

Summary of case studies on human rights violation in Dawei Special Economic Zone Area

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Compiled by DDA and local villagers

1 . Villagers from CharKhan bein sued

CharKhan, a fishing village located near 0 KM which is the starting point of the Road Link to Thailand, existed for 100 years. There were about 30 households, of which 3 owned boats; an average of 10 families worked on each boat. In December 2013, to implement the Dawei Special Economic Zone, the villagers were forced to move away, but the 3 boat owners refused to move. As a result, they were charged with section 188 and were imprisoned for a month. All houses were destroyed and all the villagers' livelihoods were also destroyed.

"Our orchards were destroyed by Thai people, but they were not charged with any criminal offense. But we were sued with trespass on our own land." U Soe Naing said.

2. Difficulties of one family which was relocated to relocation area

4 households were relocated to Bawar, a relocation area, in March 2013. Out of those 4 households, 3 have moved to Thailand as migrant workers after selling the houses that they received as compensation. At this time, only the family of U Aye Swe and Daw Ma Lay, a family of 6 members, still lives in the relocation area, where a total of 480 houses were built. U Daw Ma Lay has to struggle to get daily income by collecting sea shells and snails along the stream, and Aye Swe does not have any job since then. Two sons are studying in monastic education school because their parents cannot support them to attend government schools. Two daughters are working in Yangon and Myeik as helpers. Since the project was halted in 2013, neither electricity nor drinking water has been provided at the relocation site.

"I was told that everything would be fine with electricity and water in the relocation area. Now, even water, we have to find ourselves. It is so different between their words and reality." Daw Ma Lay said.

3. Loss of livelihood in Yaw Dut Thar, salt-making village

There were 11 houses with about 50 villagers in Yaw Dut Thar village, who relied on salt production for their livelihoods. Most of the families earned around 8000 kyats/bowl of salt or about 40000 kyats per day. In 2011, ITD destroyed these houses without consulting with the villagers to make space for a road along the beach. The villagers lost their main livelihood of salt-making and were moved without any compensation for their loss. Now these villagers have to struggle as daily wage laborers.

"The whole village knows that we earn by salt making. Now we have no job and have become jobless," said Daw Lay Po.

4. Paddy Fields destroyed by a quarry

Talaing Thant Mountain, located north of the SEZ between Payadat village and Mayingyi village, has been designated as the site of a quarry to produce rocks for the SEZ. In 2010, the quarry was started,

with an estimated production of 3000 tons of rock. Waste from rock production went into the fields at the bottom of the mountain, and 150 acres of farmlands owned by 40 people from Payadat village were destroyed. The villagers sent several complaint letters to the SEZ Management Committee and local government in 2012, 2013, 2014, and 2015. Although the government promised to solve these problems, there was no action or solution for the villagers, and this degraded their livelihoods.

"We were told that compensation would be given for affected paddy fields. But it has been 3 years, and nothing happened." U Htein Than said

5. Paddy fields in Mayin Gyi village destroyed during road construction

ITD built a road to transport rocks from the quarry site to SEZ area. This construction caused streams to block the road and flooded some areas, leading to water shortages that destroyed 200 acres of paddy fields. These lands were owned by about 50 villagers from Mayin Gyi village, and they were not able to grow paddy there anymore. Although the villagers demanded that ITD should build tunnels and bridges for better water flow, no one has taken responsibility for it.

6. Loss of land between 8 KM to 10 KM points on the Road Link to Thailand from Dawei SEZ

11 households were living between the 8KM to 10KM points on the Road Link to Thailand. They grew rubber and betel nut as their main livelihood. In 2011, ITD conducted a survey on the number of trees and houses for compensation. In 2012, the company gave 50 lakhs per acre for orchards as compensation. But no compensation for their houses was provided. Although they sent a request letter to the Chief Minister of Tanintharyi Region, no response was provided. The villagers accepted the compensation that was offered to them out of fear.

"They said if you don't agree with our offer, you will get nothing. So, we have to accept only what they give," Daw Thida Aye said.

7. Compensation problems related to land in initial phase

The initial phase of the Dawei SEZ is being implemented on 27 km² of land, some which falls inside a parcel of 4000 acres of palm oil owned by the government. The remainder of the initial phase is being implemented on land that was part of Pagonzone Village. In 2012, ITD offered compensation to 64 villagers for 80 additional acres of land. 14 villagers didn't accept the offer because it did not meet the same compensation standard with other places and was not fair and adequate for their loss. ITD then set fire on the palm oil plantation in order to clear trees, and the fire spread to the farmland owned by 2 of the villagers who rejected the compensation offers. After this, one of the villagers whose land was burned accepted compensation, but villagers were concerned that there is no standard and each household receives different levels of compensation. In 2013, the villagers sent complaint letters to the Township Administrator and the SEZ Supporting Committee. ITD has informed the villagers that their complaints will not be addressed because the initial phase of the SEZ has been postponed.

"I was offered less compensation compared to my neighbor's though both our lands were burned. That's why, I did not accept compensation." Daw Yu War Htwe said.