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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*),
ILO- International Labour Organization
MOMC- Military Operational Management Command
KNU- Karen National Union
NMSP- New Mon State Party
NLD- National League for Democracy
DKBA- Democratic Karen Buddhist Army
KPF- Karen Peace Force
MI- Military Intelligence

News

No compensation for the houses burnt by gas explosion

September, Thaton Township, Mon State

On September 17, five families who lives in Tha-mar-saing villages which is on **the motor** road between Thaton and Beelin towns in Mon State did not receive any compensation from SPDC authorities, after their houses were totally destroyed by the explosion from a pipeline connecting to Myaing-kalay cement factory.

They have to set up the makeshifts after their houses were destroyed by the gas explosion and the local authorities not only never took care of them **but** also never said for the compensation for these houses.

"The houses belonged to five families in the village were seriously burnt on September 17, 2004 night at about 10:00 p.m.," said the villagers. The houses were nearby the explosion and the villagers run first before the serious explosion happened. However, no people wounded from **the** explosion.

"The explosion threw huge fire which is higher than a tree and burnt five houses and a truck nearby," according to a Tha-mar-saing villager.

Although the authorities have come to the areas for the repairs of pipeline and even they met some villagers' houses were destroyed and displaced



It seems too dangerous to local people that gas pipeline passes through paddy farms, villages and plantations in Mon State.

Commentary

SPDC tries to consolidate its power in ethnic areas

While the ceasefire groups have applied in the National Convention about 'the separation of power' among the Central Government and State Governments, the military regime has tried hard to consolidate its power and plans to control the whole power.

There is a strong evidence happened in Mon State. The SPDC and local Burmese Army battalions have planned to open more government schools and tried to close down the Mon national schools in Ye Township, where the New Mon State Party has run nearly 80 schools including some middle level schools.

The establishment of the government schools in the context of civil war in Burma is the central government is still trying to consolidate its power, and they have no will for the decentralization of the power which is demanded by the different ethnic nationalities.

Similarly to the Mon areas, the SPDC tried to allocate more of its administration in another 7 ethnic State and does not share any political power even to ceasefire groups, who agreed with regime to cease fighting and demanded for peace talks near a decade.

Consolidation of power by the SPDC means it does not want to share power to other pro-democracy and ethnic nationalities' organizations - that would far from National Reconciliation - demanded by the international community.

in the area, they never asked them how suffer, how they could continuously live and how much for their new shelters.

"No one knows the reason of the gas explosion," according to the villagers. Many people believed the explosion happened naturally because the quality of pipeline is low and most joints of the pipeline could make explosion. Many of them said, they did not believe the KNLA (KNU troops) will involve in the demolition, because they knew KNU has a ceasefire talks with SPDC.

The gas pipeline transmitted gas from Rangoon to Myaingkalay village in Karen State, where a cement factory is operating. The gas-pipeline is built along the motor road and it crossed into some villages.

According to villagers told IMNA source, the loud explosion frightened the villagers and it is the first time the gas exploded in the area, the northern part of Mon State.

The last time gas explosion in southern Mon state happened in Mudon Township's Kwan-hlar village on October 17, 2003 and the explosion destroyed some paddy farms. It frightened the villagers to suddenly move from the village at midnight.

Due to lack of skills by the Burmese engineers during the construction of the pipeline, the gas has regularly

spilled in the junctions of the pipeline and then blew up seriously and loudly.

On February 8, 2003, the explosion occurred in northern part of Ye Township in Mon State and the Mon villagers in a village, Lamine, were affected by the bad gas smell.

This gas pipeline passes through villages, paddy farmlands and fruit and rubber plantations in Mon State. It seem too dangerous to local people gas poison and it explosion.

The military regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), in Burma constructed this pipeline in early 2000 with a main purpose to provide gas for a cement factory in Myaingkalay in Pa-an Township of Karen State. The regime also brings gas from the multinational gas companies, Total (France) and UNOCAL (United States) exploited 'Yatana' gas field in Andaman Sea of Burma. During the gas pipeline construction, the regime authorities confiscated civilians¹ farmlands, house gardens and orchid plantations along the route, and the Mon civilians were forced to move.

Report

Gross Human Rights Violations in Ye Township, Southern Part of Mon State

I. Background of Ye Township

Ye Township is in Mon State and it situates in southernmost part of the State and the majority of local inhabitants in this township are Mon people and some Karen villagers also stay in eastern part of township area. Since the beginning of civil war in Burma until NMSP ceasefire deal with the then military government, SLORC, the whole township area, except Ye Town, was under the control of rebel armies and the whole township area was in war zone.

The eastern part of this township borders with Thailand and western part of township has a long seacoast with Andaman Sea. As geographical location, the local inhabitants are mainly farmers who are growing paddy and fruit trees in the area. Many villagers who are inhabitants in coastal area involve in fishing works along the area.

In this township, most of the areas are covered with rubber, fruit and betel nut plantations in eastern part of Township area and with paddy-fields in western part of the area. And, there are also many thousands acres of forests also cover in many part of the area. Therefore, geographically, both Mon and Karen rebels could take base and launch their military activities against the Burmese Army properly. For many decades, the troops of Burmese Army could not suppress the rebellion.

As the local people are Mon and Karen inhabitants, normally, the rebel soldiers have gotten supports from the civilians and so that the villagers in the area were constantly accused as rebel-supporters. With this accusation, many Mon civilians from this township area had been killed, tortured and some women were raped during the course of armed conflict between NMSP and successive military regimes in Rangoon until NMSP dealt ceasefire with the then military regime, SLORC.

After NMSP entered for ceasefire, the abuses that related to suspicion of rebel-supporters have been reduced. But a Mon splinter armed group still operated their military activities against the Burmese Army in both southern and northern parts of Township along the seacoast since 6 years ago, while NMSP controls in eastern part of Township area and along Ye river area (*look in the map*). Thus, the civilians outside of NMSP control area have been still suffered from human rights violations that related to suspicion of rebel-supporters.

Additionally, in duration before and after NMSP ceasefire, the civilians in both Ye town and villagers in various township area had to provide various types of taxation, contribute unpaid labour and food and other supplies for the military battalions, which have been active in the whole township area. Previously, in this township area, the Burmese Army four military battalions, namely, IB No. 61, IB No. 106, LIB No. 343 and IB No. 299. When these military battalions operated military activities against rebel armies in the area, the soldiers constantly took foods from villagers and conscripted the villagers to be porters to carry their ammunitions and food supplies. And, whenever the army or township authorities implemented road construction and other development projects, the civilians in the concerned area are forced to be unpaid labourers.

When many BA troops entered into the area, the Mon population has been greatly suffered and the following accounts are gross human rights violations and abuses committed by mostly the soldiers from those battalions.

Recently during the period from 1999 to 2001, the Burmese Army deployed a main military force, Military Operational Management Command (MOMC No. 19) and its 10 light infantry battalions and 3 artillery battalions in the area and thousands acres of land belonged to the Mon civilians were confiscated without confiscation. Currently, hundreds of Burmese soldiers arrived into the areas and they have constantly restricted the movement of the people, forced them to contribute labour in development projects and in military deployment.

From late 2003 until June 2004, the Burmese Army launched a military offensive against a Mon splinter group in southern part of Ye Township and have committed various types of human rights violations against the local civilians. After June, although the offensives have reduced down, the Burmese Army has kept control in the area and committed violations. The following accounts are how the Burmese Army involved in gross human rights violations.

II. Gross Human Rights Violations

A. Arbitrary arrest, summary execution and inhumane treatments

While the various battalions of Burmese Army, such as IB No. 61, IB No. 106, LIB No. 343 and LIB No. 299, launched the military offensives in many rural areas of Ye Township, the Burmese Army or *tatmadaw* soldiers always accused the rural Mon inhabited villagers as rebel-supporters to a Mon splinter group.

Since the ceasefire, the NMSP and its military faction, MNLA, withdrew from southern part of Ye Township and they do not have the military activities while the BA troops have full military activities in order to against the Mon splinter groups.

However, the SPDC's military GHQs in Rangoon regularly sent many new military battalions to this Ye Township, to launch the offensives against the splinter group, Nai Hlein and Nai Bin, which has the connection to Hongsawatoi Restoration Part' (HRP). When the commanders and soldiers from new battalions entered into the area, they could not separate which are Mon villagers and which are non-villages. Thus, they accused the villagers as Mon splinter armed group-supporters and they have cruel and inhumanely treated similarly to all villagers, especially men.

During their military offensives in August of 2004, the soldiers from the No. 3 Tactical Command and LIB No. 273 in Ye Township area also killed some Mon villagers. Almost along with the arbitrary arrest against the villagers, some villagers are killed by the BA soldiers.

As an instance,

On August 27, 2004, a villager was killed and other eight villagers from Mi-htaw-hlar-kalay were arrested with the suspicion of supporting a Mon rebel group by Burmese Army's Light Infantry Battalion No.273.

Nai Chit Htwe, 35 years old a train ticket seller, from Pauk-pin-gwin village of southern Ye township was killed on August 27, 2004 and 8 villagers from Mi-htaw-hlar-kalay village were arrested after fighting between Mon rebels broke out on August 29 that killed 4 Burmese soldiers and a 14 years old schoolboy accordingly to the source of Mon splinter group.

The rebel group also informed that LIB No. 273 also killed the village headman of Mi-htaw-hla-gyi village: Secretary Nai Kon Pha, without trail in the first week of July.

The Mon splinter group leader said: it was so cruel and inhumane to the Mon people in the area. After killing of the villagers, the BA soldiers also said that the arrested villagers are killed during fighting.

According to a report of a villager from that area, eight villagers under the suspicion of supporting rebels were accused as keeping the rebels in the villages and providing foods for them. In that area, Mon people are supporting the rebels for years and currently the Burmese military government SPDC, have been intensively launching military offensives against to Mon rebels in order to take control of the whole area.

In the area, the Burmese soldiers have often made a regularly arrest the villagers and punished them in order to prohibit them supporting the rebels. In early of this year from January to March, No. 3 Tactical Command in the area killed over 10 villagers with the similar suspicion.

According to fifteen villagers who fled from their villages to escape the abuses and arrived to the Mon refugee resettlement camp on July 15, killing and other human rights violations have been continuously committed by the soldiers of Burmese Army in Southern Ye Township.

One villager Mr. Nai Lwi Mon who arrived the Hlockhani Mon refugee resettlement camp in late July explained the situation as:

Burmese soldiers from Battalion No.273 based in Magyi village, Ye township and sometimes based in Kanbauk, in Yebyu Township, they arrested 15 villagers from Magyi village, used as porters and human-shields while they launched offensives against the Mon splinter group. Many villagers were beaten, fed with insufficient food and had to carry heavy ammunitions. The villagers who were suspected supporting splinter group were killed and tortured.

Many porters from Magyi village who was led by Nai Ar Shane arrived back to the village on July 11, 2004 and were tortured until Nai Ar Shane's hand was broken because serious beating. Nai Kon Pha, village secretary from Mi-htaw-hlar-gyi village and Nai Ngae from Magyi village were killed by this battalion (LIB No. 273) soldiers under the command of Maj. Khin Kyaw Soe with a suspicion of supporting Mon splinter group.

Many young men were frightened as the soldiers pointing guns to them, checking on them and many women were harassed by the soldier.

Every week 15 men were used as porters on a rotation basis and they did not allow them going to farms and plantations. People in the village lost their regular job.

Hundreds of villagers from Southern Ye Township fled to Thailand since the beginning of 2004 to escape from the persecution of Burmese Army that has launched military offensives against the Mon splinter group led by Nai Hlein and his commander Nai San Shay which has military activities against the Burmese Army, according to the source from the Mon refugee camp.

Because of the recent offensives launched by the Burmese Army in the area, about 20% of the estimated over 50,000 local population displaced and many of them fled to the border areas with Thailand or to the Mon refugee resettlement camps according to Kyone-kanya village headmen.

While hundreds of Mon innocent civilians in southern part of Ye Township, Mon State 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.

Among the villagers who were arrested, some of them are the family members or close relatives to the rebels. When those villagers were arrested, the BA soldiers have rarely put them in trial according to the law, but tortured them seriously during the interrogation to get information about the activities of the rebel soldiers.

As an instance,

"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 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 Sun 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, the soldiers 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.

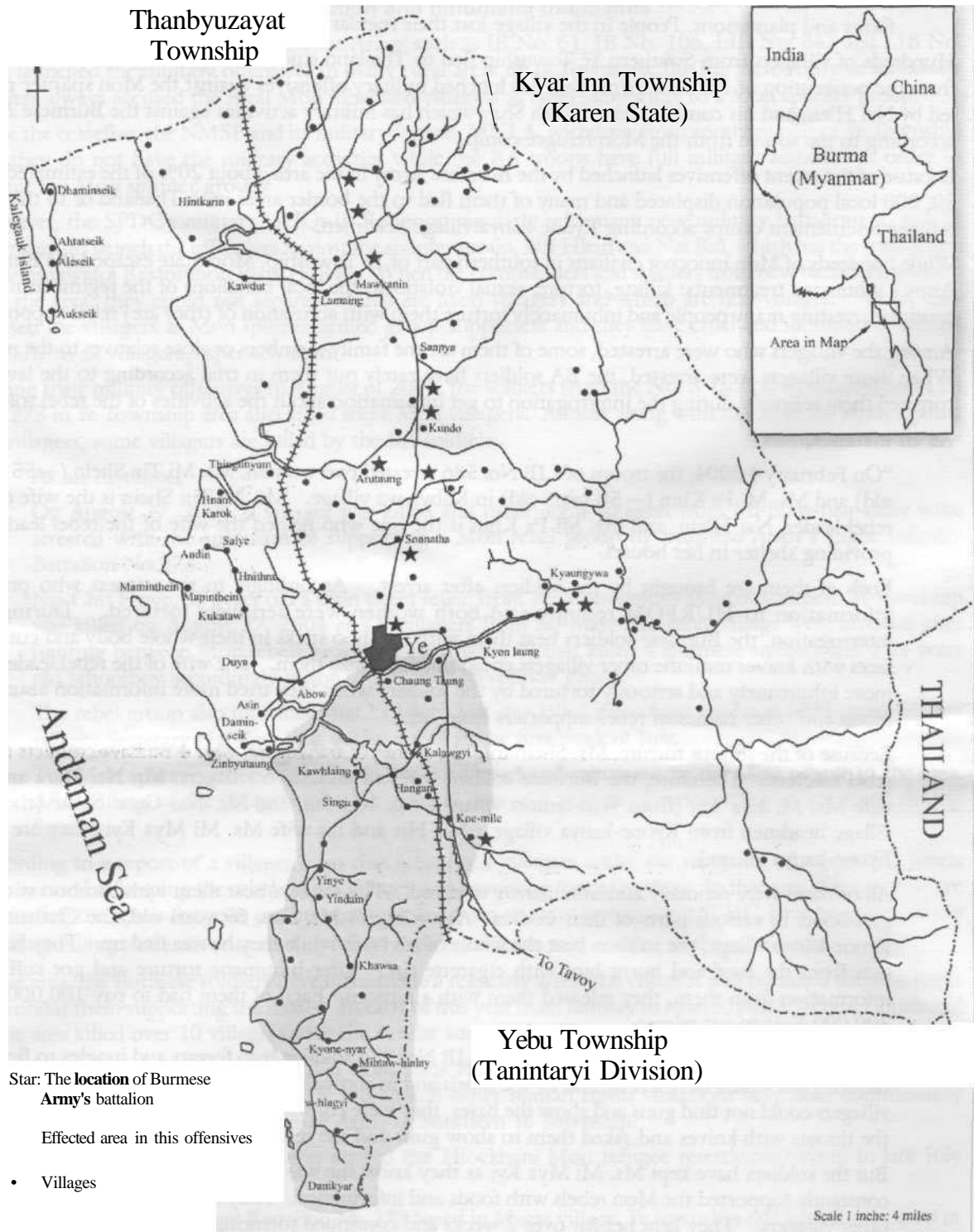
Before the release, they were brought by the LIB No. 586 soldiers into forests and jungles to find the hidden guns which were left behind by the rebels and to show the rebels' temporary bases. When the villagers could not find guns and show the bases, they were constantly tortured. The soldiers pointed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

Sometimes, the killing of villagers also happened in the forests or jungles or in the plantations where the displaced villagers were hiding. When those villagers knew about the activities of BA troops, they always went into the nearest forests and hide there. If they were arrested in forests or in hiding place, they must be tortured or killed. No information of such killing could be easily collected.



Map of Ye township, Mon State, Southern part of Burma

The arbitrary arrest still have continued in southern part of Ye Township area. In the third week September, 2004, the Burmese Army arrested five villagers with suspicion rebels' parents and additionally restricted the villagers' movement to work in their paddy-farms and orchid plantation.

The instance is:

Burmese Army Battalion (*LIB*) No.586, Colonel Ngwe Soe arrested four parents of Mon rebels in Kaw-hlaing village in southern part of Ye Township, Mon State, informed by a villager. The arrested village civilians are Mr. Nai Aung Tin and Mrs. Mi Phae, Mrs Daw Nu, Mrs. Daw Mya Sein, and another one man (*Mrs. Mi Oud's husband,*).

Although Mrs. Mi Oud's son, Mr. Nai Ani and Mrs Daw Mya Sein's son, Mr. Nai Dorkhae retired from the Mon rebel group and fled to Thailand for seeking works, Col. Ngwe Soe still arrested their parents, a villager Mr. Nai Myaing (a secret name) said.

Colonel Ngwe Soe also ordered the villagers if one villager who kept the Mon rebel at his/her houses or if the fighting happened in the village; they (*the Burmese soldiers*) will kill the villagers and arrest the villagers and they will also burn down the whole village.

Colonel also accused the villagers of bringing the Mon rebels to fight against them on the August 29, 2004, near Mi-htaw-hlar Kalay village, a village in southernmost area of the Township. If the villager does not bring the rebel, the rebel could not be able to come and fight them. The accusation of the Colonel was groundless, said the villagers from the area.

In the fighting near Mi-htaw-hlar Kalay village, four Burmese soldiers were killed in the ambush of Mon rebels. The house which the Burmese soldiers took shelter was also burnt down and the house owners and other 13 people including village headman were arrested by the Burmese Army.

It is always a normal revenge by the Burmese Army to the villagers; if they lose their men or guns in the fighting they must punish the villagers nearby where the fighting happened. The revenges are almost relating to arbitrary arrest of the villagers including suspected rebels' family members, torture and detain them. The revenge against the innocent civilians are not only violate the international human rights principles, but it also against the National Laws. Human rights situation in the southern part of Ye Township in Mon State have been serious. The civilians could not receive any type of international protection, even though some of them have based there for some years.

Currently, the villagers from Kaw-hlaing village and villages nearby are ordered to not go to work at their paddy-farm and orchid plantations according to the villagers. The commander from No. 3 Tactical Command also ordered the villagers to collect all things and goods at their farms or plantation within three days and if not, they would be punished. Since late August 2004, the villagers were again barred to work in their farms or orchid plantations.

House burnt and arrest: on September 12, 2004, a house to which the Mon rebels fired to 6 BA's soldiers while they were falling in asleep was totally burnt down by the Burmese soldiers and household heads were also arrested on the next day.

The burnt house was in Mi-Htaw-hlar-kalay village, southern Ye Township, where 4 Burmese soldiers among 6 under the command of LIB No. 282 were shot to death by the Mon rebels while they were sleeping on August 29.

The Burmese soldier came and arrested the owners of the house, Mr. Nai Yein and Ms. Mi Dot and our village headman on the next day morning. The soldiers took three of them to the Tavoy (*Dawai*) Town, accordingly to Mi Htaw-hlar-kalay villagers said. During the soldiers burnt their houses, they did not allow the house owners to collect any goods from their houses, they burnt down the whole houses with valuable things.

Tavoy town is situating south of Ye Town and is in Tenasserim Division where LIB No. 282 took base. "Another 6 villagers who were on duty of patrolling the village (*under the command of Burmese soldiers*) also arrested by Infantry Battalion No. 61. The 6 villagers have been still investigated by the Burmese Army in Ye Town now," a villager explained.

According the villagers, the Burmese Army is so angry to the villagers because of the Mon rebels could surround their soldiers and shot them death while the Burmese Army and the instructed patrolling groups have taken intensive security in the area.

B. Sexual violation against women

The sexual violations against women as punishment against the villagers for their support to the rebel armed force have continued since December 2003. Women are raped by the soldiers at villages or some are raped during the military offensives.

In August 2004, there are some instances when women are often raped by the commanders of BA military battalions who launched the offensives in southern part of Ye Township.

The instances are:

In the third week of August, 2004, during the troops of No. 3 Tactical Command and LIB No. 273 lunched their military offensives in Mi-htaw-hlar-kalay village of southern part of Ye Township, the Sergeant Min Oo raped a Mon woman, Ms. Mi Yee, 23 years old at night time.

"Mi Yee, 23 years old was raped by Sergeant Min Oo and about 5 young women moved to town after the soldier committed harassment against them," Nai Win who is a villager from Mi-htaw-hlar-kalay explained.

At night, the soldiers also climbed up many houses and looted livestock, clothing, and other valuable things and had argument with villagers. Later, after the villagers were frightened to be killed, most of them kept quite even they found looting in front of them, reported by a villager.

Another rape case was occurred in Kwethonyima village of Yebyu Township which is the border town of Ye Township. On August 10, 2004, when a young Mon woman was on a travel near her village, Kwethonyima of Yebyu township, she was repeatedly raped by a Sergeant from the Burmese Army's Light Infantry Battalion No. 406, a according to the source close to woman. *Note: HURFOM did not get exact name of the commander.)*



Many women fled from Southern part of Ye Township to escape from sexual violation committed by Burmese Army soldiers

"Mi A—M—, 18 years old woman, traveled with a group of 5 male villagers from her village to Maethan-taung village by boats in the morning of August 10. On the halfway, lonely the army Sergeant stopped their board and asked them to approach to the river bank. When the boat stopped, he robbed the passengers and took all their belongings. The passengers have to give their properties such as gold-wares, silver-wares and other valuable things to him.

After that, the Sergeant took the woman, Mi A—M—, along with him and let the boat and passengers travel continuously. Then, he raped the woman for one day and one night. On the next day's morning around 10 a.m, he brought the young woman to the village.

The young woman was suddenly brought to the clinic in village for treatment injuries. She had to stay for 3 days in clinic and then became better.

On August 12, 2004, the Sergeant came into village and as the villagers could recognize him, they tried to arrest him. He also tried to shoot some villagers and some of them also got injuries. However, the villagers could arrest him and tied him up. They sent him to LIB No. 406 base nearby.

According to the news from the villagers, the LIB No. 406 commander killed the Sergeant after the villagers arrested and offered to the battalion. But this information is unreliable. It could be, accordingly to some villagers, the battalion commander released some mis-information of killing his man as punishment. By this way, they could protect their man who involved in crime. Might be, the commander would transfer his man secretly to another battalion.

Previously there are many evidences that the BA soldiers are not punished even they committed crimes against the villagers or raped the women.

C. Continued Conscription of forced labour

Like many parts of Mon State and Southern part of Burma, the SPDC authorities and members of Burmese Army have still conscripted the civilians to contribute their unpaid labour in various different projects and military deployment. Similarly in Ye Township of Mon State, different battalions and SPDC authorities also used the civilians since the beginning of 2004, and they have used them in their self-help activities such as in Road repairing site, and new road construction, clearing the bushes and grasses near their battalions and working in their battalion base.

In this Township, there have been many battalions have taken base and launched military activities, the civilians have been suffered more if compared with other areas, where there is less military operations conducted by BA.

Since SPDC and Burmese Army have instructed its local military battalions to create self-help activities, many BA battalions in Ye Township conscripted unpaid labor and forced to build the roads. During the No. 3 Tactical Command is taking base in the area, they planned to build a road from Hangan village to

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
	Total	7924	44534

Magyi village in southern part of Ye Township. This road has length of 20 miles and the BA battalions in the area planned to build this road part by part.

As an instance,

From March to June, the SPDC military units operating in the southern part of Mon State, Ye Township are using forced labor in order to construct a new road from Hangan to Ba-round villages, which has about 4.5 miles long (*it is one part of the whole road*). Fifty villagers have to rotate working on the road building daily.

The fifty villagers from four villages have to dig the land to build the road and they are constantly surrounded by the military troops. According to a villager from Singu village, the villagers have to dig the land 18 feet wide and 2 feet deep as help from the military troops is limited. Hangan, Singu, Ba-round and Totat Ywa-thit's villagers were being forced to construct the road. The road is only one fourth of the way complete.

"Men and women work in their own groups. If it is your turn, you have to go and work. Our house has had to go 4 times," said a Ba-round villager. Arrangement for building road is implemented by Colonel Myo Win of No. 3 Tactical Command. The road will run across the farms in Hangan to Ba-round villages.

"On both sides of the road become ruin. The ground became about 4 feet in depth. The size of the road is over ten feet. This is why it has destroyed a lot of farmland," he added. When asked him about land compensation, he says, "The military government doesn't pay any compensation to the villagers. We will not dare to ask for compensation. If we do, we will lose our lives."

Under the order of such road construction, the villagers also lost their lands, but they could not complain anyone for compensation. The BA who involved in the construction always did not make any pre-discussion to the villagers when they decided to build the roads.

As another part of this road, the BA commanders in the area have built a road from Khawza village to Magyi village, which has about 10 miles long. In this road construction, the villagers from 8 villages are constantly forced to contribute their labour without payment.

In the first week of September, 2004, the villagers of Singu and Toe-tat Ywa-thit were forced to work on this road which the BA planned to use trucks in order to travel. The villagers in the villages were divided into four groups and they have to work in the construction of the road on a rotation basis.

According to a villager who involved in the construction explained that:

Some of villagers who contributed their labour are only 10 - 12 years old as the adults have to work at farms and homes and could not free time to work. Captain Than Soe from LIB No. 343 and his soldiers closely watched on the workers. The Colonel Nyi Nyi Htwe from the LIB No. 343 opened fire if the workers were late to get to the work site and the late workers must to pay 7000 Kyat for one bullet after he shot.

"I heard three times that he opened fire from the work site on September 21," said the witness. The site is belonged to the Toe-tat Ywa-thit village, and the commander set work hours are from 7: 00 a.m. till 3:30 a.m. and from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The commander did not want the villagers come late to the worksite and they always involved threatening the villagers with firing to air. But the villagers have to compensate for the bullet costs.

Each family at least have to send one village, woman or child (under 18 years accordingly to Burmese custom) to the construction site, if the rotation arrived to them. When the men and women are so busy at their works, they have to send the children to the worksite.

Torture to forced labors during the road construction: On August 19, 2004, some villagers who were used to contribute unpaid labour were beaten by the soldier in the road construction site, when the labors took a rest for a while.

Everyday about 10 village from one quarter in Khaw-zar village (or Sub-Town) and 10 villagers from each village in that area were forced to work to repair the road construction.

Accordingly to the villagers who involved in the construction in August 2004, he said,

"At least three or four people were beaten in a day from a village," said Mr. Nai Kon Mon who witness the torture during he was forced to work in the construction.

"A week ago, when our group was forced to work three men: Nai Take, Nai Thein Zaw and Nai Pu father, *about 60 year old*, from Khawza village were beaten because of they took a rest for a while," Nai Kon Mon who regularly forced to work in the army battalion explained.

"When they beat other people, you could not look the soldiers. If you looked the torture, they will also come to beat you with truncheon," said Nai Kon Mon. "For a man even you was ill, you have to go and work in road construction. If they saw you at homes, you were beaten and had to pay fine," said the Nai Kon Mon.

Colonel Nyi Nyi was taking responsibility in taking forced labor from the villagers from Khaw-za and villages nearby.

In the No. 3 Tactical Command's plan, they would change the big Mon villages like Khaw-za and Lamine villages in the area, to be Sub-Town and they would put full administration as a small town. Those villages has about 500-1000 households and SPDC local authorities considered to create them as Sub-Town.

In creating of Sub-Town, in order to have good communication, the BA battalions in the area have to take responsibilities to build road, hospital and high school, police station and local military battalion, etc. In most of these constructions, the BA battalions constantly request the labour from the civilians.

The BA is not only conscripting forced labor, but they also collecting money from the villager: twice or more per month as development fund. The BA collected at least 30, 000 Kyat from a family who have money, and 3,000 Kyat from a poor family each time. The BA is also using villagers as porters to carry army supplies during army lunch military operation against the Mon splinter armed groups around the area. The use of the porter is also on a rotation basis.

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: hurfomcontact@yahoo.com
Webpages: http://www.rehmonnya.org/monforum_main.php

With regards,
Director
Human Rights Foundation of Monland

will be suffered from this forced relocation, As the village situates in the middle **of paddy-field**, the houses are built in crowd.

Accordingly to the villagers,

"The Ye Township authorities are not only forced the families to move to anyplace they like, they also confiscated lands nearby; to have sufficient space for the police station and hospital." Besides force relocation and land confiscation in this village, SPDC's Township authorities also instructed the local headmen to collect money from the villagers for almost expenses that need to spend in building the police station and hospital.

"Ye Township authorities ordered and set time to -move even in this raining season and the Village Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MCWA) is collecting money instead the village PDC 1000 Kyat per household for the fund of these police station and hospital," explained by a villager.

MCWA is a hand-picked Government Organized Non-Government Organization (CONGO) of the regime, SPDC. It was formed after the regime ratified (Convention on Elimination of all Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), in order to protect the rights of women and children. For the construction of even a hospital, the SPDC Township authorities provided only 2 Million Kyat (~ 2000 US Dollar), which will be not enough accordingly to the villagers. The headmen confirmed that they might need about 10 Million Kyat (~ 1 0000 US Dollar) for the completion of the project.

However, the Township authorities have not said anything for the money collection of another construction project - building of a police station. Even though these two projects are government project, however, the villagers have been seriously suffered not only losing their properties, but also to providing payment.

Since 1999, after the Burmese Army confiscated many thousands acre of land in the area, the regime SPDC has deployed more soldiers and police in the Township area in order to keep control the whole area. Ye Township was in conflict zone in the pre-ceasefire situation between New Mon State Party and the Burmese Army the armed faction of this regime. Most parts of this township are under the dual administration of the NMSP and the regime after 1995 ceasefire. Currently, the SPDC Township authorities have planned to move forward into many Mon villages in order to put them under their control.

These projects are also related to the Burmese military government's militarization and development policy. The government confiscated land in Mon areas long time ago since after NMSP ceasefire and they are



A villager from Southern Ye Township explains his experiences on human rights- violations committed by Burmese army

extending their troop deployment. Some lands are confiscated for the Burmese army businesses and self-reliance program, while some are used in their development projects.

In Mon areas, even the NMSP agreed for ceasefire to the regime since 1995, **but** the human rights violations against the Mon civilians outside of NMSP's ceasefire zones are not ceased. The military regime authorities and its armed force still commit forced relocation of Mon civilians and confiscated thousands acres of land from the Mon farmers without compensation.

III. Conclusion

Most parts of YeTownship, except the town, is 'black area' or 'free fire zone' recognized by SPDC and its Burmese Army troops. Hence, the majority ethnic Mon villagers

including ethnic Karen and Tavoyan civilians in the rural area of this Township are constantly accused as rebel-supporters by the regime soldiers and commanders. like many parts of conflict area of Burma border area with Thailand, the ethnic civilians are inhumanely treated by SPDC or Burmese soldiers.

A result of badly treatment or committing gross human rights violations, there is a population displacement **in** the Township. Many civilians are not dear to stay in their villages and most of them go to hiding places especially in jungle or forests to escape from the violations by Burmese soldiers.

Looking back to the 3-4 months, since June 2004, the SPDC and the local Burmese Army battalions tried to weaken the activities of the NMSP authorities in the area and applied more pressure **to** NMSP members to not come into dual administration areas in Township. The SPDC plans to have single control over the whole area, besides the recognized NMSP ceasefire zones that situates in eastern part of the area.

The activities also created much mis-understanding and tension between NMSP and the regime SPDC. It also makes the NMSP be disappointed to attend the National **Convention**, which will be held again **in** November of late of this year.

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