



“Why has Ao bought 30 top-up phone cards?”

Before the tsunami four million visitors flew into Phuket’s international airport every year.

In Burma, Ao’s family uses cash – not cards - to buy things. If they have enough money to save they buy gold and wear it.

Ao has found work on a building site for a new hotel.

Ao phones home regularly.



Ao hopes to work in a tourist bar so that he will learn enough English to chat up his dream partner!

Phuket suffered a 90% drop in visitor numbers after the tsunami in December 2004.

Burmese people living near the Thai border can illegally tap into Thai phone networks.

Phuket has loads of jobs available to re-build the island's tourist facilities

Phuket lies close to the Burmese border.

Dealers in Burma can exchange the numbers on Thai top-up phone cards for cash.

Burmese migrants are cheaper to employ than Thai workers.



Worldwide, the amount of money sent home by migrants working abroad is greater than all the overseas aid given to poor countries.

There are about 73,000 legal migrant workers from Burma working on Phuket, and maybe the same number working illegally

Ao's family lives in Burma near the Thai border

For Ao, working illegally in a bar in Thailand is worth the risk. He can make more money and send it home to

Amnesty International called Burma, "a prison without bars". The country has been ruled by a military

No member of Ao's family has a bank account - they don't trust the Burmese banking system.

Migrants in Thailand often do the '3D' jobs – dirty, difficult and dangerous

