

Setting Up the Systems of Repression:

The progressive regimentation of civilian life in Dooplaya District

Karen Human Rights Group

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Setting Up the Systems of Repression: The progressive regimentation of civilian life in Dooplaya District

While attention has been focused on the SPDC's violent attacks against villages in northern Karen State, the regime has been implementing a much more systematic campaign of repression in southern Karen State. The SPDC militarily occupied this region nine years ago, and has since been creating its model of society – through extending roads and military control to every corner of the region, establishing and training local controlling authorities, forcing villagers to join SPDC organisations, forced registration of all people and resources, forced double-cropping and other agricultural programmes without the required support, movement restrictions and crippling taxation on trade and mobility, and land reallocation to those complicit with the regime. All of these are part of the process of setting up local control mechanisms to implement the SPDC's hierarchical vision of society, in which the main purpose of the civilian population is to serve the military and support those in power. In return, local people get nothing except additional work, and violent punishment including torture and killings whenever they are perceived to be uncooperative or disrespectful. Little or nothing is provided for their education or health, while their crops and possessions are systematically looted to keep them poor. Drawing on the SPDC's own order documents and over a hundred interviews with villagers in the region, this report finds that people in Dooplaya feel worse off than ever before, and that their suffering is not caused by conflict or lack of foreign aid, but by SPDC repression.

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Introduction and Executive Summary

In 1997 the State Law & Order Restoration Council (SLORC) regime ruling Burma used a major military offensive to capture most of Dooplaya district, which makes up the southern portion of Karen State. Close to 10,000 villagers fled to neighbouring Thailand rather than live under state control, and most of them are still in Noh Po and Umpiem Mai refugee camps. Thousands more were internally displaced, many of them cut off by the Burma Army troops before they could reach the border. The open agricultural terrain and lack of mountains in most of the district make it difficult for villagers to remain hidden for long, however, and most of the internally displaced now live under state authority. Late in 1997 the SLORC changed its name to the State Peace & Development Council (SPDC), but with no significant change in policy or tactics.

Prior to 1997 the Burmese state controlled very little of Dooplaya; villagers ran their own lives and villages, with partial control by the Karen National Union (KNU). Capturing these areas so suddenly provided the SLORC/SPDC with a blank slate on which to carve its model of society. To symbolise this new beginning, General Maung Aye flew in to Kyaikdon and trod on the Karen flag on national television. The campaign then began with the immediate destruction of non-cooperative villages, forced relocation of remote villages to areas garrisoned by the Army, forced eviction of all Muslims from Dooplaya and the destruction of their mosques.¹ Within a year this was followed by state seizure of much of the farmland, which was taken over for Army camps or Army farms or re-parcelled and sold to the highest bidder. Many villagers were displaced and made landless; others had to struggle to keep their land while experiencing their first taste of regular forced labour and extortion demands. Villagers were forced to work along hundreds of imported convicts to extend a network of roads throughout the district so that more Army camps could be built and supplied. As these Army camps were established, the Army progressively restricted and attempted to control all aspects of villagers' lives. Smaller SPDC-allied armed groups, particularly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) and Karen Peace Force (KPF), were used as proxies to control the civilian population in return for lucrative logging concessions and permission to run other businesses.

Nine years into the occupation, the societal experiment continues. Now confident of its military authority over most of the villages, the SPDC is allowing some people to resettle in newly garrisoned areas. In the past year, many villagers forcibly relocated or displaced in 1997-98 were finally allowed to return to re-establish their villages, but with many conditions and restrictions: they are not allowed to go outside their villages without SPDC-approved passes; they are forced to support local SPDC and proxy military units with food, funds, and forced labour; and they are told that if they fail to obey all forced labour and other demands by the military or if they fail to report people with KNU connections they will once again be forcibly relocated. To complement the military authorities, the SPDC is also in the process of extending the reach of its civil authority structures throughout the district. Villages have been forced to establish Village Peace & Development Councils (VPDC), made up of a chairperson, secretary and several 'members', to act as the local arm of SPDC authority. The VPDC is mainly used to impose military and Township Peace & Development Council (TPDC) demands on villagers, by assigning families responsibility for forced labour, organising bullock carts for SPDC use, collecting extortion money for the troops, etc. In October/November 2005 all VPDC chairpersons, secretaries and members in Dooplaya were forced to attend (at their own expense) an intensive Security and Management training in Moulmein, at which they were lectured on their responsibilities to 'organise' the villagers to provide all forms of support for military authorities, report on and control the activities of their villagers, and turn over anyone suspicious or uncompliant with orders.

¹ See [Refugees from the SLORC Occupation](#) (KHRG #97-07, May 1997), [Clampdown in Southern Dooplaya](#) (KHRG #97-11, September 1997), and [Strengthening the Grip on Dooplaya](#) (KHRG #98-05, June 1998).

As part of this, local VPDCs have been tasked with forcing villagers to join SPDC organisations, for which they have been assigned recruitment quotas based on village size. In this way villagers have been forced to join the SPDC's *Pyitthu Sit* paramilitary militia, Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAF), Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), Myanmar Fire Brigades, and other such organisations. Villagers are forced to pay for the training and support of those who join *Pyitthu Sit*. For the other organisations, those who join are forced to pay application and membership fees, though many of them say they have no interest in the organisation and are have not subsequently been called on to do much. Villages in Dooplaya have been ordered that at least 50 percent of the village women must join MWAF and/or MMCWA. It may be that the SPDC simply wants to pump up the numbers in these organisations, because it uses them (particularly the women's and children's organisations) as vehicles to obtain funds from UN and other international agencies.

Villagers have been informed that they will be required to pay for and obtain National Identity Cards or face arrest. VPDC leaders are forced to draw up village registers showing every household, adult and child and listing all land, possessions, livestock, carts, sawmills and other resources in the village. These are used as a basis to set 'taxes' and demand forced labour. Each family is supposed to pay for a laminated copy of their own household list, showing all occupants and possessions, which they must post on the outside of their house. If visiting troops find additional people staying in the house, they are arrested as suspected rebels.

Villagers are now complaining that movement restrictions are more severe than ever before. People are no longer allowed to live in scattered villages or outlying houses, because villages must be compact and centralised for easy control. Most people's fields are still some distance from the village but they are not allowed to go there for more than a few days at a time, for which they must obtain an SPDC pass. In growing season, when villagers traditionally live in their farmfield huts, this is inadequate to tend the crops and keep wild animals and stray livestock away. In mid-2005 the Kawkareik Township PDC went one step further, ordering the destruction of all farmfield huts (see order document in this report). To Karen villagers, such an order is equivalent to ordering the destruction of their way of life. Moreover, travel and movement of produce along roads or rivers has become extremely expensive because these are dotted with checkpoints which demand payment from all who pass. Some of these are manned by SPDC troops, but SPDC allied groups like the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) and Karen Peace Force (KPF) are also awarded permission to set up checkpoints in return for their loyalty.

Under Burmese 'law' the state owns all land and has the power to decree how it must be used, so with the consolidation of SPDC control villagers are increasingly being told what they can grow and when. Most villages are now ordered to grow a second rice crop in dry season, but without being provided any help to set up the required irrigation systems. Many are also now being ordered to plant rubber, sugarcane and castor bean. They are forced to buy seed, even if they do not want it, and pay part of the harvest or money if the crop fails. Touted as the path to riches and development, most villagers say these forced cropping programmes are instead driving them further into poverty. Overlapping and conflicting orders come from local military officers wanting to make a profit at the villagers' expense, and higher authorities seeking to force villagers nationwide to plant crops like castor for export. Meanwhile, many villagers have had their farmland confiscated without any payment to make way for new Army camps, Army farms or roads, where they are then forced to do unpaid labour. In some areas, local SPDC authorities have suddenly announced that land is to be reallocated. SPDC officials then survey and confiscate all the productive farmland without payment, repackage it into parcels, and sell it to the highest bidder – usually outsiders who come into the area to buy up cheap land, unless villagers can put together enough money to buy back their own fields. No one seems to know where the money from these sales goes.

Establishing and training local controlling authorities, forced recruitment to SPDC organisations, forced registration of all people and resources, movement restrictions and excessive taxation on mobility, and land reallocation to those complicit with the regime – all of these are part of the process of setting up local hierarchical control mechanisms to implement the SPDC's hierarchical vision of society, in which the main purpose of the civilian population is to serve the military and support those in power. In return, local people get nothing except additional work, and violent punishment including torture and killings whenever they are perceived to be uncooperative or disrespectful. Little or nothing is provided for their education or health, while their crops and possessions are systematically looted to keep them poor. Once established, these SPDC systems attempt to perpetuate themselves by attracting people willing to sacrifice others to obtain personal power, even petty power at the local level. The result, if this is allowed to progress further, is an entrenched system of intimidation and repression like that already existing in the central Burman heartland, where few people are willing to openly stand up against the regime. As this report shows, however, Karen village leaders in Dooplaya are doing a great deal to prevent this from happening by evading and undermining SPDC demands and protecting their villagers from the worst abuses whenever possible.

In Karen districts further north the SPDC is right now attacking villages in order to force civilians to live under their control, but with little success as the villagers escape into the hills and forests. Developments in Dooplaya since 1997 provide an example of what might happen next if SPDC forces succeed in those campaigns. Though not as completely under their control as central Burma – various other armies are still active, and villagers still do flee and escape – Dooplaya demonstrates what happens when SPDC authorities begin to feel confident in their power and are seldom threatened by the attacks of opposing forces. According to villagers living under this power, the results include increased militarisation; conscription of villagers into SPDC-run organisations; land confiscation for the Army without compensation; forced labour on Army farms, roads and other infrastructure, and portering Army supplies; excessive and corrupt taxation and outright extortion; looting of villagers' belongings and food supplies; violent abuses including rape, torture, shooting and killing of villagers with impunity; forced 'temporary' marriages of village women to soldiers; and restrictions on their access to health and education. In short, most of the violent abuses they face when there is armed conflict, plus an additional array of abuses which progressively erode their ability to survive while further extending the power of the military.

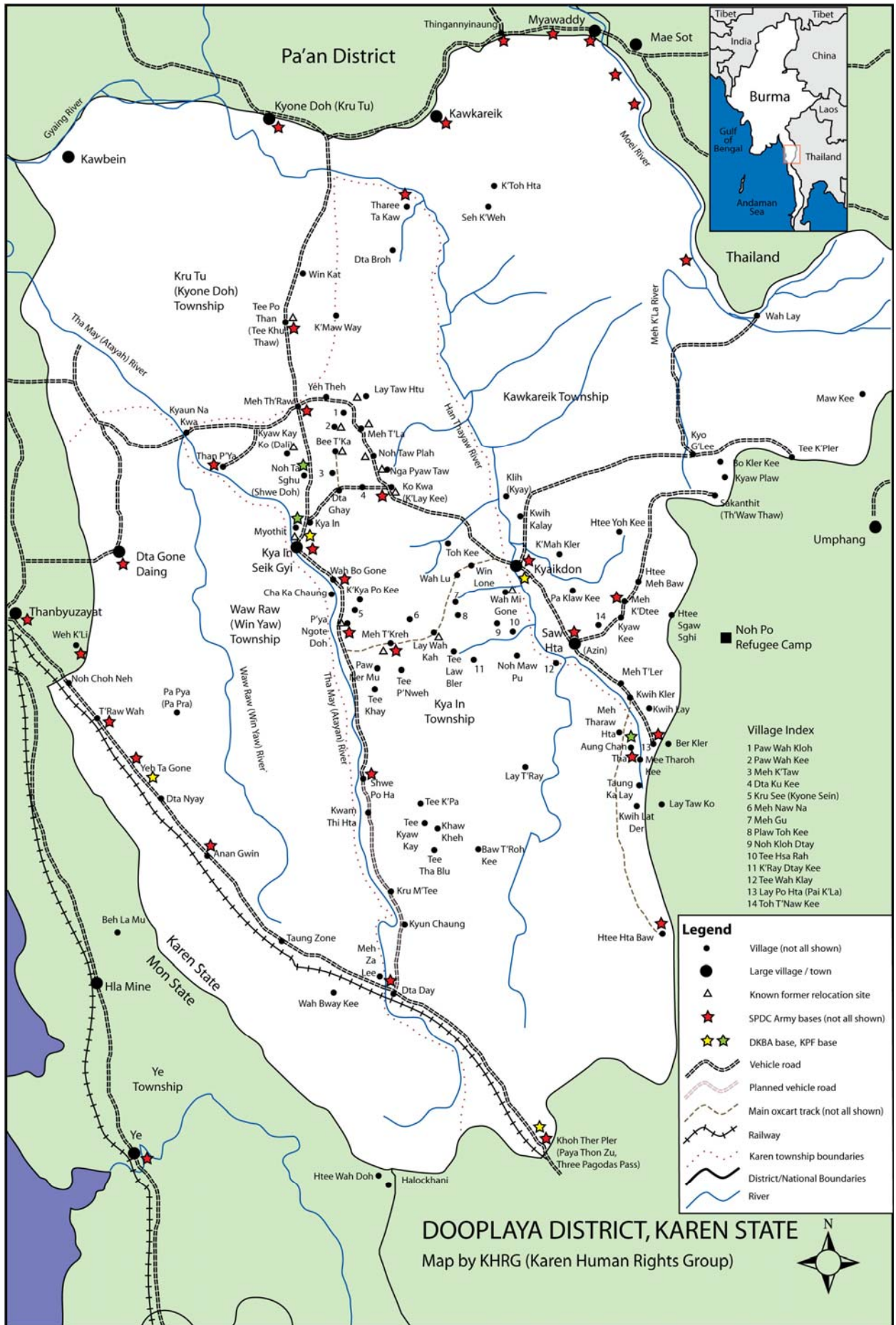
Notes on the Text

This report has been drawn from over 100 detailed interviews conducted with villagers in various parts of Dooplaya District in southern Karen State in late 2005 and the first half of 2006, supported by photographic evidence. KHRG has also obtained over 100 order documents sent by local authorities to villages in the district, some of which are included in this report in English translation; Appendix C shows the originals of some of these documents. Names of people, villages and places have been replaced with ‘---’ or ‘xxx’ where necessary to protect local people.

Many of the place names mentioned in the report are indicated on the accompanying maps. Most townships, villages and rivers have both a Karen and a Burmese name, and we have tried to be consistent throughout the report and favour the names preferred by local people. Dooplaya District is a Karen designation, used by local people and the Karen National Union (KNU) but not by the SPDC, which divides the district into Kawkaeik, Kya In Seik Gyi and Ye townships. Within the district we have used the Karen township names: Kawkaeik and Kru Tu (a.k.a. Kyone Doh) in the north, Kya In in the centre, and Waw Raw (a.k.a. Win Yaw) in the southwest. Some interviews were also conducted in the Hla Mine area of Ye township, which lies just south of Dooplaya but experiences similar conditions.

Terms and Abbreviations

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| SPDC | State Peace & Development Council, military junta ruling Burma |
| PDC | Peace & Development Council, SPDC local-level administration (e.g. Village PDC [<i>VPDC</i>], Village Tract PDC, Township PDC [<i>TPDC</i>]) |
| KNU | Karen National Union, main Karen opposition group |
| KNLA | Karen National Liberation Army, army of the KNU |
| DKBA | Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, Karen group allied with SPDC |
| KPF | Karen Peace Force, ‘ <i>Nyein Chan Yay A’Pweh</i> ’ (‘Peace Group’) in Burmese; formed in 1997 by defected KNLA officer Thu Mu Heh and allied with SPDC |
| NMSP | New Mon State Party, armed Mon organisation to the south who have a cease-fire with the SPDC |
| IB | Infantry Battalion (SPDC), supposed to be about 500 soldiers strong but at present most SPDC battalions number under 200 |
| LIB | Light Infantry Battalion (SPDC) , supposed to be about 500 soldiers strong but at present most SPDC battalions number under 200 |
| NCO | Non-commissioned officer (Corporal, Lance Corporal, Sergeant) |
| Kaw Thoo Lei | The Karen homeland, also used as slang for KNU/KNLA |
| Nga Pway | ‘Ringworm’; derogatory SPDC slang for KNU/KNLA people |
| loh ah pay | Forced labour; literally it means traditional voluntary labour, but not under SPDC |
| Viss | Unit of weight measure; one <i>viss</i> is 1.6 kilograms or 3.5 pounds |
| Bowl/Pyi | Volume measure equivalent to 8 small condensed milk tins; about 2 kg / 4.4 lb |
| Kyat | Burmese currency; US\$1=6 Kyat at official rate, 1000+ Kyat at current market rate |
| Village tract | An administrative unit of 5 to 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village |



Karen Districts



© Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), 2005

Scale: 1 cm to 22 km
1 in. to 35 miles

BURMA



© Map by KHRG (Karen Human Rights Group), 2006
Scale 1:800,000

The ceasefire and increased militarisation

“Infantry Battalion #98 came and set up their camp beside our village but this was no benefit to the villagers. Instead they only force the villagers to go as porters and for ‘loh ah pay’ [ad hoc forced labour] and steal the villagers’ chickens and ducks. The villagers also have to worry for their sons and daughters, and each sawmill owner has to give their camp 25 cubits of sawn timber.”

– A--- (male, 39), village headman, P--- village, Waw Raw township

Though the SPDC now controls central and western Doooplaya, the Karen National Union (KNU) is still strong particularly in the remoter eastern parts of the district and also frequently penetrates the central areas. In January 2004 an informal ceasefire agreement between the SPDC and the KNU, the only armed resistance force still fighting the SPDC in Karen regions, came into effect. However, this did nothing to reverse or even slow down the SPDC’s militarisation of the district which had been occurring since 1997; if anything, the ceasefire appears to have resulted in more rapid militarisation, because the SPDC no longer had to fear attacks against troops being sent into the district or encroaching into its remoter areas. When Karen forces got in the way, they were attacked with no consideration of the ceasefire; since late 2005, the SPDC no longer even makes any pretense of observing it. According to a KHRG researcher in the region, during the ceasefire the SPDC sent small columns into areas they had not been able to penetrate before to map out KNLA positions. Under the ceasefire they were not supposed to enter these areas without KNLA permission, but this was ignored as SPDC columns bulldozed roads into mountainous areas, then sold concessions for logging companies to come in.

“I heard about the ceasefire between the KNU and SPDC when I talked with other ordinary soldiers, but none of our NCOs said anything about it. The NCO told us that if we saw KNLA holding guns we must shoot at them, because if we didn’t they would shoot us. During that time we didn’t see any KNLA, but if we had seen them we would have shot at them because those were our orders.”

– K--- (male, 22), deserted from SPDC IB #87 in July 2005 in Kawkareik township

“At the end of 1997 or the beginning of 1998 we abandoned our village and went to stay in other places. The KNLA and SPDC Infantry Battalion #230 deputy battalion commander Pyi Nyin’s column fought each other at Kalay Kee, which is only three miles from our village. Pyi Nyin came and tied up some of our villagers and ordered us to get out of our village within ten days, so the villagers scattered to many other places. In March 2005 we went to Kyaikdon to ask Light Infantry Division #88 officer Aung Than Htun for permission to return. He told us we could come back to stay in our former village but that we must obey all the rules they give us, and if we do not obey they will force us out of our village again. The rules he gave us are that we must not offer any food to the KNU or allow the KNU to enter our village, and that no fighting can occur in our village. He said if we break any rule he will destroy our village. We returned, and then on March 15th 2005 SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #416 officer Htun Shwe demanded seven people to go as porters to carry Army medical supplies.”

– C--- (male, 40), village headman, Y--- village, Kya In township



Teak and *ta la aw* logs being taken out of the forests east of Kya In Seik Gyi by outside companies having logging agreements with SPDC officials. Local villagers say there is almost no teak left due to this kind of logging, and this claim is supported by looking at the small-diameter logs now being taken. Local people receive no payment or compensation whatsoever from this business. [Photos: KHRG]

SPDC Light Infantry Division #88 was present in Dooplaya from January 2005 until January 2006, when they were replaced by Military Operations Command #19. At present over 20 SPDC Battalions are active in Dooplaya, including Southern Command's Strategic Operations Command #9, Infantry Battalions (IB) #36, 39, 93, 98, and Light Infantry Battalions (LIB) #343, 534, 588 and 591 in Waw Raw (Win Yaw) township; in Kawkareik township, Infantry Battalions #10 and 77 and Light Infantry Battalions #32, 317 and 415; in Kya In township, Infantry Battalions #10, 62, 78, 103, and 284, Light Infantry Battalions #301 and 416, and Tactical Operations Command #1 under Military Operations Command #19; and Infantry Battalions #32, 284 and 285 in the area surrounding Kya In Seik Gyi town. This list is not complete and does not even include Kyone Doh (Kru Tu) township, so the real number of SPDC battalions active in the district is probably at least 30. These battalions do not operate at full strength and generally rotate every three to six months; even so, there could easily be 3,000 to 5,000 SPDC troops on duty in Dooplaya at any given time. These are backed up by the 101, 906 and 907 Battalions of the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) and the smaller Karen Peace Force (KPF, or *Nyein Chan Yay A'Pwet*), both armed Karen groups used by the SPDC to fight the KNU/KNLA when required.

*"In 2005 one of the soldiers from [SPDC] LIB #83 Column 2 deserted to us with his gun so we sent him to the KNU. His company commander came to the village and interrogated the village head. He blamed us for his soldier deserting and said we are working with the KNU, but we told him we didn't know anything about his soldier. He still blames us. That deserter was only 17 years old, and he told us he had been a soldier for ten years already."*²

– Ma A--- (female, 44), village head, K--- village, Kya In township

"There are some child soldiers in the SPDC patrols. Some patrols have four child soldiers, and some have five child soldiers. Some of them are only 12 or 13 years old."

– D--- (male, 36), village headman, T--- village, Waw Raw township

"On January 17th 2006, Infantry Battalion #10 officer Myo Khaing and his troops came to stay in our village for a week. He demanded 250,000 Kyat from Z--- the sawmill owner, and he demanded chickens weighing 1½ viss [2.4 kg / 5 lb] from me. He had about 30 soldiers. I saw two convict porters and three child soldiers under 15 years old. I asked those child soldiers 'Why aren't you attending school, you are so young.'

² It is unlikely that this boy was recruited to the Army at age 7, but he may be referring to the SPDC's 'Ye Nyunt' ('Brave sprouts') organisation, which conscripts orphans and other stray young boys into military-run special schools which give military-style training and then channel boys into the Army once they reach age 12 or 13.

They answered that they thought they would be happy as soldiers, but now they're unhappy and want to see their parents but there is nothing they can do about it."

– Daw L--- (female, 49), village headwoman, K--- village, Kya In township



Deserters from the SPDC Army in Dooplaya. These soldiers say they fled because of regular beatings and abuse by their NCOs, who stole their salaries and rations and ordered them to take their food from the villagers. The boy on the right was forced into the Army at age 15 in 2002 and deserted in Dooplaya in March 2005, now aged 18.

[Photos: KHRG]



Since 1997, SPDC forces in Dooplaya have worked on extending a network of roads throughout the district so that they can establish Army camps along the roads and then radiate power and control from these camps.³ In December 2005, SPDC forces repaired roads throughout Waw Raw township to facilitate transport of military supplies. SPDC Army units throughout the district establish checkpoints all along the roads to rigidly control all civilian movement and to extort money from everyone who passes. DKBA and KPF units do the same. For example, anyone passing along the road from Kya In Seik Gyi to Kyaikdon has to pass several checkpoints of the SPDC, DKBA, and KPF, and pay extortion to pass each gate. People transporting goods have to pay a great deal more; along the road from Saw Hta (Azin) to Meh K'Dtee, any vehicle carrying wood has to pay 20,000 Kyat to pass the SPDC checkpoints – except, of course, the SPDC's own vehicles.

"In December 2005 the SPDC started working again on the road from Kya In Seik Gyi to Paya Thon Zu [Three Pagodas Pass]. They were using bulldozers and tractors to construct the road."

– U M--- (male, 51), village head, B--- village, Kya In township

DKBA forces in the district focus most of their efforts on their own survival and that of their families. To this end they set up checkpoints along roads to extort money from all who pass, and they are also heavily involved in taxing villages, logging and selling wood, and taxing others who do the same. They also build pagodas and monasteries, often using the forced labour of villagers for this purpose. DKBA #907 Battalion is based in Kyaikdon and Kya In, #906 Battalion in Khoh Ther Pler (Paya Thon Zu or Three Pagodas Pass) and Yeh Ta Gone, and #101 Battalion near Kyauk Taing (a.k.a. Klaw Hser) village in southwestern Waw Raw township.

³ See [Operation Than L'Yet: Forced Displacement, Massacres and Forced Labour in Dooplaya District](#) (KHRG #2002-U5, September 2002), [Starving Them Out: Forced Relocations, Killings and the Systematic Starvation of Villagers in Dooplaya District](#) (KHRG #2000-02, March 2000), and [Strengthening the Grip on Dooplaya](#) (KHRG #98-05, June 1998).

“The nearest DKBA camp is in Kya In, about 1½ hours from our village. That is DKBA #907 [battalion], Captain T’Kee. They stand at the gate and collect tax from the vehicles that go along the road. They collect 3,000 Kyat per car and 200 Kyat per [bullock] cart.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

[This order is written on notepaper headed ‘IMT – Institute of Marine Technology’]

[Stamp:] 12-11-05
Democratic Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A.

To: xxxx
Informing you

Subject: Need help (elephants)

You and all elephant owners must come to M--- during the K’Htaing (monks’ robes offering) festival in November (full moon of Dta Saw Mon) to meet with me.

[Sd.]
Saw Htoo Per
Dee Kay Bee Ay
Liaison officer
Temporarily in M---

Order #1. As a result of this order 5 men from S--- village had to take their elephants and haul logs for two days without payment at M--- DKBA camp. For Burmese original see p. 79.

The KPF has no more than 100 or 200 troops and is primarily concerned with making money through logging. In some areas villagers have demarcated protected forests and forbidden all logging there for years, but now the KPF ignores all restrictions and logs these areas. The KPF also demands taxes of two baskets of paddy for every hundred baskets harvested in villages near their camps, and an annual tax of 50,000 Kyat for every elephant. They also demand wood, bamboo and thatch for building their camps, causing villagers to complain that they are no better than the SPDC. The order below decrees some of the taxes to be paid to the KPF on the villagers’ crops:

[Stamp:]
Karen Peace Force
Date: 7-1-2006
Han Thayaw Special Region

| | | |
|-------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. Paddy | per (100) baskets | rate 2 baskets |
| 2. Betelnut | per (100) pieces | “ 2 kyat |
| 3. Sesame | per (1) basket | “ 200 kyat |
| 4. Pepper | per (1) viss | “ 50 kyat |

Note: Prepare a list of names, farms and fields.

[Sd.] 7-1-2006
(Captain Kawla)
[Stamp:] Company Commander
Company #3
Karen Peace Force
Han Thayaw Special Region, Karen State

Order #2.

“The Peace Force [KPF] has three army camps. One is in Noh Ta Sghu, one in Aung Chan Tha and one in Kwih Kwa Law. The Peace Force is the nearest army camp to my village. They set up a gate there to collect money from the cars that pass. There are only six houses in their army camp, surrounded by a fence. They frequently come to our village. They demand bamboo once a year from the villages. In December 2005 they demanded 500 Kyat from each house in our village for their New Year celebration.”

– Naw E--- (female, 42), village section leader, M--- village, Kya In township

“Two months ago [October 2005] our village had to make a vehicle road for the KPF from Noh Kler to Noh N’Bu.⁴ Kyaw Win Htun, a soldier under KPF NCO [non-commissioned officer] Kler Paw, ordered us to do it urgently and we finished it in two days. They forced us to do it quickly because they said their truck would come up soon. The KPF is using this road to haul timber and service their ore mines. When we worked on the road they didn’t pay us and we had to come back to eat at our own houses. We have to be afraid of the KPF as well as the SPDC. On December 30th 2005, Kyaw Pit from KPF came and demanded two bottles of alcohol from me for New Year’s Day. One bottle of alcohol is 1,000 Kyat and he forced me to buy two bottles and pay for it myself. After he was drunk I asked him to pay the cost – one bottle is 1,000 Kyat, so two bottles is 2,000 Kyat. But he told me, ‘Don’t talk so much. I will stomp my heel on the back of your neck!’ I told him, ‘Thank you so much for saying that, because I’ve never heard words like that spoken before.’ Later he sent me 1,000 Kyat, but it’s a month later now and he still hasn’t paid me the rest.”

– Naw K--- (female, 53), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

The Karen National Union (KNU) in the area provides some support for the establishment of village schools and sometimes helps to organise the villagers to resist excessive KPF logging and other activities which harm their livelihoods, while the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) fights a low-intensity war of harassment to reduce the hold of the SPDC, DKBA and KPF over remoter areas and areas adjacent to the border with Thailand. Both KNU and KNLA make demands of villagers for taxes and sometimes for guides and other labour, but these taxes and demands are lighter and more short-term than those made by other groups.

“We feel there are differences between the KNU and the SPDC. The KNU people always suggest to us what we can do to develop our village, and they don’t ask for porters. But the SPDC, whenever they come to the village they demand chicken and pork, and they steal things from the villagers.”

– A--- (male, 39), village headman, P--- village, Waw Raw township

“The difference between the SPDC and KNU is that the KNU are our own nationality. They try to help us and protect us from the SPDC. If they were not there the SPDC would torture us more than they do now.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

⁴ Map reference: this new road is a spur off the existing road at Nga Pyaw Taw, northwest of Kyaikdon.

If they keep cutting, the villagers will have to live under the rain...

“The Peace Force [KPF] in Myothit⁵ cut wood. There are many hundred *ta la aw* trees [*a teak-like tree with large leaves, which fall in dry season and are collected by villagers for roofing thatch*] in the area around M--- and T---. Every day they come with 20 or 30 carts to carry timber. The KNU heard about this and summoned us. They suggested we should go and forbid the KPF because the trees belong to the villagers. The KNU head of forestry wrote a letter to them and gave it to the M--- village head to pass it to them. But they didn't give it to the Peace Force in Myothit, they gave it to the Peace Force in K--- instead and the soldiers there didn't send the letter onward so it was lost, and the Peace Force kept cutting wood.

One day I saw 30 or 40 carts come and I really got angry. I wanted to go to Myothit but I knew it's not easy to go there and ordinary people don't dare go. I decided to go anyway. I asked people to go with me but no villagers dared to go, so I asked them just to send me by motorbike. I visited a nurse in K--- who often goes to Myothit and asked if she would go with me, but she said if it was about the timber she didn't want to get involved. She said she only goes there to give medicine to the children. Her husband said 'We can never say anything about the wood.' He said their *ta la aw* trees had already all been cut down by the Peace Force and that he thought they will destroy all the *ta la aw* before long. He said if I went alone and they put me in jail I wouldn't be able to do anything. I thought about it and decided that was true, so I came back home.

I met with the M--- village head and talked to her about going to Myothit to tell the Peace Force to stop cutting *ta la aw*. She said if I wanted to go I could go, but she wouldn't go, she was afraid of the Peace Force because they had punched her in the face one time. I told her she would only have to go with me and I would talk to them alone. The next day I spoke to E--- and told him the villagers kept asking me where they would go to gather [*roofing*] leaves when the *ta la aw* is all gone. I told him it made me sad to think of the villagers under the rain without a good roof and asked him to speak for us. He told me he couldn't do anything and suggested we ask D--- instead. I told him if he didn't want to speak that is okay, but I would not ask D---. Then he agreed to speak for us. After he spoke for us, they stopped coming to cut the trees, but later we heard they were coming to cut the trees again. It is a problem for us. I think that if we go and raise it with them repeatedly, they will put us in jail. Now they're cutting 200 or 300 trees and selling it for their own profit, but the villagers need those trees so they can gather leaves to make roofs for their houses. The trees are getting fewer and fewer. If they keep cutting, I'm sure the villagers will have to live under the rain.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

⁵ Literally 'New town', a forced relocation site established in 1997 just north of Kya In Seik Gyi town. The KPF is cutting wood extensively throughout the areas immediately east and north of Kya In Seik Gyi.

Forced organisation of villages

“The Burmese forced us to relocate almost 8 years ago. It was in August, and two months after we fled we came back to our hill fields for the harvest. The village heads had a meeting and warned us that it was not safe to stay in the villages any more, so we fled again. For seven years I moved around different places, and I came back to stay here [in her village] a year ago this month.”

– Naw K--- (female, 53), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

Increasingly confident of its militarisation of the district, in 2005 the SPDC began allowing some villagers forcibly relocated in 1997 to return to re-establish their villages. While some people remain in hiding in the forests, particularly in the eastern region of Dooplaya which juts out toward Thailand, many of those who have been leading mobile lifestyles or living in other villages without access to land since 1997 are gradually settling back into established villages. The majority of villagers in Dooplaya either remained in their villages after 1997 or already returned to them shortly thereafter, because unlike Karen regions further north, the open and less mountainous terrain of central Dooplaya affords little space for displaced villagers to hide. As a result, the vast majority of people in Dooplaya now live in stationary villages within reach of SPDC military authority.

“Our village was destroyed nine years ago by the SPDC and now we must rebuild it. We came back to rebuild our village just this year. Before that, we were staying separately in the forest, one family here and one family there. If they [SPDC] captured us, they forced people to find the others who had fled and force them to come back. They did that to me, but I told them ‘I can’t find those people, if you must find them you’ll have to find them yourselves.’ They glowered at me but that’s what I said. When they went and couldn’t find anyone, they came back and glowered at us again. I told them, ‘You told me to find people but they’re hiding in the jungle, so I can’t find them for you.’”

– Naw K--- (female, 40), village head, N--- village, Kya In township



The date plaque over the entrance shows that the house on the left was built in 1996 in Htee Po Maw village of Kawkaik township. The owners only lived in it a year before being forcibly relocated, and when this photo was taken in mid-2005 their village still lay abandoned and overgrown. The photo on the right shows a house in Ya Theh Hta village near the Kya In Seik Gyi – Kyone Doh vehicle road. People were forced out of this village in 1997 and only allowed to return in 2005; their new houses still have no walls. [Photos: KHRG]

Permission to re-establish villages comes with conditions: that villagers must comply with all SPDC demands for forced labour, money, food and materials, that all movements and activities of villagers must be reported and people are not allowed to leave their villages without SPDC permission, and that any KNU/KNLA presence in or near the village must be immediately reported. Most villagers have ricefields some distance from the village, and spend much of the growing season living in huts in the fields so they can tend the crop and

keep scavengers away – but SPDC authorities now forbid villagers from staying in these huts, and in Kawkareik township the SPDC has ordered all field huts to be destroyed (see order document below). To Karen villagers, without a field hut it is impossible to farm properly. In the words of a village head in Kya In township who was given permission to re-establish his village in March 2005, *“He told us we could come back to stay in our former village but that we must obey all the rules they give us, and if we do not obey they will force us out of our village again. The rules he gave us are that we must not offer any food to the KNU or allow the KNU to enter our village, and that no fighting can occur in our village. He said if we break any rule he will destroy our village.”* He went on to note that within a few days of their return the villagers were already ordered to provide porters to SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #416.

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>[Stamp:]</i> | Township Peace & Development Council Kawkareik town, Karen State Letter No. 4 / 1-1 / Oo 1 Date: 2005 June 27 th |
| Township Peace & Development Council Kawkareik Township | |
| To: Chairpersons All Ward / Village Tract Peace & Development Councils Kawkareik township | |
| Subject: <u>The matter of temporary huts in flat [irrigated rice] fields</u> | |
| <p>1. In every township of Karen State it is known that temporary huts have been built in the flat fields, so they must be dismantled. If this order is not obeyed, action will be taken under the law in accordance with State Peace & Development Council letter number 5 / 2-17 / Oo 6 dated 22-6-2005, <i>[you are]</i> informed.</p> <p>2. Therefore if any temporary huts have been built in the flat fields of the ward / village tract they must be dismantled. If this is not obeyed, action will be taken in accordance with the law, <i>[you are]</i> informed.</p> | |
| | <i>[Sd.]</i> (for) Chairperson (Nyunt Oo, Secretary) |
| Copies: | |
| - Township supervisor, township land survey department, Kawkareik town | This letter is sent to ensure control and see that |
| - Manager, Myanmar Agricultural Production, Kawkareik town | there are no temporary huts being built. |
| - File / Receipt | |

Order #3. This order was issued right at the beginning of cropping season, when the villagers need their huts the most. ‘Action will be taken’ means the Army will destroy the huts and possibly fine or punish their owners. For Burmese original see p. 79.

To consolidate its administrative structure, the SPDC has been forcing villages to form local administrative units. In villages throughout the district, township SPDC authorities have instituted a Village Peace & Development Council (VPDC). The chairperson and secretary of this council must attend meetings every month at the Township Peace & Development Council (TPDC) offices. Those in southern Doooplaya must go to TPDC offices at Lah Pa, Hla Mine, and Ye town in nearby Mon State. Similar TPDC offices are placed at Kya In Seik Gyi, Azin, and Kawkareik. In Kya In township, appointed VPDC heads are forced to attend monthly meetings at the Operations Command military headquarters in Kya In Seik Gyi. At these township-level meetings, speeches are given by TPDC leaders, Army Operations Commanders and Division Commanders about how villagers must contribute materials, money and labour to SPDC-decreed ‘self-help’ projects like schools, dispensaries, and libraries. Village heads are lectured on their duty to report information to the military, notified

of forced labour, taxes, food and materials which must be provided by their villagers over the coming month, and scolded for any recent failures to obey orders. Decrees are also issued ordering villages to undertake dry season paddy cultivation and castor seed plantations (see below under '**Forced agricultural programmes**'). Though it is dangerous to say anything or object in these meetings, the excessive nature of the demands often causes village heads to raise carefully worded resistance by pointing out that there is no way their villagers can possibly comply with all of them. To this the officials usually respond with angry threats, or by saying that these orders have come from higher levels and they have no choice but to see that they are obeyed.

"We have to attend SPDC meetings once a month at the Operations Command in Seik Gyi. This meeting has no benefit, instead it only gives trouble and worries to the villagers. In the meetings they order the villagers to do this and that. They ordered the village heads to select women to join Myanmar Women's Affairs [Federation], and then those women had to pay admission fees. They ordered the villagers to do plantations, and the villagers have to give them money too. They ordered the villagers to build libraries, join Myanmar Women's Affairs and [Myanmar] Maternity and Child Welfare [Association], and to make plantations for them. Even though the villagers don't want to do anything that they demand or order, they have to do it because they are under SPDC control. The SPDC doesn't understand the difficulties of the villagers, they only understand how to find money and food for their own stomachs."

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

"The meeting starts at 1 o'clock in the afternoon and finishes at 3 or 4 o'clock in the evening. They don't give us food so we have to buy our own. Each time I go it costs me 1,000 Kyat, and if two people go it costs 2,000 Kyat."

– Naw M--- (female, 47), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

"Camp commander Thein Than Win from the Chaung Wah battalion orders all of us village heads to attend a meeting twice a month at the office of Chaung Wah VPDC chairman U Maung Lu. If you are absent they fine you the cost of the tea for everyone who's at the meeting. I missed it one time and had to pay the cost of tea to everyone, so later I dared not be absent again. If I don't attend, one of my assistants is always there."

– Saw T--- (male, 35), village head, S--- village, Ye township

"On December 31st 2005 I went to one of their meetings at Saw Hta [Azin]. They didn't say anything special, they were talking to everyone in Burmese and I don't know what they said because I don't understand Burmese. The meetings we have with them don't have any benefit, but if they summon us we have to go."

– Naw K--- (female, 40), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

Every month villages receive minutes of the meeting, reminding them of all the duties they were instructed to perform. The document translated below is a typical example. The references to villagers picking up and paying for seed are related to the SPDC's programme to force villagers to plant castor at their own expense. 'Land leasing forms' relate to SPDC authorities forcing villagers to pay bribes to avoid having their land confiscated. These and other demands reflected in these minutes are explained in further detail in later sections of this report.

[Stamp:]
Township Peace & Development Council
Kawkareik township

Resolutions of meeting number 11/2006 for working discussions of the Township Peace & Development Council chairperson and members with township agriculture control members and (VPDC) chairpersons and clerks at 1300 hours on May 31st 2006

| No. | Resolutions | Implemented by |
|-----|--|-----------------|
| 1 | To encourage and urge the farmers in relevant wards and villages to grow rainy season rice in order to fulfil the 2006-2007 rainy season project plan. | All VPDCs |
| 2 | To fulfil the fencing castor bean planting by the end of June and report on its implementation together with photos. | " |
| 3 | Remaining villages yet to take their seeds must come to Kawkareik Township Peace & Development Council office quickly and take them. | Remaining VPDCs |
| 4 | To urge each family in wards / village tracts to raise ten chickens and one pig. | All VPDCs |
| 5 | VPDC clerks must prepare land leasing forms number 12 and number 27 and report to the Township Peace & Development Council at the 15-6-2006 meeting. | " |
| 6 | To open village libraries all wards / village tracts should work with social groups. | " |
| 7 | All wards / village tracts are urged to achieve 50 percent [<i>membership</i>] in Women's Affairs and Maternal and Child organisations. | " |
| 8 | Remaining villages yet to pay the money for fencing castor seeds and calendar fees must come and pay quickly at the Kawkareik Township Peace & Development Council office. | Remaining VPDCs |

[Sd.]
Minute taker
(Daw Nweh Ni Myint, senior clerk)

Letter No. 2 / 1-4 / Oo 4
Date: 2006 June 7th

Order #4.

Both long-serving and newly-appointed village heads are now being informed of their duties to the SPDC by forcing them to attend 'trainings'. VPDC leaders in Waw Raw (Win Yaw), Hla Mine and Ye townships were ordered to attend 'management and security' training organised by the Mon State general administration department. Translations of two of the original order documents are shown in Appendix A. The training began on October 3rd 2005; first 450 VPDC chairpersons had to attend for five days, then 259 VPDC secretaries for five days, and finally second secretaries for five days. All those attending were ordered to bring 50,000 Kyat spending money with them, and also had to bring their own notebooks, rulers, pencils, pens, mosquito nets, blankets, bedsheets and cups. Each attendee was forced to pay 8,400 Kyat for the food provided over seven days, plus 500 Kyat training fees. One attendee told KHRG everyone was forced to hand over 11,000 Kyat for 'admission fees' on arrival. The second secretary of Beh La Mu village in Waw Raw (Win Yaw) township did not have enough money to attend the training, so at midnight on October 21st 2005 troops from SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #588 came to his village and arrested him. They accused him of not reporting intelligence to them about KNU activities, force-marched him to the Army camp in the middle of the night, and detained him there until releasing him the next day.

"In August 2005, TPDC Organising Director Kyaw Mya Hlaing sent a letter ordering us to meet with him at the Ler Mu office, and that the village chairpersons and secretaries must attend the Security and Management training at Moulmein. On October 3rd the VPDC chairpersons went to attend the training, and on October 10th the village secretaries like me went. It was in Moulmein at the Tavoy College, Shwe Myein hall. We had to bring everything with us, like notebooks, ruler, pencils, pens, mosquito net, blanket, bedsheet, and cup, and when we arrived everyone had to give 11,000 Kyat for admission fees. We ate three times a day at 7 a.m., noon and 5 p.m. We had to attend the training without fail. In our training for 1st secretaries there were 249 of us there for five days. There were over 10 trainers. They talked about managing the village and transportation between villages, they explained how village secretaries have many duties but no salary, and that we must evaluate the school and teachers. On security they told us that our villages must be kept safe by keeping gangsters out, and that if any enemies [KNU or other SPDC opposition] enter the village we must inform the nearest Army or police unit. On economics, they told us to plant paddy, several kinds of bean, corn, sugarcane, there must have been over ten crops in all but I can't remember them all. On health, they said our VPDC chairpersons must work together to fill the needs of our villages, for example by building dispensaries.

I had to collect 50,000 Kyat from the villagers for training expenses. The K--- [village] chairman said to me, 'The only use of this training is to make our money disappear.' He meant there is no benefit from this. In the evenings after the training sessions we discussed the training and agreed that it was no use to us and our money was lost for nothing. The third session was for the village 2nd secretaries but the 2nd secretary of Beh Lah Mu village didn't attend, so on October 19th the Light Infantry Battalion #588 Battalion Commander Myint Zaw sent his Warrant Officer Than Win with a group of soldiers. They came at night to look for village 2nd secretary Maung O--- at his rubber plantation hut, but he wasn't there. The soldiers only found his son-in-law S--- so they beat him with their rifle butts two or three times. That night Maung O--- was at W--- village, so the others called him back urgently. When he arrived they arrested him and took him to their Battalion camp, and the village chairman went along. The chairman explained that Maung O--- couldn't attend the training because he had no money and the villagers weren't able to pay for his expenses. After that they released him."



U P--- was among approximately 700 local village PDC officials forced to attend the SPDC training in Moulmein. He says he had to collect 50,000 Kyat from the villagers to cover the fees and costs of the training. [Photo: KHRG]

– U P--- (male, 51), K--- village, Ye township

The training agenda included security, management, education, health and economic matters. On education and health, village heads were told to organise their villagers to

arrange schools and clinics, though they are given no state assistance to do so. Economics focused on forced cropping programmes, ordering villages to grow a second paddy crop in dry season and cash crops for export – again with no state support or consideration of available land and workforce. Security focused mainly on responsibilities of the VPDC to report information on their villages to military authorities. In the lectures on management, village leaders were ordered to organise their villagers to join SPDC organisations like the *Pyitthu Sit* militia, Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA), Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation (MWAFF), Myanmar Fire Brigades, and the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), all of which are to be expanded throughout the villages. The MMCWA is a health-oriented organisation which receives a great deal of foreign funding from United Nations agencies and international non-governmental organisations, but is controlled by SPDC authorities at all levels; at township level, the chair is automatically the wife of the local TPDC chairman, and at village level the chair is the wife of the SPDC-appointed village headman and the secretary is the wife of the village secretary. MWAFF was created in 2003 by then-SPDC prime minister Lt. Gen. Khin Nyunt, who stated its purpose as being to “take charge of the women sector comprehensively” and to support the governmental Myanmar National Committee for Women’s Affairs (MNCWA).⁶ The USDA is a ‘mass’ organisation created and controlled by the SPDC but nominally independent; mass membership is forced or coerced, while its core members are often used by the SPDC for thuggery and killings, as in the case of the Depayin massacre of May 2003. The Fire Brigades are not organised or equipped to fight fires, but instead are given paramilitary training to act as auxiliary to the Army and the People’s Militia. All of these groups are categorised by the SPDC as ‘People’s Auxiliary Forces’ (*Pyitthu Ah Ku Tat*)⁷ and are deployed to extend an SPDC military presence into every village.

“The SPDC and VPDC forced the men to join the Pyitthu Sit [‘People’s Militia’]. They gave them training but they didn’t give them guns for the training. The villagers weren’t given any choice whether to join or not. They had to join because they were ordered, but they didn’t get any salary. After the training, the men didn’t have to do anything. They were told that they have to secure their own village. Not only our village was ordered to join, but also the other villages.”

– Saw L--- (male, 56), K--- village, Waw Raw township

“In 2004 the SPDC ordered our villagers to join the Fire Brigades. The village head and villagers agreed that we wouldn’t join unless they put pressure on us and made trouble about it. Later we didn’t hear any more about it, but people from all six sections of Seik Gyi [town] had to join.”

– Naw M--- (female, 47), T--- village, Kya In township

“The TPDC and VPDC forced the villagers to organise themselves as the Maternal and Child Welfare [MMCWA] and Myanmar Women’s Affairs [Federation]. They forced the women in the villages to organise this. If her husband is village head, she must become the [MMCWA or MWAFF] village head, and if her husband is village secretary then she must become the secretary. They don’t care if they’re literate or illiterate, even illiterate women were chosen to be the leaders and secretaries. Now we have 27 women in Myanmar Women’s Affairs and 7 women in MMCWA. They didn’t get any training about these organisations and they don’t need to do anything, but each woman had to pay 500 Kyat to join these organisations.”

– A--- (male, 43), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

⁶ ‘Formation of MWAFF’, *News and Views from Myanmar*, 29 December 2003. Accessed at http://www.mofa.gov.mm/news/dec29_mon6.html on May 4, 2006.

⁷ Andrew Selth, *Burma’s Armed Forces: Power Without Glory*. Eastbridge: Norwalk, 2002. Page 81.

Secret

[Stamp:]
Township General Administration Dept.
Kawkareik Township

Township General Administration Department
Kawkareik town, Karen State
Letter No. 3 / 3-3 / Oo 4
Date: 2006 June 8th

To: - Township Religious Affairs Supervisor
Kawkareik town
- Township Education Supervisor
Kawkareik town
- Chairpersons
All ward / village tract Peace & Development Councils
Kawkareik township

Subject: Procedures in cases of agitation

Reference: (1) Karen State General Administration Department letter number 3 / 2-17 / Oo 1
dated 31-5-2006
(2) Kawkareik District General Administration Department letter number 3 / 3-10
/ Oo 1 dated 7-6-2006

1. Internal and external destructive elements jealous of the development of the nation could infiltrate among the civilians to spoil the peace and create agitation. The responsible ministry will not view any incident as small, so all cases should be handled with caution until they are resolved so that small incidents will not grow into bigger problems. If the monks become agitated because of terrorist infiltration and activities then the *sangha [monks' organisation]* at all levels must take charge and manage it. If the students become agitated, the male and female teachers at all levels must take charge and manage it. If the public becomes agitated, the responsible people concerned such as ten-house leaders, hundred-house leaders and Ward Peace & Development Councils must take charge and manage it until it is resolved, as informed by the *[above]* reference letters.
2. Therefore, you are informed that the above directives must be carried out and obeyed.

[Sd.]

(for) Township Administrator
(Han Win Lat, Deputy Administrative Supervisor)

Copies:

- District Administrator, District General Administration Department, Kawkareik town
- Receipt Copy

Secret

Order #5. For Burmese original (two pages) see p. 79.

Every village has now been ordered to create a chapter of the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA) and the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation (MWAFF) 'without fail'. The number of members demanded from each village is based on village size, but most villages have been ordered that at least 50 percent of the female population must join. Application forms for both organisations have already been delivered to some villages, which were forced to pay 250-350 Kyat for each MMCWA application form and 300-500 Kyat for each MWAFF form. Example copies of these forms with translations are shown in Appendix B. Orders specified that each form delivered must be bought by a villager, filled out, and submitted to the organisation. One village head in Waw Raw township told KHRG his village only has 37 houses but was sent 40 application forms, "so it seems like all of us will have to join that organisation."

“Women that join their groups have to pay admission fees. They ordered the village head [herself] to select women to join Myanmar Women’s Affairs [Federation]. We already collected money from the villagers and sent it to them. Every person who joined had to pay 310 Kyat. No villagers were interested in joining, so we had to force them to join. They gave 50 application forms to my village. Even though the villagers don’t want to do the things they are forced or ordered to do, they have to do it because we are under SPDC control. The SPDC doesn’t sympathise with the difficulties of the villagers. For Maternity and Child Welfare [MMCWA], they gave 100 forms to our village, but we haven’t done anything yet. I know that the villagers don’t understand anything about these organisations, but when SPDC demands money from them they are used to paying without knowing or understanding why.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

“The SPDC forced the villagers to join Maternity and Child Welfare [MMCWA]. They sent us 50 application forms and we had to pay 250 Kyat for each form. We haven’t organised enough women to join yet. I don’t know what to do and I don’t understand what this organisation is about. They just told us that after we finish filling in the forms we have to send them to the Kya In village tract head. C--- village was ordered to organise the women to join Myanmar Women’s Affairs [Federation] by the TPDC. This was ordered at a meeting in November 2005 by the TPDC Chairman and the Operations Commander. The villagers were not willing to join this organisation, but they were ordered to be sure to join and we couldn’t give the TPDC a good excuse why we didn’t want to join. They told us it would be good for the women because when women are abused by men or by the soldiers of any army they could report it to the Myanmar Women’s Affairs people and they could help them. After this speech, some women joined the organisation. In their order document it instructed that the woman whose husband is village chairman must be the chair of the organisation in her village. The TPDC chairman gave 120 application forms to the women of our village. We had to buy these application forms for 320 Kyat each. In the form it said ‘I am a member of Myanmar Women’s Affairs, and this is the organisation that will solve the problems of abuse against women. We women will take responsibility for this.’ The form had blanks for the women to fill in. In the meeting they said women could also use this form as an ID card if they didn’t have an ID card. Most women were not interested in joining this organisation, but they were forced to join. If the SPDC soldiers rape or abuse girls or women, we don’t really believe that this organisation will solve it for them.”

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

“On December 30th 2005 we got a letter from the SPDC in Kya In Seik Gyi. It said that the women in the village must join the Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation and that five leaders must be chosen. Each woman has to pay 320 Kyat to join. It also ordered villagers to join Maternity and Child Welfare, and each person has to pay 250 Kyat to join that. We haven’t organised this yet.”

– U M--- (male, 51), village head, B--- village, Kya In township

“There are some organisations like Maternal and Child Welfare, Myanmar Women’s Affairs and the Fire Brigade. These organisations have been established in the village since a year and a half ago. The TPDC and VPDC ordered the villagers to join them. People weren’t given a choice. Even though they didn’t want to join, they had to join because it was ordered. The admission fees were as much as 1,000 Kyat. The women were given no training, but sometimes when the health committees came they would summon all those who are members of their organisations for meetings, and the members had to go and listen to them talk. They are also responsible to help children or mothers who are at the hospital without enough money. They have very little money, but they give it to help children or mothers who don’t have enough money to go to hospital.”

– L--- (male, 56), VPDC member, K--- village, Waw Raw township

Some villages have also been forced to build 'libraries', then given one or two dozen books which they are told to keep there. The purpose behind this is not clear, particularly to the villagers forced to do the work, but asking questions about such projects is always dangerous.

"The SPDC Operations Commander ordered the villagers to construct a library in each village. There were 128 villages that were ordered to construct libraries. They gave 85 books to each big village, and 25 to 75 books to each small village. They said that if the villagers read the books we will get more knowledge and improve our lives too. We already received the books they sent to keep in the library. Most of the books were [magazines] about Burmese actors and actresses. We had to buy a library signboard from the SPDC for 5,000 Kyat. We haven't given them that money yet and we thought about making the signboard ourselves. Most of the villagers don't read or write Burmese, and many find reading books boring."

– Naw M--- (female, 47), T--- village, Kya In township

"The SPDC forced the villagers to construct a library. They said it would benefit people who could come and read in it. But I don't think it will be a benefit because most of the villagers don't speak, read or write Burmese. They sent us books for this library in November 2005."

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township



"The TPDC chairman forced T---, P--- and C--- villages to build libraries with our own resources. When we finished building them, on January 7th 2005 they gave 25 books to our village, 30 books to P--- village and 45 books to T--- village. They told us to put the books in the cupboard. A few of the books were magazines about health, business and social affairs, but most of them were about actors or actresses and movies so that the women and children would be interested in their books."

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

One of the village 'libraries' which the Kya In Seik Gyi Township Peace & Development Council chairman ordered local villages to build in Dooplaya district in early 2005. Villagers had to build the libraries at their own expense using their own materials. Most of the 'books' provided by the TPDC are actually movie magazines. [Photo: KHRG]

"They forced the villagers to build a library but they didn't give us the wood, bamboo or other things that we needed to construct the building. They gave us some books to keep in the library, and so far they haven't told us what those are to cost. If we have to pay them money for the books that they gave us we'll just have to pay it, because we are afraid of them."

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

Villages throughout Dooplaya have been ordered to send complete registers of households and population to the TPDC office each year, and to provide these registers to every new military unit that arrives in their area. This is so that anyone not on the register can be arrested as a 'rebel element'. Each family must pay 500 or 600 Kyat to the VPDC authorities to be included in the household register, and this money is passed on to the TPDC. One village headwoman told KHRG that every household in her village had to pay 600 Kyat to participate in the registration plus 200 Kyat to laminate their registration form so it could be

posted on the outside of their house without rotting in the weather. To avoid arrest, villagers without national identity cards have been told to apply for them, at a cost of 5,000 Kyat per person. Villages must also provide complete registers of all sawmills, mechanised equipment like rice mills or tractors, bullock carts, cultivated land and populations of draught animals, chickens, ducks, goats, buffalos, cattle and elephants to the TPDC office. The officials claim these registers are for development purposes or so that they can report any thefts by SPDC soldiers to other authorities, but in reality any such reports only result in threats against the villagers rather than action against the soldiers. In reality the household lists posted on each house are a control measure enabling passing Army patrols to arrest unauthorised villagers and guests or interrogate families about missing family members; while the village-level registers are used by the Army and local authorities to allocate demands for forced labour, bullock carts, crops, money, livestock and materials to the villages in their control area based on village population and access to resources.

“Last year, 2004, and this year, 2005, the SPDC demanded from us a household population register including all fields and plantations. They said that if we didn’t give this register then when they come and take our fields, our land and our livestock we cannot object.”

– D--- (male, 36), village headman, T--- village, Waw Raw township

“Last rainy season the SPDC forced us to prepare a register of households. We had to give two copies of it to the Operations Command and two copies to Infantry Battalion #83. It was a lot of work so we had to ask the teachers to help us, because most of the villagers can’t read or write Burmese [and each copy would have to be written out by hand]. The teachers had to leave their students to help, so it also disrupted the students’ education. They [the Army] said if we gave them the register it would be easy for us to get ID cards. Around our village it is very hard for people to get ID cards, but the villagers just complied anyway out of fear, because they also threatened that if any household didn’t hand in its registration and later got into trouble, the village head will not be allowed to vouch for them [to verify they are her villagers so they will be released from detention]. They demanded 600 Kyat from each household to register, and they said if villagers wanted to laminate their household register list then they have to pay 200 Kyat for the plastic. So the total each household had to pay to be on the register list was 800 Kyat.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

[Stamp:]
Township Peace & Development Council
Kawkareik township

Township Peace & Development Council
Kawkareik town, Karen State
Letter No. 2 / 1-2 / Oo 6
Date: 2006 April 20th

To:

Chairpersons
All Ward / Village Tract Peace & Development Councils
Kawkareik township

Subject: The matter of following the meeting decisions

1. According to discussion meeting number 10/2006 of state/district/township Peace & Development Councils and state-level departments held at 0900 hours on 5-4-2006 at the Karen State Peace & Development Council meeting hall, the following resolutions have been decided upon for implementation by the ward / village tract level.
 - (a) To gather and clean temples of each religion.
 - (b) If strangers arrive in wards/villages this must be reported immediately to the authorities concerned.
2. Therefore *[you are]* informed to discuss with township religious affairs supervisor to arrange cleaning of the temples of each religion and to report immediately to the authorities if your ward/village receives any strangers.

[Sd.]
(for) Chairperson
(Nyunt Oo, secretary)

Copies to:

- chairperson, District Peace & Development Council, Kawkareik town
- township religious affairs supervisor, religious affairs department, Kawkareik town
- office / file

Order #6.

The response of village heads

"I have been village head in my village for four years now. I was elected by the villagers. The responsibility of the village head is to look after the villagers and to represent them. Before, the village heads in our village were men, but the SPDC soldiers tortured them, slapped, punched and kicked them until no man wanted or dared become village head any more. ... When the SPDC enters the village and demands porters, guides, or carts I usually go along with the villagers, because I am afraid they will abuse my villagers. Usually if the villagers who go with them cannot speak Burmese, they slap their faces, grab them by the hair and beat them."

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

Most village heads are elected by the villagers to represent them. Once in the position, they are the ones who must deal with the SPDC and other armed groups. When orders and demands are received, they are expected to arrange the compliance of villagers. This means keeping track of whose 'turn' it is to do forced labour, gathering money to compensate bullock cart owners who are forced to take their carts for labour or to compensate the owners of confiscated livestock, and other similar duties. In this process, most village heads feel a responsibility to protect their villagers from excessive demands. To do this they often ignore the SPDC's written orders, hoping that the demand will simply be forgotten. If the officer is serious, he often has to send an order two or three times to get any reply from the village head – who may then just send a representative to plead that she's ill or away in the fields. In this way many orders lapse without ever being obeyed; for example, in one recent set of approximately 40 SPDC order documents obtained by KHRG, the village heads had complied with less than half. Even their compliance often takes the form of constant negotiation with SPDC and other authorities for demands to be reduced or postponed. In the end, SPDC officers very seldom get the full number of forced labourers they demand, and orders to plant SPDC-ordained crops often go ignored if the villagers don't want to plant them (see below under '**Forced Agricultural Programmes**'). When the officer demands to see the crop that was never planted or the road that was never cleared and threatens violent punishments, village heads can often appease him with a bribe. Simple day to day noncompliance like this greatly reduces the burden on villagers while maintaining their dignity and control over their lives. However, it also seriously undermines the SPDC's control over the villages, and therefore puts the village heads in the front line of the struggle between villagers and armed authorities for local self-determination. Noncompliance puts village heads at great risk, and they are often detained, beaten or tortured for their villages' failure to comply with orders. Being village head requires knowing the limits of how far the local military officers and civil authorities can be pushed without a violent retaliation.

"All the village heads are women. The men don't dare to be village heads because the Burmese speak to the men angrily, and they cannot speak Burmese fluently so they don't want to talk to the Burmese. It is a little bit better for women, because we dare to talk to the Burmese. If the Burmese order us to go and meet with them, even if they send the letter in the night, we have to go. I've been village head for 8 months now. The villagers elected me. My duty as village head is when they demand things I have to provide them, and if they order us to find things for them then we must find them. If they fine us we must pay them, even if we do not have the money we cannot deny them. The most difficult thing for me as village head has been when they demand bullock carts. If the Burmese demand bullock carts at night then I have to go looking for some, and it bothers the villagers because they have to do it too. Our village has 45 houses but I reported that there are 30 houses [to lessen SPDC demands]. The villagers all work hill fields. We also have betelnut plantations and do a little logging to get income."

– Naw K--- (female, 53), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

The frequency of beatings and torture make most people in Dooplaya reluctant to become village heads. Moreover, when villagers do not have the money to pay the extortion or buy the livestock demanded from the village, the village head often has to go into personal debt to meet the demand if she or he does not want to be tortured. Many villages have therefore made the village head's position temporary or rotating. Though traditionally a male-dominated position, many villages now appoint female village heads because they feel women are less likely to be beaten or tortured than men. Elderly women usually prove to be better negotiators than men. They not only draw on their knowledge and experience, but also exploit the reverence for mothers and the elderly ingrained in Burmese culture to shame the younger military men and convince them to lessen their demands. This is a delicate and risky process, however, because it is not unusual for officers to detain and beat elderly women or to demand their replacement as village head. There are also physical risks and difficulties resulting from the constant orders for the village head to travel to Army camps to receive orders at all hours of the day and night.

"I have been secretary of T--- village for 5 months already. I was elected by the villagers. The men in the village don't dare to be village head or secretary, because the SPDC come to the village and ask them questions and when they can't answer them they are punched, beaten, slapped and tortured. Women have been doing this work for almost 10 years now. No one wants to be secretary or village head permanently though, because the SPDC are always demanding things and forcing them to do this and that, so the village head and secretary are always busy doing things for them."

– Naw M--- (female, 47), T--- village, Kya In township

When orders are given to the village head, she or he has to find villagers or carts to do the forced labour, or buy the food or goods demanded. People take turns doing forced labour, though it sometimes leads to disputes. Demands often come during busy periods in the crop cycle or when people have no money, making it difficult for village heads to comply. In these situations they need all their negotiating skills, both to convince the SPDC and other armed groups to reduce the demands and to convince villagers to comply in some way.

"When [SPDC officer] Myo Maung was there, they used to demand two bullock carts from us once a month to carry all their rations from K'Lay Kee camp to Kyaikdon. The distance is so far that I cannot tell you how many hours it took. The bullocks that went looked bad and could barely walk by the time they arrived back at the village. We complained that it was difficult to find bullock carts to go, so he reduced it to one bullock cart. We complained about the distance, and they reduced the distance and said we'd only have to carry as far as Plaw Pa Taw. We asked them to pay the cart owner and they said they would pay, but when the owners arrived back they always said they hadn't been paid. So we villagers ourselves had to pay the owners 15,000 Kyat each time to help them. We collected 500 Kyat from each house to do that. First we collected 1,000 Kyat each only from cart owners, but then we decided it would be more fair to collect 500 Kyat from each house. We pay the bullock owner 5,000, the cart owner 5,000, and one person from each house helps the bullock cart driver to harvest his paddy at harvest time. Though we do this to help each other some people complain about it, but we must do what we must do."

– Naw K--- (female, 53), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

To make it easier to deal with these demands, some villages have implemented a system of collecting 'taxes' of a few hundred Kyat per month and a bit of rice from each household on a regular basis. This is pooled into a fund which the village head can draw on. When rice is demanded, she negotiates a reduction in the demand and then pays the rest out of the rice pool. When livestock or goods are demanded, the money is used to buy these from people in the village who have them. In this way the burden is spread and somewhat softened, but each passing year brings more demands and funds usually fall far short of what is required.

“We collect taxes in our village once a month. We collect 200 Kyat per house. We don’t collect it from people who don’t have enough food for their families, or from the pastor’s house. If people don’t have any money to give us, we don’t force them or trouble them. We use the money we collect for the needs of our village, for example when SPDC soldiers come and demand chicken or food we use this money to buy it for them. We also collect ½ basket of rice per house once a year.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

“There are three kinds of people in our village. The first kind are people who have paddy fields, carts, bullocks and gardens so they have enough food to manage throughout the year. The second kind of people can only grow enough food for their own family, but they don’t get enough for the whole year so they have to work very hard for their family’s survival. The third kind are people who are not in perfect health or full strength so it is hard for them to support their families. We collect rice and money from the villagers once a year to cover some of the demands of the military troops, but we don’t collect taxes from this third group of people because we know they are in trouble and we don’t want them to fall into even more trouble.”

– Naw E--- (female, 42), village section leader, M--- village, Kya In township

If my cow got lost, would you pay for it?

“The Peace Force [KPF] is right next to our village, just one furlong away to the east. Their place is called K---, their Company Commander is K--- and second in command is D---. Last rainy season the Peace Force ordered my village to send carts to carry their supplies and rations. Around November-December [2005] one of the Peace Force’s cattle got lost, so they sent a letter summoning the village heads of P---, M--- and T--- villages. I had to go to Seik Gyi, so I sent my secretary instead. When I got back from Seik Gyi one of my neighbours told me I was ordered to go to the Peace Force camp at 4 p.m. and to take 200,000 Kyat to pay the cost of their lost cow. She said each of the three villages was ordered to pay 200,000. I didn’t have any money and I told her we didn’t steal it so we won’t pay it. My husband also said not to go because it’s not fair, we don’t tend their cattle so how could we know when it was lost. But my secretary came and told me I had to go because the M--- and P--- village heads were waiting there for me, so I went.

When I got there I told the Peace Force that my mother-in-law’s cow was also lost, so if I asked the Peace Force to pay the cost of that lost cow would they be willing to pay it? I knew they didn’t like my words, but they didn’t say anything. Deputy Company Commander D--- told me the order came from [Company Commander] K---, the owner of the cow, so he was just passing it on to the village heads. I said that just as he had been ordered to pass it on to us, now I was being ordered to pass it on to my villagers. He said that was no concern of his but that we would just have to pay, so I would have to bother my villagers about this.

I came back and told the villagers, but the villagers refused to pay. So we had to search for this cow. Later a man coming back from K--- said there was a stray cow they’d found there, so I sent some villagers to look at it. They came back and said it was the Peace Force’s cow, but the villagers there were asking us to ransom it for 10,000 Kyat. The Peace Force had let their cow loose and it went to eat the other villagers’ paddy so the villagers had caught it. We ransomed the cow for 10,000 Kyat. To search for it we had to use a motorbike and buy petrol, and if we include everything the total we paid was close to 30,000 Kyat. We brought the cow back to its owner, K---, but he wasn’t at the Army camp. We told them we hadn’t stolen their cow, but they had accused us of stealing it, so now they should pay us back the money we’d spent searching for their cow. But they didn’t pay us anything.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

Forced agricultural programmes

“On November 30th 2005, the TPDC chairman wrote a letter to the village head ordering the villagers to grow rice in the dry season. They gave 30 baskets of seed paddy to the village, but we have to pay them 2,800 Kyat for each basket they gave us. Most of the villagers are facing big problems growing rice in dry season because there isn’t enough water. They haven’t paid the money for the seed paddy to the SPDC yet, but they are supposed to give it after they harvest the paddy. Even if the crop fails, we will have to pay them that money. They ordered us to plant paddy along the roadsides. Last year they also ordered us to plant four acres of dry season paddy, but it wasn’t successful and we didn’t harvest even one tin of rice. This year again we don’t think we will succeed in growing dry season paddy.”

– A--- (male, 43), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

Throughout Burma rice is grown in the June to October rainy season, but SPDC authorities are now ordering Dooplaya villagers to produce a second rice crop in the December to April dry season. This requires irrigation systems and fertilisers, which the SPDC is not providing. Immediately after the regular harvest of November 2005, the Township Peace & Development Council in Kya In Seik Gyi forced each group of nine villages in the area to buy a total of 50 baskets of paddy seed from them at 2,500 Kyat per basket – 50 baskets would be enough to plant about 25 acres (10 hectares) under ordinary conditions. The seed variety is called ‘*sin thweh luh*’, and in the meetings villagers were told by SPDC authorities that it will yield a crop in just three months. Most say they did not believe any of this, but dared not say anything in the meeting for fear of punishment. Village leaders who protested that they did not have land available for this crop (because in the fallow season they use their paddy fields as livestock grazing) have been told to plant rice along the roadsides. It is unclear as yet whether SPDC authorities plan to demand a large quota from this dry season crop at the end of the season, as they have done in previous years. One villager in the area told KHRG that there is no way they can produce the crop, because in dry season no surface water is available in the area. He added, “If lightning were to strike us all on the head, that would be better than trying to plant paddy in the dry season.” A village headman in Kya In township told KHRG,

“The VPDC ordered us to plant paddy in dry season but our villagers cannot do that yet. We think we will never plant paddy in dry season because in dry season all of the streams and ponds are dried up, and we cannot grow paddy without water. Another reason is that we traditionally release our livestock to graze freely in dry season, so if we plant paddy we’ll have to fence in our paddy fields because we can’t expect everyone to restrain their livestock. But there’s no way we can fence all our fields. Anyway, our villagers have decided that we will never comply with this order to grow dry season paddy. If the SPDC punishes us then we will accept the punishment. Right now all of the farmers are refusing to plant dry season paddy.”

– U L--- (male, 56), C--- village, Kya In township

“On November 30th 2005, two or three village heads from our area were summoned to a meeting at Kya In Seik Gyi by the TPDC. They were told to do dry season planting. They gave the villagers the seed paddy, but the villagers have to pay them 2,500 for each basket of seed paddy. Our village, T---, was given 30 baskets of paddy and ordered to plant 20-30 acres. We have problems planting paddy in dry season because we don’t have enough water, and we don’t have enough land to grow all that they asked. We couldn’t refuse them though, because they told us that if we don’t do as they have ordered they will punish us in some way. So now we have started growing 3 or 4 acres of paddy. The villagers are working very hard and they are very distressed about this crop. We don’t think dry season paddy growing can benefit us, because it isn’t the right time to grow paddy.”

– K--- (male, 49), T--- village, Waw Raw township

“They talked about this in the meeting, but we weren’t interested so we didn’t say anything. They said they wanted us to become rich so they would force us to do this. But we knew that there isn’t enough water and that it would have no benefit for us, so we haven’t done it. The type of paddy is ‘sin thweh luh’, they said that in three months we would be able to harvest. They said the villages around ours must plant 65 acres. Some of the villages on the other side of Kya In Seik Gyi planted it, but most of the villages on our side didn’t. I became so angry when I was reading the order letter out to the [assembled] villagers that I started tearing up the letter angrily in front of them. They don’t understand the situation of the villagers. They only know what they want without ever sympathising with the difficulties of the villagers. They also ordered the villagers to plant rubber trees and said that if the rubber trees grow we’ll be able to sell rubber to other countries.”

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

“The SPDC forced nine villages around my village to do summer planting. ... We already told them that this won’t be any benefit for the villagers and that we’ll just lose all the money we invest, but they still force us to do it.”

– U T--- (male, 33), village head, K--- village, Kya In township

Not only are villagers given no support for dry season paddy planting, they are forced to buy the seed for the crop and in some cases additional equipment, all at their own expense. Sixty-one year old U B--- describes how his village was forced to buy a tractor to work the dry season paddy crop they had no desire nor intention to plant:

“The TPDC chairman forced the villagers to do dry season planting, and he also forced the villagers to buy a tractor from him. The villagers didn’t want to buy it but they forced us, so we bought it for 750,000 Kyat. After we bought it no one used it, so we kept it under the monastery. Some people from another village said they would buy it, but when they came to see it they said this tractor isn’t any good. I would sell it even for just 550,000, but nobody wants to buy it. They also forced the villagers to buy their seed paddy and plant it. Some of the villagers had already tried that, but their paddy plants didn’t grow even as high as one cubit [18 inches / 45 cm]. Then they [SPDC] said that the villagers didn’t follow their instructions and that’s why the crop didn’t grow well.”

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

Many villages have also been ordered to plant rubber, sesame, and castor bean. All of these orders overlap with each other with no apparent coordination, sometimes ordering people to plant several different things on the same plot of ground. Once the SPDC decides a particular product is the country’s route to prosperity, everyone is ordered to produce it – but at their own expense, with no support. Castor bean is the latest SPDC fixation, with the idea that it can be used to produce bio-fuel that will replace the petrol, kerosene and diesel now imported at great expense. On January 17th 2006 SPDC Minister of Industry U Aung Thuang gave a speech; “Noting that the cultivation of an acre (0.405 hectare) of land with 1,200 physic nut plants can produce up to 100 gallons (454.6 liters) of biodiesel, he said the government has made arrangements to put nearly 8,000 hectares under more than 5 million physic nut saplings.”⁸ In December 2005, the SPDC announced that “50,000 acres in each of Myanmar’s nine military divisions” would be commandeered to plant castor.⁹ By January 2006, farmers all over the country were being ordered to buy castor seed from the SPDC and plant castor. Every state and division is to be involved; KHRG has already received reports of forced castor planting, sometimes including land confiscation and forced labour,

⁸ [‘Myanmar eyes physic nut oil as fuel to help solve oil crisis’](#), Xinhua news service (China), 18 January 2006.

⁹ [‘Castor beans to be grown for biofuel’](#), Myanmar Times, 9-15 January 2006.

from Chin, Rakhine, Shan and Karen States and Rangoon, Pegu and Mandalay Divisions.¹⁰ Though the SPDC pushes the programme as a solution to Burma's fuel needs, it is worrying to note that the regime is also eyeing export markets; Thai and other foreign investors have been offered the chance to invest in 'joint venture' projects to buy castor cheap using Burmese 'contract farming',¹¹ while in 2003 Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was already promising to waive import duties on castor from Burma.¹² Producing for export would mean there would be no limit on how much land the SPDC might force to shift from food crops to castor production. In Dooplaya most villagers say they are short of food, and as most of them cannot afford machinery their fuel needs are very small. Some people see some benefit in biofuel, but most would much rather grow food crops.

"The SPDC told us the reason to grow castor is that we will harvest castor bean, then we can grind those beans and the castor bean oil will become diesel fuel which we can use in our vehicles. He said in the future we will not have any more diesel fuel in Burma so we must start growing castor. I think if castor oil can become diesel fuel that will be useful for us, because some villagers already bought motorcycles and cars."

– Daw T--- (female, 53), K--- village, Kya In township

The castor planting project came to Dooplaya in January 2006. On January 19th a written order was issued by Yeh Htun, Chairman of Kya In Seik Gyi TPDC. It stated, *"Regarding the above matter, villages located in Kya In Seik Gyi township must plant 83 acres of castor in 2006, 166 acres in 2007, and 166 acres in 2008, totalling 415 acres over three years under our castor planting project."* He went on to order that each farmer plant 200 castor bushes each year for the next three years. The VPDC chairperson of each village was forced to come to the TPDC office in Kya In Seik Gyi and buy two bowls of castor seed at 3,300 to 3,500 Kyat per bowl (one bowl is about 2 litres volume). Similar orders have been issued to villages in other townships as well, like the order shown below issued to all villages in Kawkareik township in June 2006 telling them that growing castor is their national duty. Many of these orders refer to castor plants as 'fencing'. This may be a semantic way of brushing aside villagers' complaints that they need their land to grow food, by implying that castor bushes can be planted as fences without using land needed for food crops. The acreage and number of plants demanded, however, is far in excess of what could be planted as 'fencing'.

"In January 2006 they wrote two order documents to my village ordering the villagers to plant castor. They forced the villagers to come and buy castor seed from them and to plant it. They ordered that the villages around Kya In Seik Gyi have to set aside 1,200 acres to plant castor, and that the acreage must increase every year. The order letters came from the TPDC chairman and from U Hla Shwe of the Ministry of Agriculture in Kya In Seik Gyi."

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

"The SPDC ordered us to plant castor. We don't want to do it because we have so much other work to do. They told us to give them 3,300 Kyat for each bowl of castor seed, and they ordered our village to plant 14 bowls. They said that this year, 2006, we have to plant 83 acres, then 166 acres in 2007 and 166 acres again in 2008. They ordered that each household has to plant 200 castor bushes each year, 600 castor bushes over 3 years. We have to plant this on our own land."

– U A--- (male, 58), W--- village, Kya In township

¹⁰ See for example ['Myanmar government's forced agricultural policies contributing to displacement of people in eastern Shan State'](#), Asia-Pacific Daily Report, 19 January 2006; ['Castor oil plantation project a problem for the people'](#), Khonumthung News, 13 April 2006; ['Arakan FBR relief team mission trip to Arakan IDP area'](#) (Free Burma Rangers, June 2006).

¹¹ ['Myanmar traders meet Thai PM'](#), Myanmar Times, 4-10 July 2005.

¹² ['Bagan summit backs initiative for economic partnership'](#), Myanmar Times, November 17-23 2003.

[Stamp:]
Township Peace & Development Council
Kawkareik township

Township Peace & Development Council
Kawkareik town, Karen State

Announcement

1368 BE 7th waxing day of Nayon
Date: 2006 June 2nd

Subject: To grow fully 30,000 acres [sic: bushes] of castor plants as fencing in 2006 in Kawkareik township

1. Kawkareik township of Kawkareik district has to grow 100,000 (one hundred thousand) castor fencing plants between 2006 and 2008. By the end of 2006 it is planned to grow 30,000 (thirty thousand) acres [sic: plants]. Battalions, troops, individuals, departmental staff and the people have been implementing this earnestly as a national duty.
2. All people living in Kawkareik township have been implementing this as a personal duty, however some people do not obey and it has been learned that some [seeds] have been resold to outsiders. Growing fencing castor plants is to your benefit, and moreover it will fulfil requirements for fuel for machinery. It is planned that you may also sell the surplus for extra income.
3. Therefore it is announced that citizens of the township must work hard to exceed the 2006 plan to grow 30,000 acres [sic: plants] and fulfil your quota of plants so that this fencing castor bean plantation project will be successful.

[Sd.]
Chairperson
(Htun Win, Pa/2948)

Letter No. 5 / 3-1 / Oo 6
Date: 2006 June 2nd

Distribution to:

- all departments, Kawkareik town
- all chairpersons of Ward/Village Tract Peace & Development Councils
(to be announced over loudspeakers in your ward/village,
and this announcement is to be posted at offices).

Copies to:

- chairperson, District Peace & Development Council, Kawkareik town
- office / file

Order #7. For Burmese original see p. 80.

"They sent us the castor seeds with a letter ordering us to plant the castor and telling us we must pay 3,300 Kyat per bowl of seed. They sent us two bowls of seed so we have to pay them 6,600 Kyat. In the meeting they said each household has to plant 50 castor bushes. It's difficult for the villagers because if we plant it we'll also have to look after it and water it, and people are afraid that if the plants die the SPDC will fine or abuse them. We haven't planted any yet and we think we won't do it. We've never heard of castor before, we don't know what it is or how they will use it. We don't know how to grow it and no one wants to plant it."

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

Not only are villagers being ordered to plant castor, some SPDC officers are planting it around their camps as well in the apparent hope that they will make a profit from the beans. Major Htun Htun Oo of Light Infantry Division #88, for example, planted 500 castor bushes outside his camp at Paya Daw village in Kya In township. When villagers' cattle occasionally strayed into the unfenced plantation, he fined the cattle owner 7,000 Kyat each time.

In sunny and dry conditions castor bushes grow rapidly, and their seeds produce a fine oil used for a variety of applications worldwide, as an ingredient in motor oil, paints, soap, inks, plastics, and many other products. However, Dooطلا villagers say they know nothing about growing or harvesting castor, and they are afraid of it because several of their children have suffered severe diarrhoea and almost died after accidentally eating one of the castor seeds. This is because unprocessed castor beans contain ricin, which is “among the most lethal naturally occurring toxins known today”;¹³ much more toxic than cyanide, in its pure form as little as 1 milligram can kill an adult human.¹⁴ If a raw castor bean is swallowed, symptoms including abdominal pain, vomiting, and severe, sometimes bloody diarrhoea occur within hours, and death can follow. Castor is therefore seen as a dangerous crop to grow, particularly in uncontrolled village environments where children can be attracted by the brightly coloured fruit pods full of beans covered with intricate and unique designs.¹⁵ Though the villagers’ fear of this crop is very well founded, they say they are also afraid the SPDC will punish them if they fail to plant it. On January 14th 2006, all of the Village Peace & Development Council chairpersons and secretaries in Kya In Seik Gyi township were forced to attend a ceremony celebrating the planned establishment of castor plantations in their villages. The ceremony was videotaped and broadcast on national television to demonstrate the villagers’ alleged support for the project.

“I think this castor bean will not do us any good. No one wants to plant it and we don’t know how to plant it. No one dares keep it in their house because they worry that their children will eat the beans. Last week two children ate some and they vomited and had diarrhoea until they nearly died. We went to ask the Camp Commander if we can stay without planting castor, but he said he doesn’t know about this and it is not his job. We think we won’t plant it, we’ll just pay the cost they demanded and keep the seed in a safe place.”

– Daw L--- (female, 49), village headwoman, K--- village, Kya In township

“In the meeting they ordered us that our villagers have to plant castor. They decreed that the villages of Kya In village tract must plant 550 acres, so each household must plant 500 castor bushes. They said they are doing this to develop the country, and that we can use it as petrol for cars and aeroplanes. We didn’t know anything about this. When I came back and talked to the villagers about it, they said they didn’t have anywhere to grow it. Later the Kya In village tract chairperson sent us the castor seed. We had to buy it from them, one bowl [about 2 litres] is 3,300 Kyat and they sent us two bowls so it cost 6,600 Kyat. On January 14th 2006 they came and held an opening ceremony for castor planting and showed us how to plant castor. The ceremony lasted one and a half hours, from 11 o’clock in the morning until 12:30. They took video of the ceremony. Three years ago the SPDC forced the villagers to plant ‘their sein pay’ [belleric myrobalan, a medicinal herb]. They said its oil was getting more and more expensive so we should plant this kind of bush. The villagers brought the plant to our village and we planted it, some households planted five plants and some planted ten. We worked hard to look after these plants. SPDC troops always passed through our village, though, so before long they burned all our trees and bushes including those ones, and we didn’t get anything from it.”

– Naw M--- (female, 47), T--- village, Kya In township

¹³ Mark A. Hostetler, ‘Toxicity, plants – castor bean and jequirity bean’. June 26, 2003: <http://www.emedicine.com/PED/topic331.htm>

¹⁴ See <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/plants/castorbean.html>

¹⁵ This has led the US Department of Agriculture, among others, to conduct research aimed at developing a less toxic form of castor bean. See http://www.ars.usda.gov/research/projects/projects.htm?accn_no=404195.

“T’Ka Kloh, Wah Boh Gone, T’Ka Kee and Ohn Ta Bin, four villages. Each has to plant 14 bowls of castor seed, the SPDC is forcing us to plant it. We have to pay 3,500 Kyat for each bowl of seed. We know the villagers don’t have money, but we collected some from each house. They ordered T’Ka Kloh to plant 4 acres of castor, Wah Boh Gone one acre, T’Ka Kee one acre and Ohn Ta Bin one acre. The villagers didn’t want to do it. TPDC secretary Han Taw Ni ordered us to do it at a meeting in December 2005. Many village heads attended the meeting. We were ordered to attend these meetings once a month.”

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

“In January 2006 the SPDC sent a letter ordering me to attend a meeting. In the meeting they told us to deliver 150 bamboo because my village is big, and they said they would tell other villages to deliver 100 bamboo each. They said they would use the bamboo to make a fence around their castor plantation. The other villages that were forced to supply bamboo were Kaw Khaw Kloh, T’Ka Kee, Wah Boh Gone, T’Ka Kloh, Ohn Ta Bin and Oo Pi.”

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

Many village heads told KHRG that even if forced to buy castor seed, they will try to avoid planting it. In a typical show of village defiance, some have managed to avoid obtaining or paying for the seed for over six months, as indicated in the order document below issued to all villages in Kawkareik township in June 2006:

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>[Stamp:]</i> Township Peace & Development Council Kawkareik township | Township Peace & Development Council Kawkareik town, Karen State Letter No. 5 / 1-1 / Taut 2 Date: 2006 June 7 th |
| To: | |
| Chairpersons All Ward / Village Tract Peace & Development Councils Kawkareik township | |
| Subject: <u>The matter of paying back the cost of the fencing castor seed</u> | |
| 1. Kawkareik township Peace & Development Council has purchased and distributed fencing castor seed to the wards / villages by kilogram or by bowls/baskets in order to fulfil the duty to grow 30,000 fencing castor bean plants in 2006. | |
| 2. The township council must pay off the cost of the castor seed and therefore wards/villages are informed to return the cost of the distributed seeds before 15-6-2006. The remaining villages yet to take their seeds must come and take them quickly. | |
| <i>[Sd.]</i> 7-6-06 (for) Chairperson (Nyunt Oo, secretary) | |
| Copies to: | |
| - all regional chiefs, Township Peace & Development Council, Kawkareik town | |
| - all growth/control members, _____ department, Kawkareik town | |
| - office / file | |

Order #8.

To the villagers the land is theirs, and they have the right to grow what they want. Unfortunately for them, since 1974 the constitution and repeated state decrees have given official ownership of all land to the state.¹⁶ Now that the SPDC has seized control of their villages they are subject to SPDC 'law', under which:

*"The State controls all land. Farmers have rights only to cultivation, which household members can inherit if permitted by the authorities of the Township and Village Land Committee and the Settlement and Land Records Department. The State can revoke land use ownership rights if the farmers do not grow the crops specified by the authorities or use the land as specified."*¹⁷

Once it is confident of its control, the SPDC begins enforcing these laws which permit military authorities to decree who can farm what land, what they must plant on it and when. Farmers in many areas of Dooplaya are now finding out for the first time that living under SPDC control means losing control of the land they have farmed for generations.

"The SPDC issued a document from Pa'an saying that they wouldn't use forced labour any longer."¹⁸ Our village head said at the Operations Command meeting that the leaders said they wouldn't demand forced labour any more. So all the village heads asked, now you are ordering us to plant paddy in dry season and make sesame and rubber plantations, and isn't that forced labour? Then the Operations Commander said they aren't forcing the villagers, they're doing it for the development of their country. So some of the village heads said: but it is interrupting and interfering with the villagers' work and livelihood. The village heads also said, if we come to you and ask for the petrol we need to follow your orders you never give it, and we have to buy it at the shop. But they just kept replying that this is for developing the country, so it isn't forced labour."

– Naw M--- (female, 47), T--- village, Kya In township

¹⁶ Nancy Hudson-Rodd, Myo Nyunt, Saw Thamin Tun, and Sein Htay (2003) 'The impact of the confiscation of land, labor, capital assets and forced relocation in Burma by the military regime'. NCUB/FTUB discussion paper. Accessed at http://www.ibiblio.org/obl/docs/land_confiscation-contents.htm on 16/12/05.

¹⁷ Nancy Hudson-Rodd and Myo Nyunt (2001) 'Control of Land and Life in Burma', *Tenure Brief* No. 3, April 2001: 1-8. Published by Land Tenure Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison. This quote is from page 6.

¹⁸ A reference to SPDC Order 1/99 of May 1999 and Order Supplementing Order 1/99 of October 2000, which prohibited the use of forced labour and decreed criminal penalties for anyone demanding it. These Orders have never been implemented. For more information see Appendix B in [Forced Labour Orders Since the Ban](#) (KHRG #2002-01, February 2002).

Land confiscation

“When the SPDC first came to our village around 1999 or 2000, they confiscated U Nin Swee’s land and built their Army camp on it. After that they confiscated more and more land. They took all the land owned by A’Tin, Aung Aung, Mu Sein Aung, U Nin Swee and Pu Lone, and they didn’t pay any money for that land. After their land was confiscated, some who had no more land had to move to other villages, and some outsiders moved into our village [as tenants, after their land elsewhere had also been confiscated] and settled on other people’s land. Right now the local Army camp is occupied by Light Infantry Battalion #103. The Battalion Commander is Aung Naing Oo, the deputy commander is Yeh Tote and the Camp Commander is Htoo Way.”

– U M--- (male, 51), village head, B--- village, Kya In township

Land is being confiscated without compensation from villagers in Dooplaya, both by the military and the civil authorities. On September 2nd 2005, a group of 30 officials led by Nay Zaw, the SPDC’s surveyor for Hla Mine township, and the Company Commander and Deputy Company Commander from Weh K’Li Army camp, came with the VPDC chairman to Weh K’Li village just southeast of Thanbyuzayat. The group measured off much of the villagers’ land and later confiscated it without compensation. The same was done in Dta Gone Dtaing village west of Kya In Seik Gyi. On the same day, Nay Zaw led another group that confiscated 123 acres of land from villagers in Anan Gwin village in Waw Raw (Win Yaw) township, then on September 8th they confiscated an additional 123 acres from people in Beh La Mu village just northeast of Hla Mine. All of this land was sold on the market for personal profit by surveyor Nay Zaw, the Village Peace & Development Council chairmen of the various villages (demonstrating that not all VPDC heads are sympathetic to their villagers), and local military officers. To prevent their land also being confiscated, ten of the farmers in Anan Gwin village pooled together 335,000 Kyat and gave it to VPDC chairman U Aung Thein to bribe the surveyor and the military officers. In some villages, people have to pay 5,000 Kyat per field to the Surveyor to prevent their land being confiscated. The Surveyor promises to provide receipts but thus far he never has.

“This year in 2006, Column Commander Aung Soe Oo from DKBA #906 [Battalion] combined with the SPDC Army to confiscate villagers’ land and sell it to other people. They sold it at 30,000 Kyat for five acres. Our villagers bought back 200 acres and paid at that price. People from other villages came to buy land as well – villagers from Kya Bee Ther, Nu Than Htut, Hser Mu Ter, U Lay and Hser Mu Ter east. Some Mon and Burmans came to buy the land as well. The DKBA said they will separate the money they get into three shares – one for the SPDC, one for KNU and one for themselves. They also ordered the villagers to plant rubber.”

– N--- (male, 43), village head, P--- village, Waw Raw township

“The SPDC is confiscating the land and fields of the villagers. This year in 2006, the village head and the owners of the land and fields went to them and asked for their land back, but they said they couldn’t give it back. The plantation owners were T---, Maung P---, and U B---, and the field owners were B---, O---, Maung P---, P---, and W---. The owners used to plant rubber, sugar cane, sesame and other things on their land. Now the SPDC is growing paddy on some of that land. The villagers are forced to plough the fields, sow the paddy, transplant the seedlings and do the harvest for them. All of the villages around here have to do this.”

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

“Fifteen years ago in Pah Tun village, when the SPDC [actually SLORC at that time] started building the road, the SPDC authorities extorted the lands of the villagers in Pah Tun village. The owners of the land were A’Kah, Maung Thay Htun, Po T’Lay, Kah Yeh and Pu Duh. They extorted their land and then sold it to bosses or rich people from Dta Lu Wah. They sold it for 3,500 Kyat per acre. The villagers used to

plant betelnut and durian on that land. Some of them lost 15 acres, some 20 acres and some 30 acres. The SPDC told the landowners that they didn't have any title deed so they couldn't claim the land was theirs, and that the land therefore belonged to the government. Now the New Mon State Party (an armed group under a ceasefire with the SPDC) is always arguing with the village head because they want to take the villagers' land, and the SPDC authorities also say they will confiscate all land for which people don't have title deeds."

– D--- (male, 36), village headman, T--- village, Waw Raw township

Land along roads is some of the most vulnerable, because it is frequently confiscated for Army camps or simply to widen or reroute the road. The order below was sent to several village heads in Kya In township, telling them that all houses and buildings along the road are to be destroyed without compensation; this is most likely intended as a security measure to protect any SPDC troops moving along the road. Ironically the order accuses the villagers of encroaching on the road, when the reverse is actually the case.

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>[Stamp:]</i> Township Peace & Development Council Kya In Seik Gyi Township | Township Peace & Development Council Kya In Seik Gyi township, Kya In Seik Gyi town Letter No. 2 / 5-19 / Oo 9 (060) Date: 2006 January 19 th |
| To: Chairperson <u>xxx</u> Ward / Village Peace and Development Council Kya In Seik Gyi township | |
| Subject: <u>Regarding illegal encroachment on road boundaries</u> | |
| Reference: People's Construction Works of Kya In Seik Gyi town letter no. 164 / Lah Wa / Ma Na Ah / Ka Ah / 2005-2006 / 5 (Ka) dated 9-1-2006 | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. There are illegally built houses, huts, and shops within the road boundaries belonging to the Township People's Construction Works, so they have requested <i>[the TPDC]</i> to investigate and take action in accordance with the law.2. Therefore every ward/village must investigate where there are houses, huts and shops illegally within the road boundaries belonging to the People's Construction Works, and these must be dismantled by the deadline of 25-1-2006. You are informed to take effective action against those who fail to obey the law. | |
| <i>[Sd.]</i> Chairperson (Yeh Htun – Pa/3538) | |
| Copies: People's Construction Works, Kya In Seik Gyi town Office Copy / File | |

Order #9. For Burmese original see p. 80.

Forced labour

“On August 9th 2005 all the villages were ordered by Battalion #284 to plough the fields and plant paddy for the SPDC Army. They said they would farm food for their soldiers. The land where they set up their Army camp belonged to some villagers. They didn’t buy it, they just came and said they would set up their Army camp there and how much land they would take. They took about 5 or 10 acres of fields that belonged to several villagers. C--- village had to plant two acres for them. We ploughed the fields with our bullocks and we planted the paddy ourselves. We had to bring our own bullocks or ploughing machines and tools, but they gave us money for each day. They paid 1,000 Kyat for a pair of bullocks and 500 Kyat per day to the people who planted the paddy. They called 15 or 20 people to do the work because they didn’t have enough food to feed more people. The villagers from C--- ploughed the fields for three days.”

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

Where farmland has been confiscated by the military, the people of nearby villages are forced to work on it. Since 1997, much of the villagers’ farmland near Kya In Seik Gyi town has been fenced off by SPDC Infantry Battalions #32, 283 and 284; local villagers have been told this is now military land. The Battalions are using this land for irrigated rice fields, vegetable fields and cash crop plantations for their own benefit, but it is the villagers in the area who are forced to make and maintain the fences, clear the fields, irrigate and plough the ricefields, sow the seedbeds, uproot and transplant the young paddy plants into the larger fields, weed, harvest, and process the crop – all with their own buffalos and farming implements. All produce goes to the local Army, and the villagers get nothing.

“In August 2005, SPDC LIB #283 forced our villagers to plough fields and plant paddy for them. They ordered that one person from each house must do this for them, and 22 villagers from our village went to do it. Most of us were women, some were as young as 13 years old. We had to bring our own food because they didn’t give us food. They also didn’t pay us any money. We started working at 7 or 8 o’clock in the morning, then they let us rest at noon and we had to start working again at 1 o’clock. When we ploughed the fields we had to bring two pairs of our own bullocks, and they also have one bullock and one buffalo. My village had to plant two baskets of paddy seed. There were 3 villages that were forced by the SPDC to do the planting – N---, K--- and M---. This time, in 2005, we didn’t have to do the harvest for them as well, but in previous years we had to do that too. The fields they are planting are not their own, they are fields they confiscated from the villagers of Ther Hter. The confiscated fields are next to their army camp. They forced the villagers to fence the fields for them, but now they maintain the fences themselves. Their army camp is fenced with wire. We think they’ve planted landmines around or under their fence, because they don’t let the villagers take their cattle around the outside of the camp. When one villager’s cow went and ate some of the paddy in their field they captured it, summoned the owner to come and ransomed it for 35,000 Kyat. When I went to their camp I didn’t see any porters, but I saw some child soldiers.”

– Naw E--- (female, 42), village section leader, M--- village, Kya In township

“In 2005 we had to farm for the SPDC Army. We ploughed the fields and did the planting and harvesting for them. The land that they forced the villagers to plant was land they had confiscated from the villagers. We used 10 bullocks to plough the fields – we had to hire all the bullocks and equipment at our own expense. They didn’t give us food so we had to bring our own food. Some of the other nearby villages also had to go. After the harvest they [the local Army] sold the rice. They sold it for at least 2,000 Kyat per basket.”

– Saw B--- (male, 62), T--- village, Kya In township

"In 2005, SPDC Battalion #284 called the villagers of T--- village to do 'loh ah pay' [forced labour] at Kya In Seik Gyi. To do this, they summoned the village head to meet them and ordered the village head to arrange it for them. They ordered the villagers to plough the fields and plant paddy for them. The field was something like six acres. Almost all of the villagers went for the 'loh ah pay'. We had to do what they ordered, because they are armed and they have power over the villagers."

– U T--- (male, 54), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

"Our village is next to Dta Gone Daing army camp. The commander of the camp is Win Thaw. In November 2005 they ordered the villagers of K--- and S--- villages to plough fields for them. The SPDC said that they were going to grow soybean."

– L--- (male, 56), K--- village, Waw Raw township

In addition, at the end of each rainy season these same battalions demand 12 to 24 bullock cart loads of firewood for use in their brickbaking kilns. The Army officers use their own soldiers as labour to bake the bricks, then sell them for personal profit. When buyers are scarce, they force the local villages to buy the bricks at 5 Kyat per brick.

"In December 2005 SPDC Battalion #284 demanded 30 klih [30 cubic armspans / 3,750 cubic feet / 106 cubic metres] of wood from C--- village, but I told them we could send only 30 bullock-cart loads. One klih of wood is equivalent to 4 bullock-cart loads. They wrote a letter to the village heads saying they would have a meeting at Kya In Seik Gyi, and they ordered it at that meeting. They told us to help them by giving them 30 klih of wood to repair their army camp. They said they would give us 2,000 Kyat per klih and 500 Kyat to the owner of each cart. Wah Boh Gone, Cha Ka Chaung, Ohn Ta Bin, Gko Bee, Th'M'Leh, Mi Law Kyo, and Kyone Lwin Gone also had to give them wood. They ordered the village heads to deliver it by the end of the month. When we didn't send it on time, they kept coming to the village again and again demanding that we send it the next day. All the villages under control of Battalion #284 have had to give them this wood once a year for six years already. The first three years they made our village give 20 klih of wood, then the next couple of years it was 10 or 15 klih. They use the wood to bake bricks. They use some of these bricks to build their army camp, but they sell the rest of them."

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

"On January 26th 2006, SPDC Battalion #284 wrote a letter demanding 100 bamboo, saying they must each be longer than 10 cubits [15 feet / 5 m]. We already cut the bamboo and sent it to them, but they didn't pay us any money. In December 2005 they also demanded 5 klih [5 cubic armspans / 625 cubic feet / 18 cubic metres] of wood from my village. They told us they would pay 1,000 Kyat per klih, but they never paid us even one Kyat. Since 1997 they've been ordering the villages to send them wood. They use the wood to bake bricks for their army camp, they use some of it for building and sell the rest. They bake the bricks in a villager's field."

– Saw B--- (male, 62), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

| | | |
|--------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| To: | <i>[Stamp:]</i> | Date: 21-12-05 |
| Chairperson | Infantry Battalion #284 | |
| xxxx village | <i>[unclear]</i> | |

To transfer the brickbaking wood for the kiln, send as many bullock carts as can be gathered from the village on 22-12-2005.

U T--- from xxxx village must come to meet with the Chairperson and Battalion Commander on 22-12-2005, you are hereby informed.

[Sd.]
21-12-05

Order #10. For Burmese original see p. 80.

After receiving the above order from Captain S---, the village leaders had to arrange 16 bullock carts to go to the IB #284 Army camp. Each cart had to be loaded and make the 30-minute trip to the battalion brickbaking kilns twice. No money or food was given. The following week, the same officer sent the order below to another nearby village which had already been forced to cut wood for the brickbaking kilns and deliver it to the Army camp, ordering them to send all their bullock carts to move the wood yet again:

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <i>[Stamp:]</i> | To: | Date: 28-12-05 |
| Infantry Battalion #284 | Chairperson | |
| <i>[unclear]</i> | xxxx village | |

Subject: Transferring loads of wood

Regarding the wood for baking bricks that the Elder's village sent to us, the kiln has been moved so the wood must be moved (as soon as possible) to the new place, you are informed.

[Sd.]
28-12-05

Order #11. For Burmese original see p. 80.

Along with wood for brickbaking, villages receive a constant stream of demands from every nearby SPDC, DKBA and KPF Army camp to provide bamboo, wood and thatch roofing. The officers sometimes say they plan to use the materials for a clinic or school, but this very seldom happens; more commonly, they either use them to improve their Army camp (often using the forced labour of the same villagers), or sell them for personal profit. Even when some is used for the stated purpose, villagers are ordered to produce two or three times the required amount so the officers can sell the remainder. Complying with these orders is hard and time-consuming work, and villagers are expected to process the materials and deliver them to the Army camp. Village heads spend much of their time attempting to negotiate reductions in these demands, usually by pointing out that they are already processing similar demands from two or three other camps or that villagers are very busy in their fields. Sometimes bribes have to be paid for demands to be reduced. Even if they succeed in getting some demands reduced, there are so many demands that the villagers end up spending much of their time on this work. Making matters worse, they must then take the time to deliver the materials on their bullock carts or on their backs to camps which may be

two hours' walk away, and if repairs are to be performed then they usually find themselves called upon to do that work as well.

"This SPDC army camp has been located near our village since 1999 or 2000. The first Battalion that came and set up this camp was Light Infantry Battalion #548. When they arrived at the village they started setting up the camp and they ordered all the villagers in this area to dig trenches and to bring bamboo and wood and use it to make fences for their army camp. They ordered the villagers to finish it all within seven days. ... In 2006 the SPDC has ordered Kyone Sein village, K'Sut village, K'Yain Taung village, Dta Noh village, Sein Gone village and Si Zone village each to bring them 200 or 300 bamboo poles 10, 12 or 15 cubits [15-23 ft / 5-7 m] long. They said they were going to repair their fences. They also demanded wood and told the villagers they were going to build a food storehouse. The logs had to be 12-13 handspans circumference and 12-13 cubits [18 ft / 6 m] long. They demand these things by writing letters to the village heads."

– U M--- (male, 51), village head, B--- village, Kya In township

"There is a DKBA Battalion 906 camp in the middle of our village, alongside the Paya Thon Zu [Three Pagodas Pass to Thanbyuzayat] main road, and there is a New Mon State Party army camp near our village. SPDC Infantry Battalion #93 is also camped in our village – they have been in our village almost one month already, and they always demand 'set tha' [messenger/servant] forced labour. Before IB 93 there was IB 63, and before that it was LIB 308. IB 63 stayed in our village more than a month and a half. They regularly ordered the villagers to give them 350, 400 or even 500 logs of wood or bamboo. This month, on December 17th 2005, IB 93 camp commander Aung Kyaw Mu demanded 300 bamboo and 50 wooden logs. Each wooden log had to be 4 cubits and 1 handspan [7 feet / 2 m] long and each bamboo had to be 10 cubits [15 feet / 4.5 m] long. We have to cut the wood and then haul it to their camp at Yeh Ta Gone, the nearest SPDC camp to our village. Whenever they demand bamboo or wood they say they'll use it to fix their fences or barracks. Sometimes they do that, but sometimes they just sell it for money for themselves."

– D--- (male, 36), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

| | | |
|--|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>[Stamp:]</i> Myanmar Police Force Southern Kya In Police Station Kawkareik township | To: Chairperson xxxx village | Date: 2006 May 1 st |
| Subject: <u>Notification to send bamboo pieces quickly</u> | | |
| Continuing to notify [you] that xxxx village tract must send 1,000 pieces of two-foot length, one end sharpened bamboo before 2-5-2005[sic:2006] to Southern Kya In Police Station without fail. | | |
| [Sd.] (for) <i>[Stamp:]</i> Station Commander Southern Kya In Police Station Kawkareik township | | |

Order #12. Bamboo of this description is normally used to make punji-stake booby traps around military camps.

“Infantry Battalion #98 officer Khin Maung Kyi ordered me to deliver to him 200 planks of wood, each of which had to be 6 cubits [9 feet / 2.7 m] in length and 5 by 3 inches [cross section]. I told him I could only find 100, so I sent those 100 planks to him on December 8th 2005. He told me he was going to build a nursery school at Nah Po Yu village. He also demanded a register of all the people, animals, sawmills and plantations in our village.”

– B--- (male, 39), village headman, P--- village, Waw Raw township

“In October 2005 the SPDC [officer] wrote a letter to me and ordered me to bring him 10 logs of wood. The circumference of the logs had to be four handspans, and they had to be 7 cubits [10.5 ft. / 3 m] long.”

– T--- (male, 36), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

“In May 2005 they demanded 150 bamboo. The Ko Kwa camp commander was Myo Maung, and he demanded bamboo from all three villages near his camp. He demanded both big and small bamboo to make a fence around their camp. He said if we didn’t give it to him, he would come to shoot and eat our livestock. On January 21st 2006, Ko Kwa camp commander Maung Shwe from LIB #301 came to our village with five soldiers and demanded 45 betelnut saplings. He said he would go and plant them in the town.”

– Naw K--- (female, 53), village headwoman, N--- village, Kya In township

Bullock carts are a main form of transport in the plains of central Dooplaya. Many villages are forced to supply bullock carts with drivers at least once a month to haul SPDC Army rations or transport troops and their families. One village head in Kya In township told KHRG that since November 2005 his village has had to send two bullock carts with drivers every week to be on standby for use by Light Infantry Battalion #415 at Per Yah Taw camp; in rainy season, if the dirt roads become impassable to bullock carts, the village is forced to send 15,000 Kyat in cash per cart for the privilege of not sending the carts.

“In the rainy season of 2005 we had to carry rations for SPDC soldiers with our bullock carts twice a month. Some bullock owners didn’t want to do it because they hated to see their bullocks so exhausted, and when they sent their bullocks the SPDC soldiers beat them all the time. When the bullocks came back they were so thin we thought they would die. I just want all this forced labour to stop.”

– Daw L--- (female, 49), village head, K--- village, Kya In township

“In October 2005 SPDC LIB #546 demanded three bullock carts from our village, and they came to the village themselves to get them. That was the worst time for me. It was raining heavily that day when they demanded carts. They demanded three but we only gave two carts. I went with two carts and one other villager, along with two more carts from P--- village. At first we thought they would just make us go somewhere nearby so we wouldn’t need to eat, or that otherwise they would give us rice to eat, so we didn’t take our own food. But we had to go and pick them up at K’Lay Kee army camp and then send them to the IB #32 army camp. We got nothing to eat all morning or afternoon. We hadn’t eaten all day, so we asked them to buy us something to eat. Then they bought us small round cakes that cost 50 Kyat each, and they only gave one to each of us. Neither the bullocks nor the humans had eaten anything. We had to sleep at T--- for a night.”

– Naw E--- (female, 42), village section leader, M--- village, Kya In township

“On November 19th 2005, the SPDC LIB #83 column deputy commander Mya Khine demanded one cart from us, and I went with the cart and the owner Naw P---. When we reached their camp the Battalion Commander told me to rest there overnight because the soldiers hadn’t come yet. I told him I didn’t want to stay but he told me I couldn’t go back, so I had to stay in Seik Gyi. The next morning they came and called me. When we reached their camp they started loading up the cart. I warned

them the bullocks were easily frightened and not to come too close to them, but they did. The bullocks took fright and took off, and I couldn't control them so they crashed into an electrical post, breaking the yoke and throwing me from the cart. One of my legs was hurt and I suffered from that for the next two months, but they never gave me any treatment or money for my leg or to fix the cart. I had to go back to Seik Gyi to buy a new yoke for 5,000 Kyat, and then had to send their load by cart to the base of the hills."

– Naw M--- (female, 47), T--- village, Kya In township

They demand carts so often, many of the villagers have sold their carts ...

"They demand carts especially in rainy season, because their trucks can't travel in rainy season. In rainy season they demand our carts at least twice a week, sometimes even twice in a day! The villagers might be busy ploughing their field, but if the SPDC demands bullock carts they have to leave their work and take their bullocks and cart to carry SPDC supplies. Sometimes there are floods and the bullock carts can't get through, so the SPDC forces the villagers to carry their supplies ourselves.

In 2004 they stopped doing it, but in June 2005 they started demanding ten bullock carts from the villagers again. We had to go to Battalion #32, load their supplies and things and take them to the base of the mountain. Then their Captain ordered the carts to climb the mountain. I told him we couldn't climb it because even cars can't climb it. Then he ordered us to climb slowly and said many soldiers would be with us to help. I asked him, even if they help us climb the mountain, who will help us come back down? Then he told me if we didn't want to take our carts up the mountain we ourselves would have to carry the things up the mountain. I got angry and said then I would carry all their supplies up the mountain myself, but I wouldn't force my villagers to do it! Then they thought for a few minutes and didn't order our carts to climb the mountain after all.

A week after that they demanded carts again, and the Peace Group [KPF] demanded two carts that same day to carry rice for them. I'd already told the SPDC if they demanded carts again I wouldn't give them any, but they said they'd demanded 5 carts from Meh K'Taw [village] and Meh K'Taw could only find 3 carts, so I must find three carts too. In 2005 SPDC [Battalion] #416 came back on rotation, and when they came back the villagers had to go and transport them to the base of the mountain on six bullock carts. It is two hours east of our village. Since June 2005 LIB #83 has also demanded things from the villagers at least twice a month.

Sometimes they demand five or six carts, then give us 4,000 or 5,000 Kyat and tell us it's for us to buy milk to drink – but normally if you hired a single cart for that distance you'd have to pay 5,000 Kyat, and for a load lighter than theirs! Usually when they demand carts it takes all day before we can come back. We go in the morning and come back in the evening. The bullocks are not fed, and they don't give any food to the owners or the villagers either. Because they demand carts so often, many of the villagers have sold their carts and bullocks. Some have moved to other villages because they don't want to stay in T--- village with all the demands for forced labour and things. They demand carts so frequently that sometimes we refuse, and when we refuse they come and capture our carts themselves. On July 14th or 15th 2005 they came and captured three carts along with the bullocks and their owners, and this year they've already come and done this twice. Our villagers reported it to the Light Infantry Division Commander once in the monthly meeting, but he only told us never to raise this issue in the meetings. I'm sure this coming [2006] rainy season they'll still demand our carts. We know they will, so if we don't want to face it the only way is for us to flee this village and go somewhere else."

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

Throughout 2005, SPDC Light Infantry Division #88 forced villagers to transport their supplies and ammunition from their Kya In Seik Gyi headquarters to army posts at Kyaikdon, Pai K'Lah (a.k.a. Lay Po Hta), Hta Pah Law, Meh K'Dtee, and Htee Hta Baw. Villagers were forced to come with bullock carts to haul these loads, and villagers were fined 15,000 Kyat for each bullock cart that failed to show up. In rainy season, when bullock carts often get stuck along the washed-out roads and muddy tracks, ten to twenty people from each village had to go and carry Army supplies on foot at least once a month. It is in rainy season, when conditions are worst for travel and when villagers are busiest in their fields, that SPDC military units make the most demands for bullock carts with drivers, because the Army's trucks cannot move on the washed-out roads.

"When the SPDC demands things from us we have to give them, and if they fine us for any reason we also have to give that, because we cannot protest to them. The biggest problem for our villagers is their demands for bullock carts [with drivers]. Even when they demand them in the middle of the night, we have to send them right away. We usually have to carry their army rations every month from Kyaikdon to Plaw Pa Taw by bullock cart. In December 2005, Shwe Maung [the Ko Kwa camp commander for SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #301] demanded 15,000 Kyat from us because the bullock cart he had called for 'loh ah pay' [forced labour] had been taken by the KPF that day. Shwe Maung had to travel by car instead that day, so he demanded money for his petrol costs from our villagers. I went to see him to explain and showed him the letter from KPF, but he rejected it and said, 'The SPDC is not under the KPF.' I told him, 'You are the same, you both get salaries [paid by SPDC].' He asked me, 'So you know about the KPF?' I said, 'I know them, they were Karen soldiers before but they surrendered and made peace with the SPDC.' He told me, 'Never mention the name KPF again when you come here.' I went to tell the KPF that Shwe Maung of the SPDC was demanding this money, and the KPF told me not to give it to him. But Shwe Maung kept summoning me constantly and threatening me, and in the end I was afraid and gave him the money he was demanding."

– Naw K--- (female, 53), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

"On January 19th 2006, Light Infantry Battalion #103 asked for five bullock carts. First they said three carts, but then later they said it must be five carts so we had to give them five carts. They used two of the carts to carry bricks, and the rest to carry their own gear. They said they would take the bricks to D'Noh. They didn't pay any money to the cart owners but we didn't dare refuse to obey. Also, ever since they've arrived near our village we've had to send them one 'set tha' [messenger / camp servant] every day."

– U M--- (male, 51), village head, B--- village, Kya In township

"On January 22nd 2006 at 10 o'clock, Saw Proh from the Peace Force [KPF] came with three of his soldiers. It was Sunday and we were on our way to church, but he harassed me and demanded carts to send them back to their army camp. They had managed to walk here on foot, so why couldn't they walk back? But he rushed us to find carts and send them. He knew it was Sunday and we had to go to church, but he had a gun and so we had to send him to Kya In. He went back with one soldier and his wife, and I went along with the owner of the cart. He didn't give us anything, but we were afraid of his gun so we had to send him."

– Naw E--- (female, 42), village section leader, M--- village, Kya In township

Where bullock carts cannot go, villagers are forced to go as porters whenever Army units need to transport supplies. Patrols force village heads and others to guide them, even when they already know the way, and sometimes force villagers to walk in front of them as human shields and minesweepers.

“Sometimes they ask for guides, and sometimes we have to go and carry their rations for them from their base camp, K’Lay Kee army camp. If they demand two villagers, we have to send two. Usually they demand at least two. In October 2005, SPDC LIB #83 ordered the villagers to carry their things because the water flooded and carts couldn’t go. There were 22 villagers, and six of them were female, who went to carry the food and belongings of the SPDC. We had to take their things from their army camp and carry them to Kya In. We were carrying bullets and rations. There were two girls only 13 or 14 years old who had to carry the SPDC’s bags weighing 8 or 10 viss [13-16 kg / 28-35 lb]. These girls had to come in place of their parents. We had to cross the river in flood, and we were afraid we would be carried away by the current. When we crossed we helped each other, but the soldiers didn’t help us. They didn’t give us food either. When they’d ordered us to come they had told us to bring our own food, and they didn’t pay us either.”

– Naw E--- (female, 42), village section leader, M--- village, Kya In township

“In September 2005 SPDC battalion #103 ordered the village head to give them a villager to guide them to T’Ka Kloh village, which is two hours from our village. They forced the villager to walk in front of them. I went along with the villager, because I was afraid the SPDC soldiers might torture my villager. ... On January 5th 2006 the SPDC asked for a guide to lead them to Kya In. They said they didn’t know the way. I suggested that they just needed to follow the car road! But they said it was too hot and they wanted to go by the bush path, so we had to give them a guide. They didn’t pay him anything.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

“Infantry Battalion #63 stayed in the village for one week. When they decided to leave they asked for two porters and ordered them to guide them to Meh Klu. They left in the morning and the two villagers didn’t arrive home until evening. All day these villagers were carrying loads for them, but they didn’t give them any food.”

– Saw N--- (male, 35), village head, A--- village, Waw Raw township

“When SPDC troops pass our village, they demand one guide to lead them along their way. Sometimes we have to hire a villager to be their guide, and pay him 1,500 Kyat per day.”

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

Though fighting in Dooplaya is now sporadic and localised, it still occurs whenever SPDC and KNLA forces encounter each other, and landmines are still scattered throughout the district. Sometimes villagers doing forced labour as porters are wounded or killed as a result, but when this happens their bodies are simply left behind and their families are given no compensation. In January 2006 Military Operations Command #19 replaced Light Infantry Division #88 in Dooplaya, and they brought approximately 500 convicts with them for use as porters to supplement the use of forced labour by villagers. One convict who escaped told KHRG that on their arrival in Dooplaya the convicts were divided up, and he was part of a group of 30 convict porters dispatched to Azin (Saw Hta) army camp by Khin Maung Htun, commander of Tactical Operations Command #1, “for use as porters whenever needed.”

“We didn’t catch villagers to be porters because we already had five or six convicts [for portering] with each Company. Some convicts ran away from us and some got sick. The soldiers had to carry their equipment, so they forced the convicts to carry the other loads. Some Section Leaders scolded and tortured the convicts. I saw one convict die when we were on our way to Kyaikdon, and we left his body with the villagers there. When convicts ran away we caught some villagers to carry loads in their place. We also caught some villagers along our way to guide us, and if they couldn’t understand Burmese language the soldiers beat them.”

– K--- (male, 22), deserted from SPDC IB #87 in July 2005 in Kawkareik township



Two convict porters from Magwe division in northern Burma who were brought to Dooplaya district to serve SPDC Light Infantry Division #88 but escaped in February 2006. Despite the lack of any ongoing military offensive in the district, these men say they were part of a group of 500 convicts brought to do forced labour for troops in Dooplaya. [Photos: KHRG]

“In March 2004 one of our villagers named Pa Kyi Deh, 28 years old, was at his farmfield hut in his ricefield when an SPDC patrol came by and forced him to go as a porter. There were other villagers already with them as porters too. Along their way the KNLA opened fire on them and there was fighting. Sadly, Pa Kyi Deh died in this fighting, but the SPDC troops just left his body laying there and continued on their way to Lay Noh. They didn’t do anything to help his family with the burial.”

– A--- (male, 39), village headman, K--- village, Waw Raw township

“In the waxing moon of Wah Soe [July] 2004, one of our villagers named Kaw La Po, or Thein Aung, went as a porter for SPDC LIB #308 Deputy Commander Kyaw Soe Naing. He was 48 years old. Kaw La Po was killed by a landmine just outside Pa Pya village. The SPDC didn’t give anything for that. The people of our village supported his family with supplies for a year after that, and we make sure that his wife and daughter don’t have to go for any forced labour like everyone else has to.”

– S--- (male, 58), village head, P--- village, Waw Raw township

Villagers are also called for rotating shifts of forced labour at every SPDC Army camp in their vicinity. This labour is called *set tha*, literally ‘messengers’ because they are used to deliver Army order letters to nearby villages, but they are also used as camp servants for jobs like cutting grass, repairing fences, gathering firewood and hauling water. A village usually has to send one or two people on rotation to each SPDC Army camp in their vicinity. The village head makes up a roster of households in the village, and when a household’s turn comes they must send one able-bodied person or hire someone to take their place.

“SPDC Operations Command #1 at Anan Gwin is near our village. Our villagers always have to do ‘set tha’ labour there. We do ‘set tha’ by rotation – each person takes a turn of five days.”

– P--- (male, 51), village head, W--- village, Waw Raw township

“The SPDC Infantry Battalion #98 officer wrote a letter to me and summoned me to meet him at the army camp, but I didn’t go so he wrote to me again. After two letters I still didn’t do as he ordered. On September 8th 2005, he wrote to me again so I went to meet him. He was very angry with me and punished me by ordering me to bring him 2,000 pieces of bamboo. He said they would build barracks and fences at the army camp. Starting from November 8th we were ordered to send two ‘set tha’ [‘messengers’, i.e. army camp servants] to stay there for three days, then two more to stay for the next three days and so on. We still have to do that now. The ‘set tha’ people have to take along their own food. The SPDC doesn’t give them any food or money. They have to chop bamboo, clear grass and scrub, and carry water for the soldiers.”

– A--- (male, 39), village headman, K--- village, Waw Raw township

“In 2005 Light Infantry Battalion #103 moved into the army camp next to our village. This battalion ordered us, the B--- villagers, that whenever they are at the camp we have to bring them one or two barrels of water each day. Sometimes when we arrived late [with the water] they scolded us and said that we didn’t respect them. We are very afraid of them so we have to do whatever they order us or demand from us. They don’t ask for bamboo or wood, but they often demand shaved bamboo ties and each house has to give them a big bundle of bamboo ties. They say they use them to hold together their fences. When they replace their roofing [necessary every two years with leaf roofing] they demand bundles of roofing shingles from the villagers. The people of the other villages in the area receive these orders too.”

– U M--- (male, 51), village head, B--- village, Kya In township

Roads serve as arteries of control for the SPDC in Dooplaya, so since the SPDC occupation of the district they have been extended and improved. Villagers throughout the district are regularly called out for forced labour maintaining roads and clearing all plants and scrub within 5 or 10 metres of the roadsides. For example, on July 23rd 2005 Warrant Officer Tint Shwe at Anan Gwin army camp ordered the villagers of Ku Ner Wah and Anan Gwin villages to clear a swathe five armspans wide along both sides of the Thanbyuzayat – Three Pagodas Pass road between their two villages. This is to make it impossible for villagers or KNLA to move along or across the road undetected, and to lessen the possibility of ambushes or landmines along the road. When clearing the roadsides, however, the villagers are at high risk of detonating landmines. Villages are usually ordered to repair or clear a designated stretch of road 2 or 3 kilometres long by a particular deadline. The villages must do this work until it is finished, so usually everyone in the village including children, women and the elderly come out for several days with their machetes to get it over with as quickly as possible so they can return to their own livelihoods.

“This year in 2005, [SPDC] Infantry Battalion #308 ordered the village head and the villagers to clear the road. We had to bring our own food and tools, and they didn’t pay us any money to do this work.”

– A--- (male, 36), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

“The car roads come from Kru village to Pa Pya, Kyaw Klah, Noh Cho Neh and Khoh Ther Pler. In the other direction they go from Kru village to Taung Dtee, Dta Kung Tak and Mudon. The SPDC forced us to build these roads and now to maintain them. [This is along the Thanbyuzayat – Three Pagodas Pass road.]”

– S--- (male, 58), P--- village, Waw Raw township

“Two months ago [October 2005] our village had to make a vehicle road for the KPF from Noh Kler to Noh N’Bu.¹⁹ Kyaw Win Htun, a soldier under KPF NCO [non-commissioned officer] Kler Paw, ordered us to do it urgently and we finished it in two days. They forced us to do it quickly because they said their truck would come up soon. The KPF is using this road to haul timber and service their ore mines. When we worked on the road they didn’t pay us and we had to come back to eat at our own houses. We have to be afraid of the KPF as well as the SPDC.”

– Naw K--- (female, 53), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

The SPDC has announced that it will rebuild the railroad from Paya Thon Zu (a.k.a. Khoh Ther Pler, Three Pagodas Pass) to Thanbyuzayat, part of what was known as the ‘death railway’ under the World War Two Japanese occupation. On November 7th 2005, U Moe Naing from the Myanmar Railways Department took photos and noted potential station sites along the route. Villagers in the area suspect that they will have to perform forced labour on the reconstruction. SPDC officials in the area are trying to exploit this fear to convince people to move their villages to the side of the Paya Thon Zu – Thanbyuzayat vehicle road by telling villagers that those who move to the roadside will no longer be called for forced labour or forced to provide wood, bamboo and thatch to SPDC authorities. This is probably a lie, as the main reason for wanting villagers to move to the roadsides is usually to make them more available for forced labour.

“On December 21st 2005 I heard the SPDC Column 2 officer say that they will repair the railway. He asked me where the old station was and I told him. He said they will repair the railway route this year.”

– Saw L--- (male, 43), L--- village, Waw Raw township

All of these demands combine to keep village heads and villagers busy complying with SPDC demands much of the time. A village head from P--- village in Kawkareik township interviewed in February 2006 told KHRG that in the few preceding days alone, SPDC Infantry Battalion #32 had demanded 100 shingles of thatch on February 11th, then the next day demanded two tractors and five bullock carts to carry the battalion’s rations. It is these constant combinations of demands, not the lack of foreign aid or trade, that take the villagers away from their crops and other work and drive them into poverty.

¹⁹ Map reference: this new road is a spur off the existing road at Nga Pyaw Taw, northwest of Kyaikdon.

Taxation and extortion

“There are 55 houses and 355 people in our village. Most of the villagers are poor and don’t have enough food to eat – only ten of the households have enough food to get them through the year. Those who don’t have enough food to feed their families cut wood or bamboo and sell it in Thaton, Kler Pa or T’Raw Wah, but the bamboo and wood are getting more and more scarce. People in our village have to work very hard, so sometimes when we have to collect the taxes some households cannot pay. All the taxes add up to at least 25,000 to 30,000 Kyat per year for poorer villagers, and 80,000 to 90,000 Kyat per year for those who have more money.”

– D--- (male, 36), village headman, T--- village, Waw Raw township

Along with SPDC control comes heavy taxation. In addition to money they pay to avoid forced labour, people are forced to pay many forms of ‘taxes’ to various authorities. Villagers are heavily taxed on their livelihoods but most of these ‘taxes’ are informal, determined by whim of local military officers and officials and going mainly into their pockets. In all areas where the Karen Peace Force (KPF) operates, they force villagers to hand over two baskets of rice for every 100 baskets harvested, and money taxes on other crops. Owners of cattle or elephants have to pay informal ‘taxes’ on them every year; for example, the KPF demands 50,000 Kyat for each elephant in areas where they operate. Taxes like these are one of the real reasons that SPDC authorities demand complete registers of people’s land and livestock as mentioned earlier.

“The SPDC ordered our village to provide a register of rubber plantations and all other plantations, and we have to pay taxes on these plantations. Our village has to give 63,000 Kyat every year. They also asked for a population register and we have to give them a new one once a year. They didn’t tell us what they will do with this register.”

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

“The SPDC collects taxes on our land, gardens and fields too. We have to send the money to the Operations Command in Seik Gyi. The total we collected this year was 6,000 Kyat. They collect that money every year. In August 2004 one of the SPDC officers from Seik Gyi ordered that every field or garden beside the car road must be measured and the owners must pay him 5,000 Kyat. He said that a Chinese company was coming to take all the land alongside the car road, but he didn’t say what kind of company or its name. He told the villagers to measure their fields and give him 5,000 Kyat per field, and then he would give us title papers and our land would be saved, that once we had that paper the Chinese company couldn’t take our land. The villagers were afraid to lose their land so they hurriedly measured their own land and gave him the money. But later he didn’t give us any title papers. The villagers went to him and asked for the papers but he didn’t give them anything, he just said he would give it later. We never saw any company come to our village either.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

“Each house has to pay 500 Kyat in taxes each month. Some of the villagers pay but some don’t, so sometimes I get into debt [the village head has to pay the full amount to the Army regardless]. These taxes are collected by SPDC and KNU. When they come into the village we have to give them food to eat. Sometimes they ask for chickens and pigs and we have to buy those for them.”

– U P--- (male, 39), village head, O--- village, Waw Raw township

In addition to taxes on agricultural livelihoods, traders are taxed by being forced to pay large amounts of extortion to get through every SPDC, DKBA and KPF checkpoint they have to pass whenever they transport goods along the roads.

“We need to buy goods from Mudon and along the way there are four SPDC checkpoints, one DKBA checkpoint and one of the KPF. From Mudon to our village costs about 15,000 Kyat in checkpoint fees. A truck carrying wood, charcoal or rubber has to pay at least 50,000 Kyat in fees.”

– S--- (male, 58), P--- village, Waw Raw township

“We buy rice and other food from [Kya In] Seik Gyi. We buy a basket of rice for 5,000 Kyat, but we have to pay additional car fare of 200 Kyat per basket. The SPDC set up a gate along the way where we have to pay 100-200 Kyat tax for every sack of rice.”

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

“DKBA #901 Battalion collects taxes on all the cars or motorbikes that travel on the roads near Kya In Seik Gyi.”

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

Village sawmills face some of the heaviest ‘taxation’ and extortion. These are small operations with either a single diesel-powered circular log saw or several two-man timber hand saws; elephants are used to haul the logs, which are then sawn into planks. Some mills then produce furniture and other products. Some villages have as many as 4 or 5 of these small mills. The KPF demands 50,000 Kyat per year from each sawmill in their operating area and the DKBA demands an additional 30,000 Kyat per year, but even this is dwarfed by the demands made by SPDC commanders. Every sawmill in Kya In Seik Gyi township has to pay 550,000 Kyat per year plus an additional 15,000 Kyat per month to Aung Kyaw Nyein, commander of SPDC Strategic Operations Command #2 in Kya In Seik Gyi. The headman of T--- village in Kya In township told KHRG each sawmill in his village has to pay 15,000 Kyat per month to the Kya In Seik Gyi forestry office, and every time an SPDC column comes to the village additional extortion must be paid; for example, in January 2006 each sawmill was forced to give 9,000 Kyat to a visiting column from LIB #103. In addition the sawmill owners in T--- village have to pay 30,000 Kyat extortion regularly to DKBA #901 Battalion commander Saw T’Kee. No receipts are issued for any of these payments. In addition, every time an SPDC Army column comes to a sawmill, the owners are expected to fête them with beer, spirits and pork curry, usually costing over 10,000 Kyat in total. One village headwoman told KHRG, “they take goods from the shops and then force the sawmill owner to pay for them.” Whenever a new battalion rotates in (an almost monthly occurrence because each unit rotates every three to six months), sawmill owners are forced to give 45,000 or 50,000 Kyat to the new commander.

“When the SPDC come to the village they don’t ask so much food and money from the villagers, but they do from the sawmill owners. These two sawmills have only been set up for two months now. Each of them had to pay tax of 550,000 Kyat to the Operations Command. Then in December 2005 they had to give two logs of wood, already cut and made into two round tables. We had to deliver them to Battalion #284 next to Wah Boh Gone village, their battalion commander is Khin Maung Aye. Their Intelligence Officer, Sein Kyi, also demanded a table and four chairs. In January 2006, Light Infantry Battalion #103 demanded 9,000 Kyat from each sawmill. The sawmill owners also have to pay tax of 30,000 Kyat to DKBA #901 Battalion.”

– Saw B--- (male, 62), T--- village, Kya In township

Army officers in Kya In Seik Gyi town also regularly demand furniture from sawmills in the area without paying for it. In December 2005, for example, Infantry Battalion #83 officer Than Soe Oo in P’Ya Ngote Doh army camp was about to be rotated out of the district, so he ordered a sawmill at Chaung Wah village to make him a snooker table, five table sets (each with a table and four chairs), and two settees. One settee usually sells for 200,000 Kyat and a table set for 50,000 Kyat, but the officer paid nothing. Another sawmill was forced to give 41,500 Kyat in cash, 20 nylon sleeping mats, and various planks. After Than Soe Oo left, he

was replaced at P'Ya Ngote Doh in January 2006 by Light Infantry Battalion #103 commanded by Battalion Commander Aung Naing Oo and Deputy Commander Ye Htun. Since then, they have ordered sawmills in the area to send twenty 6-inch by 3-inch planks each 10½ feet long to Kya In Seik Gyi town, and the sawmill owners were also forced to buy motorbikes for them. They specified that the motorbikes must be new 2005 models, and the sawmill owners had to deliver them by January 31st 2006.

"I've had my sawmill in this village for one year already. The closest Army camp is Infantry Battalion #32 at the Operations Command in Kya In Seik Gyi. Sometimes they come to my sawmill and ask for food or pigs or chickens, and if we can't find pigs or chickens then they demand 10,000-20,000 Kyat from each sawmill. There are nine sawmills here. Before we set up our sawmill we had to ask permission from the SPDC, and pay 550,000 Kyat to the Operations Commander at Kya In Seik Gyi. Whenever they come they demand food or money. In November 2005 Than Soe Oo, the Column Commander from Infantry Battalion #83, came and demanded 41,500 Kyat from each sawmill. He also demanded five sets of wooden chairs. Normally we sell one set of chairs for 30,000 Kyat. We collected 26,000 Kyat per mill to make five sets of chairs for them. After we finished making them we had to deliver them to Battalion #32 at Kya In Seik Gyi. In January 2006 Light Infantry Battalion #103 came to our sawmill from their camp at P'Ya Ngote Doh. They demanded 20 wooden planks from each sawmill. Each plank had to be 6x3 inches and 10 feet long."

– Saw S--- (male, 39), G--- village, Kya In township

"When SPDC Infantry Battalion #83 was based at P'Ya Ngote Doh, they often asked for food or money from the sawmills in our village. Before they left P'Ya Ngote Doh [to be rotated out], they demanded one motorbike from each sawmill. Some of the owners couldn't give it to them, so they told those owners to buy carpets and other furniture for them instead."

– U T--- (male, 54), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

"In December 2005, SPDC Infantry Battalion #83 told three of the sawmills to give them 10 planks of wood each, and from the other two sawmills they took some tables and chairs and then ordered them to give them 20 wooden planks which must be 8 feet long. Their commander is Than Soe Oo. When they demanded these things they said they needed to make benches for the football ground, not for themselves. We delivered these things to them at Kya In Seik Gyi on our carts. There was a dressing table, a set with six chairs and a big table, and 30 wooden planks. The sawmill owner said the value was over 100,000 Kyat for that set of chairs and 30,000 Kyat for the dressing table, but they never gave any money. All those chairs and tables were made of teakwood. They really pick on the owners of the sawmills. They demand everything they want from the sawmill owners."

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

The SPDC camp at P'Ya Ngote Doh also extorts large amounts of money at its checkpoint on the main road from Kya In Seik Gyi to Khoh Ther Pler (Paya Thon Zu / Three Pagodas Pass). In dry season, they demand 2,000 Kyat from each motorbike, 5,000 Kyat from cars and trucks not carrying commercial goods, and 10,000 to 20,000 Kyat from each truck carrying sawn timber. In rainy season, when the road is not usable, they set up a checkpoint on the river and demand 2,000 Kyat from each passing boat and 10,000 Kyat from each wood-transporting barge travelling along the Tha May (Atayan) river. As noted earlier, SPDC troops based along the road from Azin to Meh K'Dtee extort similar amounts from vehicles transporting wood. Throughout Dooplaya, travelling along roads is impossible without money to pay heavy bribes at every checkpoint.

“My village is next to the SPDC Army camp. This camp has been built in front of our village, at the road junction. The Army camp set up a gate and they collect taxes from every vehicle and motorbike that passes. They collect 5,000 Kyat for a vehicle [car or truck] and 2,000 Kyat for each motorbike. If a vehicle isn’t carrying any goods they don’t collect, but they still collect 2,000 Kyat from each motorbike [even if it is not carrying anything]. Whatever the season, at least three to four vehicles and 9 or 10 motorcycles travel past this gate each day. The Tha May river is next to their Army camp so they also tax all the boats that cross the river. They collect 2,000 to 5,000 Kyat from each boat, and 1,000 to 5,000 Kyat from each bamboo raft. In the rainy season at least 5 or 10 boats cross the river each day, but not so many in dry season.”

– U M--- (male, 51), village head, B--- village, Kya In township

“On January 7th 2005, SPDC Battalion #545 came into the village and impounded seven bullock carts that were carrying wood. They said the cart owners hadn’t informed them that they were going to carry wood. When the seven carts arrived, they took them to their Army camp and fined the owners 5,000 Kyat per cart. The morning of January 19th 2006, SPDC Battalion #103 from P’Ya Ngote Doh camp came into our village to impound 12 bullock carts that had transported wood before returning to T---. They fined them a big pig, three chickens and a case of beer.”

– S--- (male, 37), T--- village, Kya In township

In addition to regular ‘fees’ and extortion, villagers regularly have to confront demands for money for any number of purposes which should not be their responsibility. To raise money to buy prostheses for his former soldiers who had lost arms and legs, SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #591 officer Myo Zaw Thein forced villagers in Kyaun Ywa village to buy pictures of the Buddha. Each household was forced to pay 500 Kyat for the printed image, because the SPDC provides only an initial prosthesis and no further support or medical care to disabled veterans. Another example occurred in the second week of September 2005 when a policeman in Kyaun Way village, Win Yaw township committed suicide by shooting himself, reportedly because he was unhappy with his treatment at the hands of his commander. The commander then forced every household in the village to contribute 500 Kyat toward the funeral. Finally, every time a patrol comes to their village, people are expected to provide all the needs of the soldiers and watch silently as their belongings are looted.

Looting

“When the SPDC troops come into our village they demand rice from the villagers. They say they don’t have any rice to cook, so please give them some. Some order the village head to buy them some juice and snacks from the shops. The commanders say, ‘We’ve come from a distant village. We had to walk all the way, so now you must give us a warm welcome and give us tea, coffee or beer.’ Some of them go to the sawmill owners and demand two or three bottles of alcohol, or they demand money to buy alcohol.”

– U L--- (male, 56), village head, C--- village, Kya In township

Throughout the district SPDC soldiers routinely loot the food and property of the villagers with impunity. This is worsened by the fact that since 1998 the SPDC has instructed its units in the field to ‘live off the land’ as much as possible and they are no longer fully rationed; moreover, SPDC deserters in Dooplaya have told KHRG that Army officers steal a significant portion of their soldiers’ salaries and rations for personal profit, then tell their soldiers to get their food in the villages. Soldiers also steal anything they think they may be able to sell for a few Kyat, even used utensils and clothing. The incidents mentioned below illustrate the kind of routine looting which occurs, but they are only a few examples from the hundreds of cases occurring in Dooplaya. Attempts to report incidents of looting are usually met with either inaction, threats, or possibly even retaliation. The items stolen are usually simple, but many of them are important to the villagers’ survival; the fact that SPDC soldiers steal such things shows the desperation of their poverty despite their power and impunity.

“My salary was over 9,000 Kyat [per month] but the NCO used many excuses to take cuts from our salary and I only got 4,000 Kyat. We demanded some rice from the villagers because we didn’t have enough food.”

– K--- (male, 22), deserted from SPDC IB #87 in July 2005 in Kawkareik township

“Last year in 2005, SPDC [patrols] came into our village and ordered the village head to find rice and chickens for them, but some of the soldiers also went directly to the villagers and asked for bowls of rice. Sometimes they told the village head or the villagers that they didn’t have any rice left so they had to ask for rice, and sometimes they said if we give them some they will pay us back. But they never pay us back.”

– U B--- (male, 61), T--- village, Kya In township

On May 10th 2005, a column from SPDC Infantry Battalion (IB) #83 came to Toh Kee village in Kya In township and stole 8,500 Kyat in cash from Maung Htun’s house, and two pairs of trousers and four pairs of underwear from the house of U Ba Myin. On May 18th 2005, IB #83 troops went to Noh Maw Pu village in Kya In township and looted from the house of Saw Po Heh two machetes, two sleeping mats, one sarong, 4 cloth shoulder bags, two plates, a pair of sandals, 2 viss (3.2 kg/7 lb) of tobacco, a big tin (16 kg/35 lb) of rice, and two Christian Bibles. They also stole two ploughshares, an axe and 20 eggs from Naw Mu Lay’s house.

“Some of the villagers plant pepper, but the SPDC soldiers stole it and pulled down the plants. They even cut down our betelnut trees and other fruit trees when they can’t climb the tree to steal the fruit. ... On January 19th 2006 they stole a large basket of betelnut. They camped in a villager’s house and stole that villager’s things at night. We saw the betelnut husks later in the forest. They took it to Kya In and sold it there. On January 19th some of them were also sleeping in my house, and stole almost ½ basket of my paddy. In the morning my paddy was gone so we knew it must have been them. We couldn’t report it to their commander because they were already gone. When SPDC soldiers enter the village, the villagers cannot go anywhere. The villagers have to remain in their houses, we can’t go out because we fear they’ll steal our food and belongings if we’re not there.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

“Ten days ago [January 21st 2006] LIB #301 came here from Ko Kwa camp. It was Aye Myint and his friends, he is an NCO. Five of them came and demanded 45 betelnut plants that they said they would take and plant in town. I don’t know if they planted them in town or not, but they didn’t pay for them. They also demanded kyaut b’lu thi [a jungle fruit], dauk shout myint [wild lime root], concentrated alcohol and sticky rice. I didn’t have the first two so I just took him concentrated alcohol and sticky rice the next morning. He had said he would pay, but then he refused to pay because I hadn’t brought everything he demanded. He said, ‘Mother, don’t treat me like this. I don’t have a house so take pity on me.’ I said, ‘I don’t believe someone like you has no house.’ He said, ‘Can’t you see that I’ve come to stay here in this place that you built for us?’ I answered, ‘Yes, but I believe people like you get a salary.’ Then he didn’t say anything, he went back to his camp.”

– Naw K--- (female, 53), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

On August 11th 2005 an SPDC column led by the deputy battalion commander of Infantry Battalion #63 came to Mine Kee village in Waw Raw township and stole 20 of the villagers’ chickens, a pair of gold earrings, one men’s sarong, a machete, four big tins (about 64 kg/140 lb) of rice, and 15 viss (24 kg/53 lb) of pork. On August 13th, the same column ordered five of the villagers to serve as porters for one day. On August 30th, IB #63 Column 2 Commander Than Htay and his soldiers came to Maw Kyo village in Waw Raw township and stole 18 bowls (36 kg/79 lb) of rice, 32 baskets of paddy (rice still in the husk), two pigs weighing a total of 60 viss (96 kg/211 lb), and 38 chickens.

“The SPDC came to my village on December 18th 2005. They were LIB #83, Major Myo Khine. He came and stayed for two days. He demanded chickens from the villagers. I told him we only have a few left, but he told me that I give chickens to ‘nga pway’ [‘ringworms’; SPDC slang for KNU/KNLA] so I must give some to him too. He said he would keep demanding it until I gave it. I didn’t want to argue with him so I gave him some. We were afraid of him because he had a gun and could kill us. I was afraid of his gun more than I was of him. He also demanded a basket of rice. He said he would repay it when they got their rations, but until now we haven’t got it back.”

– Naw E--- (female, 42), village section leader, M--- village, Kya In township

On November 7th 2005, SPDC IB #98 officer Khin Maung Kyi and about 60 of his men came to Kyaut B’Lu village in Waw Raw township. They found Saw Bpin Htun’s house empty, because his mother was ill so he and his whole family had gone to be with her at her house. However, the officer said that any empty house must be the house of a KNU member, so he had his soldiers systematically loot the house. They took 50 sheets of rubber (some villagers have small rubber plantations; they process the tapped rubber into large standard sheets to sell) worth a total of 127,500 Kyat, 7 viss (11 kg/24 lb) of fishpaste, 15 viss (24 kg/53 lb) of shrimp paste, 11 chickens, seven pots both big and small, 10 plates, 5 spoons, 3,000 betelnuts, two axes, and miscellaneous clothing. They also destroyed a mattress, probably because they could not carry it.

“The SPDC says that they are good and kind people, and that they wouldn’t do any harm to villagers or steal our things. But when their soldiers come to the village they steal the villagers’ fruit, machetes and other things. We can’t keep reporting it to their commander every time because we’re afraid he’ll get angry with us. When they come and stay in our village it is a big problem for the villagers. Sometimes they stay for 2 or 3 days, sometimes for a whole week. They stay in the villagers’ houses and eat their hosts’ chickens at night. They also steal chickens from other houses, and betelnut and pepper too. Sometimes when their commanders come to the village we have to buy things from the shop for them and pay for it ourselves. They don’t only steal belongings and food from the villagers, they also demand food and things from the village head. So the village and the villagers can’t develop or get out of poverty.”

– Naw M--- (female, 47), T--- village, Kya In township

Violent abuses

“In May 2004 SPDC LIB #588 officer Myint Zaw arrested a villager named Maung Doh at his house. They accused him of stealing something of theirs from alongside the car road. They arrested him at 4 a.m. They tortured him in many ways, including lighting candles and burning him with flame and wax, lighting nylon rope and dripping the burning nylon on him, punching him and stomping on him, and then that afternoon they killed him. He was 35 years old, a married man with four children. His wife is Naw D---.”

– U P--- (male, 51), B--- village, Ye township

The ceasefire and the scarcity of any armed conflict in Dooplaya do not prevent SPDC forces from torturing, shooting and killing villagers. In ***Continued militarisation, killings and fear in Dooplaya District*** (KHRG #2005-F6, June 2005) KHRG documented the March 7th 2005 shooting death of Nan Thaung Thaung Myint (a.k.a. Naw Pay Thwe), a 35 year old woman shopkeeper in Painkaladon village of Kya In township. Her only crime was stepping outside the front of her house at the wrong moment; a group of skittish SPDC soldiers entering the village were startled, and blew away the top half of her skull with assault rifle fire at close range. The same report documented the March 2005 summary execution of Ya Paw O’wa, a 60 year old man from Win Kat village in Kru Tu (Kyone Doh) township, who was marched into the forest by DKBA soldiers and killed, his body left slung over the branch of a tree; no reason was given, and villagers could only guess the killing was retaliation for their failure to meet some demand of the local DKBA.



The remains of 35 year old Nan Thaung Thaung Myint (above) and 60 year old Ya Paw O’wa (right), arbitrarily killed by SPDC and DKBA troops in Dooplaya in March 2005 (see text above).

[Photos: KHRG]

On May 24th 2005, a column of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #415 led by deputy battalion commander Zaw Htun arrived at Leh Daw Gyi village in Kya In township and camped in the monastery compound. At dusk their sentries saw three young villagers passing and shot all three of them without explanation. Eighteen year old Maung Hla Htwe, son of U Eh Cheh, died at once. Twenty year old Saw Hla Min, son of U Kyaw Myint, died later at Pa’an hospital. Twenty year old Saw Eh Htun was injured.

In July 2005 a column of Infantry Battalion #83 soldiers led by officer Than Soe Oo stopped at Ter Dah village in Kya In township and spent the night camped in the village, many of the soldiers staying in the villagers’ houses. A child soldier who was standing sentry that night under one of the villagers’ houses thought he saw something, took fright and fired six to eight rounds from his assault rifle. At least one bullet went through the wall of Maung S---’s

house where he was sleeping with his wife and children, hit his two year old daughter Zin Ma Oo in the head and killed her. After seeing the body the following morning, the Battalion Commander paid the family 70,000 Kyat in compensation – about US\$60 at current exchange rate.

“In 2005, Infantry Battalion #83 shot my little daughter Zin Ma Oo. She was two years old. It happened at 2 o'clock in the morning. The SPDC soldiers were sentrying at night in the bunker [a pit beside their house where villagers shelter if the SPDC attacks the village]. We woke up to hear their guns fire 6 or 7 times. After the firing stopped the soldiers went back to their Army camp immediately. My little child was killed by that gunfire. We reported it to a villager who takes responsibility for the children in the village and he reported it to the commander, and then they came to look at my daughter. When they looked at her they said they couldn't help her because she didn't have a hope, and then they went back. The next day they came and gave me 70,000 Kyat.”

– Maung S--- (male, 23, Burman), T--- village, Kya In township



Zin Ma Oo's father, who was sleeping in the same house when she was shot. [Photo: KHRG]

On July 17th 2005, after two soldiers had deserted from SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #588 and surrendered to Karen forces, LIB 588 officer Myint Zaw and his troops went to K'Neh Kah village in Waw Raw township. They arrested the village head and accused him of helping the deserters, and they tortured villagers Saw Htee Der and Naw Baw Lu from K'Neh Kah village and Saw Nyin from Su Zee Myen village. None of these villagers had anything to do with the desertion, but it is routine SPDC military practice to punish local villages whenever any soldiers desert; this is supposed to encourage the villagers to capture and hand over any deserters they see in future.

On August 15th 2005, officer Aye Mya of SPDC Infantry Battalion #283 at Tee Hta Baw camp was drunk. He went to Du Boh village in Kya In township at 3 p.m. and ordered Saw Yah Khay, the 40 year old village headman, to show a video for him. When Saw Yah Khay refused, Aye Mya shot him dead on the spot.

“On September 25th 2005, soldiers from Infantry Battalion #83 came to my house and ordered me and my youngest son to come down. I came down first and my son came out two or three minutes later. Commander Than Soe Oo got angry with my son [for taking so long] so he shot his catapult [slingshot] at my son's head and said we didn't show him proper respect. They did this to many people in our village. When they were patrolling near our village they found two men staying in their farmfield huts. They tied them up with rope and beat them cruelly. They held them all day and only released them in the evening.”

– U H--- (male, 58), K--- village, Kya In township

On September 19th 2005, officer Than Soe Oo and his Infantry Battalion #83 troops came to K--- village in Kya In township before dawn. That night 29 year old Saw Hsa Th'Lay Mu had slept alone in his family's farming hut in their irrigated field outside the village. Before sunrise Saw Hsa Th'Lay Mu went fishing by the river. The IB 83 column saw him stepping into the water and shot him in the back. They then pulled him out of the water, stomped on his neck and stabbed him to death with a knife. After hearing the gunshot from his house, Saw Hsa Th'Lay Mu's father went to the farmfield to check on his son. He met the SPDC soldiers coming the other way, and they told him they had just shot and killed a Karen soldier. When he reached the river he found the body of his son. After speaking to the father Than Soe Oo gave the family 50,000 Kyat (about US\$40) as compensation, but Saw Hsa Th'Lay Mu's father gave the money to the village head because he could not bear to take it.



The remains of Saw Hsa Th'Lay Mu, age 29, gunned down by SPDC troops while fishing in the Tee Day river in September 2005. The photo below shows his parents. [Photos: KHRG]

“On September 19th 2005, officer Than Soe Oo and his men from SPDC Infantry Battalion #83 shot and killed my son Saw Hsa Th'Lay Mu. He was 29 years old. He stayed in our farmfield alone that night. At 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning he was catching fish on the bank of the Tee Day Kloh [river] when they shot him. I heard the gunfire, so in the morning I went to check on him and I met Than Soe Oo and his soldiers there. He told me that when my son saw them he had tried to run away so they shot him. My son has never run away, whether he saw SPDC or DKBA or KNU. He asked me if my son was a KNLA soldier. I told him he wasn't a KNLA soldier, he was just helping me on the farm since he finished 7th Standard [Grade 7]. I could see my son lying on the shore of the river. It had been raining that night. They had shot him in the back, but he hadn't died immediately so they had stomped on his neck and stabbed him in the left side of his chest with a knife. After I spoke to them, Commander Than Soe Oo gave me 50,000 Kyat [about US\$40]. But I gave all that money to the village head.”

– U H--- (male, 58), K--- village, Kya In township

At about midnight on October 19th 2005, a column of SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #588 troops led by Warrant Officer Than Win came to Beh La Mu village in Waw Raw (Win Yaw) township, just northeast of Hla Mine. They searched U H---'s house and the two huts in his rubber plantation. They destroyed all of the belongings they found. They searched for village second secretary Maung O---, who had failed to attend the 'management and

security' training for VPDC members held earlier in the month in Moulmein (see above under '**Forced organisation of villages**'); but they only found his son-in-law, whom they beat with a rifle butt once on his head and four times on his back. They proceeded to U Kyaw Ba's field hut and stole his two roosters. They eventually captured Maung O---, accused him of not reporting information about the KNU, and force-marched him all the way to their Battalion camp at Ye town, where he was interrogated. The column also detained Tha K'Deik villager Saw Chan Win, tied his hands and forced him to go with them as a guide. The next day the Beh La Mu village chairman went to Ye, convinced the authorities that Maung O--- had missed the training because he didn't have enough money for the fees, and secured his release.

"In October 2005 the SPDC shot Pa Pler, a 45 or 50 year old man from Tee Ler Chaw village, when he went with two friends to hunt animals in the forest. His two friends had guns [flintlock hunting muskets made by the villagers] in their arms and Pa Pler was carrying a mattock [large hoe]. The SPDC troops saw them and thought they were their enemy, so they shot at them. Pa Pler was wounded in his leg, the bone was broken but they didn't do anything to help him. They tied him to the other two men and took all three of them to Khaw Klah. They interrogated them and summoned the village secretaries of Tee Ler Chaw and Tee Kler Nee villages. The secretaries told the SPDC that these were ordinary villagers just out hunting for game."

– U P--- (male, 39), village head, O--- village, Waw Raw township

On November 13th 2005, Column #2 Commander Saw Kyaw Thein brought his Light Infantry Battalion #301 column to Htee Wah Klay village in Kya In township. They interrogated and tortured 60 year old Kyaw Hlaing and 39 year old Maung Aye Tin, then forced the two men to go with them to the village chairperson's house and released them there. The column also went to Noh Kwih Hta village, where they saw 32 year old Maung Hla Kyaw eating in his house. They ordered him to come down out of the house, but he delayed coming out for a few moments because he had been eating; for this reason, when he came out of his house the soldiers beat him.

"In December 2005 the SPDC were working on the road from Kya In Seik Gyi to Paya Thon Zu. They were at Tee Khay, and they were sent two barrels of petrol by boat from Kya In Seik Gyi. The two barrels were stolen by the KNU at Maw Yeh Der. When they heard this, they accused the villagers of P'Ya Ngote Doh of sending information to the KNU, so Infantry Battalion #83 arrested three villagers from P'Ya Ngote Doh. Their names are K---, S--- and P---. They were arrested at night, taken to the lockup and interrogated. They accused them of sending messages to the KNU by Icom [walkie-talkie]. They released them the next day after the village head pleaded for them, but they told the village head and secretary of P'Ya Ngote Doh that their villagers would have to pay them the cost of those two barrels of petrol."

– U M--- (male, 51), B--- village, Kya In township

"On April 29th 2005, SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #308 officer Htay Khaing summoned me to Anan Gwin camp, so I went along with one of the ten-household leaders [in larger villages each 10 households has a representative on the village council]. He allowed the ten-household leader to go home but he detained me overnight. The next morning Htay Khaing asked me, 'Are people in your village about to celebrate something?' I answered, 'Yes, people will celebrate with a traditional Karen Done dance show, and tomorrow morning they will celebrate May Day.' He asked, 'And will the KNLA come too?' I said, 'I'm not sure, maybe they will come.' Then he ordered me to follow his column and took me to our village. Just outside the village someone opened fire on them. Then Officer Htay Khaing accused me that I had shot at him, but I told him, 'I'm following along with you, how could I shoot at you?' But he beat me and detained me in the monastery and wouldn't let anyone see me. I stayed there one night and then Naing Lin Oo, the commander of Column 1

Company #1, called me over to stay beside him. He told me not to be afraid and said, 'I am here, Officer Htay Khaing will not kill you.' I stayed with him until 10 a.m., then I ran away and escaped."

– S--- (male, 58), village head, P--- village, Waw Raw township



These two village elders in Waw Raw township say they were arrested by SPDC Infantry Battalion #63 in June 2005 for failing to adequately satisfy the Army's demands for forced labour and extortion. L--- (left) was beaten in detention, while K--- (right) was detained at the Army camp for five days without charge. [Photos: KHRG]

Villagers in Dooplaya are also punished by SPDC forces whenever fighting does occur, even though since the ceasefire it has been SPDC troops who have instigated almost every armed skirmish. On June 11th 2005, SPDC officer Tin Win took 50 of his troops to Myay Gone in Waw Raw township. At about 9 a.m. they were passing through Pa Pya village when they saw KNLA soldiers and opened fire on them despite the ceasefire. The KNLA soldiers returned fire. Afterward, the SPDC officer saw a villager's farming hut belonging to 30 year old Saw Moh Loh (a.k.a. Po Lu Ku) near the site of the clash. He declared that it was a KNLA hut and had his soldiers burn it down. The hut did not contain any KNLA soldiers, but it did contain 10 baskets of rice, 28 baskets of paddy, one basket of sesame seed, a big tin of sesame oil, 18 viss (29 kg / 63 lb) of fishpaste, ten large and small cookpots, ten plastic containers of various sizes, fifty plates and bowls, 25 spoons, two sleeping mats, two blankets, two men's sarongs, ten women's sarongs, 35 shirts, eight children's school uniforms, four cloth shoulder bags, a bicycle, two big saws, four fishing nets, three umbrellas, two flashlights, 2,000 Kyat in cash, and three tons of 6-inch x 6-inch ironwood house posts stored under the hut which Saw Moh Loh was planning to use to build a house – in short, almost all of the possessions of Saw Moh Loh's family, all of which was destroyed in the fire. The only things not destroyed were an axe, a machete, 1 viss of cooking oil, two cloth bags, a tray of eggs and 10,000 Kyat in cash, because the soldiers stole these things before setting the house alight.

"Infantry Battalion #36 officer Khin Maung San told me that if the Karen army shoots at them when they are travelling, they will burn down the closest village."

– Saw H--- (male, 35), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

"On June 11th 2005 some fighting occurred just south of Pa Pya village at Lay K'Er between the SPDC Army LIB #63 and the KNLA. After the fighting the SPDC soldiers arrived at the farmfield hut of Po Lu Ku, a villager. He is 30 years old and has 3 children. They ordered the people in the hut to come out and threatened that they would shoot them dead, but then some other soldiers stopped them from doing that."

They climbed into the hut and stole everything they wanted, and then they burned the hut down. The villagers didn't dare say anything. Along with the hut they burned ten baskets of rice, 28 baskets of paddy, three tons of wood he was going to use to build a house, clothing, pots, etc. The total value of it was about 1,100,000 Kyat. The LIB #63 officer is Htay Khaing, but we don't dare report him to any higher authority because we are afraid they will torture us."

– U M--- (male, 50), P--- village, Waw Raw township

"The SPDC ordered the village head that if any KNU people enter our village we have to send a message to them, and that if we don't send a message and they find out, they will hit or beat our village head. So every time the KNU enters the village we send the news to them. They also said that if the KNU fights them, they will make trouble for the village and the village head."

– D--- (male, 36), village headman, T--- village, Waw Raw township

On July 11th 2005 at 11:30 a.m., 18 soldiers from SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #591 led by non-commissioned officer Than Zin Htun arrived suddenly in Kyauk Taing (a.k.a. Klaw Hser) village in Waw Raw township. They saw KNLA troops of Company #4 from Battalion #10, 6th Brigade. The two sides shot at each other and the KNLA quickly withdrew, but the SPDC troops kept firing after the Karen soldiers were gone. They shot 22 year old villager Saw Lah Win, who was taking cover under the house with his mother, a village health worker. He was shot in the head and died immediately.

"On July 11th 2005 Burmese soldiers from LIB #591 under NCO Than Zin Htun came to my village. They met the KNLA and shot at each other in the village. The KNLA soldiers only shot for a while and then ran away, but the Burmese soldiers just continued shooting in the village. One of their bullets hit my son Saw Lah Win and he died at once. We were cowering together under our house, and the bullet hit him in the forehead and exploded through the back of his head. I started crying and shouting, until they finally stopped shooting and came to look at my son. The Burmese Army medic reached out to touch my son but I shouted that I would



Saw Lah Win's mother, a village midwife, mourns the loss of her son. [Photo: KHRG]

not allow them to touch my son, that I would do it myself. My son Saw Lah Win, or Po Kwa Gyi – he was 22 years old and a farmer. I heard the SPDC soldiers saying it was the KNLA who was shooting and that they hadn't shot him. But the KNLA had run away long ago already, and it was the Burmese soldiers who just kept shooting in our village. Then SPDC Than Zin Htun offered me 20,000 Kyat and two sacks of rice, but I did not want their money and rice. I hate the Burmese soldiers for shooting and killing my son. Before my son was dead he worked and provided food for us, and after his death no one helped us and we must work very hard. I want to shout to all the people in the world how the Burmese soldiers shot and killed my son. I want to inform the leaders of the world so they will know how cruel the Burmese soldiers are to us, and so that in the future this cannot happen to other villagers like it has happened to us."

– Daw T--- (female, 45), village midwife, K--- village, Waw Raw township

“This village has been located here for more than 200 years already. Before 2000 there were more than 90 houses here, there were a lot of people and houses. Then in 2000 the KNLA attacked the SPDC Army camp next to our village. After the fighting the SPDC summoned every household to the camp for a meeting. They asked the villagers why we hadn’t informed them or sent a report that the KNLA was going to attack their camp. The villagers answered that we hadn’t known, and that we cannot get information about these things. Then the SPDC told the villagers that if this ever happened again they would kill the villagers and burn all the houses in whatever village is closest to the fighting. Some of the villagers were afraid it would happen again and they would be in trouble, so they moved to other places and other villages.”

– U M--- (male, 51), village head, B--- village, Kya In township

We don’t know what they did with him...

“They don’t capture us to be porters, but people are afraid of them so people flee when they come. In the fifth month of 2005 he [*the local SPDC officer with his troops*] came and he saw that people had fled, so he asked me why and I told him, people are afraid of you so they fled. ‘Why are they afraid of me and why don’t they respect me? I am not *Nga Pway* [*‘Ringworm’, SPDC slang for KNU/KNLA*].’ I said, people flee because you usually force people to carry baskets and go with you. If you didn’t force people to go with you they wouldn’t be afraid of you, and all the men wouldn’t flee. Then they started looting people’s things. They saw a piece of a beer case and they said that house owner must be *Nga Pway*, even though he is a villager, so they entered the house and stole all the food and everything they wanted, even the women’s underwear. Then he came back to my house. He climbed up into the house and called ‘Maung Kyaw, Maung Kyaw [*Uncle*]’ but I told him there is no Uncle, Uncle was afraid of you so he ran away. Then he kicked my torch, looked into my bedroom and stole my daughter’s underwear. I told him there was nothing for him in the room, and he climbed down out of the house and left.

Some of the troops started to leave while others were still in the village, and when they got past my mother’s house they saw some people coming back to the village because they’d heard that the soldiers weren’t capturing the villagers. But when they saw those men coming back they started shooting at them, and the men had to flee again. Five of them got away but they caught one young man. They started accusing him of being *Nga Pway*, but little brother protested that he is not *Nga Pway*. Then they saw another person, shouted that he must be *Nga Pway* and started chasing him and shooting at him. He fled until he fell down in the fields, but they didn’t catch him. They were firing their bullets straight toward the farmfield huts of my two younger siblings.

After that they came back and started ransacking every house. They opened people’s [*clothing storage*] boxes and took their axes, ploughs and machetes. Those things are not their enemies but they took them, and even took our lighters and lighter fuel. People didn’t dare say anything. They took away the boy they had caught to Thi Kweh. People didn’t know him because he was from Wah Mu, he had just come to our village to work tending cattle. We don’t know what they did with him or what happened to him. People said that group was from LIB #83.

They came back again at harvest time [*November 2005*]. This time it was [*LIB*] #416, their commander is Than Sein Ko. They came to a farmfield hut and saw people eating there, but when those people saw them they were afraid and ran. Then they shot at those people, but the people escaped. They went into the hut and stole the people’s bags, clothing, ducks and chickens. It was N---’s farmfield hut. They didn’t burn it down, but they took everything and as much of his rice as they could carry.”

– Naw K--- (female, 40), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

Rape and forced marriage

"In August 2005, SPDC IB #63 came and stayed in our village for one week. Their battalion commander's name is Tin Win. One night their Company #2 Commander, his name is Soe Naing, he was drunk. He came back to the house where he was staying at 10 o'clock. He took out his gun and pointed it at the old woman who owns the house. She is 60 years old and her name is Ma H---. And he told her that he would cut off her head and kill her. Then he blew out the lamp and pushed her down to the floor. That night Ma H---'s husband wasn't home but her youngest daughter, 21 years old, was there. Her daughter heard what was happening to her mother but she couldn't do anything because she is a girl – she was lucky the commander didn't know she was there in her own room. While he was trying to do something to Ma H---, she was lucky that she managed to escape from him and run out of the house. The next morning the old woman came to me and told me all about what had happened to her, and I reported it to the Battalion Commander – but he didn't do anything to punish the man."

– Saw H--- (male, 35), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

During the annual *Thingyan* (Burmese new year) water festival of mid-April 2006, Nai Win Aung's group of SPDC Infantry Battalion #61 troops from Ko Kwa camp went to Tee Ler Baw village in Kya In township. Some of the soldiers demanded cigarettes and other goods from the village shops without paying. The shopkeepers later went to protest to the village headwoman and the soldiers' non-commissioned officer (NCO). On April 17th the NCO was questioning the soldiers involved at the army camp. Angry at being questioned, three of the soldiers left the camp and returned to Tee Law Bler village. They threatened village headwoman Daw Dtaun Dtaun and forced her to summon Naw N---, one of the shopkeepers. She came accompanied by one of her uncles, and the three soldiers forced her and her uncle to go with them outside the village. When they reached Wah Mi hill the soldiers forced her uncle to go back. Then while one of them stood guard the other two pointed knives at Naw N--- and raped her. After raping her they let her go, but they did not return to camp. Instead they went to P'Aw Kee village, where on April 18th they detained 47 year old villager Saw Dee Htoo and demanded his money. When they realised he had no money, they shot him dead. This news got to Ko Kwa army camp and a patrol was sent out after the rogue soldiers. When the patrol found them there was a firefight and the three soldiers were captured. The patrol received orders by radio to kill them and summarily executed them at Kweh Hta. After that, Ko Kwa camp commander Nai Win Aung and his Infantry Battalion #61 troops were moved to Kyaikdon in central Dooplaya.

On October 9th 2005, a column from SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #308 was temporarily encamped in Zee Ner Bin village in Waw Raw township. Company Commander Naing Lin Oo had been drinking with DKBA officers based nearby, and on his return he saw two village sawyers and ordered them to accompany him. They refused, so he drew his pistol and forced them to go along. At 11 p.m. they reached U W---'s house in his rubber plantation. Naing Lin Oo ordered the sawyers to stay outside and went into the house. He ordered the sawyers to take U W--- away, and then he pointed his pistol at U W---'s wife Ma T---, aged 28. He told her not to call out, and raped her in the house. When U W--- returned Ma T--- had already been raped, but Naing Lin Oo was still there. Ma T--- started speaking in Mon to tell her husband what had happened, but Naing Lin Oo understands Mon. He drew his pistol and fired two shots at U W---, but he missed and U W--- ran away. After sunrise Ma T--- and U W--- went with the village chairperson and reported the incident to Naing Lin Oo's army camp, then to the camp commander of Yeh Ta Gone camp, and then to Infantry Battalion #62 at T'Raw Wah. Naing Lin Oo was put in the battalion lockup and the battalion commander said that he would be forced to resign his officer's commission, but before long Naing Lin Oo rotated out of the area with his company. According to the village head, *"We don't think he was really punished or forced to resign like the battalion commander promised, because he was afraid it would damage the reputation of his battalion."* The case

was also taken to the local New Mon State Party (a ceasefire group) and the DKBA, “but they didn’t care about this problem, and in the end they all forgot about it and didn’t seem to care what had happened to this couple. They all took the side of the SPDC. Neither the SPDC commanders nor the DKBA did anything to help us.” Deciding it was no longer safe to stay in their village, Ma T--- and U W--- fled with all their family members and now live in M--- town in Mon State.

Naing Lin Oo of LIB #308 may previously have been involved in other unreported rapes or attempted rapes. In mid-July 2005, for example, his column was camped overnight in Loh Shan village of Waw Raw township. In the middle of the night Naing Lin Oo went underneath the floor of Ma L---’s house, which like most Karen houses is raised at least six feet above ground on posts. Ma L--- heard him creeping around, probably checking how many people were in the house before entering. She shouted loudly at him and he fled. The next morning he came and arrested Ma L---, accusing her of not reporting that the KNLA had entered the village overnight and claiming that the village dogs must have been barking at KNLA soldiers, whereas they had actually been barking at him. After demanding and receiving a ransom of rice and chickens, he released her. The message was clear – that he could detain her whenever he likes, and that she would be punished for any attempt to report him.

“In 2005 there was an SPDC deserter staying in the house of U K---, a KNLA soldier who lived in our village. One night when U K--- wasn’t there and his wife was staying at K---, the deserter was watching movies in the house. He watched until 2 a.m., then he went to the house where U K---’s wife was staying. She heard his steps outside but thought it must be other villagers. Then he came into her room holding a knife and told her not to shout. He took her gold necklace and told her to leave, but then he grabbed the girl who was staying there with her. She knew he must be planning to rape her so she tried to run away, but he chased her and slapped and kicked her. Fortunately she managed to escape. The next morning we heard the news and tried to find the SPDC deserter, but we couldn’t find him.”

– A--- (male, 39), village headman, K--- village, Waw Raw township

In some villages of Dooplaya which are near SPDC Army camps, villagers are reporting that SPDC soldiers have on several occasions forced village women to marry them under threat. When the units of these soldiers rotate out of the area they leave their wives behind and make no further contact, presumably considering themselves ‘single’ again and possibly seeking a new forced marriage in their next posting. The women in the village end up abandoned. When villagers have reported these cases to SPDC Division Commanders and Military Operations Commanders, no action has been taken.

“In 2004, around June, SPDC Light Infantry Battalion #308 came to our village on operations. One of their soldiers named Htun Win Ko forced a woman in the village named N--- to marry him, but after only one month he left when his unit rotated out, and he left N--- in the village pregnant. Later she delivered twin children. N--- is an orphan, her parents are already dead and she lives with her grandmother. The village leaders went to report this to the NCO of the new SPDC unit, but he didn’t care about it.”

– Saw B--- (male, 49), village head, D--- village, Waw Raw township

No other abuses serve to dehumanise the villagers and assert the Army’s control over them so much as rape, sexual abuse and forced marriage. When it is conducted with impunity, as is usually the case, and when commanding officers and other authorities make it clear they do not care and refuse to take action, this serves notice to the villagers that under SPDC rule they are seen as nothing but servants of the Army to be exploited in any way the soldiers please. This pushes the forbearance of most villagers beyond its limit, however, and KHRG is receiving more and more reports of villagers taking their lives in their hands by

reporting rapes and protesting to SPDC authorities. In some cases villagers have lynched or summarily executed soldier-rapists without consideration of the potential retaliation. Even some SPDC Army officers seem to fear the unleashed fury of the villagers, seeking transfers for themselves or their men after a rape occurs.

Effects on villagers' survival

“Our village has been here for 200 years already. It has 70 houses, and I have been the village head for 3 years now. People here plant hill fields, flat [irrigated] fields, and [cash crop] plantations, but now most of the villagers don't have enough rice or food to manage throughout the year, only a few of them have enough food for their families. Some are so poor that they have to work in the morning to get their meal for that evening. Those who don't have enough money or food look for paid day labour for other people or in other villages. They can get 1,500 Kyat per day, but they have to do very hard work to get any money.”

– Saw H--- (male, 35), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

When the informal ceasefire came into effect in January 2004, some villagers in Dooplaya who had been staying in remote areas since 1997 took this as an opportunity to return to their home villages. However, they had either abandoned or sold all of their property and belongings when they first escaped, so on their return they had no land and few possessions. Most of them had to seek paid day labour in other people's plantations or breeding livestock, or they began brewing or distilling alcohol and making and selling simple snacks to survive, using whatever money they could get to buy rice at the inflated price of 6,000 to 7,000 Kyat per basket. Many cannot find enough money so they have to dig wild roots to supplement their diet, and those who fall ill cannot afford medicines or treatment. Even for those who never left their villages, the consistent demands and abuses they face have made it difficult for them to survive. A KHRG researcher reports that under present circumstances, only about thirty percent of villagers in Dooplaya are able to produce and retain enough food for their families to survive each year, while seventy percent are going hungry; this despite the fact that Dooplaya is a fertile region where most of the land is tillable. As a result, some villagers are selling their land and livestock and leaving, either to the towns, the jungles in the eastern reaches of the district, or to refugee camps in Thailand.

“People in our village work their own flat fields, hill fields and plantations, but most of them don't have enough food or rice so they have to look for paid labour. Some of them go outside the village and cut bamboo for others. In a day maybe they can get 50 or 100 bamboo, and they can get 1,000-1,500 Kyat for 50 bamboo. They transport it on their carts. But the bamboo is getting more and more scarce. This year we can still cut bamboo, but next year I think we won't be able to do that any more. If there's no bamboo, people won't be able to work for money.”

– Saw K--- (male, 43), village head, P--- village, Waw Raw township

“There are 103 houses in our village. People here plant irrigated [rice] fields, hill fields, and rubber plantations, but many of the villagers don't have enough food for their families. Only about one third of the families have enough food.”

– T--- (male, 36), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

“In the village some people have enough paddy and some people don't have paddy, so those with paddy lend or sell paddy to those who don't have enough. One basket of rice costs 3,000 Kyat and a basket of paddy is 1,000 Kyat. People who can't buy rice borrow it from others and then pay them back after the harvest.”

– Naw K--- (female, 40), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

Prior to the SPDC occupation of Dooplaya in 1997, when villagers were ill they either bought commercial medicines or went for treatment to clinics run by the KNU or by agencies bringing aid across the border from Thailand. These clinics have now been destroyed by the SPDC and it is difficult for mobile medical teams from Thailand to operate in many areas without being caught by SPDC forces. No medical services are provided by SPDC authorities except to come periodically to give free vaccinations for polio, probably as part of projects funded by foreign agencies in Rangoon, but there are no primary health services

and no proper medical care for the villagers' most common ailments – malaria, diarrhoea, dysentery, stomach ailments, skin diseases, tuberculosis and heart disease. Clinics built by SPDC authorities to great fanfare (with forced labour, money and materials extorted from the villagers) are not supplied with any medicines; sometimes they are only staffed for a few weeks and then left abandoned.

“We built a dispensary in our village and the SPDC sent a health worker, but they don’t provide any medicines. The health workers have to buy the medicines themselves and then we have to buy it from them. We have to pay 50 Kyat for a tablet of paracetamol. The most common illnesses for us are malaria and the common cold. If we get seriously ill we go to the Noh Cho Neh clinic, and if they cannot cure us they send us to the town hospital – but we have to spend our own money for all the expenses.”

– P--- (male, 51), village head, W--- village, Waw Raw township

“We don’t have a clinic in our village, but when we get sick we can go to T’Raw Wah. You must have at least 10,000 or 20,000 Kyat to go to T’Raw Wah hospital. Most of the villagers don’t have enough money so when they get sick they just stay home. Some are cured with herbal medicines, but some who are severely ill have died. This year, 2005, two people have died of paralysis. One was 4 years old and the other was 42 or 43. We tried to send them to hospital but it was too late. Once a year the Backpacks [Backpack Health Worker Teams, an independent group bringing medicines in from Thailand] come to the area around our village. Some other health workers come and give us vaccinations too. But most of the villagers just have to buy or make herbal medicines. If we have to buy [commercial] medicines, it costs 200 Kyat for one tablet or 2,000 Kyat for an IV drip.”

– Saw L--- (male, 43), village head, L--- village, Waw Raw township

“I am a health worker, a midwife. My first training was organised by the KNU, and later I went to an SPDC-organised training in Ye. I have to pay 500 Kyat for a pair of [latex] gloves, I pay it with my own money. When I go to help someone deliver I ask 2,000 or 3,000 Kyat because I have to buy all the supplies myself, but sometimes villagers cannot pay me so I don’t ask anything from them.”

– Daw T--- (female, 45), K--- village, Waw Raw township

“In the [December 2005 monthly TPDC] meeting Doctor Maung Maung said that he has 36 million Kyat for patients, so he said that if any villagers fall ill he invited them to come and see him and he would look after them. After that one of the T--- villagers, Naw M---, got sick so she went to the hospital. When she reached the hospital the nurses came to her and asked her whether she has much money or not. They said to her that she could only be admitted to hospital if she had enough money. She wasn’t supported by any doctor so it cost her 100,000 Kyat that time, and she had to search very hard to raise that money. She has gastric problems, jaundice and liver disease. The nurses there always ask every villager that goes to the hospital questions about money.”

– Naw M--- (female, 47), T--- village, Kya In township

Where commercial medicines are available, villagers buy them and administer them often without understanding their specific applications. ‘Injections’ and saline intravenous drips are commonly seen as cure-alls, as are paracetamol tablets. Commercial medicines are becoming harder and more expensive to obtain, however, leaving villagers to rely on traditional herbal remedies derived from roots and seeds. United Nations and other foreign organisations operating through Rangoon finance programmes such as free polio vaccinations, but villagers point out that they have never had problems with polio, it is malaria and diarrhoea they have problems with but they receive no help with these. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is active in health programmes in some parts of Doooplaya, though most of the villagers interviewed for this report had no idea of

what they are doing. In areas where SPDC control is incomplete and KNLA forces still operate, villagers can sometimes get free treatment from KNLA medics and 'backpack' mobile medical teams coming from Thailand may reach them once every few months. When people are seriously ill or wounded, however, other villagers have little choice but to try to send them to a town hospital, which is more expensive than most people can afford, or to a refugee camp clinic in Thailand.

"People who are seriously ill have to go to Seik Gyi or sometimes to Pa'an. To go to Seik Gyi we need a lot of money, because if we don't have enough the nurses there won't take care of us. One of the children in my village had to go to Pa'an hospital. He had fallen on the ground and the tendon of his leg was sprained. His leg was operated on, and it cost more than 300,000 Kyat for his treatment. The poor people in our village use mostly herbal medicines for treatment because it is cheaper. This year several villagers have died. Some died of fever or other diseases, and in December one villager woke up early to cook rice but suddenly fell over and died in the kitchen. No one knew what he died from."

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village headwoman, T--- village, Kya In township

"We can't get any free medicines, we have to buy them. The most common disease is malaria. If people get seriously sick and we can't cure them in the village we send them to Kya In Seik Gyi hospital. Some health workers came to inject polio vaccine for free, but I think we've never had any polio disease here."

– Naw K--- (female, 85), village headwoman, N--- village, Kya In township

"We don't have a clinic in our village, but there is one medicine shop. When we get sick we go to him and buy a bottle of [intravenous] drip and ask him to inject it for us. The KNU also gives him some medicine that he gives us for free."

– Ma A--- (female, 44), village head, K--- village, Kya In township

"There is no clinic or hospital in our village. Most people just use herbal medicines when they get sick. When that is not enough, we send them to Noh Choh Neh clinic. The most common disease is fever with headache [sometimes this can be malaria, dengue, or scrub typhus], and every year at least five people die of that. The backpack and other health workers [mobile teams coming from Thailand] come to our village once a year."

– B--- (male, 39), village headman, P--- village, Waw Raw township

"We don't have a clinic in our village, but last year we asked a lady from Wah K'Meh to come and look after the patients in our village. She constructed her own clinic for the villagers. We have to pay 100 to 300 Kyat for one dose of medicine and 2,500 Kyat for an IV drip. She buys the medicines at T---. The most common ailment is fever with headache. If villagers get seriously ill they have to go to T--- or Moulmein, but it costs a lot of money, maybe 120,000 Kyat, to get treatment in Moulmein."

– Saw H--- (male, 35), village head, T--- village, Waw Raw township

"There is no clinic in our village, so when we get sick we fetch nurses from other villages and give them money. It costs 100-200 Kyat for one dose of tablets and 2,000 Kyat for one bottle of IV drip. The most common disease in the village is malaria. This year ICRC and a health organisation came into the village one time and gave vaccinations to the children. Some KNU health workers also came and gave us some medicines, but there wasn't enough for all the villagers so they went back."

– U P--- (male, 39), village head, O--- village, Waw Raw township

“We have no clinic in our village. If we get sick we go and call the health worker [midwife] from Nat Gyi or Klay Hta. We have to pay her 150 or 200 Kyat for a dose of medicine. Some villagers have no money to go to hospital, so their diseases get worse and they die.”

– K--- (male, 35), village head, S--- village, Ye township

Prior to the SPDC occupation most villages had schools which they either ran themselves or which operated under the KNU education department. Teachers were hired and materials purchased by villagers themselves, and curricula were usually derived from a combination of the KNU and SPDC school systems. Fees to attend these schools were minimal, often paid in rice rather than money, and exceptions were usually made for poor families. After occupying the district the SPDC destroyed or forced the closure of most of these schools and decreed that students are only allowed to attend SPDC-approved schools teaching an SPDC-approved curriculum. Local villagers are forced to build such schools, supply all the materials, and pay the salaries of the SPDC-supplied teachers in addition to school fees, but are not consulted in any way regarding where schools should be built, what levels they should teach or what the curriculum should be. These schools prohibit the Karen language from being taught or spoken, leaving children to grow up illiterate in their mother tongue. Most villages do not have an SPDC school, forcing parents to send their children away for schooling and cover the added costs of boarding. Most students cannot go beyond primary level because the fees are too high to go any further; students who attend SPDC middle schools need at least 100,000 Kyat per year for fees and expenses, and most farming families cannot pay that.

“We have a school in our village. It was built by the villagers. We have four teachers that the SPDC sent us, and four more teachers that we hired. The four teachers that the SPDC sent, we have to give 30,000 Kyat for each of them. Each family has to give them four milkbins of rice, one bottle of cooking oil and everything they need to cook each month. The Burmese authorities give them 7,500 Kyat each month. We pay the other teachers 7,500 Kyat per month, but we don’t have to give them food like the Burmese government teachers. Students have to pay 3,500 Kyat for a set of books. The admission fees are 1,500 Kyat for fourth standard students and 500 Kyat for kindergarten. Students in 7th and 8th standard have to pay 10,000 Kyat. The highest level is 8th Standard [Grade 8], but the villagers are hoping to establish higher levels. None of the teachers teach Karen language. There are 8 teachers and 300 students in our school – two teachers for standards 7-8, two for standards 4-5, and the others take care of the other standards. Seventy or eighty percent of the children go to school. Those who finish 8th standard and want to continue to 9th and 10th standards can go to Pu Pra, but very few of them go there because it costs too much money. It costs 250,000 Kyat for one student for a year [including boarding costs]. So after 8th standard most of them help their parents in the flat fields or the hill fields.”

– Saw L--- (male, 43), village head, L--- village, Waw Raw township

“The children in O--- village study at the monastery hall because we haven’t built a school. There are two teachers and 50 students there. One of the teachers, from Pu Pra, we hired for 140,000 Kyat per year, and the other for 50,000 Kyat. Each house in the village pays them 600 Kyat and four bowls [about 8 kg. / 18 lb] of rice. The admission fee for a student is 500-700 Kyat. Students who finish 4th standard and want to continue can go to Pu Pra, but only 3 or 4 children have gone there. Some parents say it is a waste of time and money to study any higher, because even for those who have finished the higher grades the only thing they can do when they come back to the village is help their parents in the fields. There aren’t any other jobs to do. A few parents, though, think differently and they urge their children to continue at school.”

– U P--- (male, 39), village head, O--- village, Waw Raw township

“We have four primary schools and a middle school. These schools were established by the SPDC government. The teachers were hired by the SPDC government, but the students have to buy their own notebooks and textbooks. The students aren’t given any opportunity to learn Karen in school or during the school term, so we teach them Karen at the monastery during the school holidays.”

– L--- (male, 56), K--- village, Waw Raw township

The people of some villages have responded by setting up their own schools once again. These schools teach the Karen language, but if SPDC authorities find out about them they are ordered to close. The KNU is still supporting the establishment of schools in some areas by paying all the building costs and costs for books and materials, but there are only a few areas beyond SPDC control where this has been possible. Some parents send their children to study at refugee camp schools in Thailand, where they stay with relatives or in dormitories for unaccompanied children. Many others have no opportunity to do this so they join the KNLA, and if they are lucky the KNLA sends them to study and supports their costs.

“We built a school but we only have kindergarten students and one student in 1st Standard. Our only teacher lives with us here, he used to teach a long time ago. We give him 40 baskets of paddy [per year] but no money. Each student pays school fees of 500 Kyat. We go to buy books in Kyaikdon. One notebook costs 250 Kyat, and the students copy their lessons into this book. We don’t get any support from others for our school. We have to teach the students in fear, and if we hear the SPDC are coming we close the school.”

– Naw K--- (female, 40), village head, N--- village, Kya In township

“We have a primary school in our village. The villagers constructed the school with some wood we were given by the KNU governor. The three teachers were hired by the villagers and are paid by the villagers. Each Grade 1 student has to give a basket of rice [per year] and a Grade 5 student has to give 5 baskets of rice. We buy the books in Kya In Seik Gyi. Each Grade 1 student has to pay 1,750 Kyat for the books, and Grade 5 students have to pay 2,500 Kyat. Most of our children go to school. Some want to come but their parents can’t afford to send them, and some have to look after their baby sisters or brothers, or they have to look after cattle and buffalos to make money.”

– Ma A--- (female, 44), village head, K--- village, Kya In township

“We have four primary schools in our village. These schools were built by the villagers and we hired the teachers ourselves. In total there are 13 teachers and more than 200 students in the four schools. Each teacher is paid 150,000 Kyat per year. The schools in our village don’t teach Karen language. Some students learn it on their summer holidays. But two thirds of the children don’t go to school, mostly because they can’t be supported by their parents. Students who finish 4th Standard [grade 4] and want to go on to middle school can go to Noh Choh Neh if their parents can pay for it, but school admission fees at Noh Choh Neh are 100,000 Kyat per year so only a few can go. Some students really want to go to middle school but their parents don’t have enough money for the fees. Those who finish 8th Standard [grade 8] can go on to high school at Pu Pra, but the school fees there are 200,000 Kyat.”

– B--- (male, 39), village headman, P--- village, Waw Raw township

“We have a high school in our village. The school was constructed by the villagers. We hired two teachers, Ma M--- and A---, they were from A’Nya Naw Lu. We pay them 25,000 Kyat per month – that money is given by the villagers. There are 30 students in the school.”

– D--- (male, 36), village headman, T--- village, Waw Raw township

Overall, most villagers feel they are much worse off under the SPDC occupation than they had ever been before. Dooplaya is a fertile area which used to support extensive irrigated ricefields and extensive plantations of betelnut and other cash crops. Much of this has now been destroyed or taken over by SPDC authorities. Burdened by restrictions on all their movements and activities and constantly harassed by forced labour demands, villagers are no longer able to adequately support their families, while much of what they are able to produce is taken from them by the SPDC military and civil authorities and various proxy armies. Health and education systems that existed in the past, though always rudimentary, have been wiped out and not adequately replaced. This is because systems and structures set up by the SPDC since the occupation are not intended to improve the well-being of the population, but merely to consolidate control over the population by the occupation forces.

Conclusion and further reading

“The soldiers who demand carts and force the villagers to carry their things and guide them everywhere are the SPDC soldiers. They are the troops that trouble and torment the villagers, and try to force the villagers down to a lower level of living. Just like in my village, other villages are also tortured and tormented by the SPDC. But we can’t do anything to them, so we just hope these troops will not remain on this earth any longer. One of the T--- villagers said that if there are any SPDC in heaven, he won’t go to heaven. He really hates them. He won’t even go to heaven if they’re there, so on this earth he must really be sick of them.”

– Naw L--- (female, 34), village head, T--- village, Kya In township

The stories told above are drawn from the lives of villagers in Dooplaya. They are not a complete account, and similar incidents are happening every day in various parts of Dooplaya right now. Listening to the stories of the villagers, however, what becomes very clear is that in most cases what is most important is not the specific abuses, but the way they combine to make life unsustainable. In Dooplaya, the development of infrastructure, establishment of SPDC systems and structures, forced recruitment to civil organisations and implementation of state agricultural policies might be viewed by some as a ‘peace dividend’ following the consolidation of state control over a previously rebellious region. However, all of these developments are aimed more at control and repression of the population than at improving local conditions, and have been accompanied by increased militarisation, land confiscation, forced labour and violent abuses leaving villagers much worse off both politically and materially than they have ever been. This is what happens when the SPDC gains control of a rural area.

Hopefully the situation in Dooplaya right now will give pause for thought to those who believe that a ceasefire or even a lasting end to armed combat is sufficient to create ‘peace’ or justice in Burma, and to those who believe that a bit of relief aid is sufficient to balance out the injustices of SPDC rule and make it somehow sustainable or even palatable – as the idiom goes, like shit with sugar on it. Such approaches are simply not good enough, and the people of Dooplaya and of Burma deserve better. Dooplaya provides an example of what the SPDC does to traditionally Karen-controlled regions where it finally manages to gain a foothold; if the current SPDC attacks on Karen villages in districts further north are successful in bringing the population under control, this is what those districts will probably look like in ten years. We hope that those reading this report will remember the people of Dooplaya when reading other reports on the much more violent SPDC offensives now going on in Karen regions further north, and remember that even without the offensive columns and the mass destruction of villages, people still continue to die violently, needlessly and unjustly under SPDC rule no matter how ‘peaceful’.

Further background on the situation in Dooplaya can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- ***Continued militarisation, killings and fear in Dooplaya District*** (KHRG #2005-F6, June 2005)
- ***Dooplaya District: Fighting and Human Rights Abuses Still Continue After Ceasefire*** (KHRG #2005-F1, February 2005)
- ***SPDC Violates the Ceasefire During Karen New Year Celebrations: The Attack on Kah Law Ghaw Village, Dooplaya District*** (KHRG #2005-B1, February 2005)
- ***Operation Than L’Yet: Forced displacement, massacres, and forced labour in Dooplaya District*** (KHRG #2002-U5, September 2002)

Photos from Dooplaya can be seen in ***KHRG Photo Gallery 2005*** and ***KHRG Photo Set 2005A***, available on the KHRG web site (www.khrg.org).

Appendix A
Orders to attend SPDC Security and Management training

The documents translated below were sent to villages throughout southern Dooplaya. The first page decrees that all VPDC leaders must attend 'security and management training', while the second and third pages give some preliminary instructions on what they will need to prepare and bring with them. These documents are related to the explanation above on page 19 in the section 'Forced Organisation of Villages'.

[Stamp:]
Township General Administration Department
Ye Town

Township General Administration Department
Ye Township – Ye Town
No: 1 / 1-2 / Oo 2
Date: 20 December 2005

To:

Chairpersons
All Ward/Village Peace & Development Councils
Xxx ward/village tract
Ye Township

Subject: Ward/Village Peace & Development Council chairpersons are to attend the Security and Administration training

Reference: Mon State General Administration Department order dated (16-9-2005), Number 1 / 5-43 / Oo 2

1. In accordance with the guidance given by the national leader, the General Administration Department is planning to hold a one week long security and administration training, as in the above reference letter, for all chairpersons of Ward/Village Peace & Development Councils.
2. The training will be conducted with the objectives that the Ward/Village Peace & Development Council will understand and become effective in general administrative tasks, administration and planning processes, and support for systems of security and information, in order to carry out these tasks effectively for the population in its area.
3. This training is to be attended by Ward/Village Peace & Development Council chairpersons. Subsequent trainings will be attended by the *[VPDC]* members in turn, you are hereby informed.
4. This training is being organised by the Mon State General Administration Department and will be held in Mawlamyaing *[Moulmein]* town. The dates of the training will be announced later. Training instructions are attached to be complied with in advance.

[Sd. / 20.9.2005]

Township Administrative Supervisor
(Thein Zaw, Pa/4053)

Copies to:

No. 19 Military Operations Command Headquarters
Chairperson, Township Peace & Development Council, Ye township
Sub-township Administrative Supervisor (Hla Mine / Waw Zar) is to inform
chairpersons and acting chairpersons in advance
to attend the training

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State General Administration Department
Mon State, Mawlamyaing Town
Ward/Village Peace & Development Council Chairpersons
Security and Administration Training
Instruction information for the training

Location, training period and training place

1. The above training will be held in Mawlamyaing [*Moulmein*] in October 2005 from (dd) day, lasting one week. People who will attend the training must report on (dd) day, October 2005 at 12:00 noon. [*Those who wrote this order used '(dd)' to indicate a date yet to be decided.*]

Objective

2. In accordance with the guidance given by the national leader, this training will be conducted with the objectives that those serving as Ward/Village Peace & Development Council chairpersons and members will be trained in general administrative department working procedures, governance and administration, security and how to systematically provide information in order to carry out these tasks effectively for the population in their area.

Requirements for trainees

3. People taking responsibility in wards/villages must satisfy the following requirements:
- (a) Healthy person
 - (b) Free from any [*legal*] case
 - (c) The person who has been assigned responsibility

Things which must be brought by the trainees

4. The following items should be brought.
- (a) Bring these items to the training:
 - (1) Pillow (1) piece
 - (2) Blanket (1) piece
 - (3) Mosquito net (1) piece
 - (4) Bedsheet (1) piece
 - (5) Mug (1) piece
 - (6) Sweater (1) piece
 - (7) Water scoop (1) piece

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- 2 -

(b) Bring the stationery and documents needed for the training, at minimum those listed below:

- (1) Notebooks 1 dozen
- (2) Identification card
- (3) Pens, pencils, ruler
- (4) Passport photos (5) pieces

(c) Each trainee must give 1,200 Kyat per day to cover the cost of food,
[totalling] 8,400 Kyat for seven days, plus general fees of 500 Kyat.

Forbidden

5. [You are] Not allowed to bring items such as those in the list below:

- (a) Items which can wound or injure
- (b) Jewellery or large sums of money
- (c) Radios, cassette players or musical instruments
- (d) Chess set, game of draughts, or carom board
- (e) Narcotic drugs
- (f) Things not required for the training (for example cars/animals)

General agenda

6. The administrative knowledge development training must proceed as below:

- (a) Report on time on the dates specified for the training
- (b) Stay in the training accommodation and eat together in the training hall; it is forbidden to bring any other people to the training
- (c) During the training period, ordinary personal problems will not be accepted as excuse to be absent from the training; only cases with strong supporting evidence will be considered.
- (d) Any health problems must be reported to the township administrative supervisor.

Discipline

7. The trainees must obey completely all discipline specified by the training supervisory committee.

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Appendix B

Application forms for SPDC Women's Organisations

The following is a translation of an application form for the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation distributed in Dooplaya. Each village was forced to buy a number of forms based on the number of households, and submit that number of applications along with application fees. As an example of some villagers' unwillingness to commit to this organisation, the girl who filled out this form is 13 years old. Her parents probably believed that if they enrolled a young girl the adults could avoid time-consuming duties so they could continue to provide food for the family. For further explanation see above on page 22 in the section 'Forced Organisation of Villages'.

| |
|--|
| <p>Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation M.W.A.F.</p> <p>Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation Membership Application Form</p> |
| <p>To:</p> <p>Chairperson Ward/Village tract executive team Ward/Village tract Women's Affairs group ____Xxxx____ ward / village tract</p> |
| <p>Subject: Membership application for the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation</p> |
| <p>1. I want to become a member of MWAF and this is my application. 2. If accepted to be a member, I will honour the pledge that I provide here. 3. I will work in accordance with the ethics and specified policies of MWAF in keeping my pledge, and will complete any tasks which are assigned to me.</p> |
| <p>Name: _____xxx_____ Date of birth: _____xxx_____</p> <p>Identification card number: _____</p> <p>Religion: _____Christian_____ Ethnicity: _____Karen_____</p> <p>Father's name: _____U xxx_____ Father's identification card number: _____</p> <p>Mother's name: _____Daw xxx_____ Mother's identification card number: _____</p> <p>Address: _____xxx_____ Ward/village tract: _____Kya In Gyi_____ Township: _____Kya In Seik Gyi_____</p> <p>Permanent Address: _____xxx_____ Ward/village tract: _____Kya In Gyi_____ Township: _____Kya In Seik Gyi_____</p> <p>Occupation / School / College: _____student_____</p> <p>Education: _____3rd standard_____</p> <p>Hobbies: _____domestic work_____</p> <p>Participation in any organisations / None: _____None_____</p> <p>(if you participate, give its name)</p> <p>Date: _____22-11-05_____</p> |
| <p>Applicant's signature</p> <p>Signed</p> |
| <p>Name of organisation recommending this applicant: _____</p> |
| <p>[continued on next page]</p> |

[continued from previous page]

For this woman to become a member of MWAFF we are recommending her / not recommending her.

Secretary

Chairperson

_____ Township, _____ ward/village tract executive team
_____ Ward/village tract Women's Affairs Federation

You are accepted / not accepted to become a member of MWAFF.

Secretary

Chairperson

_____ Township working group, township Women's Affairs Federation

| |
|------------------------------|
| Recommended as a member |
| Date: _____ |
| Member # _____ |
| Section/village tract: _____ |
| Township: _____ |
| District: _____ |

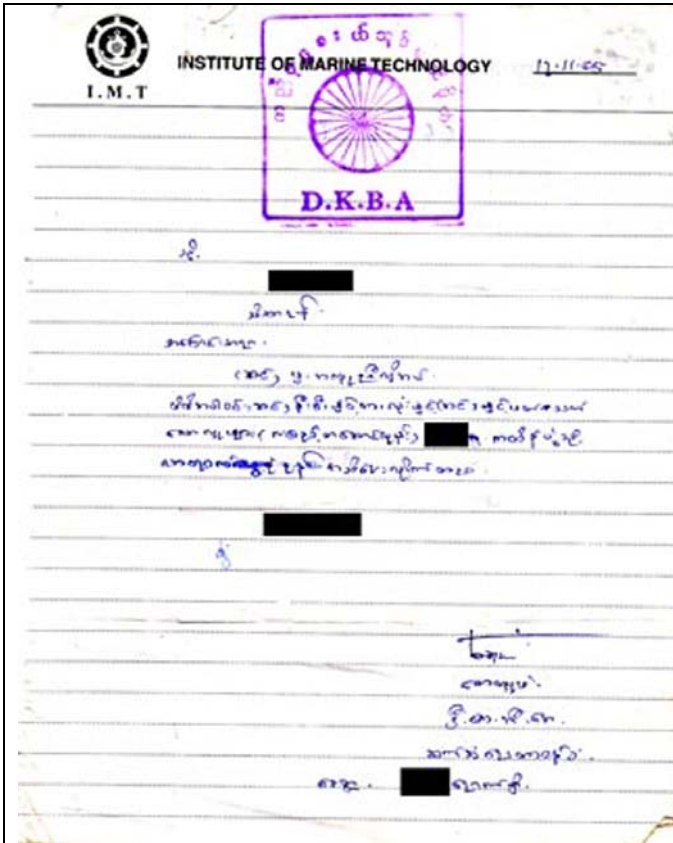
[Below is the Burmese original of this application form (two sides of a sheet)]



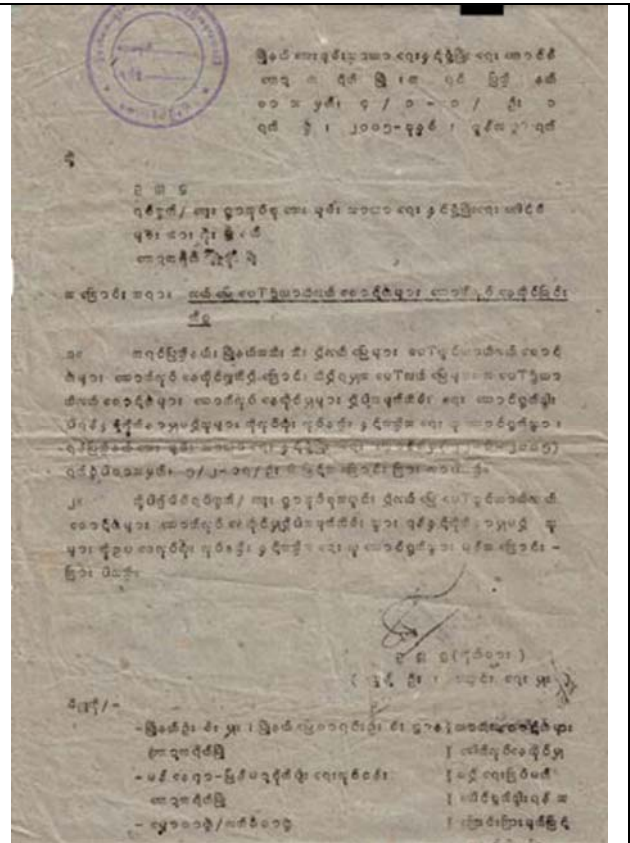
The following is a translation of an application form for the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association distributed in Dooplaya. Villages were ordered to buy quotas of these forms based on the number of households in the village, and were ordered that at least 50 percent of all women must join this organisation and the MWAF (see above). For further explanation see above on page 22 in the section ‘**Forced Organisation of Villages**’.

| | | |
|---|--|----------------|
| | | Attachment (D) |
| Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association Membership Application Form for Township Branch | | |
| | | Date: - - |
| 1. | Name | _____ |
| 2. | Age (date of birth) | _____ |
| 3. | Ethnic group / religion | _____ |
| 4. | Identification card number | _____ |
| 5. | Occupation | _____ |
| 6. | Present address | _____ |
| 7. | Permanent address | _____ |
| 8. | Education | _____ |
| 9. | Spouse name | _____ |
| 10. | Spouse’s occupation and address | _____ |
| 11. | I [<i>male</i>]/ I [<i>female</i>] promise that I am not involved with any section 21 [<i>‘illegal’ organisations as specified in Section 21 of the MMCWA bylaws</i>]. | |
| 12. | I [<i>male</i>]/ I [<i>female</i>] hereby apply to be registered as a member of Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association. | |
| 13. | [I] will take responsibility for the required membership fees. | |
| 14. | Under Section 21, only people at least 18 years old can apply. | |
| Note: Only people already holding an Identification Card can apply. | | |
| (Applicant) | | |
| | Name | _____ |
| | Father’s name | _____ |
| | Address | _____ |

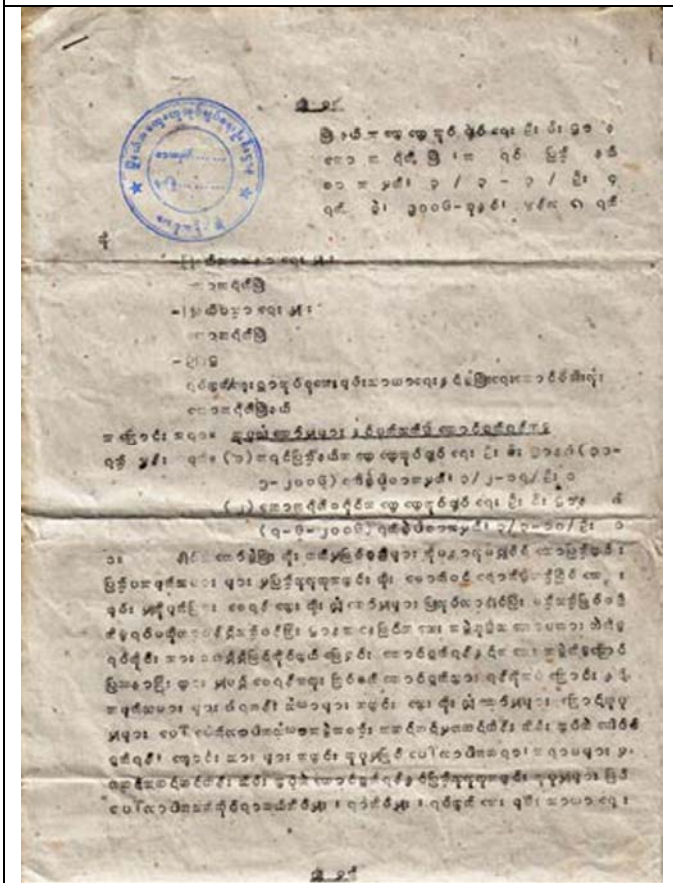
Appendix C
Originals of some order documents translated in this report



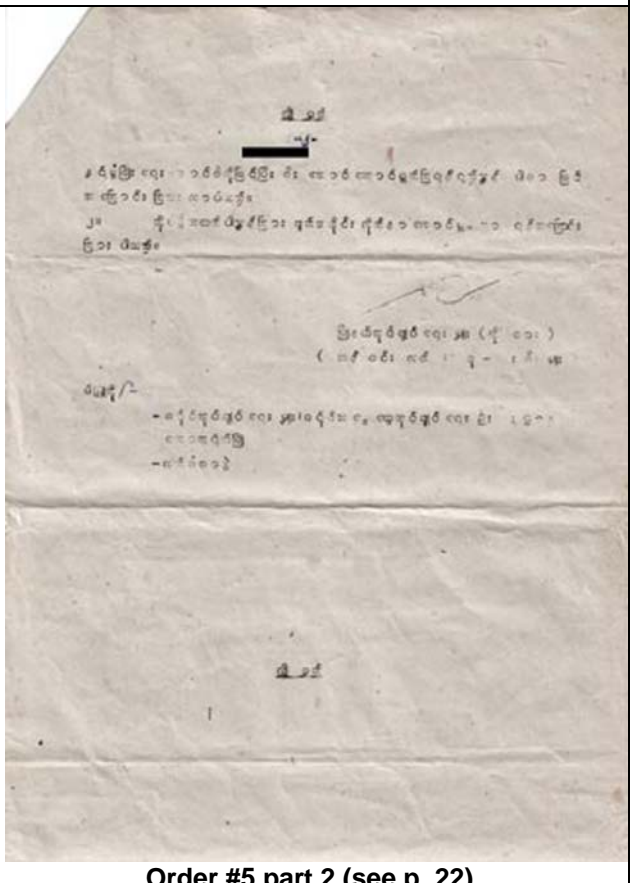
Order #1 (see p. 13)



Order #3 (see p. 17)



Order #5 part 1 (see p. 22)



Order #5 part 2 (see p. 22)

