



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

News Bulletin

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Incident Report: Papun District, June 2011

The following incident report was written by a community member who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights abuses, and is based on information provided by 27-year-old Naw K---, a resident of Ny--- village in Dweh Loh Township. She described an incident that occurred on the evening of June 6th 2011, in which she was arrested by Tatmadaw IB #96 troops when returning to her home and forced to porter along with two other villagers, Saw W--- and Kyaw M--- before later escaping, an incident that was previously reported by KHRG in December 2012 in "Papun Situation Update: Dweh Loh Township, Received in November 2011". Security precautions taken by Tatmadaw troops on resupply operations are also mentioned, with Naw K--- describing how the two other villagers were shot at by IB #96 soldiers as they approached the agricultural area surrounding D--- village prior to their arrest. Naw K--- also highlights other issues associated with forced portering, specifically how requiring villagers to travel through unfamiliar areas contaminated by landmines places villagers at increased risk of landmine injury.

Incident Report | Dweh Loh Township, Papun District (June 2011)

The following incident report is presented below translated exactly as originally written, save for minor edits for clarity and security.¹ This report was received along with other information from Papun District, including two other incident reports, one situation update and four photographs.²

The incident happened on June 6th 2011

It happened in Ny---village, Waw Mu village tract, Dweh Loh Township, Papun District.

I am Naw K---. I am 27-years-old and I have three children. The youngest one was seven months old [at the time of the incident]. At 7:00 pm on June 6th 2011, it was raining and I was breastfeeding my child. There were flat fields with frogs beside my village, so when my child fell asleep I lit my *may gkay der* [lamp] and went to catch frogs. It took about two hours. Later, I realized that my child would be awake and crying and I also had enough frogs. As I had enough

¹KHRG incident reports are written or gathered by community members in Papun District who have been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions. KHRG trains community members in eastern Burma 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.

²In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in eastern Burma, 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. As companion to this, a redesigned website will be released in 2012. In the meantime, KHRG's most recently-published field information from Papun District can be found in the Report, "Papun Interview Transcript: Naw P---, November 2011," KHRG, April 2012.

to eat for one meal, I came back home. I arrived at the garden of my house and I was about to enter, but I didn't know that the SPDC Army [Tatmadaw Infantry Battalion (IB) #96]³ were coming. I entered my garden and it was dark so I could not see anything. Immediately, my mouth was covered, my lamp blown out, and someone said "don't talk". They arrested me and forced me to porter, so I had to follow them.

It was very difficult for me following the SPDC. It was raining and I could not see the way, so sometimes I fell over. When we arrived at the fields by D--- [village] at about 10:00 pm, I could see the lights [of the village]. Saw W--- and his friend Kyaw M--- were carrying beef and they [soldiers from IB #96] shot directly at them. The two people were villagers. Even though the SPDC Army shot at them, they didn't run away. They lay down in the mud with their beef. No one was hit. Then, the SPDC [soldiers] called them to porter and told the villagers to follow them.

I couldn't sleep that night [at O--- village]. I missed my child and my breast became bigger and milk came out. Because of my breast pain I cried the whole night. We were staying at O---. Before it was day, I talked with Kyaw M--- and we watched [the soldiers], and when they were sleeping, we escaped.

If I look back [at the situation], we were lucky. The places that we went through had landmines but they didn't hit us. When it was day, we arrived in P--- [village] and we ate rice, and then we continued and we arrived back at our houses [in Ny--- village]. I saw that my child was crying and that their grandmother was crying too. The system of SPDC control makes me very sad.

The SPDC Army is based in Waw Mu. They went to send food to their friends in A---. They saw me and arrested me and made me follow them. The information is true because I suffered it myself and I am reporting it.

Further background on the current situation in Papun District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- "Papun Interview Transcript: Naw P---, November 2011," (April 2012)
- "Papun Interview Transcript: Saw L---, June 2011," (March 2012)
- "Papun Interview: Maung R---, August 2011," (February 2012)
- "Papun Interview: Saw H---, March 2011," (February 2012)
- "Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, May to June 2011," (February 2012)
- "Papun Interview: Saw T---, August 2011," (January 2012)
- "Papun Situation Update: Dweh Loh Township, Received in November 2011," (December 2011)

³In Karen, the Burmese phrases *Na Ah Pa* (SPDC) and *Na Wa Ta* (SLORC) are commonly used to refer to the Burmese government or to Burma's state army, the Tatmadaw. Many older Karen villagers who were accustomed to using the phrase *Na Wa Ta* (SLORC) before 1997 continue to use that phrase, even though the SLORC has not officially existed since 1997. Similarly, despite the official dissolution of the SPDC in March 2011, many Karen villagers continue to use the phrase *Na Ah Pa* (SPDC) to refer to the Burmese government or to the Tatmadaw; see: "Mission Accomplished as SPDC 'dissolved'," Myanmar Times, April 4-10th 2011. The term *Na Ah Pa* was used by the villager who wrote this report and "SPDC" is therefore retained in the translation of this report.

