



**Karen Human Rights Group**

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

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**Short Update**

August 15, 2014 / KHRG #14-28-S1

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**Hpa-an Short Update: Hti Lon Township, March 2014**

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*This Short Update describes events occurring in Hti Lon Township, Hpa-an District in March 2014, including land confiscation committed by the Burma/Myanmar government and wealthy individuals, destruction of villagers land due to flooding caused by a dam, as well as the strategies of villagers to claim back their land, and obtain compensation for the land that they have lost.*

- *In Naung Ka Myaing village, fields belonging to 39 villagers were confiscated and flooded by the Yay Boat Dam (also called the Hti Lon Dam), resulting in the destruction of over 3,000 acres of land. A further 44 villagers had their land confiscated and marked as 'forest land'.*
  - *The villagers filed an official case with the Burma/Myanmar government, in an attempt to receive compensation, and have submitted a list of landowners and the amount of land they lost, as well as videos portraying the land.*
  - *Burma News International (bnionline.net) conducted a video news report on the case. A link to the video, as well as a description of its contents, can be found below, following the tables.*
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**Short Update | Hti Lon Township, Hpa-an District (March 2014)**

*The following Short Update was received by KHRG in April 2014. It was written by a community member in Hpa-an District who has been 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.<sup>1</sup> This report was received along with other information from Hpa-an District, including six other situation updates, 1,080 photographs and two video clips.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> KHRG 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 writing situation updates, community members are encouraged to summarise recent events, raise issues that they consider to be important, and present their opinions or perspective on abuse and other local dynamics in their area.

<sup>2</sup> 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. For additional reports categorized by Type, Issue, Location and Year, please see the Related Readings component following each report on KHRG's Website.



	
<p>This photo was taken on March 9<sup>th</sup> 2014 in the western part of Hti Lon village, Hti Lon village tract, Hlaingbwe Township, Hpa-an District. The photo shows damage to villagers fields due to water which was released by the Hti Lon Dam. <i>[Photo: KHRG]</i></p>	<p>This photo was taken on March 9<sup>th</sup> 2014 in Hti Lon village, Hti Lon village tract, Hlaingbwe Township, Hpa-an District. This is a photo of the Hti Lon Dam. The Burma/Myanmar government confiscated villagers land to build the dam, and once built, resulted in damage to over 3,000 acres of villagers land. <i>[Photo: KHRG]</i></p>

I want to report about the suffering of the villagers of Noh Ka Mler village. The village is called Naung Ka Myaing village in Burmese. The villagers are suffering the same things as the villagers from Maw Ko Der village, Hti Lon village, the *kaw la* [Muslims]<sup>3</sup> and the Mon<sup>4</sup>. In the list that was submitted to me by the villagers of Naung Ka Myaing village, there are 40 fields that were flooded [due to the Yay Boat Dam]. They submitted the amount of land and the names of the villagers whose land was confiscated. They also submitted the acres of land that were confiscated by the government and rich people, and the names of 58 land owners<sup>5</sup> whose land was confiscated. The villagers are also trying their best to get compensation for their land that was affected by flooding, and the land that was confiscated by other people. There are 3,000 acres of land that were flooded. They also gave videos that show the land that was confiscated (while traditional music plays in the background), and the list of land owners, in their own hand writing. The government also threatened the villagers.

Table A1. List of farmers whose land was flooded due to the Yay Boat Dam, and the number of acres flooded:

No.	Name	Father's name	Residence	ID number	Acres	Signature
1	U Saw Kin Shwe	U Chit Thein	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	12.00	
2	Daw Ma Than Nweh	U Moo Be	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	16.00	
3	Saw Aung Kyi Win	U Shwe Li	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	2.22	
4	U Thein Lon	U Ton Nyin	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing)	4.87	
5	U Naing Min Aung	U Awh Tha	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	3.57	

<sup>3</sup> Kaw La Thu, “thu” meaning black, is a term used to refer to Muslim people by Karen people in Burma. Muslim people do not typically self-identify with this term.

<sup>4</sup> The Mon people are believed to be some of the oldest inhabitants of Southeast Asia. Most live in the central Myanmar government demarcated areas of Mon State, located in the south of Burma and bordering Kayin State, Bago Region (formerly Pegu Division) and Tanintharyi Region (formerly Tenasserim Division). These areas overlap to an extent with KHRG’s research areas, which follow a locally defined system of demarcation.

<sup>5</sup> In the original report, the researcher indicated there were 58 landowners whose land was confiscated. Upon reviewing the lists provided, there were 39 landowners who lost land due to flooding, and 44 whose land was confiscated and marked as ‘forest land’.



6	Kay Thi Soe	U Pipe Thaung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	3.57	
7	U Loon Shwe	U Aung Kin	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	8.84	
8	Daw Naw Moo	U Ton Hpay	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	11.30	
9	U Saw Myah Shwe Aung	U Maung Tin	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	25.00	
10	U Than Tin	U Kyah Mee Lone	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	6.00	
11	Daw Hlah Sa Ber	U Tu Lu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	5.00	
12	Daw Moo Thout Lah	U Ah Ku	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	20.00	
13	U San Thein	U Sein	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	15.00	
14	Saw Hpa Lay Kyaw	U Tha Tin	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing)-- -		
15	U Than Tin Aye	U Be Sa Koe	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	17.00	
16	U Paing Law	U Kyaw Thin	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	7.00	
17	Saw Thein Ngwe	U Hpa Ler	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	6.00	
18	U Maung Htun	U Paw Law	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	1.14	
19	Nan Hte Po	U Shwe Htun	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	4.20	
20	Moo Hta Ler	U Sein Tway	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	15.00	
21	Daw Ta Htet Htet	U Kya Hkin	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	5.00	
22	U Saw Kin Hlet	U Shwe Mya	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	10.00	
23	Nan Paw Hka Lu	U Tway Maung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	2.08	
24	U Hpa Sa Lon	U Tha Yin Aye	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	2.50	
25	U Shwe Sein	U Hpa Shaung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --		
26	Maung Win Naing	U Mya Yon	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	17.00	
27	Htain Lin	U Hton Hpay	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - ---	7.00	
28	Naung Mu Ti	U Maung Oo	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	3.00	
29	Daw Nan Hkin Myint	U Hpa Hpaung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - ---	3.00	
30	U Tha Kwee	U Lone Shwe	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	20.00	
31	U Win Kyaw	U Hpa Su	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	13.50	
32	Moo Naung Htee	U Ba Lee	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	13.44	
33	U Hpa Taw	U Hton Rate	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) - --	3.58	
34	Daw Ma Thaung Na	U Kyah Kee	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing) -- -	20.00	
35	U Ka Lee Htun	U Myah Sein	Naung Ka	N/BAN(Naing) --	20.00	



			Myaing	--		
36	U Hpa Lo	U Tin Poe	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing -- --	13.14	
37	U Saw Hpah Htoo	U Shwe Hlah Tun	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing -- --	14.00	
38	Nan Moe Moe	U Tun Maung Shwe	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing---	12.00	
39	U Sein Myah Shin	U Kway Paw	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN(Naing---	25.00	

Table A2. The list of farmers whose land was confiscated and marked as 'forest land', and the number of acres confiscated:

No.	Name	Father's name	Residence	ID number	Acres	Signature
1	Nan Lu Ku	U Tin Aung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing) ---	Farms	
2	Maung Myint Soe	U Myaing Thein	Ta Wan Pan Ya	N/LBN (Naing) ---	1.50	
3	U Ah Bu	U Maung Shwe	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	3.00	
4	U Win Kyaw	U Phaa Wu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	11.68	
5	Daw Pu Lone	U Maung Saung	Kyone Kaw	N/LBN (Naing)---	Farm	
6	U La Kwa	U Ba Chit	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
7	Daw Sein Lite	U Myah Sein	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	3.00	
8	Saw Nay Tun Aung	U Mot Kain	Gyone Pa Kaw	N/LBN/ (Naing) ---	Farm	
9	U Maung Sein Myint	U Htee K' No	Gyone Pa Kaw	HBE – ---	3.00	
10	Saw Tin Soe	U Pa La Bon	Gyone Pa Kaw	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
11	Daw Po No	U Kyah Doe	Gyone Pa Kaw	N/BAN (Naing)---	8.75	
12	Daw Moo Nya	U A' Dwrite	Naung Ka Myaing	HBE – ---	Farm	
13	U Saw Pu Lu	U Nyuat Sin	Ta Wan Pan Ya	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
14	Saw Has Ma Nya	U Hpa Gaw Htee	Ta Wan Pan Ya	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
15	U Maung Way	U Pipe Poe	Ta Wan Pan Ya	HBE – ---	Farm	
16	Daw Ma Yin Aye	U Ta Bu	Ta Wan Pan Ya	N/LBN/ (Naing)	Farm	
17	U Hlah Aye	U Pan Mya	Naung Ka Myaing	N/LBN/ (Naing)---	4.00	
18	Daw Myu Hlaing	U Ban Du La	Naung Ka Myaing	N/LBN/ (Naing)---	20	
19	Saw Ba Thein	U Htun Maung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	15	
20	U Ah Pa Lon	U Tun Hla	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
21	Daw Mya Kyone	U Nyaing Myaung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	3.00	
22	U Maung Sin Shwe	U Tin Aung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	4.00	
23	U Hpa La Own	U Chaung Lone Pyu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	1.50	
24	Daw Kin Mya	U Hpay Mon	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN	Farm	



				(Naing)---		
25	Daw A' Wa	U Hpa Pu Lu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
26	Daw Mya Than	U Taung Thu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
27	Daw Ma Yi Tun	U Thein Aye	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
28	U Than Aye	U Than Hpay	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
29	U Thant Kin	U Kaing De	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	2.50	
30	Nan Kin Myint Htay	U Ban Du La	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
31	Saw Hpa Loung	U Kyaw Kin	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
32	Nan Meh Yin Thein	U Pa Da	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Farm	
33	U Hpa Thon	U Ngwe Htun	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	3.00	
34	U Tha Daw	U Hpa Hla Aung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	3.00	
35	U Saw Hpa Da	U Jet Nu Paw	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---		
36	U Saw A'Ka Ler	U Hpa Pu Lu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	9.95	
37	U Awh Ba Sein	U Maung Chit	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Hill field	
38	Daw Ma Win Aye	U Shwe Hla Lu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	Hill field	
39	Saw Shwe Hlaing	U Aung Tin	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)----	3.00	
40	U Kyah Aee	U Aung Kyaw	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	2.00	
41	U Shae Lone Sein	U Hpa Ti Ka Lu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	5.00	
42	U Maung Shwe Sein	U Hpa Naung	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---		
43	Daw Pi Li	U Za Bout	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)---	2.50	
44	Daw Sa Per Nyaunt	Ni Taw Lu	Naung Ka Myaing	N/BAN (Naing)----	3.00	

### Review of BNI video:

Burma News International (bnionline.net) conducted a video news report on the case, which can be viewed at <http://burmese.bnionline.net/index.php/videos.html?task=videodirectlink&id=200> (Burmese language).

In the video, local people who live between Hti Lon Township and Hpa-an Township discuss the land that they have lost due to the construction of the Hti Lon Dam, and how they reported this to Nan Say Hwah, a member of Parliament from Hpa-an Township.

Over 100 people<sup>6</sup> from Hlaing Bwe Township, Karen State, had over 3,000 acres of their land confiscated due to the construction of the dam, and the villagers have encountered various

<sup>6</sup> The video describes 'over 100' villagers losing their land due to flooding caused by the dam. KHRG only received information pertaining to 39 villagers who lost their land specifically due to flooding.



difficulties because of this. The villagers do not have land to live and work on, so they must do odd jobs in order to survive. In addition, a number of their children have gone to work in Thailand, as there is no work available locally.

The local Agriculture and Irrigation Ministry (#6) began construction on the Hti Lon Dam in 2006, and finished in 2010. The villagers have not yet received any compensation for the land they have lost. Villagers from Naung Ka Myaing village in Hpa-an Township, and Hti Lon village & Yay Pu village in Hlaing Bwe Township, in particular have suffered the consequences of the dam project. The villagers were not informed and consulted about the project.

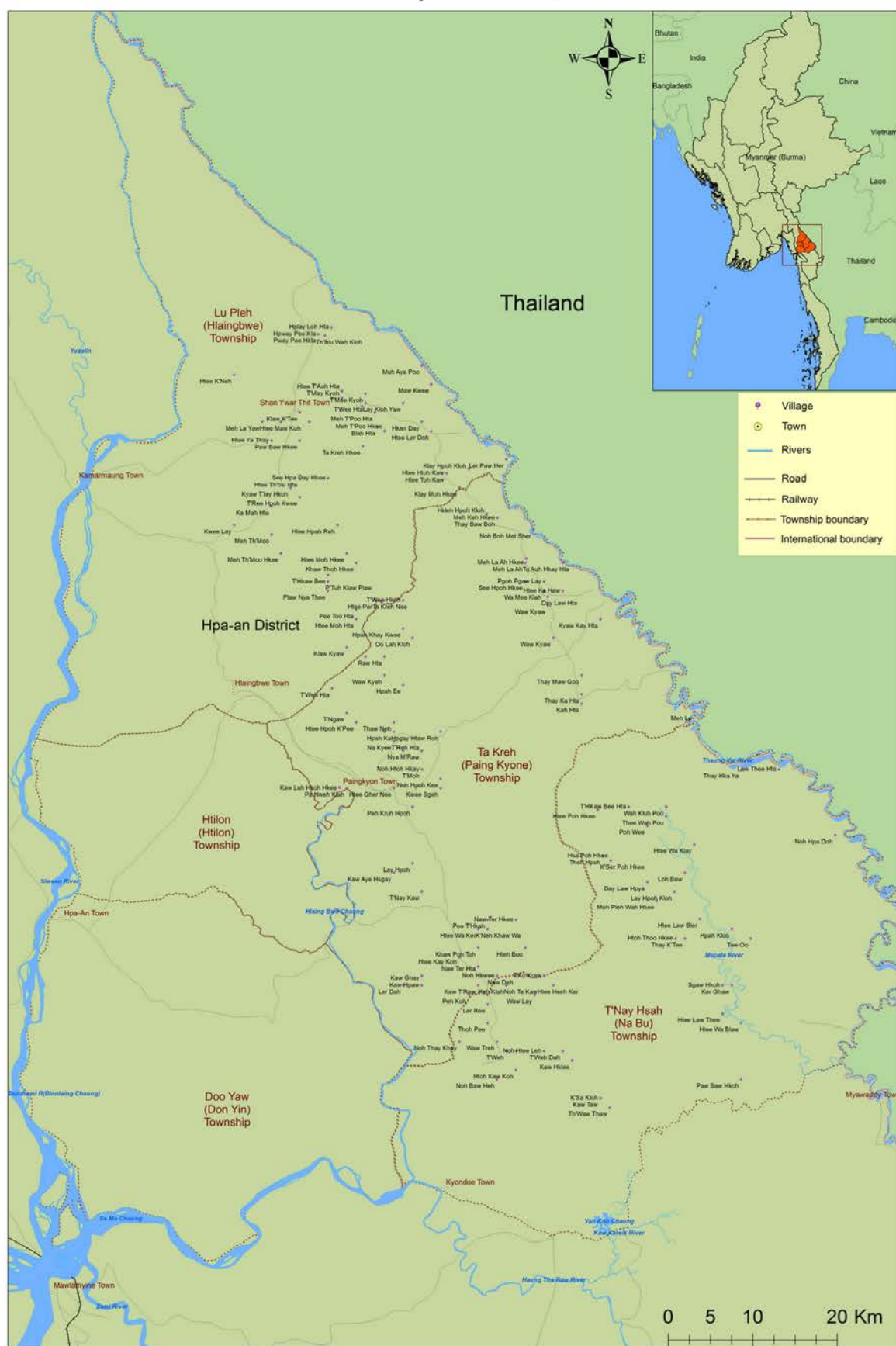
U Zaw Htike, Chairman of the 88 Generation Students in Hpa-an, arranged for the villagers to meet with Nan Say Hwah. Nan Say Hwah stated that she did not have the right to tell the Chief Minister of State to provide compensation to the villagers who lost their land, but she will report about the case to the Minister, as well as to the chairman of the Farmland Investigation Commission.

Further background reading on the situation in Hpa-an District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- “Hpa-an Situation Update: Hlaingbwe, Don Yin and Hti Lon townships,” (April 2014)
- “Hpa-an Short Update: Don Yin Township,” (March 2014)
- “Hpa-an Situation Update: Nabu Township,” (May 2012)
- “Negative impacts of dam building and drug use in Paingkyon and Nabu townships, Hpa-an District,” (May 2014)
- “Chapter: The impact of anti-personnel and other mines in Southeast Myanmar since the January 2012 ceasefire,” (July 2014)



### Hpa-an District



Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)