



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Interview

August 18, 2017 / KHRG #16-90-A4-11

Dooplaya Interview: Saw A---, September 2016

This interview with Saw A--- describes events occurring in Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District in 2016, including road construction and taxation.

- *According to Saw A---, the Karen National Union allowed road construction companies to construct a national highway up to 230 feet wide, between the Three Pagodas Pass and Thanphyu Zayet Town in Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District after the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement was signed in 2015. This road project is funded by the Burma/Myanmar government and is based around extension of an existing road.*
 - *Local villagers disagreed with the road construction project. Due to the road construction project, many villagers' land and properties were affected; however, there was uncertainty whether some local villagers would receive full compensation for their loss.*
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Interview | Saw A---, (male, 54), B--- village, Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District (September 2016)

The following interview was conducted by a community member trained by KHRG to monitor local human rights conditions. It was conducted in Dooplaya District on September 5th 2016 and is presented below translated exactly as it was received, save for minor edits for clarity and security.¹ This interview was received along with other information from Dooplaya District, including four other interviews, two situation updates and 164 photographs.²

Ethnicity: Unknown

Religion: Buddhist

Marital Status: Married

Occupation: Township permanent committee member

Position: Road and communication officer

Can you tell me your name, please?

My name is Saw A---.

¹ KHRG trains community members in southeastern Burma/Myanmar to document individual human rights abuses using a standardised reporting format; conduct interviews with other villagers; and write general updates on the situation in areas with which they are familiar. When conducting interviews, community members are trained to use loose question guidelines, but also to encourage interviewees to speak freely about recent events, raise issues that they consider to be important and share their opinions or perspectives on abuse and other local dynamics.

² In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in southeastern Burma/Myanmar, KHRG aims to make all field information received available on the KHRG website once it has been processed and translated, subject only to security considerations. For additional reports categorised by Type, Issue, Location and Year, please see the Related Readings component following each report on KHRG's website.

Can you tell me your age?

I am 54 years old.

Which village do you live in?

I was born [and currently live] in B--- village.

Are you married?

Yes.

How many people are there in your family?

There are six people in my family.

How old is your youngest child?

My youngest child is 11 years old.

What is his [youngest child's] name?

His name is Saw C---.

Can you tell me how many daughters and sons you have?

I have three sons and one daughter.

Where do you work now?

I am now working for the Township standing committee.

What is your religion?

I am a Buddhist.

Currently, what responsibilities are you taking?

Currently, I am in charge of road and communication in Win Yay Township.

Regarding road and communication, how long have you been in charge of the road and communication of Win Yay Township? Can you tell me what year did you start to work in this position?

It's been a long time. I have been in charge of road and communication since before the 2015 election.

When did you start taking charge of road and communication?

I first started working as a road and communication officer in 1994.

At that time, what were the main responsibilities you took regarding road and communication?

In the past, I was just working as a road and communication officer.

Which area where you were assigned to be in charge of [with regard to] road and communication?

At that time, I was in charge of road and communication in Win Yaw area.

Can you tell me the [past] experiences that you have had whilst working as a road and communication officer?

In the past, before the ceasefire agreements [both preliminary ceasefire agreement and Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement] were signed, we just worked with local villagers to construct self-funded bridges and roads as a community.

What about now?

In this current period, [some of the roads] in some areas might be constructed and funded by the Burma/Myanmar government. We also cooperate with some local villagers [to conduct road and bridge construction]. After the ceasefire agreement [2012] was signed, we have seen that most [road and bridge construction] are constructed by machines.

Regarding road construction, what year did the road construction start? Could you also tell me the name of this road?

Yes. Firstly, the current road that we know [are talking about] is called “Death road”. [People] call it the “Three Pagodas Pass- Thanphyu Zayet road”. It is also called “Road Project”. Another name is the “Asian Highway road”.³

How wide will the road, known as the Asian Highway, be?

Firstly, road constructors said that it [the width of the road] is not stable [will vary]. Some [road constructors] said it should be 40 feet wide. Some said it should be 60 feet wide. Some said it should be 75 feet wide. Some said it should be 100 feet wide. Some said it should be 150 feet wide.⁴

Based on that information, how wide is the road that is currently being constructed?

The road currently being constructed is 40 feet wide in Mon State and it is 60 feet wide in Karen State.

Where does the road construction conducted in Mon State start? From where to where?

The road in Mon State is constructed from Tha Kaw Lan Wa, the start of the road, to Zee Na Pin, the end of the road [with an estimated 80 miles distance between the two].

Can you tell me how it is [road construction] different between Mon State and Karen State? For example, it is 40 feet wide in Mon State and it is 60 feet wide in Karen State. So can you tell me why there is a difference?

There are a lot of big rubber plantations in Mon State. Most of the rubber plants [in Mon State] are ready to use [the rubber is ready to be tapped]. Yama Nya Company is responsible for constructing the road in Mon State. Therefore, the road construction in Mon State is different from Karen State. For our side, we just recognise that the road is 60 feet wide when we construct it in Karen state. We assume that the road in Mon state is 40 feet wide [because there are mature rubber plantations which would be damaged if the road would be wider].

How many miles are there from Zee Na Pin [in Mon State] to Three Pagodas Pass [Dooplaya District]?

There are 64 miles and 3 furlongs⁵ from Tha Kaw Lan Wa to Three Pagodas Pass.

Who supports and funds this road construction project?

I do not know. I heard that a Japan [company] gives funding for this road construction project.

How many [local] companies construct the road in this area? Tell me who are the managers or chairpersons of these companies?

I do not know who the chairpersons of the companies are but I know the name of the companies. Yama Nya Company, founded by New Mon State Party (NMSP), is in charge of road construction from Tha Kaw Lan Wa to Zee Na Pin [in Mon State]. UMG was called [asked] by Ministry of Construction to conduct the road construction from Zee Na Pin to Lute Shan.

³ While this is often referred to by villagers as part of the Asian Highway project, it is in fact just a National Highway.

⁴ The width of the road is due to vary in different villages and areas. It will be wider in some and shorter in others ranging from 40 to 230ft.

⁵ A furlong is a unit of distance equivalent to 0.2 km or 0.125 miles.

What does UMG stand for?

UMG stands for Myanmar Shwe Tharaphu [Myanmar Golden Crown].⁶

What was it [UMG] asked to do [by Ministry of Construction]?

They [UMG] were asked to repair and construct the road. In this area, Special Road Group (9) constructed the road.

Where are the Special Road Group (9) based?

They are based in Hpa-an.

Where do they [Special Road Group (9)] live in Hpa-an?

I do not know exactly where they live in Hpa-an.

As you told me before, there are two companies who are constructing the road. Is it only Yama Nya Company and Myanmar Shwe Tharaphu Company? How many other companies are there?

There are Myanmar Shwe Tharaphu Company, Dagon Power Company, Ma Pyin Dagon Company, Full Start Company, Kin Janawa Company, Mya Lin Aye Company,⁷ 3K Star Company⁸ and Shwe Chaung Sone Company.

When did they [companies] start to work [conduct road construction]?

The construction of the main road started in November 2013.

Before this road was constructed, did you go to meet and discuss with local villagers regarding the road construction project [as you are a road and communication officer]?

No. I did not.

What challenges did you face when the road was constructed?

When the road was constructed, there were some challenges between local villagers and us such as arguments and disagreements because the road construction affected local villagers' lands, houses and plantations. Therefore, they [villagers] reported it [to us]. We had to address those issues.

Can you tell me how you addressed it? Did you give money to villagers [as compensation]? Or did you just negotiate with villagers?

Yes. The Karen National Union [KNU] gave permission for the road construction. That is why companies are able to construct the road. Based on [KNU] leaders' permission, we make [document] a list of what [lands and plantations] has been affected due to the road construction. In order to be able to address this issue, we reported it [a list of damaged areas] to the Burma/Myanmar Ministry of Construction.

Can you tell me how do you report it [a list of damaged areas]? Who do you work with? Which organisations do you cooperate with?

⁶ Myanmar Shwe Tharaphu or Myanmar Golden Crown have been accused of human rights abuses in the past. See [“Chinese Oil Company Linked to Human Rights Abuses in Burma \(Myanmar\)”](#), Earth Rights International, December 2011 and [“ရက်အနည်းငယ် ရပ်နားထားခဲ့တဲ့ ကျောက်ဖြူ သမိုင်းဝင် ကျောက်တစ်လုံး ဘုရားတောင် ပြန်လည်ပိုင်းခွဲ”](#), Narinjara.com, February 2013.

⁷ For more information on Mya Lin Aye see previous KHRG reports at [“Dooplaya Interview: Saw A---, September 2016”](#), May 2017 and [“Dooplaya Interview: Saw A---, September 2016”](#), June 2017.

⁸ For more information on 3K Star Company see the previous KHRG report [“Dooplaya Situation Update: Kyonedoe Township, September 2015 to December 2015”](#), January 2017.

In order to report it [a list of damaged areas], there are no organisations which we have to work with. We report it to the Myanmar Ministry of Construction but I cannot say anything [not sure] about what they [Ministry of Construction] will do.

Can you tell me who is responsible and accountable for this road construction?

If I say clearly, KNU's current chairperson said, *"If we do not construct this road, we might become the audience [and not be involved in road construction in the KNU-controlled area]. According to the transition period, we have to work with the Burma/Myanmar government to construct this road. At this time, our [KNLA] Battalion Commander Bo Tin Hlaing will be leading these companies. Then, U⁹ Maung Maung from Mya Lin Aye Company will be responsible to call the other companies to conduct the road construction"*.

What do you mean by KNU's chairperson? Can you tell me the name of KNU's chairperson?

I mean KNU's chairperson is our A'poe [grandfather] Mu Tu Say Poe.

As you told me that KNU's chairperson gave permission to conduct the road construction, did they [KNU] come to give it [permission] by themselves? Or did they [KNU] just send permission by telegraph?

I heard that they [KNU] gave permission to construct the Three Pagodas Pass-Thanthphyu Zayet road from [KNU] congress [at the District level] which was held in Htee Hpa Htaw village, Waw Raw [Win Yay] Township, Doolaya District.

You mentioned U Maung Muang, who is he? What responsibility is he now taking regarding road construction?

He is a managing director of Mya Lin Aye Company. He is also an advisor to the chairperson of the District Economic [Department of KNU].

Can you tell me what he [U Maung Muang] suggested regarding the damage caused by the road construction?

In some cases, he is able to solve the issues [arising] from the road construction but he cannot solve all of the land issues. As for us, all we can do is report a list [of damaged areas].

How did he [U Maung Muang] solve some issues related to road construction in order to make local villagers satisfied? Can you tell me about that?

He did not solve the land and plantation issues. If villagers' houses were affected by the road construction, he just gave money to villagers as compensation.

What do you mean by villagers' houses? There are many different types of houses. Bamboo houses? Wooden houses? Concrete houses?

I mean wooden houses.

OK. What is the price [compensation] for one wooden house?

The maximum price [compensation] of houses beside that road will be 200,000 kyat [US\$147]¹⁰ for one house because the roof of a house is made with leaves from trees. The houses' pillars are also just six square inches [wide]. How can I explain this? That is just some money for the villagers [to construct a new house] but not all [not sufficient to rebuild a house]. This is the compensation [they receive] for having their house removed.

Now this road is called the "Asian Highway road" but when this road was called the "Death road", how wide was it at that time?

⁹ U is a Burmese title used for elder men, used before their name.

¹⁰ All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the July 31 2017 official market rate of 1366 kyat to US \$1.

At that time, this road was just nine feet wide.

I heard that they [road constructors] repaired the old road [so] I want to know if they also constructed the new road. Can you explain that to me?

They repaired and widened the old road and they also constructed the new road in some areas. For example, they constructed the new road in Meh Za Li area [Mon State].

As the new road is constructed, I heard that the construction also affected some of the local villagers' lands or plantations. So how did you deal with that?

To deal with it, we just reported it [a list of damaged areas]. For the other parts [problems], we did not address them.

Where did you report it to? When you reported it, did you explain to local villagers about your report?

Yes. We explained to local villagers that we had already reported it to our upper leaders regarding what [land and buildings] have been affected due to the road construction.

Can you explain to me what the situation of local villagers regarding the road construction is and also the problems which they are currently facing?

Some local villagers heard that they [other villagers] did not receive compensation although they [leaders] gave compensation. Actually, this is just a rumour because we have never heard that the money [compensation] will be distributed to villagers. We have never known if [leaders] will give money to local villagers as compensation.

Before this road was constructed, did anyone [leaders] decide how much the villagers will lose [receive in compensation] if they lost one tree from their lands?

Nobody has decided to pay villagers like that but U Maung Maung reported one thing to the Ministry of Construction. He reported that 6,000,000 kyat [US \$4,400] will be [paid in compensation] for one acre of land and 20,000 kyat [US \$14.5] will be compensated for one rubber tree. That is what I heard.

When did he report it? What did this committee decide and discuss about? Did he already report it or not? Could you explain to me about that?

He did not report it as a committee [member]. How can I explain this? He lives in a city and he just reported it. That is just what I heard.

Did he explain where he reported it to?

He reported it to the Ministry of Construction.

Who is in charge of the Ministry of Construction?

U Saw¹¹ Myint was in charge of the Ministry of Construction in the past.

Who is in charge of the Ministry of Construction, at the moment?

Currently, we only know that U San Lwin is in charge of the Ministry of Construction.

So how does he [U San Lwin] address the current issues related to road construction? Can you tell me about that?

Regarding road construction issues, he said that he will report it to the upper leaders of the Burma/Myanmar government.

When did he report it? When did he know about these issues regarding road construction? Can you tell me about that?

¹¹ Saw is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

I cannot tell you about that. I do not know about it.

Do you not know the day that he reported [the issues]?

I do not even know the day that he reported [the issues]. I also do not know whether he reported it or not.

Regarding this road construction, the Ministry of Construction posted a sign beside the road. What do you think about the '230 case' [the proposed rule that the ne road will eventually span 230 feet wide]?

For the '230 case', I do not know whether they [Ministry of Construction] will conduct the road construction as a long-term project or whether they will conduct it as a short-term project. If they conduct it for as a short-term project we cannot agree with it as local villagers do not agree.

What about if they [Ministry of Construction] will conduct it as a long-term project? How will you plan to prepare?

If they conduct it as a long-term project and construct the road more than 100 feet wide, they will have to pay an amount of money which is equal to the current price of the land [that the road expansion covers] according to the rules. In our opinion, what we can do for local villagers depends on the needs of local villagers.

So can you tell me your opinion on the advantages and the disadvantages of this road construction?

I cannot say about the advantages and the disadvantages of this road construction.

Regarding road construction, what good things did road construction bring for the villagers? Or what bad things did it bring for villagers? Can you tell me your opinion on this?

We can say it for both sides [road constructors and villagers]. On the villagers' side, they will say that it brings disadvantages to them. On the road constructors' side, they will say it is all [beneficial] for villagers.

If so, did the KNU take responsibility or accountability for this local road construction? What responsibility and accountability did the KNU take?

As our KNU is responsible [gave permission] for this road construction, we formed a road committee in order to be able to solve the problems [which arise] when the road is constructed. The committee was formed to monitor the road construction in order to ensure it runs smoothly. Also, this committee has the responsibility to make sure that road construction is safe.

You talked about the road committee, how was it formed? Can you tell me about that?

This road committee was formed with the Road Communication Department, Farm Department, Forestry Department, civilians and the Tatmadaw.

Who are the civilians [road committee members]?

They are U Saw D-- and U E--- who live in F--- village.

U Saw D--- and U E---?

Yes.

Currently, what responsibilities are they [U Saw D--- and U E---] taking?

U E--- is already retired but U Saw D--- is now working for Mya Lin Aye Company.

Which village does U Saw D--- live?

He lives in F--- village.

Since the road construction project was conducted in 2013, what has improved regarding villagers' livelihood in Win Yay Township? Can you tell me about that as are you are responsible [for road and communication]?

Mya Lin Aye Company was able to donate [for the construction of] Nan Kom Yet clinic in Win Yay Township. I do not know what other companies helped the local community but within these three years (during road construction), some schools and clinics were constructed in this area.

When you talked about schools and clinics, I want to know who supported [funded] these schools and clinics. Did villagers construct it themselves with community funds? Did companies [road constructors] support these schools and clinics? Or did the Foundation from Japan¹² fund these schools and clinics? Can you tell me about that?

These schools are funded and supported by international communities.

When the road was constructed, bridges were also constructed. Can you tell me how many bridges have been constructed?

There are more than 100 bridges including small and big bridges. If we want to know exactly, we have to look at the list of constructions.

There are more than 100 bridges. So have all of these bridges already been constructed?

All of the bridges have been constructed, apart from concrete bridges.

When they [road constructors] constructed the road, did they construct the road to a level of quality recognised by the local community? Or did they construct the road to a level of quality recognised by the road engineer?

They did not construct the road to a good quality.

Regarding the 230 [ft road] case, they [companies] posted a sign. Can you tell me about local villagers' opinion on it?

After the sign post, which said a road 230 feet wide [will be constructed], was put up, local villagers did not agree with it. They [villagers] have already had a meeting twice because they did not agree with the 230 feet [wide] road project. We also cannot agree with it as local villagers do not agree. Local villagers are strongly against this road project.

Regarding their [villagers] disagreement, did KNU and Township authorities go to conduct research in the community and did they explain or educate local villagers? Did they give any advice to villagers?

No. Villagers just held a meeting with each other. They [villagers] submitted a letter in August 2016. However, nobody came to explain to villagers about this road project.

When this sign post was set up, did local authorities and road constructors inform villagers about that?

No.

Did they [local authorities and road constructors] consult with local villagers?

No.

Did local companies [road constructors] set up the sign post? Or did the Ministry of Construction set up the sign post? Can you tell me about that?

¹² This is likely to relate to the Nippon Foundation. [The Nippon Foundation](#) is a Japanese NGO currently implementing social innovation and development projects in Burma/Myanmar. KHRG has received several reports from community members on The Nippon Foundation's recent activities in Thaton and Hpa-an Districts, see more at "[Hpa-an Situation Update: Hlaingbwe and Nabu townships, December 2014 to January 2015](#)," KHRG, July 2015; and "[Thaton Situation Update Bilin and Hpa-an townships, June to November 2014](#)," KHRG, February 2015.

The Ministry of Construction set up these sign posts. Our civilians and our organisation would not set up these sign posts.

Regarding this road construction, can you share what else you know?

Regarding this road, we did not know what was planned in the beginning. When we knew about it, companies had already come to construct the road. In previous years, the time that KNU did not allow anyone to construct the road, nobody came to construct the road. After the preliminary ceasefire agreement¹³ was signed [in January 2012] between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government, the road construction started. Therefore, this road construction depended on our KNU's agreement.

So if the road is constructed, the road construction will cost a lot of money, right? Regarding this road construction's budget, where does the budget come from? How much does it cost to construct this road? Regarding this, did anyone call a meeting and make a discussion with local villagers?

No. Nobody did.

When permission was given to construct this road, they [companies] entered into the local areas to construct the road. Therefore, who is coming to document the damage to villagers' lands and properties due to the road construction?

Our road committee is documenting [the damage of villages' lands and properties]. When we document land destruction, sometimes the road is not constructed at the same time [as the land destruction occurs] so it is hard to document land destruction because sometimes the road committee record land damage twice. Therefore, we have to confirm the list of land damage conducted by [road] constructors to ensure we record the number accurately.

After the [2012 preliminary] ceasefire agreement was signed how active were the Tatmadaw?

We can say that Tatmadaw is always active [in Win Yay Township] because they have their Operations Command [army camp] in A'nan Kwin. They also have their army camps in Toung Soe and Three Pagodas Pass. Thus, there is a military road for the elder leaders, which is not accessible for villagers. Sometimes they rotate their army troops.

After the preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed in 2012, before this road was constructed, did the Tatmadaw's troop's rotation and elder leaders' trip [in Win Way Township] happen all the time or just sometimes? Did it mainly happen after the road was constructed?

They [Tatmadaw] rotated their troops and elder leaders came to visit [Tatmadaw army camps in Win Yay Township] after the road was constructed.

Did it [Tatmadaw activities] increase or decrease after the road was constructed?

After the road was constructed, it increased.

They became more active [after the road was constructed]. Correct?

¹³ On January 12th 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace process, see the [KNU Stakeholder webpage](#) on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see *Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire*, KHRG, May 2014. In March 2015, the seventh round of the negotiations for a national ceasefire between the Burma/Myanmar government and various ethnic armed actors began in Yangon, see "[Seventh Round of Nationwide Ceasefire Negotiations](#)," *Karen National Union Headquarters*, March 18th 2015. Following the negotiations, the KNU held a central standing committee emergency, see "[KNU: Emergency Meeting Called To Discuss Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement And Ethnic Leaders' Summit](#)," *Karen News*, April 22nd 2015.

Yes.

As you are the road and communication officer, can you tell me how do you feel about these issues [that have arisen] due to road construction? How do you confront with these issues?

If I say openly, we should follow the NCA [Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement]¹⁴ because according to the NCA¹⁵ they [Tatmadaw] must inform [KNU] if they travel [in KNU controlled-area]. They [both KNU and Myanmar government] always have to collaborate with each other. In reality, the situation seems like that they go wherever they want to go and they live wherever they want to live.

Did the Tatmadaw call local villagers for forced labour, *Loh Ah Pay*¹⁶ and assistance regarding this road construction? If they did, can you tell me about that?

They [Tatmadaw] did but not a lot. However, I do not know the specific dates that they did.

In the coming year, 2017, when will they [road constructors] cover the road with tarmac? How wide will they cover it with tarmac? Or will they extend the road? How will they make the road stronger? Can you tell me about that?

I heard that they will cover the road with tarmac but it seems like they will not do what they say. I do not know exactly when they will cover the road with tarmac but I heard that they will do it.

After the road was constructed, can you tell me about villagers' healthcare and their livelihood situation? How did it [road construction] affect villagers' livelihoods? How did it benefit villagers?

After the road was constructed, it is easier for organisations to travel [to this area] in order to come to help villagers. It is also quicker and easier for villagers when they travel. Especially in the summer, it is more comfortable for villagers if they travel.

Do villagers have to pay taxes when they travel on the road? Who collects taxes?

Regarding taxation, the NMSP [New Mon State Party] collects taxes in Si Na Pin area. Regularly, our KNU collects taxes in Thit K'Taing area and Lute Shan area but it is not happening like before because [KNU] reduced the amount of tax.

How much does the NMSP ask when they collect taxes in Si Na Pin area? How much do they charge in taxation? Can you tell me about that?

¹⁴ On October 15th 2015, after a negotiation process marred with controversy over the notable non-inclusion of several ethnic armed groups and on-going conflicts in ethnic regions, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed between the Burma/Myanmar government and eight of the fifteen ethnic armed groups originally invited to the negotiation table, including the KNU, see "[Myanmar signs ceasefire with eight armed groups](#)," Reuters, October 15th 2015. Despite the signing of the NCA prompting a positive response from the international community, see "[Myanmar: UN chief welcomes 'milestone' signing of ceasefire agreement](#)," *UN News Centre*, October 15th 2015, KNU Chairman General Saw Mutu Say Poe's decision to sign has been met with strong opposition from other members of the Karen armed resistance and civil society groups alike, who believe the decision to be undemocratic and the NCA itself to be a superficial agreement that risks undermining a genuine peace process, see "[Without Real Political Roadmap, Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement Leads Nowhere...](#)," *Karen News*, September 1st 2015. The signing of the NCA followed the January 12th 2012 preliminary ceasefire agreement between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the preliminary ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

¹⁵ As per the 2012 preliminary ceasefire agreement between the KNU and the Burma/Myanmar government, the Tatmadaw are only allowed to operate and travel up to 50 yards from either side of roads that connect their army camps through KNLA territory, and only within a 150 yard radius around their own army camp.

¹⁶ *Loh ah pay* is a Burmese term now commonly used in reference to forced labour, although traditionally referring to voluntary service for temples or the local community, not military or state projects.

They have not fixed how much passengers have to pay but the amount of taxation just depends on the things [goods for trading] that passengers carry.

The minimum amount of tax?

The minimum amount of tax is 1,000 kyat [US \$0.75].

What about the maximum tax?

3,000 kyat [US \$2.2].

What about the KNU side?

Our KNU also collects taxes like that but now it is not like before. Previously the KNU charged vehicles a fixed amount, now following the road construction vehicles may still have to pay a small unfixed amount of taxation.

I think it is enough here. So do you want to say or add anything else outside of my questions?

No. I think it is enough too.

OK. So I want to take a picture of you after our interview. Can you tell me how should we use your picture and this audio record interview?

Photo and audio record?

Yes. I am now recording our interview. After our interview, I will take a photo of you. So tell me which way we should use your picture and this audio interview. I want to know your attitude.

You do not need to censor my picture [if it is published]. You can use it openly.

So I will take a photo now. OK?

Yes.

Thank you.

Yes.

Further background reading on the situation in Dooplaya District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- "Dooplaya Interview: Saw A---, September 2016," (May 2017)
- "Dooplaya Situation Update: Kawkareik Township and Noh T'Kaw Township, April to May 2016," (March 2017)
- "Dooplaya Situation Update: Win Yay Township, June to July 2015," (March 2017)
- "Dooplaya Interview: Saw A---, August 2015," (February 2017)
- "Dooplaya Situation Update: Kyonedoe Township, April 2016 to July 2016," (February 2017)

Dooplaya District



Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)