

# The Mon Forum

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## Some Acronyms in This Issue

SPDC-	State Peace and Development Council,
APTD-	Agricultural Products Trade Department,
ILO-	International Labour Organization
IB -	Infantry Battalion ( <i>of Burmese Army</i> ),
LIB-	Light Infantry Battalion ( <i>of Burmese Army</i> ),
MOMC-	Military Operational Management Command
PDC-	Peace and Development Council,
PVA-	People Vigorous Association
USDA-	Union Solidarity and Development Association

## News

### Conscription of Forced Labour along With Offensives

(January 2003, Southern Ye Township, Mon State)

While the Burmese Army: Southeast Command's No. 3 Tactical Command and 5 battalions have been launching military offensives against a Mon splinter group in southern part of Ye Township, Mon State, the Burmese Army has conscripted hundreds of villagers from 7 villages to build a 10 miles long motor road.

No. 3 Tactical Command's commander, Brigadier Myo Win, ordered to construct a 10 miles connecting two local Mon villages in the area, Khaw-za and Magyi, and it is also known as 'Khaw-za - Magyi motor road.

Local Mon villagers from 7 villages along the motor road have been ordered to complete building of embankment of the road. Under the Tactical Command, two army battalions: Light Infantry Battalion No. 586 and LIB No. 282 have taken responsibility in conscription of forced labour in villages.

The battalions also set piece of work for each family in the villages and let the villagers work in workplaces with their own arrangement. They set each family to complete building of 4 meters in length and 8 meters in width of embankment. The embankment is 8 meters in width and



A group of forced labour used by the local Burmese Army

## SPDC's Ruthless Way of Winning War

The soldiers of the current military government, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), or Burmese Army, are not brave enough to fight against their enemy, especially the ethnic armed groups, in the battle-fields. But they are brave enough in committing mis-treatments against the ethnic civilians who are innocent and no arms to revenge them.

For over 5 decades long civil war in Burma, to win unfair war on the ethnic rebels, the soldiers of Burmese Army has put 'fear' to the local civilians to not support the rebel groups concerned. What have they done to the innocent civilians? Inhumane and cruel treatments: killing, torture, rape, arrest and detention are the consistent treatments to the ethnic civilians by Burmese Army.

When asked, most displaced persons said that they had to flee because of mis-treatment and gross human rights violations committed by the Burmese Army. If it is only war or fighting between two sides (between Burmese and other ethnic armed forces), they could still remain in their native villages. But now, the civilians are targeted as 'rebels' in Burma's civil war.

In the recent war in Shan State and Karen State, the soldiers of Burmese Army have killed the civilians, rape women, torture both men and women and put fear on them to not support the rebel groups concerned. Similarly they have done a similar way in late 2003 offensives in Mon State.

Burma still does not have peace at the moment. The ethnic people living in the border areas with Thailand have been more seriously suffered from SPDC's ruthless or inhumane way of winning war.

each family need to complete 4 meters in length of embankment building.

The height of embankment is different from one place to another. In some place, where the ground level is normal, the villagers have to build 2 meters high embankment. In some places, if the route passes in valley area, they have to build up to 5 meters high embankments.

General works in the construction are: villagers have to dig earth outside of embankment route; carry dirt and stones to the embankment until it get the same level of height; and press the earth to get strong embankment.

The battalions ordered that the villagers must go to the workplace on the set days and if someone failed to work, he/she must be punished.

Therefore, since early of January 2004, at least 50-100 villagers each day have been forced to work in the construction without payment. The villagers have to carry their own foods and medicines to the workplaces. As most of the workplaces are close to the villages, the villagers can sleep at their homes.

Although International Labour Organization (ILO) has cooperated with regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), to eradicate the requisition of forced labour, but the regime has no 'political will' in implementation. More terribly, the local battalions of Burmese Army have not cared the advises, rules and procedures provided by ILO and have continuously take unpaid porters (villagers) during their military offensives and in road construction in rural areas.

## Mon State's Farmers Demand for Farmers Right

(January 2003, Mon State)

In a short statement dated on January 24, 2004, Mon State's Farmers Association demanded their right for freedom of cultivation, crop husking and trading of their crops.

The Mon State's Farmers Association is an illegal organization and they have involved in 'defiance' against the military government's monopoly policy to control all trade and crops produced by paddy cultivated farmers.

In the Statement, the farmers from Mon State demanded the regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in six points as below:

1. Allow for the freedom of decision in crop cultivation,
2. Allow for the freedom of crop husking, transport, and storage of crops,
3. Allow for freedom of from selling paddy crops at low price to the government (set paddy-buying centers),
4. Abolish the taxation rule on crop transportation,
5. Farmers must have right to adopt decision for their own affairs,
6. Farmers who currently involve in cultivation must own farmlands

Since the Burmese Army (armed faction of the current regime) seized the political power in 1962, agriculture

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**Urgent Release**  
**Human Rights Foundation of Monland**  
January 15, 2004  
**Serious Human Rights Violations: Crimes Against Humanity!**  
**Murder, Rape, Forced Relocations**  
**in Ye Township, Mon State, Burma (Myanmar)**

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The Burmese Army based in southern Ye, Mon State inhumanly raped local women, abused Buddhist monks, killed local Mon villagers, restricts the movement of local farmers, uses the villagers as porters in the front-line, and collects money from poor villagers for the general income of the military troops in late 2003 and early 2004. Consequently, the civilians in that area have faced meaningless violations against human dignity, various hardships for survival, population displacement and food-shortage problems. Over 100 families have fled to border areas and other jungle locations for safety.

The armed force of Burma's military government, State Peace and Development Council, (SPDC), Burmese Army: Southeast Command's No. 3 Tactical Command led by Brigadier Myo Win and Light Infantry Battalion No.586, LIB 591, Infantry Battalion No. 61, IB. 31, and IB No. 97, and the other battalions from Tenasserim Division, LIB No. 273 and LIB No. 282, have seriously committed human rights violations against the Mon civilians in villages situated in the southern part of Ye Township during their intensified military offensives against a Mon rebel group in late December 2003 and earlier January 2004.

The Mon villagers were accused as being rebel-supporters, because an active Mon armed group have been in the region. However, there is no hard evidence that they are guilty of the accusations.

Burmese Army has launched the military operations in the area where about 20 Mon villages are situated with over approximately 30,000 populations in the area.

Human Rights Foundation of Monland, as an ethnic Mon human rights group, implores the international community and human rights organizations to urge the Burma regime SPDC and its army to cease all types of human rights violations against the innocent civilians, women, children and religious leaders. In particular, we would like to call upon international entities such as the United Nations, the U.S. Government, The European Union, and ASEAN to demand and pressure the military regime of SPDC to comply with standards of international human rights law. We need urgent actions that will convey to SPDC to immediately cease the civil war and human rights violations against ethnic populations.

**CASES AND NATURE OF VIOLATIONS:**

**Arbitrary killing:** From mid-December until present day, the troops of various battalions under the command of No. 3 Tactical Command have killed 6 men: Nai Zeit (40 years old), from Hangan Village; Mehm Kao Chan (19 years old) from Hangan Village; Nai Non Ong (37 years old) from Hangan Village; Nai Zan (28 years old) from Khaw-za Village; Nai Kyaw (30 years old) from Khaw-za village; Mehm Ye Myint Paing (16 years old) from Khaw-za Village. Mehm Kao Chan, a young man was killed in a farm hut near his village, Hangan, while Nai Zeit was killed when he was hunting. Four other people, two men, one woman, and one 15-year-old child, were also killed but no names are available in this report. Further fact finding will be made soon. All of them are being accused as rebels, because they did not hold permitted documents

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to stay outside of villages. Nai Non Ong or Nai Win (a former Mon medic of NMSP) and his friend Nai Zan were accused as rebel-supporters and were killed on December 22, 2003.

**Sexual assaults:** Both married and unmarried women from 9 Mon villages near the patrolled areas of LIB No. 299, and other surrounding battalions in southern Ye Township, have been forced by commanders to sleep with them at night for sexual abuse. The troops demand and took 3 women per day to stay for 24 hours in their bases. According to a testimony by a woman who fled to the border area, Mi San Myint from Krone-kanya village, the commanders ordered women to cook and do chores during the day and raped them at night.

Forced relocation: Mon villages in Southern Ye Township, Win-kyan village with approximately 70 households; Win-pop with approximate 80 households; Day-bound Village with approximately 150 households, were ordered to relocate immediately in first week of January, 2004. About 30 households in the outskirts of Mi-htaw-hlar-gyi village were ordered into the middle part of the village in late December to prevent the sheltering of rebels.

Torturing of Buddhist monks: 3 Mon Buddhists monks from villages: Khaw-zar, Mi-htaw-hla-kalay and Kyone-kanya, were arrested and accused of supporting rebels and were seriously tortured in late December 2003. According to witnesses, the monks were tied up by the hands, and the soldiers beat them in several parts of the body, burnt their bodies and put them under the hot sun.

**Apology: CORRECTION**

When Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) issued the 'Urgent Release' on January 15, 2004, it did not have reliable information and still tried to get accurate information. In that 'release' it put the mistaken information about the battalions and commands of Burmese Army, which involved in committing human rights violations in Ye Township. It put Light Infantry Division No. 22. Actually, LID No. 22 has not led the offensives, but Southeast Command's No. 3 Tactical Command and other five battalions led by Brigadier Myo Win have led the offensives against the Mon splinter.

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## Report

# Terror in Southern Part of Ye Township – Part I: Summary Killing, Torture, Arbitrary Arrests and Detention

### I. Background of Ye Township

Mon State, where the majority of ethnic Mon civilians live, situates in southern part of Burma and it has 10 administration Townships<sup>1</sup> and it is a small State among 14 States and Divisions in current Burma. Under the totalitarian rule of military regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), in Burma, Mon State is under dictatorial rule of the local SPDC authorities and armed force, the Burmese Army.

Ye Township situates in the southernmost part of Mon State and it is the largest township area. The majority of the Mon people are the orchid farmers who mainly grow various types of fruits such as lime, orange, betel-nut, and rubber. Most of the lands in the areas are covered with green plantations and the people have rice resources.

However, Ye Township and the people in there have been serious effected due to five-decades long civil war in Burma. Geographically, as the Township area is covered with forests and orchid plantations, it has been the main natural bases for ethnic rebel armed force such as Mon National Liberation Army - MNLA (armed faction of New Mon State Party) and Karen National Liberation Army – KNLA (armed faction of Karen National Union) to launch the military fighting against the Burmese Army.

When the troops of the rebel armed groups have based in the various parts of Ye Township, they have been totally relied on the civilians in the areas, in term of foods, shelters and guiding. Since the civilians were involving in helping the rebel armed groups, they have been constantly accused as ‘rebel-supporters’. Accompanying with this accusation, the local civilians have been inhumanely mistreated by the government (or Burmese) soldiers.

During 1970s and 1980s, the Burmese Army a ‘Four Cuts Campaign’ and had tried to cut all possible supports from the civilians to the rebel forces in Mon State, like it happened in many parts of Karen State, Karenni (Kayah) State, Shan State and Kachin State. Four cuts means the Burmese Army tried to cut off communication, recruitment, food supply and information supports from the civilians to rebel soldiers.

How did the civilians suffer from this campaign in Ye Township? Many Mon villages, which were far from main roads, especially motor roads and railway



Headquarters of Southeast Command in Moulmein, Mon State

roads, and the Burmese Army’s outposts, were forced to resettle near the main roads or surrounding areas of army camps. This was ‘forced relocation of the civilians’ and the Mon villagers in the rural areas of Ye Township have been suffered mostly during 1980s. That four campaign has forced thousands of villagers to flee from their homes and displaced. At that time, as the rebel armies controlled some parts of the areas close to the border, those displaced civilians tried to escape the rebel controlled areas. Later, as the forced relocation and increasing mis-treatment against the villagers, many refugees fled into Thailand and took shelters in Thailand’s refugee camps<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Ten Administration Townships in Mon State are: Kyaik-hto, Bee-lin, Thaton, Paund, Chaung-zone, Moulmein, Mudon, Kyaikmayaw, Thanbyuzayat and Ye Townships.

<sup>2</sup> There are over 100000 refugees along Thailand-Burma border and nearly one million Internally Displaced Persons in southern part of Burma because of five-decades long civil war.

In 1988, after the popular pro-democracy uprising in Burma, the Burmese Army seized the political power and increasingly launched the offensives against the ethnic rebel armed groups. Similarly, the Burmese Army's various battalions came and launched offensives in Ye Township and tried to uproot the activities of Mon rebel bases. They could increasingly control some villages and selected their own village headmen and replaced in the positions of headmen elected by the villagers. They have formed village militia force, train them to attend military schools and instructed them to fight against the rebel soldiers.

In June 1995, after the main ethnic Mon armed resistance force, New Mon State Party<sup>3</sup> and MNLA agreed for ceasefire with the regime and Burmese Army, some parts of Ye Township become peace and some Mon civilians returned back to their native areas and re-establish their lives.

By taking good opportunity during ceasefire with the New Mon State Party, the Burmese Army has deployed more troops in Ye Township. First round of military deployment was in 1999 and the Burmese Army deployed LIB No. 299 in southern part of Ye Township, in Koe-mile village. Later in 2000, the Burmese Army confiscated many hundreds acres of land in eastern and northern part of Township area and deployed another 10 army battalions (see in the map)<sup>4</sup>. Most lands were belonged to the Mon orchid farmers and they did not receive the full amount of compensation cost for these lands.

However, the rebellion activities against the Burmese Army have not really ceased even after ceasefire. After MNLA troops withdrew from the southern part of Ye Township, one Mon splinter group, which was led by former Mon commanders has fought against the Burmese Army and they have tried to control the area. At the same time, the Burmese Army also tried to control the whole area. Therefore, the armed conflict between the Burmese Army and the splinter group has escalated since early 1998. Although the Burmese Army have launched the offensives against this splinter groups every year, however, they could not uproot their activities at all. In late 2003, the Burmese Army's Southeast Command, based in Moulmein city, the capital of Mon State, launched a new round of offensives against the splinter group.

## II. Late 2003 Offensives and Suffering of the Civilians

In the last week of November 2003, the Chief Commander of Southeast Command, Maj. Gen. Thura Myint Aung came to Ye Town to attend a bridge opening ceremony. After the meeting, he also called a meeting

<sup>3</sup> New Mon State Party (NMSP) was formed in 1958 to fight against the Burmese Army and successive military governments in Rangoon. It agreed for ceasefire with the current regime on June 29, 1995.

<sup>4</sup> 10 Burmese Army battalions are: Light Infantry Battalion No. 582, No. 583, No. 584, No. 585, No. 586, No. 587, No. 588, No. 589, No. 590, No. 591. All these battalions are under the command of Military Operation Management Command No. 19, which bases in Ye Town.

### Violations of Internationally Recognized Human Rights Principles (Accordingly in this Report)

The current regime in Burma, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), and its arm faction, Burmese Army, have violated the following basic human rights principles in southern part of Ye Township, Mon State.

#### Article 3 of UDHR

- Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

#### Article 5 of UDHR:

- No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment.

#### Article 9 of UDHR:

- No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

#### Article 10 of UDHR:

- Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

#### **Article 2 of Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (26 June 1987)**

- Each State Party shall take effective legislative, administrative, judicial or other measures to prevent acts of torture in any territory under its jurisdiction.
- No exceptional circumstances whatsoever, whether a state of war or a threat of war, internal political instability or any other public emergency, may be invoked as a justification of torture.
- An order from a superior officer or a public authority may not be invoked as a justification of torture.

(Note: Burma (Myanmar) is not a State Party to this Convention.)

with all village headmen from villages situate in both northern and southern part of Township and inquired the activities of the Mon splinter group. Then he also ordered the village headmen that to not do any support to the Mon splinter group if they require to have peace in Mon State. He also added that if they (the village headmen) support the splinter group, they found guilty.

After the meeting with village headmen, then he also held another meeting with local battalion commanders of Burmese Army. There are about 13 battalions in Ye Township and he met all of them and found the way how to uproot the activities of the Mon splinter group.

The Mon splinter group, which has only 100 troops, was headed by former MNLA commanders, Nai Hlein and Nai Bin, they have involved in fighting against the Burmese Army since 1998. They have mainly launched the military activities in Ye and Yebyu Township (which is in Tenasserim Division) against the Burmese Army and therefore, they have good geographical positions to hide in the areas. On the other hand, they have totally relied on food, guidance provided by the villagers in the area. As the Burmese Army has known about the supports from the civilians to the rebels, they planned to cut off all of these supports.



A Group of Burmese soldiers in a Mon village of Ye Township, Southern part of Mon State, Burma

In early December 2003, the Chief Commander of Southeast Command, Maj. Gen. Thura Myint Aung formed and sent No. 3 Tactical Command led by Brigadier Myo Win to launch offensives in southern part of Ye Township area. Under his command, there were five battalions: IB No. 31, IB No. 97, IB No. 61, LIB No. 586 and LIB No. 591 involved and these battalions took responsibility separately in the area and tried to uproot the activities of Burmese Army.

To help the No. 3 Tactical Command managed from Southeast Command in Moulmein, the capital of Mon State, the Burmese Army's Coastal Region Command, which base in Tenasserim Division, also sent four military battalions: LIB No. 282, LIB No. 273, LIB No. 408 and LIB No. 409, to help launching offensives against the Mon splinter group. Hence, the Burmese Army used about 2000 troops in launching offensives against the 100 troops strong Mon splinter group<sup>5</sup>.

As a result, all burdens fell into the Mon civilians in the area. As the primary suspicion of the Burmese Army's troops, the local civilians in the southern part of Ye Township were accused as rebel-supporters. The Burmese Army commanders believed there would be many people who are the relatives to the soldiers in Mon splinter groups and many patriotic Mon elder people and Buddhist monks would support the Mon soldiers.

The punishment against them has been inhumanely and cruel. Even until the end of 2003, the offensives continued and the Burmese Army has planned to launch offensives for six months until the beginning of rainy season. They expect they could uproot all activities of the Mon rebels' activities within six months.

In cutting off the supports from the civilians to the rebels, the soldiers from Burmese Army have mis-treated the civilians inhumanely as a threat to all of them to not support the Mon rebels. Many innocent civilians were arbitrarily killed, inhumanely tortured and put indefinite detention, some women were raped, many men were forced to be porters and labourers in a road construction, movement restriction and some villages were forcibly relocated.

Because of the above-mentioned abuses committed by the Burmese Army, thousands of Mon villagers from the area have tried to escape to other areas, where they felt safe. Due to movement restriction, many of them

<sup>5</sup> The Burmese Army launched offensives against this Mon splinter group in the previous years, but their army strength is not like this 2003 offensives.

could not move out from their villages, and so that they have been also facing food-shortage problems. Many of them also tried to get out of their villages and fled to another areas, but it is so easy for them because the Burmese soldiers could kill them. However, many hundreds of villagers fled into New Mon State Party's control area while some of them fled into Thailand, but in Thailand as it does not have 'Mon refugee camp', they could not take shelters even they were 'refugees' effected by war<sup>6</sup>.

Note: In this report, we would like to describe mostly the human rights violations: KILLING, TORTURE, ARBITRARY ARREST AND DETENTION.

### III. Accounts of Killing, Torture, Arbitrary Arrests and Detention

During the different battalions of Burmese Army launch the offensives the Mon splinter group, led by Nai Hlein and Nai Bin, as mentioned above, the Mon civilians in the rural areas are suspected as rebel-supporters and therefore, many of them were killed incidentally or taken by the soldiers and were killed in summarily without trials.

'Torture' by the soldiers from Burmese Army were committed because they suspected the villagers as rebel-supporters and sometimes, it was acted by the soldiers as 'punishment'. The soldiers from the Burmese Army always suspected all men and women in the village as rebels or rebel-supporters.

The following accounts are about killing and tortures committed by the Burmese Army during the Burmese Army offensives before the end of 2003.



Diasplaced Persons in the rural area of southern Burma

#### A. Killing

##### Case 1:

On December 14, while the Burmese Army's IB No. 31 troops led by Lt. Col. Nyi Nyi Swe in southern part of Ye township to uproot the activities of Mon rebels, they also killed a 19 years old boy near Hangan village. When the boy, Mehm Kao Chan, was at his plantation hut, the soldiers shot to him without notice with a suspicion of a rebel. The boy died on the spot.

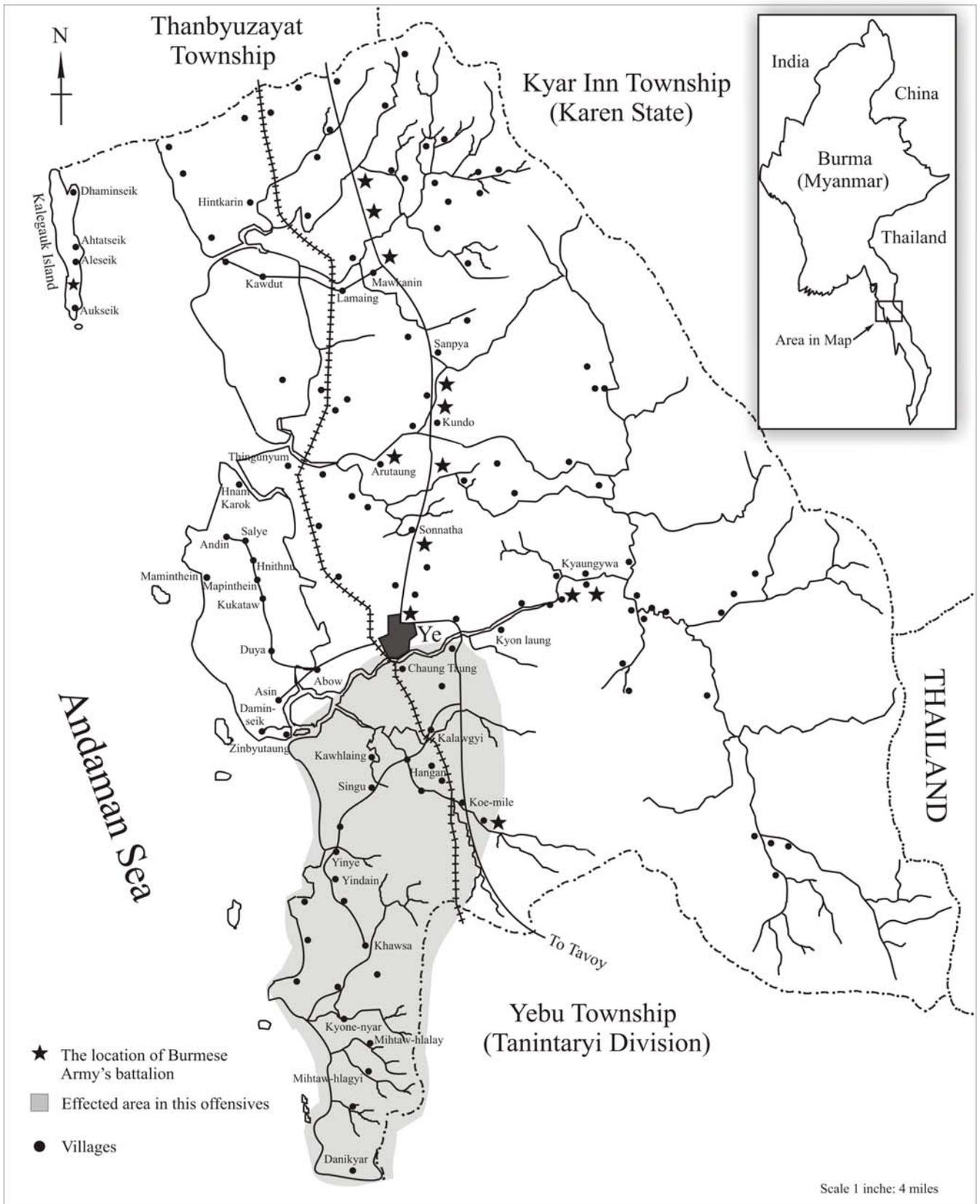
The boy was at his plantation and waited for father and other family members who came and harvest fruits. During he was waiting and staying at small hut in plantation, the soldiers shot to him suddenly without notice. As the soldiers thought there was a rebel soldier in the hut, then they shot to him. He was only 19 years old and he helped his parents. He was from Hangan village, which situates only about 10 miles from Ye Town.

The soldiers claimed that they made a mistake in killing him because they thought he was a rebel hiding in a hut. Then they also warned to the whole villagers in villages to not stay at the farms or orchid plantations. Case 1:

On December 20, IB No. 31 troops led by Lt. Col. Nyi Nyi Swe arrested two men: Nai Non Ong (37 years old) from Yindein village and Nai Zan from Khaw-za village with a suspicion of rebel-supporters. Nai Non Ong was a former medic from New Mon State Party's health department and the Burmese Army suspected him that he is providing assistance to the splinter

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<sup>6</sup> The ethnic Mon refugees were spontaneously relocated into New Mon State Party's controlled border areas and resettled in temporary resettlement zones.



group. They suspected Nai Zan as a support to the rebel because his house was locating close to the sea and they believed he has been receiving the Mon (rebel) soldiers. First they detained them and interrogated them to know how the activities of the Mon splinter group.

After serious and inhumane torture to both of them, the commander said he would need to bring them to Ye town for further interrogation. The Burmese troops brought both of them in a jungle route from Khaw-za village. When they arrived in eastern part of Shwe-hinda village, the soldiers shot to both of them and killed them summarily.

The villagers nearby heard gun sounds shot by the Burmese soldiers, but nobody dared to go and look for corpse of the two men. On the later day, when their family members tried to find their husbands and fathers, they could not get any news of the men.

### **Case 2:**

On December 18, 2003, when the troops of Burmese Army from IB No. 31 led by Lt. Col. Nyi Nyi Swe, launched offensives against the Mon rebels near Hangan village, they shot to a hunter and killed him in the evening time because they ordered to not stay in forests or orchid plantations late evening. The name of the farmer was Nai Zeit (40 years old) and he was from Hangan village.

As he was late due to his hunting livelihood, he did not think that the Burmese troops would come close to his place where he took for a short rest. About 6:30 p.m., when there was dark, the Burmese soldiers who came close to him and thought he was a rebel and shot to him without prior notice. He died on the spot.

Then the soldiers found he was not a Mon rebel soldier, but only an ordinary civilian. They brought him back to Hangan village and informed the village headman about his death. The commander of the troops paid his family with 2800 Kyat (about 3 US Dollar) for funeral cost.

The soldiers also reminded to the villagers that they would not allow anyone to stay at farms or plantations after 6 o'clock in the evening and threatened them that if they found someone, they would kill him. They claimed the killing of Nai Zeit happened because he was at his plantation after 6 o'clock.

### **Case 3:**

On December 25, 2003, before the soldiers from LIB No. 586 set fire to a fishing village, Khaw-za Chaung-wa village which has about 50 houses, the soldiers arrested a woman, Mi Htay (24 years old) with accusation of a rebel-supporter because her husband was a Mon soldier. Then they shot to her and one-year old her baby and they threw them away in the river. According to the villagers, when they were immediately shot, they still survive, but the soldiers threw them into water.

Killing happened to her because her husband was a Mon soldier in Nai Bin led command of the Mon splinter group. As they knew she was a wife of Mon soldier and her baby the child of the Mon soldier and so that they killed both her child and her.

Then they confiscated valuable things in the village



A Mon man who was snabbed by a knife of Burmese soldiers

and then set the fire to the village. First, they burnt down the house belonged to the woman, Mi Htay and other houses. As the fire did not separate quickly, only a few number of houses are burnt down. Almost the villagers in village fled without taking any of their belongings.

## **B. Torture:**

There have been many cases of torture while the Burmese Army is launching the military in December 2003 and January 2004. There are various types of torture committed by the soldiers from Burmese Army. Beating is the main and common practices of torture, the soldiers used their gun-boots, sticks and jungle-butts in beating the villagers. In some cases, the soldiers put the villagers under hot sunshine for hours without providing foods and water. In some cases, the soldiers forced men, women and even Buddhist monks to dig holes, which means to put their corpses, and beat and threatened them to kill.

Most of these inhumanely torture are always relating to the suspicion of rebel-supporters. The tortures are always committed during the soldiers are interrogating the men, women and Buddhist monks or questioning them about the activities of the rebel soldiers in the area. The following accounts are the tortures documented by human rights reporters of Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) during December 2003 and January 2004.

### **Case 1:**

On December 10, 2003, No. 3 Tactical Command's Commander, Brigadier Myo Win arrested the village Chairman of Khaw-za village, NAI NGWE and three committee members and tortured them during they were interrogating them. They forced them to dig their own poles (for their own corpses) and beat them until they said about the activities of Mon soldiers. The soldiers said that if they refused to say truth, they must be killed. They beat their bodies and burnt some parts of their bodies.

At the same day, they also arrested another 10 villagers from Khaw-za village, who they suspected the rebel soldiers and tortured them similarly. All village headmen and villages were detained in Tactical Command base in eastern of the village for over one week and did not allow their family members to meet them.

### **Case 2:**

On December 13, 2003, IB No. 97 entered into Kyone-kanya village and asked the village to gather in a village ground for meeting. When the villagers arrived, the soldiers did not really hold the meeting, put all of them under hot sun heat for 10 hours. About 200 villagers including women were put under sun heat without providing them with foods and water. The commander of the troops said that that was the punishment for their supports to the rebel soldiers. They also threatened to the villagers that if they contacted the Mon troops or soldiers in the future, they must be killed.

### **Case 3:**

On December 14, 2003, LIB No. 568 troops led by Maj. Hla Khaing arrested five villagers from Kyone-kanya village and they are: NAI AH BON; NAI TUN KYI (Village Secretary); NAI ONG; NAI TIN AUNG MYINT and an old man; to show them the bases of Mon splinter group. The soldiers tied all of them up.

The soldiers brought these men along their military patrol and let them show the bases of the rebels. As most of them said, they did not know, they were inhumanely tortured. During NAI AH BON (22 years old) was tied up, they brought him separately from other villagers and beat him with sticks in his back and thighs. They forced him to not shout and when he shouted slightly loud, they pointed knives to him. They similarly tortured other villagers. They brought them for 5 days totally and feed them only one meal each day. When they asked for foods, they were also beaten.

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Village Secretary, NAI TUN KYI, was more seriously and inhumanely tortured, because they believed that he is the main person who mainly contacted the rebel and must know the bases of the rebels. They took his hair and dragged his head on the ground for several times. They pointed sharp knives on her face several times. They beat his body and head with motor shells and sticks. They beat his body until three pieces of bamboo sticks were broken.

Additionally, the soldiers also put plastic bag in his head and face up to neck and poured water on his head. He could not get enough breath and lost consciousness at the same time. When the cold water on his head also made him to not get sufficient breath.

Because of this inhumane and serious torture, NAI TUN KYI's head was broken, a lot of blood poured out from his ears, some of his rib bones were broken. Although he petitioned the soldiers to not torture him and he would resign as 'Village Secretary', but they said that if he resigned from that post, they will confiscate all his belongings in village.

After their release, NAI AH BON could not walk for 2 days and NAI TUN KYI could not walk for 5 days. Even an old man about 75 years old was tortured by soldiers, but not so serious like other villagers.

The soldiers the Village Secretary because they believed that he must know about the activities of the rebel soldiers and they arrested another 4 villagers because their farms and orchid plantations were far from village and they must know the bases of rebel soldiers.

#### **Case 4:**

On December 17, 2003, when the troops of LIB No. 586 went into Toe-that Ywa-thit village, the soldiers arrested MA EYE (about 40 years old) with accusation of rebel-supporters. During their interrogation, the soldiers put small sharp blades in her mouth if she say she 'don't know'. They put small blades in her mouth for several times, she got wounds in her mouths.

This was another method of torture in forcing the villagers to tell them something. During the solders were putting blades into her mouths, they also beat her on the other hand. The Burmese soldiers believed that her husband was in Mon splinter group.

#### **Case 5:**

On December 25, 2003, the troops from LIB No. 586 led by Maj. Hla Khaing, arrested a former village chairman, NAI MART (70 years old) from Toe-tet Ywa-thit village, southern part of Ye Township, with accusation that he was the main contact person to the Mon rebel leader, Nai Hlein. The soldiers beat him with sticks for 14 times seriously until his back, hands and legs were bladed in blood. He was even the Chairman of the village for 4 years before 2003 and so that they accused him he was contacting to the rebel leader and supported them with foods and shelters.

#### **Case 6:**

On December 26, 2003, Maj. Hla Khaing informed the villagers from the whole Toe-tet Ywa-thit village to hold a meeting and invited them to come to football ground in village. About 100 villagers, including women, came and he put them under the hot sun heat from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. in the evening. He did not allow the villagers to take food and water. He claimed that that was the punishment for their contacting and supporting the rebel soldiers.

On the same day, the soldiers also beat the village Chairman, NAI YON (45 years old) with accusation of rebel-supporters. Maj. Hla Khaing also arrested NAI SHWE (38 years old) and his two daughters, who are 19 years old and 17 years respectively and beat them because he accused them that they are providing foods for rebel soldiers.

#### **Case 7:**

On December 25, IB No. 32 troops led by Lt. Col. Nyi Nyi Swe arrested one monk from Khaw-zar village and tortured him inhumanely and seriously. They arrested 50 years old REV. SOE AUNG from Bae-day monastery in the village and accused him that he was contacting the rebel Mon soldiers. They tied him up with robes and put under the building of monastery for

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**Villages and Population Effected by the Offensives  
And Human Rights Violations Committed by Burmese Army**

No.	Name of Villages	Estimated Households	Estimated Population
1.	Kyone-kanya	194	464
2.	Khaw-za	600	3500
3.	Khaw-za Chaung-wa	150	900
4.	Mi-htaw-hla-gyi	90	500
5.	Mi-htaw-hla-lay	80	530
6.	Magyi	100	560
7.	Dani-kyar	70	400
8.	Kyauk-l	110	650
9.	Dokabon	40	230
10.	Shwe-hin-tar	50	260
11.	Kabya-gyi	200	1100
12.	Kabya-wa	300	1650
13.	Yindein	200	1250
14.	Yindein Chaung-wa	80	450
15.	Yinye	300	1900
16.	Sonpayouk	40	240
17.	Ba-round	70	400
18.	Toe-tet Ywa-thit	200	1100
19.	Hangan	3000	17000
20.	Kaw-hlaing	1000	6000
21.	Ka-lort-gyi	800	4100
22.	Sin-gu	150	800
23.	The-kon	100	550
<b>Total</b>		<b>7924</b>	<b>44534</b>

several days and tortured him in various methods. They beat his whole body for several hours. They put him in a hole and beat him. They burnt his legs with fire. They were torturing him during their interrogation how many times he contacted to the rebels and what supports he gave to them. As he cried too loud and the other monks lost tolerance to hear his voice for help and left from the monastery.

### **Case 8:**

On December 26, the troops from LIB No. 273 which came from Tenasserim Division, arrested a Buddhist monk, REV. POCK (45 years old) from Mi-htaw-hla-lay village and beat him. The soldiers also disrobed him during their torturing because they tried to say that he was no longer a monk. They forced him to dig his own holes and beat him. They also threatened him that if he died and they would put his corpse in that hole. They accused him that he is the main contact person to the Mon splinter group in term of providing them with foods and money.

### **Case 9:**

On December 27, 2003, with accusation of contacting and supporting Mon rebels, Maj. Hla Khaing from LIB No. 586 arrested two men: NAI NYUNT AUNG (45 years old) and NAI CHOIL (68 years old) from Toe-tet Ywa-thit and cut their faces with small blades several times. Both of them seriously wounded.

The soldiers tied them up and cut their faces with knives during their interrogation how they are supporting the Mon rebels. After torture and got some information about the rebels' activities, the Burmese soldiers released them.

Arbitrary arrests, detention and torture are the related abuses committed by the Burmese Army's various battalions. Some villagers were only arrested and detained for some days with accusation of the rebel supporters. During detention, those detainees could not get sufficient foods and sometimes they also faced torture. In most cases, during the villagers were in detention the concerned commanders asked ransom or large amount of money and then released them.

### **C. Arbitrary Arrests and Detentions**

Some villagers were also arrested and detained in army battalions' detention cells or Tactical Command's temporary centers. In the process of military patrol, whenever one battalion arrived in one area, the commander always found a temporary place and detained the villagers who were suspected as 'rebel-supporters'. Not only the villagers, who were suspected as rebel-supporters, were arrested but the relatives of the rebel soldiers were also arrested. Most of them are detained at least for 24 hours, and during their detention, almost the detainees were tortured.

The army commanders released some villagers or village headmen after they received some amount of ransom from their families. But some villagers, especially the family members or relatives to the Mon rebels, have been detained without release. Even though HURFOM's human rights reporters also documented some arbitrary arrests, detentions, and demand of ransom and the cases are as below:

#### **Case 1:**

On December 10, 2003, after the No.3 Tactical Command arrested the Chairman of Khaw-za village, Nai Ngwe, three village committee members and another 10 villagers, they detained and tortured them (as the Case 2 of Torture). After detention and torture, the Commander, Brigadier Myo Win asked for ransom from those village headmen and villagers. They have asked more from village headmen and less from villagers. After they received about 500000 Kyat ransoms in total, then they released those village headmen and villagers.

#### **Case 2:**

On December 13, with accusation of rebel-supporters, the No. 3 Tactical Command's Commander Brigadier Myo Win arrested 7 villagers from Khaw-za village and put them in detention. The arrested villagers are: Nai Myint, Nai Ye Min Pine, Nai Yote, Nai Gate and other 3 men. After arrest, the soldiers detained them for one day and one night without feeding any foods. They also beat the villagers and tortured them.

At the end, the commander asked ransom: 100, 000 Kyat per person and if they could pay, they would release them. After over 24 hours detention, when their family members paid the ransom to the soldiers, they released them at the end.

#### **Case 3:**

After seriously and inhumanely tortured by the soldiers (in Case 3 of Torture), the commander from LIB No. 586 asked 400,000 Kyat ransoms from Village Secretary, NAI TUN KYI, of Kyone-kanya village and then released him. They also asked ransom from other villagers. But they asked less amount than Village Secretary. They asked 100000 Kyat from each village. Four villagers have to pay for that ransom.

After 5 days detention and inhumanely torture, the commanders also received 800,000 Kyat from Village Secretary and four villager from Kyone-kanya village.

#### **Case 4:**

On December 16, 2003, the troops from IB No. 61 arrested 3 villagers: Nai Sein Maung (man); Mi Yin Shwe (woman); and Mehm Moe (a boy) and detained them without release.

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### 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.

However, we also invite your feedbacks on the information we described in each newsletter and if you know anyone who would like to receive the newsletter, please send name and address to our address or e-mail as below:

HURFOM, P. O. Box 11, Ratchburana P. O.  
Bangkok 10140, THAILAND  
E-mail: mforum@np.anet.net.th <or> monforum2003@yahoo.com  
Webpages: <http://www.rehmonnya.org>

With regards,

Director  
Human Rights Foundation of Monland

The soldiers accused them that they are the family members of a Mon soldier who is in splinter group. The commanders said they would release them if their family member (the Mon soldier) came back with gun. The commander demanded 6000 Kyat each day from their relatives or through village headmen to spend for their foods.

### **Case 5:**

On December 19, 2003, the soldiers from LIB No. 586 also arrested 6 villagers from Khaw-za village with accusation of rebel supporters. Then they also detained them for 3 days and asked 200000 Kyat for ransom per head. When their detainees' family members said the ransom was quite expensive and to reduce, the soldiers have reduced to 100000 – 150000 Kyat per head, then the villagers paid them.

#### ■ News from page 2

business and trading have been totally under the control of the successive governments.

Farmers are instructed during the BSPP (Burmese Socialist Programme Party) era ruled by Army Generals (with civilian cloths), what types of crops they must grow, what fertilizers they need to put in their farms, and how many tons of crops they need to produce. In harvest season, the government ordered to farmers to sell the set amount of paddy to the government.

After 1988 when the current military regime came into power, the Army Generals have used the same rules to farmers as during BSPP era. The authorities or army commanders have also increased their control on farmers and increased the set amount of paddy that the farmers needed to sell to government at low price.

Mon State's farmers mainly produce paddy, but they have to sell about 25-50% of their crops to farmers

at low price. The government buys paddy from farmers 5 to 10 times lower than the market price.

In early 2003, Mon State's farmers also wrote letters to senior Buddhist monks in Mon State and Karen State, to appeal the Generals to stop their restriction against the farmers. Therefore, in mid-2003, the regime declared they would try to find a new method in relations with farmers.

In late 2003, the regime formed 'Commerce of Enterprises' and let the local traders buy paddy from farmers at low price again, which is 2 – 3 times lower than the market price. If the farmers disagreed to sell their paddy, the authorities did not allow the farmers to husk their own paddy to get rice. The farmers still face a new restriction and oppression by the authorities.

Therefore, they have organized each other and released statement by demanding the regime with six points demand to be free from restriction and oppression.

When the family members of those detainees paid money to the soldiers, then they stopped torture and release them immediately.



#### IV. Conclusion

In order to war on the small number of ethnic armed group based in southern part of Mon State and northern part of Tenasserim Division, the soldiers of Burmese Army have used several methods of inhumane treatment in order to stop all the civilians in the area supporting the rebels. These mis-treatments are also threat and punishment to the civilians by the Burmese Army.

Besides summary killing, inhumane torture, arbitrary arrests and detention without trials, the Burmese Army also has restricted the movement of civilians, especially to not go and work in their orchid plantations or farms; women have been sexually abused; and many houses and villages are forcibly relocated.

NOTE: HURFOM will report about the remaining human rights violations: such as MOVEMENT RESTRICTION; SEXUAL VIOLATIONS AGAINST WOMEN AND FORCED RELOCATION in the the next issue of THE MON FORUM.

For over five-decades, the Burmese Army has not changed its tactics of treating the ethnic people in order to win war. Although the UN human rights monitoring bodies, international human rights organizations, international governments have condemned for the regime SPDC and the Burmese Army's worst human rights record in Burma, but the regime has not cared and tried to improve the human rights situation in the country.

The similar human rights violations are also committed by other troops or battalions of Burmese Army in eastern part of Burma especially in Karen State; Karenni (Kayah) State and Shan State, where the Burmese Army has launched the offensives against the ethnic rebel armed groups.

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