KHEN SUAN KHA: IRREGULAR BURMESE MIGRANTS IN MALAYSIA: A CASE STUDY OF CHIN PEOPLE. THESIS ADVISOR: PORNPIMON TRICHOT. CO-ADVISOR NARUEMON THABCHUMPON, Ph.D., 137pp.

Burmesse people have been migrating to Malaysia since early 1990s. Socio-political-economic pressure pulls the Chin migrant workers from Burma to come into Malaysia rather than India and Thailand for better network in Malaysia as well as to shun from direct deportation to home country. Amidst Malaysia government’s violation of migration rights, resettlement from Malaysia to third countries plays critical role in migration to Malaysia.

The largest irregular migrant populations from Burma, besides economic factors, ethnic and religious discrimination are the main factors that push Chin people to migrate out of Chin State. Low income, dependency on other migrants, assistance from community based groups, and support from friends in third countries help Chin people to survive amidst destitution in Malaysia. Being only a State Party to only two of international human rights instruments: the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and has not ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICPMW), and has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention, both refugees and irregular migrants are illegal.

This research has tried to classify and enrich understanding about the authentic situation of irregular Chin migrants from Burma, their experiences and working conditions in Malaysia and related consequences. It has exposed the push and pull factors of Chin people’s migration to Malaysia irregularly, and has identified working environments, economic situation and social welfare conditions of irregular Chin migrants in Malaysia too understand irregular Chin migrants’ survival strategies.

The research unveils that no policy protects Chin irregular migrants in Malaysia that they are in a risk situation.

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