



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Incident Report

January 12, 2018 / KHRG #17-80-I2

Mergui-Tavoy Incident Report: Domestic abuse and attempted murder in Ta Naw Th'Ree Township, August 2017

This Incident Report describes an incident in which Saw Kyaw Win committed domestic abuse and attempted to murder his mother, Naw A---. After Naw A--- reported this incident to the Ta Naw Th'Ree Township level police officers, Saw Kyaw Win was arrested on August 2nd 2017 and held in custody at a Karen National Union (KNU) police station. Saw Kyaw Win was known to be using both yaba and crystal yaba drugs.

Incident Report | Ta Naw Th'Ree Township, Mergui-Tavoy District (August 2017)

The following Incident Report was written by a community member in Mergui-Tavoy District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor local human rights conditions. It is presented below translated exactly as originally written, save for minor edits for clarity and security.¹ This report was received in August 2017 along with other information from Mergui-Tavoy District, including one other incident report, four interviews, one situation update and 46 photographs.²

Part 1 – Incident Details

¹ KHRG trains community members in southeastern Burma/Myanmar to document individual incidents of abuse 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 writing incident reports, community members are encouraged to document incidents of abuse that they consider to be important, by verifying information from multiple sources, assessing for potential biases and comparing to local trends.

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.

Type of Incident	Attempted murder and domestic abuse
Date of Incident(s)	May-August 2017
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	B--- village, Doo P'Leh Oh Klo Hkoh area, Ta Naw Th'Ree Township, Mergui-Tavoy District

Victim Information	
Name	Naw ³ A---
Age	53
Sex	Female
Nationality	Karen
Family	Married
Occupation	Farmer
Religion	Christian
Position	Villager
Village	B--- village

Perpetrator Information				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Saw ⁴ Kyaw Win	Villager	-	B--- village	-

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

Naw A--- reported that her son, Saw Kyaw Win, who is a yaba⁵ and crystal yaba user, broke and damaged the family household furniture and also tried to murder her. After

³ Naw is a S'gaw Karen female honorific title used before a person's name.

⁴ Saw is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

⁵ *Yaba*, which means 'crazy medicine' in Thai, is a tablet form of methamphetamine. First developed in East Asia during the Second World War to enhance soldiers' performance, methamphetamine has become increasingly popular in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Burma/Myanmar where it is typically manufactured. See, [Yaba, the 'crazy medicine' of East Asia](#), UNODC, May 2008; Chapter IV in [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response in Southeast Myanmar since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, June 2014; "Thaton Situation Update: Bilin Township, July to September 2016," KHRG, April 2017; and "[Dooplaya Field Report: A quasi-ceasefire? Developments after the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, from January to December 2016](#)," KHRG, September 2017.

this incident, she fled from her son and reported what happened to Karen National Union [KNU] Ta Naw Th'Ree Township level police officers. The KNU police officers arrested Saw Kyaw Win and I [KHRG researcher] also collected information about the incident that the victim reported.

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

Saw Kyaw Win's mother [Naw A---] reported this case to the Karen National Union [KNU] Ta Naw Th'Ree Township, Mergui-Tavoy District police officers and told them to arrest her son in order for him to learn from his mistakes and stop abusing her. He [Saw Kyaw Win] can be released from the KNU [police office] after his [mental health] condition improves.

Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail.

Naw A--- is the mother of Saw Kyaw Win. Three years ago, her son migrated to Thailand for a year. After he returned to his village, he began recreationally using yaba and crystal yaba with his friends. After he began using yaba or crystal yaba he lost his self-control and did whatever he wanted [lost his inhibitions]. Crystal yaba is stronger than yaba.

Saw Kyaw Win regularly used yaba with his friends until the point at which yaba affected his mental condition and caused him to fall into a stupor. As a result, he regularly argued with his mother and siblings, often causing them to flee from their house in order to escape from him. The domestic abuses committed by Saw Kyaw Win include: breaking his family's TV and wardrobe, damaging his mother's clothes and destroying the [family] bathroom. Additionally, he cut [damaged] the house posts and sold his mother's cows without consent at the price of 150,000 kyat (US \$109.97)⁶ per cow and also sold the motor for his mother's boat at an unknown price. He attempted to murder his mother, after which his mother no longer felt safe at home and moved to live with her siblings. As his mother could not overcome these issues by herself, she reported what happened to the KNU Ta Naw Th'Ree Township police officers. After listening to her report, KNU police officers went to Saw Kyaw Win's house to arrest him

⁶ All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the December 19, 2017 official market rate of 1,364 kyats to US \$1.

on August 1st 2017, but he was visiting his friend's house in the forest on that day. On August 2nd 2017, KNU police officers arrested him [Saw Kyaw Win] at midnight at his friend's house near the Ka Ma Lo river source. KNU police officers took Saw Kyaw Win from B--- village to the KNU police station at 5:00 PM on August 3rd 2017. He is currently held in custody, but the KNU police officer has not yet decreed how many years he will be sentenced to prison. Lieutenant Saw C--- said, "Regarding this [drug] case, Saw Kyaw Win has to be sentenced to at least three years of prison."⁷ This case is now held with [KNU Ta Naw Th'Ree Township] judge, P'Doh Saw D---.



The above photos were taken on August 2nd 2017 in B--- village, Doo P'Leh Oh Klo Hkoh area, Ta Naw Th'Ree Township, Mergui-Tavoy District. The first photo on the left shows the materials Saw Kyaw Win used to consume yaba and crystal yaba. The second photo on the right shows Saw Kyaw Win's mother Naw A--- pointing at the household furniture such as the wardrobe and the TV that Saw Kyaw Win damaged. After her son attempted to murder her, she did not feel safe living with him and reported her concerns to the Karen National Union [KNU] Ta Naw Th'Ree Township level police officers. [Photos: KHRG]

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

Did the victim(s) provide permission to use this information? Explain how that permission was provided.

The victim provides permission [to KHRG] to use this information and the attached photos.

Further background reading on the situation in Mergui-Tavoy District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

⁷ The KNU Drug Prevention Special Act (1/2014) was enacted in 2014. Articles 2 to 8 give a prison sentence of between 6 months and 10 years for the use and sale of yaba, depending on the quantity of drug being used and sold. Article 22 states that if murder occurs whilst using drugs, the perpetrator can be punished according to Kaw Thoo Lei Criminal law or National Criminal Law.

- “Mergui-Tavoy Interview: Naw A---, August 2017” (December 2017)
- “Mergui-Tavoy Situation Update: K’Ser Doh Township, June to September 2017” (December, 2017)
- “Mergui-Tavoy Interview: Hpuh A---, January 2017” (October, 2017)
- “Mergui-Tavoy Interview: Saw A---, March 2017” (September, 2017)
- “Mergui-Tavoy Interview: Saw A---, February 2017” (September, 2017)

Mergui/Tavoy (Thanintharyi) District

