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Rape of army daughter confirms Licence to Rape systemic in Burma

The recent rape and murder of the young daughter of an SPDC soldier by a fellow officer is a shocking indictment of the continuing culture of impunity for military rape in Burma .

On April 29, 2005 , the 6-year-old daughter of an SPDC sergeant based at Light Infantry Battalion 524 in Kunhing in Central Shan State , was raped and killed by an SPDC corporal from the same base.

Central Shan State has been the target of intensive anti-insurgency operations by the Burma Army since 1996, involving forcible relocation of hundreds of thousands of villagers and widespread human rights violations including sexual violence. This was documented by SWAN and SHRF in the report Licence to Rape in 2002, revealing how over 600 women and girls had been raped with impunity by Burmese troops.

"This case proves the systemic nature of sexual violence under the regime in Burma ," said Nang Charm Tong of SWAN. "Even the daughters of the Burmese Army troops are now suffering the consequences of the policy of Licence to Rape."

SWAN has been calling on the international community to condemn the use of sexual violence by the military regime in Burma and to push for political reform.

"This shocking incident is a wake-up call to people in Burma , including military personnel and their families, that no women or girls are safe under the current system," said Nang Hseng Noun of SWAN. "It is time for everyone, especially military personnel, to oppose the system, for the sake of their wives and daughters, before it is too late."

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