

The Mon Forum

Issue No. 11/2007

November 30, 2007

The Publication of Human Rights Foundation of Monland (BURMA)

Contents

News:

- (1) Corrupt police arrest youths, seize motorcycles in Mudon Township
- (2) Village headmen shell out over one million Kyat to Township authorities

Commentary:

People wants peaceful political dialogue

Report:

- (1) Land Confiscation and Continuous Consequences to Civilians in Northern Ye Area

Some Acronyms in This Issue

MOC-	Military Operation Command,
NMSP-	New Mon State Party,
IB-	Infantry Battalion,
LIB-	Light Infantry Battalion,
GAD-	General Administrative Department,
VPDC-	Village Peace and Development Council,
USDA-	Union Solidarity and Development Association,

News

Corrupt police arrest youths, seize motorcycles in Mudon Township

Mudon Township, 27 November, 2007

Young people returning from a pagoda festival in Nyaung-gone village, Mudon Township were arrested by Kamarwet policemen, even though they did not commit any crime. They were detained to extort money, which the policemen claimed they had to pay to their higher authorities.

Five young people from Hnee-pa-daw village, between the ages of 14 and 18 years, were detained by policemen in Kamarwet village. Their unlicensed motorcycles were seized.

Admitting that the youth had not broken the law or created any trouble, the policemen said that they were arrested for money to be given to higher authorities, and to fulfill their quota. They had no cases to report and no money to give to senior authorities.

The policemen added that the youth could appeal – the policemen don't care if they lose their jobs because they needed the money badly.

The youths were detained in Kamarwet police station for a night on November, 17 and their parents had to pay 20,000 kyat per person and



These motorbikes owners have been arrested and made to pay money to avoid detention

People Wants Peaceful Political Dialogue

The people in Burma have been suffered from protracted civil war and political oppressions in Burma for many decades and all of them including ethnic minority people hunger for peace. Therefore, all of them silently welcome the UN Envoy to Burma which tried to negotiate with ruling Generals to initiate political dialogue with pro-democracy leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and her party, National League for Democracy (NLD).

Although Mr. Gambari 's UN Envoy entered into Burma two times, there is no real political dialogue happened yet. At the same time, SPDC's Burmese Army brought thousands of troops from Mon State and Tenasserim Division especially from Military Operational Command No. 19 and No. 8 into Karen State to launch new offensives against KNU (*Karen National Union*) and KNLA (*Karen National Liberation Army*) which has fought against the central government for decades.

It is enough for the people in Burma. It is time to have peaceful dialogue and settle political problems in peaceful means. Ruling regime has main responsibility to initiate it and other parties will agree to involve in this process.

100,000 kyat per unlicensed motorbike to have their children released.

Travelling on motorbikes is common during the traditional festivals celebrated after Buddhist Lent.

Festivals are held in pagodas in different villages and young people often travel from village to village at night. Usually there is no seizure of unlicensed motorcycles but travellers have to pay a 'wheel tax' if their two wheeler is unlicensed.

This is the second time Hnee-pa-daw villagers have been arrested and made to pay money to avoid detention. A similar situation took place in Kwan-htar village where travelers were arrested at night and made to pay 100,000 kyat. (Source: IMNA)

■ ■ ■

Village headmen shell out over one million Kyat to Township authorities

Mudon Township, 22 November, 2007

Village Peace and Development Council headmen (VPDC) in Mon State have to shell out not less than one million Kyat to the Township Peace and Development Council TPDC and the District police officer annually.

One VPDC headman in Mudon Township said that every month, they have to pay about Kyat 50,000 to 70,000 to the TPDC for many reasons such as to support women's affair activities or Union Solidarity and Development Association activities among other reasons.

Moreover, the District Police officer visits the villages every three month to check on the situation. The village headman puts the money in an envelope as a gift to the police officer and they have to fill up his vehicle's tank with petrol for the trip.

A village headman said, "I noted, it is about 1- 1.5 million Kyat a year that we have to pay to the authorities."

He added that they are not allowed to ask for that money from the villagers but find the money by themselves.

It is not only VPDC headmen in Mudon Township who face this situation but the village headmen in Thanphyuzayart Township are going through the same experience.

The VPDC headmen gets the money by solving the villagers local problems, writing recommendation letters for the villagers and collecting taxes from the villagers who sell and buy produce from the farm and rubber plantations. (Source: IMNA)

■ ■ ■

Report

Land Confiscation and Continuous Consequences to Civilians in Northern Ye Area

I. Background of Land Confiscation

Since 2000, after the current ruling military regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) and its armed force, Burmese Army or *tatmadaw* (literally) expanded its military deployment in southern part of Mon State, they have continuously confiscated land and properties from Mon people without any compensation.

During 1999 to 2002, the SPDC and Burmese Army deployed about 10 Light Infantry Battalions in Ye Township alone, both in southern and northern area of Ye and another 10 Artillery Battalions in Thanbyuzayat and Ye Township areas (*look in the map on page no.10*). 10 battalions deployed in Ye Township are put under the command of Military Operation Command (MOC) No. 19 and the battalions are: Light Infantry Battalion No. 583, No. 584, No. 585, No. 586, No. 587, No. 588, No. 589, No. 590, No. 591 and the MOC. 19 battalion itself. Artillery Regiments are AR. No. 311 to AR. No. 318.

In documentation of HURFOM (*Human Rights Foundation of Monland*), it documented about 8000 acres of lands were confiscated by various battalions during 1999-2002. Thousands areas of farmlands and plantations with paddy, rubber, betel-nut and orchards were confiscated and none of the landowners received full compensations for the value of their lands. The farmers developed their lands and created livelihood since their ancestor's time over 50 years ago.

Full lists and details of cases of these land and properties confiscation are described in the HURFOM 2003 report: NO LAND TO FARM – a comprehensive report on Land, Real Estates, and Properties Confiscation in Mon Area (Burma) and its follow-up reports in “The Mon Forum” from 2004 to 2006.

After extensive land confiscation, the ceasefire political party – New Mon State Party (NMSP) and the land owners have appealed to local authorities, Burmese Army commanders and Southeast Region Command in Moulmein, the capital of Mon State, to retain some parts of their lands or to get compensation. But their appeals are almost and quickly rejected, and the military authorities claimed that the lands have no government warranty and so they believed that the lands are forestry land. By this reason, the ruling regime or local battalions have said that they have the rights to confiscate any of lands. During land confiscation, the authorities also confiscated properties on the lands and never responded that to give compensation for the values of those properties.

Although the farmers were eager to appeal their cases to the high-ranking authorities, the majority have very limited access. These poor farmers could found no places to seek legal helps. A few of farmers who were able to bring their cases to the attention of Southeast Command Headquarters, were allowed to harvest their crops for 2 to 3 years under restricted conditions and were paid small amount of compensations.

Massive land confiscation by the Burmese Army forced thousands of civilians to landless, jobless, and homeless. Many young men and women were painfully left their homes and illegally entered Thailand for employment opportunity, while many other had fled to Thailand-Burma border areas to escape from brutal oppressions. Those who are not able to leave their homes have remained in towns and villages in poverty, starvation, helplessness and fear. Land confiscation has exerted severe negative impacts on not only local economy but also social and moral of the local people.

The Burmese Army not only confiscated farmlands, orchards and plantations, but the soldiers have also forced the farmers and landowners to work in the confiscated lands. In some areas, farmers and villagers were forced to work in building military barracks on the confiscated lands. In those cases, the landowners

were forced to provide building materials such as lumbars, bamboos and thatches needs for construction. In addition, the military collected money from local civilians to help cover the expenses of building new barracks and battalions.

These described consequences have continued and gross human rights violations such as movement restriction, forced labour and porter and taxation have been committed by soldiers of Burmese Army since the local civilians' lands are confiscated.

II. Consequences in 2007

During 2007, in the area of both northern and southern Ye Township, the local authorities and troops of Burmese Army have committed the following human rights violations:

Movement:

This violation has been widely committed in southern part of Ye Township. A group of a Mon splinter group has been active in this area. They sometimes involved in ambush attacks against the Burmese Army's troops. Then the local military battalions and Burmese Army's military operations ordered the local farmers to not get out from their villages to work at their farms when the fighting happened in area. In many cases, the farmers are allowed to work at their farms only in daytime and are not allowed to sleep at night. The soldiers do not allow them to bring foods along with them. With suspicion as 'rebel-supporters', many villagers are beaten and mis-treated by soldiers.

Forced labour:

In southern part of Ye Township, the Burmese Army constructed a motor road from Ye Town to Khaw-zar Sub-Town, then to the end of Ye Township in order to gain over control in the whole area. Hundreds of villagers in southern part of Ye Township have been forced to involve in working for this construction. The Mon civilians in both sides of Township areas suffered from the conscription of forced to work in military barracks. They have been forced to build various types of building in military bases and work for protection of these bases by digging bunkers and making fences. Additionally, the soldiers also forced the local villagers and former landowners to work in confiscated lands and orchid plantations. The villagers feel so upset to work in this situation, because they have known that these lands are belonged and now they have to work as 'slaves' for soldiers. Beside forced labour used in development programs and in Burmese Army's bases, whenever they have military operations or patrol, the soldiers always took the local villagers to be as 'porters'. The commanders always instructed the local village headmen to gather villagers and provide them as porters when they arrived into the villages.

Taxation:

Because of low salary payment and lack of administrative costs in each battalion, the battalion commanders in each command always have to find extra income to cover all costs. Therefore the battalion commanders have to collect money from village headmen and villagers from many ways. Many military battalions set up their own check-points along motor road and collect money from vehicles and passengers those passed on the road. Additionally, they also collected tax from the local villagers. In harvest season, the soldiers also collected paddy from village headmen.

<p>Note: In this Report, The Mon Forum just on the use of forced labour in northern part of Ye Township.</p>

III. Another Land Confiscation during 2007

In late October, 2007, HURFOM field reporter talked to a former teacher of Ye High School who asked to stay as an anonymous. He is from a village near Ye town and has been worked in Ye Township area for several years.

He said, "There are totally about 1500 acres of rubber plantations which are confiscated by LIB No. 586 and LIB No 587 during 2004 to 2007. These plantations are in Kyaung-ywa, Thin-kun-kyun, Kaloh, Ayu-taung, Kon-du and Han-gan villages".

They confiscated the rubber plantations in hill and the places where was suitable to set up their Battalion so that they can give reason that they confiscated them because they had to build their Battalion.

They confiscated the villagers' plantations with orders. They sometimes confiscated them by talking to the owners straightly or by promising they will give some amount of payment for their plantations. However, there was no villager in Ayu-taung who received payment for their plantations. Currently, LIB No.587 has been confiscating many acres of rubber plantations in Ayu-taung village in 2007 for their own business.

Case I:

Nai Lxxx, 58 year-old and his wife live in Han-gan village. His wife is from Kon-du village and they had 10 acres of rubber plantations in Kon-du village. In August, 2005, 7 acres of his rubber plantation were confiscated by LIB No. 587 which was led by Lieutenant Colonel Khin Maung Oun. At that time, the value of these 7 acres of plantation was around Kyat 20, 000, 000.

Nai Lxxx said, "Lieutenant Colonel told me that all of these rubber plantations can be used for the country if it is necessary and they needed to build military barracks. Therefore, he said me that they took and used these areas because it also was owned by the country".

Nai Lxxx then requested Land Registration Department to help him in order to get his plantations back. However, a person who was in charge of the Land Registration Department told him that they can't take any action for that because all of these plantations were owned by the country.

Nai Lxxx and his wife had seven children: five of them were working in Thailand; two of them already got married and they could not help them. He was too old to work in the plantations by



This rubber plantation was confiscated by LIB No. 587 in Kun-du village, Ye Township, Mon State

himself. Therefore, he had hired 3 workers to work in their 3 acres of rubber plantations which were left from being confiscated. It was not enough for living of his family because there was not much money left for him after paying salaries of those three workers.

Case II:

Similarly, there were two Han-gan villagers whose rubber plantations also confiscated by LIB No. 587 like Nai Lxxx. Their names are Nai Mxxx and Mi Axxx. They confiscated 4 acres of Nai Mxxx's plantations and 5 acres of Ma Axxx's plantations. These two plantations' owners went to Thailand for living because they were nothing to depend after their plantations were confiscated. Recently, the soldiers from LIB No. 587 cut down all of the rubber plants and had been conducting military training.

He also said, "I have no money to invest in another job. Nevertheless, I dared not grow more plants because it is unpredictable when they will confiscate these 3 acres of plantation". Therefore, it seems no relief for him and his wife to earn more for their living.

Case III:

Nai Axxx, 35 year-old and his wife, Mi Ngxxx have been living in their rubber plantation with their three children for three years. Their plantation was one mile away from Kon-du village. They bought it for three year. The former owner has plants the rubber plants in it for 6 years when they bought. Now, it is nine years since it was planned and the rubber was able to be harvest. He had five acres of rubber plantation. Totally, there were 9 years after the rubber plants were planted. They were matured enough to harvest.

In early 2007, one Captain, one sergeant and their three soldiers came to measure Nai Axxx's plantation with the reason that it was near their Battalion and they had to do so for security. In the next week after the came to his plantation, they informed him that he needed to pay tax for to work in his plantation. There were 15, 000 plants which he were harvesting in his plantation. They said that he must pay 200 Kyat per plant to harvest the rubber during dry season (from late August to April).

Nai Axxx said, "I can't afford to give them 200 Kyat per plant. Therefore, I just pay them 30,000 kyat and continue harvesting the rubber as long as they don't complain anything because I am not sure when will they confiscate my plantation".

Case IV:

Near by his plantation, there were some bigger plantations which were owned by Nai Oxxx and Nai Lxx Dxx. Nai Lxx Dxx owned 15 acres of rubber plantations and he also had to pay tax the same rate as Nai Axxx. He also could not afford to pay them and they allowed their workers to harvest 5 acres of his rubber plantation as their own. They did not even maintain the rubber plants nor clean the bushes. Therefore, he also had to clear the bush, make the fire routes and maintain the rubber plants.

Nai Lxxx Dxx said, " I ask them to take care of the plants and maintain the plantations while they are harvesting the rubber but in vain because they complain to the soldiers there. I can not say anything more because I am worried if they are their former soldiers and I even can not speak Burmese so much".

"Burmese people from Magway, Pakokgu town come and work in the rubber plantations here. They are trying to influence this area because they got power from these Burmese soldiers (they don't care about the local villagers because they understand that Burmese soldiers will be their side if the villagers complain)", related to an anonymous female clerk of Village Peace and Development Council (VPDC).

III. Forced Labour in Northern Part of Ye Township

There are many military battalions in northern part of Ye Township. Before 1990, there is only one military battalion in this area and it is Infantry Battalion No. 106, which bases in Mor-ka-nin village, 20 miles far from Ye Town in the north. Later during 1993, another military battalion Light Infantry Battalion No. 343 was deployed. During 1999-2000, when the Burmese Army's MOC No. 19 deployed more military battalions such as LIB No. 586, LIB No. 587, LIB No. 588 and LIB No. 589 and many hundreds acres of land are confiscated. (*Look in the map*)

During in October and November 2007, one main military battalion LIB No. 587 has used some hundreds of villagers to involve in various types of contributing labour for battalion works. The following points are detail information on the use of forced labour.

a. Forced labour use in October and evidences



A forced labour victim from Aru-taung village and an Army staff (a Sergenat) from Kun-du based LIB No.587

In early October 2007, villagers from Ayu-Taung village in Ye Township were forced to work on rubber plantations that had been confiscated by the LIB No. 587. The orders were given by LIB No. 587's Captain Myint Zaw. The villagers were forced to work in rotating groups of 30. Another 30 people were chosen after the first group completed its week of work.

The villagers had to bring their own food as the LIB did not provide rations. Those who lived near the Battalion were able to go home at the end of the work day, but the people who lived further away

had to stay near the plantation for the entire week. Nai Htun Lay, a member of the Village Peace and Development Council (VPDC), was given the responsibility of organizing 30 villagers to work on the plantations. The main task of these 30 villagers involved clearing the plantations of brush.

Besides forcing the villagers to clear bushes, some farmers who are former landowners were forced to work in their rubber plantation again by commanders from LIB No. 587.

A villager by the name of Nai Axx said that the plantation he was forced to work on had in fact belonged to him until 2005, when it was confiscated by LIB No. 587. At the time of confiscation, the plantation boasted around 800 plants. The thought of working on his old garden made him so upset that he decided to hire someone to work in his place. He informed Nai Hxxx Lxx of his decision, but was denied because his name was already on a list of workers. Therefore, he had no choice but to clear brush for the Burmese soldiers.

After first group of villagers are forced to work, the commanders ordered the village headmen to send second group of villagers. Among the villagers in group, some former landowners were forced to work. Nai Txxx Wxx of Ayu-Taung village, was forced to work on the Army's rubber plantation. He was included in the second group of 30 laborers. His plantation was confiscated by Major Zaw Naing Htun's LIB No. 587 sometime between 2004 and 2005. Even though they promised to pay him, he has received nothing.

Moreover, he was asked to sign a form saying that he had been paid. Now, the LIB No. 587 has begun producing rubber from his plantation. He said that it was double mistreatment from the Burmese soldiers because they not only confiscated his plantation but also forced him to work on it.

A HURFOM Field Reporter reported that the LIB No. 587 often forced the villagers to work to support the battalion. A Kun-duu villager, Mi Kun Sait (name has been changed), 45, was forced to spend a week growing pineapple plants among the rubber plants on the plantation of LIB No. 587. Because her husband and children were working abroad she had to work alone. Some villagers were forced to grow pineapple plants while others were forced to find seedlings. Mi Kun Sait was forced to work there for a week.

The commanders from LIB No. 587 has used each group of villagers for about one-week and then changed with another group of villagers. Forced labour has been used for the whole month.

b. Forced Labour in November and Evidences

Beginning in early November 2007, the villagers of Thin-kan-kyun village have been forced to construct a fence for the LIB No. 587. The soldiers from LIB No. 587 ordered Nai Htun Lay, a member of Village Peace and Development Council (VPDC), to organize and instruct people in building the fence.

Nai Nyunt, a 50-year-old from Thin-kan-kyun village, says that he is forced to cut bamboo for the fence. There are about 20 people being forced to work on the fence, including Nai Nyunt Tin. Half the people cut bamboo while the other halves dig holes. He says that they have been working on the fence for over a week already but it is not finished yet. He is worried about his family and home because he is not allowed to return until the fence is complete.

Kon-du and Ayu-taung villagers were continuously forced to work in the plantations, such as: maintaining the rubber plants, making fire routes in the plantation, clearing the bushes and painting the rubber plans with lime and harvest the rubber. Moreover, they also were forced to construct the fence in their Battalion, construct the roads, build the barracks for them, grow the castor-oil plans and dig bunkers for them.

Some villagers also explained about their stories as below:

Nai Htun Oo, 45 year-old, said, "They force me harvest the rubber from the plantation which they confiscated from me. They give me order to do so without any payment".

Nai Maung Nyunt, 54 year-old, from Dan-kyi village said, "LIB No. 587 was set up in our village in August, 2004. At that time, I had two rubber plantations near Ayu-taung village; 400 rubber plants in one plantation and 800 rubber plants in another. The colonel of LIB 587 and his



An Army staff from LIB No. 587 and a confiscated rubber plantation in Kun-du village, Ye Township, Mon State

followers come to measure my two plantations and they confiscate it at the end of August, 2004. I become jobless and hopeless for my family because my family depends on these two plantations. My children feel depress and flee to Thailand. I don't get any contact with them until now".

The sergeant of IB No. 587 promised them that they would be paid 1500 kyat a day. However, after working in the rubber plantation for three weeks they received no payment. When working in the Army plantation they had to provide their own food and also had to carry out additional cleaning duties around the battalion. As his two sons work abroad, Nai Pxxx Dxxx and his wife have to work whenever they are ordered. They have no garden and he works as a day labourer. Therefore, it seems there will be no relief for them, because he and his wife receive no money for their daily work.

c. Women in Kon-du village are forced to work

From November 23 to 28, 2007, a group of women were forced to work in the rubber plantation of LIB No. 587 near Kun-Du village for a week. There were 15 women in the group. Three of them are Ma Kun May, Ma Txxx Sxx and Mi Axx Mxxx whose native was Kaloh village, Southern Ye Township. They have moved in Kun-du village just for 5-6 years.

They had to clean the bush in the rubber plantation with choppers. There were two sergeants observing when they were working.

Mi Axx Mxxx said, "They force the villagers to work not just this time. The villagers have been occasionally forced to work in these plantations since LIB No. 587 confiscated them." Soldiers from LIB No. 587 confiscated these plantations 3-4 years after the rubber plans were planted. "As for us, we have been forced to work since 2006. We not only have to supply our owned ration when working but also have to cure ourselves if we feel sick. The worst is that they don't even let us drink their water" added Mi Axx Mxxx.

In this women group, the oldest woman is 60 year-old and the youngest is 18 years. Young ladies dared not go away from the group when they are working because they were afraid of being raped by the soldiers in the Battalion.

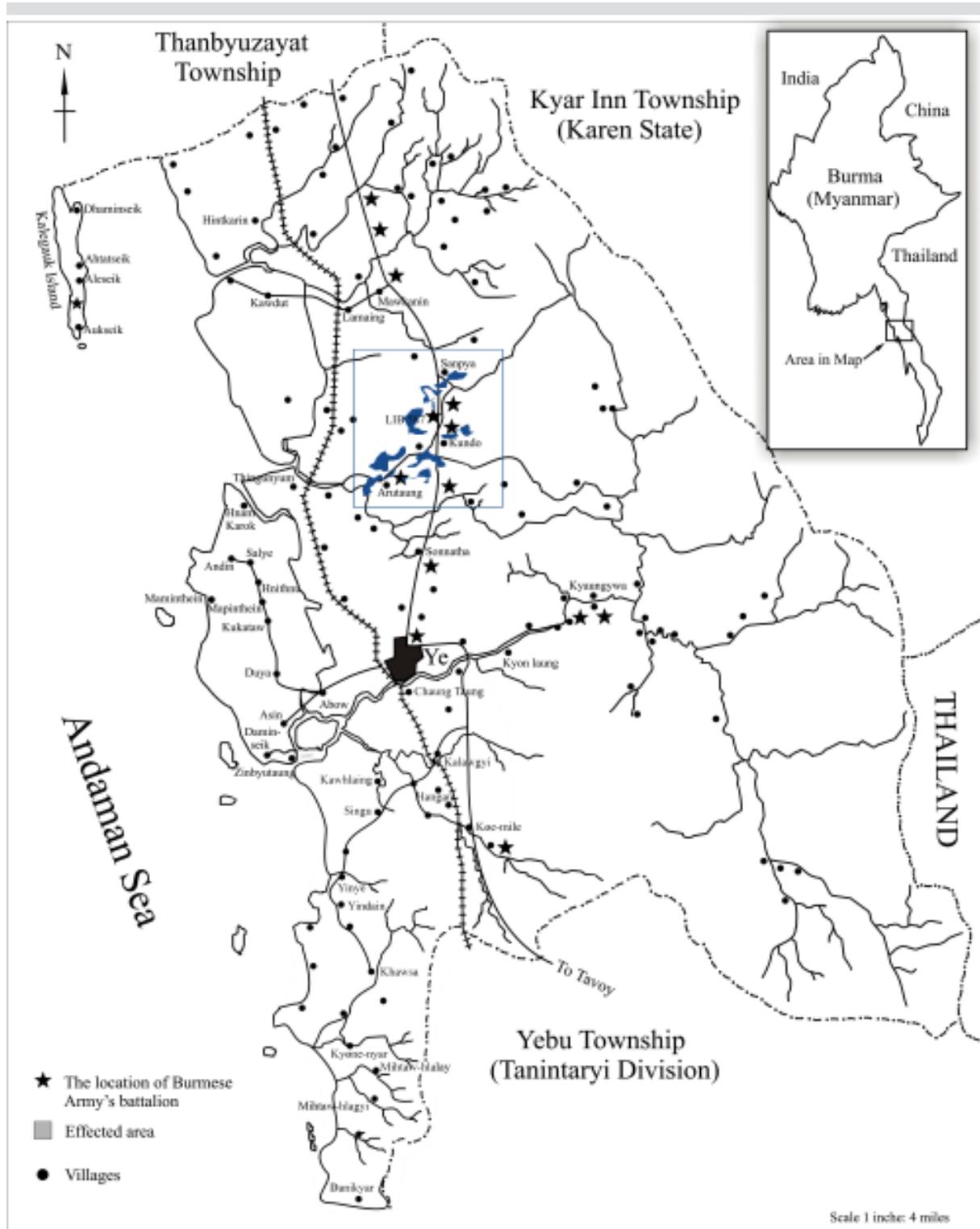
Mi Mxxx Axx also said that she saw 6-7 men who were working in the Battalion's plantation. They were strangers from another village because she was sure that they were not from Ayu-taung nor Kun-du village. The oldest man in the group is around 50 year-old and the youngest is about 20 year-old. They had to cut the bamboo, paint the rubber plans with lime and dig the hole to build the fence for them.

Before, they also had to harvest the rubber as well but they had to clean the bush and make fire routes by now. She said that they are having a very hard time because their children were working in Thailand. Therefore, these women had to work whenever the soldiers ask them. She said that villagers are struggling in forced labor and their living while Burmese soldiers earn from selling the rubber of the plantation which they have confiscated.

V. SPDC's Population Transfer Project

There are approximately 400 acres of Lands, which were owned by villagers in northern Ye Township, have been confiscated by LIB No. 587 since June 2007.

According to a Sanpya villager who asked to stay as an anonymous, "Burmese people from central part of Burma, such as: Pakokku, Yesagy Township, have moved to the villages in Ye Township since 2003-2004. At that time, there are about 20 households of Burmese came to live in our village".



Map of the area effected by forced labour and land confiscation in Ye Township, Mon State

Actually, LIB No. 586 and 587 called them to transfer and allowed them to grow a local type of bean in the wild lands. Later on, LIB No. 587 and 588 confiscated about 200 acres of lands in Done-pee village. These lands were especially rubber plantations, cashew nut plantations and orange plantations.

“Unemployed from central part of Burma moved to Mon area and the soldiers used them as their supporters, especially to inform them the activities of villagers in the village” added Sanpya villager.

A Kon-du villager, Nai Hlaing, 35 year-old, who’s currently working in Thailand, said to HURFOM reporter, “ In 2007, Lt. Col Khin Maung Oun from LIB No. 587 conferred the confiscated plantations to Burmese people, who moved to our village, the time to harvest the rubber. They harvest the rubber and give the money to the Battalion after the rubbers are sold”.

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 2237, General Post Office
Bangkok 10501, THAILAND
E-mail: hurfomcontact@yahoo.com
Website: <http://www.rehmonnya.org>

With regards,

Director
Human Rights Foundation of Monland

Before, they took all the responsibility to do the rubber process by process (harvest it, put into buckets, grind it and dry it) give money to the Battalion after they sell them. Sometimes, the soldiers hired them with monthly salaries to work in the plantation. Later on, they worked as day laborers in the plantations.

Currently, there are about 30-50 households of Burmese people living in Mon villages, especially in Kon-du, Han-gan and Ayu-taung village. They lived at the edge of villages and around the plantations where the Burmese soldiers have confiscated.

Nai Hxxxx, a local Mon inhabitant added, "These Burmese take advantage of the local people because they are given a favor by Burmese soldiers in the Battalion. Our clothes are losing very often and there is less security from the time they have arrived our village".

However, nobody dare to complain about them to the Burmese soldiers because they were key supporters of the soldiers who give them information about the activities of the villagers.

In 2005 – 2006, some of these Burmese people involved as members of Village Peace and Development (VPDC). Although nobody in the village agreed with them, they were able to participate as members of VPDC because the soldiers and VPDC members gave them permission to do.

In Cone-pee and Kon-du village, there were some families of retired soldiers who were living in the rubber plantation which LIB No. 587 have confiscated. Some of them were unemployed; some of them were injured after they retired so that it was very convenience for their living by staying in these plantations.

In conclusion, there was less security in Mon villages, Ye Township, after the Burmese people from Middle part of Burma transferred to Mon area. They tried to interfere in the activities in village by trying to participate in VPDC and other places to get power. Therefore, villagers did not want to stay in the village any more as they felt it seems their village is not their owned society and most of them fled to Thailand as a result.

A 60 year-old, Han-gan villager, said, "Many people have been speaking Burmese Language more and more since these Burmese have arrived. Many young people are married with Burmese. Therefore our Mon language and literature are in the risk to be lost due to this transferring of Burmese from Middle part of Burma".

According to a confirm source, "There is a mixed blood policy of them that a soldier will be increased in post and get higher position in organizing activities in the village if he get marry with a Mon girl.

Last February 2007, an Ayu-taung villager, 22 year-old girl, got married with Sergeant from LIB No. 587. Including her, there were about 5-6 girls from the villages around these area, got married with Burmese. Some villagers complained that it is very obvious that Burmese were trying to get married with Mon girls according to their policy. Therefore, their Population Transfer Project is one of the reasons why most villagers want to leave village and flee to Thailand.



HURFOM

Villagers were forced to work in the LIB No. 587's confiscated rubber plantation near Aru-taung village, Ye Township

VI. Conclusion

As the result, most people fled to Thailand in order to make money and there were just women and children left in the village. In reality, the Burmese soldiers already had their purpose to make people leave their village. Now, there are more number of Burmese migrant workers from central part of Burma came to the village and built small huts beside the road as temporary. Later on, they changed these small huts into houses. Therefore, these places became into their permanent places. Now, there are so many people from Middle part Burma have taken over most of the places in Ayu-taung village.

Not only the villagers from Aru-taung village are suffered from additional land confiscation and conscription of forced labour by the Burmese Army, many other Mon villagers from Khaw-zar village tract in southern part of Ye Township has similarly suffered. They always have to contribute their labour every week and the village headmen have to arrange on a rotation basis.

The Mon political leaders, community leaders and the people in Ye Township has suspected that the SPDC is systematically implementing 'population transfer project' under its assimilation policy which has been adopted for decades. By confiscating land from local villagers, they have forced many Mon families to leave from their native homes while many of them migrated into Thailand. Then, the Burmese army encouraged to bring more Burman race migrant workers into Mon areas and let they worked in the confiscated lands.

The Mon people in the area not only lands but also regular incomes for their daily survival. Therefore, they have many disadvantage of economic and social life. The Burmese Army takes advantage from this situation and militarized the whole areas.

HURFOM
P. O. Box 2237
General Post Office
Bangkok 10501, THAILAND
E-mail: hurfomcontact@yahoo.com
<http://www.rehmonnya.org>

Printed Matter

Address Correction Required

⤴ REMINDER: HURFOM's mailing address has changed