



Report 1

Women And Child Trafficking in Burma

I. Root Causes of Women And Child Trafficking in Burma

The current Burmese military government, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on 16th of July 1991. However, the Burmese government does not comply with the convention by neglecting child rights, instead of promoting them. The Myanmar National Committee of Women Affairs (MMCWA) and The Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA) are established to focus on the issue of trafficking. But they are not so effective because they are hand-picked organization of SPDC, and their activities are totally under the control of the male-dominated military regime which does not want to hear negative news on Burma.

Each year in Burma, thousands of young people and women are fleeing from villages to work in Burma's cities and neighboring countries. They are fleeing unemployment and poverty and, when they reach the towns, often are forced to find jobs in sweatshops where they are exploited. Many children have to work because their parents do not have enough money to send them to schools. In Burma, education fee is very expensive.

So many children have to find a job to support their families. Jobs in Burma for these children are scarce, dangerous and badly paid so the children are easy prey for human trafficker who promise better jobs and salaries in Thailand. The brokers or trafficker sell children into the works: as beggar in the road, as servants in wealthy houses, as workers in the brick-making factory and etc,. Many children are trafficked in neighboring countries - Thailand, Malaysia and China.

The international community said that Burma has the worst record in human trafficking. In order to appease the international community the Burmese government promised to prosecute those who work as human traffickers but, in reality, their jobs flourish.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the children should be protected from trafficking, but the military government does not comply with this at all since thousands of children are openly trafficked every year. One of the main problem is that government officials, soldiers, policemen are often involving in trafficking.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the Article 28,



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Message From

Woman And Child Rights Project
(Southern Part of Burma)

Woman and Child Right Project (WCR P) is an cooperative activity with Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) and it has main activity in collecting the information related to the human rights violations of women and children in southern part of Burma (Myanmar). It also aims to get world community's awareness for the protection of the rights of women and children.

The Burma's military regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 to guarantee the rights to women in Burma. Similarly the regime also ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991 to guarantee the rights to children in Burma. However, the regime has failed in their implementation of the conventional rights and the human rights violations against women and children systematically.

WCRP is dedicated to inform the world community what happens to general women and children in Burma and plans to educate them to know about their rights as the following objectives.

1. To monitor and protect the woman and child rights, by collecting information about their real situation by referencing the CEDAW and CRC, and distribute information to world community.
2. To strengthen women and children community, by providing on their rights accordingly to CEDAW and CRC ratified by regime and encourage them to participate in the struggle in the protection of their own rights.

every child should receive free primary education. However, the government does not comply. Many children drop out from the school because they cannot pay extra fees for school. So many children find a job outside, the brokers or traffickers persuade some of them to migrate into the neighboring countries and as a result, they sell those children in Thailand.

Since 1962, after the Burmese Army seized the political power from the civilians elected-government, it has not respected the international human rights principles: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); civil and political rights; economics, social and cultural rights; and other international covenants. Until 1988, as the military regime isolated Burma to the world, Burma was not under the spotlight of the international community.

After 1988, the current military regime, SLORC/SPDC even ratified the CRC and CEDAW to save its face to the international community, however, it still violates human rights against women and children in both rural and urban areas.

II. Women and children works as servants (or are sold as servant)

Women and children from rural area find it very difficult to get a job. Many children cannot join the schools because education costs are very expensive. Many people are vulnerable to traffickers because they are not literate, have little general knowledge about their neighboring countries and desperately need jobs. At the same time, many brokers or traffickers say to women and children who want to work in neighboring countries that in other countries they can get a good job with a lot of salary. They also said they can support their family for daily food, accommodation cost and their brothers/sisters education. Many people believe what the traffickers have said. So they want to go the border area to get jobs with proper wages.

In rural areas, many people work in agriculture, farming, odd jobs, etc. They work from morning 6:00 a. m. until evening 6:00 p. m., but they get only 500 Kyat (~ 5 US Dollars) or/and 1000 Kyat (~10 US Dollar) per day. That is not enough for their family, to buy foods and many other things. But almost always the jobs are very difficult to get and they not permanent. In one month, they often only work 10 days to 15 days. So it is quite hard to support their families.

Many people want to go to neighboring countries to receive permanent jobs and a higher salary. Traffickers recruit women and children to work in Thailand especially. But they do not know whether the traffickers employ or sell them to the employers. Once they work for the employers for many years and do not get salary, then they know they were sold to employers by traffickers.

Their condition is described as 'modern slavery', in which they earn little or no money, but suffer serious abuses such as debt bondage, rape, physical abuse, and in some case murder.

Young women and children are not only trafficked to Thailand, but also to cities in Burma. For instance, women and children under 18 years who are living in rural areas in Mudon township, Mon State, they often go to work as house-

servants in Moulmein (*Mawlamyine*), the capital of Mon State and Rangoon (*Yangon*), the capital of Burma. Some of them are trafficked and employed in back-breaking work with low wages. This is also the plight of women and children from southern Burma. They do the washing, cooking, baby-sitting and caring for elderly and sick members of their employers' families.

One story was about a girl from the rural area of Mudon Township and the girl explained:

I had to wake up in early morning to cook and clean the house. When the employer waked up I had to go to market with her. In the morning 9:00 a. m., I help to open clothes market (selling T- shirt and other clothes). After that, I helped with cooking in the evening. When I went to sleep, it is nearly mid-night. Sometime I don't want to wake up in the morning. If you do something wrong they beat and scold you. My aunt sent me from my village to work in the town. She said I would get 3000 Kyat (about 3 US Dollars) for a month. However I never got my salary. The employer said that my aunt received my salary for 6 months in advance. I thought she will give my salary to my family but my family does not receive it. So, I want to go back my hometown, I don't want to work in the township. Many women who are working in the town have been trafficked like me.

In the same way, many women and children are trafficked by traffickers and employed in Thailand. In Burma American Demarcation Alliance (BADA) research it says that, 10,000 Burmese girls are trafficked into Thailand each year. The brokers told them that working in Thailand they would get opportunities, jobs and good salaries. However many people have been sent to work into brothels, constructions, factories and sex industries. Additionally, the Burmese female migrant workers are also treated as 'slaves' in workplaces.

An example :

A girl under 18 years old with her two friends from Rangoon were seeking job opportunities in Thailand. The brokers recruited and took them with many other people to work in Thailand. The brokers sent the girl and her friends to a remote place where the security was not good and from where they could not go outside. After 2 weeks, the girls was sent to look after sick people. She was beaten often and received no salary.

More terribly, when the girls went and worked in Thailand, they also feared being arrested by of Thai police and their movement was totally restricted. When the girls were put alone, as they could not speak Thai, they could not communicate with other people. Their situation is completely and isolated.



Young Mon women selling foods and snacks in Mon state

A story was:

A girl came from Paung Township in Mon State was 16 years old when she worked in an apartment in Bangkok to look after children and old people. She did not have a chance to go out. But when she threw the garbage, she can go outside and then she run to up-stair quickly everyday. she wore old cloths and T-shirt everyday. The girl was working there over two years but she did not receive salary and the employers beat and sometimes raped her. But she did not want to tell anybody.

The woman who told the above-story was from Burma. She was working in the foreigner's house nearby to look after children and she found the girl everyday like this - throwing garbage and climbing up-stairs. So she wanted to know about the girl. She thought this girl is not Thai, she could be a Burmese girl. She told her employer about the girl. So her employer said she should ask what happened to her. The wanted to help that Burmese girl.

One day, the Burmese woman had the chance to meet the girl and asked many questions but she did not give any answers because she was afraid that Thai police would arrest her. She could not speak Thai language.

The woman was patient with the girl in the end, the girl explained her current situation -that she was working a long

time but did not receive salary. So, the Burmese woman and her employer, the foreigner, complained to the NGOs about the girl. Thai NGOs took action against the girl's employer, punished her through a court and deported the girl back to her home-town in Mon State, Burma.

Thousands of women and girls have been trafficked into Thailand and many of them were sold as 'slaves'. The number of women and children who suffer from trafficking increase every year, although Myanmar National Committee of Women Affairs (MNCWA) and other NGOs provide education and consultation in small scale in Burma, but the regime has not punished those who involved in trafficking. In 2002 MNCWA punished only one trafficker by sending them to jail for 2 years imprisonment, however, trafficking is on-going situation because the authorities take bribes from brokers and hide many of these cases.

III. Luring and Trafficking Women into Prostitution

There are many cases in Burma of human traffickers luring young women with promise of employment and selling them to brothels to become 'prostitutes' against the existing laws in Burma. In most brothels, the young women or girls are forced to receive the customers as 'slaves'.

In Burma, there is lack of employment and so little chance to have a regular income. Even when people have jobs often their incomes are not enough for buying of even basic foods, because the families have to pay various types of tax to the authorities or the Burmese Army. When most young women and girls do not have employment, many of them decide to seek work by entering Thailand illegally.

This situation creates a good opportunity for human traffickers. They organize for both rural and urban young woman and girls to travel and work in Thailand. It is very difficult to blame any women for deciding to work in Thailand. They believe they can get work in Thailand and workloads will be better than in Burma and after getting employment they have to get money to send back to their parents at home for survival and support their sisters/brothers to attend schools.

In all ten townships of Mon State there are many instances of those who have been trafficked to Thailand. Most of them migrated into Thailand through different border entrance points - to Ranong (a Thai border in southern part of Thailand) via water route from Mon State; to Kanchanaburi Province via Three Pagoda Pass; and to Mae Sot (a Thai border town in northern part of Thailand) via Myawaddy town.

In one village, the human traffickers organized at least 5-10 women and girls to work in Thailand. The cost for entering into Thailand to get works is about 350,000 Kyat (~ 350 US Dollar) per head.

Similarly to the ethnic Mon women, the human traffickers trade in other ethnic women of Karen, Karenni, Kachin and Shan in eastern part of Burma. Many women from northern part and middle part of Shan State - Meng Kaing; Kyay The; Moe Nyaung; Meng Nan; Meng shuu; Kyaing-taung; Kyaing-khan; Meng Pan; Lin Khay; and Moe Nae; also migrated into Thailand by offering some transport cost. Traffickers took 45, 000 Kyat (~ 45 US Dollar) per head from women and girls to bring them from their native village to the Thai border.

It is very dangerous for women and girls to travel from their villages to reach a border point. As the traffickers fear being arrested by the regime authorities and police officers, they have to hide the women and children during trafficking in some locations - such as supply stores, car equipment stores, and other buildings. Traffickers also lock the outside of these buildings and restrict their movement to get available foods and other goods. Sometimes, those women and girls face food-shortage problems. This type of cruel and inhumane treatment happen in Burma. But in some cases, although the authorities know how the traffickers treat those women, they do not arrest them because they receive bribes from the traffickers.

Even though the SPDC claims that it will stop human trafficking and take serious action against the traffickers, in reality, the SPDC authorities in the border areas also take money from traffickers or migrant workers and allow many traffickers to do their work freely. Those women and traffickers have to pay not only the SPDC authorities but also many cease-fire and paramilitary groups along the route they cross.

For example, when the traffickers bring the migrant workers from Mon State to Three Pagoda Pass border point (*which is about 60 miles*), they might need to pay a lot of tax to various check-points along the route and at the end,

they have to pay 500 Baht (*Thai currency*) per head to the authorities in the border town to get permission to enter into Thailand.

While women are planning to migrate into Thailand, they also have to be afraid of arrest by the Myanmar National Women's Affairs Committee, and of harassment from male opportunists along the way. Some women who are threatened with arrest by the Women's Affairs Committee have to hide with these opportunists and are also raped by them.

Sometimes, women are arrested at some checkpoints of the Burmese Army, or police officers or immigration officers or other armed groups, and are raped or gang-raped. Some women ended up their life working in Burma's border towns as prostitutes. Or, sometimes, the traffickers also sell these women in the brothels in Burma's border towns like Myawaddy or Three Pagoda Pass although they promised to bring them into Thailand.

In many cases, the traffickers sell the women into many brothels in many Thai border towns such as Ranong, Sangkhlaburi, Mae-sot, Mae Sai and other small cities along the border with Burma. In most brothels, most women, girls and children are badly treated by the owners. They are forced to receive customers, used as slaves for selling sex without payment, have their movement restricted and sometimes are detained, etc .

As most of them are working illegally, they are threatened by the brothel owners that they will be arrested if they flee or will be punished seriously if they are re-arrested by the owners. Therefore, the women are afraid of fleeing from the brothels they work in.

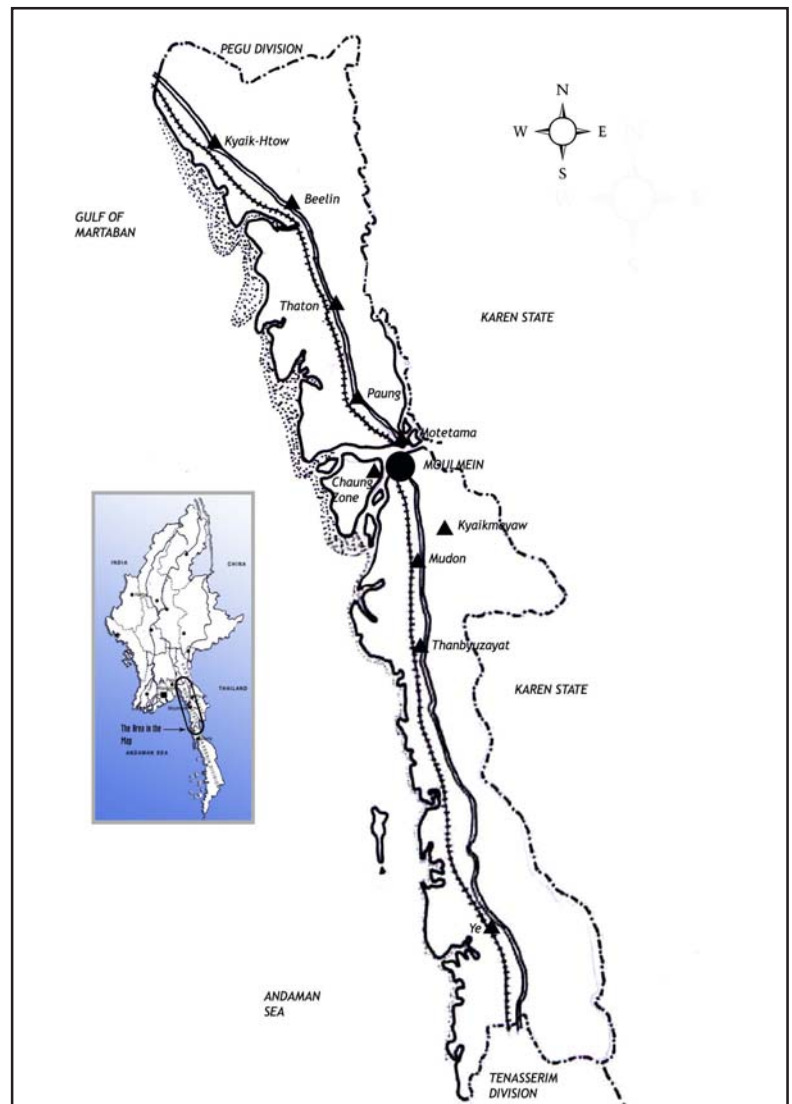
Women are forced to work for nearly 10 to 14 hours a day and they have to work every day except from during menstruation time only. If their health is bad or if they suffer from STDs, will they be allowed to take rest. One woman, has to receive 5 to 15 customers per night. Sometimes, they are also seriously beaten by brothel owners, or (female) sex worker group leaders.

In some brothels, the traffickers sell those young women and girls with money without their knowledge, but the brothel owners use the women to work for the brothels in order to pay back the money taken by the traffickers.

Normally the women have to work for the brothels for many months or sometimes for years. As most of them do not know how much money they earn per day, how much they pay to the owners and when their debt payment will be completed. In these cases, the women are exploited by both brothel owners and traffickers.

Some women also become pregnant while they are in brothels because some customers refuse to use condoms and they often forced to have abortion and sometimes contract STDs. In some cases, the women deliver babies and those babies are taken by the brothel owners and the women are forced to return Burma or arrested by Thai police. When these women are deported back, they would again suffer from the punishment of Burma's immigration authorities and Women's Affairs Committee.

According to the CATW (what), about 60% of women and girls who are illegally trafficked from Burma are forced to work in brothels or sex industries, in Thailand.



Location Map of Mon State

Trafficking of women and girls to Thailand is done by the traffickers in most parts of Burma that are close to Thailand. However, women and girls are not only trafficked to Thailand but also from rural to urban areas to Burma. Even though the SPDC ratified the CEDAW and the Women's Affairs Committee was formed to fight against human trafficking, the group could not effectively track brokers because of a lack of cooperation by the local authorities.

IV. Trafficking women to China

Accordingly to the laws of Chinese government, one family could only have one child in order to prevent population growth. On the other hand, the tradition of Chinese people is that it is more important for a family to have a boy. Many families terminate the pregnancy, if they find they have a female babies. Therefore, the rate of delivering male baby is higher if compared with female babies. Lack of women in China to do the domestic works or to be second-wives helps to increase 'women and girls trafficking' from other countries to China.

Ethnic women from Kachin State and northern Shan State are lured by the human traffickers and women are brought to China. Most tribe women who have lack of work in their homes were lured by the traffickers to have works in China, and they are brought to China. Once they arrived to China, women are sold to Chinese men to be their wives or second wives.

The economic situation of tribe people in the northern part of Burma are so poor and many women are unemployed like many women in various parts of Burma. They have totally relied on the agriculture in hilly and valley areas, mining and

Students must to pay for including for preparing school

Taramon/ Sangkhlaburi

June 3,2004

The high school students in some part of Mon State must to pay extra fees during school entrance period start this month, a source from Mudone township said.

"The school entrance fees is 4000 Kyat but The students must pay more for preparing the school," a township resident from southern said. They must to pay not in cash but materials, which needed to prepare the school, such as cements, logs and galvanized iron sheets, he added.



Students in Thanbyuzayat town

The fee is not the same in the whole Mon State. Some schools in Mudone and Thanbyuzayat townships have picked 2500 Kyat for primary school and 298 Kyat for middle school and 3600 Kyat to 41000 Kyat for high school, he said.

But for the students in Hnee- pa-daw village southern Mudone township must to pay worth about 6700 Kyat, the fees including for preparing the school.

In Pa An township, Karen State, the entering fee for the school is more than Mon State. "Middle school fee is 5250 Kyat, said a woman, but not exactly because the students have to go school today for school entrance fee.

In the border town Three Pagodas Pass Opposite to Kanchanaburi, the primary school fee is 180 Baht, thee middle school fee is 250 Baht and high school fee is 300 Baht. But that is not included for the book. For including the books, primary school is 315 Baht, Middle school is 600 Baht and high school is 1000 Baht, said a student parent, Mr Nai done from the town.

Article 35 of Convention on the Rights of the Child

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

logging. However, these works are not permanent and the women have tried to find jobs by leaving to another areas. Their income in the hilly areas is just around 500-1000 Kyat per month. The commodity price in the mountainous areas generally higher than other parts of Burma because the traders have to bring things from middle parts of Burma to their areas.

These difficulties and general lack of income for the women create opportunity for the traffickers to organize and bring them to China. They tell women in the communities that they could get better in China and if they stay at homes and take care the old people or children, their income would be better than at their homes. Therefore, more and more tribal women from Kachin State and northern Shan State illegally migrated to China to seek works.

However, sometimes, their dreams and reality are quite so different. Many women also faced brutal treatments by some Chinese men as their second wives. They are forced to have sex with animals especially dogs and are thrown into the pools of leech, said a Kachin women who arrived to Thailand.

Hundreds of women from Burma were sold in China for several years and they lost chance to return their homes. Unlikely to Thailand, as China territory is too large, migrant women or girls could not communicate and many do not know to how return their homes and many second wives also get illegal children with Chinese men. More terribly, as Chinese government does not have a policy of 'saving foreign women', who are in slavery, the ethnic women from Burma in China could not find any help.

V. Begging Money

As the economic situation gets worse, more and more children in Burma become beggars on the roads, at the teashops, bus stations, harbors and railway stations. Some children join a group or gang, and also beg for money at festivals. "It is very difficult to force them out form the market when they beg money," said a student in Moulmein, Mon State.

Some of the children grew up in orphanages and some of them are abandoned on the roads. There is a gang, who organizing those children and force them to beg for money, to sell flowers and sing songs. Many Burmese people in the urban areas do not cared this type of exploitation and the regime's sponsored GONGO also never take a serious action to fight this exploitation. Moreover, the gang forces children to steal clothes around the neighborhood and, therefore, start them on a possible life of crime.

When children beg for money at the teashops and restaurants, some shop owners treat them badly and threaten them so they do not to come into the shops. Child beggars are criticized by the community people for their behavior without finding the root cause. The rights of the child are not fully recognized by the society. So they have difficulties in their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Some people have no sympathy towards these children, and call them dirty beggars.

The regime's organization, Maternal and Child Care Association has failed to do assessment and research into why so many children are forced to be beggars and provide has also fouled to with them assistance for schooling and better shelters.



A child Beggar in town

VI. Child Trafficking

Among the thousands of people who suffer human trafficking, the children (under 18 years old) are the most serious. Many of them are forced to work as domestic servant and some of them are also forced to work as 'sex workers' in brothels.

A number of child trafficking gangs have also formed in Mon State and the members have stole children especially girls and brought them to Thailand.

As an instance,

In 2002, a child trafficking gang from Kyaik-khami suburb Town, in Thanbyuzayat Township, stole six girls between 9 and 11 years old and the people believed that the gang would sell them in Thailand. Surprisingly, the members of the gang were women and those women tried to lie of girls and took them away. The gang stole only girls, not boys.

The above gang only chose girls under 18 years of age. However, normally gangs take the girls whether under 18 or not, who agree to work in Thailand. On the other hand, it is easier to organize the girls who are under 18 years, because they would easily believe the traffickers and do not think much. As most of the girls and boys wanted to get more money and better clothes, they wish to work in Thailand.

Once the children arrive in Thailand, they are forced to work in gardening and agriculture, selling fruits and flowers on cities' roads, selling and sending newspapers in cities, and other back-breaking work which are so hard if compared with their ages.

A local English newspaper, Bangkok Post, pointed out that about 60% of the girls and women who are working in sex industries are under 18 years old.

Girls are not only trafficked to Thailand but also to cities in Burma to work in the sex industry there. The formed 'Maternal and Child Care Association' is so powerless to protect the children who suffer from trafficking to the neighboring countries and selling involuntary sex in various Burma's cities' brothels.

Conclusion

Under the rule of the military government, because of mismanagement imported by the regime, most people both in rural and urban communities face hardship and struggle to survive. The regime, itself, does not have much political will to create work and livelihood for people and those who suffer particularly are young men and women. Thus, the people in southern part of Mon State, always tried to seek work in the neighboring countries especially Thailand. This situation makes people vulnerable to traffickers.

Some migrant workers in Thailand can send money back to their families in Burma, and that attracts more and more people from Burma to go and seek work in Thailand. This makes even more opportunity for the traffickers.

By taking bribed money from the traffickers, most authorities blind their eyes on the whole processes of human trafficking in Burma. Although SPDC top leaders have claimed they will clamp down on the human trafficking, but in reality, it has no concrete procedures to actually do this.

Additional human rights violations committed by the members of Burmese Army and local authorities also force the ethnic civilians in the rural areas to leave from their homes, contact the traffickers to cross the border, and while some of them are forced to end up their lives in brothels or in gardening or in agriculture with a low salary. Those who are sold by the traffickers have to work without payment until they could pay the debts or money taken by the traffickers.

In undemocratic Burma, only a few number of the military commanders who have executive power control the whole country, and they have seriously oppressed 'media freedom' and 'social and human rights activities' in the country. Therefore, the real situation is not well-known even in the country, and human trafficking becomes a normal daily activity that is not so serious for the government authorities.

Report 11

Miserable Life of Burma's rural women

I. Cause of Poverty

When the military government SLORC (then it changed name as SPDC later) seized the political power in Burma, then the people in the country have greatly faced poverty. Their main problem is the people could not find employments and monetary inflation in their daily life. Only the top leaders and the supporters of the regime have better chance while many people in the whole country is are very poor. The government has many organizations under their control, but it does not provide or allocate sufficient fund to the organizations. So, the government authorities just collected money from people in order to provide budget for these organizations for the implementation of government projects and development programs.

When the civilians had to support illegal fund (not accordingly to the law) it also includes the fund to women and children organizations, Government Organized Non-Governmental Organization (GONGOs) such as Myanmar National Committee on Women Affairs (MNCWA) and Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA). For development programs, they include the construction of roads, railway roads, and bridges, and beautification of model villages and cities. In many cases, the people in the rural areas near or in the conflict areas had to pay for porter fee and are forced to work without payment. The government also a lot of taxes for their businesses, income-generating projects and agricultures. So, the people in Burma became poorer and poorer.

Hundreds of women, child and pregnant women are force to work the government's development program. " Luke-ar-pay" is a Burmese expression that is often rendered in English " voluntary Lobar ", but in reality it means " force labor" for the people in Burma. For those families who could not provide payment to authorities, they might need to pay money. Hundreds have suffered from beating, exhaustion, accidents and lack of medical care in these construction site. The SPDC continues to insist the all evidence of forced labour happened in the country and claimed that such labor is " donated" voluntarily by the people as a noble act of charity.

There are many international and local human rights organizations have monitored the conscription of forced labour and reported hundreds of thousands of the civilians including women, boys and girls have been forced for years to work in these projects. According to 'the Burma and the Role of Women' report, published by the SLORC (the then regime), it said that who have contributed their labour to individual projects were voluntary. On December 15, 1995 the New Light of Myanmar, a main SLORC control newspaper reported that 921, 755 people had contributed in the construction of the Pakoku-Monywa railway, which situates upper Burma. More recently, in their submission to the ILO, the SLORC said that 799, 447 working people contributed voluntary labour on the Aungban-Loikaw railway, which situates in eastern part of Burma.

In the same way, in 1994 the Mon Forum, the publication of Human Rights Foundation of Monland reported that thousands of women had contributed their involuntary labour to the building of the 110 miles long Ye-Tavoy railway construction project, which situates in southern part of Burma .

How is voluntary? If one family could not go to the construction site and work there, it has to pay 500-in 1000 Kyat per day. In most labour camps in these infrastructure projects were full with many women, children and pregnant women . The women population was equal with men in the camp. The age range of women were from 15 to 65 years old. The works in most infrastructure projects are hard.

Besides the infrastructure projects, the people are also forced to work in the military bases. The civilians are ordered to clean the camp's compound, clear all the trees and bushes along both side of the road closet ot military bases, dig trenches and make fences for the soldiers, cut down trees and bamboo for fire-wood, make thatches for roofing, and other.

Illegal taxation, conscription of forced labour, labour fee have made the people to face poverty in Burma. More terribly for many rural women, who could not get employment and regular face more difficulties to live in their own villages.

II. Exploitation from women in rural areas

A ll population in Burma are vulnerable to be forced by the Burmese Army in forced portering in military patrol and offensives and other labour duties. Although men are taken most frequently, children and women including those who are pregnant or nursing their infants are also arbitrarily taken by the soldiers. Men often flee from their village or sleep outside their home for fear of being taken as porter and the soldiers take anyone who remains including women. As a result, women have been taken much frequently to be porters. Therefore, women are subject to the similar human rights violations as men in the rural areas during its offensives and military patrol.

If the women or men could not go for portering, again they may need to pay for the porter fee. According to “ Mi W-- K--” (33) years old, the mother of 3 children woman from Singu Yebyu township in southern part of Burma said:

“Our family has to work as porter and give money for various kinds of tax. My husband is working a labour in a paddy field. In our village, we had to go and work as porter on a rotation basis without any payment. Every household in the village has to pay 3, 000 Kyat per month for porter fee if they could go for portering. As we are poor, every time my husband had go portering. Porters who are in the porter service of the Burmese Army are fed with boiled rice and watery bean soup. They are not provided sufficient sheltering during the offensives. Many suffer from malaria, diarrhea and other diseases in the frontline but are still forced to carry heavy loads without medical treatment. So that my husband did not want to go the porter again and then run to Thailand. Now, when the Burmese Army called for porter I had to go instead of him. I also could not tolerate for these abuses and fled to Thailand to follow him” .

Women are reportedly raped while they are as porters in the military column. For under aged women, they face worst treatments. They are reportedly raped by one or more soldiers nearly every night, and they still had to carry supplies or ammunition day time. Those who resisted were also killed.

Even the men are taking responsibility for family income, but the women take responsibility for management in a household to have sufficient food, to provide education to the children and to have medical care and other basic need for a family. When there is more and more taxation and exploitation of labour, the women received less and less income from their husbands or their income become insufficient for various expenses.

Normally in the rural area, the headmen have to take responsibility in collection of various types of tax and they also confused in providing various kinds of tax to various groups. Especially, when the men are in paddy fields or in fishing, it is so hard for the women who remain at homes to find money to pay for tax.

The main livelihood of the Mon people is agriculture, but most of their lands and farms are confiscated by SPDC and the Burmese Army in the recent year and this is a serious exploitation. The farmers who have lands also have to sell 15 baskets of paddy per one acre at low price to the government after their crop harvest. This also created much poverty among the farmer families.

III. Restriction of Movement and Sexual Violations against Women

Normally, the people in the rural areas have been restricted for their movement to go to their plantations and farms. The local village headmen and the commanders from the battalion nearby always instructed them to do some traveling documents by payment - 500 Kyat to 1000 Kyat for each time. In the instruction, the villagers have to stick in the traveling documents. If they could show their traveling document they must be punished or suspected as rebels or rebel-supporters. Similarly to the men, when the women went to their farms even just outside of their villages, they have to make traveling document by payment.

Article 11 of Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women

States Parties shall take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(a) The rights to work as an inalienable rights of all human beings;

Invitation for Feedback to Our Publication
 "The Plight"
 of Women and Children in Southern Burma

Dear Readers,

With objectives to monitor the situation of women and children in southern part of Burma and to empower them with the rights described in CEDAW and CRC, which are both ratified by the current military regime in Burma, our "Woman and Child Rights Project (Southern Burma)" came into existence since 2000.

Under this project, "The Plight" Newsletter is produced quarterly and this newsletter especially describe the general situation of women and children in Burma and how their human rights are violated by the ruling regime and its army.

In a plan to evaluate our publication, we wish to get the FEEDBACK of our readers. Hence, you can kindly send your feedback. If you know anyone who would like to receive the newsletter or if you wish to send your feedback, please feel free to contact the following mailing and e-mail address.

Woman and Child Rights Project
 P. O. Box 11, Ratchburana Post Office
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 E-mail: wcrproject2003_2004@yahoo.com
 Website: www.rehmonnya.org

With regards,

Project Coordinator

The serious restriction of movement has been applied by the troops of Burmese Army in southern part of Ye Township in the recent months.

According to a Mon woman, Ms. Mi N—W—, from southern part of Ye Township,

"When my father went to paddy farm, to carry hay for cows, he was arrested on the half-way without any traveling documents. After arrest, he was beaten by the Burmese soldiers and interrogated whether he sent rice to the rebel soldiers. Although my father refused the accusation, they did not thrust him. Then, the soldiers brought to village headmen and let they said that he was good man. After that they forced him to make traveling document. He had to pay 1000 Kyat and it is for three months. When he needed to extend it for one more, he need to pay 500 Kyat again. Besides that payment, each household in the village had to pay 10 baskets of paddy per month. As we could no longer tolerate for this type of oppression, then we decided from the village."

That family also arrived to a Mon refugee resettle ment site, Halockhani, to take refuge in there.

When the villagers could not go and travel to their farms, and plantations, and could not have chance for harvest, many of them faced many other social problems. When they could not get sufficient foods from their farms, many families faced food-shortage situation and other problems, especially women and children have suffered much from this situation.

Accordingly to another woman, Ms. Mi A—M—, from Kabya-wa village:

"As I was trying to help my family, I went to sea for fishing. However, as the military government tried to restrict the movement and we face difficulties in our livelihood. As the village headmen's instruction, I had to make an official traveling document to travel to the sea. I have to pay 200 Kyat each time and I could do fishing only 2 hours in the sea. It was a problem.

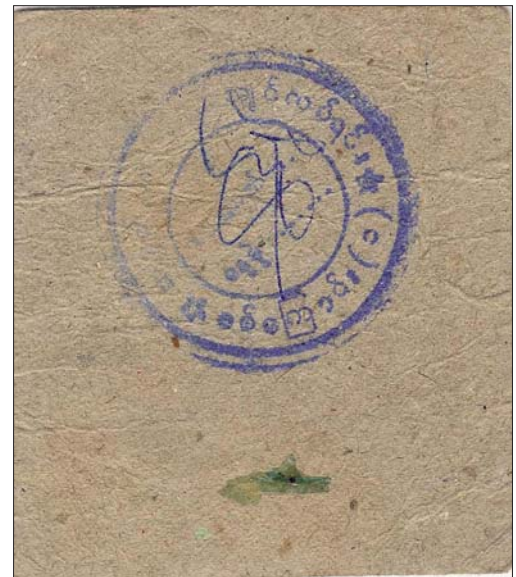
"Besides this restriction, the Burmese soldiers also collected tax from the villagers to pay porter and other fee. However, the villagers still had to go for porters. Another problem is we still have to take guard for the Burmese Army. When the soldiers arrived into village, they told the villagers to guard them outside of the village.

“When their commanders arrived into the village, we also had to arrange for welcoming ceremony. We had to prepare food, took water for their bath, and gave a message. They also collected money to buy foods and other things in the ceremony.”

During women were traveling to the workplace, they sometimes faced sexual violations or rape by the Burmese soldiers. After some women in southern part of Ye Township were raped by the soldiers, many women were afraid of being raped by the soldiers, and some of them escaped from their homes.

Although the International Labour Organization (ILO) instructed the Burmese Army to eradicate the use of forced labour in the whole country, but the civilians in the rural areas of southern Mon State are still suffered from this concription of forced labour. Many women are still forced to work such as building roads and bridges and clearing of bushes along the motor or railway roads. In some cases, women were also forced to carry

ammunitions and food supplies for the Burmese Army. As porters, women are also raped by the soldiers.



Traveling document made by SPDC local commander

Acronyms

SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
SLORC	State law and Order Restoration Council
WCRP	Women and Child Rights Project
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
MNCWA	Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
NGOs	Non Government Organization
BADA	Burma American Demarcation Alliance
STD	Sexual Transmitted Diseases
ILO	International Labour Organization

Conclusion: Population Displacement and Poverty

In order to save their face in the international community, the current regime, SPDC, ratified CEDAW and guarantees the political, civil, social, economic, and culture rights of women. To monitor those rights and involve in the implementation, the regime also formed some woman and child organizations under its control. However, these organizations never had any influence to take action against the men from the Burmese Army.

The use of forced labour is more terrible abuses among many types of abuses, and it violates the Article 11 of CEDAW, which describes the discrimination and oppression against women in their employment. In many cases of use of forced labour, some pregnant women are also forced to work.

Additionally, women in the rural areas of southern Mon State, they are also restricted for their movement, ordered various types of tax, faced sexual harassment and others. Those women could no longer stay at their home villages even though they have properties, relatives, but they have to leave from their homes. During their displacement, from one place to another, they also have many other difficulties for survival.

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