction. To complete the whole construction of this road, the authorities and commanders from LIB No. 299 also required labour from villagers. So, they gave instruction to the village headmen to send the possible required number of villagers to contribute labour in the construction.

The pieces of work for the construction are, collecting stones at nearer of the construction, crushing the stones into small pieces, carrying stones and laying them in the embankment, and other works. In the construction, the authorities always required around 200-300 villagers to contribute and they are separated into many designated places with many different work-duties to them. The village headmen had to send the set number of villagers to the construction site or to the designated work-site. Sometimes, they are on the road to do building the embankment, and sometimes, they gather stones in the forests or along the streams.

Actually, with the received fund, when the headmen arranged hiring trucks and carrying stones, the budget are not enough and when they asked to army commanders, they are instructed to collect fund from their own villages.

When the village headmen had no choice they had to collect the fund from their own village, with rate 100-500 Kyat per household again.

Therefore, under the slogan of SPDC for border area development, the villagers are suffering not only from the collection of fund, but also they have to distribute labour without payment in this road construction. The program has begun after NMSP-SLORC ceasefire and the authorities have participated in many part of Mon State to adopt border development program, but they have just collected fund from the people as mentioning to do self-help developments and have conscripted labour from the villagers.



## More IDPs in Yebyu Township Area

(April 2000)

After one Mon armed group with 60-100 armed forces rose up for rebellion against SPDC, in many parts of Yebyu Township and Ye Township areas, the Mon villagers in these areas are normally accused as rebel-supporters or sympathizers. During the Mon National Day, on February 20, the armed group lalso attended the ceremony and the tension between the local SPDC troops and the group have seriously increased.

The Mon national day ceremony was celebrated in Paukpingwin village and the group leaders also attended and delivered speeches. Many Mon villagers from villages near Paukpingwin village also attended the ceremony and listened to the speeches of armed group leaders. After the celebration, the SPDC troops from IB No. 25 and LIB No. 273, heard about this, they tried to arrest the people who attended the Mon national day. However, they could not get many key leaders of celebrating committee members



### Displaced villagers:

*Most of them are displaced from various villages from Yebyu Township area*

and accused all villagers from the villages who attended the ceremony as rebel-supporters.

As a revenge, the local troops of the Burmese Army from LIB No. 273, 410 and IB No. 25, has blocked many villages and have not allowed the villagers to go to their farms and worked their own works. IB No. 25 troops also went into many fruit plantations near the villages and arrested some farmers and tortured them and forced them to go back homes and stay in the village without moving. Some villagers and village leaders were also arrested in their own villages and tortured by the soldiers with accusation they were supporting for the Mon national day celebration and collected fund for that ceremony. Similarly, the villagers in farms and plantations were also arrested and accused as rebel-supporters, and were severely tortured by soldiers. After the Burmese Army blocked their villages, every family was threatened to not support the rebel group while the villagers in farms and plantations were threatened that they must be killed if they stayed longer in their work places.

Sometimes, the soldiers blocked the whole village and did not allow the villagers to go out of it and they looted villagers' belongings in their plantations and farms. They soldiers took food supplies and fruits in the plantations. If one villager kept a lot of food supplies in his farms, he must be accused as rebel-supporters and could be terribly tortured by soldiers.

Because of movement related restriction and torture related to accusation of rebel-supporters, the villagers were in fear for more persecution and some of them also faced food-shortage problems in their own villages. On the other hand, the Burmese troops who patrolled around the farms and plantations also confiscated some food supplies which they met and burnt down some foods.

As a result, the villagers from Paukpingwin, Mi-htawhlar Gyi, Mi-htawp-hlar Kalay, Dani-kyar, Chaung-phar, Kyauktayan and Phaya-thonzu villages have to flee from their native villages and about 70 families moved into Tavoy resettlement camp and over 100 families resettled in Hle-seik, a IDP village established last year and "The Chaung" a new IDP village established in March 2000. Some many other families also displaced in another places.

According to our estimation, about 3000-5000 villagers in the above mentioned Mon villages left from their homes to escape from mis-treatment and systematic persecution by the Burmese Army. Many families moved into SPDC's firm control and where they felt they would be less suffered than in their villages. Among many thousand displaced persons, about 1,000 population has gradually moved into NMSP Tavoy District control area including refugee resettlement area and IDPs villages.



### Levying Tax from Dry Season Paddy

## Crop of the Local Farmers

(March, 2000)

Although the local authorities have not asked the farmers in Mudon and Kyaikmayaw Townships, who grew dry season paddy crop to sell their paddy at low price, the farmers have to pay various types of tax to the authorities to get permission for growing crops, to get available water sources, to get petrol oil and others. So, the tax payment with cashes to the authorities is equal to the paddy tax given after the production of rainy or wet season crop.

In the southern part of the government also encouraged farmers and their own soldiers to cultivate both dry and wet season crops for more paddy production in Burma. For the traditional farmers, who grow only rainy season crop are quite hard to add another dry season crop growing project within their limited time. On the other hand, those farmers could not get available water sources and facilities such pump-generators to bring water and fertilizers for the farmers. So, many traditional farmers did not join in growing dry season crop.

But only number of farmers, less than 10% of the total, in Mudon and Kyaikmayaw township areas, whose farms have near government water distribution canals or near the river and streams have grown dry seasonal crops by bringing water from those possible water sources. However, to get water or to get permission, the farmers have to pay various type of tax to authorities.

When a farmer asked for permission to grow dry season paddy crop, he/she has to pay to local village authorities with tax 200 Kyat per acre and another 200 Kyat per acre to Township authorities. Then the farmers have to pay 200 Kyat per acre to the local military battalion and 150 Kyat to the paddy-buying committee. Additionally, when the farmers asked permission to get water from government water distribution canals, they also have to pay 200-1000 Kyat per acre. Therefore, a farmer has to pay 1,000 – 1,500 Kyat to government authorities to complete all processes of farming for dry seasonal crop.

Although the government has declared they would have supported the farmers who grow dry season crop with petrol oil and fertilizers, they farmers did not received these facilities at government price, but they have to buy them from farmers. Actually, the government departments have sent these facilities to Township authorities and the authorities have sold them to farmers again at the similar price in private market. Thus, for a farmer who owned about 5 acres of land also lost about 20, 000- 30, 000 Kyat every year in buying fertilizers and petrol at high price.

In some area, when the government do not like other crops, such as sesame, pea-nut, corn and others, they also ordered to take these plants and forced them to grow dry season. In the beginning 1999, such the problems also happened in Kyaikmayaw Township farms and the farmers were forced to change their crops to dry season paddy crop

and they also have to abandon the traditional agriculture methods.

## Repatriation of Mon Displaced Persons from Thailand

(April 2000)

Although the repatriation of the Mon people with many families have not been make by the Thai authorities for a long time, just recently about 30 Mon families who stayed in Thailand border with any recognized ID cards were repatriated to Burma side of the border. Since 1997, after Mon refugees from Chaung-chi area of Mergui District, opposite side of Prachuab Kirichan Province of Thailand, were repatriated with lack monitoring by UNHCR to Burma side of the border, there has been no such repatriation have been conducted. However, the deportation of thousands of Burmese illegal immigrants have been weekly make by the Thai authorities to Halockhani resettlement camp and MRDC also helped them with foods for some days.

At the beginning of April, when Thai authorities in Thong-phar-phoom area made the new registration of displaced persons and tribe people in the area, they also arrested and deported the villagers who had no identity cards and have stayed in Thailand illegally for some years. When the authorities went into "Ban Bilockhi" village, they also met many Mon families who had no Thai ID cards or Tribe ID. The authorities also arrested those villagers and then deported them back to the border area and told them to not return into Thailand again.

Those displaced villagers also crossed the border and resettled in Tavoy resettlement camp. There were about 160 villagers from over 30 families arrived to our camp in the first and second week of April. When they arrived to the resettlement site, they left nothing and could brought only some clothes and pots along with them. Therefore, the site leaders in Tavoy camp helped them with foods and some

shelters. No family chose to return their native homes, where they fled from and decided to stay on in the resettlement site until the human rights situation in their native villages become better.

Actually, those villagers were refugees and they mainly fled from their native villages in Yebyu and Tavoy townships area for over five years ago to escape from the systematic persecution committed by the Burmese Army and the local government authorities. According to our inquiry, those villagers had fled from their active places because of the constant conscription of forced labour by the local Burmese Army's battalions and related tax collection to construct 110 miles-long Ye-Tavoy railway road. They said during that time, they had no time to work in their own farms and plantation for regular income and were hard to survive. Some of them escaped not only to avoid the forced labour but also from forced relocation, forced displacement and other abuses related to accusation of rebel-sympathizers.

Then, they fled into Thailand with expectation to get jobs. At that time, NMSP have not agreed ceasefire with SLORC and the Mon refugees in Thailand were under threat for forcible repatriation to Burma. These villagers knew about the conditions in refugee camp and chose to not join the refugee camp. With the whole families, they went into Thailand and sought jobs for income and survival. In Thailand, they could not own lands but were used to be day-labourers for Thai gardeners or fruit plantation owners. Although they could not receive the permanent work and income, they could survive in Thailand.

Although they stayed for over 5 years, they were not recognized as refugees or as Thai tribal people. They just displaced outside of refugee camps. When the MNRC and NMSP resettled the returned refugees in the resettlement site, some families also joined and stayed in the resettlement site while many others still remained in Thailand. Normally, the life in Thailand was not difficult like in the refugee

resettlement site, and some of them chose to stay on in Thailand until the Thai authorities drove them out of the country.

During March and April 2000, Thai authorities have carefully checked the immigrants from Burma with a worry following the hospital seize in Rat-chburi. The authorities met those villagers have no ID cards to officially allow them to stay on in Thailand. On the other hand, since they were Mon people, the authorities did not choose to send them to a refugee camp, but deported them to Mon resettlement site.



**The spontaneous repatriation** of Mon refugees from Thailand in 1998

# Report

## Tax Collection and Other Violations for Battalion Fund

### The Initiative of Battalion Fund

In the previous reports, we have widely described how the local authorities and SPDC's army battalions involve in levying tax as porter fees and fund for development projects. Besides these types of tax collection, the local army battalions also involved in other types of tax collection for battalions' fund that could mainly provided them to support their survival. Otherwise, the army also interfered some of the administrative authorities' works and they also collected tax from farmers, fishermen and day-labourers, to get fund for their battalions.

Since 1997, after the higher military command could not provide the enough food rations and budget to every battalion in the local areas, the Burmese Army also instructed the local battalions that they must support themselves and to seek foods and other supplies that required for them. And, the local military battalions found their own ways in collecting fund for their own battalion.

Then, the battalions invented various type of taxation, which is not legally mentioned in the laws or State Constitution, and collected tax from both villages' and towns' civilians to receive the set amount of tax. Considerably, an army battalion, with 300 soldiers and other 100 population of soldiers' families, the commander is quite hard to feed all of them. Therefore, when the commander could not receive the full amount of food supplies and the set budget for the battalions, they required inventing the types of tax. If the commanders could not manage to support his battalions' soldiers with enough foods or to run the battalions' administrative and other activities, they must resign from their posts and the second-commander of the battalion could take that post.

Due to this restricted orders against the army battalion commanders, they had to tried hard to get fund depending on their situation and environment. Among the battalions, they also could negotiate each other, how they could collect fund from the civilians. For example, in October 1998, to get fund for the concerned military battalions, Southeast Military Command also invented and instructed the local military battalions to collect fund for disabled soldiers from the civilians in their based townships. Thus, the local military battalions in Ye Township, LIB No. 343 and IB No. 61 collected the new type of fund from the civilians and received about 7 million Kyat from the whole township area. Then, the Southeast Military allowed these two military battalions to keep that fund and to invest in some businesses for the battalions profit and from that profit to provide food supplies for soldiers and budget for expenses of the battalions. So, IB No. 61 also invested some fund in transportation of passengers and Southeast Military Command allow the battalion to monopolize one ferry company that operated carrying passengers back and forth between Moulmein and Ye. And LIB No. 343 invested some of their fund in fishing industries that operated in Andaman Sea by individual company and the battalion has participated as a shareholder.

Since those battalions required more fund and extent their own businesses *or* sometimes, when they have to use more expenses in their own military battalion, they also have authority to invent another type of tax collection and could collect fund as they like. Thus, as a result, many battalions commanders who have authority enjoyed and participated in corruption and then, the civilians have been suffered more from the various of tax collection under the name of battalion fund.

The following data are the practices of tax collection conducted by army and police for their own fund and instances of these varied from one area to another area. Or, sometimes, Southeast Military Command or Mon State PDC (*Peace and Development Council*) or Karen State PDC officially ordered the subordinate army and police station to collect fund for an occasion and an activity that is ordered by the Military Command or State PDC.

### Taxation for Police Station and Army Battalion Fund

After the army battalions or police stations in a Township receive order from the higher military commands *or* State/Division PDC, that they would not received available budget or food rations for their own battalions, the local army and police battalion collected fund from the civilians. Sometimes, by mentioning the reason to higher authorities that they required to improve the living standard of the soldiers and their families, the higher army command and government authorities also those battalions to collect fund by their own way to support their subordinates. Even many types of taxation is not mentioned in the constitutions and sometimes, these against the laws, the higher officials just blinded their eyes.

Depending on the geographical bases of a battalion, and the quality of the battalion commander, some battalion could collect more funds, while some battalion could not. All responsibilities to feed the soldiers and operating of the battalion rely on the battalion commander, and he ordered his low-level officials to collect fund from

the civilians. Then his subordinates would order the town ward leaders/ village headmen in all villages under their control to pay the tax. By this way, the tax collection in the town and rural areas have been collected by the army battalions.

In collecting this type of fund, sometimes, the commander and his followers officially declared that they would collect "battalion fund" and sometimes they did not. After declaration or official instruction, the town and village headmen have to take responsibility to collect this type of tax. Sometimes, the battalion collected the battalion fund only from a specific group of people, such as traders, passengers, mobile owners, rubber plantation owners and others. However, they have no system that collecting which type of tax from which group of people.

**As an instance,**

During December 1999, when a military battalion, based in Thanbyuzayat town, IB No. 62, collected battalion fund, the commander officially declared that they would collect fund from especially rubber plantation owners. Even the battalion bases in Thanbyuzayat town, it has activities in many Mon villages southern part of Mudon Township and the commander just instructed to his officers to collect fund from the rubber plantation owners. He ordered each family who owned small or large plantation, they must have 1, 800 Kyat per family. The battalion have launched military activities about 10 villages in this area, about 2, 500 families from these villages have to pay the battalion fund, so the battalion receive about 4. 5 million Kyat as battalion fund. The villages such as Kwan-klar, Hnee-padaw, Yaungdaung, Sathawe, Doe-mile, Kalort-tort, Thaugpa, Paung-sein and others have to pay this type of tax. Normally, in Mon villages in Mon State, there are many households in one village, and the smallest village has about 300 households, while a big village has over 1, 000 households. In these 10 villages, nearly half of the villagers are rubber growers and many hundreds of rubber plantations are in each and surrounding of their villages and in the slope of Taung-nyo mountain range.

Recently, when the military battalion collected fund, they have used indirect way and have used the method that the rubber growers must sell their rubber to the battalion at low price, like the authorities forced the local paddy growing farmers to sell their paddy at low price to the set paddy-buying centers. Similarly, after the battalion received rubber from civilians at low price, they re-sell the rubber to traders at market price and received a lots of profit from it. But, in buying rubber and selling it, it takes time for the battalion to get profit. So, in 1999, they changed the method and directly collected fund from the civilians. By new method, the battalion has less responsibility and could collect all fund from rubber grower within one month. Similarly to IB No. 62 did, the other battalions in Mudon and Thanbyuzayat Township, LIB No. 209 and IB No. 31 collected fund from rubber growers from their respective areas. They have managed the areas to not overlap each other.

The other type of tax of battalion fund always happens when Burmese Army (BA) deployed new battalion in one area. At that time, the authorities or army required a lot of fund from the civilians to start building the military encampment and install facilities. In this case, before the deployment of an army battalion, the local battalion confiscated the lands that owned by civilians and planted with valuable fruits and rubber trees plantations without any compensation. Then the battalion built their barracks in the plantations, they did not cut all trees and then sell the fruit and rubber for their battalion fund. Additionally, when the battalion built the barracks, the soldiers also forced the civilians to contribute free labour and provide construction materials such as bamboo, thatch and wood.

**As an instance,**

When a battalion of Burmese Army, LIB No. 299, was newly deployed near Koe-mile village of southern part of Ye Township, the authorities and army confiscated about 200 acres of rubber and fruit plantations owned by Koe-mile villagers without paying compensation. Then, Southeast Military Command also ordered to two local battalions, LIB No. 343 and IB No. 61, that originally based in Ye Township, to collect fund from the new battalion, LIB No. 299. Thus, LIB No. 343 and IB No. 61 collected fund from every village in Ye Township. Even the smallest villages with 50 to 100 households in the Township, has to give 2, 000 – 3, 000 Kyat to the authorities or soldiers, for the battalion fund of LIB No. 299. Thus, the villages with 1, 000 households have to give fund 50, 000 Kyat and up.

The battalion was not only taking fund from the civilians to build their military barracks, but they also requested the villagers nearby to send various types of construction materials from the barracks such as bamboo, thatches and wood lumbers and others. The commander also requested the villagers and elephants from Hangan, Koe-mile, Kalort and Mun-aung villages to contribute free labour in cutting trees, bringing trees and materials, building the military barracks and many other works.

## **Levying Indirect Tax from Civilians for Occasions and Activities**

Although sometimes, the battalions officially told to the village headmen that they would collect fund for their own battalions, sometimes they did not mention like that and tried to show another reasons to get the set amount of fund. During 1999, the battalions in Mon State tried to gain a lots of fund from the civilians by staging traditional

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boxing, singing and dancing and others and sold tickets to villagers and town residents by forces in raising fund for their own battalions.

According to the initial plan, SPDC arranged to cerebrate Students Sports in Moulmein, the capital of Mon State and ordered all battalions under the Southeast Military Command, to collect fund and support the Students Sports. According to secret instruction, the Southeast Military Command instructed its subordinated battalions to provide the Students Sports at least one million Kyat while they instructed to other battalions to provide up to 5 million Kyat. To cerebrate that Students Sports, the Southeast Military Command also required about 100 Million Kyat and according to the reliable source, the SPDC government could provide only 20 millions Kyat and secretly ordered the Southeast Military Command to seek the remaining fund. Thus, this military command required to seek 80 millions Kyat and then the Command requested the local military battalion to collect fund from the civilians again.

By taking that order as good chance, the local battalion sought fund not only for Students Sports but also for their own battalion fund. But they collect fund, the battalion commanders did not explain to the civilians that they collected fund for Students Sports and battalion funds. They just forced the civilians to buy the tickets for various stages to watch, such as boxing, dancing and singing.

There are various instances of collecting of battalion fund, by mentioning another reasons. From June 5 until 6, 1999, IB No. 210 battalion led by Lt. Col. Tin Hla staged a traditional boxing in Mudon town sport stadium. Before the stage, the commander had called meetings with local village headmen and town ward leaders and instructed them to sell 100 tickets of boxing in each village and town ward. For some big villages in the township, he gave about 300-500 tickets to sell at price 500 Kyat per one ticket. Totally, the commander gave about 10, 000 tickets in township for one night show and 20, 000 tickets for 2 nights show. Then, he ordered to headmen that they must not pay back these tickets and if the headmen could not sell all tickets, anyhow, they must have to pay money for the costs of tickets that they received. Thus, the headmen again forced the villagers to buy tickets with order one ticket per household. Besides selling the tickets, the commander also instructed the village headmen that they must collect fund from the houses which did not receive any tickets, 100-300 Kyat per household. From staging of this traditional boxing, LIB No. 210 could make about 5 million Kyat fund and just paidd some small amouts to boxers. Most villagers who bought the tickets, could not come to watch boxing in stadium, because their home villages were far from the town.

Again in Mudon Township, another military battalion, No. 2 of Mechanical Enginneering Battalion, led by Lt. Col. Ye Din also staged a dancing concerts that were hired from Rangoon and sold tickets by forcing the village headmen and town ward leaders. The battalion gave 10, 000 tickets to village and town wards leaders and let them sell at price 300 Kyat per ticket. From this staging concerts, the battalion could make estimated 3 million Kyat.

Similarly, IB No. 208 that bases in Kyaikmayaw Township also staged a tridition boxing in Township sport stadium andd sold about 10, 000 tickets for two nights long boxing stage on June 13 and 14, 1999. From this stage, IB No. 208 battalion could make about 4 million Kyat fund.

Likewise, Ye Township based military battalion, IB No. 61 also staged a singing concert with well-known singers from Rangoon in Township hall in the first week of May and sold the tickets to town and village civilians at price 1, 000 Kyat per tickets. Although the villagers who stayed far from the town could not come and watch the concert, the headmen have to pay for the costs of tickets given by the battalion. From this staging the concert, the battalion received about 3 million Kyat fund. Similarly, thhe second week of June, IB No. 61 also held a women football competition and sold the tickets to every house in Ye Town and the price of one ticket was about 100 Kyat. They sold about 10, 000 tickets and received about 1 million Kyat. However, nobody how much the battalion had to support the Southeast Military Command, but each battalion required to spend at least about 500, 000 Kyat per month and more to feed their soldiers and do other battalion purposes.

In 1999, according the source from Mon State SPDC, the battalions could not the set amount of budget and Southeast Command still required fund to celebrate the Students Sports. Due to not available budget, the Mon State PDC and Southeast Military Command also reported the budget situation to higher authorities and then SPDC canceled the Students Sports Celebration. And, they also allowed Southeast Military Command and its local military battalions to collect more fund from the civilians in Mon State and Karen State to get enough budget to celebrate Students Sports.

Besides this State occasion, whenever the SPDC celebrated annual occasion, the local million and authorities also collected fund from the civilians and the concerned battalions took the extra amount of collected money for their battalion fund. Thus, whenever the government authorities and army celebrate Independence Day, Armed Forces Day and others, they have chance to collect huge amount of fund from the civilians.

**As an instance,**

To celebrate Karen State Day in Pa-an, the capital of Karen State, the authorities also collect fund by staging traditional boxing and sold about 20, 000 tickets to civilians by forces. The price of one ticket was about 250

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Kyat. The authorities sent these tickets to every village headmen and let them sell to their villagers. From this boxing competition, the authorities and army could receive about 3. 5 million Kyat per day and they had continuously celebrated for four days and received about 14 million Kyat fund from the civilians. In celebrating Karen State ceremony, the authorities used only about 5 million Kyat and they shared the remaining funds among the army and Karen State PDC authorities.

Similarly in Mon State, whenever the authorities celebrated one occasional and important day, they also collected fund from the civilians. Or, the authorities made calendars or flats with massage of the occasions and sell them to civilians, car and truck drivers by forces. In such collecting fund, the police, army and government authorities also actively participate.

**Conclusion**

Under the name of collection of fund, for the various purposes, the civilians in Mon State and Karen State have been constantly suffered and they could not refuse from paying these types of fund, or they could face arrests and detention. According to a Town ward civilian in Mon State, she said each family have to pay the authorities at least 1, 000 Kyat within one month and in some months, they have to give away about 5, 000 Kyat per month. In Burma, due to less opportunity, even an able-bodied man, it is quite difficult for them to get 5, 000 Kyat incomes per month and the money is not enough to feed their families.

And, at the same time, they have to give away a lot of fund to government authorities and civilians again. Sometimes, besides their payment, they also have to contribute unpaid labour for the government and less time to work their own works. Under these conditions, the civilians are facing a very hard situation for survival and to gain available shelters and clothing. Besides the households who close to SPDC or who are the SPDC authorities or army officers, all civilians in Mon State and Karen State have responsibility and they were unequally treated.



**Information on HURFOM  
and  
Invitation for Feedbacks  
from Readers**

Dear Readers,

Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) was founded in 1995, by a group of young Mon people. The main objectives of HURFOM are:

- To monitor human rights situations in Mon territory and other areas southern part of Burma,
- To protect and promote internationally recognized human rights in Burma,

In order to implement these objectives, HURFOM has produced "The Mon Forum" newsletters monthly and sometimes it has been delayed because we wait to confirm some information. We apologize for the delay.

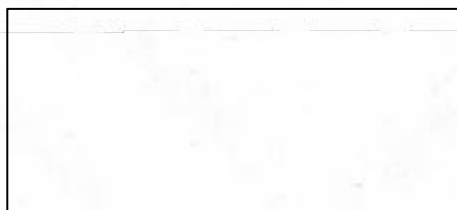
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