

The Mon Forum

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Some Acronyms in This Issue

- SPDC- State Peace and Development Council,
- SLORC- State Law and Order Restoration Council,
- IB - Infantry Battalion (*of Burmese Army*),
- LIB- Light Infantry Battalion (*of Burmese Army*),
- MNWCWA -Myanmar National Working Committee for Women's Affairs
- MOMC- Military Operational Management Command
- PDC- Peace and Development Council,
- CEDAW- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

News

Inhumane or Degrading Treatments against Civilians Continue

(February 2004, Southern Ye Township, Mon State)

While hundreds of Mon innocent civilians in southern part of Ye Township, Mon State (look location map on Page 6) escaped the Burmese Army's inhumane treatments: killing, torture, sexual violations: the local battalions of the regime army still continue arresting many people and inhumanely torture them with accusation of (they are) rebel-supporters.

On February 4 2004, the troops of LIB No. 586 arrested two women: Ms. Mi Tin Shein (~ 55 years old) and Ms. Mi Pa Khin (~ 50 years old) in Kabya-wa village. Ms. Mi Tin Shein is the wife of the rebel leader, Nai Hlein, and Ms. Mi Pa Khin is the one who helped the wife of the rebel leader by providing shelter in her houses.

Both of them are brought by the soldiers after arrest. Accordingly to the witness who provide information to HURFOM recently said both women were seriously tortured. During the interrogation, the Burmese soldiers beat them with bamboo sticks in their whole body and cut their faces with knives until the other villagers could not recognize them. The wife of the rebel leader was more inhumanely and seriously tortured



Troops of Burmese Army who launched an intensive offensives against a Mon splinter group in the southern part of Ye Township, Mon State

What the MNWCWA Can Do for the Women in Southern Part of Ye Township

MNWCWA stands for the Myanmar National Working Committee for Women's Affairs and it is an organization to implement to fulfill the rights of Burmese Women (including ethnic nationalities' women) accordingly to CEDAW because Burma has ratified it in 1997.

MNWCWA is totally under the control of the military regime in Burma, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) and has implemented the CEDAW principles accordingly to instruction of male-dominated military regime.

Therefore, when there is sexual violations especially ethnic women in the rural areas are raped by the soldiers of the regime, whether it is possible for the local MNWCWA members to report accurate information to the regime and punished the rapists accordingly to the State's existing criminal laws. It is found that still impossible.

The recent evidence, although there was "License to Rape" report produced from the ethnic Shan women and human rights groups, the MNWCWA has no any power to inquire about any cases of these rapes. As most violations were committed by the local military commanders of Burmese Army, no local MNWCWA members were able to collect accurate information. They have been kept silence and blinded their eyes.

The members of MNWCWA in Ye Town of Mon State, will hear what are happening to the majority women in the southern part of Ye Township because many women fled to Ye Town. However, no action by MNWCWA has been arranged to protect the rights of women accordingly to CEDAW and other international human rights principles.

Therefore, there is a serious need in Burma to have an independent human rights body (whether it is national or international) to closely monitor human rights in Burma, especially human rights violations against women.

by the soldiers when they tried more information about the rebels and other names of rebel-supporters from her.

Because of the serious torture, Ms. Shein told the names of 6 villagers, who even have contacts to the rebel soldiers. Therefore, the Burmese soldiers arrested another 6 villagers: Mr. Nai Hara and his wife Ms. Mi Hla Tin (from Win-tamort village); Mr. Nai Suu and Mr. Nai Gone Sakar (they are village headmen from Kyone-kanya village); Nai Hit and his wife Ms. Mi Mya Kyi (they are from Kyone-kanya village).

All of them were seriously and inhumanely tortured. The soldiers beat them with bamboo sticks or gun-boots in various parts of their bodies. According to Mr. Suu, 59 years old, the Chairman of Kyone-kanya village, they beat the whole of his body while they he was tied up. They hanged him from the roof and burnt him with cigarette fire. After inhumane torture and got sufficient information from them, they released them with a ransom. Each of them had to pay 100,000.00 – 300,000 Kyat to get release.

Before the release, they were brought by the LIB No. 586 soldiers into forests and jungles to find the hidden guns which were left behind by the rebels and to show the rebels' temporary bases. When the villagers could not find guns and show the bases, they were constantly tortured. The soldiers pointed the throats

with knives and asked them to show guns and the rebels' bases.

But the soldiers have kept Ms. Mi Mya Kyi as they knew she was the key person who contacted and constantly supported the Mon rebels with foods and information. They tortured more seriously than other villagers. They kept her for over 2 weeks and continued torturing.

Similar torturing against the civilian was also done by another military battalion No. 97 recently. On January 26, Maj. Kyaw Ngwe Soe of IB No. 97 arrested Village Secretary of Kyone-kanya village, Mr. Tun Kyi and other 4 villagers from his village. They tortured them inhumanely with a suspicion they were the supporters to the Mon rebels.

The soldiers took Mr. Kyi's hair and dragged his face on the ground. They beat his head with RPG motor-boot until a lot of blood fall out. The soldiers detained all these five villagers for 5 days and at the end, they asked ransoms for releases. They took 400,000.00 Kyat ransom from Mr. Kyi and 100,000.00 Kyat each for other four villagers.

Besides torture, the commanders and soldiers of the Burmese also raped or gang-raped the ethnic Mon women, forcibly relocated some villages and summarily killed some villagers and village headmen.



Report

Terror in Southern Part of Ye Township – Part II

I. Imposing 'Great Fear' Among the Civilian

Starting from early of December 2004, the Burmese Army, the military faction of the current military regime in Burma, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), have launched an intensive offensives against a Mon armed splinter group in southern part of Ye Township, Mon State (look the map of Ye Township in location map, Page 6). Until the end of February, the offensives took about three months, and nearly 25% of the total population, which has over 40000 ethnic Mon people, have displaced because of human rights violations and terror against the innocent civilians.

In this offensives, the Burmese Army's Southeast Command formed a No. 3 Tactical Command and put the five military battalions, Infantry Battalion No. 97; IB No. 61, IB No. 31, Light Infantry Battalion No. 586, LIB No. 591 and sent nearly 2000 troops into the areas to launch the offensives against 100 troops strong the Mon splinter group¹.

In this offensive, the No. 3 Tactical Command and the battalions under its command have tried not only to win war on the rebel group, but also to win on the civilians psychologically to halt all the Mon villagers' supports to the rebel group.

Accompanying with this offensive, the Burmese Army have put 'terror' that more inhumane and serious than 'four cuts campaign', which just it has tried to cut supports: such as food supplies, information, recruits and shelters to the rebel soldiers. In the Burmese Army's recent four cuts campaign, the Burmese Army mainly relocated the local villagers and tried to keep control on the civilians. In the current offensives, the Burmese Army has mistreated against the civilians to totally decide that they must not support to any rebel troops.

Because of this offensive, many villagers were killed, tortured and detained with accusation of rebel-supporters. The civilians are totally blocked in their villages and they were not allowed to get out of villages. Some villagers including children and women were killed when the Burmese soldiers found them outside of their villages².

Women were seriously suffered from sexual harassment and raped or gang-raped by the commanders of Burmese Army or their ordinary soldiers. Many women have tried to flee from the homes to escape such sexual violations. Women are not safe to stay at homes at all. Many women displaced not only in Mon State, but also some of them fled into Thailand illegally.

NOTE :

In the previous report in *The Mon Forum* Issue No. 1/2004, "Terror in Southern Part of Ye Township – Part I", it described human rights violations such as summary execution, arbitrary arrest and detention. In this Issue, we describe human rights violations committed by the Burmese Army: about sexual violations against women and forced relocation of civilians' residence; in the southern part of Ye Township.

Accordingly to the local community leaders, the current offensive is most inhumane. Recently for many years, although the Burmese Army launched the offensives in every dry season, the killing of the civilians was less if compared with this offensive. Similarly, a very little number of women were sexually violated by the soldiers in general³.

The Burmese Army also sent only one or two military columns with troop number less than 500 soldiers into this area, and the measurement of human rights violation was less. In the recent offensives, although the religious leaders, especially Buddhist Monks, acted as 'human rights defenders' to protect innocent people, women and children, but this time, the Burmese Army's soldiers also arrested, detained and tortured some senior Buddhist monks⁴. Considerably, therefore, how serious the local village headmen were tortured badly by the Burmese soldiers.

¹ The Burmese Army also launched the offensives against this Mon splinter group in Yebyu Township, northern part of Tenasserim Division. Troops from LIB No. 282, LIB No. 273, LIB No. 408 and LIB No. 409 have jointly launched military operation.

² *The Mon Forum* Issue No. 1/2004, January 31 2004

³ The Burmese Army's commanders and soldiers always try to satisfy of the appetite of sex when they launch offensives, by raping against ethnic women.

⁴ The Buddhist Monks have a lot of influence in Burma's culture because the majority of Burmese people including some Mon, Arakanese, Karen, Shan ethnic people are Buddhists.

The Burmese Army generally has attempted to impose 'great fear' psychologically among the civilians to think seriously fear if they think to support the rebel army. Not only men, even women were serious afraid of being arrested, killed and raped by the Burmese soldiers if they contacted or supported the rebellion activities in the area.

Many family members or the relatives of the rebel soldiers in the areas were killed, tortured and kidnapped the Burmese soldiers. Their houses were burnt down and their properties are confiscated, as the Burmese Army believed that these things are belonged to the rebels. This is one type of imposing fear to the civilians to bar their husbands or sons or the relatives to not join the rebel force.

On the other hand, as the women in the community are believed as rebels' relatives, they have been similarly suffered from sexual violations committed by the Burmese Army.

II. Sexual Violations Against Women

In the sexual violations against women, here in this report, we include about the members of the Burmese Army involvement in sexual harassment and rape against ethnic Mon women in the rural areas of Ye Township. Sometimes, the sexual harassment is also relating to 'rape' after the Burmese Army forcibly asked Mon women to stay with them over night.

The following are the data how the Mon women in the rural areas of southern part of Ye Township have been sexually harassed by the soldiers and raped or gang-raped by the Burmese Army.

A. Sexual Harassment against Women

"Fashion & Beauty Show" arranged by Burmese Army's local commanders

In order to create 'fear' among the civilians, the SPDC or Burmese Army's local commanders have also used the local women as 'comfort' women to entertain them even amidst the offensives against a Mon splinter group.

On January 4, 2004, the No. 3 Tactical Command led by Brigadier. Myo Win ordered 2 to 4 pretty Mon ladies from 16 villages included Khaw-za village to involve in the contest of a "Fashion and Beauty Show", which held by Khaw-za village where the No. 3 Tactical Command took base, southern part of Ye Township (look in the Location Map).

Brigadier. Myo Win, who come from the southeast command in Moulmein capital, managed the Fashion show and he said that this "Fashion and Beauty show" was to celebrate the 46th Anniversary of Burma's "Independence Day" that falls on January 4, 2004⁵.

Many Mon Women between the age of 17 to 25 years old who has tall and sling body structure were forced to involve in the Show in that village. The list of the villages that were forcibly ordered to send young women to the Show are as below:

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) Khaw-za | 6) Kabya-wa | 11) Magyi |
| 2) Toe-tat Ywa-thit | 7) The-kon | 12) Kyauk-l |
| 3) Yin-ye | 8) Kyone-kanya | 13) Tayoke-taung |
| 4) Yin-dein | 9) Mi-htaw-hla-kalay | 14) Shwe-hinda Ywa-thit and |
| 5) Kabya-gyi | 10) Mi-htaw-hla-gyi | 15) Khaw-za Chaung-wa |

According to a source of a villager who fled to Halockhani Mon Refugee Camp in Thai-Burma border area, the villages, which were ordered to select young women and involve in that Fashion and Beauty Show also had to pay fine if they failed to participate. If a village failed to participate in the Show, it would be fined to pay 150, 000 Kyat ransoms to the local military battalion.

Traditionally, the Mon women in the rural areas never had any experience of involving in such show and many of them refused and fled from their women to escape from this Burmese Army's sexual harassment⁶. Once, the selected women fled from the villages, the village headmen had responsibility to pay fine to the local commanders. The headmen collected money from all the families from the whole village or sometimes, the parents of the selected women had to pay more.

In December 2003 and January 2004, in order to escape from all violations including sexual harassment and sexual violations against women, about 400 of Mon displaced villagers from southern part of Ye Township

⁵ Burma retained her Independence from British colony on January 4, 1948.

⁶ In Mon culture, the Fillion and Beauty Show is not acceptable by religious leaders and community elderly people.

arrived to the Halockhai Mon Refugee (resettlement) Camp and over 80% of them fled into Thailand to seek works⁷.

Among these displaced women, many young women fled from their native villages even (some) without their parents, to escape for the forcible participation in 'Fashion and Beauty Show' arranged by the military commanders. Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) also conducted interviews with some displaced women and they explained about 'sexual harassment' against women as below:

Interview # 1

Name: Ms. Mi H- W-

Age: 20 years old

Native village: Kyone-kanya village, (southern Ye Township, Mon State)

My name is Mi H— W— and I live in Kyone-kanya village of Ye Township. Because of my body structure (tall and look fair complexion), they (the Burmese Army's commander and the soldiers including the headman of the village) ordered me to participate in the "Beauty and Fashion Show", which were held by the Burmese Army in Khaw-za village via our headman.

As soon as I heard about that I was selected to involve in the show, my parent started to worry about me and they disagreed with me to involve such that show. So, As be decided, I fled my village to current place, here. For my village, the headman selected 2 of my friends, who are the age of 18 and 22 years old each. But I had fled here and I heard nothing about them what happen later. I am also not sure that whether they involve in the show or not.

Interview # 2

Name: Mi H— L—

Age: 19 years old

Native village: Yain-dein Village, Ye Township, Mon State

I'm H—L— from Yin Dein village of southern Ye Township, Mon State. In order to join in the "Fashion and Beauty Show" in Khaw-za village at Independence day's evening, which were managed by the Burmese local battalion, our village headman selected 4 young Mon ladies who had tall and sling body structure in our village to participate in the Show.

Accordingly to the order of the commander of the Burmese Army battalion, the selected girls were Mi Sangran, Mi Than Cho, Mi Aye Than and Mi Seik Non. They were asked to live in the battalion for 3 days and 2 nights. During these days, the ladies were asked to do rehearsal of doing "Cat Walk" in front of them (the commander and soldiers in the battalion base) and later the commander released 2 of 4 selected girls because of their ages. These two girls are between 8th and 10 standard in their high school classes and even though they are pretty, their physical appearances are still young.

Moreover, the young women have been forced to do works in the army bases as cooking, carrying water and finding foods for them during these rehearsal days. At nighttime, they also forced to entertain the commanders of the battalion such as forcing the women to massage them especially the commander of the battalion. But no body exactly know who were raped besides these Fashion and Beauty Show by the commanders and soldiers of the local Burmese Army's battalions.

Interview #3

Name: Mi E- W—

Age: 19 Years old

Native village: Khaw-za Village, Ye Township, Mon State

My name is Mi E- W— from Khaw-za village (southern part of Ye Township). As the Burmese Army's commander found I'm tall and sling, he ordered our village headmen to include me in "Fashion & Beauty Show". The commander ordered the unmarried women, who are tall with 5 feet and 6 inches to involve in fashion show.

I did not want to involve in fashion show and therefore, I fled from my village. Another two girls from my village were selected to involve in the fashion show without their willingness. As the Burmese Army

⁷ Accordingly to the estimation of the village leaders who arrived to the border area, nearly 25% of the total population in the area have left from their native villages and displaced in many ways.

commander requested four girls to involve in fashion contest, the village headmen had to find two girls from town (Ye Town) to involve in fashion show. The villagers had to pay for these hired women.

Not only the women from our village, they also asked from 10 villages to send 1 to 4 girls to fashion show to involve in contest. They also said to the village headmen that to select even school girls, but they must be in classes of 8 grades to 10 grades. I heard they selected four girls from Yin-dein village.

If the selected girls are not beautiful and too young (if looked like children), they rejected them and forced the village headmen to select again.

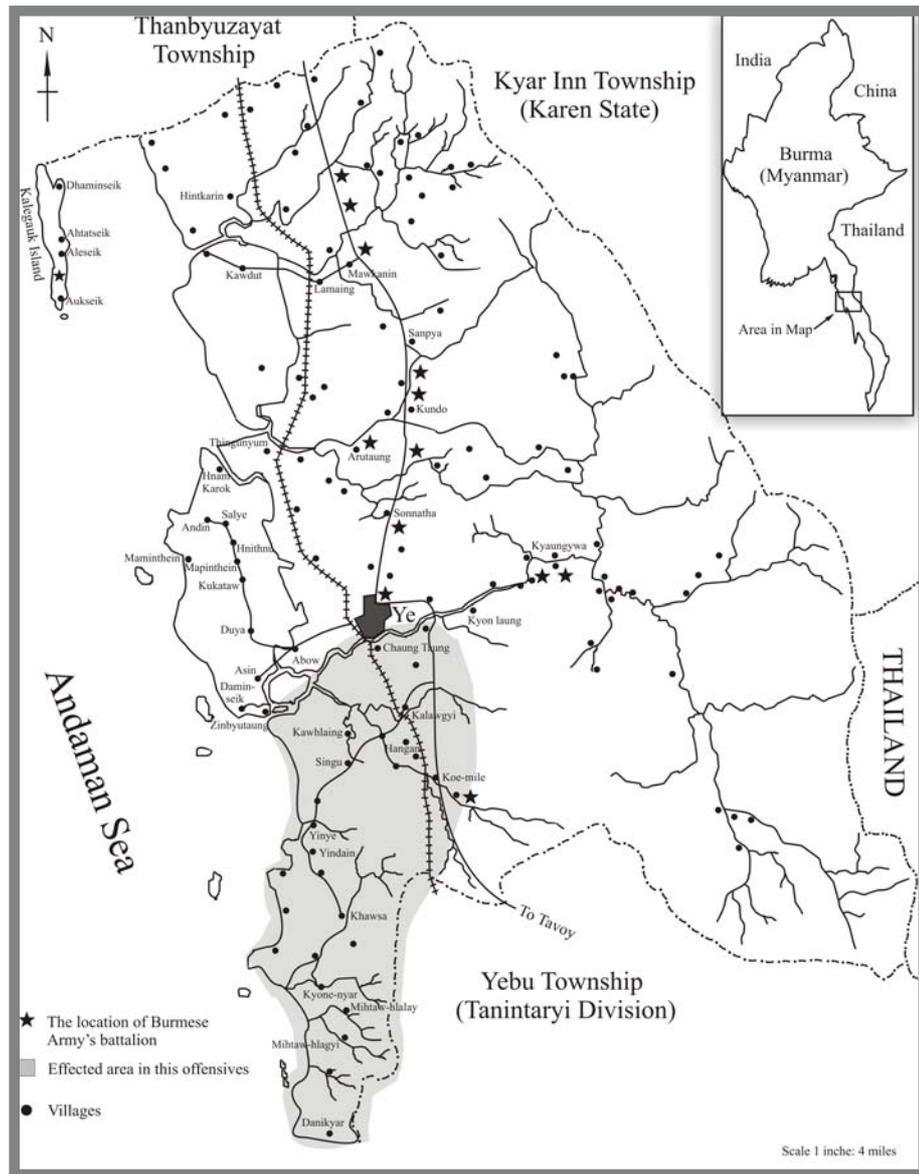
Those selected girls have to go to army base (near Khaw-za village) and let them stay in the base for two days and two nights for rehearsal before the fashion show was actually taken place. During these days and nights, we didn't know, how the commanders and soldiers treat to those girls.

Accordingly to the selected girls, they had to do 'catwalk' in front of the army commanders for hours. If the commanders did not like, they were forced to keep walking. The commanders also came and touched their bodies and dragged their cloths during their instruction.

There are about 30 girls in the whole area were forced to be in army bases for several for the rehearsal of 'catwalk' for the fashion show. Then, (in second week of December 2003) the commanders hold a contest of 'fashion show' in Khaw-za village. Girls were asked to do 'catwalk' and posed with their different types in a stage and the commanders selected the most beautiful girl and gave them small prizes.

Besides this fashion show, the young women in many villages have been constantly forced to do works in the army bases and to entertain the commanders of Burmese Army. They asked at least three women from one village to stay at their bases for 24 hours. Those women had to do cooking, carrying water and finding foods for them.

At nighttime, the commanders forced the women to sing 'karaoke' songs together with them especially to entertain them. The women have to serve liquor and foods for them. They also had to do massage for them. Many women are raped, but I didn't know details.



Map of Ye Township, Mon State

Rotation of Women's Labour and Entertainment

The above-mentioned information are how the women are forced to serve as 'comfort' women for the Burmese soldiers. In many cases, as soon as the Burmese Army's battalions arrived into a village, they found CD player machine and monitor (Television) from the village or sometimes they ordered the village headmen to send them one or two set of CD player machines and (gasoline) generator to play 'karaoke' and sing the songs while they are drinking liquors. Later, the military commanders also requested women from the villages nearby to send some women to sing 'karaoke' songs along with them in order to entertain them and give massage to them while they were taking foods and drinking liquors.

Accordingly to a village headman from Kyone-kanya village, who fled and arrived to Mon refugee camp in second week of February 2004 said,

"They (the commanders and soldiers) asked 3 women every day to stay (for 24 hours) at their bases. Their (temporary) bases are normally in a good house in village or in school close to village. Soon after they based, they asked a Television, a CD Player and a generator. We have to find CDs for them to sing songs and gasoline for generators.

"Whether married or unmarried women, they took 3 women every day. They said, they took women only with young ages less than 30 years old. In their bases, they forced the women to sing the songs, to serve liquor to them, to feed them with foods, to give massage at nighttime and at daytime, they forced to do works such as cooking foods, carrying water, and finding fire-woods. They also threatened the women, if they fled, they must be killed.

"After one night and one day, we had another 3 women. First, I also refused to send women to them. So that they beat me seriously and said if I didn't listen to their orders, they will kill me. Therefore, I was afraid and approached the community women to send the women."

According to estimation of this headman, about sixty percentages of women who were forced to stay at night in military bases could be probably raped by SPDC. About eighteen women from his village alone were forced to go to the military base to sing karaoke songs during the night with the military officials while some head villagers were asked to participate for giving presents to the women singers.

He also added that, "after the (sing songs and drinking) party, the commanders took only beautiful women and raped them". The commanders let other women stayed away and asked only beautiful women to sleep with. Among eighteen women who were asked, he did not know how many of them were raped.

If the beautiful women's parents lied to the officials that their daughters were not at homes when they were coming to take the women they must to buy expensive foreign produced liquor like Black Label which was worth of 25000 Kyats (25 US Dollar) in Burmese Currency as a punishment.

In the party, the women were forced to drink Black Label (liquor) or alcohol mixing with Star Colar juice, to make women drunk and easier for the commanders to have sex.

Accordingly to the Ms Mi K—S—, a sexual victims from Khaw-za village, she said the army commanders had chosen only beautiful women to sing karaoke songs with them during at night. Those beautiful women were called many times by them, not based on the rotation basis, to sleep in their bases. Accordingly to Ms S_, some women who participated in January 4 Independence Day 'Fashion and Beauty Show' had been repeatedly asked by the commanders to stay at their bases at night time.

In this case, the village headmen were not collaborators to the local military commanders of Burmese Army. As they were too afraid of killing by the Burmese Army, they have to arrange sending women to the commanders. During this offensive, almost village headmen in the areas are seriously beaten and some are killed.

B. Sexual Violations or Rapes

The sexual violation: rape or gang-rape is also the Burmese Army's impose of 'great fear' among the women to not support the rebel armed group. The rape is one type 'inhumane and degrading treatment or punishment' against civilians and it absolutely violates the SPDC's ratified the CEDAW, to guarantee the rights of women⁸.

⁸ The current military regime, SPDC, has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 1997. However the Burmese soldiers' rape against ethnic women in Shan State, Karen State, and Karenni (Kayah) State have been reported by other ethnic human rights groups.

Rape Cases:

Case 1:

On 12th January, 2004, No. 3 Tactical Command, that was operating military campaign in Southern Ye Township, Mon state ordered to send three women daily in rotation to do basic works such as cooking, carrying water, finding fire woods, etc. for the military column at daytime and raped them at nighttime. The women from many households in Khaw-za village and six villages nearby were forced to send three women every day on a rotation to the army encampment.

Ms. Mi K— H—, 23, a woman who was raped said that women were forced to work for cooking and the commanders raped them at nighttime.

“They (soldiers) don’t like when the village headmen married women. If a woman said she was married, she was seriously beaten. In the daytime we have to cook meals for them and carry water for their shower (just for the commanders including even low ranks commanders). After having dinner, they demand to have message, and when night fell they raped us. We did not dare resist at all,” said by Ms. H—.

The women were changed with another 3 women on a rotation basis on the next day evening. This military commands have avoided to rape married women.

(Note: some battalion commanders have raped both married and unmarried women during this military offensive.)

Case 2:

Captain Hla Khaing of LIB No. 586 that was combating against the splinter Mon armed group raped Mi M— H—, 20, daughter of Nai Sway, from Toe-tat Ywa thit village, and a soldiers under his command also raped Mi S—W—, 25 from The-khone Village and Mi Z- T—, 17, from Sin-gu village.

As being described, the raped women had no longer dared to live in their villages and escaped away from their villages. Her niece said she has been taking refuge in Ye Town. The people who have close relationship with Mi S—W— and Mi Z- T— said they also were hiding in northern Ye Township area, where they have their friends or relatives.

Captain Hla Khaing arrested Mi M— H—’s father with accusation of having contact with the splinter Mon armed group. While he was interrogated and seriously tortured in a custody, the Captain called her to negotiate for the release of her father. At night, the Captain Hla khaing took her, who came to meet him in confidence of his offer to a house, drove out the owner of the house and then raped her. After raping, he detained her for two days and raped repeatedly.

While Ms. Mi S— W— was being threatened with knife to yield to be raped, she shouted for help, the villagers came and resaved her. She was too shame to stay at village longer and therefore, escaped to another area. Similarly Mi Z- T— felt too shame to stay at her native village and therefore, she escaped to northern part of Ye Township.

Case 3:

In the second week, a woman, Ms. Mi A—L—, 20 years old, from Kaw-hlaing village was arrested by the troops of Burmese Army’s LIB No. 586 soon after her father was arrested with accusation of a rebel agent. Her father, Nai W—was arrested by the commander of LIB No. 586, Captain Hla Khaing and then she was arrested against.

She was brought by the Burmese soldiers of LIB No. 586 and repeatedly raped by both commanders and soldiers. Mostly, she was gang-raped by the soldiers, when they launched military operation. She was brought from one place to another or one village to another by the soldiers and they raped her at night time. She was not fed with sufficient foods and could not sleep for several nights and therefore, she was physically so weak, said by a her neighbour.

Her father disappeared and she never found him. She believed that he was killed by the soldiers.

She said, she was so weak and her health condition was bad when she arrived back at her homes. Even Ms. Mi A—L—asked the soldiers to kill her and not to rape her, but they continuously raped. When the soldiers arrived to her home village, they let her stay at her homes for a while and when they left for the military operations, then they brought her along with them again. Therefore, she was totally raped for over two-months.

When she was arrested and gang-raped by the Burmese soldiers from LIB No. 586 soldiers, she had about 5-6 months pregnancy. Her husband also had to flee to escape arrest and killing by the Burmese soldiers.

Accordingly to the latest information, she delivered a baby while her pregnancy is only eight months while the troops arrived a Mon village, Yinye, which is far about 5 kilometers from her village. After incomplete days of child delivery, she now is taken care by the Yinye villagers.

The Burma's military regime ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1997. Following this ratification, the regime formed 'Myanmar (Burma) National Working Committee for Women's Affairs' (MNWCWA) in order to obligate the CEDAW principles, provides protection for women's rights and reporting to CEDAW. However, this MNCWA is operating totally under the control of the regime and it has no independent monitoring on sexual violations against women. It is just a puppet.

On the other hand, due to breakdown of freedom of information and communication in Burma, general women in cities or towns or in the areas under the control of the regime do not well know the real situation of ethnic women in the conflict zones. In the reporting of MNWCWA to the CEDAW, it always never mention about the worst situation of women in war zones and just says women in Burma are not seriously suffered from discrimination.

'Rape' is used as a weapon by the Burmese Army not only in the conflict zones in Mon State, but also in Karen State, Karenni (Kayah) State and Shan State. Therefore, it is a systematic violations against women in imposing 'great fear' among the ethnic community women in order to stop them or their relatives to not join the rebellion activities.

III. Forced Relocation and Dislocation

Forced relocation is the related human rights violation of the Burmese Army's to cut off all supports of the local civilians to the rebel soldiers. The commanders of Burmese Army believed that if the rural ethnic villages are under their firm control, they could control them easily and would stop supporting the rebel army. After the rebel soldiers have no support from the civilians, they would surrender to the Burmese Army.

The total Mon villages were accused as being rebel bases, where the Mon rebel soldiers received foods and shelter and therefore, they have tried to control all these villages. For the villages, where they believed they could not control, the Burmese soldiers forcibly relocated them to another villages or to combine in another villages' sections⁹.

Some forcible relocation of the Mon villages in some small villages during the offensives from December to the end of February 2004 are as below:

Case 1:

A Mon villages in Southern Ye Township, Win-kyan village with approximately 70 households were ordered in mid-December 2003 to move into Mi-htaw-hla-kalay or Mi-htaw-hla-gyi villages. Because the village was accused of providing shelters and foods to the Burmese Army. IB No. 31 troops led by Lt. Col. Nyi Nyi Swe was taking responsibility to move all villagers from that village. He ordered them to move into any villages they liked within three days.

The villagers had to move from their villages, by taking some belongings along with them but they could not take all. Because of limited time, some villagers even could not take their livestock, clothing and sufficient foods along with them.

Case 2:

Similarly, the Burmese Army's IB No. 31 also forced about 80 families of villagers from Win-pop village to immediately move from their village within two days. Since the time for the relocation is too limited and short, the villagers could not bring all of their properties and belongings along with them. The villagers moved to many different villages, Magyi, Mi-htaw-hla-kalay, Mi-htaw-hla-gyi and others, where they have friends or relatives.

⁹ Normally the Burmese Army tries to relocate some small villages, which are far from the main big villages and forced them to stay in these big villages, where they have firm control on the civilians.

This village is also similarly accused as rebels' shelters and the Burmese soldiers moved them immediately. Many of them have to abandon their gardens, paddy-farms, and live stock in this forced relocation.

Case 3:

Day-bound Village with approximately 150 households was also accused as 'rebel shelters' by the commanders of IB No. 31, because this village was far from other main villages. Therefore, the villagers were ordered to relocate immediately in first week of January 2004 to other villages.

Accordingly to the order, they must move from their village immediately within 3 days. If compared with above 2 villages, this village had better houses with wood and iron sheets as roof. Over 40 families lost their houses with worth over 2 Million Kyat for one house, while a few families lost 3-5 Million Kyat for their houses. Most families in this village have rubber and orchid plantations near their villagers, and so that they have to abandon all of these plantations¹⁰.

As they had limited time to relocate in another villages, they lost many belongings and properties, especially household use properties, livestock, and others. The commanders also said that if they found someone after the deadline in the village, they would shoot and kill them immediately. The villagers moved into several different villages in the area, where they had friends and relatives.

Case 4:

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 by IB No. 31 commanders. This village section is close to the jungle road that close to jungle route and therefore, the commanders of IB No. 31 accused that the rebel soldiers often came and took shelters in this village.

Therefore, they ordered the villagers to move into the main section of the village immediately. As the soldiers gave two days time to relocate themselves in the main village, they had time to take the building materials.

Case 5:

On December 25, 2003, LIB No. 586 troops also set fire a small fishing village, Khaw-za Chaung-wa village, which had about 50 households, in where most fishermen were inhabiting. As the village was close to the seashore and the Burmese Army's troops believed that the rebel soldiers used the village as sheltering and to get foods from fishermen.

Before the soldiers burnt down the village, the soldiers looted many valuable belongings and properties from the houses and set fire in one house. The soldiers also ordered the village to not stay at their villages and to move from there as quick as possible.

Before burning down the village, the soldiers also killed a woman, who was accused as a rebel soldier's wife, and her baby, by throwing into water. Then they set fire from her houses and tried to burn the whole village. As the fire did not separate quickly, only a few houses were burnt down. But all villagers fled into Khaw-za main village without taking belongings along with them.

Besides the Burmese Army's various battalions involved in the relocation of the villagers from the remote villages, the Burmese soldiers also forced some individual families, who are accused as the relatives of the rebel soldiers, to another villages. The soldiers destroyed some houses, looted the belongings and beat some people with suspicion of these people were the relatives to the Mon rebel soldiers.

The following information are about the recent of forced dislocation of the Burmese Army to the individual families in Mon villages.

Case 1:

On December 30, 2003, the Burmese troops from LIB No. 586 went into Shwe-hinda Ywa-thit village and destroyed one house because the house owner was accused as the relative to a rebel commander, Nai Bin. The soldiers also confiscated household's materials, 30000 betel-nut crops, 40 baskets of paddy crops and others, and took them to Ye Town.

On the same day in the same village, they destroyed Mr. Nai Phae's house with accusation he was a contact person to the rebel soldiers. They burnt down his house, confiscated two cattle and other household materials. They also killed one cattle for their foods.

¹⁰ After 1995 NMSP-SPDC ceasefire, as the Mon villagers believed there was peace in Mon areas, many families built better houses in their villages. They normally use hard woods in building their houses and roofed them with iron sheets.

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:

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With regards,

Director
Human Rights Foundation of Monland

The commander of LIB No. 586, Captain Hla Khaing, also ordered the two families to immediately move from their village to other village. As both families were afraid of being arrested and tortured, they immediately leave from the village. The soldiers took their belongings including one cattle to Ye Town and then to their base, which situates in the northern part of Ye Township.

Case 2:

On December 31, 2003, the Burmese troops from LIB No. 586 went into Toe-tat Ywa-thit village and destroyed a house. They accused the house was belonged to a mother-in-law of a rebel commander. They confiscated every belonging from the houses and took them to Ye Town, where they have bases on the next day.

They also ordered the household headed woman to leave from that village immediately and go to another places. Therefore, the woman and her family members immediately moved to another village to escape the arrest and mistreatment committed by the Burmese soldiers.

After the civilians or families were forced to leave from their homes or villages, they lost their permanent livelihood and their regular income. They could not bring a small amounts of belongings including some basic food along with them but had to abandon their farms, plantation, fishing boats and other various livelihoods.

In most cases, the Burmese Army's troops went into these relocated villages and looted the remaining things. This is a reason why they have instructed the villagers to immediately leave from their villages: within 3 days or 2 days or one day.

In this forced relocation and dislocation, the Burmese Army did not set the relocation camp but just forced the villagers to leave their homes and then they can enter into any other villages which are under the absolute of its control.

IV. No Protection to Innocent Civilians

As a result of mistreatment against the Mon civilians in southern part of Ye Township: such as summary killing; arbitrary arrest and detention; torture and inhumane treatment; sexual violations against women; forced relocation and dislocation; restriction of movement; and looting and extortion, the civilians in the area have faced the serious crisis to live in their own villages.

Many communities were totally dislocated after the families from those villages have gradually left from their villages. Some people are just moving from one village to another while many families suddenly moved into

the regime, SPDC's absolute control area. While near 200 families of the displaced villagers moved into New Mon State Party's ceasefire zone.

Thousands of villagers also moved into Thailand via many border entries. Some of them migrated into Thailand by boats and then to Thai border town, Ranong. Most of the Mon local inhabitants are fishermen, they could easily find works in that Thai border town, where many fishing industries are operated. Additionally, many other families, moved into NMSP control areas and then into Thailand by other ways, by walking and taking buses.

Human rights violations in Burma have been serious and the regime or its armed faction, the Burmese Army (also known as *tatmadaw* in Burmese term) have never respected the internationally recognized human rights principles.

Although some international NGOs such as International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided training to the commanders of Burmese Army about the right of the people in the conflict zone and the Australian government sponsored organization have provided training about the human rights principles, there is no improvement in the field of human rights in the conflict zones.

**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.

Preamble of CEDAW:

- Recalling that discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries,

Article 3 of CEDAW:

- States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

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