



News Bulletin

March 29, 2013 / KHRG #2013-B13

**Incident Report: Forced Labour in Papun District #2,
February 2012**

The following incident report was submitted to KHRG in May 2012 by a community member describing an incident that began on February 22nd 2012 in Dwe Lo Township, Papun District, where Border Guard Force (BGF) Battalion #1014 soldiers forced between 70 or 80 villagers to construct their army camp without providing any wage, the necessary building materials for construction or medical care for villagers who became sick while labouring. According to the community member who wrote this report, forced labour demands continue, but are described by villagers as having decreased to a level with which the demands do not significantly infringe upon their normal routine and less precautions are taken.

Incident report | Dwe Lo Township, Papun District (February 2012)

The following incident report was written by a community member trained by KHRG to monitor 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 along with other information from Papun District, including four other incident reports, one interview and two situation updates.²

Part 1 – Incident(s) detail

Type of Incident	Forced Labour
Date of Incident(s)	February 22 nd 2012

¹ KHRG incident reports are written or gathered by community member 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.

² In 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 2013. Three other incident reports that were submitted along with this one have been published as “Incident Report: Looting in Papun District #1, May 2012,” KHRG, March 2013; “Incident Report: Looting in Papun District #2, May 2012,” KHRG, March 2013; and “Incident Report: Forced Labour in Papun District #1, May 2012.” These reports have been summarized and published as the most recent report for Papun district, “Border Guard Battalion #1014 demands for labour and other goods in Papun District,” KHRG, March 2013.

Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	W--- village, K'Ter Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Papun District
---	--

Victim's Details								
Name	Age	Sex	Nationality	Family	Job	Religion	Responsibility	Village
Saw E---	40	Male	Karen	Married	Farming	Buddhist	Villager	M---

Perpetrator				
Name	Rank	Company/Battalion/Division	Based at	Commander's Name
Saw Maung Chit	Commander	Border Guard #1014, W---	W--- camp, W---	W--- Operation Commander

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain the specific manner how you collected this information.

A [Border Guard Force]³ Battalion, which is led by the Commander Saw Maung Chit,⁴ came into W--- village. At first, they stayed beside the villagers' houses in the village, and they stayed wherever they wanted. Therefore, the W--- Operations Commander didn't approve this and he ordered Commander [Maung] Chit Thu⁵ to build a camp. Therefore, on February 22nd 2012, they started building W--- camp and they asked M--- and Y--- villagers to go and build it for them.

2. Explain how the source verified information accuracy.

We got this information from E---, who is an M--- villager⁶ and also had to go and build the camp.

PART 3 – Incident Details

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail. For each incident, be sure to include 1) when the incident happened, 2) where it happened, 3) what happened, 4) how it happened, 5) who was involved, and 6) why it happened. Also describe any villager response(s) to the incident, the aftermath and the current living situation of the victims. Please, use the space prepared below and create attach if needed.

This forced labour happened on February 22nd 2012 in W--- village, K'Ter Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township,

³ Border Guard Force (BGF) battalions of the Tatmadaw were established in 2010, and they are composed mostly of soldiers from former non-state armed groups, such as older constellations of the DKBA, which have formalized ceasefire agreements with the Burmese government and agreed to transform into battalions within the Tatmadaw. BGF battalions are assigned four digit battalion numbers, whereas regular Tatmadaw infantry or light infantry battalions are identified by two or three digit battalion numbers. For more information, see "DKBA officially becomes Border Guard Force" Democratic Voice of Burma, August 2010, and, "Exploitation and recruitment under the DKBA in Pa'an District," KHRG, June 2009.

⁴ Commander Maung Chit's name is sometimes spelled "Maw Hsee."

⁵ Although the community member used the name Maung Chit Thu as the commander of Border Guard Force Battalion #1014, Maung Chit Thu is actually a top-tier officer in the Border Guard, while Maung Chit is the commander for Battalion #1014. The confusion stems from the fact that Maung Chit Thu is part of the intelligence division for the Border Guard Force and his actual role in the command structure is unclear. In December 2012, KHRG verified that these two names do not refer to the same officer. For more information on Maung Chit Thu's authority, see "Pa'an Situation Update: June to August 2011," KHRG, October 2011.

⁶ The community member had travelled to the area previously, and shared KHRG information gathering methodology with villagers, in order to prepare notes of events in their area as local records for general reporting. This Incident Report is based on the villagers' notes that were shared with the community member.

Papun District. The forced labour occurred when the Border Guard Battalion #1014,⁷ which is led by Commander Maung Chit, and his people came and stayed in W--- village; in the villagers' houses and beside the houses. Because they lived wherever they wanted, the Operations Commander who came to live in W--- camp didn't approve, and he gave an order to Commander Maung Chit. The order was: "*The Border Guard has to have its' own camp in the correct place, and they must have dignity as Thein Sein Government's military, so they have to build a camp.*"

As the Operations Commander gave the order, Commander Maung Chit and his group from the Border Guard #1014 had to build the camp. However, they needed bamboo, thatch and wood poles. Because they couldn't find [them], they asked the M---, Y---, Z--- and N--- villagers [to provide them]. The villagers brought their own bamboo, thatch, wood poles and their own tools as usual, and after that, they had to build a wooden hut and fence for them. They had to bring all the things that were needed, and they had to work with great effort, but they didn't get any wages. They had to work for the Border Guard for five days, but when they were sick or when they were injured, the Border Guard didn't take care of them. For meals, they were treated, but not with enough [food].

There were about 12 or 15 people who worked for them [at one time], so after the building was finished, there would have been 70 to 80 people who went and worked for the Border Guard. If we calculate the cost, it [unpaid wages] would be over 200,000 kyat (US \$229.36).⁸ Their leaders always talk about good things, but their subordinates on the front line are not following their leaders' words. If we consider forced labour and the words of Thein Sein⁹, they are not harmonious. Doesn't Thein Sein know what his people are really doing, or does he decide to pretend that he doesn't know about that? Forcing people to labour like that has not ended yet, but there is not as much forced labour anymore and the villagers do not need to take a lot of prevention [measures]; their living standard can continue as usual.

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

This information can be used where it is necessary.

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

⁷ KHRG received reports on the activities of Border Guard Force (BGF) Battalion #1014, which has been active along the border of Papun and Thaton Districts. Battalion #1014 is commanded by Major Maung Chit, which is also sometimes spelled Maw Hsee, whom is allegedly to be a part of an advisory committee that oversaw the 2010 transformation of the DKBA into the BGF, and assumed responsibility for business activities for the group. See "The Situation In Karen State After the Elections," EBO (Euro-Burma Office) Analysis Paper No. 1/2011, April 2011. More recently, on August 5th 2012, the KNLA and BGF #1014 engaged in armed conflict in Mae Seik village, Papun Township, despite the terms of the ceasefire; see "KNLA and Government's Militia Fight – Four Soldiers Killed," Karen News, August 7th 2012. For additional articles discussing abuses perpetrated by BGF #1014, see "Torture and killing in Thaton District," KHRG, October 2012; "Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, received April 2012," KHRG, June 2012; "Papun Interview: Saw T---, August 2011," January 2012; "Thaton Situation Update: June to October 2011," KHRG, November 2011; and *All the Information I've Given You, I faced it myself*, KHRG, December 2011, p.14.

⁸ As of March 15th 2013, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 872 kyat to the US \$1. This reflects new measures taken by Burma's central bank on April 2nd 2012 to initiate a managed float of the kyat, thus replacing the previous fixed rate of 6.5 kyat to US \$1.

⁹ The Burmese government has pledged to the International Labour Organization (ILO) that it will end forced labour in Burma by 2015. These pledges were embodied in a Memorandum of Understanding between the Government and the ILO, signed on March 16, 2012. For more information on the issue of forced labour and Burma's relationship with the ILO, see "Civilian and Military order documents: August 2009 to August 2012," KHRG, October 2012.

- “Incident Report: Forced Labour in Papun District #1, May 2012,” (March 2013)
- “Incident Report: Looting in Papun District #2, May 2012,” (March 2013)
- “Incident Report: Looting in Papun District #1, May 2012,” (March 2013)
- “Border Guard Battalion #1014 forced demands in Papun District,” (March 2013)
- “Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho and Dwe Lo townships, September to December 2012,” (March 2013)
- “Incident Report: Religious discrimination and restrictions in Papun District, September 2012,” (March 2013)
- “Papun Situation Update: Dwe Lo Township, July to October,” (February 2013)
- “Papun Situation Update: Lu Thaw Township, March 2012 to November 2012,” (February 2013)
- “Papun Situation Update: DweLoh Township, July to October 2012,” (December 2012)
- “Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, June 2012,” (October 2012)

