



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

News Bulletin

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Pa'an Interview: Saw Hn---, March 2012

This report contains the full transcript of an interview conducted during May 2012 in T'Nay Hsah Township, Pa'an District by a community member trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions. The community member interviewed 25-year-old Saw Hn---, from H--- village, who described an incident in which he was injured by a landmine when returning from a fishing excursion to his village in November 2011. Saw Hn--- describes how he was taken to hospital for medical treatment, where he had his leg repaired with a steel plate. Such abuses are also described in a thematic report published by KHRG on May 21st, 2012, Uncertain Ground: Landmines in eastern Burma.

Interview | Saw Hn---, (male, 25), H--- village, T'Nay Hsah Township, Pa'an District (March 2012)

The following interview was conducted by a community member in Pa'an District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions. It 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 T'Nay Hsah District, including two incident reports, 44 other interviews, and 683 photographs.²

Ethnicity: Karen

Marital Status: Married

¹KHRG trains community members in eastern Burma 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.

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 Pa'an District can be found in the Report, "Pa'an Situation Update: T'Nay Hsah Township, September 2011" KHRG, May 2012.

How do people address you?

People call me Hn---.

Is it Hpah³ Hn---?

Saw Hn---.

How old are you?

I'm 25-years-old.

Where do you live?

I live in H--- village.

How did you get hit by the bomb? Was it when you went hunting?

It was when I came back from fishing. I was walking down in the stream and I heard people talking. I thought that I'd go and check on it.

You wanted to go and check what they were talking about?

Yes, I went to check but I couldn't see so I kept on going and didn't want to turn back. When I saw the people, I didn't dare to approach them because I thought they were DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army] soldiers. So, I didn't turn back but kept working around that place. I heard an explosion and I didn't know what was going on.

Have your wounds healed already? Did it happen a year ago already?

Not a year yet. It happened only three months ago.

Were you injured at the end of this harvest year?

Yes, during the period when the people reap the paddy.

Was it last year when the people reaped the paddy?

Just this year [2012].

This year? This month is March.

Yes, I got injured three and a half months ago.

So was it the end of last year?

Yes, it happened at the end of last year. I was in the hospital for two months and I have been back here for a month and a half. Yes, it happened three and a half months ago.

Which hospital did you go to?



This photo, taken on March 24th, 2012 in H---village, T'Nay Hsah township, Pa'an district, shows Saw Hn---, an H--- resident who was injured by a landmine near to a stream when returning to his village from fishing. He was taken to Kawkareik hospital by foreign humanitarian workers in the area, where he received treatment. [Photo: KHRG]

³An informal S'gaw Karen prefix.

I went to Kawkareik Hospital.

Did anyone help you?

If no one had helped me, I wouldn't have been able to survive.

Who helped you?

I don't know but I think it was *Kaw Lah Wah*⁴. They helped everyone who got injured by the bomb. There is still a person who got injured by the bomb in the hospital who hasn't been discharged yet.

Are you married?

Yes.

How many children do you have?

I have one child. My wife gave birth in the hospital when I was there for the medical treatment.

Is it a girl or a boy?

It's a girl.

Has your leg been joined with steal?

Yes.

Further background on the current situation in Pa'an District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- "Pa'an Situation Update: T'Nay Hsah Township, September 2011," (May 2012)
- "Pa'an Situation Update: Nabu Township, September 2011 to January 2012," (May 2012)
- "Villagers used as human shields in Pa'an District, October 2011," (March 2012)
- "Pa'an Interview Transcript: Naw D---, November 2011," (March 2012)
- "Pa'an Interview: Naw G---, November 2011," (January 2012)
- "Pa'an Interview: Naw K---, September 2011," (January 2012)
- "Incident Report: Villager shot and killed in Pa'an District", October 2011 (December 2011)
- "Pa'an Interview: Saw C---, October 2011", (December 2011)

⁴Literally, 'white people'; in this case most likely people assisting a local humanitarian organisation, although no further information is provided on the individuals or the organization that assisted Saw Hn---.

