



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

News Bulletin

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**Incident Report: Forced recruitment in Thaton District #1,
May 2012**

The following incident report was written by a community member who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights abuses. The community member who wrote this report described that on May 29th 2012, villagers were ordered to be recruited for a one-year service by Moe Nyo, a former DKBA leader now serving as a company commander in BGF Battalion #1014, in order to form a new people's militia group. The cost to avoid service was 50,000 kyat per month, which the villagers reported having difficulties with raising. Some villagers who refused to serve, but lacked the money to opt-out and responded to the order by fleeing their village. This report has been summarized along with three other Incident Reports received from this area in: "Border Guard #1014 forced labour and forced recruitment, April to May 2012," KHRG, May 2013.

Incident report | Hpa-an¹ Township, Thaton District (May 2012)

The following incident report is presented below translated exactly as originally written, save for minor edits for clarity and security.² This report was received along with other information from Thaton District, including four other incident reports, five interviews, one situation update and 139 photographs.³

Part 1 – Incident(s) detail

¹ As of January 2013, KHRG began to use the common spelling for "Hpa-an" District to reflect the standardized transliteration developed in 2012; past KHRG reports used "Pa'an."

² KHRG incident reports are written or gathered by community member in Thaton 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.

³ 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. In the meantime, KHRG's most recently-published field information from Thaton District can be found in the report, "Thaton Situation Update: Hpa-an Township, January to July 2012" KHRG, March 2013. This abuse was also documented in another Incident Report and submitted to KHRG. See "Incident Report: Forced recruitment in Thaton District #2, May 2012," KHRG, May 2013.

Type of Incident	Forced recruitment
Date of Incident(s)	May 29 th 2012
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	H--- village, Kyon Mon Thwel village tract, Hpa-an Township

Victim Information								
Name	Age	Sex	Nationality	Family	Occupation	Religion	Position	Village
U D---	44	Male	Karen	Married with three children, eldest, 24 years, youngest, 3 years	Farming	Buddhist	Chairman	H---

Perpetrator Information				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Moe Nyo	Battalion Commander	Border Guard #1014	Noh Hpoh Moh	U La Ba

Part 2 - Information Quality

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

On June 2nd 2012, I went to H--- village and I met and interviewed the [village] chairman Saw⁴ D---. He told me about the Border Guard [Battalion] #1014, which is led by La Ba and Moe Nyo, who called a meeting on May 29th 2012 in B--- village and ordered the H---, B---, W---, X--- and Y--- villages to give five soldiers from each village.

2. Explain how the source verified information accuracy.

Related to this forced recruitment, Saw D---, the chairman from Kyon Mon Thwel village tract, attended the meeting held by Moe Nyo and La Ba in B--- village, and he reported that he was ordered to send five new soldiers from H---, and was forced to sign a pledge to try to find the people [recruits].

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 May 29th 2012, the Border Guard soldiers, Moe Nyo and La Ba, who are from B--- village, called the five villages, H---, B---, Y---, X--- and W---, to attend a meeting. In this meeting, the leader, Moe Nyo, gave an order

⁴ The honorifics “Saw” and “U” are both titles used for men, but “Saw” is in S’Gaw Karen and “U” is in Burmese; The community member used both to refer to the victim in this incident.

forming *Thaung Kyan Thu Sant Kyin Yay A Hpwe* [anti-insurgency group]. Each village had to give five people, and if they couldn't, they had to give 50,000 kyat (US \$58.07)⁵ for each month to hire a soldier. At that time, during the meeting, the village leaders from every village, who attended the meeting, were forced to sign a pledge to continue to recruit [villagers as soldiers] until they get five people. The villagers who have to go [recruits] do not want to go, but they also don't have money to hire people, so this is a big problem for them.

Forced recruitment in these five villages began in 2010 by the military group which was led by Moe Nyo. Moe Nyo was a former DKBA leader. However, after the Burmese Government held an election in 2010 and transformed the DKBA into the Border Guard, he disagreed and he didn't listen to them, so he came back and lived in B--- village with his six or seven subordinates, because he didn't have the same opinion [as the Government]. Then, he formed *Thaung Kyan Thu Sant Kyin Yay A Hpwe* [anti-insurgency group] and demanded five villagers from each of the five villages [in the area]. One person has to serve for one year, and after one year, another person has to replace him. Currently, Moe Nyo is known to have returned and works with the Border Guard #1014, but he also formed peoples' militias on the side. The Burma Government might not know about [his] forming of the people's militia. Some villagers think that he will make money in the process. The villagers from H--- had to leave their village because of forced recruitment, because they dare not go serve as soldiers and they also don't have money [to opt-out].

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

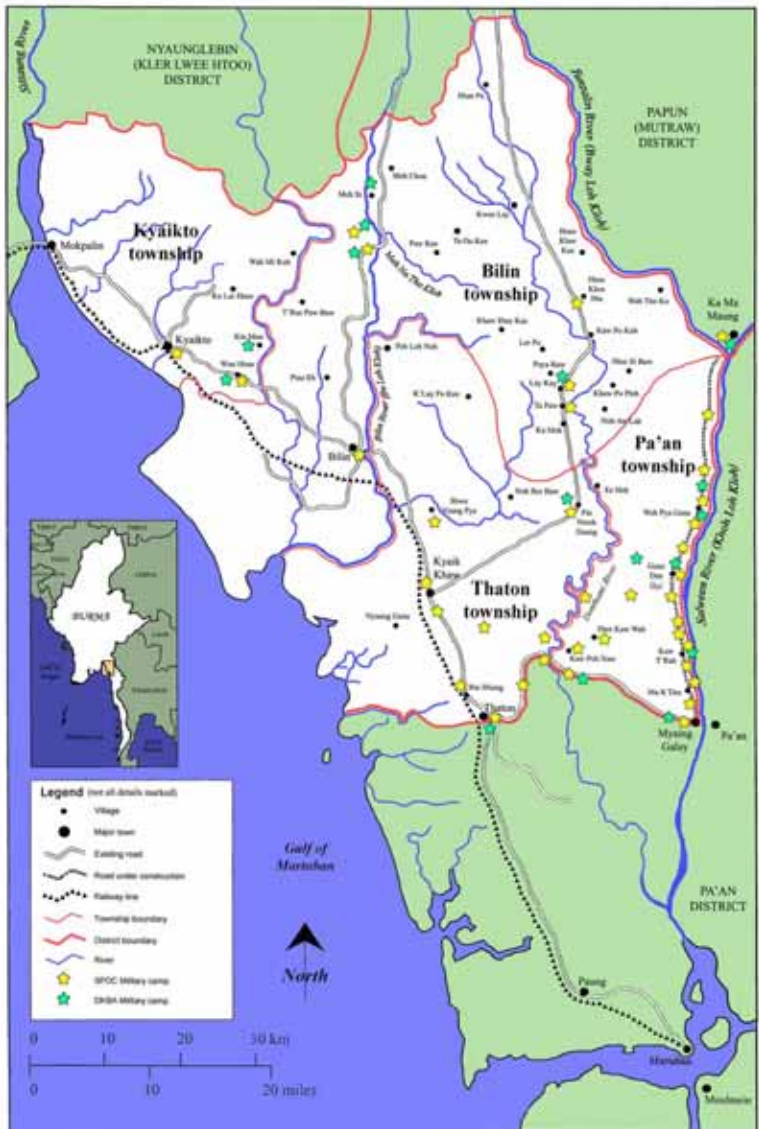
We have permission to use this information, but the name and the place of the person who gave this information should be secure.

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

- "Incident Report: Forced Labour in Thaton District," KHRG, May 2013
- "Incident Report: Land confiscation and forced labour in Thaton District, April 2012," KHRG, May 2013
- "Torture and killing in Thaton District," (October 2012)
- "Thaton Interview: Saw L---, October 2010," (June 2012)
- "Thaton Interview: Saw L---, October 2010," (June 2012)
- "Sustained Tatmadaw resupply operations in Thaton, Nyaunglebin and Papun during ceasefire," (May 2012)

⁵ As of March 4th 2013, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 861 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.

Thaton (Doo Tha Htoo) District



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