



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Complaint Letter

July 30, 2015 / KHRG #15-46-CL1

Complaint letter to KNU Agriculture Department in Paingkyon Township regarding land confiscation

The Complaint Letter below was sent to Saw Naw Dee, head of the Agriculture and Land Directorate, from the Karen National Union (KNU) Agriculture Department, Paingkyon Township. It was written by U B--- who is the representative of the land owners whose lands have been confiscated. The villagers' uncultivated lands were confiscated by Cantonment Area Supervisor U Kyaw Hein from Border Guard Force (BGF) Battalion #1015 who then sold them. In the letter below, the villagers whose lands have been confiscated request that the KNU Agriculture Department in Paingkyon Township take action and help them reclaim ownership of their lands.

Complaint Letter | Paingkyon Township, Hpa-an District (May 2015)¹

To:

Saw Naw Dee (KNU Agriculture Department, Paingkyon Township)
Head of the Agriculture and Land Directorate
Paingkyon Township, Kayin State

Subject: Reporting and requesting help to get back the residential compound and lands confiscated in A--- village, Paingkyon Township, Kayin State.

Regarding the above subject, the uncultivated lands, whose owners [reside] in A--- village,² Paingkyon Township, Kayin State, were confiscated by Border Guard Force (BGF)³ Battalion #1015.⁴ Cantonment Area Supervisor U Kyaw Hein divided the lands

¹ This Complaint Letter was submitted to KHRG in June 2015 and is presented here, translated into English exactly as originally written, save for minor edits for clarity and security. It was received along with one situation update and 179 photographs.

² The confiscated lands are located in A--- village, however, the owners reside in other villages listed below.

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 formalised ceasefire agreements with the Burma/Myanmar government and agreed to transform into battalions within the Tatmadaw. BGF battalions are assigned four digit battalion numbers, whereas regular Tatmadaw infantry battalions are assigned two digit battalion numbers and 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 KHRG has received numerous reports of human rights violations involving BGF Battalion #1015, including arbitrary killing of civilians, arbitrary taxation and demands, forced labour, as well as additional cases of land confiscation. For detailed information see, “[Human rights violations by BGF Cantonment](#)

into plots and sold them. This case was not reported to any organisation. Therefore, I appeal and report to you, gentleman, to help us and take action in order for the villagers to get back their lands which have been confiscated. I am also attaching the list of the names of the land owners whose lands have been confiscated.

List of the names of the land owners whose lands have been confiscated

May 1st 2015

No.	Name	Father's name	Village	Original ownership name	Buy/ inheritance	In Use/ Not in use	Signature	Note
1.	U C---	U D---	E---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U C---	
2.	U F---	U G---	E---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use		
3.	U H---	U I---	J---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U H---	
4.	U B---	U L---	E---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U B---	
5.	U M---	U N---	Ae---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U M---	
6.	U O---	U N---	E---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U O---	
7.	U P---	U Q---	E---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U P---	
8.	U R---	U S---	J---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U R---	
9.	U T---	U U---	J---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U T---	
10.	U V---	U W---	J---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use		
11.	U X---	U Y---	J---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use		
12.	Daw Z---	U K---	J---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	Daw Z--	
13.	Daw Aa---	U Ab---	J---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not		

[Area Commander Kya Aye in Paingkyon Township, Hpa-an District, February 2013 to July 2014,](#)” KHRG, September 2014.

						in use		
14	U Ac---	U Ad---	E---	Grandparent	Inheritance	Not in use	U Ac---	

U B---, E--- village
Land owner (representative)

Copy

- Commander in Chief (KNU/KNLA Headquarters)
- Saw Naw Dee (KNU Agriculture Department, Paingkyon Township),
Head of the Agriculture and Land Directorate, Paingkyon Township, Kayin State
- Received

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

- “Hpa-an Situation Update: Hlaingbwe and Nabu townships, December 2014 to January 2015,” (July 2015)
- “Hpa-an Situation Update: Paingkyon Township, March 2014,” (July 2015)
- ““With only our voices, what can we do?": Land confiscation and local response in southeast Myanmar,” (June 2015)
- “Press release: "With only our voices, what can we do?": Land confiscation and local response in southeast Myanmar,” (June 2015)
- “Hpa-an Interview: Saw A---, May 2014,” (May 2015)

Hpa-an District



Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)