



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

News Bulletin

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Incident Report: Violent abuse in Papun District, October 2012

The following incident report was written by a community member trained by KHRG to monitor human rights abuses in Papun District, and is based on an interview with a villager named Saw P--- concerning an incident of violent abuse. The incident occurred on October 15th 2012 in Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township, Papun District, when Saw P--- unwittingly allowed his cow to graze on a vehide road that had been dosed by Saw Pah Mee, a Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) Commander. Upon encountering Saw P--- the area under his control, Commander Saw Pah Mee blindfolded, punched, and left Saw P--- tied up overnight, as well as shooting one of his cows. The incident report also includes mentions the violent abuse of a Muslim villager, Saw L---, on October 8th 2012, by Border Guard Commander #1014 Commander Maw Nee Hseh; details of this incident were described by the same community member in a previously published report: "Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho and Dwe Lo townships, September to December 2012," KHRG, March 2013.

Incident report | Bu Tho Township, Papun District (October 2012)

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 four other incident reports, one situation update, 39 photographs.²

Part 1 – Incident(s) detail

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 member 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 2012. In the meantime, KHRG's most recently-published field information from Papun District can be found in the report, "Incident Report: Religious discrimination and restrictions in Papun District, September 2012," KHRG, March 2013.



This photo was taken on December 8th 2012 in T--- village, Lu Thaw Township, Papun district, shows Saw P--- who was violently abused by a KNLA Commander Saw Pah Mee. Saw P--- also described that the perpetrator killed one of his fattest cows without any compensation.

Type of Incident	Torture ³
Date of Incident(s)	October 15 th 2012
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	M--- [village], Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township, Papun District

Victim Information							
Name	Age	Sex	Family	Occupation	Religion	Position	Village
Saw P-- -	51	Male	Yes	Buffalo trader	Buddhist	Villager	T--- village

Perpetrator information				
Name	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander
Saw Pah Mee	Commander	5 th Brigade, KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] soldier	Around Meh Hsee village	Saw Baw Saw Heh (5 th Brigade)

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain the specific manner in which you collected this information.

³ While the KHRG community member uses the word 'torture' to describe the abuse perpetrated by the KNLA commander in this report, there is no indication that the commander was attempting to extract information from the villager he was abusing and, therefore, the incidents described in this report are not likely to meet the internationally-accepted definition of torture. However, that they chose to use the Karen phrase, 'ta ma er mah ner ta' meaning torture, as opposed to ma p'yweh, meaning 'abuse', or ma na ma hphaw, meaning 'torment' to describe the event suggests the severity of the incident justifies this classification. This incident is also described in: "Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho and Dwe Lo townships, September to December 2012," KHRG, March 2013.

KNLA Commander Saw Pah Mee and his soldiers were travelling along the road where people graze their buffalo and cows, the road from K'Ter Tee to Meh Th'Waw, leading to the Thai-Burma border. Sometimes, Saw Pah Mee closes this road for traveling and sometimes they [Saw Pah Mee/the KNLA] open it. Saw P--- did not know exactly when [or if] they [had] closed the road, so he crossed [into the area] that Saw Pah Mee controls, and [then] he was tortured by Saw Pah Mee and [Saw Pah Mee] shot and ate one of his [Saw P---'s] cows.

2. Explain how the source verified information accuracy.

On December 8th 2012, I had something to follow up on regarding the Saw L--- case⁴, so I went to T--- village. I met with the T--- village head, who told me about another incident, that [in which] Saw Pah Mee shot at Saw P---'s cow and ate it. So, I went to meet with Saw P--- and interviewed him face to face.

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.

On December 8th 2012, I had something to follow up: a case regarding Border Guard #1014 Commander Maw Nee Hseh, [who] tortured a Muslim whose name is Saw L---. Therefore, I went to T--- village, Bu Tho Township, Papun district. When I arrived in the village and met with the village head, I was told about another incident, in which Saw Pah Mee tortured Saw P--- and killed one of his cows.

I was told about that, so I went to meet with Saw P--- and interviewed him. He told us that he did not know that Saw Pah Mee [had] closed the road so he let his cow graze along Meh Hseh Road. When he arrived to Saw Pah Mee's area, which is close to M--- village, he encountered Saw Pah Mee.

When Saw Pah Mee saw Saw P---, he asked him [what he was doing] and Saw P--- told him that he did not hear or know anything about the road being closed. He also said that if he had known, he would not have come. But Saw Pah Mee did not like his answer and kept scolding him. While scolding him, Saw Pah Mee also asked for money from him. Saw P--- said that if he has to pay 100,000 kyat (US \$114),⁵ that it is fine and that he is willing to give it. But he [Saw P---] kept scolding him and, at 12:00 am, Saw Pah Mee blindfolded him, tied him up under a villager's house and punched him three times.

After tying him up, Saw Pah Mee did not [want to] take the 100,000 kyat (US \$114) anymore. But he picked up his gun and went to the place where the cows were and shot at the biggest and fattest cow. The cow did not die immediately, so they shot it with three guns and it sounded like a battle was happening.

Saw Pah Mee blindfolded Saw P---'s eyes and left him tied up from 12:00 am until the morning. In the morning, he untied Saw P---, having shot and killed one of his cows without compensation. If Saw P--- had sold that cow he would have received around 550,000 kyat (US \$513). However, as Saw Pah Mee killed it, Saw P--- did not get any money.

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

⁴ The community member is referring to the violent abuse of a Muslim villager, Saw L---, by Border Guard #1014 Commander Maw Nee Hseh; details of this incident were described by the same community member in a previously published report. See "Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho and Dwe Lo townships, September to December 2012," KHRG, March 2013.

⁵ As of March 19th, 2013, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 878 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.

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

The information can be used as it is needed.

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

- “Incident Report: Religious discrimination and restrictions in Papun District, September 2012,” (March 2013)
- “Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho and Dwe Lo townships, September to December 2012,” (March 2013)
- “Papun Situation Update: Dwe Lo Township, July to October 2012,” (February 2013)
- “Papun Situation Update: Lu Thaw Township, March 2012 to November 2012,” (February 2013)
- “Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, June 2012,” (October 2012)

