

# **FORCED MIGRATION/INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN BURMA**

**WITH AN EMPHASIS ON GOVERNMENT-  
CONTROLLED AREAS**

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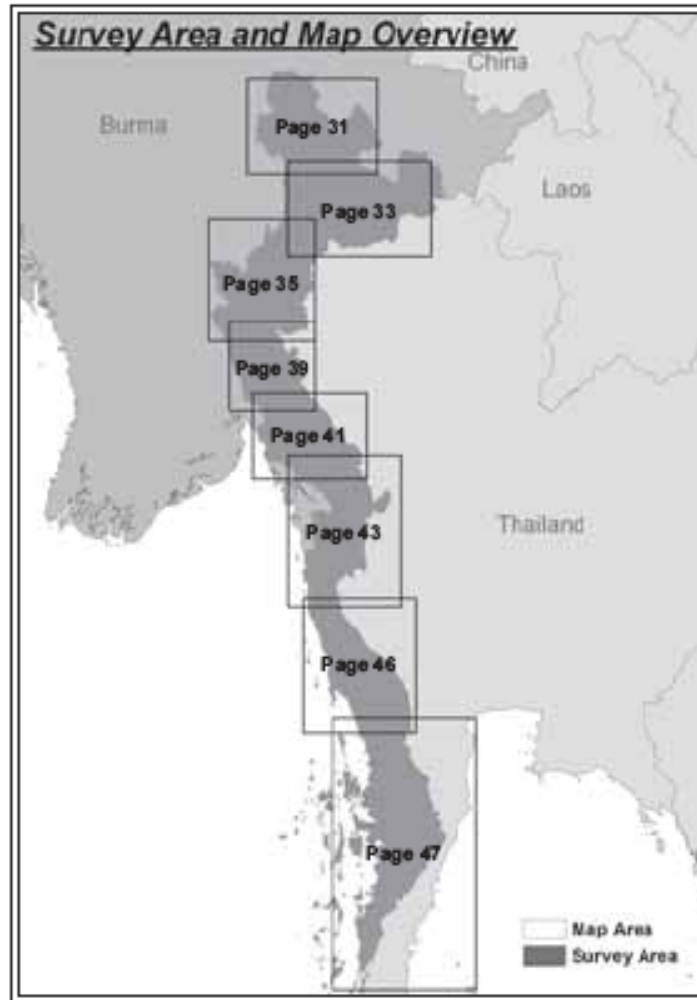
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# Map of Burma



## Map of survey area covered by the Thailand Burma Border Consortium (not covered in the present report)



Source: Thailand Burma Border Consortium, 2006

For more detail of the areas covered by the TBBC Survey, go to [Internal Displacement in Eastern Burma, 2006 Survey](#), and see the pages indicated in this map, namely p31 (Central Shan State); p33 (Southern Shan State); p35 (Karenni State & Toungoo; p39 (Eastern Pegu Division and Papun); p42 (Northern Mon and Karen States); p43 (Southern Mon and Karen States); p46 (Northern Tenasserim Division) and p47 (Southern Tenasserim Division).

N. B. Since the present report does not touch any of the areas in the pages indicated above, and as the TBBC Survey covers largely rural areas, most of the urban centres in the TBBC Survey area are only marginally covered by either report.

## Executive Summary

This report is a preliminary exploration of forced migration/internal displacement in Burma in two main areas.

The first is the **status** in terms of international standards, specifically those embodied in the *Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement*, of those people who leave home not because of conflict or relocation orders, but as a result of a range of coercive measures which drive down incomes to the point that the household economy collapses and people have no choice but to leave home. Some analysts describe this form of population movement as “economic migration” since it has an economic dimension. The present report looks at the coercive nature of the pressures which contribute to the collapse of the household economy and argues that their compulsory and irresistible nature brings this kind of population movement squarely into the field of forced migration, even though the immediate cause of leaving home can also be described in economic terms. Information on the actual numbers or patterns of movement of such migrants is beyond the scope of this report, though expert individuals and organisations have stated that they think that the “livelihood migrants” probably constitute most of the migrants in Burma. This report limits itself to presenting reports about the coercive measures practiced country-wide and discussing the status of those who have been subject to such measures.

The second area is **geographic**. The report looks at those parts of Burma not covered by the Thailand Burma Border Consortium, which concentrates on the conflict and post-conflict areas of Eastern Burma. It hardly touches on conflict-induced displacement since most parts of Burma covered in these pages, including the major cities, are government-controlled, and there is little overt military conflict. Within these parts of the country, it looks at the coercive measures referred to above, essentially through a collection of documents from various sources, ranging from scientific studies by UN agencies to articles by “opposition” organisations, including the National League for Democracy. It also carries reports of direct relocation by government agents through which whole rural and urban communities are removed from their homes and either ordered to go to specific places, or else left to their own devices. The most substantial report on urban displacement in Burma was produced in 1991 by UN Habitat.

The report is described as **preliminary** because its sources of information are unsystematic and indirect. The survey conducted for the report among refugees and migrant workers in neighbouring countries provides too small a sample to come to an accurate view of the patterns or scale of displacement in Burma. Some social scientists the author consulted generously commented that 560 respondents was quite good, that it was actually a larger sample than many similar surveys. However, the low numbers of some of the samples -- 20 respondents, for instance, for Kachin State -- mean that no substantial comparison can be made of different States and Divisions of Burma. On the other hand, here are 560 people from Burma saying rather consistently that their reasons for leaving home included subjection to forced labour, land confiscation and extortion by the military and civil authorities. Taken with other surveys and reports over the past two decades, including those by the ILO and the Special Rapporteurs on Myanmar, this indicates that people

who leave home in Burma are not simply pulled by the lure of economic opportunity, but are forced out by a combination of coercive and economic factors.

The preliminary nature of the report is also due to the lack of systematic in-country research. There is very little access to independent researchers. Those interviewed were largely refugees and migrants in neighbouring countries – having crossed an internationally-recognised border, they were no longer “internally displaced”, though it is likely that a substantial proportion of them would have been so classified before they left Burma. The report contains a set of recommendations for further research – in-country and out -- into patterns of movement; for instance, what proportion of those leaving home remain within the country or indeed, their State or Division of origin? What are the precise ways in which the coercive measures interact with the household, local and national economy? What is the role of the city in absorbing migrants from the countryside? What is the role of the satellite towns in absorbing migrants?

A good proportion of the 500 or so pages of documents which form the bulk of this report deal with direct relocation. In the case of urban centres, the reports and articles describe people being forced out of the inner cities into satellite towns or pre-satellite paddy fields by programmes which are described by the authorities as aimed at “squatters” and by others as exercises in “clearing out the opposition”. A major cause of village relocation is that land is needed by the army and its commercial allies for plantations, factories, golf-courses, tourist resorts, roads, bridges, dams and other infrastructure. In addition, the army needs large areas for military installations.

This report encourages further debate and research on the magnitude of forced displacement in Burma and questions the current estimates that exist for internally displaced in the country.

## Definition of “internal displacement”

In this report “internal displacement” is used interchangeably with “forced migration”, with “relocation” and “forced relocation” as closely-related but more specific terms, and corresponds to the description given in para 2 of the Introduction to the **Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement** and amplified by the **Handbook for Applying the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement**:

*“For the purposes of these Principles, internally displaced persons are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border.”* (Para 2 of the Introduction to the Guiding Principles.)

*“The distinctive feature of internal displacement is coerced or involuntary movement that takes place within national borders. The reasons for flight may vary and include armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights, and natural or human-made disasters.*

*Persons who move from one place to another voluntarily for economic, social, or cultural reasons do not fit the description of internally displaced persons to whom the Guiding Principles apply. By contrast, those who are forced to leave their home areas or have to flee because of conflict, human rights violations, and other natural or human-made disasters do fit the description of the internally displaced. **In some cases, internal displacement may be caused by a combination of coercive and economic factors...** [emphasis added]*

*Handbook for Applying the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, p5.*  
(Brookings Institution, UN OCHA 1999)

# Introduction

## Where does forced migration in Burma occur?

Most current discussions on internal displacement in Burma/Myanmar (hereafter, “Burma” or “Myanmar” depending on context) refer to the figure of 500,000 reached by the Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC) in November 2006 for the conflict and post-conflict zones of Eastern Burma<sup>1</sup> with, sometimes, a vague reference to “perhaps a million for the country as a whole”. This narrow focus on an area containing a rather small proportion of Burma’s population is due in part to the large number of reports about the human rights situation in Eastern Burma published by Burmese and non-Burmese organizations with access to the conflict areas and to people leaving them. It is also due to lack of access to most areas “inside” the country<sup>2</sup>; in part it is due to the absence of dedicated studies of internal displacement/forced migration in the country as a whole<sup>3</sup> and in part to the high profile of the armed struggle in Eastern Burma, together with the popular notion that internal displacement is limited to conflict-induced displacement.

These factors have led to the view that there is hardly any internal displacement in the rest of the country, and that most population movement outside the main conflict zones can be reduced to “economic migration” as opposed to forced migration.<sup>4</sup>

The present report looks at internal displacement/forced migration in the **whole** of the country. It takes the 2006 TBBC IDP survey for Eastern Burma, which provided the figure of 500,000, as the best available description of internal displacement in Central and Southern Shan State, Karen State, Karenni State, Mon State, Tenasserim Division and Eastern Pegu Division up to October/November 2006. It does not attempt to research these areas but reproduces the Executive Summary and one of the tables from the TBBC survey (see pages 51-53 and 56 below). The present report therefore concentrates on

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<sup>1</sup> See [Appendix 1](#) and [Internal Displacement in Eastern Burma, 2006 Survey](#)

<sup>2</sup> Humanitarian access to vulnerable groups from “inside” is currently in decline due to SPDC restrictions. The ICRC has been obliged to close most of its offices and a number of medical organisations including the Global Fund have pulled out. A recent publication on the situation is the 6 April report by the (US) Government Accountability Office, [International Organizations: Assistance Programs Constrained in Burma](#). Access by scholars is also limited. UN agencies have a presence in the country, but they are restricted in what they can share with researchers. Humanitarian and human rights entities working cross-border enjoy better access to the conflict areas than those working from inside. Field research for the TBBC is carried out by Karen, Karenni, Mon and Shan community-based organisations. See also the websites of the [Karen Human Rights Group](#) and the [Free Burma Rangers](#).

<sup>3</sup> Several publications, groups and individuals, while concentrating on the conflict and post-conflict areas, also cover parts of Burma not dealt with by the TBBC. These include the [Human Rights Yearbook – Burma](#), from 1994. See in particular the sections on Forced Relocation and Internally Displaced People and on Forced Livelihood. The Burma Ethnic Research Group, especially its 1999 report, [Internal Displacement in Myanmar](#) re-issued in 2000 in *Disasters* has been widely cited since then on displacement beyond the conflict zones. [The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre](#) has sought to cover the wider area, as has Ashley South – see, for instance, his [Burma: The Changing Nature of Displacement Crises](#) February 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Consider, for instance, the Burma chapter of the latest US State Department Report on Human Rights Practices (March 2007), which states that, “According to NGOs, there were more than 500,000 IDPs in the country [emphasis added] at year’s end.”



forced migration in the parts of Burma that the TBBC surveys do not cover, namely Irrawaddy, Magwe, Mandalay, West Pegu, Rangoon and Sagaing Divisions, and Kachin, Chin, Arakan and Northern and Eastern Shan State.

### **What is the report based on?**

In common with most reports on Burma (apart from those by the Government of Myanmar and technical studies by UN and other agencies) this study is based largely on information gathered outside the country. It draws on the reports of the Special Rapporteurs on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, the International Labour Organisation and other international bodies, reports by humanitarian and human rights monitoring organisations, books and other studies, consultations with Burmese and non-Burmese experts and a survey conducted for this report with 560 refugees and migrants from Burma. Since 560 respondents is a relatively small sample, the results are taken as indicative rather than conclusive (see the section on Methodology, below, for further discussion).<sup>5</sup>

### **Who is a forced migrant/internally-displaced person in Burma under the Guiding Principles?**

On the question of who is a forced as opposed to an economic migrant in Burma, most relevant reports and surveys we have been able to access state essentially that the migrants left home either in obedience to a direct relocation order from the military or civil authorities or as a result of a process whereby coercive measures by the authorities play a major role in forcing down household incomes to the point where the family cannot survive. At this point, leaving home may seem to be the only option. These factors, however, which include direct forced relocation, forced labour, extortion and land confiscation, operate in, are affected by and exacerbate a situation of widespread poverty, rising inflation and declining real incomes. In other words, people leave home due to the *combination of coercive and economic factors* referred to in the *Handbook* cited above or, in a slightly broader formulation, *declining levels of human security*<sup>6</sup>. One has to consider the whole process leading to displacement rather than a single, immediate cause. Where coercive measures, as described in this report, are involved, the resulting population movement falls under the *Guiding Principles* even if the situation that actually triggers movement, frequently food insecurity, may also be described in economic terms.

The ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) denies that there is any internal displacement in Myanmar as, in its view, internal displacement is limited to conflict-induced displacement and since, in its view, the country is enjoying nationwide peace and

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<sup>5</sup> Questionnaire available at <http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Questionnaire-IDP.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> [The Commission on Human Security](#) defines human security as the protection of "the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedoms and fulfillment". It encompasses human rights, good governance and access to economic opportunity, education and health care. It is a concept that comprehensively addresses both "freedom from fear" and "freedom from want". Human security cannot be reduced to purely economic factors. Michael Cernea's *impoverishment risk and reconstruction model* as expanded by Courtland Robinson, covers a lot of the ground contained by this concept (see [Appendix 2](#), below).

stability there cannot, *ipso facto*, be any internal displacement. For their part, UN agencies operating in Burma, while acknowledging the reality of conflict-induced displacement, especially in the East of the country, have tended to stress the economic motivations of populations moving in government-controlled areas.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, a number of commentators, including Ashley South, Human Rights Watch and Refugees International argue that “livelihood migrants” (who in their view constitute the majority of migrants in Burma), **ought** to be counted as forced migrants. However, they do not think that this population would fall under the *Guiding Principles*. Refugees International, for instance, states that:

*“The most widespread form of displacement in Burma is migration to gain a secure livelihood, with its root causes linked to decades of poor governance and the underdevelopment of peripheral areas populated by ethnic minorities. Migration is often the only option available to poor and marginalized people and while they would not be considered internally displaced persons according to the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, such migrants are extremely vulnerable”* and, citing Ashley South, goes on to say that *“As their movement is frequently non-voluntary, this type of population movement may also constitute forced migration.”*<sup>8</sup>

The present report goes further and argues that there is a strong *prima facie* case that in a substantial number of situations in Burma, “livelihood migration” definitely **does** constitute forced migration and **does** come under the *Guiding Principles*.

### **A reflection on language**

The discussion above highlights some drawbacks in using exclusive categories to describe human situations and motivations. The use of such categories to define the status of people who move within or out of a country is related to the nature of international standards, negotiated over years by lawyers and designed to be clear and unambiguous. This leads to rigorous definitions and dichotomies which rarely express the complexity of human situations. In place of a dichotomy of “economic migration” and “forced migration”, this report therefore follows Courtland Robinson, Christopher McDowell, Arjan de Haan and others and seeks to work with the idea of the spectrum, highlighting “grey areas” and avoiding rigid boundaries between “push” and “pull”:

*“... it may be useful, on the one hand, to view internal and international migration, voluntary and involuntary movement, negative “distress” migration and positive “livelihood” migration as a continuum with no single, clear line separating one type from the other. Migration may begin internally but eventually cross international boundaries just as international migration may one day cycle back home. Voluntary*

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<sup>7</sup> UN and other agencies working inside the country are in a difficult position. There are questions their surveys cannot ask, such as those relating to forced labour, land confiscation etc. for fear of reprisals against their respondents as well as Government restrictions on agency programmes.

<sup>8</sup> [Ending the Waiting Game: Strategies for Responding to Internally Displaced People in Burma](#) Refugees International, June 2006, p1

*movement may contain elements of coercion just as involuntary movement is not without rational decision-making or strategic choice. On the other hand, distinctions can and should be made at certain points along the continuum so that one can tell the difference, for example, between an oil-company executive who moves to take a management position overseas and the subsistence farmer who is moved from her land so the oil company can drill... ”<sup>9</sup>*

The question of definitions has also been raised by Therese Caouette and Mary Pack in their “Pushing Past the Definitions: Migration from Burma to Thailand”<sup>10</sup> in which they challenge the narrow definitions imposed by various authorities on people coming from Burma to Thailand:

*“...the vast majority of people leaving Burma are clearly fleeing persecution, fear and human rights abuses. While the initial reasons for leaving may be expressed in economic terms, underlying causes surface that explain the realities of their lives in Burma and their vulnerabilities upon return. Accounts given in Thailand, whether it be in the border camps, towns, cities, factories or farms, describe instances of forced relocation and confiscation of land; forced labor and portering; taxation and loss of livelihood; war and political oppression in Burma... ”.*

Population movement in Burma/Myanmar is thus considered along a pull-push spectrum -- at one end an “ideal” economic migrant in the form of Robinson’s oil executive and, at the other end, a village ordered to relocate by a military order in the context of a counter-insurgency operation -- motivated therefore by traditional security factors. The largest numbers are made up of those well towards the middle of the spectrum driven by declining levels of human security produced by a combination of coercive and economic factors.

## **Causes and patterns of displacement**

Since, apart from the section lifted from the latest TBBC IDP Survey, which we include but do not analyse, this report covers neither the conflict areas in the East of the country nor the “pure” economic migrants, we remain with this middle ground and describe:

### **(1) Displacement/relocation produced by a single event.**

This might be a natural disaster such as a flood or fire; it might be a military attack or a relocation /eviction order from the military or civil authorities for military, infrastructure

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<sup>9</sup> [Risks and Rights: The Causes, Consequences, and Challenges of Development-Induced Displacement](#) by W. Courtland Robinson, The Brookings Institution – SAIS Project on Internal Displacement, May 2003, p4. See also [Migration and Sustainable Livelihoods: A Critical Review of the Literature](#) by Christopher McDowell and Arjan de Haan (IDS Working Paper 65, 1997).

<sup>10</sup> Open Society Institute and Refugees International, 2002, at <http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs/Caouette&Pack.htm>

or commercial purposes. Typically, these events affect whole villages or communities or sections of towns, and are relatively sudden. Such movements are frequently reported by international or local human rights organisations or the border and international media. In some cases, a single event such as a particularly cruel stint of forced labour might induce flight by an individual or family.

**(2) Displacement/relocation caused by a series of events which lead to declining levels of human security.**

The events might include coercive measures such as forced labour, land confiscation, arbitrary taxation, and compulsory, non-viable cropping in the case of farmers. These events generally act cumulatively over time, producing declining levels of human security which first affect the poorer families in a community. At this point, leaving home may appear to be the best or only option. In this context, people tend to leave as individuals or as family groups, though the whole community may gradually migrate over a period of years. It is rare that these movements are reported internationally. Information about them comes mostly from interviews and surveys with refugees or migrants in neighbouring countries, including the survey conducted for this report. The migrants are people who have been worn down by the cumulative impact of forced labour (usually without payment), land confiscation (usually without compensation), extortion and arbitrary taxation, forced agriculture, e.g. military orders to grow summer rice or *Jatropha* (physic or castor oil) plants for bio-fuel, restriction of movement (especially for the Rohingya of Northern Arakan State) and food insecurity, all of which, over a period of time, reduce people's resource base and the time they have to work for their own survival. A point comes where survival is threatened and many people, generally the poorer members of a community, leave home (though usually not the very poorest, who may not even have the capacity to leave).

In each case the immediate cause of movement is invariably a threat to security – to physical security in the face of fighting, an order to move, or in performing dangerous forms of forced labour, or to human security.

In both the conflict areas and State-controlled areas the population movements most frequently reported by human rights groups and the media are the more visible single events affecting the whole community. The Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), however, which has been reporting on human rights violations in Burma since the early '90s, thinks that small-scale movement may involve the bulk of people moving country-wide (see box).

“Most reporting on displacement in Burma only considers large-scale movements, i.e. entire villages or communities at a time. But in our 15 years of interviewing villagers and displaced people we have found a great deal of displacement occurs one family or even one person at a time. This happens particularly in state-controlled areas as a result of state-imposed forced labour, extortion, agricultural restrictions and programmes, and economic sabotage. People in Burma face demands coming from all directions from whoever holds guns or power; this is most intense in areas the most strongly held by the state, where in the space of a week a village can face demands for forced labourers, money, food and goods from three or more nearby SPDC Army camps as well as the state civil authorities. Village leaders allocate these demands to their villagers through rotations and quotas, so that families regularly have to pay their part to cover an extortion demand, or supply a family member for their turn at forced labour. Meanwhile, their ability to grow food is undermined by state-imposed agricultural programmes such as dry season cropping or castor planting, which force them to grow unwanted crops at their own expense and then hand them over to the state.

Under these conditions, families without surplus labour have to pay money to hire someone to go for forced labour in their place; additional money is also needed to pay extortion fees. With many rural areas operating largely on subsistence agriculture, money is hard to come by and families keep savings in the form of large livestock (such as cattle or pigs) and jewellery. The excessive demands force them to convert these to cash, particularly if a family member is ill or they have insufficient labour. For poorer villagers, these resources do not last long.

When they can no longer pay their way out of excessive labour and extortion, they have little choice to leave the village or face possible arrest or dispossession by the state, so they leave the village. Sometimes individual family members leave first to try to make money, sometimes entire families leave. Some head to the villages of relatives to look for work, others to the towns, others to neighbouring countries. As the poorest leave, fewer villagers are left to provide the demands, so those remaining must provide a larger share of the forced labour, money and food demanded; gradually more villagers are driven into poverty, then end up with little option but to leave. Over the years, many villagers from areas under tight state control have told KHRG that through this process their villages have gradually lost 20 to 30 percent of their populations – generally the poorer proportion of the population, consisting of landless labourers and those with less land or an insufficient number of family members. Taken together, and keeping in mind that such conditions exist in state-controlled regions across Burma, this family-by-family displacement probably accounts for far more of Burma’s internally displaced people than does the large scale forced displacement of entire villages. As the Army continues to grow and expand its presence throughout the countryside (regardless of the presence or absence of armed conflict), and as the state implements an increasing number of agricultural projects and infrastructure projects with their associated demands, it is likely that this type of displacement will continue to increase.

(...)

Very few villagers are displaced in the ‘heat of battle’ of Burma’s very low-intensity armed conflict; they are displaced by state programmes to establish and exert control over them, which they choose to resist through non-compliance. SPDC forced relocation campaigns, even in ‘conflict areas’, are targeted more at bringing the civilians under state control than at undermining the armed opposition groups. In our experience, the absence of armed conflict does not reduce displacement but merely changes its nature. Armed conflict is a symptom of weak state control, not its cause. The lack of control is caused by civilian non-compliance, a small part of which develops into armed resistance. The SPDC responds not by attacking the armed opposition (which it could easily do) but by launching scorched earth campaigns and large scale forced relocations to bring civilians under its control. This leads to the simultaneous displacement of entire villages. In contrast, where the strength of state control makes non-compliance and armed resistance more difficult, the resulting repression and exploitation create a great deal of family-level displacement (as described above), which is far less common in areas of weaker state control. Armed conflict itself is thus neither a principal cause nor a remedy of displacement in Burma, but merely a by-product of weak state control over the population in many regions.”

*Kevin Heppner, Director of the Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG) February 2007. See also his [“Sovereignty, Survival and Resistance: Contending Perspectives on Karen Internal Displacement in Burma”](#) and the KHRG website at <http://www.khrg.org>*

## ***Key links on internal displacement in Burma***

### **[Burma Human Rights Yearbooks, from 1994](#)**

(See especially the sections on Internally Displaced People and Forced Relocation). The Yearbooks are produced by the Human Rights Documentation Unit (HRDU) of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (the government in exile mandated in 1990 by the National League for Democracy and allied parties when it became clear that the military was not going to hand over power to the parties which had won the election). The HRDU is a team of human rights monitors who compile digests of reports from many sources. Though funded by the “opposition” they maintain professional standards of reporting.

### **[Online Burma/Myanmar Library, section on Internal Displacement/Forced Migration](#)**

This is an online library at <http://www.burmalibrary.org> of some 15,000 documents on Burma/Myanmar. The library’s digital holdings include substantial archives of material produced by the Burmese State and its allies as well as material by Burman and non-Burman groups, governmental, non-governmental inter-governmental and academic sources. Organised in approximately 70 categories, it seeks to be a source of all good quality information about Burma/Myanmar.

### **[Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Myanmar \(Burma\) page](#)**

An NGO funded by the Norwegian Refugee Council and mandated by the UN Inter-Agency Task Force on Internal Displacement to monitor the phenomenon world-wide. See <http://www.internal-displacement.org> for its aims, scope and methods of work

**[Report of the ILO Commission of Inquiry: customised version highlighting forced relocation and land confiscation.](#)** The Commission of Inquiry of the International Labour Organisation into forced labour in Myanmar (Burma) was set up in 1997. It was composed of three senior jurists, including two former chief-justices. An ILO Commission of Inquiry is regarded as second only to the International Court of Justice in legal authority, especially in its areas of principal competence, namely international labour law.

### **[Thailand Burma Border Consortium \(Reports about internal displacement in Burma\)](#)**

(Mainly covers Central and Southern Shan State, Karen State, Karenni State, Mon State, Tenasserim Division and Eastern Pegu Division) The TBBC coordinates funds from governmental and other donors to refugees on the Thailand-Burma border. See its website, <http://www.tbbc.org> for further information.

### **[Karen Human Rights Group \(KHRG\)](#)**

(Mainly covers Shan State, Karen State, Karenni State, Mon State, Tenasserim Division and Eastern Pegu Division). KHRG was established on the Thailand-Burma border in 1992 and in the view of the author is the most prolific and competent human rights group working in the area. It employs local and international staff. See the website for further information. A 2007 KHRG report, **[Development by Decree: The politics of poverty and control in Karen State](#)**, is one of the best presentations of the impact of coercive measures on people in Burma, as described below, though it is outside the geographical focus of the present report.

## The struggle to survive at subsistence levels

Though the principal focus of this report is not Burma's economy, there is an important relationship, which should be noted, between the coercive measures which drive down people's incomes and the general poverty of the country. Two inter-related factors are involved: (1) Because of Burma's general poverty, people, especially in the rural areas, are only just managing to make ends meet, on top of which come (2) the specific coercive measures described in this report which increase the downward pressure on people's incomes to the point where the household economy collapses and survival is threatened. This is the point at which many people migrate. The measures include systematic, nationwide demands by the military and civil authorities for uncompensated labour, land, cash and goods and the implementation, without local consultation, of compulsory, ill-considered "development" projects. They also involve soldiers without agricultural expertise instructing farmers not only what crops to grow, but where, when and how. Not surprisingly, the crops frequently fail. The economic impact of these measures is frequently disastrous, especially for the many people who in the words of the Economist Intelligence Unit "*struggle to survive at subsistence levels.*"<sup>11</sup> Coercive measures like forced labour, agricultural meddling and the authorities' demand for building and other materials reduce the time farmers have to grow their crops. Confiscation of land and animals and the extortion of goods and cash reduce their physical resource base and household incomes are driven down to crisis point. According to the World Bank,<sup>12</sup> "[t]he primary cause of poverty and poor human development outcomes in Myanmar is low household incomes." The overall picture, therefore, is that for people in Burma, with its widespread poverty, rising inflation and declining real incomes, an already precarious situation is rendered critical by the coercive measures imposed by the authorities, and many people see migration as the only remaining option.

The whole process is clearly a vicious circle which one can enter at any point, such as the role of the army: ... the military lives off the back of the farmers because the Burmese economy is too weak to feed such a large army, which the regime thinks it needs to control the population, and the violations which follow further depress the country's standing in the eyes of multilateral and bilateral donors, who refrain from resuming economic development assistance<sup>13</sup>, which prolongs the national economic crisis, which means that the army continues to live off the back of the farmers, leading to more human rights violations...and so on...

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<sup>11</sup> "Myanmar remains one of the poorest countries in the world, and many people struggle to survive at subsistence levels", Economist Intelligence Unit *Country Profile Myanmar (Burma) 2006*, p26

<sup>12</sup> *Myanmar: An Economic and Social Assessment*, World Bank, 1999, page v

<sup>13</sup> Most multilateral and bilateral economic development assistance was suspended following the events of 1988.

In Burma, most education and health services can only be accessed through money, and for the people we are discussing, what little access there may once have been is now approaching zero. The illness of a working member of the family can precipitate the collapse of the household economy, and illness is almost inevitable given the malnutrition and prevalence of disease recorded for many parts of the country. To people driven to the edge by the combination of coercive and economic factors described in this report, the impact of malaria, TB and HIV/AIDS is likely to increase the drive to migrate, thus adding another vector to the spread of these and other infectious diseases.

### ***Key links on the Burmese economy***

[Online Burma/Myanmar Library](#) (Section on the Economy)

See above for description

[Burma Economic Watch](#)

This is a group of economists based in the Department of Economics at Macquarie University in Australia.

## **Forced migration and threats to human security**

The rest of this report is divided into a listing of the individual threats to human security referred to in the report, followed by a set of summary introductions to the Documents. The Documents form the bulk of this report and they and their corresponding summaries are arranged by State or Division of Burma. The Documents contain material describing incidents of forced displacement and practices which can produce displacement. They are placed in a separate annex at [http://www.internal-displacement.org-/8025708F004CE90B/\(httpDocuments\)/942C84C75F965D24C12572D6002FF41D/\\$file/Burma\\_annex\\_documents\\_mai07.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org-/8025708F004CE90B/(httpDocuments)/942C84C75F965D24C12572D6002FF41D/$file/Burma_annex_documents_mai07.pdf) as well as being linked from the foot of each State or Division summary.

The distinction between the categories below is not rigid as, for instance, paying a fine rather than performing a particular stint of forced labour can be classified as extortion, as can some coercive agricultural policies.

**The sections on States and Divisions in the Summaries and Documents are divided into:**

### **Forced relocations/evictions (rural and urban)**

This category covers direct forced relocation by the military or civil authorities. Reports of rural or urban destruction of houses or evictions are placed under this category. Reports of land confiscation which mention demolition or confiscation of houses are taken



as cases of forced migration/relocation and placed here. Some instances of displacement due to natural disasters and fires are also covered by this category.

### **Punishment for non-compliance with orders**

Material under this heading demonstrates that orders from the military and civil authorities, including those for implementation of cropping policies, are compulsory, and that any resistance or non-compliance is punished -- with fines, imprisonment, physical violence, and in at least one case (of resistance to Jetophra cultivation in Chin State), the threat of a death sentence.

### **Other threats to human security**

This section covers factors which may be direct, independent causes of displacement but which generally act in combination with others to make it more and more difficult for people to survive in their home place. Coercive measures such as forced labour, extortion, forced agriculture and land confiscation, for instance, reduce household incomes and thus contribute towards economic suffering, within the general context of declining levels of human security. The main categories are:

### **Land confiscation**

Where a household is entirely or largely dependent on the land, land confiscation can be a direct cause of displacement, as well as a factor contributing, along with other pressures, to the reduction of the family resource base, pushing down incomes and reducing human security to a level that frequently leads to displacement. In the survey conducted for this report, land confiscation was reported in the rural areas of all states and divisions. Of the 560 respondents to the survey conducted for this report, 39.1% gave land confiscation as a reason for leaving home.

### ***Key links on land confiscation in Burma***

[Burma Human Rights Yearbooks, from 1994](#)

See above for description

### **Implantation of settlers**

In most situations covered by this report, this form of demographic engineering has a largely political goal, namely to dilute the non-Burman Buddhist population, especially of Northern Arakan, where (Muslim) Rohingyas are relocated and non-Muslim settlers settled on their former lands. It also operates, to a lesser degree, in Mon and perhaps Kachin State and Sagaing Division (in the Kabaw Valley). The mass relocation of the Wa, which led to the displacement of Shan villagers in Southern Shan State, was carried out for somewhat different reasons. In the past, the implantation of settlers in Northern Arakan has largely involved the confiscation of land, but recent reports describe the destruction of houses and the eviction of the former inhabitants, thus constituting an act of direct forced displacement.

## **Forced labour**

Forced labour is reported in all parts of Burma, though less in urban areas. This practice, especially forced portering and other especially brutal forms of forced labour, amounting to torture, can be a direct cause of displacement. It also reduces the time people have to do their own work and thus pushes down family incomes. Those with some resources can pay someone to carry out their forced labour duties, but eventually, these resources may be exhausted and the person/family has the choice of doing the work or leaving. The most thorough and authoritative account of forced labour in Burma, the 1998 report of the ILO Commission of Inquiry, states that:

*“Families who were no longer able to support themselves often moved to an area where they thought the demands for forced labour would be less; if this was not possible, they would often leave Myanmar as refugees. Information provided to the Commission indicated that forced labour was a major reason behind people leaving Myanmar and becoming refugees.” and that: The impossibility of making a living because of the amount of forced labour exacted is a frequent reason for fleeing the country.”*

The 1999 World Bank report<sup>14</sup> states that “... *economic development projects, armed conflict and **extensive use of forced labor** [emphasis added] have all contributed to rural displacement.*” In the survey conducted for the present report, forced labour was given by 59.9% of respondents as a reason for leaving home.

### ***Key links on forced labour in Burma***

#### [Forced labour in Myanmar \(Burma\) ILO Commission of Inquiry, 1998](#)

See above for description

#### [Observations on Myanmar by the ILO Committee of Experts](#)

The ILO Committee of Experts on Conventions and Recommendations is the senior regular ILO body examining the obligations of States Parties to ILO conventions.

#### [Burma Human Rights Yearbooks, from 1994](#)

See especially the sections on forced labour, but also the chapters on Deprivation of Livelihood.

## **Robbery, extortion, arbitrary taxation**

The practice of extortion and arbitrary taxation is reported from all parts of Burma. It involves demands for goods and cash, normally on the pretext of fees and taxes, e.g. for ceremonies or development projects, devised by the military and civil authorities. Though the paddy quota system was abolished in 2003, the civil and military authorities in some parts of the country still require farmers to sell them rice at below market price. See also

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<sup>14</sup> *ibid.* p 17 (para 2.15)

the section on coercive agricultural policies, below. Extortion and arbitrary taxation directly reduce the family income, frequently leading to food scarcity either as a single cause or in combination with other coercive measures.

Extortion/heavy and arbitrary taxation is given by 60% of the Survey respondents as a reason for leaving home.

***Key links on Robbery, extortion, arbitrary taxation***

[Burma Human Rights Yearbooks, from 1994](#)

(Especially the sections on Deprivation of Livelihood)

**Compulsory (and frequently ruinous) cropping and marketing policies**

One of the key policy objectives of SLORC/SPDC is urban stability. A means to this end is to ensure that the army and the cities, especially Rangoon, have adequate and affordable supplies of rice, lack of which can lead to urban unrest (there were rice shortages in Rangoon immediately preceding the resumption of direct power by the military in September 1988). In line with this objective, the military and civil authorities impose compulsory cropping and marketing practices on farmers throughout the country. Until 2003 these included a paddy procurement system whereby farmers were obliged to sell a portion of their rice crop to the state at below market prices. Since the quota was based on acreage rather than yield, a poor harvest frequently required the farmers to buy paddy at the market price to sell at the low quota price to the government, often leading to heavy debt and deeper poverty. In 2003 the system was abolished, though there are reports that some army units, especially in rice-deficit areas, continue the practice, that farmers in some townships are asked to sell a portion of their harvest to the local authorities at below market prices and that in some cases, the sale of rice across divisions/states is banned. Early in 2007, the Rangoon local authorities forced rice traders/brokers not to sell rice at more than the price fixed at harvest time. Currently, one of the most onerous forms of Government interference in farming is the compulsory growing of Summer rice, frequently at the wrong time of the year, in the wrong soil and weather conditions and without adequate fertilizer or irrigation. The current nationwide scheme to grow *Jatropha* (physic or castor oil plant) plants for bio-diesel is another drain on the farmers' resource base. While engaged in such compulsory cultivation, a family cannot do its own work, thus lowering its income. Income levels in remote villages relatively free of agricultural interference by the State are higher than those near population centres -- normally, villages near cities are wealthier on account of their access to urban markets. At the national level, restrictions on rice exports keep rice prices low, discouraging investment by farmers, millers and traders and thus contributing to the depressed state of the economy.

Ruinous agricultural cropping and marketing policies were given by 18.6% of the survey respondents as a reason for leaving home.

### ***Key links on coercive agricultural policies***

[Burma Human Rights Yearbooks, from 1994](#)  
(Especially the sections on Deprivation of Livelihood)

### **Militarization**

A strong military presence in an area, e.g. in Eastern and Northern Shan State, in Chin State and in Arakan, where the Nasaka and the army demand land, forced labour and other resources, increases all the other pressures described in this report and may be seen as one of the root causes of the decline in human security and thus of displacement. There is a stronger military presence in the States than in most Divisions (apart from Tenasserim and East Pegu). Flight from military recruitment is mentioned in the survey as a reason for leaving home, especially in Chin State. Outside the actual conflict areas, Eastern and Northern Shan State, Chin, Kachin and Arakan States are the most highly militarized, though actual figures are hard to come by and estimates vary.

### ***Key links on militarization in Burma***

[Burma Human Rights Yearbooks, from 1994](#)

[Voice of the Hungry Nation \(People's Tribunal on Food Scarcity and Militarization in Burma\)](#) Convened in 1999 by the Asian Human Rights Commission – See their website at <http://www.ahrchk.net/index.php>

### **Other coercive measures**

While most of the other categories are based on a large number of reports from all parts of Burma, this category, “other coercive measures”, is based on reports which mainly refer to specific States and Divisions, or to measures for which there are rather few reports. In Northern Arakan, for instance, but nowhere else in the country, the restriction on marriage is now reported to be the main reason that young people leave home, and fear of arrest or forced recruitment into the Burma army is mainly reported in Arakan and Chin State. What is perceived as religious discrimination is a major factor contributing to the movement of Rohingya (Muslim) and Chin (Christian). The lack of health and education services is mentioned in some reports and spontaneously by several respondents to the survey as a reason for leaving home. Political harassment is mentioned by a few people from different States and Divisions as a reason for leaving home. These measures are covered in the Summaries and in the Documents and Links either as “Other Coercive Measures” or, if warranted by the material, in separate categories.

### ***Key links on coercive measures in Burma***

[Burma Human Rights Yearbooks, from 1994](#)  
Especially the sections on Deprivation of Livelihood

## **Food insecurity**

Access to food occupies a key place in the hierarchy of human security, since food is vital to human survival, and historically and globally, hunger is one of the principal motives for populations to move. This is no less true in Burma, where general levels of malnutrition are very high according to UN agencies and specialized NGOs. The People's Tribunal on Food Scarcity and Militarization in Burma convened by the Asian Human Rights Commission in 1999, found hunger and food scarcity throughout Burma, due to policies which largely correspond to the “threats to human security” listed in this report. In 2006 the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food sent a number of communications to the Government of Myanmar, (A/HRC/4/30/Add.1) expressing his concern about violations of the Right to Food in several parts of the country. These included communications on land confiscation and coercive agricultural policies. Food insecurity in Burma, produced by the reduction of household incomes by a combination of coercive and economic factors, is frequently the immediate trigger to displacement.

Food insecurity (“could not feed myself/my family”) is given by 69.8% of the respondents as a reason for leaving home in the survey conducted for this report.

### ***Key links on food insecurity in Burma***

[Burma Human Rights Yearbooks, from 1994](#)

[Human Rights Year Book Burma 2005 \(Chapter on Deprivation of Livelihood\)](#)

[Voice of the Hungry Nation \(People’s Tribunal on Food Scarcity and Militarization in Burma\)](#)

## **Natural disasters, fires**

This report does not go into great detail on these topics. However, they should at least be flagged, since floods, whether due to over-logging or to heavy rains, do cause displacement; not all crop failures can be blamed on military meddling in agriculture, but in some cases are due to weather conditions; and the 2004 tsunami did displace people in Burma. Heavy rains periodically cause widespread flooding across Burma, inundating villages and farmland. In October 2006, for instance, more than 3,000 homes and farmland were inundated, with Rangoon, Magwe, Mandalay, Sagaing and Shan State particularly hard hit. A cyclone in Arakan in May 2004 killed 200 and made 20,000 homeless. The December 2004 tsunami killed about 80 people and displaced several thousand, mainly in the Irrawaddy Delta.

Fires, whether started deliberately or accidentally, have been one of the major reasons that people have moved out of Burmese cities. The successive military regimes have rarely allowed people to return to re-build their houses. Instead, the victims have been dumped in satellite towns or the pre-satellite rice fields. In February 2005, a major fire in

Mandalay destroyed more than 70 homes and left over 200 families homeless. In November 2005, a fire in Hlaing Township, Rangoon Division destroyed a large residential area. Some victims were provided with new homes, but others were relocated 20 miles out of the city

## Methodology

Information for this report was gathered over the period July 2006-March 2007. Sources were: Internet searches, correspondence and meeting with international agencies, Burma experts and groups, reading of books and scholarly texts and the design, administration and analysis of a survey. The questionnaire was in English and Burmese and the interviews were carried out in November and December 2006 by Arakanese, Burmese, Shan, Chin, Karen and English speakers (including the author) at several sites in Thailand, India and Malaysia with 560 Burmese migrants and refugees.

The relatively small size of the sample means that the results must be seen as indicative rather than conclusive. This is particularly the case with some States and Divisions, for which there were very few respondents. However one of the survey findings, that no respondents stated that they had left home for purely economic reasons, but that coercive measures were always present, corresponds to the findings of other surveys and reports. Amnesty International, for instance, states that “*Migrants interviewed by Amnesty International had left their homes in Myanmar for a variety of reasons, including the inability to find a job; confiscation of their houses and land by the military; and fear that if they remained they would be subjected to human rights violations, including forced labour*”. Amnesty International, “*Myanmar: Leaving Home*” 8 September 2005. See also the extract from a report by Refugees International and Open Society Institute on page 10,above)

### A note on sources

In common with most reports on Burma (apart from those by the SPDC and some international agencies and institutions) this study is based largely on information gathered outside the country. It draws on the reports of the Special Rapporteurs on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, the International Labour Organisation and other multilateral entities, on reports by governments, humanitarian and human rights monitoring organisations, on books and other studies, on consultations with Burmese and non-Burmese experts and on a survey conducted for this report with 560 refugees and migrants from Burma. It also draws on material produced by Burman and non-Burman media critical of the SPDC. Media freedom in Burma is among the worst in the world according to media monitoring organisations such as The World Association of Newspapers, Reporters sans Frontieres and Freedom House. Apart from official publications and a handful of magazines operating under censorship restrictions, any reporting in Burma is illegal and dangerous. There are, however, a few publications, mainly online news groups, operating

from outside the country. Those used in this report include [\*The Irrawaddy\*](#), [\*The Democratic Voice of Burma\*](#) and [\*Mizzima News\*](#) which seek to cover the whole of Burma, and several cross-border groups which focus largely on a single region -- [\*Narinjara News\*](#) and [\*Kaladan News\*](#) (Arakan State), [\*Rhododendron\*](#) and [\*Khonumthung News\*](#) (Chin State), [\*Kachin News\*](#) (Kachin State) and the [\*Monthly Reports\*](#) of the Shan Human Rights Foundation (Shan State). Areas such as Pegu Division, Magwe Division and Mandalay Division are not covered by any specialized source and information is hard to find. Most of these media groups, although largely critical of the SPDC, have developed professional reporting methods and some, for example, the Shan Human Rights Foundation, *The Irrawaddy* and the Chin Human Rights Organization, are cited in reports by the International Labour Organisation and the US Department of State, and their material is used by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar. One factor contributing to accuracy in reporting on the Thailand-Burma border is that there are so many different groups and kinds of groups working there -- diplomats, journalists, international and local human rights groups, humanitarian agencies etc. -- that a high degree of cross-checking is possible. This is less so on other borders and inside the country, which raises the question of how to use material from sources critical of the military regime where there is little in the way of corroboration -- indeed, where one source may provide the only coverage for some areas. This report uses such material, but we suggest that where there is a lack of corroboration, specific details -- e.g. the route to be taken by a pipeline, or the exact number of people evicted from a village -- be viewed with caution, and the position of the source taken into account. A major cause of inaccuracy in reporting -- and not only in Burma -- is incomplete knowledge of events or projects, which brings us back to the general problem of restricted access for media and other researchers, thus the request in the Future Research section, below, that those working inside the country do more to share information with researchers, and that every effort be made to open up more space for independent, in-country research.

## Future research

\* There should be greater collaboration between organisations and researchers working inside the country and those working outside. Surveys conducted outside Burma can complement those carried out inside the country. In-country surveys, though having a much wider geographic and social reach, typically do not ask questions on such “sensitive” subjects as forced labour or land confiscation that might result in criticism of the government and might be risky for both interviewer and interviewee if made public. Border interviews are not inhibited in this way.

\* Research is needed into the degree and precise manner by which such coercive measures as described in this report contribute to poverty and displacement. More research is also needed on specifying what kinds of projects involve displacement -- e.g. transport and energy infrastructure projects, commercial ventures, including tourism projects and army projects (both commercial and military) and, of course, agricultural “development” projects.

\* The results from the survey carried out for this study correspond roughly to those of other reports, with most respondents stating that they left home in order to escape forced labour, extortion and other coercive measures, or the economic consequences of such measures. However, since few of the public results of the other reports were disaggregated by place of origin, it is not possible to make an exact geographical correlation. Future surveys should be built on representative samples from all states and divisions in Burma and should disaggregate results by place of origin. .

\* In-depth interviews should be used to ascertain the relative strengths of people's motives for leaving home – e.g. was forced labour a more important factor for leaving home than land confiscation, and if so, why? What was the relative strength of the “pull” factor of earning more money? N.B. It is important not to confuse the issues of “leaving home” and “leaving Burma”.

\* Research is needed into the degree and precise manner by which such coercive measures as are described in this report contribute to poverty and displacement.

\* What differences are there in the subsequent pattern of movement of those relocated by government order (mainly groups) and those who left home as a result of declining levels of human security (mainly individuals and families)?

\* What is the current status of the Urban Resettlement Programme described in the UN Habitat report of 1991? Does it still exist as a government programme, or have its functions been replaced by more *ad hoc* projects related to commercial and military undertakings?

Specific questions that might be addressed by researchers and other actors could include:

What are the patterns of urban and peri-urban population movement (both into and out of the inner city and into and out of the satellite towns)?

When people leave their towns and villages as a result of declining levels of human security, where do they go? -- from village to town, from (smaller?) to (larger?) towns? to the satellite towns of the larger cities? to the inner cities?

How long do they stay there? Do they generally go where they have family and friends?

Do people gravitate to the satellite towns, and if so, how long, on average, do they stay there?

Is there a difference in patterns of movement between those who come from a village and those who come from a town?

What proportion move on to foreign countries? How many return home within a year/six months?



How many families send out an individual who calls other family members if he/she finds a suitable situation?

What gender variation is there in patterns of movement?

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# Introductions to the documents

State/Division sections of the 500 pages or so of documents are accessible by hyper-link at the foot of each summary (see below). The summaries form an introduction to this material, which will be periodically updated .

## Arakan State

### Overview<sup>15</sup>

A major root cause of displacement in Arakan is the increased presence, and thereby pressure on the people, of the Burma army, with its demands for (uncompensated) labour, land and other resources. Land confiscation in particular has been a burden on the people. Another, mainly affecting northern Arakan, is the construction of “model villages” which has recently involved the eviction of the (Muslim) Rohingyas, the appropriation of their land, the destruction of their houses and their replacement by (Buddhist) Rakhines and Burmans, not all of whom are voluntary settlers.

Survey respondents (77) from Arakan State -- mostly Rakhine Buddhists -- gave these reasons for leaving home: Economic motive, 78.2%; Natural Disaster, 6.4%; Forced Labour, 66.7%; Other human rights violations, 69.2%; Restriction of movement, 34.6%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 66.7%; Food insecurity, 87.5%; Land confiscation, 53.8%.

### Forced relocation/evictions (rural)

Forced eviction and land confiscation are widely practiced in northern Arakan State and this has led to the displacement of Rohingya. Arakan State is heavily militarized and most forced relocation in Arakan State is connected to the SPDC's efforts to construct military and police camps, settle Buddhist people in "model villages" and establish farm-lands to support SPDC security personnel and new settlers. There have also been reports of security forces evicting civilians in order to use land for commercial purposes, such as establishing rice and shrimp farms. Furthermore, evictions based on old land-use demarcations have reportedly become more frequent since 2002. People who have built their homes or farms on land which had decades ago been demarcated for other uses have been forcibly evicted and ordered to dismantle their homes/farms.

### Punishment for non-compliance with orders

In Arakan, violence is used to ensure compliance with orders.

### Other threats to human security

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<sup>15</sup> With the exception of the conflict and post-conflict areas of Eastern Burma, there is more information on forced migration in Arakan State than for the rest of Burma. This is due in part to the relatively permeable border between Arakan and Bangladesh, giving access to international human rights groups including Amnesty International, the Arakan specialist monitoring group, The Arakan Project, and two local media groups, the Kaladan News Group and the Narinjara News Group.

### **Militarization**

Apart from the conflict areas of the East, Arakan State is one of the most militarized parts of the country. The large military presence adds an extra level of forced labour, land confiscation, extortion etc. to that experienced by people in the less militarized areas, since the Burmese military since 1998 have been ordered to find their food and other supplies in the field, i.e. from the people -- what the ILO has called a policy of “self-reliance”. This drives down the levels of human security to crisis point and people leave home both to neighbouring countries and to other parts of Burma.

### **Land confiscation**

Land is confiscated for the construction of model villages (see “Implantation of Settlers”, below), army camps, army farms and commercial projects such as shrimp farms, frequently in collaboration with wealthy businessmen. In addition to the loss of land, this use has resulted in a decrease in water resources for local people and less grazing land for livestock.

### **Implantation of settlers**

A programme of demographic engineering is underway in Northern Arakan State, designed to dilute the (Muslim) Rohingya population by the implantation of (Buddhist) Rakhine and Burman settlers. This is being carried out with the construction of “model villages” for the settlers which typically involves land confiscation and recently the forced eviction of Rohingyas and the demolition of their houses.

### **Forced Labour**

Forced labour in Northern Arakan is mainly used for paddy cultivation for the military and NaSaKa; clearing jungles and preparing commercial tree plantations; repairing roads and bridges; maintaining and repairing army camps; collecting bamboo and wood for commercial use by the authorities; sentry duty; portering; brick baking; supplying gravel/stone for roads and building and constructing model villages. Forced labour has reached such an unbearable level that, combined with other abuses and the high price of rice, it has the potentiality to trigger a new refugee outflow to Bangladesh.

### **Robbery, extortion and arbitrary taxation**

Extortion by the military is a major drain on the resources of villagers in Arakan State. Recent reports claim that the military extorts fees from fishermen for permission to fish, steals fish from the fishermen; steals livestock, cash and goods from traders and farmers; kills cattle for meat; demands rice, firewood, and other materials on a regular basis.

### **Food Insecurity**

In 2005 forced labour, together with excessive demands for supplies, arbitrary taxation, a late monsoon, high rice prices and a ban on rice transportation contributed in creating a situation of hunger. A major food crisis was only averted thanks to emergency international food distribution, initially hampered by the authorities.

### **Compulsory (and frequently ruinous) cropping and marketing policies**

Local authorities are pressuring farmers to cultivate dry season paddy without the necessary irrigation or inputs, and threaten any who do not obey with the loss of their land. In Arakan, as in the rest of the country, people are required to grow Jetophra (physic or castor oil) plants, for bio-fuel, leading to forced labour, extortion and land confiscation. Those unable to fulfill their quota are fined. The plan is to put 500,000 acres of land under physic nut cultivation in each State over the next 3 years.

### **Discrimination**

Legal, social and religious discrimination against the Rohingya exists at many levels. Since the drafting of the 1982 Citizenship Law by the Ne Win Government, they have been denied Burmese citizenship. They need official permission to travel, even to neighbouring villages. Since the process is slow, this has led to deaths of people unable to reach a hospital in time, and restricts the Rohingyas' access to markets and jobs. Permission is also required to marry, which takes a long time to be granted. The desire to marry is now said to be the main reason for young people to leave home, usually going to Bangladesh. Physical violence, including sexual violence, has been reported against the Rohingya, especially by the military. The Rohingya are said to be more subject to forced labour than Buddhists.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at  
<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Arakan-docs.pdf>**

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# Chin State

## Overview

A major root cause of forced migration in Chin State is militarization, which gives rise to high levels of forced labour, land confiscation and extortion. Another reason frequently given for leaving home is the coercive agricultural policies which require people to cultivate tea and *Jatropha* (physic/castor oil) plants, either on their own land or on army plantations. There are a number of reports of evictions and relocations thought to be motivated by religious intolerance – confiscation of land of Chin Christians for use by Buddhists, including the expansion of monasteries.

In the survey conducted for this report, out of 53 respondents, Chin people gave, as reasons for leaving home: Forced labour – 75.5%; Extortion/heavy taxation - 84.9%; Restriction of movement – 47.2%, Food insecurity – 81.1%; Land confiscation – 15.1% and Economic motives, 39.6%.

## Forced relocations/evictions (rural)

According to various sources, over the years, about 50,000 Chin people have abandoned their homeland and taken refuge in foreign countries.

A group of Chin village headmen meeting in India in November 2006 stated that in the previous 12 months, from their villages and townships, out of 250 households, 54 had left; out of 20 households, 13 had left; out of 80 households, 4 had left, out of (unknown) 200 had left; out of 90 households, 12-15 had left; out of 50 households, 3 had left; and out of 240 households, 116 had left. They said the main causes of forced migration in Chin State were forced labour, extortion by the authorities, oppressive crop policies (*castor oil*) and heavy taxation.

Reports state that houses and farm huts have been burnt down on the grounds that their owners had links with the Chin National Front; that people have been evicted from their homes for expansion of Buddhist facilities, for military camps and other installations, or roads.

## Punishment for non-compliance with orders

People have been threatened with death for criticising *Jatropha* cultivation and with “severe punishment” for non-compliance with orders, including for forced labour and extortion.

## Other threats to human security

### **Militarization**

Militarization may well be the main root cause of forced migration in Chin State. Most of the sections below cite forced labour for the military, including compulsory military training and portering, extortion by the military and land confiscation for military installations

### **Land confiscation**

There is a report that land has been confiscated from Chin Christians to build a Buddhist monastery-cum-orphanage, under military patronage, and that the orphans and workers who wish to be admitted to the facility will have to convert to Buddhism. Numerous reports refer to land confiscation for Jetropha and tea plantations by local authorities. The reports state that no compensation is paid. For several years the regime has been promoting Chin State as a tea-growing centre, which has involved a large amount of land confiscation.

### **Forced labour**

Reports of forced labour in Chin State frequently refer to forced labour for the military including forcible military training (with heavy penalties for non-attendance), digging of trenches, the requisition of people, including women (who are also subject to sexual harassment), for landmine sweeping and forced portering of military supplies, the construction of army outposts and bunkers encircling military camps on the Indo-Burma border area and doing menial work for the soldiers. Other forced labour reported was building schools, Buddhist pagodas and monuments (the Chin are Christian), road construction, including the India-Burma border trade road, the cultivation of Jetropha (physic/castor oil) plants, and forced labour on tea and Jetropha plantations.

### **Extortion. arbitrary taxation**

Extortion reported includes the collection of money by the military to renovate fences around army camps on the Indo–Burma border area and the arbitrary taxing of slash-and-burn farmers; military demands for goods at below-market prices. Compulsory donations of rice and chickens to the military and forced financial contributions to the local TPDC are also described. Other reports claim that (Christian) Chin have been made to contribute towards Buddhist festivals. Other reports describe the confiscation of goods and stealing of cash from traders.

### **Compulsory (and frequently ruinous) cropping and marketing policies**

Largely the forced cultivation of tea and Jetropha (physic/castor oil) plants on people's own land or on plantations. This (unpaid) work both leaves people less time to do their own work, thus reducing their incomes, and takes up land, thus further reducing the household resource base. In some cases, land is confiscated to grow the plant. People opposing Jetropha have been threatened with a death sentence by the military.

### **Discrimination**

There are a number of reports describing religious intolerance against the Chin (of whom 90% are Christian). These include forced labour building Buddhist pagodas and monuments, restrictions against building churches, the destruction of churches and crosses,

(and the building of Buddhist monuments on the former Christian sites) the disruption of church services, imprisonment and physical attacks against pastors and church leaders.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at**  
**<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Chin-docs.pdf>**

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# Irrawaddy Division

## Overview

We do not have sufficient data to arrive at a well-grounded overview for Irrawaddy Division

Respondents to the Survey (75) gave as reasons for leaving: Economic motive, 82.9%; Natural Disaster, 14.5%; Forced Labour, 81.6%; Other human rights violations, 80.9%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 70.6%; Food insecurity, 86.8%; Land confiscation, 35.5%.

## Forced relocations/evictions (rural)

We have found no reports of actual relocation of villages in Irrawaddy Division, but one village was threatened with relocation on the grounds that it had sympathies with the Karen National Union.

## Other threats to human security

### Land confiscation

According to a number of reports, the military authorities have confiscated farming land from farmers for various projects including cashew nut and rubber plantations, oil and gas exploration, an industrial zone, farms administered by prison authorities and a tourist resort. The “Ngwe Saung Beach Resort Project, 2000” a tourism project ongoing in 2004, involved the confiscation of houses, land and gardens of five villages with minimal compensation. The villagers were relocated to farmland confiscated from villagers of Main Nga-Hsaw village without any compensation at all. 50% of households in Irrawaddy Division are now reported to be landless.

### Forced labour

There are numerous reports of forced labour for road-and bridge-building in Irrawaddy Division, cited by numerous testimonies and reports as a major cause of leaving home.

### Extortion, arbitrary taxation

300 acres of farmland were reported to have been destroyed because the owners could not pay bribes to the local authorities; a senior fire officer extorted fines on the grounds of fire hazards; two Burmese farmers who reported the extortion of money from villagers by the local authority were sentenced to two years in prison; farmers were forced to buy agricultural tools; some farmers disappeared after having complained about the paddy procurement pricing.

### Food insecurity

A witness from Irrawaddy Division told the *People's Tribunal on Food Scarcity and Militarization in Burma* in 1999 that children had starved to death in his village, that forced labour (on road-building) reduced his capacity to earn an income, and he was weak and sickly. He stressed the problem of rising food prices and unchanged wages and



being unable to afford health services. He said that he could not survive in the village, and with increasing restrictions and demands by various authorities, it was becoming more and more difficult to earn a living this way. When he moved to a town, things improved. Another witness said that paddy quotas and forced labour impoverished people.

### **Compulsory (and frequently ruinous) cropping and marketing policies**

The authorities have been forcing farmers in Irrawaddy Division to grow wetland paddy out of season at the wrong places and dry season paddy without adequate inputs. The crops fail and the farmers suffer. Those who do not obey the orders or complain are prosecuted. Farmers and rice merchants are suffering on account of the government's tampering with the rice price. The authorities have been forcibly selling corn seeds to farmers at vastly inflated prices, further reducing their incomes.

### **Natural disasters, fires**

Late-arriving monsoon downpours and frosts have frequently caused severe damages to cold season bean and lentil crops grown along the Irrawaddy River and the farmers are in serious danger of losing their capital, investments and accumulating massive debts. Burmese fishermen from Kha Pyat Thauung Village, Laputa Township in the delta region of Irrawaddy Division who were hardest hit by recent tsunamis, are still too scared to return to sea for fishing and their family members are in danger of starving as they have no other way to make a living. A large number of people in the Irrawaddy Delta were killed or rendered homeless by the December 2004 tsunami. In August 2004 there was severe flooding in Irrawaddy Division due to heavy monsoon rains which caused dams to collapse and canals to break through their banks.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at  
<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Irrawaddy-docs.pdf>**

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# Kachin State

## Overview

The root cause of forced migration in Kachin State is the increased presence of the Burma army, which is engaged in administrative and commercial as well as military activities. These have involved widespread confiscation of land and other property, and forced labour is reported in the extraction of logs as well as work on roads and bridges.

Kachin respondents (20) to the survey gave as reasons for leaving home: Economic motive, 80%; Natural Disaster, 10%; Forced Labour, 55%; Other human rights violations, 75%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 55%; Food insecurity, 40%; Land confiscation, 5%.

## Forced relocations/evictions (rural)

From 1962 to 1994, when the KIO signed a cease-fire with SLORC, the Burmese military forcibly relocated as many as 100,000 non-combatants as part of their counter insurgency campaign. Since 1994, the Burma army has confiscated land for army agriculture and road building, as well as for gold and jade mining, leading to forced migration. According to EarthRights International, "The SPDC and private companies have previously worked together to forcibly evict villagers living in areas where the regime has granted mining concessions. This practice is consistent with the countrywide pattern of increased militarization of rural border areas, ostensibly for purposes of national 'development.' "

## Punishment for non-compliance with orders

According to the *Democratic Voice of Burma*, the Burmese authorities at Bhamo, Kachin State, issued an edict stating that anyone criticising the government's physic nut plantation projects would be arrested and prosecuted.

## Other threats to human security

### Militarization

Between 1992 and 2006, the number of Burma Army battalions in northern Kachin State at least doubled (some say, tripled) and extensive military outposts increased the SPDC's reach into hitherto "uncontrolled" areas.

### Land confiscation

The military build-up has been accompanied by widespread confiscation of valuable farming land and other property, without compensation, for military and administrative purposes as well as for mining and other commercial operations, including rubber and nut plantations. In Hugawng valley, for instance, public and private buildings have been seized and one third of the surrounding farmland confiscated.

### **Implantation of settlers**

There are anecdotal reports of the in-migration of ethnic Burman settlers from lower Burma. Military families have occupied much of the confiscated houses and land and, in a move which parallels events in Mon State, army veterans have been appointed to administrative positions in the municipal and local community. (In Mon State, these officials are helping to build up the local USDA. This might also be happening in Kachin State).

### **Forced labour**

Forced labour has been widely reported for the construction or repair of roads, bridges and military bases, on logging projects and work on military farms.

### **Robbery, extortion and arbitrary taxation**

Soldiers routinely extort money from villagers under various pretexts. Animals have been killed for meat or stolen.

### **Compulsory (and frequently ruinous) cropping and marketing policies**

People are required to grow summer paddy without adequate inputs and Jetropha (physic and castor oil) plants for bio-fuel and are fined or otherwise punished if they resist or do not fulfill the quota. These activities reduce people's resource base in terms of time and land, and drive down household incomes.

### **Discrimination**

According to *Valley of Darkness* "No local Kachin writings can be seen on street signs, sign boards at the bridges, or on public buildings anymore. There are only names and inscriptions by the army officers written in Burmese." Christian Solidarity Worldwide has claimed that anti-Christian activities are rife in Kachin State.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at**  
**<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Kachin-docs.pdf>**

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# Magwe Division

## Overview

Relocation for infrastructure projects, added to coercive agricultural policies, land confiscation for institutional, commercial and private use, along with widespread forced labour and extortion are the major factors leading to displacement in Magwe Division.

Out of 70 Survey respondents from Magwe Division these reasons were given for leaving home: Economic motive, 82%; Natural Disaster, 1.4%; Forced Labour, 84.1%; Other human rights violations, 65.2%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 63.8%; Food insecurity, 85.5%; Land confiscation, 43.5%.

## Forced relocations/evictions (rural)

A number of villages in different townships in Magwe Division have been relocated to make way for reservoir and dam projects. In another relocation, 250 households were moved close to an army base.

## Other threats to human security

### Land confiscation

There are numerous reports of confiscation without compensation of productive farmland in Magwe Division by military, civilian and commercial bodies. In a number of townships, farms have been confiscated for the construction of Defence Equipment Factories, for food supply to these factories, for army houses and farms, including an army cotton plantation project, as pasturelands of army horses and for private military commercial gain. Farms have been confiscated for the extension of town housing, for school buildings and sports grounds.

### Forced labour

Reports on unpaid forced labour for the military include work on army farms, building army barracks, cutting wood, carrying waters and making furniture for army officers. Villagers have been made to leave their work and travel to various locations for military training, and pay all expenses themselves. Forced labour for civilian authorities includes building canals and dykes as part of the official projects to turn dry-land farms into wet-land paddy fields; on road-building and quarrying (a case where a man was killed while doing forced labour in a quarry was taken up by the ILO). Other reports include forced labour on the cultivation of castor oil plants, tree planting and portering for the Forestry Dept., orders by the authorities that people work in sugarcane fields for a privately owned sugar mill.

### Robbery, extortion, arbitrary taxation

Examples of extortion include: authorities and police extorting 2500 kyat for each square foot of sediment earth villagers obtained from the Irrawaddy River, the overt extortion of cash from farmers, forced donations for a pagoda, compulsory purchase of festival tickets

to benefit the police, and, through the agency of the USDA, compulsory purchase of ineffective, expensive fertilizers produced by a factory owned by the son of (former PM) Khin Nyunt.

**Compulsory (and frequently ruinous) cropping and marketing policies**

These include, as elsewhere in the country, compulsory cultivation of summer paddy and physic nut/castor oil seed plants. Some farmers were made to plant wetland rice shortly after they had been forced to grow summer rice, and to harvest the summer rice, though it was not ready. This is in a region which has no irrigation system where the farmers have traditionally grown sesame seeds, wheat, beans and other pulses and that requires less water than rice. The yields are said to be so low that the projects neither help the farmers nor the authorities. In some areas, farmers are required to sell rice to the authorities at low with the result that they are frequently ruined. The farmers in Pwintbyu Township, Magwe Division are being arrested for not able to sell rice to the government. They are only released when they could show the vouchers of sales to the government. While a ‘tin’ of rice fetches 2500 kyats in the black market, farmers are forced to sell their rice at 400 kyats per acre.

**Food insecurity**

Magwe was the subject (with Lashio, Kokang and Wa) of a WFP nutrition survey carried out April-June 2005. Magwe, along with the other survey areas, was identified as “food insecure.”

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at  
<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Magwe-docs.pdf>**

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# Mandalay Division

## Overview

The most dramatic relocations in Mandalay Division over the past three years involved the move of the capital to Pyinmana. Land confiscation has also occurred in other parts of the Division, and the coercive imposition of uninformed farming policies have also contributed to the pressures that lead people to leave home.

Survey respondents (56) from Mandalay Division gave these reasons for leaving home: Economic motive, 45.6%; Forced Labour, 38.6%; Other human rights violations, 42.1%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 33.3; Restriction of movement, 33.3; Food insecurity, 42.1%; Land confiscation, 57.9%.

## Forced relocations/evictions (rural)

The major relocations in Mandalay Division since 2005 have involved the move of the capital to Pyinmana, affecting both the people who were evicted from their homes and land to make way for the new city and the officials who were ordered, under threat of punishment if they resisted, to leave Rangoon and move there.

Several thousand villagers and residents of peri-urban areas were relocated in Pyinmana District to provide land for residences for senior generals, administrative offices, military barracks, national HQs for ceasefire groups and the USDA, bunkers, tunnels, a large military hospital, apartments, airstrips, a golf course, two luxury hotels, two large supermarkets and an airport. Land has been set aside for foreign embassies. It seems that little or no compensation was paid.

Other relocations in Mandalay Division include 200 households in Meikhtila Township who lived near to an army camp, which claims that the army owns the land. Others have been relocated to make way for a reservoir. There are reports that people from Mandalay have been relocated to Buthidaung and Maungdaw in Arakan State.

## Forced relocations/evictions (urban)

In 1990, 5000 people were relocated from their homes in Pagan to another site several miles away. Most commentators say that this was to enhance Pagan's standing as a tourist attraction (it contains the largest collection of pagodas in Burma). In the late '80s and early '90s, thousands of households in urban Mandalay were relocated to satellite towns in order to tidy up the city for tourists and to resettle "squatters".

## **Other threats to human security**

### **Land confiscation**

Land for the new capital was acquired by confiscating land from local farmers. Some farmers who lost all their farmland had to move to the suburb of Pinyinmana and sell snacks and do other menial jobs in order to feed their families. In 2004, 200 acres of land is reported to have been confiscated by the military authorities from local people Le-Way Township, Mandalay Division to build a new airport. There are reports that the authorities in Meikhtila Township have confiscated farmland to sell to property developers to build residential homes.

### **Forced labour**

The ILO Liaison Officer a.i. and the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar received information that extensive forced labour was being used by the army in Mandalay Division, including Pinyinmana.

### **Extortion, arbitrary taxation**

SPDC administrative officers are reported to have extorted cash and forced labour from village people on various pretexts.

### **Ruinous agricultural cropping and marketing policies**

Farmers in Mandalay Division (Dry Zone) are being ruined by being forced to grow wet-land rice out of season at the wrong places with no fertilizers or irrigation. Such crops inevitably fail.

### **Natural disasters, fires**

Severe floods in July 2004 and again in October 2006 made thousands of people homeless in central Burma, including Mandalay Division. In February 2005, a major fire in Mandalay destroyed more than 70 homes and left over 200 families homeless.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at**  
**<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Mandalay-docs.pdf>**

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## **Pegu Division (West)**

### **Overview**

Forced relocation, land confiscation and control over land and farmers' activities form the main focus of the reports available. Forced labour and extortion by civil and military authorities have also been reported.

Survey respondents (20) from Pegu Division (West) gave these reasons for leaving home: Economic motive, 47.6%; Forced Labour, 47.6%; Restriction of movement, 38.1%; Other human rights violations, 76.2%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 19%; Food insecurity, 38.1%; Land confiscation, 42%

### **Forced relocation/eviction (urban)**

The government in Bago forced residents to move off their land so that authorities could build an urban development project. The land was later deemed unsuitable, but the residents were not allowed to return. People have also been displaced by land-grabbing and manipulation of land legislation by the local authorities.

### **Punishment for non-compliance with orders**

(Regarding confiscation of land in West Pegu) some farmers have been imprisoned, fined, or their lands confiscated when they failed to obey orders to grow summer paddy.

### **Other threats to human security**

#### **Land confiscation**

Several cases of land confiscation are reported from Pegu Division. These include the confiscation of hundreds of paddy-fields and farmlands from farmers within Daik-U Township, Pegu Division in the construction of the Sittaung (Sittang) – Myitkyoe – Daik-U dual motorway-railway ... Aye Myint, a lawyer for the dispossessed farmers, was arrested and sentenced for bringing this and other cases to the ILO. He was subsequently released, but the land was not returned and no compensation was given. A veteran association and the pro-junta Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) confiscated 420 acres of pasturelands belonging to Phaungdawthi farmers and rented out the lands to the farmers again. Local authorities confiscated 50 acres of lands from Kamanet Village, Pegu Township, on the grounds of expanding an electricity supply compound.

#### **Forced Labour**

Burmese soldiers in charge of the security of railway tracks at Daik-U, Pegu Division in lower Burma have not only been forcing local people to guard the tracks but also beating up and fining those who refuse to clean brambles and bushes grown along the ancient railway



**Robbery, Extortion, arbitrary taxation**

Villagers at Kawa Township, Pegu Division in central Burma have been told by the local authorities to contribute to the construction of a sea water barrier. Those who own paddy fields have to pay 100 kyat per acre and landless households are forced to pay 600 kyat each. Farmers from West Pegu are ordered to grow summer paddy but the authorities do not sell them enough subsidised fertilisers at the official rate, 4,000 Kyats per 110lb bag. The local officials have been siphoning off the fertilisers and selling them on to black market traders who sell them back to the farmers at the 'outside' rate, around 20,000 Kyats per bag.

**Compulsory (and frequently ruinous) cropping and marketing policies**

Farmers from West Pegu are ordered to grow summer paddy but the authorities do not sell them enough subsidised fertilisers at the official rate. Farmers in West Pegu are being ordered to grow physic nuts, an unprofitable crop that reduces the time and land they have to grow more viable crops. Farmers have also complained that they are being ruined by the government's policy of forcing rice prices down.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at  
<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Pegu-docs.pdf>**

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# Rangoon Division

## Overview

Displacement of people from the rural areas surrounding Rangoon has largely been to provide space for those displaced from Rangoon, for the development of industrial zones, for military camps and factories, for road-building and for private or military commercial gain. Evictions from the city in the period following the resumption of direct power by the military in 1988 were part of the plan to make Rangoon more subject to military control, and for commercial gain. In the lead-up to the Visit Myanmar Year of 1996, evictions were part of the process to “beautify” the city

Survey respondents from Rangoon Division (86) gave these reasons for leaving home: Economic motive, 47.1%; Forced Labour, 14.9%; Other human rights violations, 55.2%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 47.1%; Food insecurity, 46%; Land confiscation, 31%.

## Forced relocations/evictions (rural, peri-urban)

Recent examples of rural evictions/relocations in Rangoon Division include a July 2006 report that 2000 acres were confiscated for a military factory from 200 farmers from Hmawbi Township. The report specifically states that the farmers were made homeless. Other reports, including the March 2007 report of the seizure of “thousands of acres of rice fields in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ) project area near Rangoon” imply, but do not state directly, that the farmers were displaced. Some of the cases were submitted to the ILO by labor lawyer Aye Myint, who said that he had “more than 600 cases on my hands [mainly from Rangoon, Pegu and Irrawaddy Divisions] —most of which are land confiscations by authorities.” Farmland for industrial use was confiscated without compensation for industrial use in the late ‘90s, when farmers were relocated to make way for industrial parks in the belt around Rangoon. Confiscation of farmland for urban resettlement programmes dates back at least to the evictions of 1989-1990 (see below).

## Forced relocation/eviction (urban)

Evictions were reported in April 2006 in which residents in Mayanggone Township were forced to dismantle their homes. In November 2005, most civil servants in Rangoon were made to move to the new administrative capital in Nay Pyi Taw near Pyinmana, Mandalay Division, where they were threatened with legal action if they resigned or abandoned their posts. The homeless victims of Rangoon Hlaing Township fire of November 2005 were forcibly relocated to new locations out of town by the local authorities. In 2002, residents near the historic Secretariat building were evicted so the area could be developed as a luxury residential zone.

The largest urban evictions of recent days took place in 1989-1990 when, a SLORC urban “squatter” resettlement programme moved 1.5 million people countrywide (16% of the urban population of Burma) from inner-city areas, with little or no compensation, to sites in paddy fields subject to flooding. The paddy fields had been confiscated without

compensation from farmers who themselves became displaced. The figure of those evicted from Rangoon in this period may be 500,000. UN Habitat warned that there would be problems without community participation in the programme. Other observers gave disturbing descriptions of social, health and economic conditions in the satellite towns. They also claimed that many of the victims were not squatters but owned houses to which they held title, and that the first people to be cleared out were from the areas which had given most support to the NLD in the 1990 elections. These evictions followed resettlement programmes conducted by Ne Win's Caretaker Government in 1958-60 and by the colonial government from at least 1921, when the Rangoon Development Trust reclaimed land along the rivers for residential purposes.

### **Punishment for non-compliance with orders**

People are arrested or fined if they do not obey orders for forced labour and other demands.

### **Other threats to human security**

#### **Land confiscation**

*(See also, "Forced relocations/evictions (rural)" above)*

Land near Rangoon is confiscated for residential, industrial and military purposes. Some of the actions stem from government orders, but much appears to be rent-seeking by military/ business interests. 'Forced land confiscation and labor rights abuses remain a problem in Burma, according to a leading Burmese labor activist and lawyer. "I have more than 600 cases on my hands—most of which are land confiscations by authorities," says Aye Myint, a labor lawyer who was imprisoned for representing damaged citizens and accused of "spreading false information..." "Thousands of acres of rice fields in the Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ) project area near Rangoon are being confiscated by junta authorities leaving thousands of farmers landless...The seized land is being sold to Chinese, Japanese and Indian investors..."

#### **Forced labour**

Apart from cases of forced recruitment of child soldiers sent to the ILO, there are few recent reports of forced labour in urban Rangoon. Some instances are given of farmers being made to do uncompensated rice cultivation in rural areas.

#### **Extortion, arbitrary taxation**

Soldiers and the local authorities forcibly collect rice and cash from households and impose arbitrary taxes and fines for non-contribution of forced labour and confiscate livestock.

#### **Food insecurity**

In 1999 the People's Tribunal on Food Scarcity and Militarization in Burma found that food scarcity affects Burma's cities as well as rural areas, and that the biggest problem of those living in Rangoon is feeding their families. According to the World Bank, also in 1999, conditions have deteriorated even further in peri-urban areas, with employment and

income prospects adversely affected in sectors like construction and tourism, with wages falling in relation to the price medical costs, school fees and, especially, food.

**Ruinous agricultural cropping and marketing policies**

Burmese military units were reported (in 2006, 3 years after the paddy quota was abolished) to be buying large quantities of rice at lower than market prices, according to farmers in and around Rangoon Division, causing a significant decrease in profits.

**Natural disasters, fires**

Recent late monsoon downpours at Thone Gwa Township in Rangoon Division, combined with the inconsiderate and reckless actions of the irrigation authorities, destroyed nearly one thousand acres of ready to harvest paddy fields of the Burmese farmers, according to local residents, who said that the authorities did nothing to help alleviate the pains of the farmers who have been under great pressure to pay back their loans and agricultural taxes. On 28 November 2005, a fire in Hlaing Township, Rangoon Division destroyed a large residential area. Those made homeless by the fire were initially transferred to provisional shelters at sports stadiums, interrogation centers and guest houses. Subsequently, many were moved without warning to a place 20 miles from their original homes.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at  
<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Rangoon-docs.pdf>**

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# Sagaing Division

## **Overview**

Major causes of displacement in Sagaing Division are relocations, land confiscation and forced labour for infrastructure projects such as roads, and dams, extortion and interference by the local authorities in agriculture.

## **Forced relocation/eviction (rural)**

Over 380 households were relocated recently for the construction of the proposed Tamanthi Dam on the Chindwin River. After 1989, there was a troop build-up in Kale Township and the military confiscated farmland for army installations. Those who had lost their paddy fields and farms to SPDC became jobless. They could not afford to send their children to school or pay for medical treatments and had to try to find work in town. Because of this, many local residents fled to India and some girls ended up in prostitution.

## **Punishment for non-compliance with orders**

Farmers from Kalemyo Township in Sagaing Division were arrested and detained by the local Burmese authorities for refusing to grow summer paddy.

## **Other threats to human security**

### **Land confiscation**

Thousands of acres of land have been confiscated in Sagaing Division for roads, including the Asian Highway, and for army installations.

### **Implantation of settlers**

The SPDC in Sagaing Division established three new villages between Kalay and Tamu town from March 2001. In the new three villages, only Burmese Buddhists are allowed to settle, although the surrounding areas have been co-inhabited by ethnic Chin and Shan-Bama decent.

### **Forced labour**

Villagers in Sagaing Division are reported to be subject to forced labour, including ploughing and harvesting paddy fields for the local authorities and the army, working in stone quarries for road-building projects, working on road and bridge construction, carrying army supplies, working in sugarcane fields to supply a privately-owned sugar mill and cleaning Kalay airport.

### **Extortion, arbitrary taxation**

Local authorities of Kale Township have been extorting money from people to build a bridge, on which they also have to work without pay. People in Pale Township have been fined for not being able to fulfill a cotton quota. The local authorities at Tamu are forcing

local farmers to sell rice to government rice buying centres even though most of the farmers have lost their crops in floods last year. Some farmers have to sell their working bulls and carts to buy rice from outside to sell to the government centre.

**Food insecurity**

Due to an unusually long spell of dry weather in central Burma Sagaing Division, local farmers are facing various difficulties, as they are unable to plough their fields or grow seedlings, and their animals are in danger of starving as traditional grazing pastures have shrunk.

**Ruinous agricultural cropping and marketing policies**

Local authorities in Tamu District are forcing farmers to grow to grow unproductive, low-yield summer paddy without providing sufficient supplies of water and fertilizers, which the farmers have to buy themselves. This means that they make a loss on the crop.

**Social and cultural factors**

(Christian) Nagas are reported to have been forcibly converted to Buddhism and made to do forced labour on building Buddhist pagodas.

**Natural disasters. Fires**

There were reports in 2003 and 2005 of shortages of food, including rice, due to the failure of the rains in central Burma. The farmers were unable to plough their fields or grow seedlings, and their animals were in danger of starving as traditional grazing pastures had shrunk.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at**

**<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Sagaing-docs.pdf>**

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# Eastern and Northern Shan State

## Overview

Along with the forced displacement of the Wa from 1999, the increased presence of the Burma army has been the root cause of displacement in northern and eastern Shan State. The army's policy of "self-reliance"<sup>16</sup> has led to evictions and widespread land confiscation, forced labour, extortion and other abuses which exacerbate an already fragile economy and drives down levels of human security.

Survey respondents from Eastern Shan State gave these reasons for leaving home: Economic motive, 33.5%; Natural Disasters, 4.2%; Forced Labour, 50%; Other human rights violations, 12.5%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 45.8%; Food insecurity, 54.2%; Land confiscation, 16.7%.

Survey respondents from Northern Shan State gave these reasons for leaving home: Economic motive, 86.1%; Natural Disasters, 5.6%; Forced Labour, 69.4%; Other human rights violations, 72.2%; Extortion/heavy taxation, 86.1%; Food insecurity, 80.6%; Land confiscation, 16.7%.

## Forced relocations/evictions (rural)

Several thousand people have been relocated and some are awaiting relocation for coal mining projects near Kengtung. Nothing is known of destination or compensation.

From the beginning of 2005, the United Wa State Army forcibly relocated about 600 Wa families from Pangyang township in the north to Murng Kaa area, and settled them on farmland confiscated from several thousand Shan, Palaung, Akha, Lahu, Akha and Lisu farmers, many of whom fled.

## Resettlement of the Wa, 1999-2001

From 1999, between 50,000 to 126,000 Wa hill farmers from north-eastern Shan State were forcibly moved 400km south, close to the Thai border. The removals were carried out by the United Wa State Army (USWA), in collaboration with the SPDC. The aim was ostensibly to provide more fertile land so that the farmers would not have to cultivate opium poppies, and was thus presented as an opium-eradication operation. From 4000 to 10,000 of the relocates are said to have died in 2000 alone, in the warmer climate, of malaria and other diseases. The displaced Wa in turn displaced approximately 48,000 local Shan, Lahu and Akha.

## Forced relocation/evictions (urban)

In May 2006, 5 families in No.1 quarter Kengtung town were evicted and their land confiscated to make way for the expansion of a police station. Since July 2005, people in 2

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<sup>16</sup> Since 1998, the Burma army units in the field have been ordered to live off the land – i.e. to get their food and other supplies from the local people.

satellite towns in Kengtung township have been forced to build new houses worth not less than 2 million kyat each by the SPDC township authorities. Their lands would be confiscated if the houses were not completed by April 2006.

## **Other threats to human security**

### **Land confiscation**

The Burmese military is expanding its presence in Shan State and has confiscated large areas of land to build new bases and expand existing facilities. The confiscated land is also used for army farms (since 1998, Rangoon has ordered the Burma army to be “self-sufficient” in food), and for military-owned plantations of cash crops such as *Jatropha* (physic/castor oil), rubber, vegetables and sugarcane. In one case, a large area of woodland and grassland in Murng Laang village tract in Kengtung township was confiscated for rubber plantations on which the military intended to plant 1 million rubber trees in 2006. In January 2006, tens of thousands of acres of cultivated land were confiscated by the SPDC military authorities for growing rubber trees in Mu-Se township. The confiscated land was mostly tea plantations, woodlands on which villagers grew trees for firewood as well as fruit orchards and gardens.

From the beginning of 2005, the USWA forcibly relocated about 600 Wa families from Panyang township in the north to Murng Kaa area, and settled them on farmland confiscated from several thousand Shan, Palaung, Akha, Lahu, Akha and Lisu farmers, many of whom fled.

In October 2004, villagers of Zawn-Zaw village in Mu-Se township were forced by SPDC authorities to destroy 10 acres of their own rice plants in the field near the bridge spanning the Nam Paw river, to make room for planting soya bean.

In 2001, the SPDC confiscated 20 acres of wet paddy fields and farmland in a Lahu village 3 miles southeast of Keng Tung for the construction of a technical college.

### **Implantation of settlers**

From April 2005, SPDC troops confiscated several square miles of cultivated land in Murng Kaa village tract in Tang-Yarn township in order to build a military base and other installations. Although the construction of the military base is still far from complete, the SPDC troops have already brought in not less than 50 of their families so far to settle in houses built by forced labour of the people and with materials, such as bamboo and thatches, requisitioned from the people. The 1999-2001 resettlement of the Wa (see above) may also be seen as an implantation of settlers which displaced local populations.

### **Forced labour**

Forced labour is used on army plantations or on other land confiscated from the farmers. In Ta Lur village tract, Tachilek, for instance, each household was required to grow castor oil/physic nut plants on 1 acre of land. The lands were designated by the SPDC authorities, usually farm and woodlands confiscated from the local people. Each household



had to cultivate the 1-acre plot of land designated to them. They had to clear the land, prepare the ground, build fences and then plant and take care of the plants.

Other forms of forced labour include portering for the military, doing sentry duty alongside SPDC troops and the people's militia, constructing army outposts, building and mending fences for army checkpoints, cutting bamboo for these and providing other materials, working on army farms, fetching water, gathering firewood, clearing army compounds and doing sanitation work, attending ceremonies and greeting senior officers.

People are so busy with forced labour that they do not have time to work for themselves.

### **Extortion, robbery, arbitrary taxation**

Stealing, arbitrary taxation, extortion of money and possessions in Shan State remain among the major causes depriving people of their livelihood and making them flee or move to other places in desperate search of means of survival. Anyone who refuses these forms of extortion faces action by the military authorities, frequently the confiscation of land and/or livestock and/or arrest and release only on the payment of large fines.

As part of the army's policy of self-reliance (living off the land) it uses a range of devices in Shan State to acquire land, money, goods and services from the people. These include: outright stealing of vehicles, livestock, rice and other food items, cash, household goods and valuables; demanding forced labour, including on projects like the forced cultivation of Jeteropha (physic/castor oil) plants and the forced purchase of Jeteropha saplings from the army; requisitioning vehicles for building and agricultural work; imposing various forms of arbitrary taxes or fines such as or transportation taxes, land taxes and crop taxes (taxes for growing crops on one's own land, including crops like rubber urged on the farmers by the military) ; demanding "donations" for various causes like the building of the new capital, for making copies of videos covering drug-burning ceremonies or to give to foreign dignitaries and reporters as presents; arresting people on various charges and releasing them only after receiving money, often considerable sums. Other devices are setting up checkpoints and taxing goods being carried.

Theoretically, forcible rice procurement at (fixed) low prices, frequently a fraction of the market price, was abandoned in 2003, but at the end of 2005 a new round of forcible rice purchase was reported in Shan State. Farmers who did not have enough rice to fill their quotas had to borrow or buy from other farmers and sell it to the traders. Failing to do so could result in land confiscation by the military authorities.

### **Ruinous agricultural cropping and marketing policies**

These include the demand that farmers grow dry-season rice for the military and the forcible cultivation of Jetropha (physic/castor oil) plants both on SPDC plantations and on people's own land, with the threat of land confiscation if they refuse or if the crop fails.

**Other human rights violations**

These include actual and attempted rapes, including of children, gang rapes, torture and killing. Other problems faced by the people include restriction of movement and obstacles to the registration of household members.

**Food insecurity**

The WFP has complained that curbs imposed by the army frustrates the agency's assistance programmes and that children under the age of five have been suffering from malnutrition due to mismanagement of the economy by the junta.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at**  
**<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Shan-docs.pdf>**

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## Urban and peri-urban areas

This section should ideally cover forced migration into and out of urban areas. However, I have seen virtually no information about movement **into** Rangoon, Mandalay and other cities, though I am convinced that it exists on a large scale. Most reports deal with the resettlement of people **from** the cities to satellite towns or pre-satellite paddy fields, and a selection of these is presented in the documents. There is also a serious lack of information on contemporary and recent urban displacement

From the documents annexed to the report, especially the Urban and peri-urban set, it appears that:

- \* Most people were unwilling to be resettled and resisted where possible.
- \* People were/are generally moved to worse physical and social conditions than they enjoyed previously, though see the reference below to Dagon Than Myint. Striking descriptions of the poor social, economic and health conditions in the new towns are given in the annexed *Dawn* interviews and extracts from Monique Skidmore's *Karaoke Fascism*.
- \* Military officers and others who could afford to buy land and build houses in satellite towns were pleased to do so. Some subsequently sold the land/house for a profit. Some moved into the new house in the new town and formed an elite class in the town. Some poorer civil servants were pleased with the move, especially if they needed more room for a growing family – see the *Working People's Daily* piece by Dagon Than Myint in which he thanked the SLORC for having provided him with land to build a house in Dagon.
- \* Virtually no compensation was/is paid.
- \* In most cases, very little warning was given.
- \* Many people who were moved to satellite towns were reported to have been evicted from substantial houses, to which they had title, as opposed to being “squatters” (See the Rangoon section for an extract from a book by the International Commission of Jurists, which considers that the squatters have the rights of adverse residence).
- \* There was or is little or no consultation or public participation in the process -- see the UN Habitat caveat that “*Sensitively handled by a government which recognizes the role of community participation and acknowledges the urgency of remedial priority actions and the importance of self-sustaining operations and maintenance systems, the new townships could develop into balanced and well-managed communities.*” UN Habitat, whose report is an important document on the 1989-1990 urban resettlement programme, seems to have been looking forward to the arrival of a civilian government following the 1990 elections.

\* The motivations for the removals given by the SLORC/SPDC are rarely credible – for instance the argument that they were improving the hygienic conditions, whereas in the case of those moved from Rangoon in 1989-1990, large numbers of those evicted were dumped in paddy fields subject to flooding (see the Habitat and other reports) and many died of malaria or other diseases exacerbated by the unhealthy conditions. Many of the documents annexed to this report, including material by Mya Maung, Bertil Lintner, Donald Seekins, Monique Skidmore, Guy Lubeigt and *Dawn* suggest that the SLORC had other motives for the massive urban resettlement programme of 1989-1990 and subsequent removals. These would correspond rather to the interests of the military and their associates, including the commercial gain to be had from the sale or use of confiscated property or, further into the '90s, in the lead-up to Visit Myanmar Year, and the dollars from tourists who would be attracted to the “cleaned up” cities with their new hotels. This would apply very much to prime tourist destinations like Pagan and Mandalay – in 1990 the entire population of Pagan was evicted in preparation for an exercise in “beautification” for the enjoyment of tourists. At another economic level, Guy Lubeigt considers that providing cheap labour for the industrial zones which were already being considered was an important reason for the evictions or 1989-1990 and later.

\* A political/security reason for the removals is identified by several analysts was the protection of the regime by expelling and scattering communities who were active in the movement of 1988 and which the regime considered to be threats to its hold on power. Along with the expulsions (1.5 million from cities countrywide, -- see the report by UN Habitat) came the “strategic redesign” of the city of Rangoon, as Donald Seekins puts it. The recent move of the Capital to Naypyidaw may be seen as an extension of this defensive move or, indeed, an indication that the military considers that its hold on Rangoon is not fully secure.

The set of urban and peri-urban documents has sections on Mandalay, Naypyidaw/ Pyinmana, Pagan, Pegu and Rangoon.

**The set of documents corresponding to this summary is online at  
<http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs4/Urban-docs.pdf>**

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Central and Southern Shan State, Karen State, Karenni State, Mon State, Tenasserim Division, Pegu Division (East)**

The main focus of the present report is forced migration in the government-controlled areas of Burma, and does not touch on the conflict and post-conflict areas of Eastern Burma which are well covered by the IDP surveys of the Thailand Burma Border Consortium. We have therefore extracted (with permission) the executive summary and Appendix 3 from [\*Internal Displacement in Eastern Burma, 2006 Survey\*](#) or <http://www.tbbc.org/idps/2006-idp.pdf> by the Thailand Burma Border Consortium, November 2006)

#### **INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN EASTERN BURMA, 2006 SURVEY** by the Thailand Burma Border Consortium

##### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Both tragedy and hope are reflected in this fifth annual survey of internal displacement in eastern Burma. The tragedy is that such systematic and widespread violations of human rights and humanitarian law continue to occur with national impunity and a largely ineffective international response. Yet it is the ongoing commitment and courage of ethnic community-based organisations to support grassroots coping strategies and document the impacts of conflict, violence and abuse which inspires hope for the future of Burma.

The Thailand Burma Border Consortium (TBBC) has been collaborating with ethnic community-based organisations to document the scale, distribution and characteristics of internal displacement since 2002. Collectively, these surveys have aimed to raise awareness about vulnerability in eastern Burma and inform the development of humanitarian protection strategies. Recognising that conditions for the internally displaced are always changing, this year's survey attempted to update population estimates and assess trends across different areas in more detail with higher resolution maps.

TBBC and the participating community-based organisations designed the surveys collaboratively by drawing from the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Although there were some changes for the sake of clarity, the questionnaire was similar to those used in previous years to facilitate trend analysis. Quantitative field surveys of the scale and distribution of internal displacement and the impacts of militarization and development have been based on interviews with key informants in 38 townships between June and August 2006. This has been complemented with qualitative field assessments about the causes and impacts of displacement which have been documented by community based organisations on an ongoing basis throughout the year.

TBBC has previously reported that the Burmese Army has approximately doubled the deployment of battalions across eastern Burma since 1995. This survey has identified 204 infantry and light infantry battalions currently in eastern Burma, which represents approximately 40% of the government's frontline troops nation-wide. Such militarization has facilitated the State Peace and Development Council's (SPDC's) counter-insurgency strategy which targets civilians in contravention of international humanitarian law. Accounts of such crimes against humanity have been documented by community based organisations in this report as contributing to conflict-induced displacement. State-sponsored development projects have done little to alleviate poverty in Burma, but have been significant causes of human rights abuses and displacement during the past year. The energy sector is Burma's largest recipient of foreign direct investment, but this report associates the gas pipeline in Mon State with forced labour, travel restrictions, and harassment. Similarly, proposed hydro-electric dams along the Salween River are linked with incidents of forced relocations, forced labour and the logging of community forests. Meanwhile commercial agriculture, and in particular the national development initiative to cultivate castor oil plants to produce bio-diesel, is reported to have induced widespread land confiscation, the imposition of procurement quotas and forced labour for the cultivation of seedlings.

During the past year alone, this survey estimates that 82,000 people were forced to leave their homes as a result of, or in order to avoid, the effects of armed conflict and human rights abuses. These estimates are consistent with the annual average rate their responsibility to protect Burmese citizens from harm. While the distribution of forced migration during the past year was widespread, the most significant concentration was in northern Karen State and eastern Pegu Division. Counter-insurgency operations are reported to have killed at least 39 civilians and displaced over 27,000 others in this area during the past year.

While the majority of people displaced during the past year fled in small groups, 232 entire villages were destroyed, forcibly relocated or otherwise abandoned. When combined with the findings of previous field surveys, 3,077 separate incidents of village destruction, relocation or abandonment have been documented in eastern Burma since 1996. Over a million people are understood to have been displaced from their homes in eastern Burma during this time. This reflects the cumulative impact of the Burmese Army's expanded presence and forced relocation campaign targeting civilians in contested areas. Some of these villages may have since been re-established, and indeed this survey has identified 155 villages that were at least partly repopulated during the past year. However, the sustainability of return and resettlement is restricted not only by livelihood constraints but also by the lack of official authorisation. Indeed, attempts to re-establish over 100 villages in previous years have already been thwarted by harassment leading to further rounds of displacement.

The total number of internally displaced persons who have been forced or obliged to leave their homes and have not been able to return or resettle and reintegrate into society as of November 2006 is estimated to be at least 500,000 people. This population is comprised of approximately 287,000 people currently in the temporary settlements of cease-

fire areas administered by ethnic nationalities, while 95,000 civilians are estimated to be hiding from the SPDC in areas most affected by military skirmishes and approximately 118,000 villagers have followed SPDC eviction orders and moved into designated relocation sites. These are conservative estimates for eastern Burma as it has not been possible to survey urban areas nor mixed administration areas.

Overall this represents a decrease of approximately 40,000 internally displaced persons since October 2005. This is due to a decrease of 53,000 people in the estimates for ceasefire areas. Population movements have been recorded out of areas administered by the United Wa State Army (UWSA) due to lack of livelihood opportunities. Estimates in other ceasefire areas of Shan and Karenni states have also decreased, reflecting how the areas administered by non state actors have effectively been reduced by the expansion of SPDC control. While many of these villagers may remain internally displaced, it has not been possible to track their current status.

Conversely, the number of people in relocation sites has increased by approximately 10,000 people. This is partly a result of broader survey reach in Tenasserim Division and partly due to new incidents of forced relocation in Shan State. However, a significant decrease has been recorded in Mon state, where restrictions on resettlement away from relocation sites have eased. Rather than reflecting increased freedom, this illustrates that as villagers in surrounding areas become resigned to complying with Burmese Army orders, the government's perceived need for relocation sites becomes redundant.

While the overall estimates for people in hiding sites increased only slightly, there has been a significant increase in northern Karen State and eastern Pegu Division where approximately 55,000 villagers are currently hiding from government forces. This represents an increase of approximately 14,000 people since last year, and suggests that half of those displaced in the past year were previously living with the tacit approval of local SPDC authorities in mixed administration areas. These local arrangements offered little protection when the Southern and South Eastern Military Commands coordinated patrols by over 40 battalions to search for civilian settlements and destroy their means of survival.

The wide reach of ethnic community based organisations has enabled these broad trend assessments, yet it is arguably the detailed descriptions and maps which best portray the dilemmas of everyday life for the internally displaced. The contexts and concerns vary across different geographical terrain and types of displaced persons. Yet there is widespread documentation from the sub-township level of specific accounts of abuse and atrocities having been committed by the SPDC against civilians during the past year. At the same time, the resilience of internally displaced communities to resist occupation is exemplified by instances of civil disobedience against the imposition of forced eviction and relocation orders.

This fifth annual survey of internal displacement in eastern Burma reports that the SPDC are the primary perpetrators of systematic and widespread human rights abuses and humanitarian atrocities. Through the deliberate targeting of civilians in military operations, the national authorities are violating their obligations under international humanitarian

law. Given the Burmese government's actions, the challenge for the international community is to accept responsibility to protect existing and potential victims of abuses and atrocities.

### INTERNALLY DISPLACED POPULATION SURVEY BY TOWNSHIP (TBBC Survey Appendix 3)

States, Divisions and Townships	Newly Displaced civilians (2005-06)	IDPs in hiding sites (2006)	IDPs in Relocation Sites (2006)	IDPs in Ceasefire Areas (2006)	Total IDPs (2006)
<b>SHAN STATE</b>	<b>16,200</b>	<b>13,300</b>	<b>31,300</b>	<b>131,000</b>	<b>175,600</b>
Mawkami	2,000	1,300	2,000	2,500	5,800
Mong Kung	1,200	1,300	3,000	300	4,600
Laikha	200	1,200	2,000	3,100	6,300
Loilem	1,500	1,200	1,500	800	3,500
Nam Zamg	1,500	1,500	3,000	2,500	7,000
Kun Hing	2,800	2,000	3,600	13,000	18,600
Mong Hsat	900	1,000	2,000	42,000	45,000
Mong Ton	3,000	1,300	6,600	35,000	42,900
Mong Pan	1,100	1,000	2,000	1,800	4,800
Kehsi	n/a	n/a	n/a	18,500	18,500
Langkher	n/a	n/a	n/a	7,500	7,500
Mong Nai	2,000	1,500	5,600	4,000	11,100
<b>KARENNI STATE</b>	<b>7,400</b>	<b>9,300</b>	<b>6,400</b>	<b>63,600</b>	<b>79,300</b>
Shadaw	2,100	2,900	1,500	0	4,400
Loikaw	0	0	1,900	9,000	10,900
Demawso	0	0	1,300	36,600	37,900
Pruso	800	1,400	0	7,200	8,600
Bawlake	0	0	1,000	0	1,000
Pasaung	4,500	5,000	700	1,500	7,200
Mehset	0	0	0	9,300	9,300
<b>PEGU DIVISION</b>	<b>13,400</b>	<b>17,400</b>	<b>6,400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23,800</b>
Tantabin	1,200	1,200	0	0	1,200
Kyaukgyi	9,900	10,200	6,400	0	16,600
Shwegyin	2,300	6,000	0	0	6,000
<b>KAREN STATE</b>	<b>30,100</b>	<b>49,100</b>	<b>4,300</b>	<b>45,900</b>	<b>99,300</b>
Thandaung	5,200	14,500	0	0	14,500
Papun	10,000	24,000	0	0	24,000
Hlaing Bwe	2,100	2,100	0	5,300	7,400
Myawaddy	3,800	3,800	0	6,700	10,500
Kawkareik	600	600	0	0	1,500
Kyain Seikgyi	8,400	4,100	4,300	33,000	41,400
<b>MON STATE</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>41,000</b>	<b>41,800</b>
Thaton	0	0	0	0	0
Bilin	0	0	0	0	0
Ye	1,100	300	500	41,000	41,800
<b>TENASSERIM DIV.</b>	<b>13,800</b>	<b>5,600</b>	<b>69,100</b>	<b>5,500</b>	<b>80,200</b>
Yebyu	500	500	5,400	5,500	11,400
Tavoy	4,800	800	13,600	0	14,400
Thayetchaung	100	0	6,200	0	6,200
Palaw	1,000	1,400	14,800	0	16,200
Mergui	0	0	5,900	0	5,900
Tenasserim	7,000	2,100	18,800	0	20,900
Bokpyin	400	800	4,400	0	5,200
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>82,000</b>	<b>95,000</b>	<b>118,000</b>	<b>287,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>



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## APPENDIX 2

### Michael Cernea's impoverishment risk and reconstruction model as extended by Courtland Robinson in "Risks and Rights"<sup>17</sup>

Michael Cernea's impoverishment risk and reconstruction model proposes that "the onset of impoverishment can be represented through a model of eight interlinked potential risks intrinsic to displacement." These are:

1. **Landlessness.** Expropriation of land removes the main foundation upon which people's productive systems, commercial activities, and livelihoods are constructed. This is the principal form of de-capitalization and pauperization of displaced people, as they lose both natural and human-made capital.
2. **Joblessness.** The risk of losing wage employment is very high both in urban and rural displacements for those employed in enterprises, services, or agriculture. Yet, creating new jobs is difficult and requires substantial investment. Unemployment or underemployment among resettlers often endures long after physical relocation has been completed.
3. **Homelessness.** Loss of shelter tends to be only temporary for many resettlers; but, for some, homelessness or a worsening in their housing standards remains a lingering condition. In a broader cultural sense, loss of a family's individual home and the loss of a group's cultural space tend to result in alienation and status deprivation.
4. **Marginalization.** Marginalization occurs when families lose economic power and spiral on a "downward mobility" path. Many individuals cannot use their earlier acquired skills at the new location; human capital is lost or rendered inactive or obsolete. Economic marginalization is often accompanied by social and psychological marginalization, expressed in a drop in social status, in resettlers' loss of confidence in society and in themselves, a feeling of injustice, and deepened vulnerability.
5. **Food Insecurity.** Forced uprooting increases the risk that people will fall into temporary or chronic undernourishment, defined as calorie-protein intake levels below the minimum necessary for normal growth and work.
6. **Increased Morbidity and Mortality.** Massive population displacement threatens to cause serious decline in health levels. Displacement-induced social stress and psychological trauma are sometimes accompanied by the outbreak of relocation related illnesses, particularly parasitic and vector-borne diseases such as malaria and schistosomiasis. Unsafe water supply and improvised sewage systems increase vulnerability to epidemics and

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<sup>17</sup> See footnote 7

chronic diarrhea, dysentery, and so on. The weakest segments of the demographic spectrum—infants, children, and the elderly—are affected most strongly.

**7. *Loss of Access to Common Property.*** For poor people, loss of access to the common property assets that belonged to relocated communities (pastures, forest lands, water bodies, burial grounds, quarries, and so on) result in significant deterioration in income and livelihood levels.

**8. *Social Disintegration.*** The fundamental feature of forced displacement is that it causes a profound unraveling of existing patterns of social organization. This unraveling occurs at many levels. When people are forcibly moved, production systems are dismantled. Long-established residential communities and settlements are disorganized, while kinship groups and family systems are often scattered. Life-sustaining informal social networks that provide mutual help are rendered non-functional. Trade linkages between producers and their customer base are interrupted, and local labor markets are disrupted. Formal and informal associations, and self-organized services, are wiped out by the sudden scattering of their membership. Traditional management systems tend to lose their leaders. The coerced abandonment of symbolic markers (such as ancestral shrines and graves) or of spatial contexts (such as mountains and rivers considered holy, or sacred trails) cuts off some of the physical and psychological linkages with the past and saps at the roots of the peoples' cultural identity. The cumulative effect is that the social fabric is torn apart. Others have suggested the addition of other risks such as the loss of access to public services, loss of access to schooling for school-age children, and the loss of civil rights or abuse of human rights.

Borrowing from Robert Muggah and Theodore Downing, this paper adds two additional risks intrinsic to displacement:

**9. *Loss of Access to Community Services.*** This could include anything from health clinics to educational facilities, but especially costly both in the short and longterm are lost or delayed opportunities for the education of children.

**10. *Violation of Human Rights.*** Displacement from one's habitual residence and the loss of property without fair compensation can, in itself, constitute a violation of human rights. In addition to violating economic and social rights, listed above, arbitrary displacement can also lead to violations of civil and political rights, including: arbitrary arrest, degrading treatment or punishment, temporary or permanent disenfranchisement and the loss of one's political voice. Finally, displacement carries not only the risk of human rights violations at the hands of state authorities and security forces but also the risk of communal violence when new settlers move in amongst existing populations.

From [\*Risks and Rights: The Causes, Consequences, and Challenges of Development-Induced Displacement\*](#) by W. Courtland Robinson, The Brookings Institution – SAIS Project on Internal Displacement, May 2003