

# The Mon Forum

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## Some Acronyms in This Issue

- ICRC- International Committee for Red Cross,  
ILO- International Labour Organization,  
MOMC- Military Operational Management Command,  
MWVO- Myanmar War Veteran Organization,  
NMSP- New Mon State Party,  
NC- National Convention,  
NLD- National League for Democracy  
PSO- People's Strength Organization  
SLORC- State Law and Order Restoration Council,  
USDA- Union Solidarity and Development Association,  
VPDC- Village Peace and Development Council

## News

### The Mon Political Prisoner in Depression

December 18, 2005

Nai Yekha, a Mon political prisoner who was sentenced for life imprisonment in the notorious Insein Prison, has been depressed psychologically after one of his colleague died in prison from an unknown case last month.

"Now he does not eat very well in eating time. He could not sleep well. Myo Thwe (*another political prisoner*) has to care him all the time. He is looked like so depressed at the time," a Myo Thwe family's member who met Myo Thwe in Insein Prison the day before yesterday told a border base Mon news group, *Independent Mon News Agency (IMNA)*.

Myo Thwe was arrested along with Nai Yekha and both of them were sentenced for life imprisonment. Nai Yekha and Myo Thwe are the senior members of New Mon State Party (NMSP) and both of them conspired and trapped for arrest by Burmese military intelligent on July 17, 2003 with other seven people included *First Eleven Sport*



The Moulmein Prison, where a lot of political prisoners were detained by SPDC authorities in the Mon State

# SPDC's Refusal for National Reconciliation Process

**I**t was disappointing news that the UN Representative, Mr. Razali Ismail, resignation from his post and exposed that he waited for 22 months to get SPDC's permission for his envoy to Burma. At the end, he said he is unable to bring National Reconciliation in Burma after he was not permitted to enter into Burma.

Actually it also means that the ruling regime, SPDC, has not welcomed for National Conciliation processes proposed by in order to participate in the meaningful political dialogues with pro-democracy opposition, National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and ethnic political parties those won 1990 elections and those agreed for ceasefire.

On the contrary, the SPDC also extent the house arrest terms of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and put an ethnic Shan prominent leader, Khun Htun Oo, in long-term imprisonment. These are the negative signs toward National Reconciliation.

It is needed for the international community to seriously consider how to solve problems in Burma as the regime is keeping their oppression against their oppositions and civilians in general.



A Mon political prisoner,  
NaiYekha

*Journal Editor* Zaw Thet Htwe with an accusation of plotting to assassinate the SPDC's military leaders.

According to Myo Thwe telling to his family, Nai Yekha talked very much and his health condition was well last month before his friend died. He could eat and sleep

well last month. After he felt depression, he has not been allowed for treatment in outside hospital.

On September 28, his colleague, Nai Ong Lorn died from unknown case and suffering. Nai Yekha has worried about the treatment by the prison doctor provided by the SPDC authorities especially with the medicines and injections offered by him. He is suffering from a stomach disease, drop in blood pressure and diabetes.

Prison authorities also did not allow his family to provide him with medicines and other medical supplies that they bought from the shops.

Now, only one of his colleagues Nai Myo Thwe is together with him. Editor Zaw Thet Thwe, Nai Min Kyi (Mon National Democratic Front leader), Shwe Mam, Than Tun were released recently by pressure of ILO and others international community.

Nai Yet Kha's also informed about his depressed health condition to NMSP leaders as he was a NMSP member while he was arrested. NMSP leaders also tried and engaged with the SPDC authorities for his release, but the SPDC reduced the punishment against him from death penalty to life imprisonment.



## Report

# Militarization and Continuous Suffering of Civilians in Mon Areas

### Enforcement of Militarization Policy

In 1988, the Burmese Army has only about 180, 000 troops, and since then it has planned to increase the troop number to 500, 000 troops to become the largest army in Southeast Asia even though Burma has not had any external threat. The purpose of the military regime, SPDC, for the increasing troop number of the Burmese Army is especially to protect their power and oppress the different remaining ethnic armed forces along border with Burma's neighbouring countries especially Thailand<sup>1</sup>.

Since 1988, the Burmese Army has deployed more and more troops in the ethnic areas to control more areas, which were recently controlled by ethnic armed groups. On the other hand, the increased number of the Burmese troops also protect the exploitation of national resources in ethnic areas and multinational investments.

In 1990 to 1992, the Burmese Army deployed over 20 battalions in Tenasserim Division under the command of Coastal Region Command. The deployment was especially to overrun the border bases of rebel force and launch the military offensives against the rebel force, and to protect the multinational investments, especially, Thailand's fishing trawlers and UNOCAL/TOTAL petroleum companies 'Yadana' gas pipeline<sup>2</sup>.

Whenever, the battalions of Burmese Army arrived into any area, they also forced the local people to involve in paramilitary force or militia force to help the local battalions. They forced the civilians to be in the implementation of 'militarization policy'<sup>5</sup> of the Burmese Army.

In the situation when the Burmese Army's massively deployed troops in the rural areas, the local civilians has also faced more serious human rights violations. Later, in 2000, the Burmese Army formed more and more militia force in various areas of Yebyu Township by forcible recruitment of the local villagers and formed the village militia force. These militia groups were under the command of the battalions concerned and forced them to serve duties as the soldiers in the army. The members in the militia forces are directed by the commanders of the Burmese Army to launch military patrol in their own areas to prevent any approach made by the rebel soldiers. The villagers from the villages concerned also had to pay for the salaries to those militiamen and it was a heavy duties for the villagers. Villagers had to provide them with cash and paddy.

Some villagers also escaped from the villages or communities to avoid being served in militia force. In 2001, after the members of the militia force resigned, then the Burmese Army in the area of Tenasserim Division had to form a new structure, by forcing all men in the village to serve as members of militia force on a rotation basis. The local military battalions registered all men between 18 to 40 years in the villages and ordered them to serve as militiamen without failure.

Because of this new order, the villagers have less and less time to do work or cultivate in their paddy farms or fruit plantations or rubber plantations. Additionally the Burmese Army has also restricted the movement of the local villagers or farmers to cut their supporters to rebel armies. The Burmese Army believed that the local civilians are supporting the rebel armed force and therefore, they need to cut all supports from the civilians to the rebel armies. Movement restriction against the livelihood has created great suffering of 'food-shortage problems' in the rural areas of southern part of Burma.

In the context of SPDC's militarization policy, the regime's armed faction, Burmese Army tried to put the similar duties, which they have, to the civilians to defense the State or take responsibility in the area. They believed the civilians must know how to fight against the internal enemies, especially the rebel armed forces; and foreign invaders. Therefore, the Burmese Army has forced the villagers to attend the basic military training schools that lasted for two weeks to one-month. After training school, they

<sup>1</sup> Along Thailand-Burma border, there are Shan, Karenni, Karen, Mon and Tavoyan people are living and the concerned armed groups from these ethnic nationalities have revolved against the central for their greater right.

<sup>2</sup> Yatana gas pipeline was really built in 1988, but the Burmese Army wiped out the activities of rebels in the area since 1992.

equipped them with small guns and forced them to patrol in their own areas, outside of their villages and sometimes even to the suspected rebel bases in jungles.

However, there were too many soldier escapees in the Burmese Army and the soldier number did not reach to the set number that required by SPDC. Therefore, SPDC also collected the names of the men between 18 and 40 years old and forced the villagers from some villages to attend the military training schools.

In some cases, the military commanders came into villages and asked some number of young villagers to be in the army. Sometime, the village headmen also provided the civilians from other areas, who came and worked in their areas to perform their duties of serving in the army. Sometimes, the young villagers, who were selected by the Burmese Army to involve in the Army also fled from their villages to avoid being from a soldier<sup>3</sup>.

### **Militarization after May 30 Killing Incident**

May 30 massacre of NLD members in Depayin, upper part of Burma showed the real brutal picture of SPDC and the Burmese Army, which means they did not want any peace and national reconciliation in the country and wants to grip in power as long as possible. The recent political 'talks' was just for a show to the international community to believe to the regime that they were proceeding to 'national reconciliation' and 'restoration of democracy'.

After the regime found that there was popular of 'Daw Aung San Suu Kyi' and the people support to NLD, they had had concerns there must be no support after they are not in the power seats like the current situation. With this concern, the regime and the Burmese Army did not want to abandon their political power and transfer to the 1990 election winner NLD.

After May 30 killing or massacre in Depayin, the regime has been afraid of the possible demonstration in countrywide and if there is the nationwide pro-demonstration, the Burmese Army also planned to response in violent way like against the pro-demonstrators in 1988 pro-democracy uprising.

First, the SPDC and the Burmese Army tried to dividing up the people, by organizing the government servants to be their supporters. They have instructed the government servants that they are not relating to any political parties and must be faithful to the government or regime. The local military concerned also instructed the government servants that they must not support the political party especially NLD and other ethnic political parties.

Additionally, SPDC and Burmese Army also tried to organize other Government sponsored NGOs such as Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), Myanmar Red Cross Society, Myanmar Women Affairs Committee to be their supporters. Among many other groups, USDA is their main supporting organization, which is formed with the former BSPP members and the generations of these BSPP leaders.

The regime and Burmese Army also organized local village headmen, monks and members of State fire brigades, (Burmese Army) veteran groups to be their supporters. Local authorities or the commanders of Burmese Army regularly met with the people from these groups and explained to them that the NLD and its leaders Daw Aung San Suu Kyi tried to create violence and destroy the 'rule of law' in the country. This is the regime's objective of SPDC to tar the important role of the main opposition party, NLD.

With a concern that there will be anti-government demonstration, first SPDC tried to form anti-strike groups. In order to form anti-strike or anti-demonstration, the authorities or the commanders of Burmese Army forced thousands of USDA members, local village leaders to attend 2 weeks basis military training schools.

The military training began on June 2, only two days after the massacre in upper Burma. From June to August 2003, the Burmese Army has trained hundreds of local Township and village leaders, USDA members and members of Town and village militia force. In the training, they also forced the trainees how to equip the small guns and how to confront with the demonstrators.

Accordingly to the instruction, the members of anti-strike members need to confront with demonstrators and if necessary, they need to shoot them. Soon after training, the authorities and local Burmese Army military battalions equipped guns to the trainees and formed them as groups.

As SPDC's plan, if there is a demonstration, those members of Anti-strike groups will prevent the demonstrations and confront against the demonstrators. If necessary, they need to shoot down the

<sup>3</sup> Many young Mon people fled to Thailand in order to escape being a militiaman and seek jobs in Thailand.

demonstrators with guns equipped by the army. In tactics, the Burmese Army or Burmese soldiers want to avoid confronting against the civilians. However, the commanders of Burmese Army in the areas said that they would involve in against the demonstrators when the Anti-strike groups are unable to control the situation.

In 1988's popular demonstration in Burma, the Burmese Army had 'bad name' for killing thousands of demonstrators in the main cities' streets. Now, SPDC and the Burmese Army plan to avoid such situation and but manage Anti-strike groups to confront these demonstrators violently.

In July, the SPDC authorities and Burmese Army propagandized that American and other foreign armed forces could probably invade Burma via Mon State, Karen State and Tenasserim Division. The authorities and commanders of Burmese Army propagandized about foreign invasion, as they pointed out about Iraq war. Then, they claimed that if there is foreign invasion to Burma, every citizen has responsibility to defense their sovereignty as in form of 'people force'. SPDC claims that to show patriotism and to know the way how to defense the country, every citizen in nationwide must know the basic arm equipment and how to use other demolish materials.

As a result, the SPDC authorities and Burmese Army in many areas have also forced the local men between age 18 to 40 years to attend the basic military training schools. In Mon State, the authorities and the Burmese Army conscripted about 1000 villagers from each village tract to attend the basic military schools.

On the other hand, by recruiting thousands of civilians to attend the military schools and providing them propagandized words, it is also the way that the regime is trying to weaken the democratic oppositions. When there are more people in the grounds of the military training schools, the opposition's political activities could not organize much people to involve in the political activities against the SPDC regime and Burmese Army.

After the completion of military training to Town and village leaders, USDA members, militiamen, firemen from fire brigades and the men (between 18 to 40 years old) in the communities in June and July, then the authorities forced all government servants including medical workers, teachers, office staff to attend the basic military training schools in August. They divided up the government servants in groups and forced them to attend the military training school on a rotation basis.

Trained trainees are then formed in small groups and the Burmese Army in the area nearby gave them duties to do patrolling and logistics for the army. On the rotation basis, these trained civilians have to do help the Burmese Army as soldiers and therefore, they are totally under the control or command of the army.

In conclusion, the Burmese Army tried to recruit all citizens to involve in army although it has about 400,000 troops in nationwide. This is a 'militarization' plan of the Burmese Army and they plan to put every citizen under their command.

The evidence of SPDC's military training schools, recruitment and the suffering of the civilians, government servants and people in the country as below:

## **The suffering of the civilians**

### **A. Compulsory military training and forced labour**

Forcible recruitment of the civilians to work as militias for their village is like 'slavery' to militarization formulated by the regime SPDC and Burmese Army. This is one type of forced labour, by using labor of the civilians without their desires to serve in any village militia's force.

Many villagers dissatisfied to the authorities and Burmese Army for the constant recruitment for the militias force. However, no one speak out against the regime's policy because they can be arrested and detained. Because of the harsh oppression, no one can refuse to involve as militias. For those who did not want to join in this militia training have to escape from their villages.

Normally, the recruitment of militias is instructed by orders of the commander of local battalions. But in this time during late 2005, the recruitment of village militia force was chosen by lottery system in each villages in southern Ye township areas.

As an instance,

On 10<sup>th</sup> November 2005, villagers have been ordered to serve as militias for their village militia's force by a local Tactical Commander in Khaw-za Sub-town in southern Ye Township area.

The Tactical Commander under the Military Operation Management Command No.19 ordered men from 15 villages in Khar-za Sub-town and forced the villagers to do so by a system of lottery

'If you get a lottery number you have to serve as a member of militia force for village. If you don't want to work, you have to pay up 200,000 Kyat to commander, Col. Myit Aung, immediately' a villager said.

According to villagers, at least 10 men from each village were forced to work as militias. As they hated to work as a miliamen many young men from the area escaped from their village and many of them migrated to Thailand. Some have fled to Ye town.

According to a villager, many lid not want to serve as militiamen. If they are working as militias they can be killed by both Burmese troops and Mon rebels. Village headmen and militia groups in the area were arrested regularly by the military government if there was fighting in the village.

Another tactical commander, Col. Than Toe also ordered villagers in the area to fence their village as protection against Mon rebels. In Khaw-za Sub-town area, the government launched military operations against Mon rebels that controlled the area in 2003-2004. Currently troops can control nearly the whole area. Then in mid-2004, they transformed the biggest village in the area, Khaw-za as Sub-Town.

Like the previous years, SPDC and the Burmese Army has still propagandized among the civilians in the rural areas that there could be foreign invasions to Burma, after the killing of pro-democracy activists in Depayin in upper Burma, and so that all citizens in Burma must know the tactics of using guns and defending the national sovereignty. Under this slogan, the Burmese Army has adopted a policy of 'militarization' to all civilians especially to non-Burman ethnic civilians, who stay close to Thailand-Burma border.

In the implementation of 'militarization' policy, the Burmese Army especially operates the military training schools in almost town wards and village tracts. Our human rights workers collected information on SPDC's military training school in some Townships in the whole Mon State, they found the civilians are forced (not voluntarily) to attend the follow-up training schools.

**An instance is:**

On December 15, 2005, the local Burmese Army officers in some Townships in Mon State ordered to village headmen in the area to send Village Peace and Development Council (VPDC) members to have follow-up military training in their battalion recently.

The order reached to village headmen on December 11 and they had to send 4 or 2 members each village depending on the village sizes to local battalion nearby to attend military training according to a village headman in Mon State.

The military training for VPDC members was started on December 12. According to the directives, four VPDC members were told to join the 2 weeks long training. The local military officers ordered 10 villages to join the training in the battalion. The villages have more than 50 VPDC members who had to join the training.

"We have to look after our village and town by ourselves" quoted a Burmese military officer from Battalion No.62 told the reason of training to village headmen in the meeting in Mudon Township.

According to village headmen in Mudon Township and Thanpyuzayat Township, Burmese military will inspect the arms and ammunitions that they have given to VPDC in the area.

Most of VPDC members are armed with old rifle machine guns and some village were armed with M16 alike machine guns to protect their villages.

It was the second time that Burmese Army gave training to VPDC members after they gave 7 days administration and security training in a school in the capital of Mon State.

According to the township authorities, the military government plans to fight back any invaded troops to Burma's territory. The trainers in the schools also explained to the VPDC trainees that some countries planned to interfere internal affairs of Burma.

During the training the local military authorities said that Burma was not suited as a federated union because many ethnic nationalities are living in Burma and the country can be divided into many pieces. The authorities also directed headmen to check and ensure that their villages did not allow guests for more than three days and to watch closely whether monks were joining in any political movement.

The civilians are not only forced to be trainees in the training school, many of them are also forced to work in the army bases. Therefore, as the civilians are too busy to serve for the businesses of Burmese Army.

Although International Labour Organization (ILO) and SPDC's the Ministry of Home Affairs instructed to the Burmese Army and local authorities to not involve in using forced labour, but the commanders of Burmese Army never listened the orders and they have used villagers or civilians for various businesses in their bases.

**The instance of forced labor is:**

On November 9, 2005, the villagers in Thanpyuzayat Township were forced to work by the troops at their base.

Wae-Ka-li villagers and Wae-Kha-Dike villagers said they were forced to fell trees and bamboo groves by the order of Burmese Army commanders for construction of military base in their village. None of the villagers were paid for their works.

"They set up a base in our village two days ago and then started ordering us around. The troops also forced some village cars to carry troops, supplies and used the vehicles for their officers," a villager in Wae-Ka-li said.

According to sources close to the Burmese army, the Burmese Army's Southeast Region Command has launched military operations against ethnic armed groups in southern Burma, Karen State and Mon State .



Wae-Ka-Li military base near Thanbyuzayat town, Mon State

Military operations were launched by Military Operation Management Command No. 12 from Karen State under the command of Col. Myo Win, who committed a bad human rights violation when he started military operations in Ye and Yebyu township in 2003 and 2004.

When he launched military operations in Ye and Yebyu, the villagers claimed that his soldiers raped many Mon women in the area and at least ten villagers were killed. He forced local women at 'beauty show' in Khaw-za Sub-Town for his relaxation. He threatened and demanded millions of Kyat from villagers for his pocket money.

Recently the villagers in Thanpyuzayat Township of and Kya-in-seikyi Township claimed they had been forced to work at the base while the operations by the troops were on.

In late 2005, Col. Myo Win handled the military operations in Thanpyuzayat Township and Kyait-ma-yaw Township in Mon State and Kya-in-seik-kyi, Three Pagoda Pass and Kaw-ka-reik Township in Karen State.

Another instance of unpaid labor used by local battalion in Ye township is:

On July 10, 2005, hundred of households from three villages in the north-western part of Ye township have been forced to carry and locate army bricks for a week.

By the order of Light Infantry Battalion No. 586, about 100 families from, Sein-kyi village, about 200 families from Kyone-por village and about 150 families from Thuu-myaung village have been forced to carry bricks for a furlong from brick making mills to a place where they gathered bricks for sale.

Cap. Than Htay led in the conscription of labor from the villagers by ordering via village headmen verbally and each family was instructed to have a piece of works to carry 240 bricks. Villages Peace and Development Council (VPDC) had managed



villager laborers to carry, according to villagers who suffer from this forced labor.

It made them so in difficult situation to carry the bricks from the mills to the designated places as it is in the rainy season and the roads are so slippery. Some villagers are carried by boats along the river, according to U Ye Aung, who carried army bricks for his family

A group of unpaid laborers used by the troops of the Burmese Army in Ye township of Mon

If a family was absent in the labor contribution, that family will be punished accordingly to the order according villagers. The battalion commanders will inquire later which are absent for the labor contribution.

"That's why almost the villagers went and served for carrying of the bricks," Mr. Nai Ye Aung added. The villagers are also afraid of unknown punishment by the army if they failed to perform duties.

There are about 400, 000 million bricks which is heavy about 1.5 kilogram in weight for each brick made by drought earth, which the villagers are ordered to carry and the army is selling these for their battalion's income, with the price of 25 Kyat per brick, according to the villagers.

By the above-mentioned evidences, the local Burmese Army's troops have ignored the Order 1/99 and Supplementary Order 1/99, which were issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs after the consultation with ILO<sup>4</sup>.

ILO also received a lot of information on the continuous use of forced labour by the troops of Burmese Army and has put the cases to the SPDC leaders. But at the end, ILO received threats from the SPDC-supporters in order to kick out ILO from Burma<sup>5</sup>.

## **Land and properties confiscation by effect of Militarization**

### **Case I: SPDC'S land confiscation for Army Village**

September 12, 2005: Burma Army confiscated thousands of plantations and ordered the local people to build a new village for the families of Burmese Army, who came and settled in the area.

The local sources reported that they ordered to cut down trees and clear the area to build the houses in order to create Army Village, near Khaw-Za Sub-town, southern Mon State.

<sup>4</sup> ILO have discussed with the SPDC for many years for elimination of forced labour practices in Burma and the SPDC agreed to issue two orders, but the regime has not had any intention to enforce them.

<sup>5</sup> See The Mon Forum 10/2005: Report: Role of ILO in Elimination of Forced Labour in Burma.

The plantations around the area were seized for the military families, forcing the Mon owners out of their homes and off their land, thereby displacing them.

Over 30 tons of timber in southern Ye was also collected from local villages to build SPDC schools, a Mon political activist from the area said.

"Over ten villages, namely Bop-htaw, Kyone-kanya, Weng-ta-moh, Mi-htaw-hlar-lay, Mi-htaw-hlar-gyi, Magyi, Paukpingwin, Kabya and Khaw-Za, provided timber to build government controlled schools in Khaw Za (Sub town)," said a youth from the area under condition of anonymity.

"Villagers were ordered to work as unpaid laborers on a daily basis to build the schools for the elementary, secondary and high schools. Each village was ordered by the Burma Army to send four laborers on daily basis. All villages including Khaw-za Sub-town were forced to pay 1000 Kyat per month for the project run by the army, there are about 20 villages," he further explained. Last year, over three hundred acres of plantations in the eastern part of the sub-town, where the new military village is located, were seized.

"The whole part of the eastern Sub-town is owned by the SPDC. The local Mon people owned the plantations for generations but they (Burmese government) now owns the land," he quoted the soldiers as saying to the villagers. "No one can go to the new military village, once they are built," he added.

Forced off from their land, the Mon farmers and their families have split up and migrated to Thailand and Mon IDP camps controlled by NMSP along the Thai-Burma border.

## Case II: Farmers lose land to Military Camps

On October 8, 2005, A large portion of eastern Ye township has been taken for the construction of Burmese military camps and local villagers have been forced to work on a military camp four times a month. If they fail to show up, they must pay 1000 Kyat or face detention according to local witnesses.

Mr. Sharn, aged 48 years old said, "village headman and local battalions together forced our villagers to do (unpaid labor) work." The village is comprised of over 500 households. Chairman Nai Maung Lu and Battalion No. 583 and 591 instituted the process.

"They also extorted 1000 Kyat from each household on monthly basis," the newly arrived refugee added. "They seized our possessions, if we couldn't pay the amount." He added, saying that his plantation and farm were confiscated by SPDC troops without compensation last year and he and his family became internally displaced.

"When they took our farm, we lost everything, and forced labor, and extorting forced us to leave (our home) to the Mon refugee camp on the border," he said. His plantation was put on confiscation notice by Burmese troops; it identifies the land as belonging to the troops.

There were about 200 acres of traditional plantations owned by villagers, for over three decades. The area at that time was under the control of NMSP, a Mon revolutionary armed group. Plantations were not included in the registration process due to being within the black zone area, in which SPDC township authorities had no access before the cease-fire agreement. But after the ceasefire deal between NMSP and SPDC in June 29, 1995, the SPDC troops began to enter into the area to build military battalions. Over 9 thousand acres of land in Ye township has been taken for the construction of Burmese military camps, seen as a direct result of the ceasefire agreement by the Mon community

"Everywhere you go in Ye township, from east to west and from south to north, you will see notices of the land belonging to the troops," Nai Ba Mon from Ye town said.

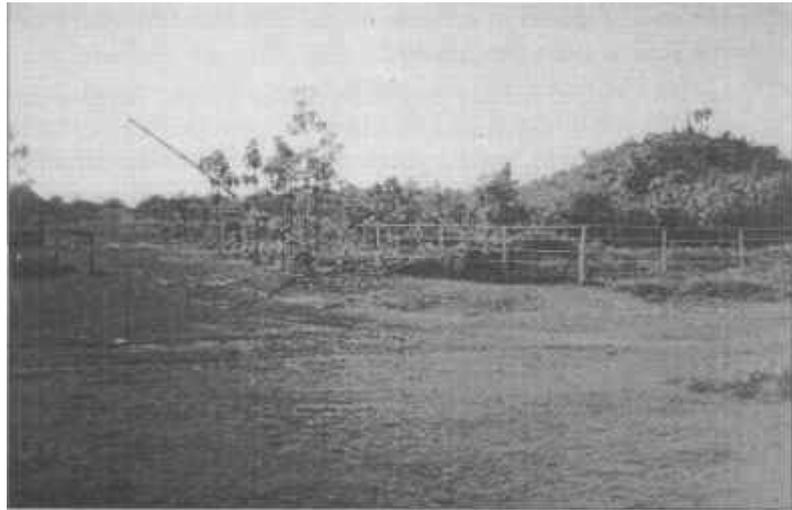


A rubber plantation which was seized by the police force in Lamine sub-township of Mon State

### **Case III: Army auctioned seized plantations**

On October, 2005, plantations seized from local villagers in 2001 are now being auctioned by the Burmese Army. The Burmese Army's Infantry Battalion No.586 held a meeting with 36 plantation owners on October 20 and permitted them to produce rubber in their seized land in lieu of payment to the army.

These plantation owners had signed a one-year contract with the battalion officer to produce rubber in plantations situated about seven miles away in northern Ye town, Mon State.



**A new battalion of the SPDC which built on the seized land in We-Yet village, Thanbyuzayat township of Mon State**

"Depending on the size of your plantation you have to pay to this battalion. Some owners paid more than 1 million Kyat for a year and some have to pay 400,000 Kyat," said a plantation owner who participated in the auction.

According to the owners, they had signed a contract with the army and paid believing that one day the army will give back their land.

Seven plantation owners did not buy from the auction. "It was our plantation. If I have to pay to get permission to produce rubber, I will not. If I have to provide about half the amount of production to the army, I can do that," said Nai Soe from, Krone-ka-bor village, who did not buy the permit.

After the army seized the plantations, it allowed the owner to produce rubber with small payments. But after three years, the army banned even this. There were 3,000 acres of plantations seized by the military government in 2004 and there were more than 7,000 acres of land seized in 1998-2002.

### **Movement Restriction**

#### **Villagers' farm work restricted in Ye Township**

During September to October 2005, Villagers from Khaw-zar Sub-town, in southern Ye Township, Mon State are facing many difficulties due to restrictions enforced by local Burmese Army commanders, according to villagers who have fled the area.

Currently the villagers are barred from working on their farms and plantations, and fruit from the plantations has been taken by soldiers.

"We have to obtain permits, signed by the village headman and a military officer, to work on the farms. Even then the villagers can only work on their farms when the army allows them," one villager, Nai Mehn, said. Villagers can hold the permits for one month, after that they have to pay 200 Kyat for renewal.

"You have to carry your document with you all the time," one villager explained. "If you do not bring it the troops will beat you, they will loot from you and your plantations. One villager was beaten to death as he did not bring his document."

Because army commanders are regularly instructing the villagers to work for them, the villagers have very little time to work on their farms.

Villagers are forced to work at least 20 days per month, on daily patrol, road repairs and porter service for the Burmese Army. Therefore, they can only work on their farms for around five days per month, said civilians from Khaw-za Sub-town.

Burmese Army troops based in the villages use two villagers as porters to carry ammunitions and food supplies every day, and sometimes force the villagers to work at the army base. The villagers have to work on a rotation basis, arranged by the headman. 12 villagers, including women, are forced to patrol around

**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 village every day and night. A family who fails to perform this duty has to pay 3000 Kyat, explained Nai Mehn.

"Some women have been raped at night by Burmese soldiers. That is the Burmese soldiers' plan. They can threaten the women as they want if the men are out on patrol or porter service," said a friend of Nai Mehn's friend.

Due to various difficulties, around 500 people from southern Ye Township flee to Thailand each month seeking work, reported a Mon refugee camp leader in the border areas.

### **SPDC's restriction against the Mon education rights: A Mon Middle Level School under Pressure to Relocate**

On October 21, 2005, A Mon National Middle school, which is operated by Mon community in Lamine Sub-town in Ye township of Mon state was under pressure to relocate after the school land space was seized by SPDC authorities.

The school land was seized since last as the local authorities' plan to build government's department buildings while the Mon State PDC decided to promote Lamine (Mon) village as Sub-Town.

"When will you move? When will you move? They (the authorities) regularly came and asked us. We will not move without they pay us sufficient money for the cost of our school building," a Mon teacher exposed to residents.

The school was run for 9 years with the support of Lamine Mon community and about 300 students attended the school and about 13 teachers are providing teaching.

Last month, the local authorities ordered to relocate the school from the lands they confiscated. But the local Mon community leaders demanded 15 million Kyat for the cost of school building.

Local Burmese authorities agreed to give 10 million Kyat for the cost of building and forced the school leader to sign that they give 12 millions Kyat instead, according to school leader.

However, the SPDC authorities still did not give the money and have threatened the teachers to relocate the school.

"How we can move? The school is opening. The new school is not built yet. If we relocate, the students face problem for their education in this year," the teacher explained.

According to a school administrator, the Mon national school was build with two concrete floors by the assistance of the local residents and Mon migrant workers in Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand in order to support for Mon education in their community. The school is in the heart of the town, in the land of Lamine Pagoda , and lands are traditionally belonged to the community.



**The Monastery is the only place for Literacy students to study Mon Language in Thaung Pyin village, Lamine sub-township of Mon State**

For the school, ICRC (International Committee for Red Cross) has also supported toilets and a water reservoir. Before the school land was confiscated, the local community also tried to extend a school building.

In Lamine Sub-Town area, there were about 30 Mon National School were operating before May 2004, and these Mon schools were forced to closed down by SPDC authorities.

### **Conclusion**

The militarization policy is directly against the democratization in Burma. Although the regime is saying they are moving toward for the democratization, but in reality, they have tried to control all civilians under their commands. Almost civilians in Burma lose individual rights and they could not make their own decisions. All the days they are under the order of the Burmese Army and regime authorities.

On the other hand, the regime and Burmese Army now is trying to create more 'confrontation' against the democratic opposition groups rather than 'negotiation'. They prepare to be ready for more attacks if there is a demonstration or political activities in the country. They have not cared much for the international condemnation for the massacre in Upper Burma which is well-known 'Depayin Massacre'. After this bloody crash down against the pro-democracy force, the regime has not cared to commit another crack down violently, if the pro-democracy force tries to hold the demonstration and conduct trips for the political organizing activities.

