

some impoverished households in Burma sell their daughters, often unknowingly, for money which is used to force the girl to work in debt bondage; debt bondage is widely used by traffickers to control trafficked women, particularly women trafficked for prostitution; women and girls from Burma typically "serve" 6 to 8 men per day, 25 days a month, and earn from AUS\$600 to 2,500 per month for the brothel owner, of which they receive AUS\$1/day or AUS\$25/month; officials of both Burma and Thailand are involved in trafficking women from Burma to Thailand; and girls are transported into Thailand with armed policemen in uniform, and often in police vehicles. The report further notes that the legal prescriptions on leaving the country without permission or valid documents subjects an undocumented migrant woman to punishment both in the destination country and her home country upon return.

Other Reports

Women's human rights; Report of the S-G to the CHR (E/CN.4/1997/40, para. 104)

The report of the Secretary-General on the integration of women's human rights throughout the UN system referred to the detailed reports, photographs, video recordings and a variety of physical evidence seen by the Special Rapporteur (SR) on the human rights situation in Myanmar which indicated that the practice of forced labour, forced portering, torture and arbitrary killings were widespread. The report notes other elements in the SR's report, including that: many of the victims belonged to ethnic populations; between 170 and 250 women were held in a two-storey dormitory measuring 60 by 40 feet; at least 30 children and new-born infants were living with their mothers in the prison; mortality rate among the new-born children in the prison was very high owing mainly to the inadequate food provided to them; and women serving as porters were often victims of sexual assaults and rape.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Myanmar to the GA

The interim report of the Special Rapporteur (SR) to the General Assembly (A/52/484) includes information on, *inter alia*: rights pertaining to democratic governance; the right to form and join trade unions; forced labour; violations against ethnic minorities; treatment of the Muslim population in Rakhine State; and, the issue of citizenship. The report notes that the government has not allowed the Special Rapporteur (SR) to visit the country and assess the situation firsthand although it has indicated that a visit will be arranged at a mutually convenient time. The report is based on information received by the Special Rapporteur up to 30 August 1997.

The report states: the politico-legal structure has not changed and the exercise of power under the existing structure continues to be used in a manner and to an extent that persistently violates basic and universally accepted civil and political rights; the laws in place continue to be used together with a host of executive orders to criminalize many aspects of normal civilian conduct, especially political activities; political parties are subject to intense and constant monitoring by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC); Aung San Suu Kyi's freedom of movement, association and

expression continue to be severely curtailed by the presence of military roadblocks outside her residence and she is subject to vilification and unsubstantiated allegations by officials of the regime and the government-controlled media without the possibility of defending herself; arrests and detentions of NDL members continue; distribution of party literature to the public is not allowed, and political parties are generally forbidden to use any means such as videotapes or printing equipment for the reproduction and distribution of their bulletins, pamphlets and statements; and, the expression of political views is not permitted unless it is in support of the present military regime.

In commentary on trade unionism and forced labour, the report notes: Burma is a party to International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 87 of 1948 on freedom of association and protection of the right to organize; workers and employees in Burma do not enjoy the right to join organizations of their own choice outside the existing structure and such organizations do not have the right to join federations and confederations or to affiliate with international organizations without impediment; the Free Trade Unions of Burma is not allowed to function in the country; forced labour is reportedly taking place in all parts of the country, including those where a ceasefire has been agreed; the army has substantially increased its permanent presence in the border regions, which has led to an increase in non-front-line forced labour for the military; another form of forced labour that has been reported is work on commercial projects for the army such as rice farms, paddy, fish pond and tree-planting operations, which the local farmers have to build up and maintain on land confiscated from local people; and, forced labour reportedly also occurs on infrastructure and "development" projects such as the construction and maintenance of roads, railways, bridges, airports, hydroelectric schemes and tourist-oriented projects.

Referring to violations against ethnic minorities, the report cites information related to military attacks and looting on civilian settlements, forced relocation of ethnic groups, forced labour for development and industrial projects and portering for military operations in apparent manoeuvres against insurgents or those suspected of supporting them. The report notes allegations received related to violations of: the rights to life, liberty and security of person; freedom from arbitrary arrest, detention and torture and ill-treatment; due process of law; and freedom of movement. Violations have included: forced displacement; indiscriminate bombardment of civilian settlements and arbitrary killings; and arbitrary arrest and torture of suspected "insurgents" and "terrorists".

The SR concludes that there has been no change in the situation since his reports were submitted to the 1996 General Assembly and the 1997 Commission on Human Rights and that the government has not acted on previous recommendations. The report states that genuine and enduring improvements in the human rights situation cannot be attained without respect for the rights pertaining to democratic governance and that the National Convention does not constitute the necessary steps towards the restoration of democracy. The report also states: extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the practice of torture, portering and forced labour continue to occur, particularly in the context of development programmes and counter-insurgency operations