

## **Hidden Strengths, Hidden Struggles: Women's testimonies from southeast Myanmar**

### **Appendix: Raw Data Testimony (January 2012 to March 2016)**

This appendix includes the full texts of 159 pieces of KHRG field documentation, which serve as the dataset for *Hidden Strengths, Hidden Struggles: Women's testimonies from southeast Myanmar*. KHRG received this information during the reporting period for this report from January 2016 to March 2016.

KHRG trains villagers in southeast Burma/Myanmar 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 conducting interviews, villagers are trained to use loose question guidelines, but also to encourage interviewees to speak freely about recent events, raise issues that they consider to be important and share their opinions or perspectives on abuse and other local dynamics. KHRG translates all documents and undertakes minor edits only for security and clarity.

During the reporting period, KHRG researchers across southeast Myanmar collected a total of 1,565 interviews, 384 incident reports and 253 situation updates. In addition, a total of 214 complaint letters, 148 land grabbing forms, and 103 written orders issued by civilian and military officials were collected, alongside 44,571 images and 1,700 videos. As this information was received, KHRG staff assessed each piece of documentation and translated those conveying human right concerns identified by women or involving women into English for analysis for this report by a team of Karen information-processing officers, who were supported by native English-speaking capacity-builders. This information was then assessed further and grouped into categories based on topic. The 159 pieces of documentation that have been used in the final version of this report and included in full in this appendix have been selected for their detailed, reliable and representative perspectives on women's experiences in southeast Myanmar, and for showing evidence of agency or action by women. Reports have intentionally been included from all seven KHRG research areas, featuring women of diverse age, background and experience. The information itself is presented here through a direct record of women's voices.

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**Source #1**

<b>Log #</b>	12-3-CL5
<b>Title</b>	Complaint Letter, Hpapun District (January 2012)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>To, Secretary National Human Rights Commission Number (27), Pyay Road</p> <p>After my husband passed away, I stayed with my children and I felt so many troubles. So I want to report my own problems. The DKBA soldiers forced and took my husband, then he stepped on a landmine and died. The DKBA soldiers took my husband a week ago.</p> <p>After my husband passed away, I had to stay with my parents. Because I have bad health, I cannot work. Even if could stay with my parents, it isn't better like [staying with] my own family, because I cannot work as normal. It is better if I can stay with my family and can stay in our own house. But that can't come true anymore. Even though I can stay with my parents or siblings, it is not the same as staying with my husband.</p> <p>I feel like something is not enough for me, and also here [with her parents] it's not my own house so I feel annoyed with myself. If my husband stayed alive and if he can make 1 baht and I can make 100 baht, it's ours. He passed away and I also can't find money, because I have one child. Therefore, I can't work because I can't take my time to find money and also I have bad health.</p> <p>After my husband passed away, the DKBA officer Bo Hla Kyel said that he would take care of me because he took my husband and my husband died under his leadership. He just said that but he didn't come to look after me. Everything I want to say is in this report, and I feel so troubled now.</p> <p>Naw M--- B--- village</p>	

**Source #2<sup>1</sup>**

<b>Log #</b>	12-3-CL6
<b>Title</b>	Complaint Letter to the Secretary of the National Human Rights Commission, October 2011
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>To:</p> <p>Secretary National Human Rights Commission Number (27) Pyi Vehicle Road Yangon Date: 26th October 2011</p> <p>My name is Naw L--- and I live in P--- village, Meh Mgeh village tract, Bu Tho Township,</p>	

<sup>1</sup> This complaint letter was mistakenly used in 'Hidden Strengths, Hidden Struggles' despite not falling within KHRG's reporting period. The inclusion of this complaint letter was due to a logging error and KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that this may have caused.

Hpapun district. I am 20 years old. I am Saw S---'s wife. My husband Saw S--- was taken by the DKBA (Democratic Karen Buddhist Army) and he stepped on a landmine over one year ago. After he stepped on the landmine, he died and left me. After he passed away, he left me his two children, so I have to take care of these two orphan children.

I do not know how to work. When Saw S--- passed away, he didn't leave me any property and also I cannot work for myself. So now, I stay with my parents. It is right [fine] when I stay with my parents and they don't tell me anything. But my siblings told me that I could not work to help them so I felt very sad. Even though I can live and stay like a person [as normal], it is not like a person [as normal]. I have felt many differences other people say, and I feel so weak [disheartened] among the people.

Because my oldest child can ask for bread, sometimes my child asks for bread. It happens sometimes that I do not want to buy for them or that I cannot, that makes me very sad and so weak and makes me miss my husband so much. I do not know what I need but I can tell [you] that the lack of a house [creates a] need after my husband passed away.

La P---

Naw L---

P--- village

Meh Mgeh village tract

### Source #3

<b>Log #</b>	12-4-T2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw A---, January 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Naw A---</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 43</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Buddhist</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen [S'gaw]</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Children:</b> Four children [eldest son is 21 years old and youngest son is 17 years old].</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Teacher</p> <p><b>Location:</b></p> <p><b>Are there armed groups who order villagers to work as porters in your village?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Which armed groups?</b></p> <p>DKBA.</p> <p><b>Do they ask for permission from the village head when they order villagers to work as porters or do they directly order villagers?</b></p> <p>Sometimes they ask for permission from the village head and sometimes they force by their own way [directly order the villagers].</p> <p><b>How do they order villagers? Once a week or once a month?</b></p>	



They call once a month.

**So they order villagers to porter for them. Where do villagers have to start portering from?**

They start from M--- to Ta Pēr Pah.

**How many hours does it take to walk from M--- to Ta Pēr Pah?**

Two hours.

**What kind of things do villagers have to go and porter [carry] for the DKBA?**

They have to carry bullets.

**How many *klo klee* [ammunition for small and heavy weapons] do they make each villager carry?**

I didn't look at whether it was three or five *7-klee's* [RPG-7 ammunition].

**Are there other things villagers have to carry?**

Yes, other things like rice.

**Have you ever gone to be a porter?**

No.

**What about your son or husband?**

I do not have a husband.

**Do you remember the date when villagers had to go and work as porters for the DKBA?**

I did not keep a record [of the date].

**How many villagers do the DKBA order each time?**

Sometimes they order seven to eight people and sometimes they demand ten people.

**Do villagers who go to porter have to sleep on the way or do they go in the morning and come home back in the evening?**

Sometimes they sleep on the way and sometimes they come back directly.

**Do you know the DKBA [unit or leader] that order villages to work as porters?**

It is Officer Tòh Ghāw.

**How many soldiers does Officer Tòh Ghāw command?**

I do not know.

**What is [the DKBA] company commander's name?**

Bàh Yòh.

**Do other villagers from other villages have to work as porters as well or is it just A--- villagers?**

They just order [villagers] from the nearby villages: B--- and C---.

**Do the villagers who porter include women?**

[no response]

**How old are the oldest people who porter?**

50 years old are the oldest [people].

**What about the youngest age?**

Over 20 years old for the oldest [of the young people]. Or 15 to 16 years old for the youngest [people].

**Do DKBA provide food for the villagers who have to go to porter?**

Yes.

**Do they feed the villagers with officer food or soldier food?**

Soldier food.

**Do they provide enough food?**

Yes, it is enough.

**How heavy is the load that each villager has to carry?**

It will be between 3,000 *viss* and 4,000 *viss*.<sup>2</sup>

**Does each person have to carry 3,000 to 4,000 *viss*?**

Yes, because the bullets are very heavy. The lightest load is 1,500 *viss*.

**Can villagers ask to take a rest when they get tired?**

I do not know. Villagers who go and porter for the DKBA, they can't ask to take a rest even when they want to rest. They can't take a rest even the when the DKBA [soldiers] take a rest.

**Do the DKBA soldiers hurt the porters when they are working as porters?**

I heard that they do.

**Do the DKBA [soldiers] hurt the porters?**

<sup>2</sup> A *viss* is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

Mostly there is [this kind of thing].

**How did they hurt them?**

For example, they kick them when they fall down.

**Do the DKBA [soldiers] tie up the porters or guard the porters at night time?**

They tie them up. They do not guard them. The DKBA [soldiers] do not tie up the villagers who are porters but they guard them.<sup>3</sup>

**Do they [DKBA soldiers] follow villagers when they go to the toilet?**

Yes, they do.

**Do the DKBA soldiers look after villagers who get sick?**

No, they do not look after them.

**Do they provide medicine?**

They give them some [medicine] when people go and ask.

**What do they do to villagers who can't work as porters anymore?**

They do not look after them.

**Do villagers still have to porter even when they can't do it anymore?**

The DKBA [soldiers] change the porter when they arrive at the village. If they do not arrive at a village, they do not change the porter. The porters will have to carry [the items] until they get to the village.

**Do they let them come back?**

No.

**Has there been fighting when the villagers have worked as porters for the DKBA?**

No, no fighting has happened.

**Has the DKBA come to the village when villagers are working as porters?**

Sometimes they come but sometimes they do not come.

**What did they do when they came to the village?**

They demanded porters again.

**After they demanded porters, where did they go?**

Sometimes they go forward [onwards through to village] and sometimes they go back to their

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<sup>3</sup> KHRG is in the process of following up to clarify the meaning of this point.

camp.

**Where is the DKBA army camp base?**

Its base is in Məh Mgeh Hta.

**Do the DKBA [soldiers] demand pigs or chickens when they come to the village?**

Yes.

**Do they ask the village head?**

Sometimes they ask from the village head and sometimes they just shoot [the pigs and chickens] on their own.

**Do they get orders from their officer when they shoot?**

Sometimes they are not given orders from their officer. They do it on their own.

**Do they pay a price for when they shoot pigs and chickens?**

No, they don't pay.

**For example, when they shoot a pig, how many viss do you think the pig [weighs]?**

About 1,500 to 1,600 viss.

**How much can you sell 1,500 viss of pig for?**

It will be over 20,000 kyats.

**Do the DKBA [soldiers] rape and kill villagers when they come to the village?**

No.

**Do they loot villagers' property?**

Sometimes when they came they just take it.

**Do the DKBA [soldiers] order villagers to go and work for their camp?**

It happens all the time.

**How many villagers have to go each day?**

If they demand three people from each village or five people from each village, the villages have to provide the amount of people they demand.

**How many villages do they demand [people] from?**

Every village in this village tract.

**Do villagers have to make thatch shingles and cut bamboo for them? If so, how much bamboo do villagers have to cut for them?**

They order [the tasks] village by village.

**How many bamboo poles does a village have to provide?**

For example, if they demand 100 bamboo poles, [the village has to provide] 100 bamboo poles.

**What about thatch shingles? How many do they demand? Do they order villagers to make thatch shingles?**

Yes.

**How many thatch shingles does a village have to make for each time that they order?**

If they demand 500 thatch shingles, villagers have to make 500 thatch shingles.

**What kind of work does the DKBA [soldiers] order villagers to do for them?**

They demand thatch shingles, bamboo, building their camp and fencing their camp.

**Are there any other things?**

No other things.

**Do villagers escape when they go and work for the DKBA?**

No.

**Do you remember the day when villagers had to go and work for the DKBA?**

No, I do not remember.

**What do villagers do when they get sick when working for the DKBA?**

The village head has to replace them [with someone who is healthy].

**Does [he/she] have to hire someone that the village head replaces for him?**

No. [He/She] doesn't need to hire.

**Do the DKBA [soldiers] kill villagers?**

No.

**Is there anything that you want to say about DKBA oppression of the villagers?  
How was the school built? Who supported it?**

Villagers gathered and built this school.

**What standard does the school go up to?**

It goes up to Standard 4.

**How many teachers are there?**

One teacher.

**How much is the teacher paid each year?**

50 baskets of paddy.

**Do they receive support [funding] from others [groups]?**

Yes.

**How much do they get?**

4,000.

**Is it Thai or Burmese currency?**

Thai currency [Baht].

**Who gives support?**

I receive support from KSEAG [Karen State Education Assistance Group].

**Where do you get the school curriculum from? Does the school use the Burmese [Myanmar] government or Kaw Thoo Lei [Karen] government [KNU] curriculum?**

From the above side, we just take Karen [curriculum] and for the rest, we take from the other [Burmese curriculum].

**Does the school allow teaching Karen [language]?**

Yes.

**How many students are there?**

18 students.

**How many girls?**

Six.

**How many boys?**

12 boys.

**Are there difficulties for parents to send their children to school?**

Yes.

**What kind of difficulties?**

The difficulties are that they can't send [their children] to school. They don't have enough food to eat.

**How many children cannot go to school?**

The school here goes up to Standard 4. For students who graduated from Standard 4, their parents cannot send them to Middle School because they do not have enough [money]. This is the difficulty they face.

**Does the school receive support like books?**

Yes, they [receive] support like books. We also receive it from KSEAG.

**How many books does the school receive each year?**

One dozen pens, 12 dozen pencils and over 80 books – 82 books.

**Is it enough to for one year? How [what do] villagers think about education? What opportunities do the students have after they graduate?**

Villagers see education as an important thing. They want their children to get an education so they gather items and build up the school so that their children can go to school. Students who graduated go to refugee camps and they do not come back. They continue their studies aboard.

**Is there a clinic in your village?**

Yes. No, there is no clinic in our village. There is one helper [medic]. People come to him when they get sick.

**What do villagers do when the disease is serious?**

If it is not serious, he can treat it but he doesn't accept [treat patients] if the disease is serious. He sends them to under [other areas].

**Which hospital does he send them to?**

He sends to them to Kaw Tàw Kòh.

**Are there difficulties going from here to Kaw Tàw Kòh?**

No.

**What about the cost?**

Yes.

**How much do you have to pay to go from here to Kaw Tàw Kòh?**

5,000 kyats.

**Do [the patients] have to pay when [they] go to Kaw Tàw Kòh?**

Yes.

**How much do [the patients] have to pay for medicine?**

I do not know.

**What are the most [common] diseases that villagers suffer in the village?**

Malaria and fever.

**Does it cause death?**

No.

**Are there any other issues that you want to talk about?**

No.

**Do you want us to send your information to the UN or ILO?**

It depends on where you want to send it.

#### Source #4

<b>Log #</b>	12-5-T1-T1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw P--- (female, 30), November 2011 <sup>4</sup>
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	B--- village, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>Ethnicity: Karen  Religion: Buddhist  Marital Status: Married  Occupation: Hill field farmer  Name: Naw P---</p> <p><b>Where do you farm?</b></p> <p>I farm on the other side of the river.</p> <p><b>Do you have to travel far from here to get to the other side of the river?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>How many hours does it take?</b></p> <p>It takes one hour.</p> <p><b>Do you have a family?</b></p> <p>Yes, I have a family.</p> <p><b>How many children do you have?</b></p> <p>I have four children.</p> <p><b>What is the name of your eldest child?</b></p>	

<sup>4</sup> This interview was mistakenly used in 'Hidden Strengths, Hidden Struggles' despite not falling within KHRG's reporting period. The inclusion of this interview was due to a logging error and KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that this may have caused.



His name is Saw G---.

**And what is the name of your youngest child?**

His name is Saw H---.

**How old is your eldest child?**

He is 13 years old.

**How old is your youngest child?**

He is four years old.

**Does your eldest child go to school?**

He has only been studying for two years.

**How many standards [grades] has he studied?**

He hasn't studied any standards because he has only studied for two years.

**How about the youngest child?**

He can't study because he is four years old.

**How many armed groups have come to your village?**

The Border Guard [BGF], DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army] and the KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] have come to the village.

**What do the Border Guard [BGF] do when they come to the village?**

They order [villagers to] porter.

**What things do they order people to carry?**

They order people to carry rice, packages, and clothes.

**Where do they order people to carry those things to?**

Some [must] reach A--- [village].

**How long does it take people to porter between here and A---?**

One hour.

**What do the DKBA [soldiers] do when they come to the village?**

They order people to carry things to D--- [village].

**What things do they order [villagers] to carry?**

They order them to carry bullets.

**How long do they order people to carry the bullets for?**

Sometimes it takes one day and sometimes two.

**What kinds of bullets?**

Bullets for heavy weapons.

**How many people do they order from the village head when they order [villagers to] porter?**

They order ten people at one time.

**Do you always have to porter for them, or is it once per month?**

For the past two or three months they have ordered [villagers to porter] three or four times per month.

**Have you ever portered things for the Burmese Army [Tatmadaw]?**

Yes, I have portered once.

**How many days did they order you to carry things for at that time?**

It took one or two hours.

**Did they release you?**

Yes, they released me.

**How many soldiers were with the armed group that ordered you to carry their things?**

There were 50 or 60 soldiers.

**What was their battalion [number]?**

I don't know their battalion [number].

**Do you know their column [number]?**

I don't know their column [number] either.

**How about their company?**

I don't know that either because they [that particular Tatmadaw company] just came once.

**What was the name of the column commander?**

I don't know.

**When they ordered you to porter did you only go with the villagers?**

We went with the Burmese [Army] soldiers. Sometimes, they ask the village head and the village head sent them.

**Did they beat you?**

Sometimes they didn't beat us but sometimes they beat us. The [B---] village head died.

**How many people died?**

One person died.

**Did they [Tatmadaw soldiers] beat them with their hands?**

No, they were ambushed with a remote controlled explosive device.

**Had they [Tatmadaw soldiers] ordered people to guide them when they were ambushed by the remote controlled explosive device?**

Yes, they were ambushed on the upper part of the road [by B--- village]. They [Tatmadaw soldiers] were going back with the DKBA [soldiers].

**Where on the road were they ambushed?**

In K--- [village].

**Were any women or little boys included when you were portering?**

It was mostly men.

**How old were the men?**

Some were 30 years old and some were 40 years old.

**Did they hurt the men who portered?**

Sometimes, they kicked and stamped on them.

**When the Burmese [Army] soldiers came to the village and ordered the [villagers to] porter, did they shoot and eat their chickens?**

Yes, they shot and ate their chickens. They stole some.

**How many chickens did they shoot and eat?**

There were 10 or 20 chickens. They ate every chicken they saw. Some cows and buffalos were hit by landmines.

**Where did they [Border Guard soldiers] plant landmines?**

They planted them in the paddy fields and they [the landmines] hit and killed people, cows and buffalos.

**Which armed group planted those?**

It was the Border Guard [BGF]. We don't know their officer's name because we didn't see them.

**Did the landmines hit the villagers?**

Yes, they hit one villager when they were portering [for the DKBA] in T--- [village].

**What was the name of the one who was hit and killed [by the landmine]?**

His name was L---. It wasn't this year but in the past [2010].

**Where did he live?**

He lived in T--- [village].

**How old was he?<sup>5</sup>**

He was around 30 years old.

**Was he single or married?**

He was married.

**How many children did he have?**

He had two children.

**Do you know his eldest child's name?**

I don't know. His youngest child is 10 days old.

**How many years ago was he hit by the landmine?**

In the past year [2011] at the water festival.

**In which month is the water festival?**

It's around April.

**Did you see the one [person] who was hit by a landmine yourself or did you hear about it from other people?**

That one I saw myself because he [the person hit by the landmine] was my cousin and the head [of B---] village.

**What about the one [the villager who was hit by a landmine] who you said was from T---?**

I didn't see that one. I only heard people talk [about it].

**Are you certain [that L--- was killed by a Border Guard landmine while portering for the DKBA]?**

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<sup>5</sup>It should be noted that although the interviewer is enquiring here about L---, a T--- villager who was killed by a Border Guard landmine in 2010, the villager at this point begins talking about a separate incident initially mentioned earlier in the interview, concerning a B--- village head who was killed by a remote controlled explosive device whilst portering for the Tatmadaw in approximately April 2011. This continues for the next six questions, before moving back to discussing L--- from T--- village.

Yes, I'm certain.

**Where is the Thein Sein SPDC<sup>6</sup> government's Border Guard's base?**

It is based in E--- [village].

**What is that [Border Guard] company commander's name?**

People call him Hpuh Meh Ka.

**How many soldiers does he have?**

I don't know.

**Naw, when you said that you had to carry things for the Burmese [Army] soldiers; did they provide you with rice?**

Yes, they provided that.

**How many times a day did they provide you with rice?**

On the day that I portered, I didn't eat even though they provided me [with rice].

**When other people portered, do they provide them [with rice]?**

Sometimes, [but they] didn't get enough rice.

**Did they provide them with the same food as their soldiers?**

Even if they provided them with [the same] food as their soldiers, they sometime didn't get enough rice to eat.

**Did the food they provide include delicious food?**

Yes, it included delicious food.

**Naw, how much did the things that they ordered you to carry weigh?**

They weighed twenty or thirty viss (32kg. / 70.4lb. or 48kg. / 105.6lb., respectively).<sup>7</sup>

**What things did you carry?**

Rice.

**How many baskets of rice did you have to carry?**

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<sup>6</sup> In Karen, the Burmese phrases *Na Ah Pa* (SPDC) and *Na Wa Ta* (SLORC) are commonly used to refer to the Burmese government or to Burma's state army, the Tatmadaw. Many older Karen villagers who were accustomed to using the phrase *Na Wa Ta* (SLORC) before 1997 continue to use that phrase, even though the SLORC has not officially existed since 1997. Similarly, despite the official dissolution of the SPDC in March 2011, many Karen villagers continue to use the phrase *Na Ah Pa* (SPDC) to refer to the Burmese government or to the Tatmadaw; see: "Mission Accomplished as SPDC 'dissolved'," *Myanmar Times*, April 4-10<sup>th</sup> 2011. The term *Na Ah Pa* was used by the villager who wrote this conducted this interview and interviewee and "SPDC" is therefore retained in the translation of this interview.

<sup>7</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6kg. / 3.52lb.

I carried only one basket (32kg. / 70.4lb.).

**Could you ask to rest on the way if you became tired whilst you were carrying things?**

I didn't rest at any time.

**Did the Thein Sein's SPDC government people [Border Guard soldiers] kick or stamp on the villagers when you were portering?**

Yes, if they were male.

**Which village were the villagers who were kicked and stamped on from?**

Villagers from all the villages that were ordered to carry [supplies] to E--- village [were kicked and stamped on]. They went at nighttime.

**Do you know the names of the villagers who were kicked and stamped on?**

No, I don't know.

**Did they kick and stamp on the porters who couldn't carry their things?**

[The Border Guard Company Commander] Hpuh Meh Ka kicked and stamped [on porters], but he didn't pull their hair or slap them.

**When you carried their things, did you sometimes have to sleep there [away from your village]?**

If a man portered, they had to sleep [away from their village] for a week [at a time].

**When they had to sleep [away from their village] for a week, did they let them sleep in a nice place?**

No, they had to sleep in the bushes.

**When the porters were sleeping in the bushes did they wait near them with guns?**

Yes, they waited near them with guns, as they were afraid that they would try to escape.

**Did they tie them up?**

No, they didn't tie them up.

**When the porters were staying overnight with the soldiers [whilst on portering duty], did the soldiers follow them if they went to defecate?**

Yes, they followed them.

**Naw, please tell us. Did they look after the porters who were ordered by the SPDC Army [Tatmadaw] if the porters were ill?**

No, they didn't look after them. When they came back they had to look after each other.

**Did they give them medicine?**

No, they didn't give them [medicine].

**Did other Burmese Army [Battalions] come to the village when people went to porter?**

The Yellow Scarves<sup>8</sup> came. They came to bring back the village head.

**Did they hurt the villagers when they entered the village?**

No, they didn't hurt them.

**Did they shoot and eat their chickens?**

They shot and ate chickens on the other side of the river. They shot and ate a lot and they just took them [without asking].

**How many chickens did they shoot and eat?**

They ate all the chickens that the villagers had, and also little goats.

**How many goats?**

There were five or six goats.

**What about the chickens?**

There were seven or eight chickens.

**When they entered the village, did they hurt, torture, or kill [any of] the villagers?**

They killed one person in C--- [village].

**Did they kill a male or female [villager]?**

They were male.

**How old was he?**

He was 50 years old.

**What was his name?**

His name was N---.

**Did they take the villagers' things?**

Yes, they took pots, spoons and clothes from owners who weren't at home and when no one could see them.

**How many things did they take?**

They took everything from the huts. They also took all of the paddy and milled rice.

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<sup>8</sup> 'Yellow scarves' is a term commonly used by villagers to denote the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), in reference to the yellow scarves that form part of their uniform.

**How much paddy and milled rice did they take?**

There were five or six baskets (160 kg. / 352 lb. or 192 kg. / 422.4 lb., respectively) of rice in ten huts.

**Have you ever seen the SPDC Army order the villagers to work for them?**

Yes, I have.

**What things do they [the villagers] have to do for them?**

[They have to] go and cut bamboo poles.

**What types of bamboo do they have to cut?**

They had to cut *wah bway* [a type of bamboo].

**How long [were the pieces of bamboo]?**

[Each] was 20 cubits (30 ft. / 9.14 m.)<sup>9</sup>.

**How many did they order?**

If [they ordered] 50 [bamboo poles] per house, people had to cut 50 [bamboo poles]. There were [censored for security] houses.

**When you portered, did you come back by yourself, did they release you, or did you try to escape?**

We didn't try to escape. We came back by ourselves.

**Did they hire you [provide payment] when you carried things for them?**

No, they didn't hire us.

**Did you carry [supplies] for free?**

Yes, we carried [supplies] for free.

**Has the armed group [Border Guard] that you carried things for come to your village again since you returned?**

Later, they came but now they don't come.

**Did they reprimand [the villagers] or order [things] when they came?**

Yes, they ordered things.

**What things did they order?**

They ordered the village head to find chickens.

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<sup>9</sup> A standard measurement of the length of bamboo poles commonly referred to in Karen as the length from one's finger tips to one's elbow, about 18 inches / 45.7 cm.



**How many chickens did they order them to find?**

They ordered them to find four or five viss (6.4 kg. / 14.08 lb. or 8 kg. / 17.6 lb., respectively). If they [the villagers] didn't do as they ordered, they [Border Guard soldiers] slapped their faces.

**Did they kick and slap them?**

Yes, they kicked and slapped them.

**Whose face did they slap when they came to the village?**

They slapped the village head's face.

**How many times did they slap him?**

They slapped him two or three times.

**What is the village head's name?**

His name is Saw W---.

**You said the village head is Saw W---. What is the name of the person who slapped the village heads' face?**

The [Border Guard] Company Commander is Hpuih Meh Ka.

**Which battalion does he belong to?**

I don't know. I only saw that they came [to the village].

**Do you have any information that you want to tell me about when the SPDC [Border Guard] came to the village and harmed the villagers?**

They ordered people to repair the vehicle road [which passes through B--- village], pick up coconut skins, and clear [rubbish and vegetation] from the roadside.

**How many coconut skins did they order you to pick up?**

There were a lot. The whole village [had to participate].

**They ordered you to pick up the coconut skins. Why did you have to do that?**

They ordered us to clean the road.

**When you said that they ordered [villagers to] repair the vehicle road, how many villagers did they order?**

They ordered the whole house [village].

**When they ordered people to repair the vehicle road, did they scold or beat [the villagers] if they didn't do it?**

Yes, they did. They hurt them.

**Do you know the names of the villagers who worked on that [the vehicle road]?**

I can't name them because they ordered the whole house [village].

**What kinds of things did they do to hurt [the villagers]?**

They hurt them by doing things like slapping their faces and beating them about the head.

**How many times did they slap them?**

If they [Border Guard soldiers] slapped [people's faces], they would slap them as much as they wanted, such as four or five times.

**Which was the armed group that slapped the villagers' faces?**

It was [the Border Guard led by Company Commander] Hpuh Meh Ka.

**Did Hpu Meh Ka come alone when he ordered villagers to do clear and repair the vehicle road? [If not], how many people did he come with?**

He came with his fellows [soldiers].

**How many of his fellows?**

There were 40 or 50 [soldiers].

**Naw, do you want to report anything else?**

I don't have anything else to report. I only have to report my health and vocation.

**What do you want to report about the SPDC Army?**

[They] kick and stamp [on villagers], and harm them by slapping their faces and pulling their hair. They order [villagers] from the village head to travel [when forced to porter for or guide soldiers], porter, cut bamboo poles, trees and thatch shingles, everything. We always have to go to E--- and Meh Koo Hta [villages]. I can't tell you everything. We have to go and work once every four or five days, once every two or three days, once every three days and once every second day. They always order [things] and we always have to go to them.

**Do you want to report anything else, like their demanding chickens?**

They enter [the village] and demand chickens without paying for them. They steal. They take rice paddy and milled rice. Their officer orders them to steal things and to take paddy and milled rice at night-time. Cows and buffalos are hit by the landmines. They go and hurt all the villagers.

**Is there anything else?**

The citizens want [this to stop] because they suffer and it's very difficult.

**Do you want to report anything else?**

Only that we would be happy if the Burmese soldiers didn't order us to do things or oppress us, if there were development, and if they went back to their country. We want our leaders

from above [Karen National Union (KNU) headquarters] to help us.

**About education, did the SPDC [Army] or another armed group build [a school] in your village?**

The leaders from above [KNU headquarters] built it.

**What kinds of leaders?**

I can't name them.

**Which leaders built the school?**

The KNU.

**How was your school built?**

The KNU built it.

**Who helped the KNU?**

The logging people helped them.

**How did the logging people help them?**

They provided trees [as building materials].

**How much does each [logging] person provide?**

They [the loggers] help one school at a time. If they have cut the trees that year they provide them [the school] with money, one million [kyat] (US \$1222.49).<sup>10</sup>

**What subjects are taught at the school?**

The subjects are Karen, Burmese and English [languages].

**Are the teachers male or female?**

[There is a] female teacher.

**Where does the female teacher live?**

K--- [village].

**Does the female teacher who teaches here get a salary?**

The [KNU] leaders help them a little.

**How much do they give them?**

5,000 [baht] (US \$166.67).

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<sup>10</sup> As of April 10<sup>th</sup> 2012, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this interview are based on a rate of 818 kyat to US \$1. This reflects new measures taken by Burma's central bank on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 to initiate a managed float of the kyat, thus replacing the previous fixed rate of 6.5 kyat to US \$1.

**How much is it [their salary] for one month?**

That's [their salary] for the whole year.

**Is that in Thai or Burmese currency?**

Thai currency [baht].

**How many students attend the school here?**

There are only 20 students this year.

**How many standards are taught?**

Four standards are taught.

**How many teachers?**

There is only one teacher.

**What teaching curriculum is used? Is it from the Burmese or *Kaw Thoo Lei*?<sup>11</sup>**

The teachings are taken from the *Kaw Thoo Lei* [curriculum].

**Are people allowed to teach the Karen language here?**

There are Karen books, Burmese books, and English books.

**Can they teach [Karen] freely?**

Yes, freely.

**How many students can't attend the school in the village?**

There are around [censored for security] students.

**What about those who attend the school?**

There are [censored for security] [students].

**Are there any problems [which make it difficult] for parents to send their children to school?**

Some parents have [problems] because they don't have enough food and they can't grow enough paddy.

**How can they send their children to the school?**

They can send them because the leaders [KNU] help them.

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<sup>11</sup> Both the researcher conducting the interview and the interviewee used the term 'Kaw Thoo Lei', which refers to Karen State as demarcated by the Karen National Union (KNU). The exact meaning and origin of the term 'Kaw Thoo Lei' is disputed; see: Jonathan Falla. *True Love and Bartolomew: Rebels on the Burmese border*, Cambridge University Press: 1991.

**What do the villagers in the village know about education?**

They know that they can live together and attend the school.

**What is the future plan for those who will attend the school?**

They need the leaders' [KNU's] help.

**What are their [the students'] opinions of the village after they have attended the school and become educated?**

[After graduating they will be] useful for the country.

**What opportunities are there for people who live here and finish school?**

They can study medicine.

**What else?**

If their education is improving, they go to teach in other [people's] houses [in the village].

**Whose houses [villages] do they go and teach at?**

[They go to] W--- village.

... *[Censored for security]*.

**Source #5**

<b>Log #</b>	12-10-S1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Situation Update: September 2011 to January 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>BGF Battalion #1017's use of forced labour</b></p> <p>On September 26<sup>th</sup> 2011, Border Guard Force (BGF) Officer Dih Dih and Second Officer Kyaw Naw, of Battalion #1017, which is based in Za Ya Phyu [village] beside Meh Breh village, forced the villagers of Th---, Sh---, G--- and M--- to work.<sup>12</sup> The people of these four villages had to harvest corn. There were two hundred villagers, including women and children, who had to work. On September 27<sup>th</sup> 2011, all two hundred villagers went to work for them, but the next day less than two hundred villagers went, so they [BGF soldiers] forced the villagers to stand in the sun for two hours, and then made them work. The villagers said that Officer Dih Dih was very aggressive. He made the villagers work like the SPDC Army [Tatmadaw]<sup>13</sup> does, ordering villagers to harvest beans and corn. Whenever</p>	

<sup>12</sup> This incident of forced labour is also described in a previously published report, "Pa'an Situation Update: September 2011," KHRG, October 2011.

<sup>13</sup> In Karen, the Burmese phrases *Na Ah Pa* (SPDC) and *Na Wa Ta* (SLORC) are commonly used to refer to the Burmese government or to Burma's state army, the Tatmadaw. Many older Karen villagers who were accustomed to using the phrase *Na Wa Ta* (SLORC) before 1997 continue to use that phrase, even though the SLORC has not officially existed since 1997. Similarly, despite the official dissolution of the SPDC in March 2011, many Karen villagers continue to use the phrase *Na Ah Pa* (SPDC) to refer to the Burmese government or

they come, they force the villagers to carry bullets, landmines, and rice and other food. When they [the BGF soldiers] were planting landmines, they ordered villagers to carry the landmines for them. They order villagers [to porter] every day because their camp is on Kler Law Seh hill slope. The villagers have to carry water and cook food for them, and five villagers have to go every day. They force the villagers to repair their camp, to cut firewood and build a fence around their camp. Villagers who are not available have to hire other villagers to go for them and they have to pay them 3,000 kyat (US \$3.67)<sup>14</sup> per day.

### **The BGF planted landmines, which caused problems for the villagers, and their buffalos and cows**

On September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2011, BGF troops [from Battalion #1017] raided a KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] camp on Sh--- hill slope. After they raided [the camp], they began to plant one hundred landmines around Sh--- village near the villagers' huts. They also planted landmines in K--- village tract, but I don't know how many. In Th---village, a 28-year-old villager named Saw Gk--- stepped on a landmine. I don't know the exact day, but it was in October 2011. On December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2011, a Sh--- villager's legs were cut off. I don't know her real name, but people call her Naw R--- and she is 32-years-old. In K--- village tract, seven villagers were injured: (1) Saw Y--- aged 35, from M--- village; (2) Saw N--- aged 28, from M--- village; (3) Saw H--- aged 48, from A--- village; (4) Saw E--- aged 36, from Ny---; (5) Saw L--- aged 37, from T---, (6) Saw U--- aged 37, from Ny---, who stepped on a landmine when he went to his farm, but couldn't deal with the pain so he shot himself with his musket; and (7) Naw P--- aged 8, from Ny--- village. Two Muslim people who came to buy cows were also killed. The two Muslims' names and villages were unknown so their bodies were left in the place where they died. These two Muslim people had stepped on the same landmine and were killed together.

### **The BGF landmines injured the villagers' livestock**

Naw S---lives in Ny--- village, and one of her buffalos and one cow [were killed by landmines]. Two cows [belonging to] Saw T---, and one goat and one cow belonging to Saw W--- [were killed by landmines]. Many of the other villagers also lost their cows and buffalos, but they do not know if it was because of the landmines or something else. They heard explosions, sometimes once a day, and sometimes twice, and sometimes even four times a day. Because BGF [Battalion #1017] planted landmines the villagers have to keep their cows in a cattle pen and their animals don't get enough food to eat.

### **The BGF planted landmines in K---, M--- and N---village tracts**

Officer Dih Dih of BGF Battalion #1017 is based near Meh Preh Bridge at Za Ya Phyu camp. The name of Battalion #1017's second officer is Kyaw Naw. They are responsible for the region of P---, and K--- and M--- [village tracts]. On September 4<sup>th</sup> 2011, Second Officer Kyaw Naw ordered the villagers to recruit more soldiers. In these three areas [of P---, K--- and M--- village tracts], is the KNLA Battalion #101 and DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army] soldiers [commanded by] Na Kha Mway<sup>15</sup>. The KNLA and DKBA soldiers have

to the Tatmadaw; see: "Mission Accomplished as SPDC 'dissolved'," Myanmar Times, April 4-10th 2011. The term *Na Ah Pa* was used by the villager who wrote this report and "SPDC" is therefore retained in the translation of this report.

<sup>14</sup> As of May 1<sup>st</sup> 2012, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report/interview are based on a rate of 818 kyat to 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.

<sup>15</sup> DKBA forces in Hpa-an and Dooplaya districts that refused to transform into Tatmadaw Border Guard battalions and which, in November 2010, began fighting Tatmadaw forces have been variously referred to as DKBA #907, *Klo Htoo Baw* (Golden Drum), and Brigade #5. Each of these terms refers to different configurations of DKBA units commanded by the brigadier general commonly known as Na Kha Mway, whose

stopped the villagers from giving [their villagers to serve as soldiers] to the Border Guard because they have become ‘Burmese dogs’: *“Pgħa k’kyaw may aw twee nuh htee nay a’tħa law twee say kaw law”* [literally ‘if a human drinks dog milk their heart also becomes like that of a dog’]. They [KNLA and DKBA soldiers] also told [villagers from] S---, K--- and L--- village tracts not to give any people to them [the BGF]. As a result, the BGF planted a lot of landmines beside the village, near people’s farm huts, where the villagers collect leaves [for making thatch shingles], and beside wells.

### **The village heads of villages in Noh Kay, Htee Poh Kyaw and Htee Klay village tracts left their positions**

On September 4<sup>th</sup> 2011, the BGF [Battalion #1017] recruited new soldiers. People who have already been village heads did not dare to take the responsibility of village head. In the village, one person had to take on the responsibility of village head for one year. This year especially, villagers did not dare to serve as the village head because the DKBA combined with KNLA troops to stop the villagers from giving new soldiers [to the BGF]. So this year, the villagers have not dared to be the village heads and they have fled. [As a result] the villagers did not have village heads, so the villagers now pick a monthly village head, which can be a woman or a man. In that area [Noh Kay village tract], one villager told me about a village head Naw D---, from A--- village, who the BGF had forced to go and look for the one-year village heads [that had run away]. [They said that] *“If you can’t find them you will have to go and stay in Koh Koh [at the Border Guard base], and you won’t be allowed to go back to your village. You will have to call five villagers each day to come and help you work in Koh Koh.”* The work that Naw D--- had to do in Koh Koh included carrying water, cooking food, cutting firewood and clearing the vegetation within their camp perimeter. Naw D--- had to stay in Koh Koh for one month and after that the villagers elected a new village head, and Naw D--- was able to go back to [A---] village.

### **The KNLA, DKBA, KPF [Karen Peace Force] and the BGF cooperated and called the villagers to a meeting**

On January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012, KNLA Battalion #101, the DKBA, BGF and KPF made peace and gathered the villagers and village heads from Htee Klay and Noh Kay village tracts at Meh Pah Leh monastery to tell them that they would not fight anymore and that they would live in peace. One of the village heads stood up and said *“If so, could you remove all the landmines that you have planted beside our village, in our farms and the places we collect leaves? I beg you. We don’t dare to go and work on our farms anymore; we don’t dare to let our cattle out or collect leaves. Please remove the landmines for us.”* As the village head mentioned this in the meeting, they [representatives from the armed groups mentioned] agreed to remove the landmines, but ten days have passed already and they have not come to remove

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real name is Saw Lah Pwe. Na Kha Mway left the KNU/KNLA in 1997 and became the commander of DKBA Battalion #907; in 2007 he was promoted to head four DKBA battalions (#901, #906, #907 and a security battalion) as the commander of the *Klo Htoo Baw* [Golden Drum] Tactical Command. In May 2009 this unit was reconfigured as DKBA Brigade #5, with Na Kha Mway commanding Battalions #901, 905, 906, 907 and 909; Brigade #5 was active in the Kya-In Seik Kyi, Kawkareik and Myawaddy areas of Doooplaya and Hpa-an districts. In September 2011, it was reported that remaining DKBA forces were to be reconfigured into two tactical commands, *Klo Htoo Wah* and *Klo Htoo Lah*, and that Na Kha Mway would be the senior commander of these forces. Most recently, in early November 2011, Brigade #5 signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burmese government in which demands for its forces to transform into Border Guard units have been dropped, and the brigade has moved to re-establish its headquarters at Wah Lay, Kawkareik Township, Doooplaya District (Sone Seen Myaing, Myawaddy Township); see: “DKBA to accelerate military tactics,” *The Irrawaddy*, September 8<sup>th</sup> 2011; and “DKBA Brigade 5 Reaches Ceasefire with Naypyidaw,” *The Irrawaddy*, November 4<sup>th</sup> 2011. For more on the origins of the current conflict and the transformation of DKBA troops into Border Guard battalions, see: “Protection concerns expressed by civilians amidst conflict in Doooplaya and Pa’an districts,” KHRG, November 2010.



them yet, and it's causing problems for the village.

### **The DKBA made a ceasefire with the Burmese government**

On November 8<sup>th</sup> 2011, the DKBA was transformed into the BGF.<sup>16</sup> Some of the DKBA soldiers did not want to be transformed into the BGF so they ran to the KNLA, and some turned their guns back against the Burmese government. On October 4<sup>th</sup> 2011, they discussed a ceasefire with the Burmese government and on October 6<sup>th</sup> 2011, they confirmed and published a specific [ceasefire agreement]. The DKBA set up one office in Myawaddy. They named it [the office] the Liaison Office. On December 9<sup>th</sup> 2011, fighting happened [between an unidentified armed group and Tatmadaw Battalion #544] in a DKBA area in D--- village. A second lieutenant from the [Burmese] government [Tatmadaw] Battalion #544 was killed, and two corporals and five other soldiers were injured. The SPDC Army did not inform them [the DKBA] about their activities and they [the Tatmadaw] go wherever they want to, so no one knows who attacked them.

### **The DKBA transformation into the BGF and the impact on soldiers' opportunities**

Since the military government transformed them [the DKBA units] into the BGF, the BGF no longer has the chance to do business. The [Burma] military government makes them make cement and do farming. They are not allowed to do business such as mining or logging so the BGF soldiers under their control try to find ways to avoid being soldiers. Some have to be BGF soldiers for one year, six months, or three years, and some for seven years. The military government does not allow them to recruit more soldiers. One of the villagers said that the Border Guard soldiers will last no longer than three years and that it [the BGF] will disappear. They [the soldiers] just want to complete their months and years [contract].

### **Civilian's opinions on the KNU ceasefire agreement [with the Burma government]**

On January 11<sup>th</sup> 2012, at 8:00 the KNU travelled from Myawaddy to Hpa-an to sign a ceasefire agreement, which they signed on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012. On January 13<sup>th</sup> 2012, they left for Nay Pyi Daw. This ceasefire project made some of villagers so happy because they have experienced conflict and their villages had been destroyed. Some have had to flee, some people have died, some have had their legs and hands blown off, and some have also had their houses burnt down so they really wish for the ceasefire to happen. However, some of the villagers questioned how the Burmese [government] will treat the KNU. The Burmese [government] is good at lying so I will wait and see what will happen because they have tried to do this so many times [already] but it has never come true. I asked them, "*If the ceasefire really happens, will there still be forced labour in the area or will there be no more forced labour?*" Some of the forced labour will decrease, such as the villagers will not have to porter during conflict. In the area, there will be no more villagers who are arrested and forced to porter. The portering of rations to the army camps will decrease. Recruitment [into the military] will also lessen. The forcing of villagers to work will also decrease. The rule of law will become better, which will mean that the abuses against villagers will decrease.

<sup>16</sup> While Tatmadaw and DKBA units have for years operated together, this operational hierarchy became formalised with the DKBA's transformation into a 'Border Guard Force' under control of the Tatmadaw and containing a fixed number quota of Tatmadaw officers. This transformation dates to at least May 2009, when commanding officers stated in a high-level meeting of DKBA officers that the DKBA would transform itself into a 'Border Guard Force.' Leaked minutes from the May 2009 meeting are retained by KHRG on file. Ceremonies attended by Tatmadaw commanders officially announced the transformation of large portions of the DKBA into Border Guard Forces in September 2010; see, for example: "Border Guard Forces of South-East Command formed in Paingkyon of Kayin State," *New Light of Myanmar*, August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010; and "Border Guard Force formed at Atwinkwinkalay region, Myawady Township, Kayin State," *New Light of Myanmar*, August 25<sup>th</sup> 2010.



**Source #6**

<b>Log #</b>	12-31-D1
<b>Title</b>	Situation Update   Tantabin Township, Toungoo District (January to April 2012)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Published May 2012 <a href="http://khrhg.org/2012/05/12-31-d1/toungoo-situation-update-tantabin-township-january-march-2012">http://khrhg.org/2012/05/12-31-d1/toungoo-situation-update-tantabin-township-january-march-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Tantabin Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p><b>Burma Army Situation</b></p> <p>There are two Burma army [Tatmadaw] troops operating in Tantabin Township, Toungoo District. In January 2012, Military Operations Command [MOC] #9 was sending rations between military camps in Toungoo District. During the time that MOC #9 was responsible for sending rations, Light Infantry Division [LID] #66 was responsible for road security. In late February 2012, MOC #9 went back [to Kler La army camp] and LID #66 was still in control of the area. LID #66 is based in Kler La army camp and their commander's name is Win Bo Shwe.</p> <p>Under LID #66, there are two Tactical Operations Commands [TOC]. TOC #1 is based in Play Hsa Loh army camp and TOC #2 is based in Bu Hsa Hkee army camp. Under these two TOCs, there are seven battalions currently occupying villages in Tantabin Township. Infantry Battalion [IB] #1 soldiers are based in 16-miles and 20-miles army camps, and in the villages of P---, P'Leh Wa, A--- and H---. Light Infantry Battalion [LIB] #5 is based in K--- and in 48-miles. LIB #6 was based in Y---, Naw Soe and Thee Muh Paw Soe villages. IB #11 is based in Kay Bpoo village. IB #35 is based in T--- and O--- villages. IB #14 is based in Ht--- and W--- villages. IB #80 is based in Th---, R--- and B--- villages.</p> <p>The Tatmadaw and KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] made an agreement that the Tatmadaw soldiers are not allowed to go further than 150 yards from vehicle roads. Likewise, the KNLA soldiers are not allowed to go closer than 150 yards to the vehicle roads. However, sometimes the Tatmadaw soldiers go into the restricted area to fish in the river. Sometimes, they have encounters with villagers.</p> <p><b>Villagers Livelihood Situation</b></p> <p>In Tantabin Township, Toungoo District, the main occupation for villagers is growing cardamom, betelnut and betelnut leaves<sup>17</sup>, durian, and mangosteen plantations. A very few number of villagers farm hill fields. After the ceasefire talks between the KNU [Karen National Union] and the Burma Government in 2012, the situation started to become more flexible and the villagers became more confident in talking to local Tatmadaw officers. However, human rights abuses continue, such as villagers being forced to porter military rations when the Tatmadaw transports rations between army camps. When this happened, villagers were also still forced to provide wood, thatch and bamboo to the local Tatmadaw army camp. Villagers are still forced to do work, such as transporting things for soldiers that were sent to them from their families. Movement restrictions [by the Tatmadaw] also still occur for villagers.</p>

<sup>17</sup> In Burmese, "betel nut" and "betel leaf" are referred to as "konywet" and "konthih," as if they are from the same plant. The Burmese names are also commonly used by Karen language speakers. "Betel nut" is the seed from an Areca Palm tree, areca catechu; "Betel leaf" is the leaf of the Piper betel vine, belonging to the piperaceae family. See "Attacks on cardamom plantations, detention and forced labour in Toungoo District," KHRG, May 2010.

On April 28<sup>th</sup> 2012, IB #35, based in Play Hsa Loh army camp, forced nine T--- villagers (five women and four men) to cut and clear overgrown weeds around the Play Hsa Loh army camp. On the next day, April 29<sup>th</sup>, IB #35 soldiers forced four T--- villagers (one woman and three men) to clear the weeds around the camp.

In the final week of March 2012, LID #66 soldiers from Kyee Chaung military camp encountered two villagers; one villager was from Hp--- village and another villager was from N--- village. LID #66 soldiers threatened the villagers and took away the net that they had brought for fishing. Kyee Chaung military camp is based close to K---, Hp---, N--- and M--- villages. Soldiers from Kyee Chaung often go to Tha Aye Loh River and Klay Loh River to fish, and they use poison to catch fish. During March 2012, LID #66 used poison to catch fish. Three people from Th--- village caught and ate the fish in the river, and after that they vomited.

In the last week of March and in early April 2012, 200 soldiers from LID #66 arrived at Kyee Chaung military camp in K--- village, and some others went to 48-miles camp. They came to repair their camp and they brought a handsaw.

On February 14<sup>th</sup> 2012, LID #66 burned two Y--- villagers' cardamom plantations. These plantations covered three acres of land, with one acre belonging to one villager and two acres belonging to another villager. On February 26<sup>th</sup> 2012, LID #66 burned four cardamom plantations, destroying 52 acres of land belonging to D--- villagers.

On March 14<sup>th</sup> 2012, MOC #9 burned an area of plantations in C--- and D--- villages, including 110 acres of the villagers' cardamom plantations. The owners of the plantations in H--- and D--- villages had fled from their villages in 2005 and were not present when their plantations were burned.<sup>18</sup> The next day, on March 15<sup>th</sup>, MOC #9 burned 35 acres of cardamom plantations belonging to eight villagers' from H--- village. On March 16<sup>th</sup>, MOC #9 burned 12 acres of cardamom plantations belonging to three S--- villagers. On March 18<sup>th</sup> 2012, soldiers from MOC #9 were transporting rations from Y--- village to Bu Hsa Hkee army camp. While returning to Kler La army camp, the soldiers began to burn the forest beside the vehicle road connecting Bu Hsa Hkee and Kler La army camps. The Y--- villagers tried to *wa may* [clear the dry leaves], but MOC #9 soldiers went and burned the villagers' cardamom plantations.

Also in March 2012, LID #66 burned four E--- villagers' cardamom plantations and three of their betelnut plantations in the Ta Thoo Hta plantation area. The E--- villagers had also planted wild banana trees in the area that was burned. In the Wa Doh Hta plantation area, LID #66 burned three of the villagers' cardamom plantations and four of the villagers' betelnut fields. In the Baw Law farming area, LID #66 burned six of the villagers' cardamom plantations and four of the villagers' betelnut plantations. In the Na Hka Hta plantation area, LID #66 burned six of the villagers' cardamom plantations and seven of the villagers' betelnut plantations. Before the fire completely died out, eight villages' cardamom and betelnut plantations had been burned down. These villages are Y---, H---, D---, S---, L---, H---, A--- and E---. Altogether, 177 acres of cardamom and betelnut plantations fields were burned down.

As most of the villagers in Toungoo District cultivate cardamom, durian trees and betelnut trees for their livelihood, the destruction of their plantations by LID #66 and MOC #9 poses a problem for the villagers. Specifically, it causes a problem for the villagers because it takes a

<sup>18</sup> For more information on the Northern Offensive in Toungoo District between 2005 and 2006, please see *One Year On: Continuing Abuses in Toungoo District*, KHRG, November 2006.

long time for cardamom and betelnut plants to grow fruit before the villagers are able to sell them as a source of income.<sup>19</sup> Cardamom crops take four years to produce fruit again after they are burned.

### **Villagers' concerns**

Villagers in Tantabin Township, Toungoo district are happy that their situation has become more flexible. At the same time, the whole community is concerned that the situation will get worse again, as they still have to do work for Tatmadaw soldiers and they still see more Tatmadaw troops being deployed in their area. Moreover, the Tatmadaw soldiers have more freedom to patrol the area compared to the past, because the soldiers do not have to worry about being ambushed or attacked by KNLA soldiers.

### **Source #7**

<b>Log #</b>	12-39-T2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Naw A, March 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Htaw Ta Htoo Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Naw A---</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 21 years old</p> <p><b>Date:</b> March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012</p> <p><b>Do you remember when did the SPDC soldiers came and made a base in the area?</b></p> <p>I was studying in Standard 8 at that time so it would have been in 2006.</p> <p><b>How long did they stay?</b></p> <p>They stayed for two months. It was in the summer.</p> <p><b>Did they come again after they left?</b></p> <p>No, they did not come again.</p> <p><b>Do they have an army camp in B--- village?</b></p> <p>They might have an army camp but I have not seen one. They had an army camp in C--- village.</p> <p><b>Do they order villagers to go and cut bamboo for them?</b></p> <p>No, they do not order forced labour in A--- village. They do not usually order villagers in our village.</p> <p><b>Do they demand thatch shingles from the villagers?</b></p>	

<sup>19</sup> The soil quality and terrain in much of Toungoo District supports only limited rice or paddy farming. For this reason, most households are dependent on income generated from various plantation crops, such as betelnut, betel leaf, cardamom, durian and dog fruit. The loss of a year's crop can have devastating consequences for villagers' long-term food-security; see "Attacks on cardamom plantations, detention and forced labour in Toungoo District," KHRG, May 2010.

No, but the Tatmadaw soldiers that are based in D--- and E--- army camps still order forced labour.

**Do they still demand [forced labour] now?**

Yes, they do.

**Do they have an army camp there?**

Yes. The army camp is very big.

**Do you know the battalion numbers that are based in the army camp now?**

No, I don't know.

**Do you see that army camp when you travel?**

Yes, I see them. They built it beside the vehicle road. Everybody sees it.

**Do you know how many soldiers they have in the camp?**

I don't know. I only saw two or three of them standing beside the vehicle road.

**Do you remember when they [last] demanded forced labour?**

It was in February [2012]. They ordered villagers to cut bamboo and logs so villages had to ask permission from the revolutionary people [KNU]. The previous Tatmadaw commander did not ask permission [from the KNU] so they did not allow them to cut bamboo and logs at that time.

**How many bamboo poles did the F--- villagers have to cut?**

There were 40 bamboo poles and 60 logs.

**How many cubits<sup>20</sup> was each bamboo pole?**

I don't know, we took an entire bamboo pole.

**What about the logs?**

We took an entire log too.

**Where did you send them to?**

We sent them to their army camp.

**How many hours does it take you to walk from F--- to E--- village?**

It probably takes two hours.

**How did you send it?**

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<sup>20</sup> A cubit is a standard measurement for the length of bamboo poles, commonly referred to in Karen as the length from one's fingertips to one's elbow, about 45.7 cm or 18 in.

We sent it by cart.

**Are there any bamboo trees left in F--- village?**

We had to go and cut it on the mountain.

**How many hours did you have to go for?**

We started leaving at 2am and we arrived on the mountain around 6am. It took us three hours.

**Did you use a torch?**

Yes, we used a torch.

**What kind of bamboo did you cut?**

The bamboos were not very big and not very small.

**When villagers sent them [the Tatmadaw] bamboo, did they order villagers to repair the army camp for them?**

Last year, they ordered villagers to repair the army camp.

**Was that in 2011?**

Yes, it was in March 2011.

**Do you remember the date?**

No, I don't remember.

**Did villagers have to cut bamboo poles for them at that time too?**

No.

**Did the villagers only have to repair the army camp?**

Yes, the villagers only had to repair the camp.

**How many villagers went?**

There were 20 villagers and they were all men including old and young [men].

**How old were the oldest villagers who went to repair the army camp?**

They were around 70 years old. The reason why they went was because there were only women in their house. They did not do the heavy work; they just cut the bamboos in to pieces.

**How old were the youngest villagers [who went to repair the army camp]?**

They were around 15 years old.

**How many days did it take the villagers to repair the army camp?**

Only one day.

**Did they pay villagers?**

No, they did not. They never pay villagers. They ordered us to work without pay.

**Did they give villagers rice?**

I think they might have given them rice.

**How many times did they give them rice per day?**

Only once at noon.

**Did they only provide rice?**

No, they also provided yellow bean paste.

**How many times did they order villagers to go and repair the army camp in 2011?**

Only one time.

**How many times did villagers have to go and cut bamboo for them in 2012?**

Only one time.

**Do villagers have to serve as sentry for them?**

For sentry, villagers only serve in the village. Villagers do not have to serve at the army camp.

**Where?**

Villagers have to go and stay at village head's house. The sentry started in our village in 2012.

**Who do villagers have to serve as sentries for?**

It is not for the military [Tatmadaw]; it is for the village. Mostly, when they are needed for travelling or transportation.

**Is it for the Myanmar government?**

No, it is for the village. For example, when it is time for the village meeting, or when there is a village plan to repair the vehicle road, these sentries have to go to each section and inform the section's leader and villagers to attend the meeting and discussion. Sometimes, they have to cook, clean and fill water for the village head because the village head has little children and he is always busy. I had to go to cook and clean for the village head once. His children study and his wife goes to stay in Toungoo Town and only he and his children stay in the village.

**How many villagers have to serve as a sentry each day?**

Two people per day.

**Do they have to stay all day long?**

Yes, they have to stay for the whole day. They can go back and stay at home if there is no work.

**Does the village head provide them with rice?**

Yes. They can eat anytime because it is at a Karen person's house.

**What do people in your village do to earn their livelihood?**

In the rainy season, people plant paddy.

**What other work do people do?**

I only know that one. In November and December, they harvest paddy and beans. People plant beans in February and March. Other times, they make thatch shingles and work on the plantations.

**Do people in your village go and work for other people outside of your village?**

Yes, they do. In our village, people who are rich, they send their children to school and after their children finish Standard 10, they send them to foreign countries to work and they can make one million kyats per month. They go to work in Thailand and Singapore. In the past there were around 400 households in the village but now there are around 250 remaining in the village. Some people went to refugee camps and some people went to Toungoo Town and other places in the area.

**What happens to their plantations?**

I don't know. Some people come back and work on their plantations.

**Are there villagers who do paddy farming and do not have enough food?**

Yes, there are. It depends on the crops' price because sometimes rice and beans' prices are too cheap.

**What do they do to survive when they do not have enough food?**

For some people, because they can manage their food they have enough food. For people who can't manage their food, they have to ask from other people. In our village, the Christian religion supports the widows and orphans. The religion provides them rice once every three months. Sometimes, they also get support from the villagers' donations, like rice, salt and chilli. We support them like that.

**How often do people sell their paddy or rice?**

They sell them when they need money.

**How many baskets of paddy did you get last year?**

I own four acres of my farm and I got 150 baskets of paddy. The Myanmar government has a bank to loan the money to the farmers and we took that money because we needed money to pay the fees for the people who plant and harvest paddy for us. We pay back the money after we sell the paddy. In 2011, the [Myanmar] government gave money twice; they gave 200,000 kyats once before farmers planted paddy and again they gave us 200,000



kyats when the farmers were planting paddy. The farmers were very happy because they needed money to cultivate their farms and they first thought that they would have to pay back that money in two different times but after they harvested the paddy, they had to pay back all that money at the same time. So this caused difficulties for the villagers because the rice and beans' prices were lower at that time.

**When did that happen?**

It happened in 2011 and 2012.

**How much does a sack of rice cost?**

It cost 20,000 kyats for a sack of rice.

**What about the cost of a sack of beans?**

It costs 18,500 kyats to 19,000 kyats.

**What about the price in the past?**

It was 25,000 kyats. We can't make much money because we had to pay for the people who planted and harvested the crops for us.

**Does the Myanmar government come and collect taxes in your village?**

They did it in the past, but they do not do it now.

**Do you know in which year?**

I do not remember.

**What about now?**

Now, they do not demand anything. Last time, during the election we had to pay 500 kyats per person. They do not demand tax anymore after the election.

**Do you know in which year?**

It was in 2010 general election when U Thien Sein became the President.

**Did you go and vote?**

Yes, I went and voted. I did not know anything. When people said lets go and vote, I went to vote.

**Did you have to pay 500 kyats when you go to vote?**

Yes. When I went to vote, it was on Sunday so I got very angry. Sunday is a day for us to rest but we had to go and vote on that day. I almost went to worship at the church.

**What will they use that 500 kyats for?**

I did not know what they would use it for because at that time I was not working for the community yet so I did not attend any meetings in the village. When village leaders asked villagers to attend the meetings in the village I did not go. When people asked us to pay we



just paid them. I just came back after I voted.

**How many people per household had to go and vote?**

One person per household.

**Can you go and vote if you are under 18?**

No, you could not.

**When you went to vote, did they record your ID number?**

I don't remember.

**How did you vote?**

It was simple. When I first went into the polling station, I had to write down my name and they checked my ID number and recorded it. Then, they gave me two pieces of paper; one paper had a drum and horn image and another paper had a paddy image on it. I marked both papers and put them in the box. Then I came back home. I heard that Thein Sein [won]. The [local] candidate who lived in Htantabin Town won the election but there was disaffection of the election result so he was intentionally driven into [by a vehicle] while riding a motorbike. He was sent to the hospital but he died from the incident.

**Did people drive into him?**

Yes, because he rode a motorbike.

**In what area did he run as a candidate?**

I don't know in detail but he ran for the candidate in Htantabin Town. He visited our village once.

**Is he Bamar ethnicity?**

Yes, he is Bamar ethnicity. He was old and kind. He did not like discrimination. He knew the situation and Karen ethnic people here like him a lot.

**Where did he live?**

He lived in Htantabin Town. He was driven into and killed while he was going to Toungoo Town.

**Where did people drive into him?**

I think it was in Toungoo Town. We just heard from the news and rumours but we did not know detailed information.

**Is there land confiscation in your village?**

I hear about it but I have not seen it myself. I heard about it from the old people. They said the Myanmar [government] soldiers [Tatmadaw] confiscated land. If the villagers want to farm they have to pay 15 rice sacks to lease one acre. They are still leasing those pieces of lands now.

**What about now? Is there any land confiscation.**

No.

**Is there a school in your village?**

Yes. There is a [Myanmar] government school.

**Who built that school?**

The [Myanmar] government built it but for the nursery school the religion [Christian church] built it. For the [Myanmar] government school, they teach up to Standard 7.

**Is it a Middle School?**

Yes.

**Where do the school teachers come from?**

They are from Htantabin Town.

**How many male and female school teachers are there in total?**

There are six Karen school teachers and some Bamar school teachers. I do not know the total number because I have never been to the school. I think there are around 10 school teachers [in total].

**How much do the school teachers get paid each month?**

I don't know.

**Does the Myanmar military government provide the salary?**

Yes. The military government provides [a salary] only for the school teachers that have been assigned [by the Myanmar government]. But for the school teachers that the villagers assigned, they get 20,000 kyats per month. For the nursery school, the school teachers get 20,500 kyats per month.

**How many students are there in total?**

I don't know.

**Are there students whose parents cannot afford to send them to school?**

If we look in the village, some children are good but some children are naughty. If they are good children, their parents try to send them to school to learn and understand more. But if they are naughty, like if their parents have already enrolled them at the school but they do not go to school, then their parents cannot do anything.

**Are there many of them [naughty children]?**

There are many of them.

**Do they help their parents?**

Some children help their parents but some do not. In my village, I don't usually see the

children that don't want to read [study], Most of them try to read, especially the students who study at higher standards.

**How much does a student have to pay for the school enrolment fee?**

For a Standard 7 student, they have to pay 5,000 kyats. For a Kindergarten student, they have to pay 1,500 kyats for the whole year.

**Do they have to pay the tuition fee?**

Not for one teacher because she loves our villagers so she invited the students and teaches them for free. Some parents give them some financial support.

**Is Karen language allowed to be taught in the school?**

They are doing it now. In the meeting the Karen leaders gave us the papers of the Karen national song but we have not sung it at the school yet. The [Myanmar] government school teachers usually come to school at 10am because they live a bit far from the school. There are six Karen school teachers who teach S'gaw Karen language.

**Is the school principal from the Myanmar government or do the villagers assign [her/him]?**

The school principal is from the Myanmar government.

**Where do the students who finish Standard 7 in the village go to continue their studies?**

Some of them go to study at Za Ya Gyi Town. Most of them go to study at Toungoo Town. This year, there are 20 students who go stay at the boarding school and study in Toungoo Town.

**Is there a clinic in your village?**

No.

**Where do the villagers go for treatment when they are unwell since there is no clinic in the village?**

There is a well-trained female medic in the village.

**Is she [Myanmar] government staff?**

No, she [the trained medic in the village] is not really from the Myanmar government. She only treats the patients in [one location in] the village. She does not go around treating people. We don't know whether she is not confident or she is lazy to do it.

**Is she young?**

She is 25 years old.

**Where does she get the medicine from?**

She goes to get it from the Myanmar government.

**Does she have a [medical] certificate?**

I don't know. I think she has a [medical] certificate. Her aunty arranged for her to attend the training and after the training she returned to the village.

**Has she opened a clinic?**

People who need treatment go to her house. People can go anytime. If the patients have a serious disease, she asks them to go to the hospital.

**How many medics are there in your village?**

There is only her. Actually, two of them went to attend the medical training that was provided by the Myanmar government. But only she works for the community. The other one got married and does not work for the village.

**What is the disease that most affects the villagers?**

It depends on the season. When it is rainy season, villagers are most affected by the flu. Villagers also get headaches and fever sickness.

**Can you tell me a little bit about the releasing of the water from the dam last year?**

Yes, villagers were forced to relocate and their village and plantations and farms were flooded.

**Can you please tell me what the problems were?**

I don't remember.

**When did that happen?**

It was in 2011 and 2012.

**Where did they release water?**

They released water from Toh Boh dam. The water was everywhere.

**How many farms in your village were flooded?**

There were many farms around the lake beside our village which were flooded. I don't know how many acres [were flooded].

**Was your farm flooded as well?**

Yes, half of my farm was flooded.

**How many acres of your farm was flooded?**

Part of my farm beside the river was flooded. It was around four acres.

**Were there farms from other villages that were flooded as well?**

The farms in Aye Kyaw and Ma La Koo villages were flooded as well.

**How many days did it take to flood?**

It took three days.

**Did the paddy die?**

Yes, the paddies died.

**Did the SPDC government and its soldiers help the villages who were victims of the flood?**

The SPDC soldiers never help us, instead they demand things from us. We had to watch our paddy be destroyed like that.

**Did villagers complain about it?**

Yes, villagers complained a lot.

**What did they do? Did they write complaint letters to the Myanmar government?**

They wrote a complaint letter and requested help for the damage but they [the Myanmar government] did not care. They are Bamar and if you step on their shit they fine you; when they step on your shit they fine you.

**How much do people sell a viss<sup>21</sup> of pork in your village for?**

A viss of pork is 2,000 kyats. It is very cheap because there are hundreds of pigs in the village. People don't usually buy pig and if they buy it, they only buy around 20 pigs.

**How much do you have to pay for a sack of rice?**

There are many types of rice. The expensive rice is sold for 12,000 kyats per sack of rice. The other types of rice are around 9,000 kyats [per sack].

**What have been the developments in your village since the 2010 election?**

I don't know. I think the previous leaders did not work consistently.

**What do you think about the organisation [KNU] signing the ceasefire agreement in 2012? What did villagers say in your village?**

Villagers said not to believe the Myanmar [government]. They said different things. Some said it is good but some said it is not good because we can't trust the Myanmar [government]. They say good things in front of you and they do bad things behind you. They have seven sickles inside their heart, if you see two of the sickles, there are five left inside their heart.

**Do you want to say something else about any issues that I have not asked you yet?**

I would like to ask about what we should do with villagers who do not stay in the village. Their names remain in the village [records] but they do not stay in the village anymore. Some of them moved to another area and some resettled to other countries.

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<sup>21</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

**Is there anything else that you want to say?**

Even though we do not have peace in the country, we have to live in the name of God and we want the situation to get better. We have to try together in our capabilities.

**Thank you so much.**

**Source #8**

<b>Log #</b>	12-39-T4-I2
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview, Htantabin Township, Naw H--- (female, 21), March 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw H---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I'm 21 years old.</p> <p><b>Where do you live? What is your village name?</b></p> <p>[I live in] Hk--- village.</p> <p><b>What is the township name [of Hk--- village]?</b></p> <p>Htaw Ta Htoo [Htantabin] Township.</p> <p><b>What is the District name?</b></p> <p>Taw Oo [Toungoo] District.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p> <p>I'm Karen ethnicity.</p> <p><b>What is your occupation?</b></p> <p>I work on agriculture.</p> <p><b>Do you work for any organisation?</b></p> <p>I work for a religious organisation.</p> <p><b>What kind of religious [organization]?</b></p> <p>I work as the head of the church women's group in my village.</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b></p>	

I'm Baptist Christian.

**Is there a SPDC [State Peace and Development Council] army camp in your village?**

Yes, there is.

**How far are the SPDC army camp and your village, near or far?**

It is far.

**How many hours does it take you to walk to the SPDC army camp?**

It [army camp] is at the village entrance.

**Do the SPDC soldiers from the army camp come in your village?**

Yes. They came.

**What did they do when they came?**

They came to buy food and take a shower.

**Did they loot villagers' belongings when they came?**

They did in the past but now they do not do that anymore.

**When did that happen? Which year?**

It happened two or three years ago.

**Has that still happened since 2010?**

No, that does not happen.

**Did they order forced labour between 2010 and now?**

Yes, they still order forced labour.

**When they come in the village, do they order the village head to meet with them and loot villagers' chicken or belongings?**

No, they do not do it anymore.

**Do they rape women?**

No, they do not do that anymore.

**Are there any changes if you compare the situation in 2012 and the situation in the past?**

Yes, there are changes.

**What are the changes?**

There was more forced labour in the past and it is getting less now. It [forced labour]

happened a few times.

**Was forced labour always happening in the past? For example, was it happening once every two months or once every three months or once a year? Were there also violent abuse, killing, land confiscation and rape cases that violated villagers' rights?**

It happened sometimes.

**Do you know how many times that villagers had to do forced labour in 2010, that was ordered by the SPDC's soldiers or Burma/Myanmar government officials or Karen National Union? Can you tell me please?**

There were forced labours. They [Tatmadaw] ordered villagers to transport their rations with motorbikes.

**Was that in 2010?**

It happened between 2010 and 2012.

**Do you remember how many times that happened in 2010?**

No, I do not remember.

**What about in 2011?**

Yes.

**Which month and what date?**

I did not remember the date.

**What about in 2011, do you remember?**

No, I do not remember.

**Which Tatmadaw battalion came and is based in the area now?**

It is LID [Light Infantry Division] #66.

**Did they replace LID #99?**

Yes, they replaced LID #99.

**Are they based in Hk--- army camp?**

Yes.

**Do you know the commanders name, of LID #66?**

I have seen him but I do not know his name.

**What about the commanders name of LID #99?**

I have seen him but I do not know his name too.



**Do you know the start date when villagers were ordered to do forced labour in 2012?**

It started in January but I do not remember the day.

**What kind of labour did they [Tatmadaw] order?**

They ordered motorbikes [to carry rations for them] and follow their trucks.

**Did they only order motorbikes or did they also order cars?**

They ordered cars too.

**When did they order cars and how many cars did they order at [that] time?**

[They ordered] two or three cars because there are not many cars in the village. If one car goes, five motorbikes have to follow that car.

**Where did that truck go, like where did they pick up the rations and where did they send the rations to?**

They went to pick up the rations at Hk--- army camp but I did not know where they sent the rations to.

**How many cars are there in Hk--- village?**

There is only one car.

**How many times did the car have to go at a time [of order]?**

They had to transport [rations] back and forth.

**How long did it take a car to arrive at the destination?**

It took two days for a car and it took one day for a motorbike.

**Where did they start taking the rations?**

[They started] in Hk--- army camp.

**Where did they send the rations to?**

I do not know where they were sent to.

**When they [Tatmadaw] ordered villagers, did they come to order by themselves or they wrote an order letter or they called the village head to go and meet them?**

They called the village head to go and meet them, then the village head came back and informed the villagers.

**Did they pay the villagers after the villagers sent rations for them?**

They did not pay the villagers. They only paid the fuel fees. Some people got it [fuel fee] but some people did not get it.

**Did they provide food?**

No, they did not.

**What kinds of things did the villagers have to carry for them?**

We did not see.

**Was it rice or yellow mung bean or alcohol?**

Yes, it was rice but I do not know others.

**Are there any other types of forced labour in your area?**

No.

**Which Tatmadaw battalion came and is based in the area now?**

It is LID [Light Infantry Division] #66.

**When did they come and base in the area, for example which month and what day?**

I do not know the date.

**Which year?**

In 2012.

**Do you know how many soldiers there are in the camp?**

I don't know. I know there are two army camps. They set up the gate in front of their army base.

**Are soldiers at the gate from LID #66?**

Yes.

**What LID number came and based in the area in 2010?**

I don't know.

**What about 2011?**

LID #99.

**What group did LID #99 replace?**

I do not remember.

**What is different between LID #99 and LID #66?**

Before I arrived in this village, the LID #99 had not gone back yet. They were travelling around in the area at that time.

**Can villagers travel freely for their livelihoods? Are there any restrictions, like when they go to their plantation they have to go to the army camp to get travel documents?**

It happened in 2011, like villagers can leave after 6AM and had to return to the village before

6PM.

**Who gave the order at that time?**

LID #99.

**Do you know the LID's commander name?**

No.

**Do you know the battalion commander name and battalion number?**

No.

**Did they provide travel documents?**

No, they did not. But villagers had to submit overnight guest lists.

**How much did you have to pay for the overnight guest list?**

100 kyats per house, at a time.

**Where did villagers have to go and submit the overnight guest list? Did villagers have to go to the army camp?**

No. We had to go and submit at the section #3 office.

**How long did they give permission at a time, like how many days, weeks or months?**

Mostly, villagers submitted for one night and they paid 100 kyats per night. If villagers submit for one month, they had to pay 400 to 500 kyats a month.

**How did they [Tatmadaw] use that 100 kyats?**

I don't know.

**Do villagers still have to submit overnight guest lists in 2012?**

Yes, but it is decreasing. I don't know if people still do that or not.

**Did you have to get travel documents in the past?**

Yes.

**From which year?**

In 2010 and 2011.

**Do you know what battalion number [of Tatmadaw] in 2010?**

I don't know.

**There was a general election in 2010 right?**

Yes.

**What are the violations against villagers' rights between after the election and 2012, like forced labour, attack on villagers, killing, violent abuse, restriction on freedom of movement, land confiscation, theft and looting? After the Thein Sein government is founded.**

In 2011, during the summer the government officials ordered villagers to go and dig a vehicle road.

**Where did that happen?**

[It happened] between Hk--- village and K---village. One villager was injured from a landslide.

**Which village was that villager from?**

In Hk--- village.

**In which month?**

I don't remember the month but it was in summer.

**What is the name of villager who was injured from the landslide?**

Saw H---.

**How old is he?**

He is 24 years old.

**Is he single or married?**

He is single.

**Who ordered villagers to dig the land?**

U Tha Win.

**What is the position of U Tha Win?**

He is an administrator.

**When did that happen?**

It happened in 2011.

**Why did he order villagers?**

Because the vehicle road was damaged and it needed to be repaired so he ordered villagers to repair the vehicle road.

**What difficulties has Saw H--- had to face after he was injured from the landslide?**

Both of his legs were dead [paralysed] and he could not walk anymore. He was hospitalised and sent to a hospital in Yangon.

**How many months has he suffered from the injury?**

He has to suffer till now.

**How many months has it been since he was injured until now?**

It is one year already.

**While he faced the difficulties, did administrator U Tha Win support him?**

He did not support him with anything.

**Have his parents reported the case to the upper leaders?**

They did not report the case to anywhere. Other villagers reported for them.

**What organisation did they report the case to?**

They reported to the KNU [Karen National Union] and KNU members met with U Tha Win and told him that he should support the victim.

**How did he respond?**

He said he would support him.

**Has he received anything or compensation from U Tha Win after U Tha Win said he would support him?**

He did not receive anything. U Tha Win gave him around 10,000 kyats or 20,000 kyats. He did not look after him at all.

**Is Saw H--- getting better now?**

No. He is not getting better yet. Just last month he went to Yangon city for a medical check.

**How many villagers from Hk--- village went to repair the road?**

There were around 30 villagers.

**Was it only Hk--- villagers?**

Yes.

**Did they pay villagers when he ordered them?**

They did not pay villagers.

**Did they treat [them to] rice?**

No, they did not treat [them to] rice.

**What are the benefits for the village when they order villagers to repair the vehicle road like this?**

There is no benefit.

**Were there any other forced labours since 2010?**

No.

**How many cars are there in your village?**

There are three or four cars but there are only two cars that usually travel.

**Are there clinics in your village?**

Yes.

**Did villagers build that clinic or what organisation built that clinic?**

The organisation built the clinic.

**Which organisation?**

I don't know.

**Was that clinic built by KNU government or Myanmar government?**

It was built by the SPDC government.

**When did they build the clinic?**

I was not born yet [when they built the clinic]. It had been built a long time ago.

**Where do the medics in the clinic come from?**

Four of them come from Hpa-an Town.

**Are they male or female medics?**

Four of them [from Hpa-an Town] are female medics and one is a male medic and he is from Toungoo Town.

**How many medics are there in total?**

There are 10 people in total; including doctor, medics and assistant.

**Are they government staff?**

Yes, they are government staff.

**How much do they get per month?**

I do not know. The assistant gets 20,000 kyats or 30,000 kyats per month.

**Is that clinic for free treatment?**

No, it is not for free treatment.

**Do they have efficient materials [in the clinic]?**

Sometimes, they do not have enough medicines.

**What are the most [common] diseases for the villagers in your village?**

Mostly it is malaria and kidney disease.

**Where do they go for the treatment?**

They go to Toungoo hospital [in Toungoo Town]. Sometimes, they have to go to the hospital in Yangon city.

**Is there a school in Hk--- village?**

Yes, there is a school.

**How many standards [grade] are taught in the school?**

It is taught till 10<sup>th</sup> standard.

**Who built that school?**

The SPDC government built that school.

**When did they build that school?**

I can't remember.

**How many school teachers are there in the school?**

There are 17 school teachers in total.

**Where do those school teachers come from?**

Some of them are from Phyu Township and some are from this [Htantabin] Township.

**Where does the school master come from?**

I don't know where the school master comes from.

**Do they teach Karen language at the school?**

They do not teach [Karen language].

**How many students are there in the school?**

I don't know.

**How much do the school teachers get paid per month?**

Most of them get 45,000 kyats per month.

**How much does the school master get paid per month?**

I think the school master gets 80,000 kyats per month. I don't know for sure.

**Are there children in your village who cannot afford to go to school?**

Yes, some of them, they have family livelihood problems.

**What are the difficulties that they face?**

Some of them do not have enough money to go to school and some of them because their parents do not force them to go to school.

**Is it free education for primary standards?**

No, it is not for free.

**How much does a student have to pay for the enrollment fee?**

The enrollment fee for the primary level student is 500 kyats per student.

**What about the middle standard level?**

I don't know.

**What about the high school standard level?**

I don't know too. The enrollment fee for all standards is the same, like 500 kyats per student. The costs are only different because they calculate with the book fees. For example, the higher standard students have to pay more for the book fees.

**Do the SPDC soldiers or KNU soldiers come and disturb the school?**

They do not disturb but if the [both] soldiers come in the villages, the grade ten students dare not study at night time.

**Why do they dare not study at night time?**

Because they are afraid of the situation.

**What kind of situation?**

Sometimes, a lot of soldiers come so villagers are afraid.

**What soldiers are you talking about?**

The SPDC soldiers.

**What are the violations that the SPDC soldiers do when they come to the village?**

We are scared of them because they have numerous soldiers.

**Do they threaten villagers?**

They do not threaten villagers. Because sometimes, when they come, they come with a lot of soldiers and they stay at school.

**When they stayed at school, did they ask permission from the school master or school in charge people?**



No, they don't because they did not stay in the school compound. They stayed beside the school.

**What are the problems villagers faced when they [Tatmadaw] stay beside the school?**

They [Tatmadaw] did not create any problem. Sometimes, they just come to watch the festival.

**What are the occupations that the villagers in your village earn their livelihood for?**

They are doing betel nut plantations and cardamom plantations.

**Is there anything else?**

Some villagers drive a motorbike taxi.

**Do they work on tea plantations?**

Yes, they do.

**Do they grow tea plants for business or they just plant for themselves?**

They just grow them to eat for themselves.

**Do they work on swidden farms or paddy farms?**

No, they don't.

**Can villagers in you village can work smoothly?**

They could work smoothly starting in 2011 and 2012.

**Do they face any problems?**

Not really. Only we could not sleep at the betel nut plantations. It is fine now.

**Are there any villagers who do not have enough food?**

Yes.

**What do they do when they do not have enough food?**

They work for other people like clearing the plantations, collecting the cardamom fruits and collecting betel nut.

**How much do they get per day?**

Women get 1,500 kyats and men get 1,500 kyats per day.

**How many households are there in you village?**

There are over [censored for security] households.

**Are there only Karen ethnic people in your village or are there also Burmese ethnic people?**

There are also Burmese people live in the village.

**What do the Burmese people do?**

Some of them get married here and some of them came to work.

**Do they get married with villagers here?**

Yes.

**What do you and villagers think about the KNU and Myanmar government signing the ceasefire agreement in early 2012? Do they say it is good or bad?**

Some village say it is good but some villagers say there is no difference.

**What else do the villagers who say it is good say about it?**

They said peace is good.

**What about villagers who said there is no difference?**

They said even though they signed the agreement the situation remain the same. The Tatmadaw soldiers still come to the area. Some of them heard that after signing the agreement the Tatmadaw soldiers have to withdraw but now the Tatmadaw soldiers come more and more. So there is no difference.

**What are the differences from when they rotated their soldiers before and after the ceasefire? What are their military situations after the ceasefire?**

In the past, if they sent rations they only reached Hk--- army camp and they ordered villagers to send them further. But now, they send them on their own.

**Do they still order villagers to send rations for them now?**

No, they don't order now. They ordered forced labour once in February 2012. They ordered motorbikes to follow them. After that, they send on their own.

**Do villagers have to carry rations for them?**

No.

**Are there widows who face with difficulties in your village?**

Yes, there are some.

**How do villagers help them?**

They borrow from other people and then, they work for them later where the work is available. Sometimes, villagers also help them, like youth and women groups from the religions in the area.

**Where do people in your village go to buy and sell things?**

They go to Toungoo Town.

**How many hours do you have to go from your village to Toungoo Town?**

It takes four hours.

**By car or motorbike?**

By motorbike.

**How many cars are there in your village?**

There are two cars.

**When you travel by car, do you have to ask permission for going down to the town and coming up?**

Yes.

**How much do villagers have to pay if they go and ask permission for going down to the town and coming up at a time?**

They have to pay around 1,000 kyats at a time.

**How many motorbikes are there in your village?**

There are around 70 motorbikes.

**How many military gates do you have to pass when you go to Toungoo Town?**

There are three military gates.

**Where are these three gates based?**

One is in Hk--- army camp, the second one is in Hp--- army camp and the third one is in 20 miles army camp.

**When you go to Toungoo Town, do you have to ask permission for going down to the town and coming up?**

Yes, we have to ask permission for going down to the town.

**How much do you have to pay at a time?**

1,000 kyats.

**What about now? Do you still have to ask permission for going down to the town and coming up?**

Yes, they still do it now, but it is okay if we don't do it.

**What are the problems that villagers mostly face because the SPDC soldiers order them to do forced labour?**

Because they come and base by the river in Hk--- village, the villagers face problems with getting water for cooking, drinking and bathing. Like because they are there, villagers dare not go and take a bath in the river. A group of villagers have to go together to bathe.

**Are villagers threatened by Tatmadaw soldiers when they go to their plantations?**

No.

**Is there land confiscation in your area?**

No. The Tatmadaw soldiers go around and cut the bamboo without asking permission from villagers [the owner].

**Do they order villagers to cut bamboo for them?**

No, they do not order. They go around and cut them on their own.

**Do you see the SPDC government come and carry out development for your village, in terms of education, health care and religions?**

Yes. Sometimes, they come and treat the nursery students with snacks. Sometimes, they come and provide prizes for students who are clever in education.

**Do they provide that every year?**

No. They provided in 2010 and 2012.

**Do they do any other development for the village?**

No.

**Do villagers see the SPDC government as good or bad?**

They see them as bad.

**Why do they see them as bad?**

Even if they stay at their place, villagers just don't like them. Sometimes, they don't respect us. They say disrespectful words to us while we are walking.

**Do they threaten the women?**

They do not threaten but they make jokes to them.

**What do you and villagers think about the KNU?**

They struggle to liberate our Karen people and to free them from the oppression.

**Do you see them as good or bad?**

I see them as good.

**Have the KNU's soldiers come to your village?**

Yes, they came.

**What did they do when they came?**

They just came to visit the village as civilians. They came once in early 2012 to forbid the

alcohol selling in the village.

**How do villagers see them when they do this?**

They see as it is good thing because villagers suffer from drug issues in the area. Sometimes, they come and say by word to the villagers that, *"Don't sell drugs. If we see you selling drug we will arrest you and give punishment."* Some drug sellers do not listen to them. So most of the villagers want them [KNU] to take action.

**What are the consequences happening in your village because people sell alcohol?**

Sometimes, within the family, members like parents and children have conflict [because of drinking alcohol].

**When the KNU forbids selling them, do you see it as good or bad?**

We see it as good.

**Do the SPDC soldiers forbid the selling and drinking [of] alcohol?**

They don't forbid them.

**How much do you have to [pay to] buy one rice sack in your village?**

People sell them differently, some people sell 19,000 kyats and some people sell 20,000 kyats and some people sell 25,000 kyats per rice sack.

**What is the biggest price?**

35,000 kyats per rice sack.

**What is the lowest price?**

18,000 kyats per rice sack.

**How much do you have to buy a viss of pork?**

5,000 kyats per viss of pork.

**Do you have to pay tax in your village?**

Yes.

**What types of taxes?**

We have to pay tax to both SPDC and KNU soldiers.

**What do villagers say about the tax?**

They [tax collector] explain to them [villagers] before they pay tax. Some villagers understand but some villagers do not understand.

**What do people who do not understand what the tax is for do?**

Some people pay willingly but some people do not want to pay tax.

**What do you think about the SPDC government and KNU signing the ceasefire agreement in 2012?**

I see it as good. But we have to stay alert all the time.

**Do you want to say something else about the issue that I have not asked you yet?**

No.

**Thank you so much for giving your time and answering my questions.**

**Source #9<sup>22</sup>**

<b>Log #</b>	12-39-T4-I2
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview, Htantabin Township, Naw H--- (female, 21), March 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw H---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I'm 21 years old.</p> <p><b>Where do you live? What is your village name?</b></p> <p>[I live in] Hk--- village.</p> <p><b>What is the township name [of Hk--- village]?</b></p> <p>Htaw Ta Htoo [Htantabin] Township.</p> <p><b>What is the District name?</b></p> <p>Taw Oo [Toungoo] District.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p> <p>I'm Karen ethnicity.</p> <p><b>What is your occupation?</b></p> <p>I work on agriculture.</p> <p><b>Do you work for any organisation?</b></p> <p>I work for a religious organisation.</p>	

<sup>22</sup> This source document has been logged under both Source #8 and #9 due to a logging error. KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that may result from this.

**What kind of religious [organization]?**

I work as the head of the church women's group in my village.

**What is your religion?**

I'm Baptist Christian.

**Is there a SPDC [State Peace and Development Council] army camp in your village?**

Yes, there is.

**How far are the SPDC army camp and your village, near or far?**

It is far.

**How many hours does it take you to walk to the SPDC army camp?**

It [army camp] is at the village entrance.

**Do the SPDC soldiers from the army camp come in your village?**

Yes. They came.

**What did they do when they came?**

They came to buy food and take a shower.

**Did they loot villagers' belongings when they came?**

They did in the past but now they do not do that anymore.

**When did that happen? Which year?**

It happened two or three years ago.

**Has that still happened since 2010?**

No, that does not happen.

**Did they order forced labour between 2010 and now?**

Yes, they still order forced labour.

**When they come in the village, do they order the village head to meet with them and loot villagers' chicken or belongings?**

No, they do not do it anymore.

**Do they rape women?**

No, they do not do that anymore.

**Are there any changes if you compare the situation in 2012 and the situation in the past?**

Yes, there are changes.

**What are the changes?**

There was more forced labour in the past and it is getting less now. It [forced labour] happened a few times.

**Was forced labour always happening in the past? For example, was it happening once every two months or once every three months or once a year? Were there also violent abuse, killing, land confiscation and rape cases that violated villagers' rights?**

It happened sometimes.

**Do you know how many times that villagers had to do forced labour in 2010, that was ordered by the SPDC's soldiers or Burma/Myanmar government officials or Karen National Union? Can you tell me please?**

There were forced labours. They [Tatmadaw] ordered villagers to transport their rations with motorbikes.

**Was that in 2010?**

It happened between 2010 and 2012.

**Do you remember how many times that happened in 2010?**

No, I do not remember.

**What about in 2011?**

Yes.

**Which month and what date?**

I did not remember the date.

**What about in 2011, do you remember?**

No, I do not remember.

**Which Tatmadaw battalion came and is based in the area now?**

It is LID [Light Infantry Division] #66.

**Did they replace LID #99?**

Yes, they replaced LID #99.

**Are they based in Hk--- army camp?**

Yes.

**Do you know the commanders name, of LID #66?**

I have seen him but I do not know his name.



**What about the commanders name of LID #99?**

I have seen him but I do not know his name too.

**Do you know the start date when villagers were ordered to do forced labour in 2012?**

It started in January but I do not remember the day.

**What kind of labour did they [Tatmadaw] order?**

They ordered motorbikes [to carry rations for them] and follow their trucks.

**Did they only order motorbikes or did they also order cars?**

They ordered cars too.

**When did they order cars and how many cars did they order at [that] time?**

[They ordered] two or three cars because there are not many cars in the village. If one car goes, five motorbikes have to follow that car.

**Where did that truck go, like where did they pick up the rations and where did they send the rations to?**

They went to pick up the rations at Hk--- army camp but I did not know where they sent the rations to.

**How many cars are there in Hk--- village?**

There is only one car.

**How many times did the car have to go at a time [of order]?**

They had to transport [rations] back and forth.

**How long did it take a car to arrive at the destination?**

It took two days for a car and it took one day for a motorbike.

**Where did they start taking the rations?**

[They started] in Hk--- army camp.

**Where did they send the rations to?**

I do not know where they were sent to.

**When they [Tatmadaw] ordered villagers, did they come to order by themselves or they wrote an order letter or they called the village head to go and meet them?**

They called the village head to go and meet them, then the village head came back and informed the villagers.

**Did they pay the villagers after the villagers sent rations for them?**

They did not pay the villagers. They only paid the fuel fees. Some people got it [fuel fee] but

some people did not get it.

**Did they provide food?**

No, they did not.

**What kinds of things did the villagers have to carry for them?**

We did not see.

**Was it rice or yellow mung bean or alcohol?**

Yes, it was rice but I do not know others.

**Are there any other types of forced labour in your area?**

No.

**Which Tatmadaw battalion came and is based in the area now?**

It is LID [Light Infantry Division] #66.

**When did they come and base in the area, for example which month and what day?**

I do not know the date.

**Which year?**

In 2012.

**Do you know how many soldiers there are in the camp?**

I don't know. I know there are two army camps. They set up the gate in front of their army base.

**Are soldiers at the gate from LID #66?**

Yes.

**What LID number came and based in the area in 2010?**

I don't know.

**What about 2011?**

LID #99.

**What group did LID #99 replace?**

I do not remember.

**What is different between LID #99 and LID #66?**

Before I arrived in this village, the LID #99 had not gone back yet. They were travelling around in the area at that time.

**Can villagers travel freely for their livelihoods? Are there any restrictions, like when they go to their plantation they have to go to the army camp to get travel documents?**

It happened in 2011, like villagers can leave after 6AM and had to return to the village before 6PM.

**Who gave the order at that time?**

LID #99.

**Do you know the LID's commander name?**

No.

**Do you know the battalion commander name and battalion number?**

No.

**Did they provide travel documents?**

No, they did not. But villagers had to submit overnight guest lists.

**How much did you have to pay for the overnight guest list?**

100 kyats per house, at a time.

**Where did villagers have to go and submit the overnight guest list? Did villagers have to go to the army camp?**

No. We had to go and submit at the section #3 office.

**How long did they give permission at a time, like how many days, weeks or months?**

Mostly, villagers submitted for one night and they paid 100 kyats per night. If villagers submit for one month, they had to pay 400 to 500 kyats a month.

**How did they [Tatmadaw] use that 100 kyats?**

I don't know.

**Do villagers still have to submit overnight guest lists in 2012?**

Yes, but it is decreasing. I don't know if people still do that or not.

**Did you have to get travel documents in the past?**

Yes.

**From which year?**

In 2010 and 2011.

**Do you know what battalion number [of Tatmadaw] in 2010?**

I don't know.

**There was a general election in 2010 right?**

Yes.

**What are the violations against villagers' rights between after the election and 2012, like forced labour, attack on villagers, killing, violent abuse, restriction on freedom of movement, land confiscation, theft and looting? After the Thein Sein government is founded.**

In 2011, during the summer the government officials ordered villagers to go and dig a vehicle road.

**Where did that happen?**

[It happened] between Hk--- village and K---village. One villager was injured from a landslide.

**Which village was that villager from?**

In Hk--- village.

**In which month?**

I don't remember the month but it was in summer.

**What is the name of villager who was injured from the landslide?**

Saw H---.

**How old is he?**

He is 24 years old.

**Is he single or married?**

He is single.

**Who ordered villagers to dig the land?**

U Tha Win.

**What is the position of U Tha Win?**

He is an administrator.

**When did that happen?**

It happened in 2011.

**Why did he order villagers?**

Because the vehicle road was damaged and it needed to be repaired so he ordered villagers to repair the vehicle road.

**What difficulties has Saw H--- had to face after he was injured from the landslide?**

Both of his legs were dead [paralysed] and he could not walk anymore. He was hospitalised and sent to a hospital in Yangon.

**How many months has he suffered from the injury?**

He has to suffer till now.

**How many months has it been since he was injured until now?**

It is one year already.

**While he faced the difficulties, did administrator U Tha Win support him?**

He did not support him with anything.

**Have his parents reported the case to the upper leaders?**

They did not report the case to anywhere. Other villagers reported for them.

**What organisation did they report the case to?**

They reported to the KNU [Karen National Union] and KNU members met with U Tha Win and told him that he should support the victim.

**How did he respond?**

He said he would support him.

**Has he received anything or compensation from U Tha Win after U Tha Win said he would support him?**

He did not receive anything. U Tha Win gave him around 10,000 kyats or 20,000 kyats. He did not look after him at all.

**Is Saw H--- getting better now?**

No. He is not getting better yet. Just last month he went to Yangon city for a medical check.

**How many villagers from Hk--- village went to repair the road?**

There were around 30 villagers.

**Was it only Hk--- villagers?**

Yes.

**Did they pay villagers when he ordered them?**

They did not pay villagers.

**Did they treat [them to] rice?**

No, they did not treat [them to] rice.

**What are the benefits for the village when they order villagers to repair the vehicle**

**road like this?**

There is no benefit.

**Were there any other forced labours since 2010?**

No.

**How many cars are there in your village?**

There are three or four cars but there are only two cars that usually travel.

**Are there clinics in your village?**

Yes.

**Did villagers build that clinic or what organisation built that clinic?**

The organisation built the clinic.

**Which organisation?**

I don't know.

**Was that clinic built by KNU government or Myanmar government?**

It was built by the SPDC government.

**When did they build the clinic?**

I was not born yet [when they built the clinic]. It had been built a long time ago.

**Where do the medics in the clinic come from?**

Four of them come from Hpa-an Town.

**Are they male or female medics?**

Four of them [from Hpa-an Town] are female medics and one is a male medic and he is from Toungoo Town.

**How many medics are there in total?**

There are 10 people in total; including doctor, medics and assistant.

**Are they government staff?**

Yes, they are government staff.

**How much do they get per month?**

I do not know. The assistant gets 20,000 kyats or 30,000 kyats per month.

**Is that clinic for free treatment?**

No, it is not for free treatment.

**Do they have efficient materials [in the clinic]?**

Sometimes, they do not have enough medicines.

**What are the most [common] diseases for the villagers in your village?**

Mostly it is malaria and kidney disease.

**Where do they go for the treatment?**

They go to Toungoo hospital [in Toungoo Town]. Sometimes, they have to go to the hospital in Yangon city.

**Is there a school in Hk--- village?**

Yes, there is a school.

**How many standards [grade] are taught in the school?**

It is taught till 10<sup>th</sup> standard.

**Who built that school?**

The SPDC government built that school.

**When did they build that school?**

I can't remember.

**How many school teachers are there in the school?**

There are 17 school teachers in total.

**Where do those school teachers come from?**

Some of them are from Phyu Township and some are from this [Htantabin] Township.

**Where does the school master come from?**

I don't know where the school master comes from.

**Do they teach Karen language at the school?**

They do not teach [Karen language].

**How many students are there in the school?**

I don't know.

**How much do the school teachers get paid per month?**

Most of them get 45,000 kyats per month.

**How much does the school master get paid per month?**

I think the school master gets 80,000 kyats per month. I don't know for sure.

**Are there children in your village who cannot afford to go to school?**

Yes, some of them, they have family livelihood problems.

**What are the difficulties that they face?**

Some of them do not have enough money to go to school and some of them because their parents do not force them to go to school.

**Is it free education for primary standards?**

No, it is not for free.

**How much does a student have to pay for the enrollment fee?**

The enrollment fee for the primary level student is 500 kyats per student.

**What about the middle standard level?**

I don't know.

**What about the high school standard level?**

I don't know too. The enrollment fee for all standards is the same, like 500 kyats per student. The costs are only different because they calculate with the book fees. For example, the higher standard students have to pay more for the book fees.

**Do the SPDC soldiers or KNU soldiers come and disturb the school?**

They do not disturb but if the [both] soldiers come in the villages, the grade ten students dare not study at night time.

**Why do they dare not study at night time?**

Because they are afraid of the situation.

**What kind of situation?**

Sometimes, a lot of soldiers come so villagers are afraid.

**What soldiers are you talking about?**

The SPDC soldiers.

**What are the violations that the SPDC soldiers do when they come to the village?**

We are scared of them because they have numerous soldiers.

**Do they threaten villagers?**

They do not threaten villagers. Because sometimes, when they come, they come with a lot



of soldiers and they stay at school.

**When they stayed at school, did they ask permission from the school master or school in charge people?**

No, they don't because they did not stay in the school compound. They stayed beside the school.

**What are the problems villagers faced when they [Tatmadaw] stay beside the school?**

They [Tatmadaw] did not create any problem. Sometimes, they just come to watch the festival.

**What are the occupations that the villagers in your village earn their livelihood for?**

They are doing betel nut plantations and cardamom plantations.

**Is there anything else?**

Some villagers drive a motorbike taxi.

**Do they work on tea plantations?**

Yes, they do.

**Do they grow tea plants for business or they just plant for themselves?**

They just grow them to eat for themselves.

**Do they work on swidden farms or paddy farms?**

No, they don't.

**Can villagers in you village can work smoothly?**

They could work smoothly starting in 2011 and 2012.

**Do they face any problems?**

Not really. Only we could not sleep at the betel nut plantations. It is fine now.

**Are there any villagers who do not have enough food?**

Yes.

**What do they do when they do not have enough food?**

They work for other people like clearing the plantations, collecting the cardamom fruits and collecting betel nut.

**How much do they get per day?**

Women get 1,500 kyats and men get 1,500 kyats per day.

**How many households are there in you village?**

There are over *[censored for security]* households.

**Are there only Karen ethnic people in your village or are there also Burmese ethnic people?**

There are also Burmese people live in the village.

**What do the Burmese people do?**

Some of them get married here and some of them came to work.

**Do they get married with villagers here?**

Yes.

**What do you and villagers think about the KNU and Myanmar government signing the ceasefire agreement in early 2012? Do they say it is good or bad?**

Some village say it is good but some villagers say there is no difference.

**What else do the villagers who say it is good say about it?**

They said peace is good.

**What about villagers who said there is no difference?**

They said even though they signed the agreement the situation remain the same. The Tatmadaw soldiers still come to the area. Some of them heard that after signing the agreement the Tatmadaw soldiers have to withdraw but now the Tatmadaw soldiers come more and more. So there is no difference.

**What are the differences from when they rotated their soldiers before and after the ceasefire? What are their military situations after the ceasefire?**

In the past, if they sent rations they only reached Hk--- army camp and they ordered villagers to send them further. But now, they send them on their own.

**Do they still order villagers to send rations for them now?**

No, they don't order now. They ordered forced labour once in February 2012. They ordered motorbikes to follow them. After that, they send on their own.

**Do villagers have to carry rations for them?**

No.

**Are there widows who face with difficulties in your village?**

Yes, there are some.

**How do villagers help them?**

They borrow from other people and then, they work for them later where the work is available. Sometimes, villagers also help them, like youth and women groups from the religions in the area.

**Where do people in your village go to buy and sell things?**

They go to Toungoo Town.

**How many hours do you have to go from your village to Toungoo Town?**

It takes four hours.

**By car or motorbike?**

By motorbike.

**How many cars are there in your village?**

There are two cars.

**When you travel by car, do you have to ask permission for going down to the town and coming up?**

Yes.

**How much do villagers have to pay if they go and ask permission for going down to the town and coming up at a time?**

They have to pay around 1,000 kyats at a time.

**How many motorbikes are there in your village?**

There are around 70 motorbikes.

**How many military gates do you have to pass when you go to Toungoo Town?**

There are three military gates.

**Where are these three gates based?**

One is in Hk--- army camp, the second one is in Hp--- army camp and the third one is in 20 miles army camp.

**When you go to Toungoo Town, do you have to ask permission for going down to the town and coming up?**

Yes, we have to ask permission for going down to the town.

**How much do you have to pay at a time?**

1,000 kyats.

**What about now? Do you still have to ask permission for going down to the town and coming up?**

Yes, they still do it now, but it is okay if we don't do it.

**What are the problems that villagers mostly face because the SPDC soldiers order them to do forced labour?**

Because they come and base by the river in Hk--- village, the villagers face problems with getting water for cooking, drinking and bathing. Like because they are there, villagers dare not go and take a bath in the river. A group of villagers have to go together to bathe.

**Are villagers threatened by Tatmadaw soldiers when they go to their plantations?**

No.

**Is there land confiscation in your area?**

No. The Tatmadaw soldiers go around and cut the bamboo without asking permission from villagers [the owner].

**Do they order villagers to cut bamboo for them?**

No, they do not order. They go around and cut them on their own.

**Do you see the SPDC government come and carry out development for your village, in terms of education, health care and religions?**

Yes. Sometimes, they come and treat the nursery students with snacks. Sometimes, they come and provide prizes for students who are clever in education.

**Do they provide that every year?**

No. They provided in 2010 and 2012.

**Do they do any other development for the village?**

No.

**Do villagers see the SPDC government as good or bad?**

They see them as bad.

**Why do they see them as bad?**

Even if they stay at their place, villagers just don't like them. Sometimes, they don't respect us. They say disrespectful words to us while we are walking.

**Do they threaten the women?**

They do not threaten but they make jokes to them.

**What do you and villagers think about the KNU?**

They struggle to liberate our Karen people and to free them from the oppression.

**Do you see them as good or bad?**

I see them as good.

**Have the KNU's soldiers come to you village?**

Yes, they came.

**What did they do when they came?**

They just came to visit the village as civilians. They came once in early 2012 to forbid the alcohol selling in the village.

**How do villagers see them when they do this?**

They see as it is good thing because villagers suffer from drug issues in the area. Sometimes, they come and say by word to the villagers that, *"Don't sell drugs. If we see you selling drug we will arrest you and give punishment."* Some drug sellers do not listen to them. So most of the villagers want them [KNU] to take action.

**What are the consequences happening in your village because people sell alcohol?**

Sometimes, within the family, members like parents and children have conflict [because of drinking alcohol].

**When the KNU forbids selling them, do you see it as good or bad?**

We see it as good.

**Do the SPDC soldiers forbid the selling and drinking [of] alcohol?**

They don't forbid them.

**How much do you have to [pay to] buy one rice sack in your village?**

People sell them differently, some people sell 19,000 kyats and some people sell 20,000 kyats and some people sell 25,000 kyats per rice sack.

**What is the biggest price?**

35,000 kyats per rice sack.

**What is the lowest price?**

18,000 kyats per rice sack.

**How much do you have to buy a viss of pork?**

5,000 kyats per viss of pork.

**Do you have to pay tax in your village?**

Yes.

**What types of taxes?**

We have to pay tax to both SPDC and KNU soldiers.

**What do villagers say about the tax?**

They [tax collector] explain to them [villagers] before they pay tax. Some villagers understand but some villagers do not understand.

**What do people who do not understand what the tax is for do?**

Some people pay willingly but some people do not want to pay tax.

**What do you think about the SPDC government and KNU signing the ceasefire agreement in 2012?**

I see it as good. But we have to stay alert all the time.

**Do you want to say something else about the issue that I have not asked you yet?**

No.

Thank you so much for giving your time and answering my questions.

**Source #10**

<b>Log #</b>	12-41-S2
<b>Title</b>	Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, received April 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in June 2012 <a href="http://khrq.org/2012/06/12-41-s2/papun-situation-update-bu-tho-township-received-april-2012">http://khrq.org/2012/06/12-41-s2/papun-situation-update-bu-tho-township-received-april-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpa-pun District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p>The Tatmadaw and armed groups, including the Border Guard and the DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army], are active in the area now. The KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] is especially active in the area. They have had to actively protect the civilians to help them to survive and so that they can avoid doing forced labour for the Tatmadaw. The KNLA has taken responsibility for protecting the civilians.</p> <p>I do not know the Burmese army [Tatmadaw] officer's name and I am not sure if I can find out. However, their camp is based to the east of the Pgeh Loh River, where IB [Infantry Battalion] #19 and LIBs [Light Infantry Battalions] #341, #434 and #340 are based. There is also one other battalion. I do not know their commander's name, but their battalion number is #642. They [the Tatmadaw] have based these five battalions in camps alongside the Papun vehicle road all the way to Way Moo village. I would say that their camps are permanent.</p> <p>There are other army camps based along the border [with Thailand]. These camps are located on the Khoh Nee riverbank from Hkaw Poo to Pa Heh, K'Hee Kyoh, Kyaw Nya, Dah Kway, U Thoo Hta, Meh Ra Hta, Meh Paw Muh Hta, Thee Roh Hta, Moh Moo Kyoh and Thoo Mgeh Hta [villages]. There is also another army camp in the Meh Pa area. These army camps have been based along the border for over ten years, but I cannot tell if they have been set up for temporary purposes or if they have been set up permanently.</p> <p>Border Guard Battalion #1012 is based in Oh Daw, Battalion #1013 is based in Hpaw Htee Hkuh, and Battalion #1014 is based in Tha Aw Play. I do not know for sure whether these three battalions are active or based there permanently. The commander of Battalion #1012 is Hpa Bee. The commander of Battalion #1013 is La Kyeh, and the deputy Commander is Kyaw Way. I do not know the name of the commander of Battalion #1014.</p> <p>The [Burma] government has increased troop numbers [in Karen State]. I asked [the villagers] how many battalions and camps there were, but I did not find out. The Tatmadaw's activities have included the transportation of food and weapons. It seems like more food and</p>

weapons are being transported [by the Tatmadaw] at present than in previous years. The Tatmadaw has not only sent food, but has also sent iron and cement for constructing many buildings. I do not know how many soldiers currently guard the gates at the entrance of the camps. Sometimes there are two to four soldiers.

The villagers have not responded to the situation reported above. The situation means that the Government army [Tatmadaw] has increased [in Karen districts] in order to ensure their security when transporting food between Ka Ma Maung and Papun, and between Papun and the Khoh Nee riverbank. They have sent more food and weapons than in previous years because they have agreed to a ceasefire with the KNU [Karen National Union]. The Tatmadaw are now able to send materials and equipment more freely, so they have sent and stored a lot of supplies. They will be more capable of operating if fighting happens again. I think that the Tatmadaw will use the materials that they have stored, such as iron and cement, to repair their camps in Papun town and buildings in other camps.

The police have rebuilt the police station in Papun [city]. They have repaired it and the number of police officers has also increased, but I do not know the leader's name. I do not know any more about the fixing of checkpoints and I do not know about the camps that were abandoned, as people do not use them anymore. Regarding the existing army camps, the Tatmadaw planted landmines beside them and also on the mountains in the past. They also planted it beside villagers' flat fields, and the places where villagers travel to cut trees and bamboo. Regarding checkpoints, I know that since January 2012, citizens have been able to travel more freely.

With regards to the situation reported above as it relates to landmines, civilians were able to respond in only one way. The village head and knowledgeable villagers went to tell the [Tatmadaw] officer that the villagers needed to build houses. The villagers have to feed their buffalos, so some Tatmadaw battalions have allowed the villagers to use some places beside the flat field farms [by clearing some of the landmines]. The situation is such that if the KNLA were to go on patrol, they would be in danger of being hit by landmines. If the KNLA patrols near the Tatmadaw camps that are beside the flat field farms, they could step on the landmines when they are going back. The Tatmadaw did this [planted landmines] to protect themselves. But in my opinion, it was to make things difficult for the villagers to work. I also think that the Government army thought that the KNLA would not know the path, so if they [the KNLA] want to go to their [Tatmadaw] camps they might ask the villagers to accompany them [to show them where the landmines are] and the villagers could be hit too. This is what I think.

I do not know what the Tatmadaw soldiers do when they are in the camps. Sometimes, they stay in the army camp, but other times they patrol outside. They go out [of their camps] to guard the bulldozers. We do not know what kinds of food they have demanded [from villagers]. The Tatmadaw has demanded coconuts and vegetables from the villages of K--- and M---. They do not demand money, porters, or villagers for sentry duty or to serve as soldiers, and they do not order villagers to serve as guides for them anymore. However, they still order thatch shingles. We do not know the name of the officer from the battalion [LIB #340] that orders things from the villagers. LIB #340 still orders villagers to do work, such as helping them to plough fields, plant paddy, and to winnow in C--- village. However, I do not know the officer's name. The civilians have not prevented this situation from happening. They have followed the demands as much as they could, but they have not followed all [of the Tatmadaw's] orders. These situations mean that human rights abuses continue. In my opinion, they [Tatmadaw soldiers] have not paid the villagers for their work such as ploughing fields, planting paddy and making thatch shingles. As they [the soldiers] have a salary, it is better if they pay for things like that

Since January 2012, I have not seen the villagers respond to the fighting that has happened between the two armed groups [the Tatmadaw and the KNLA]. Regarding the planting of landmines, since the ceasefire the villagers have planned to clear landmines from their



workplaces in order to work more easily. The armed groups that were active in the area have cleared some of them. The villagers have not responded to this situation. The villagers' workplaces have been cleared [of landmines] because of the ceasefire [between the Tatmadaw and the KNLA].

The powerful groups that came [to confiscate land], and caused problems and damaged the villagers' livelihoods day by day were the Border Guard and Burmese government army [Tatmadaw]. The Burmese government army has damaged the villagers' land and livelihoods by building camps on their land. The land that has been taken is on both sides of the vehicle road from Papun city to Way Moo Way Hsa [village]. A lot of land has been destroyed, but I cannot report the exact amount. From the [November] 2010 Burma election until March 2012, they [the Tatmadaw] built one new section in the Traw Day area of Papun city. The civilians have not responded to this situation. This situation [of land confiscation] is a human rights abuse. In my opinion, the Burmese government has a salary and money so it should not commit human rights abuses.

The powerful people [Burma government] built a vehicle road, camps, and rubber plantations that have impacted the villagers negatively. The Tatmadaw did development projects in Papun city, such as building a battalion camp, which required the confiscation of the villagers' land on both sides of the vehicle road from Meh T'Roh to T'Koo Teh. A lot of land was damaged, but I cannot report how much exactly. There are no travel restrictions and no mining, but the Burma government came to measure villagers' land, and confiscated it. Other things have also happened, like demands for land for small rubber plantations in E--- [village] after the Burma government set up electricity in the village for the villagers.

The villagers responded in some ways to the situation [relating to the confiscation of land for development projects] reported above. With regards to the setting up of electricity in the village and the demands for land, they replied that they could not give them the land because they earn their livelihoods by farming flat fields and hill fields. If they were to give the Burma government the places that they demanded, they would not have any land to farm hill fields, and the amount of land available to farm would become far less. This situation [of land confiscation] is a human rights abuse, and the civilians are forced into it. These demands are illegal. That is my opinion.

The opportunities that the villagers have to earn their livelihoods through agriculture, transporting goods, trading, hunting animals and finding food in the forest has changed. They still have a chance to do these things; however, it is not enough. The villagers have not responded in any way to this situation. They have just worked where they could work. They do not work if they cannot work. The situation is such that some villagers live far from the vehicle road and some villagers do not live where people [the Burma government] are doing development projects, so they can still do agriculture.

Villagers' livelihoods are changing because of natural resource extraction, which has decreased the natural places available [for farming]. For example, the extraction of natural resources damages all of the important cultural places, fresh water, fresh air, the forest, mineral resources, land, and the places where animals live and villagers hunt. As a consequence, some people's livelihoods are not the same. The villagers have not responded in any way to this situation [natural resource extraction]. This situation has meant that some villagers now plant peanuts and some trade animals for their livelihoods. Some villagers carry food to sell, and some farm flat fields and hill fields.

The villagers' health has changed and there has been an increase in new diseases such as dizziness, hypertension, malaria, and body pain. If the villagers go to the government hospital, they have to pay money. There they do not ask for payment for the cost of the treatment. They are willing to help, but people have to pay upwards of 5,000 kyat (US



\$6.11)<sup>23</sup>. They do not take responsibility for caring for the villagers' health. The government confiscates all things used for the prevention and treatment of disease if they see villagers carrying them. Peoples' use of traditional medicine has decreased because diseases have increased and the demand for medicine has also increased, so people cannot use traditional medicine anymore. The villagers could not respond to this situation in any way, so they have had to follow whatever people [at the government hospital] order them to do. I cannot tell you any more about this situation.

### **Changes in education**

Because teachers have not attended school regularly, the students' standard of education has been affected. Their salary has increased, which has caused problems for the student's parents. The Karen language is not taught in every school, particularly in the schools that are controlled by the government. Some schools in Ph---, La--- and Y--- have been closed. These schools have been closed since July 2011 because the Burmese army active in the area came to sleep in the villages and fired heavy weapons and people were afraid and fled. Even now, people have not gone back to those villages, so the schools were closed. These schools are in Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract. These schools were not able to teach the Karen language because the teachers had graduated from the Burmese government's school. People who want to go to study at high schools in Burma have to change their names to a Burmese one so that they can go and study there. After they have graduated, they have to use a Burmese name in order to get a job.

The villagers could not respond to this situation [concerning education] in any way. People [from the Burma government] have forbidden them to respond. In schools that are far from the Burmese government and near to the areas under KNU control, even in those that people recognise as Burmese government schools, the villagers can respond by teaching the Karen language. This situation means that the Burmese government wants to kill the Karen culture and language through education. That is my opinion.

### **Changes in the situation for women**

There is no more rape or torture.<sup>24</sup> There are no difficulties preventing women from accessing health care when giving birth. Healthcare is getting a little bit better. Women still have to do forced labour, but it has reduced a little bit. There are still livelihood difficulties. Even though men work to earn their livelihoods, it is not enough so women also have to work. Even though there are much better opportunities for women [than before], it is difficult for them to access education and to look after their families.

<sup>23</sup> As of June 6<sup>th</sup> 2012, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on a rate of 818 kyat to US \$1. This reflects new measures taken by Burma's central bank on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 to initiate a managed float of the kyat, thus replacing the previous fixed rate of 6.5 kyat to US \$1.

<sup>24</sup> This is an opinion expressed by the community member who wrote this report; it does not reflect KHRG's organizational understanding of the scope or scale of sexual violence or other abuse against women in eastern Burma. Community members trained by KHRG have previously gathered detailed evidence of specific incidents of rape and sexual violence by Tatmadaw soldiers; see Displacement Monitoring Update No. 39: "Body of unidentified naked woman found near Waw Lay village," KHRG, January 2011; Displacement Monitoring Update No. 48: "Interviews with Tatmadaw deserters confirm earlier reported incidents of abuse and general threats to civilians," KHRG January 2011. During 2011, KHRG received reports of rape and sexual violence requiring further confirmation from Papun, Thaton, Toungoo and Tenasserim districts. Note that in all of these instances, KHRG was unable to confirm the date of the incident in question. It is important to note that the majority of community members trained by KHRG to document human rights abuses are men, who face inherent social and cultural constraints in gathering detailed evidence of rape or sexual violence. The Karen Women's Organization (KWO) has released reports detailing incidents of sexual violence in many of the same areas of eastern Burma in which KHRG works; see most recently *Walking amongst sharp knives: The unsung courage of Karen women village chiefs in conflict areas of Eastern Burma*, KWO, February 2010.

### **Cultural [and religious] freedoms**

The opportunity for freedom of expression is getting a little bit better. There are no restrictions on religious worship. Cultural freedoms are getting a little bit better. Villagers can meet and communicate well. There is no more forcing of people to enter the religion [Buddhism] in order to get an education. The villagers have not responded to this situation. This situation means a reduction in the restrictions on accessing education.

The Border Guard does not have a base in this area [Bu Tho Township]. Their nearest base is in Hpaw Htee Hku camp. This is Battalion #1013, led by [Commander] Hla Kyaw and Second Commander Kyaw Way. They are active in the Bu Tho area.

In the Meh Pree area [village tract] of Bu Tho Township, a monk called Hkay Maw Way, also known as Hkay Mee Ka, lives with his soldiers. He has over 20 soldiers, approximately 30. He also has big weapons and small weapons. He lives between Meh Pree and Kyoh K'Loh and he has built a lot of rubber plantations. Moreover he has built one monastery and a school too. He plans to build a new village between Meh Pree and Kyoh K'Loh [villages], beside the monastery and road. He plans to dig one well for every two houses because the village [he plans to build] is far from water. He is carrying out his plan.

We do not know what monk Hkay Maw Way, also known as Hkay Mee Ka's, plan is, but it seems that the villagers in the Meh Pree area support him very much. We don't know what they [the monk and his soldiers] will destroy or how they will abuse the villagers' rights. We do not know which villages this monk will take people from for his new village. He wants to build the village in a rubber plantation. He has named this place Htoo Wah Kaw Kaw Kloh, but this place was not called this in the past. I do not know what it was named in the past. He plans to build a school and hospital in this village where civilians will not need to pay fees. However there is one thing: the civilians have to clear vegetation from his rubber plantations when he asks. People do not know where this monk has received assistance and money from; he just goes back to Kaw Taw and travels to Pa'an city.

The civilians have not responded in any way to this situation, reported above. They have just followed the plan of monk Hkay May Way, also known as Hkay Mee Ka. Regarding this incident, I think that it would be good if the monk were to do good things. If he works for the Burmese government and follows their suggestions, it would seem that the civilians who live nearby would be affected in a very negative way. It would affect them by preventing them from farming their hill fields or working in agriculture anymore. It would affect the villagers who farm hill fields, particularly those who do not eat enough, because the monks' village only has rubber plantations nearby. That is my opinion.

### **Burma government development projects**

The Burmese government came to C--- village to carry out development projects, including building a school. They provided two teachers, but they only taught for one or two months and then they left and could not be found. There is only one person, [a teacher] who the villagers selected, left [at the school]. They [the teachers provided by the government] did not help the teacher chosen by the villagers, but the villagers struggled by themselves. This school is classified as a government school. They built this school in C--- village in June 2011.

On February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012, they [Papun district Saw Mya Htunt Way and government officials] came to C--- village to provide electricity from a hydroelectric source. They also provided pipelines that carry water to the village. After that, the villagers had to give one goat and one pig to the Papun district leader Saw Mya Htunt Way and the government officials from

Papun when they came to look at the village. One goat costs approximately between 15,000 - 20,000 kyat (US \$18.34 - \$24.45) and one pig costs over 100,000 kyat (US \$122.25). I do not know the actual cost [of the animals that were provided]. I see that this kind of help is not always beneficial for the civilians. Regarding the hydroelectric energy, the rainfall differs between the summer and the rainy season, so it will be destroyed if people are not responsible.

[In another incident] they [the Burma government] provided electricity in E--- [village] but they [the villagers] said that the person [in charge] who came to help set up the electricity asked for 7,000 kyat (US \$8.56) per house. There are 40 households in E---. This person also asked the villagers to provide them with one piece of land for a rubber plantation and for building his house on so that he could take responsibility for the electricity. But this would cause the villagers problems, so they told him that they couldn't be held responsible for any trouble or problems that arose. The villagers responded by saying that if he planted rubber trees they wouldn't be able to help him if he faced problems, so the introduction of electricity to E--- has not run smoothly for the civilians. The villagers are not able to keep buying bulbs for the fluorescent lights. One fluorescent light bulb costs 3,500 kyat (US \$4.28), but they could only use it for one week before it became damaged so it does not benefit the civilians.

**Situation Update written by a community member, Bu Tho Township, Hpa-pun District, (Received in May 2012)**

#### Source #11

<b>Log #</b>	12-63-A7-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Interview: Naw M---, May 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	N--- village, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Naw M---</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> Female</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 33</p> <p><b>Village:</b> N--- village</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Family Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>How long time ago did you step on the landmine? Whose landmine did you step on?</b></p> <p>[It was] the Border Guard's [BGF] landmine.</p> <p><b>Border Guard's landmine?</b></p> <p>Yes, the Border Guard's landmine.</p> <p><b>What did you look for and what did you do?</b></p> <p>I went to cut fire wood because people went to cut bamboo every day and I thought I would look for some vegetables, then I came back.</p> <p><b>You came back?</b></p>	

People, like Maung Aye Than and his son in-law, travel back and forth along this path everyday but they didn't step on them [landmines]. When I went [along the path], I saw a man on the river bank, he wore a *longyi*<sup>25</sup> on his waist without a shirt and with a beard.

**Was it the period when you went to check your charcoal?**

It was while [I] was looking for firewood. In the past, soldiers planted landmines when they stayed here [the place around P--- area] but people weren't hit by them. I thought people travelled back and forth every day along this path, I went through it and I stepped on it on the way home. I was hit by the landmine but I didn't know [she didn't know that she herself stepped on landmine]

**Did your leg blow off right away?**

No, I saw people cried a lot, including my nephew.

**Did you go with many people?**

[I went] with my aunt and nephew.

**Were you pregnant at that time?**

I was pregnant for seven months. I didn't know the reason why those people [her nephew and aunt] cried a lot even the landmine blew up very far away from [us]. [I was] wrong because it [landmine] actually hit my leg when I looked at my leg.

**Didn't you know? It did not hurt?**

No, I didn't know then I came back. I couldn't do anything when it [her leg] was hit earlier because the blood bled out *ra ra* [the sound of her blood as it bled out].

**Was it hurting?**

No, it wasn't. I came back forward [in front of] other people [her nephew and aunt].

**Could you come back?**

I came back....came back, it [her leg] was hurt when it was hit [knocked again when walking on the path]

**Was it hit [by something]?**

Yes.

**[Your leg] blew off?**

No.

**Which part of your leg blew off?**

I lost all of the skin on my toes. When I touched them with my hand, there was no more flesh. None of my toes blew off, they all remained, but people [doctors] operated on me.

<sup>25</sup> A longyi is a sarong worn by men in Myanmar.

**Then, which hospital did you go to?**

I went to Kawkareik hospital. I asked people to send me to *kyaw thah* [student] clinic [Mae Tao clinic] but people didn't dare to send me.

**How did people help you?**

Border Guard helped with [gave] 50,000 kyats.

**Who were they? Maung Ngway Heh?**

Hpah Naw Poo gave it [money] to me but I didn't know the exact person who gave it to me.

**Did they give 50,000 kyats for the price of medicine [treatment fee]?**

It wasn't for the price of medicine because it was just for food costs.

**Did people help you when you went there [Kawkareik hospital]?**

Their teacher [an officer from the BGF] gave 100,000 kyats to me.

**Anybody else help you?**

Nobody. Just my relatives helped me.

**So, you had to spend you own [money] for the rest of [the treatment fee]?**

I had to spend for the rest of it.

**How much did it cost?**

Almost 700,000 kyat was spent for round trip fee and food costs. People [doctors] didn't inject many medicines [into me] due to me being pregnant. People said that it would affect the child, so people had to [look after] me the whole night...the whole night. Four people stayed at the hospital.

**Four people?**

I told you that four of us stayed at the hospital. I stayed at the hospital for two weeks but people [doctors] just cured it [her injured foot] twice then we came back.

**Did they cut off much of your leg?**

Don't talk about cutting it off. I had to hire people to throw the part of my leg away [after it was part-amputated] by paying 10,000 kyats. If I didn't hire [someone] with 10,000 kyats, nobody would throw it away.

**The part of your leg?**

I had to hire people with 10,000 kyats. If I didn't hire them, nobody would throw it away and people [doctors] didn't allow me to throw it away by myself.

**You were at Kawkareik hospital at that time?**

Yes.

**The part of leg which was cut off from your leg?**

The part of leg which was thrown away by the people.

**The part of leg which was thrown away by people?**

Yes, I had to hire the person who threw my leg away by paying 10,000 kyats. My son's father [her husband] said, "*Don't throw it away if we need to hire someone, then I will eat it (instead)*" due to being angry.

**Due to no money [as well]?**

We had no money. We didn't have money because people just handed [some] money to us urgently. My older sister sent money to me when my injury recovered. I said, "*We still are lucky by having a sister who lives away from us [who sent money to her] and if my sister doesn't live away from us, I would die*".

**Where did you step on it [the landmine]?**

P--- [a place in a plantation].

**Is it close to the flat field?**

It is quite far away from the flat field. Now, people go there every day.

**Is it located in people's plantations?**

Yes, it is in people's plantations. In the past, I went there every day. The person who planted the landmine is Kyaw Wah.

**Kyaw Wah?**

Yes, he killed himself with a gun already.

**Thank you.**

**Source #12**

<b>Log #</b>	12-63-I1
<b>Title</b>	Incident Report, Hpa-an District, 2010-2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Nabu Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Part 1 – Incident Details</b>	
<b>Type of Incident</b>	Villagers suffered with landmines, armed group planted landmines
<b>Date of Incident</b>	See table below
<b>Incident Location</b>	T--- village, Nabu Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Victim Information</b>	

<b>Name</b>	Tay Thah Moh [mother]
<b>Age</b>	60
<b>Sex</b>	Female
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen
<b>Family</b>	Yes
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer
<b>Religion</b>	
<b>Position</b>	
<b>Village</b>	T--- village

**Perpetrator Information**

<b>Name(s)</b>	Naw Kyoh
<b>Rank</b>	Company
<b>Unit</b>	999
<b>Base</b>	
<b>Commander's Name</b>	Maw Ngway Heg

**Part 2 – Information Quality****1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.****2. Explain how the source verified this information.**

We knew that Saung Tak planted landmines 300 landmines in the upper part of T--- village, at the bottom of the mountain. [As far as] we knew, about 50 landmines blew up already. [Landmines] hit two men, cows, buffalos and goats; those were hit by landmines [were reported] as we wrote up and reported. This is the true information and this is all information that villagers have.

**Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident**

**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 an attachment if needed.**

3rd Township [T' Nay Hsah Township], Noh Kay village tract, above T--- village, beside N-- pond.

No	Date	Name	livestock	sex
1.	November 11 <sup>th</sup> 2011	<i>Muh Ghah</i> [aunt] Tay Thah Moh [the mother of Tay Thah]	buffalo	Female, with small puppy
2	November 20 <sup>th</sup> 2011	<i>Muh Ghah</i> [aunt] Tay Thah Moh [mother]	bull	young cow
3	November 27 <sup>th</sup> 2011	<i>Muh Ghah</i> [aunt] Tay Thah Moh [mother]	bull	One cow
4	February 9 <sup>th</sup> 2012	<i>Muh Ghah</i> [aunt] Tay Thah Moh [mother]	bull	One cow and one ox
5	November 14 <sup>th</sup>	Hp---	bull	One small young



	2011			cow
6	November 15 <sup>th</sup> 2011	Hpah D---	bull	one ox
7	October 5 <sup>th</sup> 2011	<i>Muh Ghah</i> [aunt] Tay <i>Thah Moh</i> [mother]	bull	one young cow
8	February 9 <sup>th</sup> 2012	Kyaw S---	bull	one young ox
9	March 20 <sup>th</sup> 2012	Hpah L---	bull	one young ox
10	April 6 <sup>th</sup> 2012	Hpah D---	goat	One young male goat
11	March 19 <sup>th</sup> 2012	Naw H---	goat	One young female goat
12	[day is missing] April 2012	N---	buffalo	Old female buffalo
13	April 5 <sup>th</sup> 2010	Maw K---, 43 years old, village, hit by landmine, male		
14	March 2011	Ta M---, 23 years old, villager, hit by landmine, male		
15	March 14 <sup>th</sup> 2011	T--- village [the owner's village], Te--- [buffalo owner], beside N--- village [the place where the buffalo stepped on the landmine],	buffalo	One female [buffalo]

**Source #13**

<b>Log #</b>	12-71-S1
<b>Title</b>	Pa'an Situation Update: T'Nay Hsah Township, September 2011 to April
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in July 2012 <a href="http://khrq.org/2012/07/12-71-s1/paan-situation-update-tnay-hsah-township-september-2011-april-2012">http://khrq.org/2012/07/12-71-s1/paan-situation-update-tnay-hsah-township-september-2011-april-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	T'Nay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p><b>The suffering of villagers as a result of landmines planted beside their village, their farms and their plantations by the Border Guard</b></p> <p>On September 21<sup>st</sup> 2011, Border Guard Battalion #999 Commander Dee Dee and some of the Government [Tatmadaw] soldiers gathered together and went to fire at the KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] Battalion #101 in W--- place, [which is between] Y--- village [and P--- village], Htee Wa Plaw village tract, T'Nay Hsah Township. The Border Guard and the Government soldiers conquered the KNLA Battalion #101's base in W--- place. After they conquered the base, the Border Guard started to plant landmines beside Y--- village, beside the villagers' farms, and beside P--- village. They [landmines] hit many villagers, and many of the villagers' cows and buffalos were also hit.</p> <p>Later on, KNLA Battalion #101 withdrew to the other side of a heavily forested mountain. The forests are called P'Keh Hkee forest and Htee Klay Hkee forest. This place is next to Noh Kay village tract, and near to the villages of A---, N---, T--- and B---. These villages are in T'Nay Hsah Township. Border Guard Battalion #3, [commanded by] Battalion Commander Mya Hkaing and Battalion Deputy Commander Maung Ngway Heh, gathered with LIB [Light Infantry Battalion] #358, LIB #547 and LIB #548, and went again to attack KNLA Battalion #101. From November to December 2011, they fought by the P'Teh stream, which is next to N--- village.</p> <p>Then, the Border Guard started to plant landmines beside the village, beside the villagers'</p>



farms, beside the well, on the boundaries of the farms, in betelnut<sup>26</sup> plantations, durian plantations and rubber plantations, and on the road that the villagers use for traveling. The villagers have been hit by landmines, and their buffalos and cows have also been [hit], so the village head went and asked the Border Guard soldiers, *"Why didn't you tell the villagers that you planted landmines?"* The Border Guard [soldiers] replied, *"Village head, we didn't plant the landmines, they were planted by the KNLA."* One of the village heads responded, *"The KNLA soldiers planted landmines in the forest and they told the villagers where they had planted them. You [the Border Guard] planted landmines in our farms and in our plantations; why didn't you tell us?"* Border Guard Company Commander Hpah Maw Hkoh replied to the village head, *"You are disobedient and assist the KNLA soldiers, so we have to do things like this to you."* Another village head replied, *"We do not only assist the KNLA soldiers, we assist any troops that come into our village, and if they need something, we help all of them."* Border Guard Company Commander Hpah Maw Hkoh told the village leader, *"Ask the KNLA soldiers to remove all the landmines that they have planted and we will also remove all of our landmines."*

On January 11<sup>th</sup> 2012, the KNU [Karen National Union] held a meeting about a cease-fire [with the Tatmadaw], and on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, they signed an agreement in Pa'an Town.<sup>27</sup> In February 2012, KNLA Battalion #101 and Border Guard Battalion #3 worked together following an order to remove the landmines. Those who came and removed the landmines were Border Guard Company Commander Hpah Maw Hkoh, with Sergeant Kee Kyaw, Private Htwee Heh Kay and Battalion Deputy Commander Maung Ngway Heh, and they managed it with 20 of their soldiers. With regards to the KNLA, 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant K'Loo Koo and Hpah Htwee Maw managed it with about 15 soldiers. Some of the village heads accompanied them. They were able to remove 30 landmines altogether. At 3:00 pm on that same day, February 11<sup>th</sup>, a Border Guard soldier named Htwee Heh Kay was hit by one of their own landmines; because of that, the removal of landmines was stopped. The places where they removed landmines were in N--- and B--- in T'Nay Hsah Township. The landmines have caused a big problem for the villagers.

On April 10<sup>th</sup> 2012, when I arrived in T'Nay Hsah Township, I saw many villagers who were complaining differently in many villages. Some [villagers] do not dare go to their paddy farms or to their plantation farms. A reason for this, is that the Border Guard had planted landmines in their plantations, so some of the villagers were injured and many of the villagers' farm animals, such as cows, buffalos and goats were killed.

The people who gave [me] this information are Saw S--- from N--- [village], Uncle W--- from N--- village, W---s' mother from B--- village, Saw B--- from T--- village, Maung M--- from S---

<sup>26</sup>In Burmese, "betelnut" and "betel leaf" are referred to as "konywet" and "konthih," as if they are from the same plant. The Burmese names are also commonly used by Karen language speakers. "Betelnut" is the seed from an Areca Palm tree, areca catechu; "Betel leaf" is the leaf of the Piper betel vine, belonging to the piperaceae family. See "Attacks on cardamom plantations, detention and forced labour in Toungoo District," KHRG, May 2010.

<sup>27</sup>The ceasefire agreement signed between the KNU and RUM officials on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2011 in Pa'an Town was an agreement in principle on '11 key points', to be followed by more in-depth talks after 45 days. Senior KNU officials have since announced that the deadline of 45 days is unlikely to be met; see: "KNU ceasefire meeting with government behind schedule," *Karen News*, February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012. Meanwhile, as-yet-unpublished KHRG information received on February 19<sup>th</sup> 2012, suggests that there have been clashes between government forces and non-state armed groups in Pa'an District in February 2012 and that recent re-supply operations carried out by Tatmadaw forces in Nyaunglebin District exceeded the amount of supplies usually sent, and included heavy artillery. Local media sources have also reported ongoing fighting in Pa'an and Nyaunglebin Districts since January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012; see: "Killings and attacks between DKBA and BGF drives villagers from their homes," *Karen News*, February 24<sup>th</sup> 2012; "Ceasefires, Continued Attacks and a Friendly Encounter Between Enemies," *Free Burma Rangers*, February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012.

village and Saw Y--- from Hs--- village. The villagers cannot identify all the villagers' names, including children. The six villagers whose names I reported are from different villages, and they all have to face the landmines problem. So, they complained that they need help from people to remove these landmines.

Since the [landmine] incidents started [to happen] in 2011 and 2012, landmines have detonated once a day or once every two days. The villagers who have suffered the most are from B---, N--- and T--- villages. The incidents [include] villagers who were hit by landmines and lost their legs, and some of their [B---, N--- and T--- villagers'] buffalos and cows also lost their legs. Some [of the villagers who] were hit by landmines and lost their legs, killed themselves, [some] by shooting [themselves] with "Peh Ploh", which is the [type of] gun that they use for hunting wild animals, and for others, by hanging themselves with a rope to die.

The perpetrators are Border Guard and the KNLA, and we can say that they are perpetrators because the two armies tried to fight against each other. This is a consequence of not removing the landmines, after they had planted them. Therefore, the villagers do not dare to travel and to find firewood outside of the village or near their farm, so they mostly find firewood in their village. Their buffalos, cows and goats are also tied up with ropes. As long as the landmines are not removed, the villagers have to protect themselves by renting farmland from other villagers in areas where there are no landmines, and helping other people plant paddy in order to get rice to be able to survive. As they have no other way [to earn] their livelihood, they have to make charcoal, produce alcohol and breed buffalos, cows, goats, pigs and chickens, but not in a large number, just for their daily survival. Moreover, they have sent their children to Bangkok [Thailand], and asked them to send their parents money. There has not been any improvement to the education system for the children and they cannot build a good school. The young girls work for their livelihood by [using] their vocational skills weaving bags; they [can] get 7,000 kyat (US \$8.56)<sup>28</sup> per bag.

### **Forced labour in T'Nay Hsah Township**

The villagers have to do forced labour every day. The forced labour is ordered by the Government army [Tatmadaw], which stays in L--- village. They are LIB #358, LIB #547 and LIB #548. Twenty years ago, in L--- village, most of the population was Muslim and there were also villagers who were Pwo Karen and Sgaw Karen. When the government army arrived and set up their camp, they got rid of all the Muslim and Karen [villagers]. They invaded all the farms, the plantations, and the villagers' land. They turned farms that they invaded into a *so yah naing myin* [government appropriated land]. On April 26<sup>th</sup> 2012, I went and took photos of their camp located in L--- village, and [photos] of where the government got rid of the villagers, and where the villagers now have to go and do *loh ah pay*<sup>29</sup> such as ploughing the confiscated farms.

The villagers had to go and plough every day. After they ploughed, they had to sow paddy [seeds], and after they had sowed them, the villagers had to harvest for them [the Tatmadaw]. The villagers had to do everything until the paddy [that the villagers carried] arrived at the place where they store rice. When the villagers went and worked for them, they had to bring their own materials such as hand tractors and enough [farming] materials. One village tract had to take responsible for ten acres, ploughing, sowing and harvesting them until the paddy arrived at the place where the rice is stored. When the villagers went

<sup>28</sup> As of June 21<sup>st</sup> 2012, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 851 Kyat to US \$1. This reflects new measures taken by Burma's central bank on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012 to initiate a managed float of the Kyat, thus replacing the previous fixed rate of 6.5 Kyat to US \$1.

<sup>29</sup> *Loh ah pay* is a Burmese term now commonly used in reference to forced labour, although traditionally referring to voluntary service for temples or the local community, not military or state projects.

and ploughed, they [the government] gave them just three bottles of petroleum per day. When the villager worked for them the villager had to bring their own food each day. Moreover, the soldiers who were guarding the farm drove the cows that were eating nearby into their farms where they then detained them. After that they ordered the owner [of the cows] to come, they demanded money from them – 30,000 Kyat (US \$36.67) for one cow. During my journey this time, I saw and heard the villagers complain that there were still many instances of forced labour and oppression by the government army.

### Border Guard forced villagers

I would like to report what a monthly village head from B--- village told me, included below. On April 1<sup>st</sup> 2012, I went to B--- village. I met a female monthly village head and we talked about the forced labour. She told me that last year, in 2011, she had the responsibility of being the monthly village head. That was the time when people were planting paddy, and Border Guard Battalion Commander Mya Hkaing, who at that time was a member of the DKBA, ordered the villagers to plant paddy. Ten villagers from B--- were ordered to plant paddy. Ten villagers were ordered from each of the villages in Noh Kay village tract. There are four villages in Noh Kay village tract, including A---, T---, E--- and N--- villages. Moreover, [villagers from] the other village tracts that are in the village tracts of Yaw Kuh, Htee Klay, and Htee Hpoh also had to go on the same day. When they went they had to bring their own food. Each village tract was responsible for planting ten acres of paddy. They had to plant [the field] until it was finished.

In the past, [Border Guard Battalion Commander] Mya Hkaing was in the DKBA but now he is the commander of Border Guard Battalion #3. The [Border Guard] Battalion Deputy Commander is Maung Ngway Heh and their Battalion is located G--- village, K'Lah Koh camp in T'Nay Hsah Township. In the past, Muslim people lived in K'Lah Koh but they got rid of the Muslims and built their camp there. The place where Mya Hkaing ordered villagers to plant the paddy was near to Noh Hta Baw Mountain in L--- [village]. Now, the Battalion Commander Mya Hkaing has built an office near to Noh Hta Baw Mountain. The mountain has a big cave and he has opened several games such as cards, *Ah K'Loh Wine* and *A'Nee Htaw Wine* [types of Burmese gambling which are similar toroulette and slot machines] everyday. The Battalion also has a machine for *Yaba*<sup>30</sup> at the top of Noh Hta Baw Mountain. Nobody can go to the place where they produce *Yaba* because their soldiers are always guarding it. The villagers who go and play [gamble] use it [Yaba], and the soldiers [asked] the villagers who [they] trust to sell *Yaba*, but in villagers who sell *Yaba* report it.

When the villagers who go and gamble, use *Yaba* and drink, they pawn their farms and cows. Battalion Commander Mya Hkaing invaded about 20 farms in the area including other properties as well. Many villagers became poor because of this. Mya Hkaing ordered the villagers to do *Loh Ah Pay* in which they ploughed, harrowed, sowed, and harvested rice, until the rice arrived at the rice store. This year, after the villagers worked for the Burmese [Tatmadaw], they had to work for the Border Guard. The villagers who were not free to go had to hire a person to work instead of them. They have to pay 4,000 Kyat (US \$4.76) for ploughing, 4,000 Kyat for harrowing and 3,000 Kyat (US \$3.57) for harvesting per day. Therefore, I see that this oppresses the villagers. The government gave the Border Guard a place to build their camp. They got rid of the villagers and built their camps. The Border Guard built their camps in 2011. One camp required 500 acres [of land]. This land was the villagers', but the villagers did not get any compensation.

<sup>30</sup> *Yaba*, which means 'crazy medicine' in Thai, is a tablet form of methamphetamine. Introduced to East Asia during World War II to enhance soldiers' performance, methamphetamine has become increasingly popular in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia Vietnam, and in Burma where it is typically manufactured; see *Yaba, the 'crazy medicine of East Asia*, UNODC, May 2008.

### **The Government army confiscated villagers' land for building camps for the Border Guard**

In 2011, when the Government army transformed the DKBA into the Border Guard<sup>31</sup>, they set up four camps for them [Border Guard] in T'Nay Hsah Township: K'Lah Koh [camp] is located in G--- village, under the control of Battalion #216 Commander Mya Hkaing; Za Ya Phyu Koh [camp] is located in R--- village, under the control of Battalion #217 Commander Saw Dih Dih; Bu Gaw *Kloh* [river] is located in M--- village, under the control of Battalion #218 Commander Saw Maung Win; Battalion #220 Commander Sah Lay and his Battalion are located in Z--- village. The Battalions that are located here have damaged all the villagers' plantations. The Government army gave an order that their compound should be 500 acres. Therefore, the villagers whose places are damaged complained but they could not do anything and dare not do anything.

The village tract which was affected the most is where Mya Hkaing, Battalion #216 is based because they got rid of all the Muslim people and set up their camp there. Moreover, they did not get any compensation for the 500 acres of farm land and the plantations land that they had inherited from their ancestors. This is in Kyeh Poh village tract, T'Nay Hsah Township. Another one is Saw Dih Dih, Battalion #217 which is set up in R--- [village], Za Ya Phyu Koh [camp], and the 500 acres included all of the villagers' land. The villagers also did not get any compensation. Even though the villagers complained, they could not do anything. The Border Guard, Saw Maung Win, Battalion #218 is also set up in M--- village, Buh Gaw *kloh* [river] and that also is on the villagers' farm land and plantation land; they took all the land. Battalion #220, Commanded by Saw Sah Lay, was located in Z--- village in such a way that the camp took up all of the villagers' land. Looking back, the government ordered them to take 500 acres, which is all of the villagers' land.

**Situation Update written by a community member, T'Nay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District, (Received in May 2012)**

#### **Source #14**

<b>Log #</b>	12-79-CL2
<b>Title</b>	Complaint letter to Burma government about value of agricultural and destroyed by Tavoy highway
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in July 2012 <a href="http://www.khrq.org/khrq2012/khrq12b69">http://www.khrq.org/khrq2012/khrq12b69</a>
<b>Location</b>	Tanasserim (Mergui-Tavoy)
<b>Full Text</b>	<i>The complaint letter below, signed by 25 local community members, was written in July 2011 and raises villagers' concerns related to the construction of the Kanchanaburi – Tavoy [Dawei] highway linking Thailand and the Tavoy deep sea port. Villagers described concerns that the highway would bisect agricultural land and destroy crops under cultivation worth</i>

<sup>31</sup>While Tatmadaw and DKBA units have for years operated together, this operational hierarchy became formalised with the DKBA's transformation into a 'Border Guard Force' under control of the Tatmadaw and containing a fixed number quota of Tatmadaw officers. This transformation dates to at least May 2009, when commanding officers stated in high-level meeting of DKBA officers that the DKBA would transform itself into a 'Border Guard Force.' Leaked minutes from the May 2009 meeting are retained by KHRG on file. Ceremonies attended by Tatmadaw commanders officially announced the transformation of large portions of the DKBA into Border Guard Forces in September 2010; see, for example: "Border Guard Forces of South-East Command formed in Paingkyon of Kayin State," *New Light of Myanmar*, August 22<sup>nd</sup> 2010; and "Border Guard Force formed at Atwinkwinkalay region, Myawady Township, Kayin State," *New Light of Myanmar*, August 25<sup>th</sup> 2010.



3,280,500 kyat (US \$3,657). In response to these concerns, local community members formed a group called the 'Village and Public Sustainable Development' to represent villagers' concerns and request compensation.

### **Complaint Letter | Myitta, Mergui-Tavoy District (July 2011)<sup>32</sup>**

[From] Village and Public Sustainable Development Committee

To: Prime Minister  
Tavoy Town, Tanintharyi Region  
Date: 3.7.2011  
Subject: Specific value of crops under cultivation

In Tanintharyi Region, the highway from Thailand to Tavoy deep sea port will go the whole way through the villages in K'Maw Thwe village tract in Myitta sub-Township. It will also go across the agricultural land of the civilians who live in the village.

That will cause a lot of grievances for the civilians who live in the village, and who rely on the plantations that are planted in the agricultural land. Therefore, the Village and Public Sustainable Development Committee members in K'Maw Thwe confirm with their signatures the loss of these plantations on the next page.

We are reporting the name list of the Committee members along with the specific value of the crops and sapling plants that are already planted there.

Sd.  
Saw Hk---, Secretary  
Village and Public Sustainable Development Committee  
K'Maw Thwe Village tract  
Myitta sub-Township, Tavoy District  
Tanintharyi Region

Copy to:

- Minister, Ministry for the Progress of Border Areas, Tavoy Town, Tanintharyi Region
- General Governor, Myitta sub-Township
- Township police officer, Myitta sub-Township
- Resettlement and Mediator (Ital-Thai Development Co. Ltd)
- Village's committee members
- Office for receiving and accepting complaints

### **Village and Public Sustainable Development Committee**

#### **Myitta sub-Township, K'Maw Thwe village tract**

#### **Committee members:**

No	Name	Candidates' Role	Location	Signature
1	Saw Ay---	[Position censored for security]	Nyaw Ton	Sd
2	NawNg---	[Position censored for security]	Myin Kan Baw	Sd
3	Saw Ky---	[Position censored for security]	PyinTha Taw	Sd
4	Saw H---	[Position censored for security]	Nan P'Yok	Sd

<sup>32</sup> This complaint letter was submitted to KHRG in July 2012 and is presented here, translated into English exactly as originally written, save for minor edits for clarity and security. It was received along with three interviews, one situation update and 424 photographs.

5	Saw K---	[Position censored for security]	Th' PyuChaw	Sd
6	Saw D---	[Position censored for security]	SeikPyon	Sd
7	Saw Gh---	[Position censored for security]	K'LetKyi	Sd
8	Saw I---	[Position censored for security]	Th'PyuChaw	Sd
9	Saw N---	[Position censored for security]	Myin Kan Baw	Sd
10	Saw M---	[Position censored for security]	KyinTha Aye	Sd
11	Saw G---	[Position censored for security]	Th'PyuChaw	Sd
12	Saw Z---	[Position censored for security]	Kaw Se Chaw	Sd
13	Saw Bo---	[Position censored for security]	Nyaw Ton	Sd
14	Saw Sa---	[Position censored for security]	K'Meik	Sd
15	Saw R---	Committee member	SeikPyon	Sd
16	U Saw L---	Committee member	K'Meik	Sd
17	U Saw H---	Committee member	Nan P'Yok	Sd
18	U Saw E---	Committee member	PyinTha Taw	Sd
19	U Saw B---	Committee member	K'Taw Ni	Sd
20	U Saw O---	Committee member	K'Taw Ni	Sd
21	U Saw Hp---	Committee member	K'LatKyi	Sd
22	U Saw T---	Committee member	Myit Ta	Sd
23	U Saw A---	Committee member	Myit Ta	Sd
24	U Saw Ht---	Committee member	Kaw Se Chaw	Sd
25	U Saw Y---	Committee member	KyinTha Aye	Sd

### Village and Public Sustainable Development Committee

#### Myitta sub-Township, K'Maw Thwe village tract

#### Specific value of the crops:

No	Plantations' name	Value of mature crops	Value of sapling or immature crops
1	Areca Palm	100,000 kyat	50,000 kyat
2	Cashew Plant	100,000 kyat	50,000 kyat
3	Coconut Plant	100,000 kyat	50,000 kyat
4	Djenkol Plant	50,000 kyat	30,000 kyat
5	Mango tree	20,000 kyat	10,000 kyat
6	Srewai Tree	30,000 kyat	15,000 kyat
7	Durian Plant	150,000 kyat	75,000 kyat
8	Lemon Tree	30,000 kyat	15,000 kyat
9	Line Tree	40,000 kyat	20,000 kyat
10	Pomelo	50,000 kyat	25,000 kyat
11	Rubber Tree	300,000 kyat	100,000 kyat
12	Mangosteen	30,000 kyat	15,000 kyat
13	Marian	50,000 kyat	25,000 kyat
14	Jackfruit Plant	50,000 kyat	25,000 kyat
15	SonP'Da Plant	50,000 kyat	25,000 kyat
16	Guava Tree	20,000 kyat	10,000 kyat
17	Banana Plant	10,000 kyat	
18	Pineapple Plant	500 kyat	
19	Black Pepper	20,000 kyat	
20	Betel leaf plant	20,000 kyat	
21	Rakam	20,000 kyat	
22	Empty land (one acre)	500,000 kyat	

23	Cardamom Plant (one acre)	1,000,000 kyat	
Totals		3,910,500 kyat (US \$4,350,531) <sup>96</sup>	540,000 kyat (US \$602)

**Source #15**

<b>Log #</b>	12-79-CL3
<b>Title</b>	Complaint Letter: Ler Doh Soh Township, Mergui-Tavoy District
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in April 2012
<b>Location</b>	Ler Doh Soh Township, Mergui-Tavoy District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**From] Village and Public Sustainable Development Committee**

To: Township leader  
Ler Doh Soh Township,

Date: April 7<sup>th</sup> 2012

**Subject:** Related to damaged civilians' lands by the MPC [Myanmar Pongpipat Company Limited].

Regarding the issue mentioned above, we (the Village and Public Sustainable Development Committee) and a group [of leaders] that is in charge [of the area] of the K'Moo Thway area, met the Hkay Too Hkee village head, Hpa Tee Dah Shwe and some of the villagers on March 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 and they [the villagers] asked us to help them. We demanded the upper leaders of the (townships and districts) to solve this issue and this is our request to the leaders. The issues are reported as shown in the attached [table] below.

Yours respectfully,

Land owner signature	Basic Committee signature	K'Moo Thway area in charge signature
<i>Sd.</i> <b>Hpa Tee Dah Shwe</b>	<i>Sd.</i> Saw Hkoh (facilitator-1)	<i>Sd.</i> Governor Saw Ter (area in charge)
<i>Sd.</i> <b>Naw Cho Htay</b>	<i>Sd.</i> Naw Dah Dah (facilitator-2)	
<i>Sd.</i> <b>Hpa Tee Aw See</b>	<i>Sd.</i> Naw Ta La (advisor)	

Copy to:

- Mergui-Tavoy District leader;
- Mergui-Tavoy Vice-District leader;
- Ler Doh Soh Vice-Township leader;
- Ler Doh Soh Township secretary;
- K'Moo Thway area in charge;
- Basic committee.

<b>Damager Places</b>	<b>MPC, Myanmar Pongpipat Company Limited</b> Hin Da Tha Tu Twin, Myitta Sub-Township, <sup>33</sup> Dawei Township, Tanintharyi Division
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<sup>33</sup> As this is an official Myanmar government document, government districts and townships are used, as opposed to the Burmese demarcations used by KHRG in other reports.

<b>Period of the damage</b>	2009 to 2012
<b>Victims</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Saw A--- and his seven family members (a total of eight people).</li> <li>2. Naw B--- and her three family members (a total of four people).</li> <li>3. Saw C--- and his family.</li> </ol>
<b>Amount of the damage</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Six acres of land, a total of 2,000 (betelnut)<sup>34</sup> plants.</li> <li>2. Three acres of land, a total of 1,000 (betelnut) plants.</li> <li>3. Six acres of land, a total of 600 betelnut plants 600, three acres of farmland, a total of 500 cashew plants.</li> </ol>
<b>Place of the damage</b>	Kin Pun Cho section, B'Wa Pin Chaung Pya, Kyauk Me Taung group, Myitta sub-Township, Dawei Township, Tanintharyi Division

Because of [his] land damage, Saw A--- told the MPCs businessmen that, *"In the past, before the land was damaged, I did not have to worry like now. Now I have to worry. I am not able to send my children to school anymore."* But the MPCs businessmen told him that, *"If you have to worry and if problems happen, just work for us [our company] in your daily work."* So, he came back [from meeting the businessmen] in sadness.

He asked advice from the village head and the village head helped him [the landowner] and wrote a letter. He reported to the Myanmar government twice, but he did not receive any response. In last hope, we believe that our [Township] leader could help us. We would like to ask help and we are hopeful about it.

Related to the report, the landowner already reported to the Myanmar government twice, but [he] did not receive any answer. So, with full belief to our leaders, we hope that they [the Myanmar government] will consider and arrange [solve the problem] for us.

Complaint Letter collected by a KHRG researcher,  
Ler Doh Soh Township, Mergui-Tavoy District  
(Written in April 2012)

**Source #16**

<b>Log #</b>	12-79-CL4
<b>Title</b>	Complaint Letter to the Mergui-Tavoy District administrator concerning land damage from mining
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in June 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/06/12-79-cl4/complaint-letter-mergui-tavoy-district-administrator-concerning-land-damage-mining">http://khrq.org/2014/06/12-79-cl4/complaint-letter-mergui-tavoy-district-administrator-concerning-land-damage-mining</a>
<b>Location</b>	Ler Doh Soh Township, Mergui-Tavoy District
<b>Full Text</b>	
To: Administrator Myitta sub-Township	

<sup>34</sup> In Burmese, 'betelnut' and 'betel leaf' are referred to as *konywet* and *konthih*, as if they are from the same plant. The Burmese names are also commonly used by Karen language speakers. "Betel nut" is the seed from an areca palm tree, areca catechu; "betel leaf" is the leaf of the piper betel vine, belonging to the Piperaceae family.



Dawei District<sup>35</sup>

Date: March 1<sup>st</sup> 2012

I, Ma A---, am 38 years old [and I] live in B--- village, Kyauk Me Taung village tract, Myitta sub-Township, Mergui-Tavoy District, Tanintharyi Region. [In 2004], the Myanmar Pongpipat Company Limited (MPC) obstructed the water [lake] to [enable them to] mine for metal in the agricultural land that is owned by my father U C---. [As a consequence of the obstruction], the water rose and the plants were destroyed.

Regarding the damage mentioned above, if [we] see [remember] the damage of the plantations in 2004, [they] paid 500,000 kyat (US \$506.58)<sup>36</sup> [as compensation]. However, because the water continued to rise more and more, [the area containing] 200 cashew plants, over 1,000 big and small areca palms, lime trees, mango trees, coconut trees and papaya trees flooded again.

As a consequence of this damage, I could not afford to continue sending my children to school, so they lost their education. Therefore, I am reporting this to the relevant [people, asking them] to provide assistance, as it is necessary.

With respect,

The person who reports,

Sd.

Ma A---

[Identification number censored for security] / Ta Wa Na (Naing) 1093708

Copy

- District governor office;
- No.2 Strategic Operations Commander office;
- Local news group;
- Local military security group;
- Myanmar Pongpipat Company Limited (MPC);
- Village governor office;
- Kyauk Me Taung police station;

Karen ethnic minister office.

**(Complaint Letter) submitted by a KHRG community member, (Received in June 2012)**

#### Source #17

<b>Log #</b>	12-81-I1
<b>Title</b>	Incident Report: Land confiscation and forced labour in Thaton District
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in May 2013 <a href="http://www.khrq.org/2013/05/12-81-i1/incident-report-land-confiscation-and-forced-labour-thaton-district-april-2012">http://www.khrq.org/2013/05/12-81-i1/incident-report-land-confiscation-and-forced-labour-thaton-district-april-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-an Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b><u>Part 1 – Incident Details</u></b>	

<sup>35</sup> The villager is referring to Mergui-Tavoy District in the locally-defined Karen districts map. Tavoy and Dawei refer to the same place in Karen and Burmese, respectively.

<sup>36</sup> As of January 13<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 kyat to the US \$1.

<b>Type of Incident</b>	[Villagers were] forced to clear the company's plantation
<b>Date of Incident</b>	April 25th 2012
<b>Incident Location</b>	T---village, Meh K'Na Hkee village tract, Hpa-an Township

Victim Information	
<b>Name</b>	Naw S---
<b>Age</b>	46
<b>Sex</b>	Female
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen
<b>Family</b>	Married with six children (eldest one, 17-years-old; youngest one, 6-years-old)
<b>Occupation</b>	Hill farming
<b>Religion</b>	Buddhist
<b>Position</b>	15-day-village head
<b>Village</b>	T--- village

Perpetrator Information				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Thaw Ma Na	Company second-in-command	Battalion #1014	Law Pu village	Myint Way
Tin Win	Company Commander			
Thein Lay Myaing Company				

## Part 2 – Information Quality

### 1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

On April 25th 2012, Thein Lay Myaing Company and Shwe Than Lwin Company worked together with Border Guard Battalion #1014, which is [locally] led by Tin Win and Thaw Ma Na. They worked together and came into [the region] and confiscated 500 acres of land, which is between T--- village and X---village. Then, they forced the villagers to go and clear the bushes but they didn't give any wages.

### 2. Explain how the source verified this information.

NawS---, a villager from T---village, who had to go and clear the bushes in the rubber plantation owned by the companies and the Border Guard, which is between T---village and X---village, reported that each house had to go and clear [the bushes] for three days, but that they didn't give any wages. Moreover, the villagers had to bring their own food and materials.

## 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 an attachment if needed.**

On April 25th 2012, Border Guard Battalion #1014, which is based in Law Pu camp and is

[locally] led by Commander Tin Win, forced each house from the T---, W--- and V--- village to go and clear the rubber plantation that is between T--- and X---, a place in Ha T'Reh village tract and T--- village. The Border Guard was known to have taken bribes from Thein Lay Myaing Company and Shwe Than Lwin Company before they forced the villagers [to clear the plantation]. The companies worked together with Karen State Democracy and Development Party [KSDDP], which was formed by old leaders from the DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army], who did not join the Border Guard. These people became advisors for the Border Guard, but they didn't have any way to receive income. Therefore, when the Burmese [Burma] government held the [2010] election, they formed a party. The people who lead the party are Chairman U Tha Htoo Kyaw, Secretary U La Ba, Joint Secretary U Kyaw Than and Committee Member U Han Soe.

U Han Soe, who is among the people from that party, is working with Shwe Than Lwin Company, and he established this plantation place. Because such a broad and wide area of plantation land was designated, the nearby villages faced problems with farming, grazing their cows and buffalos, and finding food like vegetables and firewood, which they get from the forest. The villagers will have to face [a problem] with insufficient food in coming years, which is what they [the villagers] have already expected.

Incident Report written by a KHRG researcher,  
Hpa-an Township, Thaton District  
Received in May 2012)

#### Source #18

<b>Log #</b>	12-81-P1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Photo Notes: Bilin and Hpa-an townships
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Bilin and Hpa-an townships, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>This photo was taken on December 25<sup>th</sup> 2011, at A--- village, Noh Ber Baw village tract, Bilin Township, Thaton District. It was a photo of Tharamu Naw B---, who is a teacher in C--- village. Even though her child is still very young, because she loves her ethnic people, she devotes and suffers herself. The photo that is shown was taken on New Year's Day in A--- village while Tharamu was singing along with her students.</p>	
<p>These photos were taken on January 5<sup>th</sup> 2012, in D--- village, P'Ya Raw village tract, Bilin Township. This was the photo of a child named Saw E---, 12 years old, who lives in D--- village. He has got a birth defect on his arm and his father passed away when he was five years old so his mother Naw F--- has to raise him on her own. He couldn't go to school because his mother can't afford the education fee for him. He got the wound, which can be seen in the picture, from practicing riding the bicycle. He has been suffering from this wound for almost a month.</p>	
<p>These photos were taken on January 6<sup>th</sup> 2012, at A--- village, P'Ya Raw village tract, Bilin Township. It was a photo of Saw G---, who is 45 years old, who lives in A---. In 1998, while he was grazing his cattle, he stepped on the landmine and he lost his feet. He didn't know who planted the landmines. The victim, Saw G--- has six family members and in order to support his family, he weaves bamboo hats and sells them for his family income.</p>	
<p>This photo was taken on January 6<sup>th</sup> 2012, and it was a photo of a child called Saw H---, three years old, who lives in I--- village. His mother went to Bangkok to work and left him</p>	

with his grandmother.

These photos are the photos of the deforestation in Thaton District, Bilin Township, Noh Ber Baw village tract, which is a place that is close to Meh Baw Hkee, Lah Kyoh Hkoh and Muh Hkee village. The perpetrators are the businessmen Hka Aye and Kyet Mway, who are allowed [to do logging] by the district leaders in 2011. The deforestation also includes Lah Kyoh Hkoh and Muh Hkee's community forests, so the forest in the photos is the community forest that is protected by the forest committee, the forestry administrator and the district leaders.

These photos were taken on May 30<sup>th</sup> 2012. These are the photos of people mining stone between a place of Lay Hpoh Hta village and Htee Hsee Baw village and it is also a place between two districts, which are Thaton and Hpapun districts. This signboard [lists] the rules that are created by the mining owner Ko Cho and U Hla Win. The stone mining process is allowed by both brigade leaders. The stone that is produced is antimony.

These photos were taken of the people who are mining the stone. They are mining many different kinds of stones [minerals].

These are the photos of the places that the stones were mined and which destroyed many of the forests and the rivers. Moreover, it also destroyed many natural environments.

These photos were taken on May 30<sup>th</sup> 2012. These are the photos of the first stones that we [villagers] have gotten from mining in Lay Krah Hkee village, Khaw Hpoh Pleh village tract, Bilin Township, Thaton District.

These photos were taken by me on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012, when I went to J--- village and interviewed the village head, Saw K--- about the Border Guard [Border Guard Force (BGF)]<sup>37</sup> #1014 forced recruitment of the villagers to be soldiers and I took a picture of him.

These photos were taken by me on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012. I took the picture of Uncle Saw L--- who has been militia and lives in M--- village, Kyoh Moh Thweh village tract, Hpa-an Township.

These photos were taken by me on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012. These are the photos of a place between Noh M'Kwee village and Htee Meh Baw village, which is in T'Kaw Boh village tract, Hpa-an Township. This land is very expensive and they are buying it with the purpose of coming to build shops on it.

These photos were taken on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2012. These are the photos of 500 acres of teak and rubber plantations that are built with the cooperation of company Thein Lin Myaing and Border Guard #1014's Commanders Tin Win and Thaw M'Nah. [The rubber plantations] are between Meh K'Nah Hkee, Htee Kyaw Hkee, Htee Kyuh and Hpah Paw.

These photos were taken on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2012. These are the photos of a villager, called Naw N---, whom I interviewed about [the incident when] she had to go and cut the bushes on the [Thein Lin Myaing] company's and Border Guard's plantations.

These photos were taken on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2012. These are the photos of O--- village head and

<sup>37</sup> 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 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.

two of the villagers while I interviewed them about [when] they had to work for the Border Guard and [on] the Company Thein Lin Myaing's rubber plantation.

These photos were taken on June 5<sup>th</sup> 2012, at P--- village, Ha Ta Reh village tract, Hpa-an Township. These photos are [of] the report to the KNU. Hpa-an Township leader reported about the companies called Thein Lin Myaing and Hein Naing Win cooperating with the Border Guard and confiscating the villagers' lands.

These photos were taken on the same day with the above report. It is the photos of the villagers who suffer from their land being confiscated and they had to do forced labour and report about it to the township leaders.

Photo Notes written by a KHRG researcher,  
Bilin and Hpa-an townships, Thaton District  
(Taken in December 2011 to June 2012)

#### Source #19

<b>Log #</b>	12-85-S1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Situation Update:Thandaunggyi and Htantabin townships
<b>Publishing Information</b>	
<b>Location</b>	Thandaunggyi and Htantabin townships, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>There are two townships in our Toungoo District which are Daw Hpa Hko [Thandaunggyi] and Haw Ta Htoo [Htantabin] townships. Because our Toungoo District is located near the Myanmar military government headquarters in Nay Pyi Taw<sup>38</sup> the civilians always have to face the problems of forced labour and burning down the [villagers'] plantations. In our Toungoo District, since the ceasefire period, the human rights abuses have not disappeared. The human rights abuses continue in our area. This report is about our Toungoo District situation from March to the first week of June.</p> <p>The Myanmar soldier [Tatmadaw] army has been based in our Toungoo District since 2012.</p> <p>Since when the LID [Light Infantry Division]<sup>39</sup> #66 came to replace MOC [Military Operations Command]<sup>40</sup> #9, the places where the LID is based are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LID #66 headquarters is based in Hkler La army camp</li> <li>2. TOC [Tactical Operations Command]<sup>41</sup> #661 is based in Hplay Hsa Loh village.</li> <li>3. TOC #663 [based in] Buh Hsa Hkee [village]</li> <li>4. IB [Infantry Battalion]<sup>42</sup> #35 [based in] Hplay Hsa Loh, Klaw Mee Der [village]</li> <li>5. LIB [Light Infantry Battalion]<sup>43</sup> #4 [based in] Hker Weh, K'Thaw Pgeh, P'Lay Hkee</li> </ol>	

<sup>38</sup> *Nay Pyi Taw* is the capital city of Burma. In 2005 the military regime moved the capital from Rangoon to a greenfield at its present location, 320 kilometers (200 miles) north of the city. See "[Nay Pyi Taw now less of a ghost town](#)," *Bangkok Post*, December 11<sup>th</sup> 2013.

<sup>39</sup> Light Infantry Division (Tatmadaw); commanded by a brigadier general, each with ten light infantry battalions specially trained in counter-insurgency, jungle warfare, "search and destroy" operations against ethnic insurgents and narcotics-based armies. LIDs are organised under three Tactical Operations Commands, commanded by a colonel, (three battalions each and one reserve), one field artillery battalion, one armoured squadron and other support units. As of 2000, each LID has its own organic field artillery units.

<sup>40</sup> Military Operations Command; ten battalions for offensive operations; most MOCs have three TOCs, made up of three battalions each.

<sup>41</sup> Tactical Operations Command; three battalions and a headquarters usually under a MOC and a LID.

<sup>42</sup> Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw); 500 soldiers but most in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers.

[villages]

6. LIB #10 [based in] 16-Mile, 20-Mile, Ler Koh, Peh Leh Wa, Maw Hpa Der, Kaw Soh Hkoh, Hkler La [villages]
7. IB #1 [based in] 48-Mile, Th'Eye Hta [villages]
8. LIB #6 [based in] Kaw Thay Der, Naw Soh, Thee Mee Poh Soh [villages]
9. LIB #80 [based in] Buh Loh, Buh Hsa Hkee, Hpee Thoo Hkoh, Khaw Daw Hkoh [villages]
10. IB #11 [based in] Hkay Poo [village]

Ta Pa Ka [Southern Command headquarters – Taungoo District] army [camps] that are based in our area are:

1. IB #30 based in K'Ser Doh, Shah See Boh, Swah Loh [villages]
2. IB #39 based in Ton Bo, Do Thaw [villages]
3. IB #124 based in 13-Mile, Daw Hpa Hkoh [villages]
4. LIB #603 based in Leik Tho area
5. IB #92 based in Htee Tha Saw area
6. IB #75 based in Kyauk Lo Kyi, To Bo Kyi, Than Mo Taw, San Le Pyin area

### Myanmar soldiers' activity

Since the ceasefire with the Myanmar government, the Myanmar soldiers in our Toungoo District, as I knew and saw, the Myanmar soldiers sent more rations and sent more military equipment. Also they repaired their army camps which were already established. Moreover, they still order the villagers to do forced labour after the ceasefire. Because our leaders allowed them to travel only on the vehicle roads and did not allow them to travel beside the vehicle roads, but some of them went outside of the vehicle road. If we compare it to the past, the forced labour has decreased a lot, but we could not say that has disappeared yet. Also, one of the Hkler La villagers said that, this time if the Myanmar soldiers need bamboo [for building their camps] they do not order us, the villagers, anymore. But when they went to cut the bamboo by themselves they did not ask permission from the bamboo owner and they went to cut it by themselves and did not pay us. So this is also a form of abusing our rights.

### Civilians' livelihood situation

Most of the villagers in our district [Toungoo District] are doing agricultural work. The agriculture [products] are cardamom, betelnut<sup>44</sup>, durian and coffee. This year there are many villagers in our Toungoo District whose agriculture and plantations were damaged because of the strong winds. So it has caused a problem for their livelihoods. Moreover, when the Burmese soldiers came to rotate their troops in the summer they also burned down some [plantations and agricultural fields]. And also when they had [military] training in B'Yin Naw army camp they shot heavy weapons and small weapons that also damaged the villagers' plantations. The date when the Myanmar soldiers had military training and shot weapons was March 28<sup>th</sup> 2012. I know that the civilians in our Toungoo area reported that if this ceasefire is a true ceasefire, we need all the Myanmar army camps which are based in our area to withdraw. Then we could say this is a [real] ceasefire. Moreover, we do not have to worry when we are travelling. If the Myanmar soldiers do not go back [withdraw] we civilians dare not travel freely and we still have to be afraid of them. For [the villagers from] the villages which are outside of the [government] controlled area, they said "*we dare not travel freely because there are the old landmines which were planted by the Myanmar soldiers.*"

<sup>43</sup> Light Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw); 500 soldiers but most in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers.

<sup>44</sup> In Burmese, 'betelnut' and 'betel leaf' are referred to as *konywet* and *konthih*, as if they are from the same plant. The Burmese names are also commonly used by Karen language speakers. "Betelnut" is the seed from an areca palm tree, areca catechu; "betel leaf" is the leaf of the piper betel vine, belonging to the Piperaceae family.



## Education

We could say that the education in our Toungoo District is a bit downgraded. The reason why we say this is because mostly in the village, the schools extend only to fourth standard. Some villages outside of the [government] controlled area, there are no schools. It causes a problem for the children because they are not able to stay in the village and they have to stay on their plantations [land]. Even after the ceasefire they dare not go back to stay in the village because they still afraid of the Myanmar soldiers. If we look to the [villages in] government controlled areas, there are educated people but they do not struggle for their children. They only care about their own livelihood. And also, after the ceasefire, the Myanmar government does not say anything about developing an education [system]. But they said they would develop it. If we look in the areas under [government] control, the parents, for their children to be able to go the school, they have to hire the schoolteachers and give them a salary by themselves. The schools are registered as Government schools, but the parents have to buy school stationary [supplies] by themselves. The Government does not support [the schools] completely. If we look in our area, education is important, but there are students who are not able to go to school because the school fee is very expensive. Because the parents do not have money to send their children to the school, so the children have to stay beside by their parents and help with their parents' work.

## Health

If we look in our Toungoo District, health is important for the people to [be able to] work without difficulties. The reason why we say this is because we can only work if we are healthy. The most common disease that occurs is malaria. The villagers have to take care of each other if they are sick. They are not knowledgeable with medicine. But some do *thay ghee wa she*,<sup>45</sup> so they help each other. There are few people who know about medicine. Sometimes, they go to ask for help from the KNU's [KNLA] medics. The Government does not allow people to transport medicine. This Myanmar government forbids the medicine that the villagers use for diseases. So, it becomes difficult for the civilians. If the disease is serious they go to Hkler La Hospital or Taw Oo [Toungoo] Hospital. But if they do not have enough money they are not treated fairly. Since the ceasefire we could say that the Myanmar government does not do any special thing for health [services].

## Myanmar soldiers order the villagers to do forced labour

On April 28<sup>th</sup> 2012 IB #35, which is based in the [army] camp beside A--- village, ordered five women and four men of A--- village to clear the vegetation beside their army camp. Moreover, one day later, on April 29<sup>th</sup> 2012, they order one woman and three men from A--- village to clear the vegetation in their army camp. Forced labour in the A--- area is still happening. I do not know the officers, the names of the Myanmar soldiers that ordered the forced labour. After the ceasefire between the KNU and the Myanmar government we have seen and know that the villagers are still ordered to do forced labour.

## Conclusion

The issues which are explained in the situations above in this situation report show that human rights abuses are still happening. These things we have seen and known, and have reported as the current situation in our area. Even the villagers think that the ceasefire is good, but they worry that the Myanmar government would lie to the KNU. Moreover, the villagers have said, they worry that if this is not a real ceasefire, the fighting will get [more] serious than before.

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<sup>45</sup> *Thay ghee wa seh* is a Karen phrase that directly means "tree and bamboo roots," but in this context *thay ghee wa seh* means traditional medicine.

Situation Update written by a KHRG researcher,  
Thandaunggyi and Htantabin townships, Toungoo District  
(Received in June 2012)

**Source #20**

<b>Log #</b>	12-87-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Nyaunglebin Interview: Saw A, June 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Mone Township, Nyaunglebin District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Saw A---</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> Male</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 50</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Christian</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Family Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Farmer</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>Saw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>50.</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b></p> <p>Christian.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p> <p>Karen.</p> <p><b>What is your occupation?</b></p> <p>Farmer.</p> <p><b>What is your family status?</b></p> <p>Married.</p> <p><b>How many children do you have?</b></p> <p>Four children.</p> <p><b>How many years old is your eldest son?</b></p> <p>24 years old.</p> <p><b>How old is the youngest?</b></p>	



18 years old.

**Can you explain to us a little bit about your village situation?**

Especially this year it has been flooding very badly, worse than any other year, and it has taken a long time to return to a normal situation. For this reason, we can't plant vegetables or farm as usual, and we are having a problem with food shortages. The villagers are seriously in trouble this year. If we look back at the ruling system of the Myanmar government, we also still have forced labor, like they force us to pay money for development projects, like taxation, and force us to build their fences and huts since the ceasefire<sup>46</sup> was made. In my opinion, after the ceasefire they should reduce forced labor and demands for working for them [Tatmadaw]. If they make it happen like this, it will be lighter [easier] for our livelihood. Also we still have to pay salaries for the militia. My understanding is that they should not be asking for money from the villagers after the ceasefire, but T'Kaw Pgah, Pu Nee and Way Hswaeh village tracts<sup>47</sup> still have to do forced labor. The worst [case] is one whose name is Saw B---. He was tortured, arrested and put in prison without any reason or evidence. He was accused of committing many crimes, so he was put in jail for 30 to 40 years.

**What is his name?**

His real name is Saw C---, but while they air it on the news his name was called Saw D--. And we felt really sorry for his family and he has a little baby in a poor situation of livelihood. We want to help, but as you see we also don't have enough food or money to support them.

**How many children does he have?**

I don't exactly know but he has a lot of small children and one adult son.

**As you mentioned, where did you have to go and work building huts and fences?**

But for the [army] camp right now, they asked for T'Kaw Pgah village tract<sup>48</sup> and they explained to us about a policy and rule about Battalion #599, about the battalion guard and camp security living in this place for very long. And in the past they asked us to cook, find

<sup>46</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma government in Hpa-an, Karen State. Negotiators from the two parties met for a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of talks on April 4<sup>th</sup>, where they signed a more detailed preliminary ceasefire plan, and held a 3<sup>rd</sup> round of negotiations on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2012; see "[Preliminary Ceasefire Talks](#)," *Karen National Union*, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2012; "[KNU Delegations Departs for the Third Round Negotiation of Ceasefire with the Burmese Government](#)," *Karen National Union*, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. In 2013, the ceasefire process became a nationwide effort. On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 17 ethnic armed groups signed a joint proposal for a nationwide ceasefire in Laiza, Kachin State; see "[Burma's armed ethnic groups sign nation-wide ceasefire pledge in Laiza](#)," *Kachin News*, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. Two days later in Myitkyina, Kachin State, the EAGs presented their proposal to a Burma government delegation, which then presented its own plan. The Government rejected the EAG's proposal for a multi-ethnic federal army, the EAGs requested more time to review, and both sides agreed to meet again; see "[Myanmar Peace Talks Fail to Nail Down Cease-Fire Agreement](#)," *Radio Free Asia*, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. On January 25<sup>th</sup> 2014, in Law Khee Lar, Karen State, 17 ethnic armed groups agreed to an updated proposal to be presented to the Burma government in Hpa-an in February 2014; see "[Ethnic armed groups sign 11-point nationwide ceasefire draft](#)," *Myanmar Freedom Daily*, January 26<sup>th</sup> 2014. For more information on the ceasefire and how it has affected local villagers, see "[Safeguarding human rights in a post-ceasefire eastern Burma](#)," KHRG, January 2012 and "[Steps towards peace: Local participation in the Karen ceasefire process](#)," KHRG, November 2012.

<sup>47</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

<sup>48</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

food for pigs and find firewood, even cutting bamboo for them. Even though we do not dare to go and cut bamboo as they ordered, we can't complain so we just have to do as they say. Because of this it has become a conflict among the villagers.

**What do you have to do for this?**

We have to cut down coconut trees and bring them to their base camp and build a cover shield to protect themselves from the enemy attack..

**Do you have to cut down your own coconut trees?**

Yes. And fresh coconut trees are really heavy and we have to bring them by ourselves to their camp. Now they ask us to bring thatched shingles even though it is not enough for ourselves and we have to give them so it won't become a problem for us.

**Did they give you any payment for this?**

We don't hope for payment. They still scold and look at us with eagle eyes even when we do work for them and we are afraid of them too. For example, if they ask you to go and do something and if you do not arrive on time they will be really cross and punish you.

**Recently, is any forced labor happening in your village?**

Yes, just this morning one of my nephews came back from their army camp [Tatmadaw] and said they have to do a lot of things for them [Tatmadaw] like bring carts, thatched shingles and bamboo to their base camp. And his base battalion commander is Thara Lah May.

**Are they asking for money from the villagers?**

We have to give the militia money every month, 45,000 kyat<sup>49</sup> (US \$45.59). They have reduced it but if we total for the whole year it is not really a small amount of money that we have to pay to them.

**Who is forming the militia, the Government or villagers?**

The Government formed the militia, but the villagers have to look after the militia, like paying salaries and [providing] food, we can say almost everything. Also it is an advantage for the Tatmadaw because they can know what happening in this area but there is no advantage for the local people.

**What about the condition of health care in your village?**

It is also terribly bad. Some, if they are faced with sickness, it is really difficult for them. If you don't have money, don't hope to go to Moo [Mone] Township to cure [the illness] in the hospital. Even if you have a normal illness you have to spend more than 10,000 kyat (US \$10.13). And they said the Government produces pills for patients, but you have to buy it, one tablet for 70,000 kyat (US \$70.92). And since you [interviewer] have seen [the person] who came and called me to go and worship and pray for him; he really needs help and should go to the hospital, but the cost of the medicine is really expensive so we can't afford to help him. We just have to watch and wait until he dies without treating [the illness with] any special medicine. That is not fair as a human being. Some children who were born as a disabled in a poor family are very vulnerable. They don't have enough nutritious food and

<sup>49</sup> As of January 13<sup>th</sup> 2014, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 kyat to the US \$1.

later on they become malnourished.

**What are the common diseases or sicknesses that happen in your village?**

Malaria and diarrhea are common diseases in our village. But now another disease, like a skin disease, is occurring in our area.

**Do you have a clinic in your village?**

We don't have clinic in our village, we just go and buy medicine in the shop. In the past we heard that we had malaria testing material in our area, but we haven't had any recently. We still go and ask for it in Bago [division] and the shopkeeper said that one [malaria test] is 7,000 kyat (US \$7.09) but now they don't allow us to sell it anymore and we can't find it either. If we had this testing material it would be really great because there are many different types of malaria, for better results and systematic treatment of patients using the malaria diagnosis. For example, for those who do not use the test material, they can sometimes treat or give the wrong medicine to the patient. For example, a patient who has kidney disease, their appearance looks the same as someone who has malaria. So without using the malaria diagnosis [test] you can have the wrong treatment. For this reason, if we had that kind of thing [testing] it would be better for us.

**Do you have a midwife in your village?**

For those midwives who have a duty or respond to look after our village tract, [they] live in another village, so if there is an emergency we can't get them [here] punctually.

**Do you have any villagers who work as a midwife in your village?**

Yes, but not stably. Now we have received training from a religious [organization] who trains [villagers] to be a nurse aid, and each village has to send one representative for the training. Around here ten villages with five people have attended this training and we rely on them. But they don't have any opportunities, so they can't do anything to generate money by using this skill.

**Did they [Tatmadaw] allow the selling and buying of medicine?**

No, they're not allowed to sell, buy or inject any medicine.

**What will you do or how will you solve [the problem] if a serious disease happens in your area?**

We just negotiate with our villager who can treat [the disease] and do it secretly. Also we have to buy medicine very secretly. If it is very serious we carry [them] to the hospital.

**Do you have to pay for the cost of medicine when you go to the hospital?**

Don't say about the price while you stay in the hospital. Everything has a price except the place for the patient to live [hospital room]. You have to pay everything, [including the] medicine fee since they tell you there is nothing free in the hospital.

**What will they do to those who can't afford to pay money for the cost of their medicine?**

Personally, they [villagers] don't dare to go to the hospital except for those who have relatives and siblings. They gather together and carry them to the hospital and share and

help each other with the medicine cost. That is always happening in our area. Some just don't have money for treatment. We can't keep them to die like that because they are not animals. We help each other, church members also support them if he or she has to stay too long in the hospital. After they are released from the hospital they have to sell their cow to pay back money to those who helped him or her while they were in the hospital. If he or she spent a small amount money they don't need to pay it back.

**Do you have a school in your village and how many standards [does it have]?**

We have only a primary school, until fourth standard, in our village. Now, the parents are very motivated to support their children in their education, however in the past instead of going to school their parents said [to their children] "*go and look after the cows.*" Nowadays, parents support their children as much as possible. As you know the education fee is very high and for lower standards it is cheaper, but if you are going to high school or a higher standard you have to pay a lot of money and you also need to take tuition classes and pay the fee for better average score because in school they don't teach very clearly and then you have to take tuition classes again to make you understand the lessons throughoutly. If you don't take the tuition classes, you wouldn't understand the lesson. The tuition fee is also really expensive, but different tutors ask for different tuition fees. Some [tuition fees] are 300,000, 400,000 to 500,000 kyat (US \$303.95, \$405.27 to \$506.59).

**Do the teachers teach only a particular subject or all subjects?**

All subjects, because they recruited different teachers who are really good in a particular subject to teach the students. All teachers are doing their best to keep their students doing well or to earn high scores. These kinds of things are really good, but for rural people [they] are quite poor so they can't afford to pay for it [school fees]. One of my nephews who came yesterday, I told him to go and attend it [school]. Saying it is very easy, but in reality it is really difficult. His parents also have financial issues in supporting him. I told him if you don't go you will definitely fail the examination. My two daughters really want to finish their high school, but it is really hard for us to pay the tuition fee. Later one of my daughters continued studying without attending tuition classes. Later unfortunately she failed, but she wanted to continue her studies so she went to Nu Po refugee camp to finished her studies and now she has completed tenth standard.

**What is the nearest army camp based in your village tract, and how many [are there]?**

The nearest army camps are Kyon Pin Seik army camp and Paw Law Sein army camp.

**Which battalion number is based in Kyon Pin Seik army camp?**

I can't remember.

**Does Kyon Pin Seik army camp call for forced labor, like asking villagers to build or repair fences?**

Yes, they are still requesting Karen people in Pu Ni village tract to work for them like chopping wood and building fences.

**Are women included in the forced labor process?**

Most are women and children, also students because even though they have to go to school no one at home is free so they ask their children to go instead to get the amount of people they have requested. Then children [students] miss their classes.

**What is the youngest age for those who have to go and do forced labor?**

Nine to ten years old, and they can only carry one pole of bamboo.

**How about the oldest age?**

70 to 80 years old.

**Do you have anything else to tell us that we haven't included in this interview?**

Honestly, we have been living under the Government control for so long. We also heard that Myanmar government hates our Karen people and accuses us that we are rebel groups and that we are the ones who are creating a conflict. But after they proposed about building peace or [making a] ceasefire with our Karen leaders, even though it has not been long, we our Karen people can feel that it is getting better than before and we are very happy with that result. In the past if the KNU [Karen National Union] came to our village and if the SPDC heard a rumor about this they will treat us very badly and they will accuse us that we didn't inform them. But now even if they [KNU] come to town or visit somewhere we don't see any problem and we hope that the leaders will value and keep this [peace] sustainable.

Furthermore, my personal view is that we should have basic needs like access to healthcare in our own village by using our knowledge as much as we can. Because now we don't have basic healthcare in our area, so if something comes up we just have to rely on other people and they will treat us as they want. For example, our children, our villagers, our ethnicity should be treated by our own people because if they lie to you or treat you with the wrong medicine you can lose your whole life. For this reason, our village should have a community basic health worker with enough experience. Now we have organized it as much as we can, even it is not perfect, but it will be an advantage to us a lot. One challenge is that we have a few human resources, but we don't have money to buy medicine. If we can get donations from NGOs [Non-Governmental Organisations] who work in health care, or if they request from us a list of what we need it would be great, but I am not sure if that can happen or not. We also hope to work with our villagers who have been trained as a nurse aid if that happens in the future.

As for education, now we have started our plan. If it is possible we would like to provide tuition for the students in our village but we don't know if we can implement it or not. The high school in Moo [Mone Township] has four tuition classes and all are Myanmar tuition classes. And if possible we would like to call re-organize our Karen teachers who teach in other places. If we get some support or charity from those who would like to donate, it would be really great for our Karen children. First, it will be a challenge to start, but if other tuition costs 300,000 kyat (US \$303.95) we will charge the same as other [tuition classes] later we will reduce it [tuition] to 200,000 kyat (US \$202.63) step by step as much as we can, because we know that the school fees are really expensive if you are attending a high standard [grade] it will cost more. We hope that if children or students are really clever but their parents can't support them in continuing their studies, we will support them using our tuition fund. That is our dream. We can't implement it yet but we have already started in healthcare [services].

**Do you have anything else?**

Another thing is that in our region, the common villager occupation is farming, but they don't know how to use it very effectively because we just learn from our parents. Like if they heard thunder and they started ploughing their farm, we did the same because we have a lack of



knowledge. For example, we don't know why we get different amounts of rice each year. If this year from one acre of rice farm we get 50 baskets<sup>50</sup> of rice, and next year we only get 40 baskets, and the year after that 70 [baskets]. We just do [the farming] by our understanding, not systematically. Thus, we should provide basic training especially in agricultural or livelihood for villagers. Moreover, one of weakness is that all of our village tract has to rely on other villages' fruit and vegetable like cucumber, beans and bottle gourd, even though we have land and people but we didn't try it [farming] yet. I ask other people to put fertilizer while I am going around and I think this year I am going to be the first person, as a role model, to grow vegetables like beans and cucumbers and two acres for rice. I had the experience that one of my friends was visiting a Myanmar farm and he asked him, [the farm owner] you come and take fertilizer from me and this one is very fresh and another is not good and yellow in color. [He asked him] "*What is the difference?*" And he said, "*green is for selling and yellow is for our family.*" I used this [green fertilizer] with chemicals for selling because that it is not good for our health to eat. And I said, "*that is not fair because even though you dare not eat the one [vegetable] that you grow with chemicals, you sell it to Karen people.*" Then he said, "*it is fair because if I put both green and yellow [fertilizer] on the desk [to sell] your Karen [people] will just pick the green one.*" Because they don't know what will happen in the future if they eat it, even if it does not affect you in a short period of time. They didn't get training or awareness that eating vegetables grown with chemicals can [have an] effect on healthcare as well. If we grow food or vegetables by ourselves we will get fresh and healthy vegetables and we don't have to spend money on chemically grown vegetables it means we can save our money and use it on other things.

**Have you seen any armed groups entering your village?**

No, they're only asking to go to their camp.

**Did the KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] used to come to your village?**

In Way Shweh village we just saw them visiting our village as normal people, without guns, and [they] didn't violently abuse us either.

Thanks.

Saw A--- (male, 50), Mone Township, Nyaunglebin District  
(Interviewed in June 2012)

**Source #21**

<b>Log #</b>	12-95-T1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: A---, May 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Thaton Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> A---  <b>Gender:</b> Female  <b>Age:</b> 50  <b>Village:</b> B---  <b>Religion:</b> Buddhist  <b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen  <b>Family Status:</b> Married</p>	

<sup>50</sup> A basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg. or 46.08 lb. of paddy, and 32 kg. or 70.4 lb. of milled rice. A basket is twice the volume of a big tin.

**Occupation: Village Head**

**Do you have children?**

Nine children.

**How old is the eldest?**

30.

**How about the youngest?**

Six years.

**How long have you been working in the village chief position?**

One year already.

**Had you worked in previous years in the head village position?**

Yes I had.

**Could you tell me about your experience as a village head from the beginning?**

It has been four or five years already. I was working and stopped. Now I have begun another term and it's been one year already. Days have passed and it is going well enough. We work and eat together with my children in peace and unity.

**Are there any other special problems that you have faced during that period of time as village head?**

There are no special problems but just the villagers bad-mouthing each other, the villagers have no unity. They are jealous of each other and make trouble in the village.

**For example, are there any problems or troubles made by Myanmar soldiers or KNU soldiers?**

No.

**For example, do you have to manage things between those two groups?**

Currently, no! But years ago we had to sometimes.

**Yes, could you tell me what was happening during those times?**

Yes, there were [problems] but now it's smooth and no more mediating between them.

**For example, have you had to hide KNU soldiers?**

No.

**How many houses are in your village?**

There are [censored for security] houses in the village.

**Mostly, what jobs do they do?**

Farming, cultivation, hill farming and long bean farming.

**Individually, how many baskets of rice do your villagers produce per year?**

Not enough, this year there was flooding and they could not grow many grains. There was raining and a lot of flooding. And many paddy plants were destroyed.

**How about the whole village? What you think of their farming and is it enough for them?**

Only a few houses have enough rice.

**Mostly not enough?**

Yes, not enough.

**How do they manage if they do not have enough?**

They go to the jungle and cut down the trees or bamboo.

**And then?**

And then they sell them and buy food. That's it.

**How about the price of rice?**

Now, the price is 550 kyat (US \$0.56)<sup>51</sup> for one bowl.

**Where do you buy the rice?**

In the village, because people from other villages come in and sell the rice in the village.

**Where are the rice sellers from?**

They come from Soh Thoh [village], Bilin [Township], and they come by motorcycle and sell their rice.

**Like buying rice is possible in the village?**

We buy [rice] in the village. Some people go and buy rice from Hkeh Maw.

**How long does it take to go to Hkeh Maw?**

Not too far.

**Going by foot?**

Yes, not even an hour.

**How you see B--- village regarding economics?**

<sup>51</sup> As of January 13<sup>th</sup> 2014, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 kyat to the US \$1.



Some people sell things, they sit and sell. Some people work as motorcycle taxi drivers. Different jobs.

**Do they work in cultivation, orchards?**

No, they plant long bean farms, eggplant cultivation and farming.

**With farming, are they able to sell rice?**

Yes, they come and buy them.

**The beans or long beans, do they sell them by the viss<sup>52</sup>?**

Yes.

**How much for one viss?**

Around 500 [kyat] (US \$0.51), because the price is not stable.

**How about sugar cane farming and tobacco farming?**

Yes, we have sugar cane farms, but no one grows tobacco.

**After harvesting sugar cane, do they sell there or what do they do? Where do they send it?**

They send it to the sugar factory.

**How is sugar cane bought?**

I don't know how the government paid for the sugar cane I don't know.

**The Government comes and buys it?**

They go and sell it to the Government. And the Government pays them money. You would better ask the sugar cane planter.

**Like, the Government comes and buys the land. You've heard of it? How about rubber farms? Does anyone do that?**

Yes they do. People from other places come and buy it.

**Do the villagers do [rubber farming]? How many people work with rubber?**

B---. Many people have rubber field. In previous times, other people had [rubber fields]. People from other places came and bought the land and planted rubber. Some people in the village, they planted [rubber] and they didn't have enough money to spend on their rubber fields and they sold their rubber fields to other villagers.

**Where are the buyers from?**

From Kma Kyah. Their relatives. They sold to their relatives.

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<sup>52</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to (1.6 kg. / 3.52 lb.)

**How many people are working with rubber fields that they can tap now?**

Can tap? Only one or two people in the village.

**How about the price of the rubber?**

I don't know what weight they unit use for dried rubber.

**You don't know?**

No, I have never asked them.

**In your village, is there a hospital?**

No but there is a clinic.

**A clinic?**

Yes.

**Who founded the clinic?**

It was founded by the Government a long time ago

**Is there a special doctor?**

Yes.

**A government doctor?**

Yes, a government doctor, but we have to pay for injections.

**Is there any free doctor that you don't have to pay money to?**

No.

**Do the KNU backpack [medics] come like doctors, etc.?**

Yes.

**How many times per year?**

Twice.

**Do they ask for money?**

No. They [KNU doctors] bring all their materials with them. Their rice and water [rations]. They bring their drinking water with them. They do not ask for anything for healing the child patients.

**Lets say, in the village clinic, if the patient is in critical condition, is there any arrangement for them? What they do for them?**

They send them to the hospital.

**Where?**

To the camp hospital [Taung K'Lay army camp].

**Taung K'Lay and Kyeh Hkyay Hka [villages], how far are they from here?**

Over one hour going by car or motorcycle from here.

**How much is the car rate?**

Sometimes they ask for four or five hundred [kyat] (US \$0.41 or \$0.51) if they go with the patient.

**How about if they do not go with the patient?**

We paid 1,000 kyat (US \$1.01) going by motorcycle.

**How about going by car?**

I don't know. I have never gone by car. Because there are no cars.

**Have you ever known a patient that went to the hospital?**

Yes.

**How much money did they have to spend to going to that hospital?**

Sometimes, they go along with their baby or children. They had to pay fifty or sixty thousand [kyat] (US \$50.66 or \$60.79).

**Is there anyone who has gone for an operation?**

No.

**What else? Who has gone for serious situations related to pregnancy? Do you know how much their expenses were?**

Some people said if their disease are serious they had to pay over 100,000 [kyat] (US \$101.32). Let say, it is not free to cure their disease [they have to pay money]. So if their disease is strong, they have to go again and pay for treatment.

**Are there any other organizations that come to the village and give medicine for free?**

A medic from the hospital comes and gives medicine.

**Are they members of the Myanmar government or UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund]?**

I guess, they may be monk followers. The monk led that and donated the medicine and they came and distributed them. Like child vaccines they came and gave. We didn't have to pay for that.

**So regarding religion, is there any school in your village?**

Yes.

**Can you remember when the school was established? How many standards are there?**

It has four standards. You should ask the teachers.

**How many teachers are there?**

Two male teachers and one female teacher.

**Altogether three teachers, correct?**

Yes, three teachers.

**Are the teachers appointed by the Government?**

Yes, by the Government.

**Everyone?**

Yes.

**How much is their salary?**

Thirty thousand [kyat] (US \$30.40) per month.

**Is there any help from the Government?**

Yes, books, but we have to pay for that.

**They are not free?**

No.

**How about help from other organizations like the KNU, etc. regarding materials for the school?**

No, they just built a school.

**The KNU? How about the books?**

They did not pay for the notebooks but they have to pay for the textbook. No textbooks are in the Burmese language but in Karen as it is a Karen curriculum.

**There are notebooks, pens, cane balls, footballs and everything. Those are student materials?**

Yes, they are.

**In your village, the students who completed four standards, how do they continue their schooling?**

They go to Bilin [Town] because the high school is there.

**How about other places? Like Yangon or Mawlamyine?**

Some students go. Mostly only novices or monks go there.

**The schools teaching the children are ok?**

Yes they are ok, when they free, but when they [teachers] have meetings they have to go the meeting and stay there.

**Like some places we see that they go to receive their salary, and they are away for two or three weeks. Right?**

Yes they are.

**Anything like that here?**

Yes, sometimes they have a trip and sometimes they sell lottery [tickets] and could not give their full time to the students.

**The teachers in the village or from another place?**

Yes in the village. They are from another place and they married people in the village, and became a villager here. Like that. Now, he became head master.

**You said, he teaches and sells lottery [tickets]?**

Yes. Two years ago but now they dare not do that anymore.

**Why he sell three digit [lottery tickets]?**

I don't know.

**Not doing well? What do you think of that? He is a teacher and why did he do that?**

I saw that.

**What do you think of that?**

We have to pay money for school registration. Right? And they have the responsibility to teach the children regularly. They do not teach regularly, and it has become a feeling for us. If we report it to the leader, he will say that we gossip. So we did not tell him anything about that.

**If we consider of his side, is there any problem that he has by selling three digits. Why?**

We guess that he has a problem with livelihood. I don't think so, because he has a salary. And his children and wife can do work by doing something. Now he sells three digits and does not have enough time for teaching and could not teach regularly. This year he said that there will be no registration fees for the students.

**This year?**

Now, registration has not begun yet. So, we will see. He said that he will stop doing that.

**If we consider, does he have any problem with not getting enough? How much is his salary?**

For his salary he said thirty thousand [baht] (US \$30.40) per month.

**Do you think is it enough for him and his family?**

Maybe not enough, because he also has many children, So that he works in other ways to earn more money.

**Is there any other problem for children with their schooling?**

The teachers teach irregularly and some students were taken out of school by their parents and were asked to graze the cattle as helpers.

**Is it happening because of irregular teaching?**

Yes it is.

**Are there any children that you know who are young but not able to go to school?**

I guess there are many children who are not able to go to school. Because their parents can not afford to register their children in school, some are not doing well with their livelihood. So they asked their children to graze cattle.

**On the other hand, the Government proclaimed that primary school should be a free studying opportunity. So, why are their parents not able to send their children to school? And what is your opinion on that?**

Let say if the teachers take responsibility and say that *"they don't have to pay money"* like they don't have to pay for their children's education, then, they may send their children to school. They [teachers] didn't say this and people can't send their children to school.

**So they have to pay money for their education. Now, are there any movements of Myanmar soldiers around your village?**

No.

**How about in previous times? A couple years ago regarding Myanmar soldiers' movement.**

They came and asked for food. They asked and we gave.

**They asked for food for free?**

Yes, but some who are kind they bought it. They gave us money and we bought it for them. When they first came, for one or two years, they didn't give money. They just asked for free.

**Has there been anything like eating, stealing or doing in forcing [forced labour]?**

No.

**How about hitting the villagers?**

No there is not.

**How about before ceasefire?<sup>53</sup>**

No, there is. Before the ceasefire, they asked things like wood, bamboo, or thatch. Yes, that happened and as the villagers we paid.

**They asked those things for what?**

To make a fence for their camp.

**Where is their battalion [camp]?**

In Hka La Ya Shit [village].

**Where?**

In Bilin [Township].

**Each time, how much did they ask for?**

The wood amount they asked for was sometimes forty and sometimes fifty pieces of wood. Not the same amount. For bamboo, if they asked for 500 bamboo poles, we payed for 500 bamboo poles. If they asked for 400, then we paid for 400 bamboo poles for one village.

**Did they pay for that?**

No.

**What are your village's neighboring villages?**

My village?

**Yes.**

My village has no neighboring villages.

**Did they ask every village?**

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<sup>53</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma government in Hpa-an, Karen State. Negotiators from the two parties met for a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of talks on April 4<sup>th</sup>, where they signed a more detailed preliminary ceasefire plan, and held a 3<sup>rd</sup> round of negotiations on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2012; see "[Preliminary Ceasefire Talks](#)," *Karen National Union*, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2012; "[KNU Delegations Departs for the Third Round Negotiation of Ceasefire with the Burmese Government](#)," *Karen National Union*, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. In 2013, the ceasefire process became a nationwide effort. On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 17 ethnic armed groups signed a joint proposal for a nationwide ceasefire in Laiza, Kachin State; see "[Burma's armed ethnic groups sign nation-wide ceasefire pledge in Laiza](#)," *Kachin News*, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. Two days later in Myitkyina, Kachin State, the EAGs presented their proposal to a Burma government delegation, which then presented its own plan. The Government rejected the EAG's proposal for a multi-ethnic federal army, the EAGs requested more time to review, and both sides agreed to meet again; see "[Myanmar Peace Talks Fail to Nail Down Cease-Fire Agreement](#)," *Radio Free Asia*, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. On January 25<sup>th</sup> 2014, in Law Khee Lar, Karen State, 17 ethnic armed groups agreed to an updated proposal to be presented to the Burma government in Hpa-an in February 2014; see "[Ethnic armed groups sign 11-point nationwide ceasefire draft](#)," *Myanmar Freedom Daily*, January 26<sup>th</sup> 2014. For more information on the ceasefire and how it has affected local villagers, see "[Safeguarding human rights in a post-ceasefire eastern Burma](#)," KHRG, January 2012 and "[Steps towards peace: Local participation in the Karen ceasefire process](#)," KHRG, November 2012.

Yes they did around that area.

**All eight villages?**

Not all, but four villages. For my village, the side by K'Di Poo Daw is recognized as IB [Infantry Battalion] #3 area. Yes like that, we have to pay like that. The four villages, including my brother's village, had to pay IB [Infantry Battalion] #8.

**Two sides?**

Yes it is divided in two parts. So, what they said is that the K'Di Poo Daw side had to deliver [materials] to IB #3 and this side had to deliver [materials] to IB #8. They divided it like that.

**Is it far from Kyeh Hkyay Hka village to IB #8 Bilin camp?**

Not too far. It takes just awhile to go with motorcycle.

**How about IB [Infantry Battalion] #3?**

Yes, it is far.

**So, they have to give more to IB #8. Let say, is there any movement or attack by them after ceasefire?**

No, they dare not ask for things and they don't come [to the village] either.

**If they haven't attacked your village, are there any other places that you heard that they attacked?**

They just stay in Th'raw Meh [village]. That is their area [controled area].

**How about other places?**

No, that is their area.

**Are there any incidents like asking you to come to their base or asking you questions?**

No.

**For example, if they heard something and asked you to come.**

Not since the ceasefire was made. No, they have not asked us and have not dealt with us.

**Any demands or orders from them?**

No.

**How about the KNU soldiers?**

Yes, they asked sometimes. Once a long time ago.

**How much for each house?**

Those who had a cart were asked 2,500 kyats (US \$2.53) for one cart. They said that



included human [owner] taxes. And one basket of rice.

**Were there any reasons for them to do that?**

They said that it is for the Karen soldiers to eat.

**Were there any incidents like they come and hit the villager?**

No.

**Was there any incidents like eating people's chickens?**

No, they come relaxed. But they drink alcohol.

**For example, were there any acts like they got drunk and were shooting guns in the village?**

Yes, in previous times. Only Maung Sa Yoh. No one else acted like that before.

**Let say, he was drinking and shot the gun.**

Yes, he shot the gun and shouted that he wants to shoot people. Only him. That is his own village.

**Oh! His own village?**

Yes, his own village. If he thinks carefully he should take care his sister. He does not take care and shoot the gun [and] sometimes his sister confused. Sometimes, his sister goes down immediately when his brother [Maung Sa Yoh] told her to. His other brother would say to his sister that *"He is shooting the gun, don't go you will be harmed."*

**So, don't the leaders give any punishment for him?**

I don't know. We didn't report it to the leaders. We dare not report it. Because it is his own village, so if we report, it is not good. He has the responsibility to take care of his own village. He does not take care of it and moreover he destroys it.

**Is there anything else?**

No, but when he comes, I chasten him and I treat him like my own child. To be able to eat, to do together and eat together. Isn't it? We are human beings. Even I am old I still have to work with you. You can like to drink alcohol, but there should be a limit. If you can, it is good for you. If you can't that will be bad for you. Like that, but I chasten strongly.

**Yes, you should chasten your children.**

Yes, I chasten always in order for them to be a good person. It is for them.

**Now, after the ceasefire, what is your opinion of the activity of the Government's military. What do you think?**

My opinion is that if they [Tatmadaw and ethnic armed groups] are both friendly it is good. If they are in peace there are no worries for elders to worry about fighting. I think like that. They go smoothly and we go smoothly too. Isn't it? We must think like that. We foresee that if they are both good we are good too.

**For example, many people have said that “the Government’s actions are lying.” Can we believe them or not. What is your opinion if you can believe them or not?**

The Government?

**Yes.**

In my opinion, I can’t absolutely believe what the Government said.

**Why?**

They both hold the guns over here or there. They were enemies before. Now, they made peace. I can’t believe it now. But if they stop holding the guns, I can believe it. I think like that. I can’t think other thoughts.

**Now, they go with guns?**

Yes. The Burmese come; they bring their guns with them. The Karen come, they bring their guns with them. Isn’t that true? That’s why I still can’t believe them. If they use drugs, they can be wrong, So I chasten him strongly. Because they are my children I love them both [Burmese and Karen].

**I have been asking many questions. But is there any other thing that you would like to say?**

What should I say?

**I don’t know. Anything that you want to mention.**

I have nothing special to mention about the information in my village. But I want my villagers to live in unity and peace and eat peacefully. Isn’t it? When I call a meeting, come together. Like that. That is what I want.

**Only your village?**

I control my own village. Isn’t it true? I control my villagers and if they come together to my meeting, it is better! They, if they like, come together. If they don’t like, that means [they] don’t come to the meeting. As the village head, we have many things to say. We have to look at many issues. Whether our children are doing well or not. Some people are sick and they are not able to come. We have to look after them. As a village head, we call them only when we really need them. If we don’t need them we don’t call meetings. We were told and we inform them. It is usually like that. Like, yesterday the elder said: *“I brought too many potatoes. Take some for everyone and when you get home, cook them.”* Just like that. But not everyone understood. Even the school teacher did not understand. He did not even understand the words that were spoken yesterday. We said go back and cook the potatoes. He replies: *“Should I go and cook?”* I told him that they gave the information and they asked you to inform the other villagers. He said: *“I thought they said that they will give the potatoes.”* And people were laughing at him.

**Anything else that you wish to mention? Like for the whole Karen people not only in the village. What else?**

I want to mention that our whole Karen people live peacefully and [have] no worries. Work peacefully and eat together. So that the elders also will have no worries.

**Like, our nationality, in order to be safe in working, what do they need in what situation.**

Do freely and eat freely. The road is cleaned [finished]. They also said that the road construction project must be implemented. We have to construct it ourselves. We have to do what was requested of us. They said, *"we will hire the car,"* and they discussed together. *"If we hire the car, you must pay 15,000 [kyat] (US \$15.20) for buying petrol,"* they said. If we have to do this, we can not afford to do that with our people. Isn't it? If we do that every day, we would not have rice to eat. If they hire the car for us, if they can do that, we would walk on the good road.

**Finally, thank you for sharing this information that I wanted to know and sharing as much as you know. Thank you for that. In the future, we would like to cooperate further.**

Yes. Thank you!

**Thank you!**

A---, (female, 40), Thaton Township, Thaton District  
(Interviewed in May 2012)

#### Source #22

<b>Log #</b>	12-96-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Interview   Saw E---, (male, 36), T--- village, Bu Tho Township, Papun District (June 2012)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in September 2012 <a href="http://khrhg.org/2012/09/12-96-a2-i1/papun-interview-saw-e-june-2012">http://khrhg.org/2012/09/12-96-a2-i1/papun-interview-saw-e-june-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Papun [Hpapun] District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Security leader in T--- IDP [internally displaced persons] camp</p> <p><b>How many children do you have?</b></p> <p>I have six children.</p> <p><b>How old is the eldest one?</b></p> <p>15.</p> <p><b>How about the youngest one?</b></p> <p>The youngest one is ten months old.</p> <p><b>In the past, where did you live?</b></p> <p>I lived in the third Brigade [Nyaunglebin District], Ler Doh village.</p> <p><b>Ler Doh village?</b></p>	

Yes, Ler Doh village.

**In which village tract is it located?**

There is no village tract. It is in Pegu Division.

**And now, you live in?**

I live in T--- village.

**In which village tract is T--- refugee camp [IDP] located?**

This is located in Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District [Papun District]. Some parts are in Pwah Heh village tract and some parts are in Hkaw Pu village tract.

**How about you?**

I am from Hkaw Pu village tract.

**Have you been here for a long time?**

I started living here in 2007.

**Can you tell us about either your experience in, or why you left, Ler Doh?**

At first, starting from 1984, the military government's actions towards civilians were not right. Our area was recognized by the government as a black area,<sup>54</sup> an area for operation command,<sup>55</sup> they [Tatmadaw] asked for many porters and while we were attending school, our father was arrested and told to act as porter. After two years, he came back because he had not lost his life. At that time, we realised that we needed to do something; we had to act against the military government in order to cause its collapse. So, we started to understand that we needed to hold arms [work together] and fight against the government, so we joined the revolution and we held arms [worked together].

**What I want to know about, are the difficulties that you faced while you were in Ler Doh and why you came here? Was it because of fighting or was it because they frightened you?**

Yes. At that time, I was 15-16 years old. The thing that I was afraid of most was when I saw what my father had suffered; therefore, even though I lived in the village, I was afraid. When I attended school, as they called many porters, I was afraid that they would call me as a porter so I prepared myself to escape.

<sup>54</sup> Tatmadaw expert Maung Aung Myoe explains that the three-phased Tatmadaw counter-insurgency plan, developed in the 1960s, designates a territory as black, brown or white according to the extent of non-state armed group (NSAG) activity. Phase one transforms a 'black area' into a 'brown area', meaning it is transformed from an area controlled by NSAGs where the Tatmadaw operates, to a Tatmadaw controlled area where NSAGs operate. The second phase is to transform the area from a 'brown area' into a 'white area,' where the area is cleared of insurgent activities. The final phase is to transform a white area into a 'hard-core area', during which more organizational works are necessary and the government forms pro-government military units for overall national defense. See Maung Aung Myo, *Building the Tatmadaw: Myanmar Armed Forces since 1948*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009, p. 31-32; see also *Neither Friend Nor Foe: Myanmar's Relations with Thailand since 1988*, Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies Nanyang Technological University, 2002, p.71.

<sup>55</sup> The Tatmadaw set up operation commands in order to consolidate control over designated "black areas".

**Therefore, you fled here to escape. In which year was it?**

It was between 1986 and 1987.

**When you fled, did you flee to T--- IDP camp at once or were there any other places that you fled to before coming here?**

I joined the KNDO [Karen National Defence Organisation]<sup>56</sup> in 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade. Then, in 1991, the leader sent us to *Law Hkeh Tha* [head quarter] and I worked in the General Office Command (GOC) *Tha Wa Ka* [Military head quarter]. After I was injured, I asked permission to retire, but they didn't give me permission to do so. So, as I have strength in my heart [still alive], I took responsibility as a T--- security guard according to the *Tha Wa Ka* leader who commanded me to do so.

**Have you been working as the security guard leader for a long time?**

I worked [as a security guard leader] in 2007. In 2004, I started to work as the assistant security guard leader, and then, the security guard leader had other work, so I had to take his place.

**The main thing that we would like to know about is, we heard that a villager was shot and killed yesterday. And we know that you also went and looked for this villager. So, can you explain to us the events and how this happened?**

Because it is the time of year when truffles can be picked, the villagers from T--- refugee camp [IDP] went to try and gather them. At this time, people come to buy them, so they collect them and sell them so that they can get money to buy fish paste and sweet powder [mono sodium glutamate (MSG)]. They went to collect truffles in a place called U Kweh *lu* [hill]. Some girls and boys went to collect truffles. At that time, we heard that the Burmese soldiers [Tatmadaw] shot a civilian. On the same day, I went to find the person who was shot. On the [June] 13<sup>th</sup>, the soldier shot the man; we heard the sound of the gun fire in the morning at 7:20 am.

As we carried on listening, we heard heavy weapons being fired, which is not a good thing. This is when we realised that something bad was happening, and that the Tatmadaw were doing something bad. We then tried to find out what had happened. After this, we received a phone call from a villager who informed us that one villager was lost. So, we started to look for the villager, this was at 9:00 am on June 13<sup>th</sup>. At first we dared not go directly to where the incident had taken place, but on the 14<sup>th</sup>, we went to the place where the corpse was. At that time, we saw that the villager had been shot three times in the armpit. After that, they had shot him in one of his eyes. This was so that they would cause him more pain. This villager was not wearing an army uniform; he was wearing a white t-shirt with green sport shorts and a Karen longyi. His clothes did not make him look like a soldier. Also, if we look at the area where he was shot, there is no tall grass; this is an area where we can collect wood and thatch, therefore there could not have been a mistake of his identity; it was clear he was a civilian. We do not know why the Burmese soldiers chose to kill him.

**Do you mean that when you went there, he didn't go with you? Did he go with the first group and you went with another group?**

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<sup>56</sup> The KNDO is a militia force of local volunteers trained and equipped by the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and incorporated into its battalion and command structure; its members wear uniforms and typically commit to two-year terms of service.

Yes.

**What is his name?**

Saw N---.

**How old was he?**

He was 48.

**Did he have family?**

Yes, he did. He had eight family members.

**How many children?**

He had six children, with him and his wife, altogether eight people. I would like to tell you about his wife's very pitiful situation. When I went to see her, it was very pitiful. After his wife delivered her youngest baby, she did wrong with water, so now her brain is not working so well. When they came to stay in T--- camp, it seemed like her situation had improved. Now, since her husband has died the disease has occurred again and she cries every day. Now, after a while, she called out her husband's [name], then ran outside into the rain, and then she slipped and fell. So, her disease is happening again like before and we can't cure her. It is a very pitiful situation for his wife and children.

**What do you mean by doing wrong with water?**

She did wrong with the water after she had her baby; they were in Lu Thaw Township. At that time, the enemy [Tatmadaw] came and she ran outside in the rain.<sup>57</sup>

**Was this when her baby was young, soon after she delivered?**

At that time, many diseases appeared. Later, they gave her treatment with medicine but it couldn't be cured. Then, they gave her traditional medicine. At that time, the situation also didn't become better. It became better, but her brain didn't work properly. It seemed like her circulation was not regular and she thought a lot, so her mind became different every day and every night.

**Is the distance far between where the incident happened and T--- camp?**

If we go from the place where the event happened to T--- camp, it takes one hour.

**On foot?**

Yes, it takes one hour, on foot. The Burmese soldiers had never come to the place where

<sup>57</sup> Even though the interviewer has prompted Saw E--- to elaborate on "*doing wrong with water*," the exact problem regarding what has happened to Saw N---'s wife is unclear. Although it is impossible to know the exact medical condition Saw E--- is referring to, it is a belief in Karen culture that women should not expose their heads to water of any kind while menstruating, as it can cause symptoms such as the ones described here by Saw E---.

the villager was shot until the government and the KNU [Karen National Union] agreed on the ceasefire.<sup>58</sup> The Burmese [Tatmadaw] had never come to the place where the shooting took place before the government and the KNU agreed on the ceasefire. After the ceasefire, we saw many of their tracks, and they came into the area near to where we live. On the day that we were going to find him [Saw N---], we saw their footprints. They had nearly arrived at the U Kweh *kloh* [river], then the tracks showed they went back up the hill again. We also followed the Burmese [soldiers'] way, and then we arrived to the place where the person died. Therefore, these people [soldiers] were waiting for the people to come and collect truffles.

***Gu ta la hter* [truffles]?**

*Gu ta la hter.*

**At the place where he was killed, is it a field or is it surrounded by large trees and jungle?**

This place has not been farmed and there are no big trees, on this hill there are only big and small *la hter* plants [the plant with leaves that are used for thatch].

**Is the distance between the army camp and the place where they collected truffles very far?**

We can't see the camp from the place where the civilian died. If we measured it, it would be approximately 500 yards.

**If we go from the place where he died to the military camp, how many hours and minutes would it take?**

It would take half an hour.

**Does this mean that the Burmese soldiers did not shoot from their camp?**

No. I would like to explain this. For civilians, when they went to collect truffles, they went up the hill. For the Burmese soldiers, they came down from their camp situated on another hill along a path. They came down to the U Kweh *kloh* and when they had nearly arrived at the U Kweh *kloh*, they went up to the place where the people collect truffles. The civilians were not paying attention, as they had faith in the ceasefire, and therefore they did not notice the soldiers. The villagers were not expecting this kind of attitude from the Burmese military, so they went and collected truffles happily and they talked loudly. The soldiers heard them, and came down from their camp and shot at them.

**So, you're saying that the Burmese heard the villagers talking. How many people were there?**

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<sup>58</sup> The January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 meeting in Pa'an Town between representatives of the Government of Myanmar and the Karen National Union (KNU) resulted in a preliminary ceasefire between the parties and an agreement to negotiate further; see initial statement issued by KNU on January 13<sup>th</sup> 2012, the day after a 19-member KNU delegation, which included military representatives from all KNLA Brigades except 5th Brigade, attended initial ceasefire talks in the Zwegapin Hotel in Pa'an Town. Karen National Union, *Statement on the Initial Agreement between KNU and Burmese Government*, January 13<sup>th</sup> 2012; for additional information on additional negotiations, see "Govt, KNU sign ceasefire," *Myanmar Times*, January 16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> 2012; "KNU, Govt Reach Historic Agreement," *The Irrawaddy*, January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012.



There were ten people, including the one who died.

**How many females?**

As far as I know, there were six females.

**Do you know their names?**

Yes.

**Can you tell us?**

I don't know their names for sure.

**So, you just know the name of the person who died?**

Yes, only the one who died.

**Were there any other villagers who were wounded when the shooting happened?**

No.

**When they were shooting, what did the other villagers do?**

At first, the other villagers went together, but as they approached the place, Saw N--- went on a little further. The others were lower down. Saw N--- went further up, to the hill pass. At that time, the Burmese [soldier] waited and shot him. At first, they just shot once. Their guns sounded "hta". The people further down heard it, but they did not run away. After that, after two or three seconds, they shot another two times; we heard "hta" "hta". After two or three minutes, they shot again with small guns many times. They also shot with heavy weapons indiscriminately [in different directions], so then the other people fled.

**Does this mean that the Burmese [soldiers] only saw Saw N---?**

Yes.

**They didn't see the other people who were with Saw N---?**

They didn't see them; if they had seen them, they would have shot and tried to kill them all. Also, they [the villagers] were on a hill, so they [the soldiers] could not see.

**Was it because Saw N--- climbed up the hill and for the rest, they were beside [the hill].**

Because the angle of the hill was blocking where the bullets could reach, they were not hit.

**Do you know the battalion number of the Burmese military who shot at the villagers?**

Yes.

**Which military number is it?**

It is IB [Infantry Battalion] #19.

**How about the leader?**



I don't know the leaders name.

**The battalion commander or the company commander?**

I don't know.

**Do you know the camp where they stay?**

I don't know.

**Related to the case that has happened, can you tell us what your opinion is? Like, this person is a villager and as you said, he didn't wear a soldiers' uniform. On his body, there were no military materials. If we looked at him, we would have known clearly that he is a villager. So, what is your opinion on the soldiers who shot the villager?**

In my opinion, I want to say this briefly. In the present time, we listen to what our leaders from the KNU say, and we follow the rules. We as civilians go and work, and find food where we are allowed to go. In this incident, they waited and they shot and killed a villager. In my opinion, it is not good and not acceptable. For us, we have listened to our leaders' orders. In their [Tatmadaw] case, if they don't respect the ceasefire then it causes great difficulties for us civilians and we can't trust the ceasefire, which is bad for the future of our country [Burma]. Therefore, finally, because of Battalion #19, all minority ethnic groups' hope and faith on the ceasefire have been lessened somewhat.

**As we know, the villagers have come and stay in the camp temporarily. The food that they get is only rice and salt. In order to get other kinds of food and to be able to buy other kinds of food, they have to go and find it outside. As they have to go and find food outside, this is what happened. Are there any other difficulties that the villagers face while they are finding food? Is there anything else that they have to be afraid of?**

For this one [the situation], and for us here at T--- refugee camp [IDP], it is as you said. We could not live in our country, because the Burmese [military] came and attacked us, so we couldn't live there anymore. Therefore, we came and lived in the T--- area. We don't come and live here because we are happy. We come and stay here temporarily because we can't go back. Now, if we look back, we were living between the enemies and we lived in an area that was under the control of the KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army]. We didn't have places to work and there was no land to plant [crops]. For the food, as you said, salt and rice, two types. For other food, we as Karen people have a lot of food. So, some of the people try to do plantations. When the opportunity comes, in the season when we can collect thatch [March to May], then we collect thatch to weave and sell. When we get the opportunity, we will take it. Therefore, the situation is the same here, we live under house arrest. We have to stay inside. We can't go to the east and we also can't go to the west. When we cross the other side of the river, [Salween] there are rules and regulations so it is difficult for us to work. If we find food, as our area is between the enemies, we cannot let our guard down and move freely. If we do cross over to Thailand, then there are many rules and regulations. Therefore, if we look at the situation for our refugees, [internally displaced persons] it is a big weakness for our livelihoods.

**The next thing is, when they go and find food from outside, have they ever encountered any landmines? Or do they need to be afraid of landmines?**

In this area, in the case of landmines, our leaders [KNU] have told and notified us about all areas that we shouldn't go. Therefore, related to this, in our area, the civilians do not violate the regulations and there has been no difficulty. Now, the difficulty is we are not able to

travel around freely, as now the Burmese [military] have come and shot at us, this has become a difficulty for the civilians.

**These are all my questions. Is there anything else that you want to express, or any questions that I have not asked, which you would like to talk about?**

No.

**Thank you.**

Thank you.

### Source #23

<b>Log #</b>	12-108-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Interview: Naw L---, June 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	T--- village, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p><i>[censored for security]</i></p> <p><b>What is your real name?</b></p> <p>Naw L---.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>I live in T--- village.</p> <p><b>Are you Buddhist?</b></p> <p>Yes, I am Buddhist.</p> <p><b>How many children do you have?</b></p> <p>I have five children. Two are girls and three are boys.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 54 years old.</p> <p><b>I heard about land confiscation. I want to know more about this issue. If you have any information and if you want to tell me, you can tell me now. It depends on you, you can say what you want to say.</b></p> <p>In the past, the battalion [Tatmadaw] came and the battalion commander stayed at my house. He said: <i>"We have confiscated all this land. You can't own the land anymore."</i> We asked him, if the battalion confiscates our land then where are we going to live? He said that the leaders from the state gave the orders, and <i>"You guys have to leave. You have to sign."</i> I told him <i>"We will not sign. The battalion owns the land, so we don't need to sign. Because the battalion will confiscate our land and we will not get it back so we will not sign."</i> He said</p>	

*"You can't refuse to sign. The battalion owns the land so you have to sign."* He said [again] *"The battalion owns the land so you have to sign"* but we did not sign. He said *"These [lands] do not belong to you anymore. We own everything."* They cut down the trees and I told them not to cut. We own the land [and depend on it] in order to eat. But they said they have to cut and clear it all. I told them to leave the mango and jack fruit trees so we could eat the fruit. They said: *"We have to cut it all down. We own the land and we will cut it all down. You own nothing. We will take all these [lands]"*. They said that since the battalion owns the land, they can do what they want. We asked them where we will have to go and live. They [said that they] will arrange a place for us to live. They asked us to go and clear up the land where they are going to place us. We went and cleared the land. Finally, the [village] chairperson demarcated land for us but he asked us to buy the land. We can't buy it. We can't afford to buy it. We don't have money. He demarcated the land and asked us to buy it but we didn't buy it because we have lost a lot of land, so we do not want to buy it. He sold it and outside people came. No villagers from T--- village bought the land.

### **Did he ask you to buy the land he demarcated?**

Yes. He asked us to buy [the land]. He said: *"The Bamar [Tatmadaw] will take our land. They will arrange a place for us to live and stay called section 1."* They asked us to go and stay there. They demarcated the land and sold the land to villagers. We don't want to buy it. We don't buy the land and we don't stay there. People who bought the land went to build up their houses with planks and roofs using galvanised iron sheets. We can't do it. They took all our land so we can't do anything. No one from T--- village can do anything. He said he demarcated land but people didn't want it. So people from the outside came and bought the land and came to live there." For us, if they would give it to us for free, we would take it, but if they don't give us it for free, we won't take it.

As for the farms, they said that they would confiscate all the farms. All belong to them. We have to give them a tax for each acre, one acre is 15 baskets.<sup>59</sup> We gave it to them but now they make us have more difficulties. Because of this issue, one day, I argued with the village chairperson a lot. He said he didn't sell the land. He said he gave it to T--- villagers but T--- villagers didn't take it. I told him: *"You tried to sell it to us, so we didn't take it."* He didn't ask T--- villagers. I told him: *"You didn't ask the T--- villagers. If you want to know, ask the T--- villagers. You asked villagers from the other village."* I asked him: *"Do you know how many problems T--- villagers face now? Some of them went to K--- and H---, they all live in different areas now."* He said it was only a few houses. I told him it is not only a few houses. Do you know how many T--- villagers live here? Even if you don't know, how can you say that? I told him: *"We lost [our land]. We won't give up. Now the Bamar [Tatmadaw] took my [land] and they said let it be. But I told them, I won't let it be. The Bamar [Tatmadaw] confiscated all my land. The Bamar [Tatmadaw] took my house. The B [Tatmadaw] cut down all the trees. Nothing is left. Everything is gone."* He said he did not know about that. I told him: *"You don't know anything. You are the leader. So what do you know?"* Another commander came and he said the same thing. He said *"All this land belongs to the military. It does not belong to you at all."* If any group [of Tatmadaw soldiers] come, they say the same thing. They say it belongs to them. If any commander comes, they say it belongs to them. They said it all belongs to them. T--- villagers can't own the land. They said T--- [village] is vacant land. It is not on their list [that the land belongs to villagers]. They said that they will come and build [their base] on vacant land. Then I told them: *"We have worked on this vacant land since our grandparents' age. Is this still vacant land?"* They said it is vacant land on their map. So I told them that if this is vacant land, then all land must be vacant land. They said no, not all is vacant land, only the land where you live. I told them if it is vacant land here, it all must be vacant land as well in other places. I told them it is very strange

<sup>59</sup> A Basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg. or 46.08 lb. of paddy, and 32 kg. or 70.4 lb. of milled rice. A basket is twice the volume of a big tin

because all farms here are vacant land. They have confiscated everything along this river area. They left nothing.

**How many acres do the lands add up to?**

There are many acres if only we would count.

**I heard there are 2,000 acres. Is that right?**

I don't know. There are already over 30 farms belonging to our grandparents since the beginning but we presented only five or six acres [to the Tatmadaw]. They asked us how much of our land was included. We told them two or three acres from each of us. Like three of our siblings own each part of our grandparents farm. Some own three and some own six acres. There are many acres in reality. But people who own the land present only a few acres [to the Tatmadaw].

**I mean, not only farms, also including plantations and villages. How many acres do you think?**

There would be many acres. We never noted it down. Villagers are not sure how many acres of land they own. I think there are about 10 acres only for my house compound, not even including the farm. I have three farms and two houses. An acre of my land was included when they built the school. Probably, there are over 10 acres. My farms will have over 20 or 30 acres. But the acres of the farm are not accurate when villagers submit it to them [the Tatmadaw]. They only submitted a few acres because people can't pay the tax. They ask for five or six baskets from each acre. For our lands, we have to pay seven acres and five acres for farm tax. We have to pay every year. This year, they asked us to sign but we didn't sign.

**Does this mean you have to pay them the tax from your own land?**

Yes. We are farming and we have to pay them.

[*Outsider*]: we have to pay them tax.

**You have to pay farm tax?**

Yes, we have to pay a farm tax.

**But they are your own lands.**

Yes. It is our land. Even our land, we have to pay.

**How much do you have to pay for each acre?**

We have to give baskets of paddy grain. For us, we have to pay seven baskets. This year, they asked us to sign in order to work our farm. We didn't sign. My son already went to plough. They said we have to sign. If we don't sign, we can't work our farm anymore. And they said they will not allow us to go to our farm anymore.

**Why did they ask you to sign? What do they want? Do they want to take the land?**

They said this land belongs to the military. So we have to pay to work on their land. They own all the land. This is not our land anymore. Now, if we don't pay, we can't do farming anymore. Now, it's like they own all the lands. Now, my son can't go and do farming anymore. I have already ploughed.

[*Outsider*]. There are five baskets of *bu klee* [paddy prepared to spread in order to grow on the farm].

Five full baskets of *bu klee* are kept stored. Now they said, you can't have access to land belonging to the military. Now, they don't allow us access to land belonging to the military. Now, no villagers from H--- [village] come here. H--- villagers own lands in T--- [village] as well. They can't come so they have to come in other ways. For us, there is no way we can go. There is no way we can go around from here. We just have to wait and listen. My son can't do farming anymore.

I argued with the Bamar [Tatmadaw]. Win Oo pointed to me and I pointed to him. Win Oo told me and I told him. I told him that the Bamar [Tatmadaw] occupy land here but it does not include your land, so you can tolerate it. But for me, they occupy my land so I can't tolerate it. The Bamar [Tatmadaw commander] army asked him: "*Don't you demarcate land for Taw Ta Kaw Lu [people from mountain]?*" He said: "*Yes, I did demarcate but no one took the land.*" I told him: "*You asked for money so who would take the land? No one will take it. People from the mountains have lost many things so no one will take it.*" He said: "*No, I gave it for free.*" I told him: "*There is no water, who will live there? No one will live there.*" He said: "*Watch your mouth when you speak. Do you know that I sold it?*" I told him: "*If you don't know, you know people who eat money. If you don't know, you are the one who eats money. Lands were sold and many people from section 1 bought the land, don't you know that? Aren't you a chairperson in section 1?*" I didn't know that he sold Maung S---'s land. If I knew, I would have mentioned it at that time. I didn't know that he sold the land. He said: "*Do you know that I sold the lands?*"

[*Outsider*] The previous year, he planned to come and demarcate the land in the monastery compound. I asked him if he had told the monks that he was going to demarcate the land. I said: "*You are the leader. You can go and ask the monks.*" Later, he didn't dare do it.

He told the commander that he gave [land] to T--- villagers but T--- villagers didn't take the land. He also donated land to the monks. We donated to the monks and the monks sold the land.

[*Outsider*]. It doesn't make sense.

I told him we lost this amount of our land so if we have to buy, we won't buy it. In the beginning when Soe Win came, we had to pay money. He would demarcate land for us. T--- villagers went and cleared everything at section 1. I asked him to ask people who live in section 1 whether they had cleared the land. No one had cleared it, only T--- villagers did it.

[*Outsider*] [we had to pay] 200 kyats from.

Yes, 200 per person. He said: "*I don't understand and I don't know who Soe Win is.*" I told him: "If you don't know, why did you come and live in section 1?"

[*Outsider*] Tell him if you don't understand.

[*Outsider*] I heard if anyone wants to come and stay there, they have to roof their house with galvanised iron sheets.

Yes, if anyone wants to come and stay there, they have to roof their house with galvanised iron sheets. People can't stay there if they can't roof their house with galvanised iron sheets he said. T--- villagers don't have money. How can they afford a roof with galvanised iron sheets? You have to build it with cement and galvanised iron sheets. But they said T---



villagers didn't take the land and stay on it. So guests [outside people] came and stayed on the land. Now, he says T--- villagers cause complications. He told me one day about that. I told him: *"Even if you give T--- villagers land now, they will take the land."*

**When did he tell you this?**

The day he told me was...

[*Outsider*] June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**June 3<sup>rd</sup>?**

Yes, I don't remember the Myanmar month.

**It is fine to tell me the English month.**

[*Outsider*] He came this month.

Yes, that's it.

**On the third day of this month?**

Yes.

**What did they tell you?**

I went to the commander. I told the commander: *"Commander, my son will come and plough. People told me that we can't come but can I come?"* He said *"No, you can't come."* I don't speak Myanmar language very well but I tried to speak. He said: *"You can't come if you don't sign."* I told him: *"This is my land. Why can't I come?"* He said: *"If you sign you can come. If a person signs, that person can come. If two people sign, two people can come."* So, I told him that just signing will not make me an educated person. How am I supposed to survive now? I am just working for my livelihood. Now, I have nothing so my son and daughter have gone to live in Bangkok. I can only eat when they send money to me. If they don't send money, I can't eat. [Battalion] #549 confiscated all my plantations and farms. A nursery school has been built in my house. A school is built on my land. This farm is my farm. It all belongs to me but no one knows. I have had to give over my land and I feel upset but no one knows about it. While we were speaking, Win Oo, the leader of section 1 arrived. The commander asked him: *"Didn't you demarcate land for the villagers?"* He said: *"Yes, I did but no one took it."* I couldn't tolerate it anymore when I heard this. It was all coming up and I told him: *"Who told you that we didn't take it? No one said this. You sold it right? People from the mountains can't pay. They will stay for free. People from the mountains have had to give up a lot."* He said: *"When did I ask for money? I don't take money for the land behind. [land in the west]."* But I said: *"There is not much water there. Who will live there? No one will live there. Villagers gave up a lot of their land so that they could live in the front [land in the east]."* He said: *"Watch your mouth when you speak."* I told him: *"I don't know. You know someone who eats money if it's not you. If you don't know, you are the one who eats money."* Then he said: *"This woman. Watch your mouth when you speak."*

**Who?**

Chairperson Win Oo. He lives in section 1. I told him: *"You live in Sa Ta Pyi. You are Mon. You live in Sa Ta Pyi. If you don't know about T--- [village], come and ask people who live in T---."* He said: *"There are T--- villagers. Naw M--- and Naw A--- are T--- villagers. Naw M--- is a Y--- villager."* I told him to go and ask to make sure. She lives in Y---. Naw A---'s husband

is a T--- villager. The place where she lives is her parents-in-laws' land. Naw M--- is from Y---. "Go and find out," I told him. "She is not originally from T--- [village]. If you know T--- villagers, you must ask T--- villagers. You asked outside people. How can they know? You asked people who are not T--- villagers. Come and ask me and I will explain to you. I will show you how many T--- villagers' houses [there are]. I can show you all of them." I told the commander: "Win Oo is Mon. He is from Sa Ta Pyi. He comes and lives in section 1 and he is proud of himself. His son-in-law is a major. People say that they are afraid of him but I'm not afraid of anything. I will tell you everything."

### **Who did you talk to?**

I talked to the commanders of [battalion] #549.

### **What is his name?**

The commander of [battalion] #549 is Yeh Kyaw. We argued on the road. The commander looked at me. I argued and Win Oo told me: "This woman, watch your mouth when you speak." And I told him: "I speak the truth. I don't say anything that is not true." I shook my hands and he also shook his hands there on the road. If the Bamar [Tatmadaw] kill me, I would die there. He shook and I shook as we got angry. I told the commander that I lost my entire farm. I have no land. I am not afraid to die if people kill me. I'm not afraid [of] anything. I dare to die. I dare to die when people kill me. I don't own anything anymore. My land is here. People cut all the bamboo trees and they give me nothing. People took it for free. I got angry and people asked me whether I remembered what I said. I don't know. I just continued. Almost all of the commanders of [battalion] #549, I have argued with them every year. I always argue with them. I'm not afraid of them. One of the commanders asked me: "You are good at speaking, are you not afraid to die?" I told him: "I am not afraid to die," I exposed my chest and told him: "Kill me. If you dare to kill me, kill me now." He fell silent for a while and then he asked me: "A mo,<sup>60</sup> for what reason are you not afraid to die?" I told him: "I have lost my farm and my land. I am not afraid to die if people kill me." He said that is true. I exposed my chest. I dared to do that. I told him I'm not afraid of anyone. Since battalion #549 came and set up their base here, my property have gone and no one pities me. One thing starts to belong to the battalion, then two things belong to the battalion. You go back to your plantation and they ask: "A mo, what kind of papers do you have? This is military land. It all belongs to the military." I told them I planted these plants. But they said these are not my plants. "These are my grandparents' plants, this is my grandparents' land" I said. These words are very painful to me and they almost make me die.

### **Do you know his name?**

They are Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] and someone's employees.

[Outsider] Those people always say things like this.

Battalion Commander Tay Soe, he argued with me when he was going to confiscate one villager's land. He is the battalion commander of [battalion] #549. He wanted to plant rubber. He asked me to sign but I didn't sign. I told him: "Commander, this is not my land, I can't sign. This land has an owner. Go and ask the land owner." He said: "You have to get involved." I told him that I can't involve myself. He said: "The battalion can take everything but we feel pity for you so we called to meet you. We called to meet and inform you." I told him: "Even if you call to meet and inform me, I can do nothing because this is not my land. The land has an owner." He said he would inform the village head to meet him. He informed

<sup>60</sup> A mo is a term in Myanmar language meaning mother, used to express respect when talking to older people. Although it translates as 'mother' it does not imply a familial relationship.

the P--- village head. The village head came and signed. We didn't sign. Only the village head signed.

**He signed for them?**

He asked villagers to sign for him to be able to plant rubber on the land. They asked him [the village head] to sign for them as though he owned this land.

[Outsider] Did the land owners sign?

No, the land owners didn't sign.

[Outsider] Only the village head signed. Not the land owners. The land owners knew nothing. Only the chairperson and secretary signed. He is R---.

**Is it the same chairperson now as it was at the moment you just mentioned?**

[Outsider] He is R---.

[Outsider] No, it is not him.

[Outsider] He is B---.

[Outsider] Is he not Saw Z---?

[Outsider] Yes, he is Saw Z---.

[Outsider] He is Christian.

After [the village head signed], they came and planted rubber. They planted rubber and after a year, that battalion commander was transferred. After he was transferred, the next battalion commander came.

[Outsider] Naw Ht--- said she always goes and pulls out the rubber they plant.

[Outsider] Did they already plant [rubber]?

No, they don't plant them anymore. After he went back, the rubber plants disappeared and the villagers are farming the land and use it for cattle grazing.

[Outsider] Do you have to pay them?

No.

**Do you want to say anything more, like other feelings? You can say that. These words come from you. You can say more.**

They said: *"This is not your land anymore."* He said: *"We pity you so we let you stay. We own everything."*

**You have lived there since the time of your grandparents, isn't that so?**

Yes, we have lived here since our grandparents' age. They said that this does not belong to our parents.



**When did they come?**

They came in 1995. From 1995 to now, it's already 17 years.

**At that time, did only one person come? Or was it group by group?**

Three battalions came at the same time.

[*Outsider*] They came and stayed in [our] houses at the same time.

Yes, they did.

[*Outsider*] We had to leave our village. They stayed in our houses. If we didn't want to stay in our houses anymore, we had to leave our houses. They did it in this way and they built their camp [in the village].

We stayed with the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] in the house for a year. When the summer came, they ordered us to move. Then we had to move.

**Do only Karen live in this area?**

Yes, all are Karen.

[*Outsider*] All villages that the two battalions occupy are Karen villages.

All are Karen.

**What about Kaw la tho?<sup>61</sup>**

No Kaw la thoo.

[*Outsiders*] No Kaw la thoo. Kaw la thoo live near [battalion] #547.

Kaw la ItThoo live in another village.

[*Outsiders*] Only [battalion] #547 occupy the Kaw la thoo village. Here are [battalions] #548 and #549. The two battalions, [battalion] #548 and [battalion] #549, base their two camps inside the village. [*Inaudible*] one or two people is fine.

[*Outsider*] In the village, they built two armies camp. There is no place we can stay. In the past, [battalion] #549 stayed in the [battalion] #548 area.

[*Outsider*] Now, T--- villagers don't have their land even *maw keh tha* [a round seed]<sup>62</sup>. [Battalion] #547 battalion also took T--- villagers land. It reached to the new section.

**How many of your households came and stayed in the monastery compound?**

[*Outsider*] Over 30 people.

<sup>61</sup> *Kaw la thoo*, 'thu' meaning black, is a S'gaw Karen term which is sometimes used to refer to individuals in Myanmar who are perceived to have a darker skin colour. In Kayin State, it is often associated specifically with followers of Islam (Muslims), although this association is sometimes erroneous, and Muslim individuals do not typically self-identify with this term.

<sup>62</sup> *Maw keh tha* is a small seed, the villager in this instance is referring to the amount of land that he has left being comparable to the size of the *maw keh tha* seed.

**Is this households?**

[*Outsider*] Yes, over 30 households.

Some people moved to K---, H--- and D---. There are seven households in the area occupied by [battalion] #549. We live between [battalion] #549 and [battalion] #548.

[*Outsider*] There were about --- or ---or over ---. [censored for security]

[*Outsider*] it is more than ---. It could be --- households. [censored for security]

When they established their battalion presence, our house-building stopped.

**There are over [censored for security] households. What is the population?**

[*Outsider*] There are probably over [censored for security] people including children.

**Don't you have the household list?**

There are household lists.

People come and live there as refugees because they don't have anything.

[*Outsiders*] We really are refugees. Even a small piece of land, we don't have it. There is no place to work on. We can only work on the Bamar [Tatmadaw] land. You work and you have to pay them.

The land where we live now, they said it is their land. The farm where we farm, they said it is their farm. Nothing belongs to us.

**How many years ago did you move to the monastery?**

[*Outsider*] Since the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] came, some of villagers went to live in their farms.

[*Outsider*] It has been 16 to 17 years.

The year when the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] came, we couldn't move because it was the rainy season. We couldn't move so we stayed together with the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers]. We moved and stayed apart from the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] when summer came.

[*Outsider*] We came here in 1996-97. In the past, we moved to the place at the back of the DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army] base, the area occupied by Mya Hkaing. Some people lived here and some people lived there in the past. Then they came together to live here.

[*Outsider*] Some people live in P--- village.

[*Outsider*] The battalions were established on July 28<sup>th</sup> 1995.

**July 28<sup>th</sup>?**

[*Outsider*] Yes.

[*Outsider*] He is the one who keeps the records.

People who live there keep records. But we, we don't keep records.

[*Outsider*] They came on Saturday. They also cleared [a place to build their camp] on Saturday.

Yes, they always give religiously every year on Saturday. I don't know why. Now they will do it again in July. They came in July.

[*Outsider*] The time when they came, we had already planted paddy. We had to go and do *loh ah pay*.<sup>63</sup>

**So you have been staying here for 17 years?**

[*Outsider*] Not 17 years yet. I am the one who came and lived in this monastery compound only 15 years ago. I am the one who built the house first.

This year will be 16 years because we stayed one year together with the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers]. We separated from the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] after one summer.

[*Outsider*] We stayed together with the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] for one year. The next year, we didn't dare to stay with them anymore.

[*Outsider*] We have always faced difficulties since the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] came.

[*Outsider*] You faced with difficulties and I always have to tie my cows every season.<sup>64</sup>

I could not build my house; the planks that I hadn't used yet, they took them all.

[*Outsider*] In all words if we have to say, even the cows, the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] fuck their arses.

Not only the cows' arses. They fuck the pigs as well and the pigs scream "*goo goo*".  
[*Everyone laughs*].

[*Outsider*] You have to say all these things.

I called my husband: "*Husband, the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] are fucking the pig. Do you dare to go and stop them?*" "*Just let them do it,*" he said. "*Hey! Who is fucking the pig?*" I shouted. Then they go back with their backs bent [ashamed]. [*Everyone laughs*]. When your cow howls: "*Baawww*" and your cow disappears they go to the bushes and fuck your cow. Then they release your cow.

**They fuck cows?**

They fuck cows and pigs. [*Everyone laughs*].

[*Outsider*] You have to say everything. They will become animals in their next lives.

<sup>63</sup> *Loh ah pay* is a Myanmar term now commonly used in reference to forced labour, although traditionally referring to voluntary service for temples or the local community, not military or state projects.

<sup>64</sup> The villager is referring here to the fact that the Tatmadaw often use other people's cows as an excuse for taxing the money from local villagers as will be apparent further on in the interview.

One of the girls told me: *"Aunt, your cow has disappeared and did you check their legs and hooves? If the cows' legs are scratched, it is true that the cow was fucked."* They tie the cow's legs. The cows come back after they untie the cows then the cow's legs are scratched. I think, there are no female cows here, they don't fuck in cows in T--- village. That's why Saw O-- Pa said: *"I can't sell my female cow. I will have to see whether it will give birth to a Bamar [human] or a cow."*

[Outsider] Saw E---'s cow was tied last week. So you have to tell everything.

Aung Myint Sein said that the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] came and fucked his cow and his wife was about to shout but he said: *"don't scream."* The Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] will hear. He just watched. His wife told him "Aung Myint Sein, I will shout. He said: *"Don't shout, the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] will know of our presence."* They were trembling in the house. When the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] had gone the next morning, he tied up his cow and said: *"Cow, the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] fucked your arse."* He beat the cow and said: *"The Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] fuck your arse and you don't move."* He said the cow is tame. The cow stays straight when you stroke its belly. I have seen many things. My cow disappeared and I went to ask the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers]. My cow disappeared and I knew that the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers] would fuck my cow. I told the officer: *"Officer, my cow has disappeared. Help me to find the cow. My cow moved towards [battalion] #548."* He said: *"If your cow has disappeared, it is not the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers], it is the Karen."* I told him it is not the Karen. I said: *"Give me one or two of your soldiers. I will go and find it in the bushes. My cow will have been moved to the bushes"*. He said: *"I can't give soldiers to you"*. He said: *"You will find your cow tomorrow"*. I told him: *"It is true that I will see it tomorrow but if my cow is fucked tonight, my cow will die."* He said: *"No one will do this."* The next morning, I called some other villagers and we went to the bushes, two people in each team. Then the cow howled. I went and looked for the cow and I saw the cow's snout in a high position and the butt of the cow between the trees. They fucked the cow until they didn't want to anymore. If you looked around all the grass had been flattened down. I asked my cow: *"Did you get enough fucking tonight?"* [Everyone laughs].

### **I heard they fine you when the cows eat their paddy.**

Now, we have planted paddy. Their cows came and ate our paddy. We went and told them. They said their cows didn't eat [the paddy]. It was the villagers' cows. Now we tie our cows but our cows escape. They capture our cows and then they fine us 20,000 to 30,000 kyats. They don't fence their plantations. But we, we fence our plantations. I tie my cows up but he asked his soldiers to capture my cows. His soldiers can't capture the other cows because the other cows don't have ropes. So they took my cows to their commander. They said my cows ate their plants. They ordered the owner of the cows to go and I had to go. I told him: *"Commander, I tie my cows. It was not my cows that ate your plants. Many cows come."* He told me: *"If your cows didn't eat it, then the soldiers wouldn't have taken your cows."* I told him my cows didn't eat [the paddy]. He said: *"Give me 10,000 kyats."* I told him: *"I can't give it to you. I tie my cows. My cows didn't eat the plants."* He said *"If you don't give it to me, you can't take back your cows."* I didn't take my cows and I left my cows there for two days. My cows were howling and howling and then he asked me to take back the cows. I didn't pay them. For the H--- villagers' cows, they don't give them water for two or three days. They ordered the villagers to come and pay money and take back the cows. The owner has to pay 30,000 or 50,000 kyats, depending on the amount of cows. It happens every summer.

In the previous year, they captured my buffalos.

For my buffalos, this is how much it cost. For my female cows, I had to pay 50,000 kyats and 30,000 kyats for my buffalos. The last time cost me 20,000 kyats. I had to pay three times for my cows and buffalos. None of the T--- villagers were fined by the Bamar [Tatmadaw

soldiers]. Everyone was fined once or twice.

**This happened in their farm that was confiscated by the Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers]?**

Yes, it was in our farm that they confiscated. Sometimes we tie our cows up. Our cows escape. The cows go back to the house for mango. They capture the cows and they say the cows ate their plants. They capture the cows and they demand money. Sometimes they demand money and sometimes they demand bamboo and logs. Villagers have to give it to them. There are many mangoes in our house. The cows go there for mangoes and they capture the cows and they say the cows come and eat their plants. They capture the cows and they demand money. Now they plant *kyet su pin* [jatropa]. We have to buy the seeds. They plant it. If the cows go there, they say the cows destroy their plants. You have to pay them. You have to pay for everything. When your chickens disappear and you go and inform them, they say it is not their soldiers' fault. I told him [the battalion commander]: 'Many of my chickens have disappeared, but you never know anything. Many of my machetes have disappeared, but you don't know anything. Many of my hoes have disappeared, but you don't know. I know some of you who came and took my hoes, but they said they didn't come and take anything. They refused to listen to me. Since [battalion] #549 came, I have lost five hoes and ten machetes. You guys come and eat rice at my home and now over ten baskets of rice have gone. You came and asked me: "*Lend me a bowl of rice.*" How much did I give you? You don't know, and you never paid me. Now they ask for hay as well: "*A mo, give me a little hay*" I told them: "*Why don't you save hay? You have [a] large farm. Why do you take hay?*" Sometimes, they give religiously and they come to steal my wood. They really do this to us. They said they would harm the Karen until there are no more Karen. You will only see Karen in the museum. They do things to us until we can't stay anymore. They said: "*The Karen have no knowledge. They don't have a country. They stay in Myanmar now. They will have to accept what we do.*"

**Who said that?**

Bamar [Tatmadaw soldiers], but we don't know who.

**Was it Bamar [Tatmadaw] soldiers?**

Yes, Bamar [Tatmadaw] soldiers.

**Bamar [Tatmaddaw] soldiers from [battalions] #548 or #549?**

It was [battalion] #549 because we live close to [battalion] #549. There are [censored for security] houses in [the area where battalion] #549 is based. We live between the areas. They said they are kind to us. If not, they will move us away. We told the first battalion who came that this is our place. We will live here. He gave us [the land] and other villagers moved to another place. They moved to places where their relatives live. But we, we refused to leave. We refused but we can't. Then they said that Karen are useless [people]. They have no understanding. One day Karen will be in the museum. We will harm them until there is no more Karen. They said they will make sure there is no Karen.

**Source #24**

<b>Log #</b>	12-109-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Nyaunglebin Interview: Naw A---, July 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Kyaukkayi Township, Nyaunglebin District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Name:** Naw A---  
**Ethnicity:** Karen  
**Religion:** Animist  
**Marital Status:** Married  
**Occupation:** Flat field farming

**How many children do you have?**

I have seven children.

**How old is your oldest child?**

25 years old.

**How old is your youngest child?**

Six years old.

**Regarding your livelihood, do you work smoothly, or does anything disturb you?**

We can't work smoothly in our jobs and we have to deal with problems such as fear, which depresses us in many ways.

**What kinds of things depress you?**

The SPDC<sup>65</sup> [Tatmadaw]; they come to disturb us.

**The SPDC comes to disturb you?**

Yes, we did have [that problem] in the past, but not now. We also wish to be able to work smoothly in the future.

**In the past, did you have to be afraid of anything when you worked?**

Yes, we did.

**What about this year?**

This year, we don't have to be afraid or flee, like in the past.

**What kinds of work do most people in this area do?**

They just farm flat farms and hill farms.

**Have you heard that other countries, the Myanmar government and the KNU [Karen National Union] have a [pilot] project to do in your area?**

<sup>65</sup> In Karen, the Burmese phrases *Na Ah Pa* (SPDC) and *Na Wa Ta* (SLORC) are commonly used to refer to the Burma government or to Burma's state army, the Tatmadaw. Many older Karen villagers who were accustomed to using the phrase *Na Wa Ta* (SLORC) before 1997 continue to use that phrase, even though the SLORC has not officially existed since 1997. Similarly, despite the official dissolution of the SPDC in March 2011, many Karen villagers continue to use the phrase *Na Ah Pa* (SPDC) to refer to the Burmese government or to the Tatmadaw; see: "[Mission Accomplished as SPDC 'dissolved'](#)," *Myanmar Times*, April 4-10<sup>th</sup> 2011.

I haven't heard anything.

**Don't they have any projects that they will do in your area?**

No.

**Have you heard anything about whether they will come to help you and do development [work]?**

I haven't heard anything.

**Have the *kaw la wah* [foreigners from western countries] people or [people from] other countries ever come to your area?**

Yes, they came.

**How many times have they come?**

They came only one time, one or two months ago.

**What things what did you see and what have you heard that they would do? What did they tell you?**

They only said that they would do [help build] peace.

**What happened in your area? Did anyone come to tell you exactly about this activity [project]?**

No one told us.

**When people came to look around, did you see Karen people, *kaw la wah* people or Myanmar people there?**

Yes, they were all there when they came.

**Did they come to your location and your village?**

Yes.

**Did the Myanmar soldiers also come?**

The Myanmar soldiers did not come. There were Karen and *kaw la wah* people.

**How many times did they come to look around?**

They came only that [one] time.

**Whom did they meet when they came?**

They met with the villagers in Muh Hkee village.

**Did they gather only the village heads?**

They gathered all the villagers.



**What did they tell you about?**

They just told us that they would do [help build] peace. They didn't say anything else.

**Did they tell you about any special issues?**

No.

**What was your opinion and how did you feel when they talked to you?**

Because they said that they would do [help make] peace, if it is success, the villagers think that it is good.

**Did the villagers give input regarding the project that people would come to do?**

No.

**Did they [villagers] report what they wanted?**

No.

**Did you participate in the meeting?**

Yes, I participated.

**Did they allow you to share your opinions regarding this project?**

They asked for that [opinions] from the village heads.

**What about you, the villagers? Did they allow you to share your opinions?**

No, they did not allow us.

**Did they ask you, the villagers, during the meeting?**

No, they didn't ask [us] anything.

**What issues did they talk about in the meeting? Will they help you to do something like that?**

They said that they came this time to see the villagers' situation and villagers' location. They also said that, if possible, they would help [us] to be able to live in peace.

**What answer did you give them?**

At that time they just asked rhetorical questions only, so the village head told them that it is good if it becomes a reality.

**So, they didn't ask you anything?**

They didn't ask me anything.

**How do you and the villagers want the work they said that they would help you to do to become [a reality]?**



Regarding the villagers' wants, they said, "*It is good.*"

**Would they gather the villagers to live in the same place?**

Regarding that, they did say so.

**What did they say? Where will the villagers have to go to live? Do the villagers have to live in the same place or [can they] live in two places?**

They said that they would relocate Kheh Der village, but other villages could stay in their own place.

**Did they say to you that they would gather many villages to put in one area?**

No.

**What things do you want to see happen to be a benefit for the villagers?**

As they have planned to make peace, and if it is successful, that will benefit the villagers; for us not to be spread out to other villages, and to be able to live in our own country.

**How will they do this project? Did they already start it?**

They haven't done anything.

**What about the villagers? Have you already planned anything?**

We haven't done anything yet.

**Where will they do this project?**

I don't know the details of their project.

**There is no one to tell you [the details] exactly?**

No.

**Has the Myanmar government said where they will relocate people?**

No.

**Do you want to go to live in a place that they arrange?**

No.

**What will you do if they force you to relocate?**

We will not go, even if they force us. We would live in our own place where we are used to living.

**Do you know in how many villages they will do the project?**

They called all the villages.

**How many villages?**

They did not call all the villages in Kheh Der village tract. They only called the villages that are nearby, such as K'Taw Muh Hkee, Htee Hpoh Hkee and Ler Htaw Loo. They did not call the villages that are far.

**Do you know what they will support?**

I don't know.

**Currently, what are the Myanmar soldiers' activities?**

I don't know.

**Have they ever come to make a relationship with you [villagers]?**

No.

**Have they come to tell you anything?**

No.

**Does the Myanmar government do anything to you, the villagers?**

No.

**Have you gone to them [their camp]?**

I don't know, but I think some people have gone.

**How about you? Have you gone to the Myanmar soldiers' area?**

No.

**Have you heard that they will make identity cards for people?**

I don't know about that.

**Didn't you go along with people when they went to make identity cards?**

I didn't go.

**Did you see people when they made identity cards?**

I didn't see.

**Have you heard that they have planned to provide more identity cards to the villagers?**

I haven't heard about that yet. I only heard from other people.

**Do the villagers who get the ID cards dare to bring them along with them? Has anyone of them [authorities] checked [for them] or made trouble? Have you heard anything?**

I haven't heard anything.

**Does the Myanmar government have any other projects to do in this area?**

I don't know what they will do or not do.

**What is your opinion regarding the ceasefire between the KNU and the Myanmar government?**

I think if the ceasefire is fair, we see it is a good way for our villagers to be able to work and live in our own village peacefully.

**Have you ever gone to the city?**

The last time, I went to visit my older brother this month [July 2012].

**Where does your brother live?**

He lives in Ler Doh [town].

**Did you have to be afraid of anything when you went?**

I didn't have to be afraid of anything.

**Did you see the government army on the way?**

Yes.

**Did they check or ask you anything?**

They didn't ask anything.

**Do they [Myanmar government] support you regarding an education?**

No.

**Do they [Myanmar government] support you [with things] like books?**

No.

**Do they [Myanmar government] support you regarding healthcare?**

They don't support anything.

**Do you want to tell anything else? What are your future plans?**

Our future plans are to be able to live in our own country and live peacefully in the future. We don't want anything to disturb us and we would like to work smoothly.

**We heard that peoples' flat farms are sinking and land is destroyed, did these things happen to you?**

I still have one side left but I could not extend it. I still have almost half left.

**Is it near here?**

Yes, it near here.

**Is there any other place?**

No, there is no other place.

**Are there any groups that will help you to develop your location and extend your land?**

No.

**Regarding the pilot project, have people ever told you that they would help you to develop your lands and repair your farms?**

I don't know about that, because people did not tell me anything.

**Didn't village heads or the pilot project leaders tell you?**

No, they didn't tell me.

**Was your farm destroyed a long time ago?**

It happened two or three years ago.

**Why?**

Because of a landslide.

**Do you want to report anything regarding health or education?**

Education is important. An education in our location is important. Some parents who have to deal with food problems are not able to send their children to school. There are some children who can't go to the school because they suffer from diseases. We want our children to be able to study, but we need medicine for their health as well.

**Have you ever gotten medicine in your area?**

We get medicine from backpack [medics].

**Is it enough for you?**

It is not enough.

**Why?**

We do not know exactly why, sometimes is it because the medicine is late or does not arrive. In our area, we mostly buy it ourself, like if we can't wait until the backpack [medics] come.

**You get it [medical care] sometimes, right?**

Yes, we get it, but it is not enough.

**Are there any people around here who sell medicine?**

We buy it from the shop.

**Is there anything you want to say regarding your future plans?**

No.

**If you don't have anything else, thank you.**

Naw A---, (female, 49), Kyaukkyi Township, Nyaunglebin District (Interviewed in July 2012)

**Source #25**

<b>Log #</b>	12-117-S1
<b>Title</b>	Situation Update   Ta Naw Th'Ree Township, Mergui-Tavoy District (January to July 2012)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Mergui-Tavoy District
<b>Full Text</b>	

The topics of the report:

1. Government military activities
2. The civilian situation in Township areas
3. Livelihood
4. Education
5. Health
6. Information

Myanmar government military activity

There are five areas in T'Naw Th'Ree Township where the government military has been active:

- A. T'keh: The LIB [Light Infantry Battalion]<sup>66</sup> #561 commanding officer is *Da Ma Ka*<sup>67</sup> U Lah Myit Shwe.
- B. Kay [village]: The LIB #582 commanding officer is Battalion Deputy Commander Nay Aung Zaw, who takes responsibility as battalion commander.
- C. M'noh Roh: The IB [Infantry Battalion]<sup>68</sup> #17 commanding officer is Battalion Deputy Commander U Kyaw Thu Win. [There is] one company from LIB #559, and the commanding officer is Captain U To Naing; there are 15 soldiers.
- D. P'wa: IB #562 SOC [Strategic Operations Command],<sup>69</sup> IB #565 SOC.
  - a. *Pa tha sa*<sup>70</sup> in Mee Law Kway is commanded by Saw Day; there are 10 soldiers.
  - b. *Pa tha sa* in P'wa Htee Hta is commanded by Saw Hpoh Tuh; there are 10 soldiers.
- E. Moo K'hpoh- IB #224, the commanding officer is Battalion Commander U Than Aye Naing.

The civilians' situation in the areas in the township

<sup>66</sup> A Tatmadaw Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

<sup>67</sup> *Da Ma Ka* is a Myanmar word for lieutenant colonel.

<sup>68</sup> An Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. They are primarily used for garrison duty but are sometimes used in offensive operations.

<sup>69</sup> Strategic Operations Command; under regional command, three to four battalions and a headquarters, covers an area mostly for defence.

<sup>70</sup> *Pa tha sa* is a Myanmar word for "militia."

There are two types of civilians in Ta Naw Th'Ree Township; they are the civilians living in relocation sites and the civilians living in internally displaced person [IDP] areas.

a. Civilians in Relocation Sites.

During this year, the livelihood problems that the villagers had to deal with [have] decreased a little bit because [their ability to] live, travel and work has become more free, and fear has decreased. Currently, people who own their workplace [farm land] at the river source and in the old village have increasingly returned back to work, and set up additional workplaces. During this year, the civilians do not have to transport rations for the government military, repair the army camps, or porter and [they] do not have to pay money [arbitrary taxes].

b. Civilians in Internally Displaced Person [IDP] Areas.

The civilians in internally displaced person [IDP] areas have become less fearful, a little bit, regarding their livelihoods and living. In the past years, because there were attacks on the IDP areas, the IDPs had to flee to the borderline and to Thailand, so they had to deal with food problems. Because there is change this year, they have gone back to work in their own areas, and the food problems have therefore decreased.

### Livelihoods

Most of the civilians' livelihoods in the villages in Ta Naw Th'Ree Township are:

- a. Farming hill fields, planting paddy, planting fruits and vegetables
- b. General plantation work
- c. Cultivating rubber trees
- d. Cultivating cashews
- e. Farming flat fields
- f. General cultivation work
- g. General retail merchants
- h. Tea merchants
- i. Rice merchants and
- j. General goods trading

### Education

There are two places for education in the area of Ta Naw Th'Ree Township, which are for the civilians in relocation sites and for the civilians in internally displaced person [IDP] areas.

a. The education situation in relocation sites.

Currently, the education situation in the relocation sites has changed a little bit. In the past years, the students from primary school had to enroll with payment. In this year, the enrolment became free, and [students] have to pay only tuition. For the middle school, in the past, [students] had to enroll with payment but had to pay less for the school fee. This year [enrollment] is free but [they] have to pay the school fee twice. There are many children and young people who are not able to attend school because their parents cannot solve their food problem at all. Because, even though the school is free, the school fee is increasing.

Currently, there are still problems for some parents to continue sending their children, who already finished primary school, to school. There are also problems for some parents to continue sending their children, who already finished middle school, because they have to work for their livelihood. But for the students who graduate high school and university, when they apply for jobs with the government, they are not allowed to work in the government, so they have to do hill farming and have to work at a company.

a. The education situation in IDP sites.

In the past years, civilians in IDP sites had school, but because of the government military attacks, the school did not open till the [term] ended. Because there is change this year, the

school has opened again. Currently, there are many children and young people who still cannot access an education and are unable to go to school because the travelling [distance] is far, and food and shelter is not yet enough.

### Health

This year, most of the illnesses which the civilians in Ta Naw Th'ree Township have to deal with are malaria, anaemia and gastric disease. Currently, because there is rain and sunshine, the water changes and it creates measles. Most [cases of] measles that the civilians have to deal with also include diarrhoea and vomiting, measles, *kyaw paw* [pockmark], *kyawya* [chickenpox], running nose and coughing and flatulence. In the past, there was only UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund] that sometimes came to assist with the illnesses, and the patients who were serious had to go to heal in the hospital, but the people who did not have money, some died because they could not heal their illnesses. But, because there is change this year, the KNU [Karen National Union] leaders asked permission from the Myanmar government military leaders to go to heal the illnesses. Because they gave permission, *Kaw Thoo Lei*<sup>71</sup> health care, Backpack [Backpack Health Worker Team], FBR [Free Burma Rangers] and religious medical aid groups treated the patients in Karen and Bamar villages. There is now no death for the civilians who have to suffer illnesses. Currently, there are one or two clinics in the village, because the villagers organised themselves and built them, but there is no medic to treat the patients and no medicine for healing.

### Ceasefire

I have not seen any special or large [amounts] of human rights abuses in Ta Naw Th'Ree Township during this year, like in the past years. Currently, [the Government of Myanmar] signed the [2012 preliminary] ceasefire agreement with ethnic armed groups in Burma; this time is ceasefire.

Regarding the ceasefire, the civilians' opinions and characters are different. Some people see that the permanent peace-building and ceasefire is real, but some people still have worries and they believed that it is not real. Some people told [me] that it is difficult for us to believe or not believe. We would believe it if we see the reality. Currently, we live in the middle [neutrally]. The civilians told [me] that, (1): "*The reason why we do not believe is because we saw in the past there were many periods of ceasefire agreements, but later, fighting happened again,*" or (2): "*The reason why we believe is because in the past we never saw them sign a detailed agreement and publish the news like now.*" The civilians also added: "*Currently, if we see [and speak to] the government military people [Tatmadaw] on the frontline, they really want the ceasefire, and permanent peace-building in the country should be real. They also do not want the war anymore.*"

### Source #26

<b>Log #</b>	12-137-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Doolaya Interview: Saw A---, August 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Doolaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Do you suffer from anything in your location?</b>	
We suffered at times that they [Tatmadaw] ordered us to carry a lot of their things.	

<sup>71</sup> The term *Kaw Thoo Lei* refers to Karen State as demarcated by the Karen National Union (KNU), but the exact meaning and etymology is disputed; see: Jonathan Falla. *True Love and Bartholomew: Rebels on the Burmese Border*, Cambridge University Press: 1991.



**Did they pay you?**

No.

**Have they still ordered things [forced labour] when the fighting stopped [after the ceasefire]?<sup>72</sup>**

They ordered a lot.

**Do you remember on which date they ordered?**

They [Tatmadaw soldiers] order continuously. Whenever they arrive, the villagers have to carry [things] for them. You don't dare to ride the tractor anymore. They put the things [in the tractor], even if it was not arranged. They [the villagers] have to carry both their own stuff and their [stuff]. Whenever their [Tatmadaw soldiers] trucks return [to the camp], the four or five trucks are filled with them. Also, when they return [to their headquarter] they bring their old stuff [rations] with them and when they came back [from the headquarter] they bring new stuff [rations].

**What things do they order [the villagers] to carry? Rice?**

They ordered us to carry poultry and things that they took from other people. I never saw them carrying rice. They already sent during in the summer time. If we compare the times that they go and return, they come here more often than they go back [to their headquarter]. We stay and the work is uncomfortable. We have to build two houses [for safety reasons and being able to flee]; one in Thailand and one in Myanmar. All villagers feel uncomfortable and they all build two houses on the borderline such as in Maw Keh Hter, Wah May Hta, Thay Baw Boh, Lay Ghaw and Bler Doh.

**Do you know which armed groups ordered these things?**

I don't know because we can't speak Burmese. We just watched them when they came. They came with a lot [of soldiers] and they carried very good weapons. They took all the old weapons when they return to their headquarters and brought new weapons. They brought a lot of bullets and weapons.

**How many people [villagers] did they order at once?**

<sup>72</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma government in Hpa-an, Karen State. Negotiators from the two parties met for a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of talks on April 4<sup>th</sup>, where they signed a more detailed preliminary ceasefire plan, and held a 3<sup>rd</sup> round of negotiations on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2012; see "[Preliminary Ceasefire Talks](#)," *Karen National Union*, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2012; "[KNU Delegations Departs for the Third Round Negotiation of Ceasefire with the Burmese Government](#)," *Karen National Union*, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. In 2013, the ceasefire process became a nationwide effort. On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 17 ethnic armed groups signed a joint proposal for a nationwide ceasefire in Laiza, Kachin State; see "[Burma's armed ethnic groups sign nation-wide ceasefire pledge in Laiza](#)," *Kachin News*, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. Two days later in Myitkyina, Kachin State, the EAGs presented their proposal to a Burma government delegation, which then presented its own plan. The Government rejected the EAG's proposal for a multi-ethnic federal army, the EAGs requested more time to review, and both sides agreed to meet again; see "[Myanmar Peace Talks Fail to Nail Down Cease-Fire Agreement](#)," *Radio Free Asia*, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. On January 25<sup>th</sup> 2014, in Law Khee Lar, Karen State, 17 ethnic armed groups agreed to an updated proposal to be presented to the Burma government in Hpa-an in February 2014; see "[Ethnic armed groups sign 11-point nationwide ceasefire draft](#)," *Myanmar Freedom Daily*, January 26<sup>th</sup> 2014. For more information on the ceasefire and how it has affected local villagers, see "[Safeguarding human rights in a post-ceasefire eastern Burma](#)," KHRG, January 2012 and "[Steps towards peace: Local participation in the Karen ceasefire process](#)," KHRG, November 2012.



People had to send them four to five tractors at once to carry their equipment.

**Did you [villagers] have to send them [the tractors] very far?**

The villagers sent them village-by-village because they went to all villages. For example, when they arrive in Maw Keh Hter, the villagers [from Maw Keh Hter village] then carried the rations to Waw Lay and the villagers from Waw Lay carry them [further]. They order every village [to transport their rations] when they arrive.

**Do they always order people when they travel and go back?**

They do order people all the time. There is no time that they don't order people. They never carry their things by themselves. Mostly, they order people.

**How do you consider this peacetime? Is the situation stable or not?**

I work far away from my village [for safety reasons]. I feel uncomfortable. Even though people say there is peace, I feel uncomfortable.

**Do you have to suffer anything else? If so, you can say it.**

Yes, I have to suffer a lot so I got a heart disease.

**Because of what?**

Because of the yellow scarves<sup>73</sup> [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA)].<sup>74</sup>

**Do you suffer from the KNU [Karen National Union]?**

I had to suffer once when they did it [something] to me.

**You can tell me the story, it is okay.**

Really? They [KNU] robbed us and took our necklace and our money. At that time, they took my Myanmar money [worth] 500,000 kyat (US \$506.58),<sup>75</sup> [my] Thai money [worth] 900 baht (US \$28.02)<sup>76</sup> and one pair of necklaces. I wear the necklace around my neck. If we would know that people would do that to us [robbing], we would not dare to wear [them]. They would drag it [from our necks], but I hurried to take them off. I told them, *"You don't need to drag it off. I will give it to you."*

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<sup>73</sup> "Yellow Scarves" is a term commonly used by villagers to denote the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), in reference to the yellow scarves that form part of their uniform.

<sup>74</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "Inside the DKBA," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.

<sup>75</sup> As of January 13<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>76</sup> As of March 18<sup>th</sup> 2014, all conversion estimates for the Baht in this report are based on the official market rate of 32.16 baht to US \$1.

**When did that happen?**

When I lived in Maw Keh Hter [village]. It is many years ago. I am afraid of every side. I am afraid of the yellow scarves, I am afraid of the Kawthoolei [the KNU] and I am afraid of the Burmese [Tatmadaw].

**Has a situation like that [the robbery] happened in 2012?**

No.

**What about the yellow scarves?**

No.

**What about the Burmese [Tatmadaw]?**

I can't trust the Burmese.

**Why?**

They [Tatmadaw soldiers] walked over and stepped on our plants, our green beans fields. All our plants got damaged. They also ate them. If they sit and rest, why don't they sit and rest at other places? Now they are sitting at our plantations. The green beans were ready to harvest, so they [Tatmadaw soldiers] cracked a lot. They sat in many places and it [the plants] got damaged a lot. It was the same for villagers in Thay Baw Boh. It wasn't only me. The owners of the plantations where they went complained a lot. It would be better if they would move between camps a straight away. But they moved everywhere and they damaged a lot. We don't dare to tell them because they have guns. We just watch them.

**Would they [Tatmadaw soldiers] stop if you told them?**

No, we can't tell them. We don't dare to tell them when they eat [our food]. We don't dare to tell them when they go [on our plantations].

**Did this happen a few months ago?**

No. They followed the vehicle road a few months ago, but we had to send [transport] them [the Tatmadaw's rations].

**Is it accepted if villagers are not available to help them?**

People have to go. They [Tatmadaw soldiers] order until they get [what they order]. People have to transport rations [by tractors from] place-by-place. When they arrive in one village, the villagers from that village have to further transport [the Tatmadaw's rations] to the next village.

**Can't you tell them that you are not available or suggest another day?**

No, we can't. Even if we are not available, we have to make ourselves available.

**Does it happen that they [Tatmadaw soldiers] take villagers' chickens when they travel?**

You can't trust the Burmese. They just take anything without a prior notice. If people trust them, they can do so, but I'll never trust [them].

**Have other people [villagers] suffered the same?**

They [the villagers] all suffer because people are afraid and don't dare to tell them [Tatmadaw soldiers].

**Do they [Tatmadaw soldiers] take things from villagers' houses?**

We can't trust them if the owners are not at home. When people see the Burmese [Tatmadaw], they quickly go back to their houses. If they are careless and if the Burmese enter their houses, things will definitely be gone.

**So you still can't live peacefully here?**

No, it is not peaceful. You can't say it is peace. As I told you, we have to live in two houses; one in Thailand and one in Myanmar. You have to work from distance because you can't eat rice [that grows on the plantation in Myanmar] when you stay in Thailand. You have to build two houses. Currently, they say that the situation is better, so we went back to work [in Myanmar]. We can't trust the situation, no one does. All people [have to] build two houses.

**Do they [Tatmadaw soldiers] take good care of you and support you? For example: do they provide medicines if you're sick?**

No. I have never seen that. I don't know whether that happened to other people or not.

**Do they help you if you have a problem?**

No way. Don't wish that they take care of you. They do [only] demand [things] from you.

**So the villagers are still afraid?**

The villagers are afraid. The situation is temporarily better. In their mind they all see that the situation is temporary better, [but] it is not permanent. The villagers don't trust it [the situation]. If the Burmese come, they [villagers] flee to Thailand. We prepared and built one small house for each household in Thailand. They haven't retreated or decreased the [amount of] soldiers, so we can't trust them. We can trust them if they all leave. We can't trust them because, even if they left, they would eventually come back.

**I don't know about that. What have you seen?**

What I have seen is that they go away and come back. I don't trust them.

**You don't know the battalion number?**

I don't know [it] because I can't speak any Burmese. Since we fled, we are afraid. When we fled, the Burmese [the Tatmadaw] took all of our stuff. They took many people's housewalls and sold it in town. They dismantled people's houses.

**How many years ago did that happen?**

It was only this summer that they did not dismantle the houses because the situation has gotten better. When they came last year, they dismantled people's housewalls, which they sold in Myawaddy [Town].

**They didn't ask the owners when they dismantled the houses, right?**

They didn't ask. They just dismantled it.

**Did it happen after the ceasefire?**

No, they do not dare to do that.

**So there is only forced labour [since the ceasefire]?**

Yes, there is only forced labour.

**What else do you suffer from since the ceasefire?**

We haven't dare to start working properly again, because we went back [to the village] too early [and the situation was not secure]. We don't have any money. It is very bad.

**What about food? Do you have enough to eat?**

We do not have enough to eat, but we borrow from our siblings.

**What do you do for your livelihood?**

I am working on the corn [plantations]. We lose [the corn] all the time because we have to flee all the time. Last year, we did not dare to go back to collect the corn, even though the corn was ready to get collected. When we dared to go back it was raining. I can't repay my debt. I'm so sad. If I don't work I can't eat.

**What about the other people?**

Many of them lost [their livelihood]. This year, when the situation was better, we didn't have sufficient food from the work [the harvest]. Most of it [the food] was lost. If the situation is really good [safe], we have sufficient food. The year that the Myanmar soldiers came, we dared not to go back [to the village] and work. We just hired people from here. We asked the villagers who dared to go back to work for us because we didn't dare to go back to harvest the corn. When we dared to go back to harvest [the corn], it was raining again. You have to buy everything [if you want] to eat. But you can't eat if you don't have money.

**Do many people suffer like this?**

Currently, many people suffer. Around Lay Ghaw [village], many people do not have sufficient food because people [who have money] don't hire daily wageworkers. They have to look after one another with little support.

**That sounds very bad.**

Yes, it is very bad. Also the rice becomes expensive. In our area, one big tin of rice<sup>77</sup> is worth 300 baht (US \$9.34). It is Thai rice and costs 300 baht.

**How much do they pay people for daily wage work?**

They hire [and pay them for] 120 baht (US \$3.74) per day. The price of all the goods has

<sup>77</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg. or 23.04 lb. of paddy, and 16 kg. or 35.2 lb. of milled rice.

increased. Currently, we are afraid that we can't buy anything for 100 bath (US \$3.11). One kilo of pork is worth 130 baht (US \$4.05) to 140 baht (US \$4.36).

**So you can't feed anyone?**

I do not have any [animals] to breed, because we can't breed any animals on either [the Thai or Myanmar] side. You can't breed animals when you go back to Thailand. You can go back to Myanmar, but you don't have a house yet. We stay poor and repair it [the house] ourselves. I have to live in very poor conditions. When we fled, we could not bring anything like clothes or jackets. Also, my house was [located] next to the [military] operation [ground] so we didn't have time. When I ran back to pick up my daughter-in-law, the heavy weapons were continuously falling. In my mind, I had the feeling that the Burmese would arrest me, so I ran away. I didn't bring anything. When I ran, I had to run along the road and I ran very far. I left my pigs, chickens and everything else.

**Did you flee last year?**

Yes, I couldn't take anything. Even though I locked [the house], the Burmese destroyed it and took everything that was inside. They also wanted to dismantle the house, but people who dared, stayed [in her house] for a while.

**Did you get any of your stuff back when you returned to your home?**

Nothing. I lost everything. If I had lived quite far from the Burmese [the Tatmadaw's camp], I could have taken some [of the stuff], but I was very close to the Burmese [camp].

**How close were you [to the Tatmadaw camp]?**

Very close, because we lived next to the operation [ground]. When I ran back to pick up my daughter-in-law, the Burmese carried heavy weapons and went up to the Htee Nya Lee River. When I returned to my house, the Burmese shelled their heavy weapons within a few minutes. The heavy weapons were continuously falling. We could not directly run to the Waw Lay [village]. We had to run around the road and hide in the bushes. I also ran with my two or three grandchildren and some clothes and blankets. Right now, I am in a very bad situation. I don't have any money but I wouldn't have worried if I didn't have to flee. I could not take any pots or spoons. I left it all. Some people here could take some of their pots and spoons, but we could not take anything when we fled. Afterwards, we could only eat rice [that lasted] for two or three months. After two or three months, our rice had finished and other people didn't share their food with us.

**What did you do about that?**

I couldn't do anything.

**Were there many people when you fled?**

Yes, there were many people when we fled.

**What about the current situation? Are there many people who return [to their old village]?**

Yes, many people return [to their old village]. They go back and do [work on] hill fields. We can't eat if we don't do hill fieldwork, because noone provides us with food. We also never had a mosquito net. We could only eat rice. What I know is that I have enough eat rice for a few months, maybe for two or three months. After that, I don't have anything left. In my mind,

the situation is not better yet. Everyone worries that there will be another conflict in the next three or four years. This year, there was flooding and people's corn plantations were destroyed. For some of them, the entire corn plantations were destroyed. When we work on the corn plantation, we borrow money from our boss and we eat our bosses' rice. When it was time to pay [the boss] back, it [the money] was all gone. Everyone does the same. If we lose [a harvest], we are in debt. I don't know what happened to mine, so I had to plant corn four times. Many people complain that they have to plant it [the corn] three or four times. I don't know what to do.

**Do you have many troubles?**

Many troubles. Some people who do not have food go to the people who can work, eat enough, and later work for them. You would be starving and you would die if you wouldn't act like that.

**Do you have anything else [to say]?**

I can't tell any other difficulties.

**I will keep everything you said in confidence.**

I'm scared.

**I know you are scared. Thank you so much for what you told me.**

Saw A---, (male, 48), Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District  
(Interviewed in August 2012)

**Source #27**

<b>Log #</b>	12-138-S1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Situation Update: Kya In Seik Kyi Township, September 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in September 2012 <a href="http://khrq.org/2013/06/12-138-s1/dooplaya-situation-update-kya-seik-kyi-township-september-2012">http://khrq.org/2013/06/12-138-s1/dooplaya-situation-update-kya-seik-kyi-township-september-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Kyainseikkyi Township, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Armed Groups situation</b>	
In SPDC [Tatmadaw] <sup>78</sup> LIB [Light Infantry Battalion] #583, Commander of the second column is Min Naing; we do not know the Official Commander's name and they are in Thee Thah Baw. LIB #583; their Company Commander is Myo Lwin and Camp Commander is Thet Paing Ko. IB [Infantry Battalion] #283 are [based] in Kwee Lon Daing and this information is true. In Ye Tha Lauk [village], the IB #283 Camp Commander is Zaw Lin Htun, and for LIB	

<sup>78</sup> In Karen, the Burmese phrases Na Ah Pa (SPDC) and Na Wa Ta (SLORC) are commonly used to refer to the Burmese government or to Burma's state army, the Tatmadaw. Many older Karen villagers who were accustomed to using the phrase Na Wa Ta (SLORC) before 1997 continue to use that phrase, even though the SLORC has not officially existed since 1997. Similarly, despite the official dissolution of the SPDC in March 2011, many Karen villagers continue to use the phrase Na Ah Pa (SPDC) to refer to the Burmese government or to the Tatmadaw; see: "Mission Accomplished as SPDC 'dissolved'," Myanmar Times, April 4-10th 2011. The term Na Ah Pawas used by the villager who wrote this conducted this interview and interviewee and "SPDC" is therefore retained in the translation of this interview.



#583, the Company Commander is Aung Zaw Moe. In Poe Si Muh, the Camp Commander is the Battalion Commander Myo Myint Kyaw from IB #283, but we do not know the columns' name. This information was recorded on August 30<sup>th</sup> 2012. According to the information that we collected on August 19<sup>th</sup> 2012, DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army]<sup>79</sup> their yellow flag at Lay Law Hsaw on the borderline between Thailand and Burma. In Kyauk Hta, the Camp Commander is Adjutant Tin Myint Mon from LIB #343, MOC [Military Operations Command] #8 and the Operations Commander of MOC #19 in Kyeik Don is Aung Myo. There, the BGF [Border Guard Force]<sup>80</sup> commander is Eh Mwee. On September 5<sup>th</sup> 2012, MOC #19 branched into LIB #583 and LIB #586 and the total number of soldiers is over 290 heading to the borders. Currently, 6<sup>th</sup> brigade is controlled by LID [Light Infantry Division] #44. IB #283 and LIB #583 are based in Mae K'Ti camp [which is called] *Ler Kwa Soh* in Karen. LIB #586, led by Commander Maung Maung Lwin, with over 30 soldiers, came to ask for tractors from the village head in D--- for sending food and salary of soldiers in Kyeik Don Area, but they [LIB #586] did give [the owners] the cost [payment] for hiring the tractors. They finished [sending] soldiers' salary on September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012. They usually send salary once a month, but they send food at different times. This information is given by the village head. Most of the Tatmadaw<sup>81</sup> soldiers do not wear uniforms while they are going around. They usually come to buy chicken and BEc (alcohol) in D--- village. KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] Battalion #17, controls Per Kler to Win Lon [villages], but in Kya In, most villagers are [on] the KNU side, and they only say good things about KNU. KNLA Battalion #18, controls T' Moh Theh to Kya In Seik Kyi [villages]. KNLA soldiers are friendly with the villagers and the villagers also rely on the KNLA.

### **Villagers' situation**

On September 13<sup>th</sup> 2012, in T--- [village] some villagers' [had to use their] carts to carry materials such as logs and bamboo for building a bridge in Kyeik Don [Town]. Moreover, a government medic from W--- named J---, whose husband's name is R---, charged a higher cost for her treatment of most sicknesses, especially for malaria tests. The patients have to pay 2,000 kyat (US \$2.13)<sup>82</sup> for blood tests, but some villagers from the other villages said that sometimes they have to pay over 7,000 kyat (US \$7.54), including the cost of medicines. However, antibiotics, pre-protections [vaccines] for kids and newborn babies are free. In Kya In, SPDC soldiers from IB #283 of MOC #19 commanded by Moe Myint Kyaw came to find chickens in the village, but when they did not see the owner, they shot a chicken with a catapult and then brought it back to their camp without paying the cost for the chicken. This happened in rainy season and also happens sometimes in the year. Similarly,

<sup>79</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the SPDC government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "Inside the DKBA," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. The DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" in April 2012 to reflect its secularity.

<sup>80</sup> 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 see Border Guard transformation footnote above.

<sup>81</sup> The Tatmadaw is the Burmese state military.

<sup>82</sup> As of June 6<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 940 kyat to the US \$1.

in under [government] control areas, MOC #19, LIB #586 and IB #283 usually cross V--- and a villager has to follow with them to be a guide, and the villagers are fed-up with being guides, regardless of if they are paid or not. At the same time, D--- [village] also usually has to do the same things. However, for the villagers there, they are very friendly with the Tatmadaw, so they do not have a big problem with Tatmadaw. Sometimes, they are asked for three or five tractors to carry Tatmadaw [soldiers] to the place where they [soldiers] have to go, but the tractors' owners were paid 30,000 (US \$31.91) to 35,000 kyat (US \$37.23).

Moreover, villagers in E--- pan gold beside the small stream with hand-made trays and, in two or three days, some villagers can get approximately 18 grams of gold. Anyway, villagers are allowed to do their own business because they do not use any huge machines, which can make the stream unclean and muddy. The villagers' main works are betel nut plantation, paddy farming and hill farming. Wonderfully, the villagers rely on herbal medicine or traditional doctors. There are a lot of eye aches, some dengue, boils or furuncles, and coughing, but there are no government clinics in Mih Nar Ah. Moreover, most women have a special disease that causes itching in the private part of their body [vagina], as there was too much white fluid [vagina discharge] released from inside of lower part of their bodies as white menstruation. In Kwee K'Neh Ghaw, most women are in bad health condition, and they mostly have malaria, coughing, stomach ache and have a lot of back pain when they are pregnant. There are no medics or nurses in the village, so they usually have to go to X--- (T---) to get treatment. However, sometimes medics (likely M---) from Nu Poe [Refugee Camp] come to treat the villagers. The health conditions of the kids from Toh Hkee are bad, such as they have ear infections and sickness and they just rely on the very experienced traditional medics in that village. There are malaria diseases in G---, and they have to go to get treatment in Seik Kyi for emergency cases; the villagers said that sometimes the treatment costs 300,000 kyat (US \$319.15) and sometimes 100,000 kyat (US \$106.38), and it is also depends on the patients' conditions. It will cost more when the patients have a serious health condition. However, near G---, there was a small government clinic and there is only one medic who gives a health service. The villagers from most of the villages near the town usually cultivate rubber plantations, betel nut plantations, lime plantations, citron plantations and paddy farms.

On September 24<sup>th</sup> 2012, the government made the villagers buy licenses for their motorbikes in Kya In Seik Kyi Township; the cost of licenses has decreased now.

Nevertheless, these days, the villagers do not have incomes yet, as their rubber and betel nut are not ready to sell, so most villagers cannot afford this amount of money. Motorbikes owners with bikes from [made] 1996 to 1998 have to pay over 40,000 kyat (US \$42.55); from 2000 to 2005, owners have to pay over 50,000 kyat (US \$53.19); motorbikes from 2006, owners have to pay over 70,000 kyat (US \$74.47); [motorbikes from] 2007 to 2010, owners have to pay exactly 98,350 kyat (US \$104.63); from 2011, owners have to pay 140,000 kyat (US \$148.94); and motorbikes from 2012, owners have to pay over 140,000 kyat for motorbike licenses. The villagers said that if it is possible, they want the date [for making licenses] to be changed to December.

Unfortunately, most of the villages only have lower education [establishments] such as Primary schools, but some villages such as V--- [village] have nearly to middle school [level], till 7<sup>th</sup> standard, in this [school] 203 students study until 5<sup>th</sup> standard. The school system is not dependent on the number of children in the village, but it depends on whether the government supports it, and the villagers' struggle to get support from different groups and organizations. The village head from V--- wants to promote their village school to middle school for the children who finished 7<sup>th</sup> standard to be able to continue their next level of education, because they do not want their children to go to study in Seik Kyi. However, most of the village heads and villagers want a higher level of schooling. V--- has a nursery school, which is supported by KWO [Karen Women's Organisation] and H--- School is supported by



KSNG [Karen Student Networking Group]. In Kya In, it has two parts. Ka Rah Nih has a primary school and Kya In has a middle school and in the middle school, there are 200 students. However, Ta Kah Klo has the high school where the government pays a higher salary: 120,000 kyat (US \$127.66) for schoolteacher and 200,000 kyat (US \$212.77) for headmaster [per month]. Some people said that they want to be school teachers as the salary is higher, which is not like in the past. Most of the schools in 6th brigade get support from both sides: the Burmese government and KNU.

### Development situation

The villagers complained and worry a lot about the development [projects] because development projects, which are done by private companies, can cause the villagers to have conflicts with each other. In Kya In, Hkin Zaw bought a large [area of] land and then his crews planted a lot of rubber there. The problem is that his crew did not leave any space for a small walking road. In fact, Kya In village has a rule that said that the villagers could not sell their land to outsiders, so now they are still solving this problem. Hkin Zaw also did antimony mining in P--- and his company is called Thu Wana Myay Zi Lwar That Tuh Too Paw Yay co. Ltd. The biggest mine is [led by] Khin Maung and [he] works with Chinese crews and experts. There are five mining places in P--- in total, and the other three are small and private but these three only use hand tools to dig the ground and find the antimony. Antimony grade one is the best and it can be sold for over 120,000 kyat (US \$127.66) per ton. All the projects' taxes are paid to KNU. The two biggest companies like Khin Maung's and Khin Zaw's companies gave 200,000 kyat (US \$212.77) to the village school and 250 water pipes to the villagers. The mining not only affects P---, but also affects R--- because R--- is located along the same river that P--- is. The companies promise that they will dig wells for R--- [villagers]. Mining [projects] in P--- have been going on for four years already, but there is still a lot of antimony there. Because of mining, the goods and especially meat, such as pork and chicken prices have increased, especially chicken; 1.6 kilo costs between 7,000 kyat (US \$7.45) and 8,000 kyat (US \$8.51), but the normal price is only 4,000 kyat (US \$4.70). Therefore, the villagers there can no longer afford to have a chicken curry for a meal. Moreover, there is a small company called San Mya Yadanar that does antimony mining in between D---, G--- and S---. The company found antimony grade 5 there, but they are just testing the materials, and that company got permission from the KNU. There are two or three more mining [projects] in Kya In Seik Kyi Township and they are huge.

### Conclusion

Activities from both sides of the military groups did not commit violent acts against each other, but sometimes their activities can affect the villagers. Villagers faced social violence; forced labour, low [insufficient] education systems, and insufficient healthcare facilities. However, the village has good business with betel nut plantations, which is starting [to be harvested] now; lime plantation which is nearly finished [harvesting], citron garden that is also nearly finished, paddy farms that are now starting to bloom, and finally the rubber businesses which are popular because they can earn more income. Development projects are everywhere in Kya In Seik Kyi Township, especially the antimony mines, which are the most common [projects] and there is still a lot [of antimony] there.

Situation Update written by a community member, Kyainseikkyi Township, Dooplaya District,  
(Received in September 2012)

### Source #28

Log #	12-140-S1
Title	Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, November 2011 to July 2012

<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in April 2013 <a href="http://khrq.org/2013/04/12-140-s1/papun-situation-update-bu-tho-township-november-2011-july-2012">http://khrq.org/2013/04/12-140-s1/papun-situation-update-bu-tho-township-november-2011-july-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun Distict
<b>Full Text</b>	<p>As far as I know, the problems from abuses started happening on July 6<sup>th</sup> 2012, and we followed up on this in order to get more information; it took 17 days, so it [the abuses] happened until July 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012.</p> <p>The abuses happened in: Pgheh Kay village [Myin Ta Pyin Lay], Meh P'Ree village, Meh K'Naw village [Hatgyi village], Bu Wah Kwee village and Thaw Hkeh Hta village, which are in Kyaw Pah village tract, Bu Tho Township, Papun District.</p> <p>The perpetrators who caused the abuses are NPD (Nay Pyi Taw) government army [Tatmadaw]; NPD's BGF [Border Guard Force]<sup>83</sup> and the Karen National Union's (KNU) Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA).</p> <p>The abuses that happened are: the NPD government army Light Infantry Battalion [LIB] #212 Major Thi Ha and his soldiers threatened villagers from Thaw Hkeh Htah village, Bu Wah Kwee village and Kwee Neh village. The NPD government army BGF issued orders for forced labour to Meh P'Ree villagers and Meh K'Naw villagers. The Karen National Liberation Army Major Saw Hsa Yu Moo, Company #4, Company 2<sup>nd</sup>-in-command, threatened the villagers in Meh Mweh Hta village [Daung Meh village] while they were travelling.</p> <p>The objectives are also different between each group of perpetrators, who caused the different problems. For LIB #212, they usually want to have influence over the villagers; use a dictatorial governing system on the villagers; and cause the problems for the villagers. For the NPD government army's BGF, they do not have any knowledge regarding politics, so they do not know whether their work is correct or incorrect, and they abuse human rights without realizing it. For the KNLA, they want to show their power in front of the villagers because they can stay more openly now-a-days, so they want to show their power and cause the problems, as we mentioned before.</p> <p>As I mentioned above, the first [of the] problems that were caused, is that the NPD government army threatened the villagers. The second problem is the BGF ordered forced labour from the villagers, and the last one is the KNLA threatening the villagers. These problems are the problems that recently occurred.</p> <p>The details of the problems that are occurring are, on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2011, Thein Sein's government army [Tatmadaw] LIB #212, lead by Major Thi Ha, based in K'Ter Tee [K'Taing Tee], came to T--- village. As soon as they arrived, they ordered the village heads to go and meet with them. The village heads are T--- village head, Ch--- village head and M--- village head.</p> <p>When the village heads arrived, they [Tatmadaw] threatened the village heads [by saying]:</p>

<sup>83</sup> Border Guard 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. Border Guard 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 see Border Guard transformation footnote above.

*“During the time when we are in your area, each of the villagers and you have to go back and stay in your home, which is in the village. You are not allowed to go and stay in your hill field or flat field. You are not allowed to go anywhere. If you travel in the forest and the NPD soldiers see you and shoot at you, I won’t take responsibility for that. If they see you in the forest, really, they will shoot at you”.* Major Thi Ha and his soldiers stayed in T--- village for three days. During those three days, the villagers from M--- village, T--- village and Ch--- village could not travel anywhere. They also could not work and they faced so many problems.

The second problem is BGF Battalion #1013 and #1014<sup>84</sup> ordered forced labour from the villagers. This problem began on May 25<sup>th</sup> 2012. On May 25<sup>th</sup> 2012, the NPD government army BGF Battalion #1013, Major Saw Maung Soe and his soldiers, from K’Ter Tee army camp, came to the BGF army camp in Th’Ree Hta and built their new army camp. In order to build their new camp, they ordered 1,000 single grass thatches from the Y--- village head, and the Y--- village head had to collect [them] from the villagers.

Meh K’Naw villagers do not have as many single grass thatches as they were ordered [to provide], but in fear, they sent 900 single grass thatches to the BGF army camp in Th’Ree Hta on May 30<sup>th</sup> 2012. The BGF army camp in Th’Ree Hta village is located in Kyaw Pah village tract, Bu Tho Township, Papun district. Other than that, BGF #1013, which is lead by Major Hla Kyaing’s subordinate, Major Maung Soe and his soldiers, came and stayed at Th’Ree Hta village and ordered two porters from Meh K’Naw village and Kyaw Pah village to porter their rice pots and bullets from village to village; the distance between each village is one day for walking.

Not only BGF #1013’s group, but also BGF #1014’s Battalion Commander Saw Maung Chit’s soldier, Major Saw Nyut Thein, and his soldiers, came and stayed in Meh Th’Ree village. According to the village head, Saw A---, it has been two months since Saw Nyunt Thein and his soldiers came and stayed there. The BGF [Battalion] #1014 always stays in the village. The distance between Meh K’Naw village and Meh Th’Ree village is only an hour.

Since I could not go inside Meh Th’Ree village, I asked for help from Y--- village head and the village head requested a villager to go to Meh Th’Ree village. The village head ordered the villager to go and call the village head from Meh Th’Ree to come and meet with me. The villager who was ordered [to go] by the Y---village head is a villager of Y---, Saw Ht---, who is 23-years-old; it took him almost a day to go to Meh Th’Ree village, and he came back at 3:00 in the evening. None of the village heads from Meh Th’Ree came and met with me.

When I asked Saw Ht--- why none of the village heads had come to see me, he replied that: *“There are four village heads in Meh P’Ree village and none of them were available to come and meet with you because BGF #1014, led by Saw Nyunt Thein, asked them to go and stay with them. Some village heads had to porter while some other village heads were cooking, cutting fire wood and carrying water”.* Saw Ht--- told me about that on July 7<sup>th</sup> 2012. Not only the village heads have to go and stay with them, but two of Meh Th’Ree villagers also have to go and stay with them every day.

If they [BGF soldiers] are travelling, they [Meh Th’Ree villagers] will have to carry the bullets

<sup>84</sup> For additional KHRG reports discussing abuses perpetrated by BGF #1014, see: “Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, August to September 2012,” KHRG, April 2013; “Border Guard #1014 demands for labour and goods in Papun District, May 2012,” KHRG, March, 2013; “Incident Report: Looting in Papun District #1, May 2012,” KHRG, March 2013; “Incident Report: Looting in Papun District #2, May 2012,” KHRG, March 2013; “Incident Report: Forced Labour in Papun District #1, May 2012,” KHRG, March 2013. Further reports detailing abuses perpetrated by BGF #1014 are available on the KHRG website.

and the rice pots for them, from village to village, and it will take at least one day. These problems are the problems that are caused by Thein Sein's government's army and the BGF.

The last problem is the problem that is caused by the mother army [KNLA]. On July 13<sup>th</sup> 2012, Bu Tho Township's leader Saw Pah Hku called me and I went to see him at H--- village. I met with him, the [Bu Tho] Township leader in H---, [at] *Tharamu*<sup>85</sup> Naw S---'s house on July 13<sup>th</sup> 2012. But suddenly, Battalion #102, Company (4), Company 2<sup>nd</sup>-in-command, [Major] Saw Hsa Yu Moo, came in front of us [the township leader and the community member] and took out his gun and shot continuously in front of *Tharamu*'s house. He shot the gun ten times.

A day after, on July 14<sup>th</sup> 2012, Major Saw Hsa Yu Moo came and drank beer at H--- village until he got drunk and when he got drunk, he started shooting the gun in the village again. After shooting the gun, they [Major Saw Hsa Yu Moo and his KNLA soldiers] got on the boat and left to the source of the Pweh Loh Kloh [river]. When they arrived by the boat stop of Pwa See Hta, they drank beer again in the beer shop and one of Major Hsa Yu Moo's soldiers, Saw Kyaw Say, shot the gun again. He shot it two times. When the mother army's [KNLA's] soldiers went around and shot the gun, the villagers were seriously threatened. Not only NPD soldiers threatened the villagers, but also the mother army did so, so the villagers had a difficult time in their lives.

Not only these problems were caused, but the movement of the villagers was also restricted. They could not travel out of the village so much. This is because there are always landmines outside of Meh Th'Ree village and Meh K'Naw village. For example, on September 15<sup>th</sup> 2011, one of Saw D---'s cows stepped on a landmine and died. A buffalo also stepped on a landmine in the western part of Y--- village.

On October 12<sup>th</sup> 2011, Y--- villager Saw B---'s buffalo went to the western part of Y--- and stepped on a landmine and died as well. By looking at that, we can assume that there are still landmines under the ground. But we do not know whether they are the KNLA's landmines or the BGF's landmines.

After the Karen National Union (KNU) arranged the ceasefire process, we thought that the villagers' lives would be a little easier, but if we look at the NPD army threatening the villagers, the BGF ordering forced labour to the villagers and the mother army going around and threatening the villagers, we will know that the villagers' lives are worse than before the ceasefire talk.

Thein Sein's government and the mother organization leaders held the ceasefire talk in order to stop the fighting, but until now, we still cannot live confidently without fear. It is not possible that the threatening of the villagers, the forced labour of the villagers and the landmines problems will disappear easily even after the ceasefire.

Situation Update written by a community member, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District,  
(Received in November 2012)

#### Source #29<sup>86</sup>

Log #	12-145-D1
Title	Woman raped and killed in Pa'an District, October 2012

<sup>85</sup> *Tharamu* is a Karen term used for a female teacher, or nurse or any person to whom the speaker wishes to show respect especially to the women.

<sup>86</sup> This source document has been logged under both Source #29 and #30 due to a logging error. KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that may result from this.

<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in December 2012 <a href="http://khrq.org/2012/12/12-145-d1/woman-raped-and-killed-paan-district-october-2012">http://khrq.org/2012/12/12-145-d1/woman-raped-and-killed-paan-district-october-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>On October 14<sup>th</sup> 2012, a 21-year-old woman named Naw W---, who was from M--- village, was raped and killed by a 23-year-old man from P--- village, named Saw N---. The community member who submitted this information, reported to KHRG that Saw N--- had also sexually abused Naw W--- prior to the incident that resulted in her death. After this first incident of abuse, both Naw W--- and Saw N---'s parents met to agree that the two should be married, and they continued under this arrangement until Naw W---'s death. After her death, she was found with blood covering her face and thighs; her sarong was completely soaked with blood.<sup>87</sup></p> <p>The community member reported that the perpetrator uses a drug called <i>yaba</i>.<sup>88</sup> Most of the villagers reported that, in their township, people sell it openly and it is very prevalent. The villagers in the area raise concerns about the prevalence of <i>yaba</i> in their communities and the negative effects that it has had on youths in the area. They do not want <i>yaba</i> to be sold, because it is perceived to increase incidents of rape and violence, similar to Naw W---'s. According to villagers in T'Nah Hsah, there has been irreparable harm to many children and youth because of the drug, which some villagers believe is used by youth as a form of escape from their situation; the community member reported that <i>yaba</i> is one of the biggest problems affecting the villagers.</p> <p>The person who manufactures the drug in the area, is Border Guard battalion #1016's commander, Mya Khaing. He operates a production site in T'Nay Hsah Township, and he distributes it to villages in the area. Because the source of the drug is linked to an armed group, villagers do not dare to complain about the problems they experience to them. One villager also reported to the community member that, because of <i>yaba</i>, many villagers have become even poorer, as a result of the cost of their addiction. Villagers reported to the community member that they are looking for ways to remove the drug from their communities as soon as possible, but they are also looking for assistance to accomplish this goal.</p>	

**Source #30<sup>89</sup>**

<b>Log #</b>	12-145-D1
<b>Title</b>	Woman raped and killed in Pa'an District, October 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in December 2012 <a href="http://khrq.org/2012/12/12-145-d1/woman-raped-and-killed-paan-district-october-2012">http://khrq.org/2012/12/12-145-d1/woman-raped-and-killed-paan-district-october-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>On October 14<sup>th</sup> 2012, a 21-year-old woman named Naw W---, who was from M--- village,</p>	

<sup>87</sup> According to the community member, Saw N---was arrested by the KNLA, but there is no further update on the status of his incarceration.

<sup>88</sup> *Yaba*, which means 'crazy medicine' in Thai, is a tablet form of methamphetamine. Introduced to East Asia during World War II to enhance soldiers' performance, methamphetamine has become increasingly popular in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia Vietnam, and in Burma where it is typically manufactured; see "Yaba, the 'crazy medicine' of East Asia," UNODC, May 2008.

<sup>89</sup> This source document has been logged under both Source #29 and #30 due to a logging error. KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that may result from this.



was raped and killed by a 23-year-old man from P--- village, named Saw N---. The community member who submitted this information, reported to KHRG that Saw N--- had also sexually abused Naw W--- prior to the incident that resulted in her death. After this first incident of abuse, both Naw W--- and Saw N---'s parents met to agree that the two should be married, and they continued under this arrangement until Naw W---'s death. After her death, she was found with blood covering her face and thighs; her sarong was completely soaked with blood.<sup>90</sup>

The community member reported that the perpetrator uses a drug called *yaba*.<sup>91</sup> Most of the villagers reported that, in their township, people sell it openly and it is very prevalent. The villagers in the area raise concerns about the prevalence of *yaba* in their communities and the negative effects that it has had on youths in the area. They do not want *yaba* to be sold, because it is perceived to increase incidents of rape and violence, similar to Naw W---'s. According to villagers in T'Nah Hsah, there has been irreparable harm to many children and youth because of the drug, which some villagers believe is used by youth as a form of escape from their situation; the community member reported that *yaba* is one of the biggest problems affecting the villagers.

The person who manufactures the drug in the area, is Border Guard battalion #1016's commander, Mya Khaing. He operates a production site in T'Nay Hsah Township, and he distributes it to villages in the area. Because the source of the drug is linked to an armed group, villagers do not dare to complain about the problems they experience to them. One villager also reported to the community member that, because of *yaba*, many villagers have become even poorer, as a result of the cost of their addiction. Villagers reported to the community member that they are looking for ways to remove the drug from their communities as soon as possible, but they are also looking for assistance to accomplish this goal.

### Source #31

<b>Log #</b>	12-147-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Incident Report: Dwe Lo Township, June 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Part 1 – Incident Details</b>	
<b>Type of Incident</b>	Land confiscation
<b>Date of Incident</b>	June 5 <sup>th</sup> 2012
<b>Incident Location (Village, Township and District)</b>	B--- village, K'Ter Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District.
<b>Victim Information</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Ma A---
<b>Age</b>	39
<b>Sex</b>	Female

<sup>90</sup> According to the community member, Saw N---was arrested by the KNLA, but there is no further update on the status of his incarceration.

<sup>91</sup> *Yaba*, which means 'crazy medicine' in Thai, is a tablet form of methamphetamine. Introduced to East Asia during World War II to enhance soldiers' performance, methamphetamine has become increasingly popular in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia Vietnam, and in Burma where it is typically manufactured; see "Yaba, the 'crazy medicine' of East Asia," UNODC, May 2008.

<b>Nationality</b>	Karen
<b>Family</b>	Yes
<b>Occupation</b>	Food vendor
<b>Religion</b>	Muslim
<b>Position</b>	Villager
<b>Village</b>	B--- village

<b>Perpetrator</b>				
<b>Name</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Company/Battalion Division</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander</b>
Hla Kyaing and Tin Htun	Battalion Commander	Border Guard #1013	Hpaw Htee Hku village	Htoe Lu

## **Part 2 – Information Quality**

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

Ma A---, a food vendor, said that on June 5<sup>th</sup> 2012, Border Guard Force<sup>92</sup> leaders and the Light Infantry Division's [LID]<sup>93</sup> #44 Tactical Operations Command [TOC]<sup>94</sup> #442 Commander Tin Htun, gathered the villagers who own plantation land and flat farm land. She [Ma A---] was one of the villagers who owned the land, so she was invited to the meeting. In the meeting, Operations Commander Tin Htun and Battalion Commander Hla Kyaing said that they were going to build shelters for the [soldiers'] families between Noh Hpaw Htee and K'Ter Tee [Wah Ker Bridge]. The area is about 76 acres large, which includes a lot of the villagers' flat fields and rubber plantations in that area. They [the commanders] said that they would pay compensation for whatever [land] the villagers were to lose.

### **2. Explain how the source verified information accuracy.**

Regarding this [land] confiscation, five acres of Ma A---'s rubber plantation were included. She reported it to us herself, so it is a true incident.

## **Part 3 – Incident Details**

<sup>92</sup> 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 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.

<sup>93</sup> Light Infantry Division (Tatmadaw); commanded by a brigadier general, each with ten light infantry battalions specially trained in counter-insurgency, jungle warfare, "search and destroy" operations against ethnic insurgents and narcotics-based armies. LIDs are organised under three Tactical Operations Commands, commanded by a colonel, (three battalions each and one reserve), one field artillery battalion, one armoured squadron and other support units. As of 2000, each LID has its own organic field artillery units.

<sup>94</sup> Tactical Operations Command; made up of three battalions and a headquarters, usually under a Military Operations Command (MOC) and a Light Infantry Division (LID).

**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.**

Ma A--- reported the land confiscation as follows. Ma A--- has a family and lives in B--- [C--- village], K' Ter Tee village tract,<sup>95</sup> Dwe Lo Township. She runs a small [food] shop.

Ma A--- explained that in March 2012, Light Infantry Division #44 Tactical Operations Commander #442 Tin Htun, and Border Guard Force Officer Hla Kyaing, had a plan to construct shelters for their families. She [Ma A---] heard about this when she was in her shop. Not too long ago, on June 5<sup>th</sup> 2012, Operation Commander Tin Htun and Officer Hla Kyaing gathered the villagers who own rubber plantations, flat fields and land that is located between Noh Hpaw Htee and B--- villages. Ma A--- said she was included [to be part of the meeting].

When she arrived to the meeting place, Operation Commander Tin Htun and Border Guard [Commander] Hla Kyaing said that there were more than 76 acres of lands around the Wah Hker Toh [Bridge] area, and they did not care if they included the villagers' flat fields or rubber plantations; they would build buildings for their families. The villagers had to sell that land to them and were to accept whatever amount of money they [the commanders] gave. If the villagers did not agree with the money that they got, they [the commanders] would just confiscate the land without [paying] any compensation.

Even since Ma A--- planted the rubber trees, she was expecting to get a lot of money from it [when she was able to tap the trees]. But if the BGF soldiers were to buy her land, it would not be very much. If she could keep the rubber plantation, it would last until her children and grandchildren [grew up]. When she first heard about the land confiscation, she almost fainted.

Ma A--- explained that after Tin Htun and Hla Kyaing informed them, they gave money to the villagers whose land was included [confiscated]. They paid 800,000 kyat<sup>96</sup> (US \$810.54) for one acre of rubber plantation and 450,000 kyat (US \$455.93) for one acre of flat field.

Ma A--- explained that she owned five acres of rubber plantation and that they paid her 4,000,000 kyat (US \$4,052.68). Even though she did not want to sell her land, she was afraid, so she had to sell it. She also explained that her friends and neighbours also suffered.

Incident Report written by a KHRG researcher,  
Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District  
(Received in November 2012)

### Source #32

<b>Log #</b>	12-147-S1
<b>Title</b>	Papun Situation Update: Dwe Lo Township, July to October 2012

<sup>95</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

<sup>96</sup> As of January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the [official market rate](#) of 987 Kyat to the US \$1.



<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in February 2013 <a href="http://khrq.org/2013/02/12-147-s1/papun-situation-update-dwe-lo-township-july-october-2012">http://khrq.org/2013/02/12-147-s1/papun-situation-update-dwe-lo-township-july-october-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>I am submitting this situation report and I included [information on] the human rights abuses that happened between July 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 and October 15<sup>th</sup> 2012. It includes [information on] forced labour that has taken place since the ceasefire<sup>97</sup>. The Tatmadaw has been active in our area and has ordered the villagers for <i>set tha</i>.<sup>98</sup> They have also ordered one or two boats everyday from the villagers who own boats.</p> <p>Moreover, a Tatmadaw [soldier] who lives in our area also raped a girl. There are also problems from gold mining, which has destroyed the villagers' lands, and the villagers always have to face many different kinds of problems. Likewise, the Border Guard<sup>99</sup> confiscated the villagers' land in order to build shelters for their families.</p> <p><b>Confiscation</b></p> <p>In our area, between 2009 to 2012, the villagers' lands and plantations were destroyed because of wealthy people from companies,[who] came and mined for gold. Because of gold mining, the river became murky. The villagers who drink water from the Bu Loh <i>kloh</i> [river], get murky water, so there are many diseases [that have] increased. Moreover, the animals, such as cows and buffalo, drank the water from the river and got diseases. Likewise, the fish in the river have also died.</p> <p>When I went and met with H---'s Tatmadaw village head, <i>Mu Gah</i><sup>100</sup> Naw W--- said, "<i>Being a human in this area, we have to be afraid of everything. If the Tatmadaw comes, we have to be afraid of them. If the Border Guard (BGF) or the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA)</i><sup>101</sup> come, we also need to be afraid of them. We also have to be afraid of Karen National Union (KNU) leaders. We don't dare and report to [any of] them the problems that the public are facing now, and if we dare, we worry that we would be fined. If we think carefully, being public doesn't have any value".</p> <p>Regarding gold mining, the DKBA came since 2009 to mine gold. Because of that, the villagers' properties were destroyed. The villagers faced so many problems, and when the</p>	

<sup>97</sup> For additional information and analysis on the ceasefire between the Burma government and the KNU, see "Steps towards peace: Local participation in the Karen ceasefire process," KHRG, November 2012.

<sup>98</sup> *Set tha* is a Burmese term for forced labour duty as a messenger stationed at army camps or bases and serving as a go-between to deliver orders from army officers to village heads, but also involving other menial tasks when no messages are in need of delivery.

<sup>99</sup> Border Guard 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. Border Guard 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.

<sup>100</sup> *Muh Gah* literally means "aunt" but it is also a prefix to address someone who is the about the same age with your parents or aunt.

<sup>101</sup> The DKBA was formed in December 1994, led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which was the name of the military government in Myanmar at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "Inside the DKBA," KHRG, 1996.

DKBA left, there was not any gold mining and the villagers were very happy. But, again, the rich people came and asked permission [to mine] from [KNU] headquarters, and district and township leaders. They were permitted [to mine], so the company came to mine more gold than the DKBA did. The DKBA mined gold in three rivers, such as *Meh Kleh kloh*, *Baw Paw kloh* and *Meh Kleh kloh*, so the plantations, other properties and trees beside the rivers were all destroyed.

Between June 2012 to August 2012, I heard that the KNU leaders would stop the gold mining project, and I was so happy. If we look today, the company in charge [of the mines] came and built their relationship with the KNU leader and later claimed that they were given permission from [KNU] headquarters, but they started making preparations, which makes me worry again. Since the gold mining project started, there have always been problems. If there is still the gold mining in the future, our children will also face the same problems as us.

Regarding the gold mining, if the leaders see that there are benefits for the villagers, they should not stop the company. If the leaders from other countries see that there are no benefits for the villagers, I hope they would delay it until it can be completely stopped. Since gold started being mined, there have not been any benefits for the villagers.

Instead, it has destroyed huge amounts of the villagers' lands, plantations, trees and bamboo. There is only plain land without any green grass, just like what [happened to the land], as *Muh Gah* [Aunt] Naw W--- mentioned above. Now, the leaders stopped the gold mining, so there is no more gold mining and the villagers are very happy about it. However, the villagers recently started to worry again because so many companies and rich people came. If the leaders allow them [to mine], the villagers will face the same problems as in the past again.

After the ceasefire talk, on June 5<sup>th</sup> 2012, in our area, the Tatmadaw Light Infantry Division #44, Tactical Operations Command (TOC) #442's Commander, Tin Htun, appointed Border Guard Battalion number #1013's Commander, Hla Kyaing, and Deputy Battalion Commander, Tin Win, to come and build shelters for the families of the soldiers between Sa-- and S---. [This is] a place called Wah Hker Toh area, [which is] 75 acres large and the construction will destroy rubber plantations, flat fields, a graveyard, and football fields.

The villagers whose properties will be destroyed when the BGF [Border Guard] builds their families' shelters are: (1) P--'s 20-acre rubber plantation on four acres of flat field; (2) Saw M---'s one-acre rubber plantation on ten acres of flat field; (3) Gy---'s one acre of flat field; and (4) Saw L---'s three-acre rubber plantation. All of these villagers live in S---village. The villagers from Sa--- also lost properties such as: (1) three acres of flat field; (2) two acres of rubber plantation; (3) Ma Hs---'s nine acres of rubber plantation; and (4) two acres of cardamom plantation. Some of the villagers from Htee Hsaw Meh also lost their land.

Before they started building, Commander Tin Htun and Commander Hla Kyaing gathered the owners of the plantations fields and flat fields, and informed them that there will be shelters on their lands and that they would have to sell their lands to them [the Tatmadaw and Border Guard]. The owners would have to accept and be satisfied with how much they will pay. If not, they will just confiscate the lands without paying. Because of that, the villagers were afraid and sold their land for 450,000 kyat (US \$528.17)<sup>102</sup> for one acre of land, but rubber plantations were [sold for] 800,000 kyat (US \$938.97) for one acre. Some villagers got paid for each tree in the rubber plantation; for example, one rubber tree was 5,000 kyat (US

<sup>102</sup> As of November 27<sup>th</sup> 2012, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 852 kyat to the US \$1. This reflects new measures taken by Myanmar'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.

\$5.87). The villagers who have suffered for this case said that, “*Because we were threatened, we sold it to them. We know that the money that we got paid won’t last for very long, but if we have a flat field or a rubber plantation, it will last until our children and our grandchildren [can work]. Now, they are still building; they didn’t stop building, even though the KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] stopped them.*” Thara [Teacher] Aung Gyi said that after Commander Tin Htun met with the villagers, they told the villagers not to spread [information about] the project to KNU leaders or the leaders from other countries.<sup>103</sup>

### Forced labour and demands

There is always forced labour and demands in our area when the Tatmadaw is active. But it is not happening very often, like in the previous years. It has become a lot less.

For example, the Tatmadaw army camp in R--- is occupied by Infantry Battalion [IB] #96 and led by Company Commander Myo Ko, who ordered R--- villagers to serve as *set tha* [messengers]; one person [served] per day. Every day, each villager who has to serve as *set tha* [must] go around and send letters, cook for them, cut bamboo and trees and also build fencing for their army camp. This kind of forced labour still happens even now.

Moreover, they also based a column [in R--- village], and there are 24 soldiers in that column. The column is active in B---, D--- and R---. The column is Light Infantry Battalion [LID] #44, [Column] #9, [led by] Column Commander Mya Min Thu. Whenever they travel, they always call two porters from the villagers to carry their stuff and travel in front of them. If they arrive in a village, they will call porters from the new village and let the old porters go back to their village. There are still demands from them as well as forced labour. However, it is becoming a little less; there is no more killing or torture.

The Tatmadaw, based in G--- army camp, is IB #[96], [led by] Camp Commander Myo Min Tun, and the company second-in-command is Nyi Nyi Htway. On July 18<sup>th</sup> 2012, they demanded the villagers cut 80 *Wah Thoh*<sup>104</sup> and 20 poles of *Wah Kluh*,<sup>105</sup> in order to repair their camp.

On July 20<sup>th</sup> 2012, Commander Myo Min Tun ordered two boats per day from the villagers who own boats. They ordered them to go and wait in front of their army camp, which is by the river, and asked them to transport food. It is still happening even now. When they [IB #96] ordered them to do something, they said they would pay, but they did not pay anything, even now. Sometimes, they even order the villagers to carry the toilet bowl for them to build a toilet to “pee and shit”; they ordered the villagers to carry that.

Starting on July 4<sup>th</sup> 2012 until now, their [IB #96’s] demands are increasing. On August 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012, they again ordered G---villagers to cut three poles of *Wah Kluh* and 10 poles of *Wah May*<sup>106</sup> to repair their army camp.

In order to prove that the abuses that G---villagers have suffered are true, the G--- section leader, U Wa---, sent out his note as a proof.

<sup>103</sup> The community member is likely referring to members of the Norwegian Myanmar Peace Support Initiative (MSPI) who have been actively visiting rural areas in Karen state to meet with local communities. For more information on the MPSI pilot projects, see “Nyaunglebin Situation Update: Kyauk Kyi Township, July 2012,” KHRG September 2012; see also “Situation Update: Moo, Ler Doh and Hsaw Htee townships, Nyaunglebin District (January to June 2012),” KHRG October 2012.

<sup>104</sup> *Wah Thoh* is “giant” bamboo that has a diameter of around 8 inches, with narrow leaves that are less than an inch wide.

<sup>105</sup> *Wah kluh* is “giant” bamboo that has a diameter of around 8 inches, with broad leaves that are around 4 inches wide.

<sup>106</sup> *Wah May* is a narrow kind of bamboo that has a diameter of around three inches.

### Rape case

The Tatmadaw soldiers LID [Battalion] #44, [Column] #3 is led by the company's second-in-command, Moe Win. There are 27 soldiers in that column and they are active in D---, K--- and G--- [villages].

On June 15<sup>th</sup> 2012, this column came from D---village, entered T--- village and spent their nights there. On June 16<sup>th</sup> 2012, in the night time at 11:00 pm, most of the villagers were asleep. At that time, the company's second-in-command, Moe Win, went to a villager named Naw C---'s house, and went inside her bedroom. Without saying anything, he lifted up Naw C---'s sarong. At that time, Naw C--- was about to move and her child cried, so her husband who slept in front [room] of the house was awakened and called his wife to ask why she did not hear her child crying. When Moe Win heard her husband's voice, he tried to run. At that time, Naw C--- shouted that someone was in her room, so her husband went inside the room and saw Moe Win sitting by the fireplace. When C---'s husband went to check his wife, Moe Win ran away from the house. In the morning, C---'s husband went to see Commander Soe Wunna and reported it to him. Commander Soe Wunna told him not to spread [word of] the incident; [Soe Wunna] would compensate them with 200,000 kyat (US \$234.74). No one spread [information of] the incident. Until now he [Soe Wunna] only paid 100,000 kyat (US \$117.37), the other 100,000 has not been paid yet.

### Military activities

The Tatmadaw army who is based in R---, is IB #96 and the camp commander is Myo Ko; he ordered the villagers as *set tha* and also ordered them to cut trees and bamboo. There is a column called LID #44, [Column] #9 for the R---, B--- and D--- [village] area. They always ask the villagers to porter, where two villagers from each village have to go to the frontline.

The army that is based in G--- army camp is IB #96. The Camp Commander Myo Min Htun, and the Company Second-in-command Nyi Nyi Htway, always order the villagers to do something. IB #96's company commander was appointed on August 8<sup>th</sup> 2012, and the IB #96 camp commander was appointed on August 6<sup>th</sup> 2012; they always rotate after serving for four months.

The Tatmadaw army who is active in the eastern part of Bu Loh *kloh*, which includes D---, Pr---, T--- and K---, is LID #44, [Column] #3; Camp Commander Soe Wunna leads them, and there are 27 soldiers. They always order the villagers to porter and guide them when they arrive in each village.

For Sa--- army camp, LID #44's TOC #442, led by Commander Tin Htun, is based there. For the other places, I do not know which group of army is active.

### Conclusion

The above abuses that I have written [about] in this report are the human rights abuses that happened in our Dwe Lo Township. I documented the information and the photos, when I was travelling to collect the information. It is a truthful story. The villagers from Sa---village tract, such as S---, Hk---, Sa--- and Ta--- have to face problems from Border Guard Battalion #1013. Major Hla Kyaing is going to build shelters for soldiers' families, and in order to do that, they confiscated the villagers' rubber plantations and many flat fields, so it becomes problematic for them to do their livelihoods.

For the western part of Bu Loh Traw, the rich people from a company came and mined gold, so the villagers who live near there face damages to the soil, plantations and they have to

drink polluted water. So, the best thing is to stop mining gold. Forced labour, force portering, looting, *set tha*, demands and rape still happen, even now.

Situation Update written by a community member, Dwe loTownship, Hpapun District,  
(Received in November 2012)

### Source #33

<b>Log #</b>	12-149-S1
<b>Title</b>	Nyaunglebin Situation Update: Kyauk Kyi and Shwegyin townships, September to November 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in June 2013 <a href="http://khrgh.org/2013/06/12-149-s1/nyaunglebin-situation-update-kyauk-kyi-and-shwegyin-townships-september-november">http://khrgh.org/2013/06/12-149-s1/nyaunglebin-situation-update-kyauk-kyi-and-shwegyin-townships-september-november</a>
<b>Location</b>	Kyauk Kyi and Shwegyin townships, Nyaunglebin District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>The situation update is [for situations] starting from September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 to November 11<sup>th</sup> 2012. In the region, there are always things that violate human rights, but they are not obvious. [This report includes information about] money demands, [Tatmadaw] restrictions and causing trouble, Norwegians sending rice to Hkeh Der village tract, opening a bridge (Sittaung Bridge) in Nat Than Kwin and Kwin Chaung Wa, and about transferring the liaison office.</p> <p><b>Money demands</b></p> <p>On September 9<sup>th</sup> 2012, until now, they [Tatmadaw] go and demand money for [operating] the gold machines. The civilians used to work for their daily life by mining gold in the Ler Doh and Hsaw Htee townships region; the LIB [Light Infantry Battalion] #264 demands money from the people who mine gold. There are forty gold [mining] machines, and they demand 150,000 kyat (US \$170.07)<sup>107</sup> for each month, and they demand it every month.</p> <p><b>Movement restriction and causing troubles</b></p> <p>On September 16<sup>th</sup> 2012, in U--- village tract, a U--- villager, Ma L---, who sells three-digit lottery [vouchers], arranged with the U--- Police Station so that she gives [lottery] taxes to a local police officer, Chan Nyein Win. With the permission of the police officer and giving the policemen the tax, Ma L--- sells lottery on commission for Ma N---'s lottery centre. However, on the day of opening the three digit lottery, September 16<sup>th</sup> 2012, Ma L--- asked her nephew, P---, to go and transport [the vouchers].</p> <p>As his aunt asked him, Maung P--- went and took the lottery vouchers from Nga Htway Sok village. On the way back, a local police officer, Zaw Min Oo, waited [for him] and arrested him. [They] arrested Maung P--- and detained him in U--- police station; his aunty, Ma L---, reported about this [to the community member]. When his aunt, Ma L---, learned that Maung P--- was arrested, she went and explained [the situation], but the U--- Police Station asked for 600,000 kyat (US \$680.27). After they received 600,000, they set Maung P--- free. This event is an injustice. If the authorized policeman had not given permission, the villagers would not have done illegal work. The villagers do the work because the policemen give permission and take taxes. However, they fabricated [a case] and arrested him like this, so it</p>	

<sup>107</sup> As of March 25<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 882 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.



is an injustice. For this information, Ma L--- gave me [the community member] the information, which means that the victim herself let me know this information.

On October 13<sup>th</sup> 2012, the LIB #590, its Company #4 Company Commander Aung Ko Ko, said that if W--- villagers are going to travel and work, they have to make a recommendation letter and carry the recommendation letters. If a guest comes and travels [stays] in the village, they [villagers] have to submit the overnight guest list [to the authorities].

On October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2012, Ler Doh Operations Command Commander Hla Htway asked the villagers [owning] vehicles to send rations to Muh Theh military camp. The villagers complained to them and did not send their things, because the villagers have to work on their own work of sending wood and bamboo to the Pee Pleh area. Therefore, the Ler Doh Company Commander, Hla Htway, does not allow the villagers to go [to Pee Pleh], and it causes problems for the villagers to work on their own work. For this information, the car owner [named] M--- gave [it to] me.

### **Bridge opening ceremony (Sittaung Bridge opening ceremony, Nat Than Kwin)**

On September 29<sup>th</sup> 2012, the national government came and opened the Sittaung Bridge joining Nat Than Kwin and Kwin Chaung Wa, and the ceremony for the bridge was held on this day. The bridge began to be built in 2010, and building this bridge destroyed the villagers' houses (farming places) and [villagers] had to move their houses, but the country government does not give any compensation for the villagers' damages.

### **Opening a liaison office**

Starting from April 7<sup>th</sup> 2012, the KNU and the national government held a meeting and opened a liaison office in Ler Doh,<sup>108</sup> and opened the office (temporarily) in the Solidarity [Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP)] office. On September 29<sup>th</sup> 2012, the Burma government repaired it and transferred it to people in charge of the KNU (liaison Office) and to the KNU Brigade #3.<sup>109</sup> When transferring this KNU (liaison office), it [the ceremony] included the Burma leaders, who were the Security and Border affairs Minister, U That Htun from Bago Division, Bago Division Minister for electric power, U Baby Ohn, Minister of Ethnic Affairs, U Ju Bi Sa Hla, and the Bago Division Senator and Chairman [U Win Tin]. The ones who accepted the office, from the KNU side, were Governor Hser Gay, Governor K'Neh Htoo and the person in charge of communication, Commander Maw Aye Thay. Firstly, they open the ceremony with drums, horns and the Karen culture, [then] Thai cultural dancing. Minister U That Htun gave a speech, and Minister U Ju Bi Sa Hla gave a speech.

### **Tatmadaw activity**

There is no Burma military that is active in the region to attack or to build a new military camp, but they only travel on the road and they rotate frequently. On October 2012, the government who stays in the mountain [area], and set up their camp there, came and repaired the road in Than Boh for [sending] food. They then went to Muh Theh in October with three of their road construction vehicles, including two [Caterpillar] D4's and one [Caterpillar] D7. The D7 was hit by a KNU landmine on the border of Meh Theh [village], Ler

<sup>108</sup> KHRG previously reported on a May 28th 2012 meeting, which also included the Norwegian delegates: Norwegian State Secretary Torgeir Larsen, the Norwegian Ambassador to Thailand, Cambodia and Burma, Katja Christina Nordgaard, and head of the Norway-backed Myanmar Peace Support Initiative (MPSI), Charles Petrie. See "Nyaunglebin Situation Update: Moo, Ler Doh and Hsaw Htee townships, January to June 2012," KHRG, October 2012.

<sup>109</sup> Brigade 3 corresponds to Nyaunglebin District.

Doh Township, in Day Law Plaw area. When their road construction vehicle was hit by a landmine, the Burma military stopped at once, but on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2012, they continued forward towards Brigade #5.<sup>110</sup>

### Civilians' situation and livelihood

The livelihood of the civilians from K'Ser Klah region is going well. Because there are no Burma military activities, they can travel and work smoothly. In their work, there are only damages caused by nature. In Plaw region, because it has been flooding for two months, a lot of paddy died and the villagers are facing difficulties.

### Norway Pilot Program

Starting from August 8<sup>th</sup> 2012, the Norwegian government started to send rice to Kheh Der village tract. After sending [rice] for three months, they then stopped. We have to see what situation is going to happen in the future, for what their project will be in the future.

### Conclusion

The above reports are the real things that happened in our region. The Burma military and the people in charge are always corrupt. Currently, because the KNU and the Burma military entered the ceasefire, the civilians can travel freely and the villagers are very delighted for this. The villagers are the ones who have suffered from the conflict for a long time, and because the national government met with the KNU, they are very glad. If there is any difficulty, they go and report to the KNU liaison office.

Situation Update written by a community member, Shwegyin Township, Nyaunglebin District,  
(Received in November 2012)

### Source #34

<b>Log #</b>	12-154-A8-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw A---, October 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen  <b>Religion:</b> Buddhist  <b>Marital Status:</b> Married  <b>Occupation:</b> Farming a hill field  <b>Position:</b> Villager</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>35 years old.</p> <p><b>What nationality?</b></p>	

<sup>110</sup> Brigade 5 corresponds to Papun District.



Karen.

**How about religion?**

Buddhist.

**What do you do for your livelihood?**

I do hill farming.

**How about your village?**

B--- village and I grew up in this [B--- village].

**What village tract?**

Lay Wah village tract.

**How about township?**

Bu Tho Township.

**Do you have family?**

Yes, I do.

**How many children do you have?**

Five children.

**How old the eldest is?**

The eldest is 13 years old.

**How about the youngest?**

Over two years old.

**Living in B--- village, what is your responsibility?**

When the township leader came he selected me as a village head.

**Now, they have made you village head?**

They selected me as a village head but there is no [final] decision yet.

**But they made you a village head.**

Yes.

**That is not the civilians [who support you to be in this position], not KNU [Karen National Union] leaders, you were set up by SPDC [State Peace and Development Council]<sup>111</sup> as town leader, they just came and appointed you?**

Yes.

**And you did not accept that.**

Yes [no], I didn't.

**How long have you been appointed by him [township leader] in this position?**

Just one year, they came and said, "*one year*" [to be in the village head position], but I didn't accept his request.

**How many houses in B--- village?**

I guess [*censored for security*] houses including widows and orphans.

**What do people in B--- do for their livelihood?**

They do hill farming and some people do day labour. Most people do hill farming and farming.

**Do they have enough food yearly?**

No.

**More people have enough food or less people have enough food?**

Less people have enough food. Most people don't have enough food.

**Could you tell me what the township leader said to have meeting?**

They came up and asked [about the] school issue. They said, "*now we are going to build a school* [for the village]. *Do we have land for that?*" [He asked if the villagers prepared land for building a school]. And we replied, "*No, not yet.*" And he said, "*It has been a long time* [that you have not established the school] *and people in other villages have started doing* [planning for building school] *after you plan but now they have finished* [other villages have finished building school]." And [then] they said, "*Find land for that* [school]." And we replied that, "*There is land but we can not afford to buy the land.*" They said, "*For that, meet with leaders and discuss the land and help each another and buy land for the school*" [they won't pay money for the land but they will build the school by themselves].

**What is the name of township leader?**

The first name of township leader is Thein...I can't remember his full name.

**They came and said in your village or they ask someone to come and tell you [that you were called by township leader]?**

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<sup>111</sup> State Peace & Development Council of the military junta ruling Myanmar at the time, which was officially dissolved March 30, 2011 by Senior General Than Shwe following the election of a quasi-civilian government in Myanmar in November 2010

He came to B--- School.

**What else did he say?**

He didn't say other [things]. They said, "*You are C--- village tract leader and here, this is your responsibility*" for the village tract leader position. And I replied that, "*I can't do that and I can't read and I have never gone to school.*" I just replied like that. They said, "*Go and take salary.*" I replied that, "*No, I don't want to eat [take] salary.*"

**And did they reply anything?**

And they [Township leader] said, "*Take [salary] because people [I am] are willing to give [it to] you.*" And I replied, "*You take [my] the salary and use for your own.*" And he replied that, "*If we [I] take and use [your salary], it is like I put my own arms in the hand cuffs.*"

**How much did they offer you for that [position]?**

70,000 kyat (US \$70.92)<sup>112</sup> per month.

**70,000 kyat (US \$70.92) you said?**

He just discussed that issue. There was no other issue.

**Is your village reached by their [Myanmar soldiers (Tatmadaw)] soldiers?**

Burmese?

**Yes.**

They came in the previous time. BGF [Border Guard Force]<sup>113</sup> are in the village. They build houses in D--- [somewhere quite close to the village or in the village].

**Do they live with their wife and children?**

Yes.

**How is their behaviour towards civilians like you?**

Not bad, but there was a time [regarding people] collecting bamboo shoots that people sell. He [one of the BGF commanders] told me that, "*The village head forbids the collecting of the bamboo shoots and selling of the bamboo shoots.*" And I replied that, "*I forbid [cutting] bamboo and there is not only that bamboo field but we collect the bamboo shoots in other places as well.*" And he told my female friend that, "*Why didn't you ask your vice village head to come? If the vice village head comes, I will disappear his word [end his talking forever].*"

<sup>112</sup> As of January 13<sup>th</sup> 2014, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>113</sup> 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 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.

**Who was that? What is his [or her] name?**

Hpah Kaw Htoo.

**He is a BGF soldier?**

Yes, he is.

**He said if you go [to meet him], he will disappear your words [end her talking forever (kill her)] because you are collecting the bamboo shoots?**

Because of collecting and selling the bamboo shoots.

**Because of having no food and selling them for money?**

I didn't collect the bamboo shoots from forbidden bamboo fields but from other bamboo fields. There are other bamboo fields as well.

**Do you know Pa Kaw Htoo's responsibility and his position [in the military]?**

No, I don't.

**How about his salary? Do they get a salary?**

Yes they do. Every BGF soldier gets a salary.

**How much per month?**

I don't know [about] the leader [they get a higher salary]. That is not a concern with me and I didn't find out about that.

**Regarding their behaviour toward the villagers, do they ever threaten or violent [commit violence against] the villagers?**

No, except that time, it was that time only.

**How many days ago?**

In rainy season, one or two months ago.

**After that, did you ever met with him again?**

Yes.

**He said nothing?**

No, he said nothing. [We] just looked at each other.

**Who leads BGF?**

The Myanmar [government] controls BFG, is what they [Myanmar government] said [with their own mouth]. So they [BGF] say that [they are not controlled by Myanmar government]. They [BGF] said, "*We receive Myanmar military salary but our hearts are not the same as Burmese* [They are not totally on the Myanmar government side]."

**You said your school. Have you started building it?**

No, not yet. We bought the land and reported [to the upper leaders].

**You have bought the land?**

Yes.

**And you already requested the money?**

For money, we haven't collected it in the village [from the villagers]. They [township leader] said, "*We will measure the land area first,*" and we are waiting for them to come to measure the land.

**Do the B--- villagers have to buy the land [for building the school]?**

Yes, the B--- villagers have to buy the land. [They paid] 200,000 kyat (US \$202.63) and for one acre of land it is 100,000 kyat (US \$101.32) for one acre of land.

**100,000 kyat (US \$101.32) for one acre of land?**

No, one acre of land.

**Didn't they [Myanmar government] buy the land?**

No, they didn't. They guaranteed that they will come and build school.

**Do you think that is appropriate [what they are doing]? They build the school and they ask the civilians to buy the land. Do you think that is right?**

Not right, but people said that they are guests and they can't find the land to buy. They didn't say anything about their money and they said that they would pay according to the price of government land. And the other one said, "*This is yours and you should find your own. We guaranteed to build the school and don't know much money that would take. We don't know if it's ten million or hundred million.*"

**That means that you have found the land and they haven't paid the money yet. Did they come [to the village] lately?**

No, they haven't.

**After talking with you, later on, did he have communication with you?**

They do not come [these days]. They came [in previous time] and took the census. The numbers of students and people [in the village].

**Did they come with many people?**

Not a lot, they came with two people [including the township leader]. One who is has responsibility [in charge] of B--- and the other one is in charge of Kyaw Pah. Two people.

**Don't you know any of their names?**

I have his name in a note [book] at home, but I can't remember his name. I don't know what

Soe [Soe is the first name of one of them who came to the village] who is in charge of B--- [village tract]. I don't know the other one.

**How about Myanmar soldiers? Did they ever reach your village?**

In previous time they came, but I haven't seen them come lately.

**Did they do anything when they came?**

When they came, they didn't do anything special. They came and lived [in the village].

**Their living in the village, didn't it annoy you?**

Of course yes.

**Could you tell me how?**

We had to live uncomfortably.

**They slept in the house or under the house?**

Under the house.

**Were they kind?**

Some people were kind and some are not kind.

**In the village [kind to people in the village]?**

No, they didn't [weren't] kind.

**Why were they not kind?**

I don't know why. Because Myanmar [soldiers], even though they do nothing to me, I still feel uncomfortable with their presence in the village. I feel something like I am not free to go around.

**If they come in your village, do they prohibit your travelling?**

No, they don't.

**Can you civilians move around?**

Yes, they can.

**Were your civilians working freely [without military harassment] that year?**

They don't have problems with going around at night. Myanmar [soldiers] do not prohibit that and I haven't heard that BGF soldiers prohibit [travelling at night].

**Is there any [military] camp that is based close to your village?**

At the other side of K'Ter Tee River [the place where that military camp based].

**Is the Pwe Law Klo River between the village and the camp?**

Yes.

**East or west side of the river?**

East side.

**Are there things like calling [the villagers] or asking things [ordering them]?**

No.

**How about BGF soldiers?**

They used to [do such things].

**Let's say, during the time they were [here], do you know who was responsible? And who led them?**

They don't buy things [but take for free].

**Do you know their leader? Who was in charge?**

Previously there was a warrant officer [someone], I can't remember his name. And the Deputy Warrant Officer Kyaw Win.

**Now, Kyaw Win?**

I guess Kyaw Win [interviewee is unsure about the person].

**What is his battalion number?**

I don't know their battalion number. I don't know what [it was].

**I will ask you about the school [in the village]. Up to how many standards does that school have?**

Fourth standard.

**How many are there?**

There is one teacher that was sent by the Government. And we hired one teacher from the village.

**How much do you pay for of them?**

The teacher?

**Yes.**

150,000 kyat (US \$151.98).

**For one year?**

Yes.



**Including food?**

No, food is not included.

**Is she a civilian in the village?**

Yes, she is a villager here.

**Does she have family?**

She lives with her father and she is single.

**Do you pay her [salary with] rice?**

No, we just pay her money.

**150,000 kyat (US \$151.98) including food? You don't need to provide food to her?**

No, she just helps the village. She just helps the problem [not enough teachers in the school] in the village. There is nursery school with two teachers. And we paid 150,000 kyat (US \$151.98) for one of them for one year.

**Who established the nursery school?**

They were villagers [who established the nursery school]. Not the guests [people from other places].

**Not by the Myanmar government?**

No.

**How about the teacher that was sent by the Myanmar government? How much does she earn for one month?**

She once told me. I am not sure if it was 80,000 kyat (US \$81.05).

**Is it a male teacher?**

No, it is female teacher. She married a Nan Kyaw villager.

**Where does she get her salary?**

From the schoolmaster in K'Ter Tee.

**Does that school teach Karen literature?**

No, they don't teach that.

**Only Myanmar literature?**

Yes.

**Can't they teach [Karen literature]?**

The teacher that we hired in the village can teach it because she is Karen and she went to

school [and completed school] in the upper part.

**So, why don't they teach Karen?**

I don't know. But I heard according to what the villagers said, the government teacher doesn't like [that Karen literature is taught in school]. I have never asked the government teacher if she likes it or not. I just heard the villagers say that.

**How do you name the school? A Government school or a civilians' school?**

They named it a Government school. And the civilians said that it would have been better to name it a civilian school.

**Right, does the Government support all the school materials?**

No, they give nothing. Villagers have to do everything.

**How about books for students?**

They said that they will give student books for free, but I don't know what the teachers do. They asked 1,000 kyat (US \$1.01) from each student. I don't know if it's for book fees or registration fees. Some people said for book fees and some people said registration fees.

**For one student?**

Yes. For books, the Myanmar government teacher said, "*For free*". When I was going to the meeting, there were many books that the Myanmar government donated. They [Myanmar government representatives] said, "*We didn't donate these books. Other people donated these books*". That is like they just collect the benefaction. They said, "*How come that we can support these things. The salary that I get is not even enough for our family,*" he just said like that.

**For the students, is the amount they got of those pens, pencils, and books enough?**

They [students] got the distributions.

**Who distributed [them]?**

KNU distributed [them].

**Let say, during this year, what things does Myanmar government support?**

They support the reading books [text books].

**Students have to pay for that you said.**

I told you that I don't know if the teachers scam or not.

**Do the teachers come school regularly?**

Yes, but the schools close [occasionally]. The [Government] teachers close on full moon day [and other auspicious days]. It is confusing. They close the school when they have a meeting or have to go to [teacher] training.

**Living in B--- village, for healthcare, is there hospital that is set up by the**

**government?**

No, but there is a medic who completed medic training from the Government hospital.

**Does he [or she] have a Government certificate?**

Yes.

**Does the Government pay him a salary?**

No, he or she just takes care of the villagers for [a lower amount of money] for injection. There is no special hospital for the villagers with the government medic.

**How about water purification places? Are there water purification places in the village?**

No.

**Living in B---, do you drink water from Pgeh Law River or any other stream in the village?**

They dig wells and other people or *thara*<sup>114</sup> come and donate the wells.

**How many wells are in the village?**

In the part where I live, there is one well that has been donated by others and the another one that was dug by the villagers. Altogether there are seven wells in the village.

**Can [you] drink [water from those wells]?**

Yes, because in summer, we get the water from Pwe Law Kloh.

**So the wells were dried in summer?**

Not all wells, but one of the donated wells dried.

**Any questions that I am missing?**

I don't know. For me, I have nothing to say.

**So, now what do you think of the ceasefire by KNU superiors?**

I don't think that that there will be peace. But after the ceasefire I haven't heard guns shooting.

**So, what do your civilians feel with the ceasefire? What do you think?**

Friends, we love, [mostly] people have less love [towards us] than we have towards them.

**Is there anything that the Myanmar government does better in your village?**

They have not done anything yet, but they planned to do some things on ten acres of land.

---

<sup>114</sup> *Thara* (male) or *theramu* (female) is a Karen term used for any teacher, pastor, or any person to whom one wishes to show respect.

They said that those [acres] are meant for a children's football field, healthcare and wells. They came and said that. Ten acres of land, the villagers cannot afford to prepare that area of land. Even two tan of land, the villagers cannot afford to [pay for that].

**How much do you collect from each house?**

I don't know how much each house should pay. We collect 5,000 kyat (US \$5.07) for each house because I have to pay 5,000 kyat (US \$5.07) as well.

**By collecting that 5,000 kyat (US \$5.07), doesn't it cause problems for the civilians?**

Yes, because some people don't have [that much] and I don't have that money either. I think that is just for the development and education for the children in the village for the future.

**For them [Government], for land one or two acres of land, they could buy?**

If they wished, they could.

**After the ceasefire, have you ever heard any [bad] issues or sounds about the ceasefire?**

I have never heard [anything] with my own [ears]. I don't know if the Burmese organise [themselves] on their side or not.

**Have you ever visited them? For a meeting or something and did they show you the video or image [of the ceasefire]?**

I went to them for a meeting previously, but they didn't show [anything]. But not too long ago, when I went to the meeting in September 2012,, they showed me Naw May Oo's [KNU ceasefire spokesperson] photo. The other time they never showed [anything].

**What did they say?**

They talked about signing the agreement. They want to live peacefully like the leaders have signed [the ceasefire] and the frontline as not to cause a [disturbance].

**Did they play the audio?**

No, they just said that with their mouth. That is why [they aren't believed].

**Do you believe them?**

That is why I don't believe them. Tatmadaw, they talk kindly but they don't know our feelings. We don't know what their mind is and we dare not to believe them totally.

**If they are truthful, they should [play] the audio as well?**

Yes, if they are, they should play the audio as well.

**Were there images or movies?**

They introduced their names and responsibility. [There was] no audio on the movies.

**Living in B--- village, is there anything that violated your rights? Regarding natural [disasters or weather] that destroyed your work.**

No.

**So, you are doing well?**

It is difficult to say that. Working in the village [is poor].

**Is the weather is OK?**

Fine, but last [year], I could plant just a small paddy plantation. I just planted before by [my] house in a small area of land because I don't have land for a plantation.

**That is enough for one year?**

Last year, that wasn't enough. I had to buy rice from others because I got only 30 baskets<sup>115</sup> (960 kg. / 2,112 lb.) of rice.

**If you have to buy rice, how much for one big tin<sup>116</sup> (16 kg. / 35.2 lb.) here?**

17,500 kyat (US \$17.73) for one rice sack<sup>117</sup> (32 kg. or 70.4 lb.).

**How many big tins are included [in a sack]?**

Some have three big tins and some rice sacks have one basket and six or seven bowls of rice.

**Do they [merchants] bring the rice sacks to your house [as a service]?**

No, we have to buy that. I have to go and buy from K'Ter Tee with 17,500 kyat (US \$17.73).

**Your living in B---, do you breed animals as well?**

I have a couple chickens and one pig.

**How much for one viss<sup>118</sup> (1.6 kg. / 3.52 lb.) of chicken?**

5,000 kyat (US \$5.07).

**How about a pig [for one viss]?**

3,000 kyat (US \$3.04). Because they sell according to the price of K'Ter Tee.

**How much for one big tin of rice in B--- village?**

6,000 kyat (US \$6.07).

**Anything else?**

<sup>115</sup> A basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg. or 46.08 lb. of paddy, and 32 kg. or 70.4 lb. of milled rice. A basket is twice the volume of a big tin.

<sup>116</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg. or 23.04 lb. of paddy, and 16 kg. or 35.2 lb. of milled rice.

<sup>117</sup> A sack is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One sack is equivalent to 31.35 kg. or 69.12 lb. of paddy, and 48 kg. or 105.6 lb. of milled rice.

<sup>118</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg. or 3.52 lb.

No.

**So, what is your hope in the future?**

I wish to quit from village head position [village tract leader position]. I don't want to do this but I can't help it.

**So, thank you.**

Naw A---, (female, 35), Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District  
(Interviewed in October 2012)

**Source #35**

<b>Log #</b>	12-154-I3			
<b>Title</b>	Incident Report, Hpapun District, October 2013			
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished			
<b>Location</b>	Kyaw Paa tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District			
<b>Full Text</b>				
<b>Part 1 – Incident Details</b>				
<b>Type of Incident</b>	Village head talks about the situation of village 2			
<b>Date of Incident</b>	October 8 <sup>th</sup> 2013			
<b>Incident Location</b>	K--- village, Kyaw Paa tract, Bu Tho township, Hpapun District			
<b>Victim Information</b>				
<b>Name</b>	Saw Ky---			
<b>Age</b>	38			
<b>Sex</b>	Male			
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen			
<b>Family</b>	Married			
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer			
<b>Religion</b>	Animist			
<b>Position</b>				
<b>Village</b>	K--- village			
<b>Perpetrator Information</b>				
<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander's Name</b>
Maung Soe	Company Commander	1013	Paw Htee	Kyaw Win (Battalion Deputy Commander)
<b>Part 2 – Information Quality</b>				
<b>1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.</b>				
I received this information from Saw B---, the head of the village. And it is about the abuses of BGF (Border Guard Force), who ordered the villagers to be porters and one of them stepped on a landmine and died in 2011.				

**2. Explain how the source verified this information.**

The person who gave me this information is the head of the village and he has the responsibility to manage the villagers and he knows all information about the village.

**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 an attachment if needed.**

In February 2011, after the BGF (Border Guard Force) was formed, the BGF and the Burmese government soldiers combined and went to the KNLA (Karen National Liberation Army) area near the Thoo Moo River side to attack them. They also took some porters along with them and the porters did not get paid. The head of the village does not remember the leader of the operation. Saw Ky--- was one [of] the porters and he is 38, with three children and is a villager from Ky--- village. Saw Ky--- stepped on the landmine before they arrived at the riverside. The BGF did not take good care of him and he died; his children became orphans and his wife became a widow. The BGF gave two sacks of rice, twelve bottles of alcohol and 80,000 kyat (US\$67.39) for his funeral. The head of the village said that the wife of Ky--- faces with a lot of difficulties because she has to look after her three children and the BGF does not give her anything else after the funeral. Probably, the landmine that Saw Ky--- stepped on was the landmine of the KNLA. And the KNLA planted it to protect themselves from the enemies, not for the villagers because it was very far away from the village and no people live there. Such things are happening because the BGF are using the villagers as porters and they do not protect them and they do not take good care of them.

**Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details**

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

They allowed us to use this information because they want to reveal what they are suffering.

**Source #36**

<b>Log #</b>	12-154-15
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Incident Report: Bu Tho Township, November 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b><u>Part 1 – Incident Details</u></b>	
<b>Type of Incident</b>	The Myanmar government armies [Tatmadaw] came into A--- village and ordered Saw B--- to be the guide.
<b>Date of Incident</b>	November 1 <sup>st</sup> 2012
<b>Incident Location</b>	A--- village, Hkaw Poo village tract, Bu Tho township, Hpapun



district.				
<b>Victim Information</b>				
<b>Name</b>	Saw B---			
<b>Age</b>	40			
<b>Sex</b>	Male			
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen			
<b>Family</b>	Five children			
<b>Occupation</b>	Cultivation			
<b>Religion</b>	Buddhism			
<b>Position</b>	Villager			
<b>Village</b>	A---			
<b>Perpetrator Information</b>				
<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander's Name</b>
Do not know	Do not know	Light Infantry Division #44	Do not know	Do not know
<b>Part 2 – Information Quality</b>				
<b>1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.</b>				
We collected this information from the wife of Saw B--- and it is about the Myanmar army's Light Infantry Division [LID] <sup>119</sup> #44, who took her husband since November 1 <sup>st</sup> 2012 and he has not come back as of November 3 <sup>rd</sup> 2012.				
<b>2. Explain how the source verified this information.</b>				
We received this information through Naw C--- and she told us about her husband. We could not ask Saw B--- because the Myanmar government armies have not released him yet.				
<b>Part 3 – Incident Details</b>				
<b>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 an attachment if needed.</b>				
It happened on November 1 <sup>st</sup> 2012, at 1:30 pm. The Myanmar government army came into the village of A--- village, Hkaw Poo village tract, <sup>120</sup> Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District and ordered Saw B---, 40 years old, to be a guide. The government army said that they lost their way and ordered the villager to send them back, but we do not know how far they will take him. We do not know exactly about the Myanmar government army, but they are Light Infantry Division #44. And Naw C---, the wife of Saw B--- said that if the Myanmar				

<sup>119</sup> Light Infantry Division (Tatmadaw); commanded by a brigadier general, each with ten light infantry battalions specially trained in counter-insurgency, jungle warfare, "search and destroy" operations against ethnic insurgents and narcotics-based armies. LIDs are organised under three Tactical Operations Commands, commanded by a colonel, (three battalions each and one reserve), one field artillery battalion, one armoured squadron and other support units. As of 2000, each LID has its own organic field artillery units.

<sup>120</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

government does not release her husband, it will cause a big problem for her family because there is no one to take care of the paddy field and the animals will come and destroy it.

Naw C---, the wife of Saw B---, could not do anything while her husband is away from home. She can just make a fire beside the paddy field to scare the animals away from the paddy field. She does not know how long the Myanmar government army will take her husband with them and this is the only way she can protect the field.

Incident Report written by a KHRG researcher,  
Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District  
(Received in November 2012)

### Source #37

<b>Log #</b>	12-160-P1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Photo Notes: Thandaunggyi Township, July to October 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>These photos were taken on July 24<sup>th</sup> 2012. These photos describe that because of the unstable weather conditions and [heavy] raining, there is a landslide and a lot of the villagers' plants were destroyed. The plants are betelnut,<sup>121</sup> cardamom and coffee. The place was in Taw Oo [Toungoo] District, Daw Hpa Koh [Thandaunggyi] Township, Eastern Klay Wa region and the village is [called] Maw Hkuh Der village. Because it happens like that, the civilians are faced with water and food problems.</p> <p>These photos were taken on July 24<sup>th</sup> 2012. These photos show that because of the heavy rains and because of the landslide, villagers' fields were destroyed and their plantations were destroyed. When there was a landslide, the civilians had just planted paddy so, their paddy was destroyed. Moreover, their farm huts were also destroyed. Because of the landslide, it causes difficulty for the civilians who work on farming. Furthermore, their concern is that that there will be food shortage in this year and they are worried about it.</p> <p>These photos were taken on July 25<sup>th</sup> 2012. Because of the landslide the villagers' land was destroyed and this is when the villagers repaired and made [the field] better. The place is in Taw Oo District, Daw Hpa Koh Township, Eastern Klay Wa, and the villages are Thay Muh Der, Maw Hkuh Der, Boh Hka Lay Hkoh villages.</p> <p>These photos were taken on July 29<sup>th</sup> 2012. The photos show the landslide and the villagers' plants, which are cardamom, betelnut, and coffee [that] were destroyed. Regarding the plants, these are the main plants that people from Taw Oo District rely on for their livelihood. Because there is a landslide, it causes difficulty for the civilians to work on these plants. They have to plant again and it will take five years then, they can work on it [fruiting]. The place is in Taw Oo District, Daw Hpa Koh Township, Eastern Klay Wa region, Maw Hkoo Der village.</p> <p>These photos were taken on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2012. It was when the township leader asked people to go as he is going to measure the farm [with GPS] and he created a group of (land</p>	

<sup>121</sup> In Burmese, 'betelnut' and 'betel leaf' are referred to as *konywet* and *konthih*, as if they are from the same plant. The Burmese names are also commonly used by Karen language speakers. "Betelnut" is the seed from an areca palm tree, areca catechu; "betel leaf" is the leaf of the piper betel vine, belonging to the Piperaceae family.

record staff) and he is going to measure in A--- region. [He did it] for the land owners, in order to have land a grant so that people would not be able to confiscate [the land]. The place is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, headquarters.

These photos were taken on August 24<sup>th</sup> 2012. The photos show the villagers from Hplay Has Loh region going and selling betel leaves and buying things. People call this place (market) place and it is closed to Mgee Loh village.

These photos were taken on August 25<sup>th</sup> 2012. The photos showed the place where people did gold mining in the past four months. The place is closed to Mgee Loh region. The people who came and did gold mining were (Kyaw Lwa Moe brothers company). However, because the KNU doesn't give them permission, they have to go back.

These photos were taken on August 26<sup>th</sup> 2012. The photos show that in our Taw Oo District, the people who are going to measure [for] land grants are learning about GPS. Regarding the measuring of farms, it is for the villagers' land not to be confiscated. This is when the leader from Taw Oo District met with the villagers from A--- region and explained them [about measuring land]. Regarding the measuring land project, the FTUK [Federation of Trade Unions of Kawthoolei] and Taw Oo District leaders see that it is a good project and they set up this project related with an organization which is going to measure the fields. The district leaders explain to the villagers that the measuring [of] our farms is in order to have land grants for our land so that not any group can come and confiscate our land. The place is in Taw Oo District, Htaw Ta Htoo Township, B--- village (market) place.

These photos were taken on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2012. It is of the CIDKP [Committee of Internally Displaced Karen People] calling and meeting the villagers in Taw Oo District, C--- region at the district office. Because the work [livelihood] of villagers from C--- region is not going well and they face difficulties for food because the weather conditions are not favourable and the villagers' plants were destroyed,, CIDKP's [Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People] support helps with money to buy the main food, rice.

These photos were taken on September 25<sup>th</sup> 2012. These are the villagers who live in C--- region [who] gathered themselves and demonstrated at Toh Boh Dam. The villagers don't want them to block the water. If the company blocks [the water with] Toh Boh Dam, it will create difficulty for the villagers in travelling. If the difficulty started, they have to travel with boat and it can't carry lots of things. Moreover, a boat can only transport eight motorbikes per one time. Therefore, it will waste their time because they have to wait [for the boat] and they would not catch up with the time. The place where the villagers demonstrated was at Kler Loh River. If the people block the water from the dam, it will flood and the place for the villagers' plants will be destroyed. If it is destroyed, it will cause difficulty for villagers' livelihood. Because their livelihood is just [based on] plants such as betelnut and cardamom. For this demonstration, the ones who were in charge of the group were KYO [Karen Youth Organisation], KWO [Karen Women Organization] and FBR [Free Burma Rangers].

These photos were taken on July 25<sup>th</sup> 2012. The place is in Taw Oo District, Htaw Ta Htoo Township, C--- region, D--- village. It was when the CIDKP organization distributed the donation for food with money. This is when they helped in Haw Hkee region.

These photos were taken on August 10<sup>th</sup> 2012, the place is in Duh Dah Hkoh village. Currently, the Myanmar government and the KNU made a ceasefire and the villagers expressed that they cannot go and live in their old village because the villagers were worried that the ceasefire might not be the truth. Therefore, they dare not go and live in their old village. The place is in Taw Oo District region. We have to [take action] for the villagers to get their rights [compensation] for what they have suffered.

These photos were taken on October 6<sup>th</sup> 2012. The photos show that the villagers who are not from under the [government] controlled area still have to live in the jungle. However, the villagers gather themselves and worship in the hill farm hut when it is time to harvest. The villagers help each other and they respect God so for their livelihood, it goes well and benefits their livelihood.

These photos were taken on October 8<sup>th</sup> 2012. It is the KNU checkpoint, which is set up in E--- village. This KNU checkpoint does not demand money but one thing is that they don't allow people to carry [trade] alcohol because some people can't drink alcohol [because] it causes difficulty for the family members and more than that, [it causes difficulty] for the Karen people. Because the KNU prohibits alcohol, it creates delight for the religion. The place is in Daw Hpa Koh Township, Taw Oo District, Daw Loh Muh Nuh region, E--- village.

These photos shows the villagers who are discussing about what they have done towards the things that violated their rights in their region. Regarding the land confiscation, they have reported to KNU and in order to let the other countries know and help them, they reported it to the NGOs which are active in Myanmar. They did it in order to get their land back. The place is in Taw Oo District, Daw Hpa Koh Township, Day Loh Muh Nuh region, E--- village.

These photos were taken on October 13<sup>th</sup> 2012. It was the villagers from F--- village. Even though they did hill farming, they built a storage container in one place and they do not bring their paddy back into their village because they heard that the ceasefire is not sure [real]. They are worried that if there is Myanmar military activity, it would cause problems for them. This is also one of the village agencies. Because they are worried, they build their paddy storage container secretly. The place was in Taw Oo District, Daw Hpa Koh Township, Day Loh Muh Hta region, F--- village.

These photos were taken on October 13<sup>th</sup> 2012. This is the photo of when the villagers came and built a bridge that was broken in Day Loh river. The place was between F--- and G--- villages. In order to be able to go easily, they gathered themselves and built the bridge. The river is also the one on which the dam was built. The villagers are worried that it will be flooded up to this place. If the water reaches there, it would create difficulties for the villagers' livelihood as their plantations will be destroyed.

These photos were taken on July 29<sup>th</sup> 2012. The photos show that the plantations, the betelnut trees, of the people from the region were destroyed because of heavy rain and the landslide. In our region, most of the civilians do their livelihood with these plants. Therefore, the villagers [are worried] that there will be food problems because the plants were destroyed and their income will be reduced and it would be difficult for buying food. Regarding the betelnut tree, you can eat them [the fruit] after you have planted for nine years. Therefore, it is difficult for them to plant new plants and to eat [produce fruit]. Place was in Taw Oo District, Daw Hpa Koh Township, Klay Wa Muh Hta Region, H--- village.

These photos were taken in October 10<sup>th</sup> 2012. The Kyaw Lwan Moe and Brothers company came and observed where people do stone mining in I---. However, because the KNU does not give permission, they can't come and do mining. The place that produces stone is in Taw Oo District, Daw Hpa Koh Township, J--- village. If the people come and do [mining], the plantation will be destroyed and more than that, there might be difficulties for the villagers regarding the land.

These photos were taken on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2012. Because a rich person from #13 mile [village] came and did stone mining in J--- village region, the villagers' land was destroyed. When they [the company] came, they not only did what they wanted, they also did not give any compensation to the landowners. Therefore, it causes problems for the villagers from the region. Regarding the stone mining, we don't know the name of the person who has

come and does the mining. The photos show the people who do stone mining and the machine that they use. Regarding the type of stone, gold, platinum, brass and white gold [platinum] are produced. The local people who lost their land are Saw K--- from J--- village and his friends are also included but we don't know his friends' names. The one who took this photo is the local villager who is the volunteer Saw L---. The place is in Taw Oo District, Daw Hpa Koh Township, Day Loh Muh Nuh region, J--- village.

These photos were taken on October 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 evening. It was when we did an interview in E--- village. The villager's name is Naw M--- and she lives in Thandaunggyi Township. She said, *"presently, we don't trust in Myanmar government and we also do not see anything that they [do to] make the [situation] better."*

Photo Notes written by a KHRG researcher,  
Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District  
(Taken in July to October 2012)

### Source #38

<b>Log #</b>	12-160-T2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Interview with Naw A---, B--- village, Toungoo District, received November 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Interview received: November 2012</b></p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>I am Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I'm 38 years old.</p> <p><b>Your village?</b></p> <p>It is called B--- village.</p> <p><b>How about your religion?</b></p> <p>Baptist Christian.</p> <p><b>What is your responsibility [position] in your village?</b></p> <p>I do not have a responsibility [position] in my village.</p> <p><b>What do you do [for your livelihood]?</b></p> <p>I do nothing. I am the head of women [Karen Women Organisation].</p> <p><b>What do people usually do in your village [for a living]?</b></p> <p>They grow cardamom, dog fruit, and coffee.</p>	

**How many houses are there in your village?**

There might be *[censored for security]* houses.

**What is the difference between the past and present situation?**

There used to be big houses in the village, but since the displacement, there is no village left. There are only some villagers who went back to finish their work [harvest] and some villagers in the village. The houses of the past are gone. There are no big houses.

**So now, people do not live in your village?**

No, they do not. They only go back to work and return when they are done.

**So, like you said, they come back to work and then go back to stay in their home villages?**

Yes, after they finish their work.

**How about the [2012 preliminary] ceasefire between the KNU [Karen National Union and the government of Myanmar]? They made peace and the villagers are coming back to stay in the village again?**

No, they do not.

**Why do you think that is?**

There are two or three families who went back and stayed in the village, but most of the time they do not live in the village. They live in their plantation.

**Like you said, people used to be displaced. Why?**

Yes, in 1992, but at that time I was not in the village. I was in another place.

**Could you tell me about the Bamar [Myanmar] military situation in the past, say in 2008 or 2009, compared with the current military activity in 2012? Could you tell me about the differences?**

They set up their military camp there and they are still there. In the past, when we carried things, like food, if we had a long way to go back to work in our plantations, they did not make us to carry food for the whole week. They only gave us food for three days for, and after three days, we had to go back. At that time, they [the Tatmadaw] wrote recommendation letters for us and the villagers had to go back after three days. At that time, they charged 200 kyats per day. You had to take the recommendation letter for three days each time.

**In what year was that?**

That was after the displacement, before they [the Tatmadaw] came down, we had to get recommendation letters [from the Tatmadaw] each time that we travelled back to town. Everyone had to get it.

**How about now? Do they still ask the villagers to get recommendation letters [from them]?**

No, they do not. After people went down to Shwe Nyaung Bin [village] it has got a little



better. And they can move around more freely, but in my personal opinion, I would like to live like we did before. I do not want them to stay among us. Because now, some villagers are afraid of them. They carry weapons and now there are villagers who are afraid of them even if they don't do anything to the villagers.

**In your personal opinion, after the [2012 preliminary] ceasefire, what is the relationship between the local civilians and the Tatmadaw? Is there a difference? Or is it just like before?**

I do not travel much. Those who travel [a lot] they might know more about it. As for me, I do not travel much so...

**So, in the village that you are currently living in, what do the villagers mostly do?**

They work in plantations. Now, they do not do paddy farming [anymore].

**Oh really?**

Since the displacement, they could not do hill farming anymore, so they collected the crops from the hill farm in groups and returned. That's what people did.

**So now, people's livelihoods are fine?**

As good as they are supposed to be [not very good and not very bad].

**In your village, are there people that work but do not have food for the entire year?**

Yes, there might be. Some people make a lot of food [from their plantations] and they can eat well. But some villagers make less and they have to find food to eat [from other ways].

**For those who do not make enough rice to last the whole year, what do they do in order to get food for the whole year?**

They work as day labourers in order to eat every day.

**How much do they get paid per day when working as day labourers?**

In the cardamom harvesting time, they get paid 2,500 kyats each time. In summer, they get paid 2,000 kyats.

**Is there land confiscation in the village?**

No land confiscation, but if we put it this way, there are people whose plantations got damaged by the soldiers when they set up their camp.

**Approximately, on how many acres of land did they set up their camp?**

It might be five acres, but I am not sure.

**Did they pay for the land that they set up their camp on before they came?**

No, they did not. At that time, the villagers were in the village. They [the Tatmadaw] expelled [the villagers] and went back to in Thandaunggyi Town. When they [the Tatmadaw] came back [to the village area], they set up a [camp] themselves. There are villagers' plantations [around the camp]. They set up their camp on a hill and there were people whose crops



were damaged.

**So did they ask permission from the villagers?**

No, they did not.

**Is there stone mining in the village?**

No. What I just said was they came and set up their camp, I heard about it, and I requested the plantation owners to calculate their things [their losses]. However, they did not believe they would be compensated, so they did not write back to me [explaining about their losses].

**Is there anything new that the village has had to face since the U Thein Sein government took the power, under their period in power?**

It has truly decreased a lot after the ceasefire.

**What has decreased?**

It is a general statement.

**Can you be more specific?**

In my opinion, it has decreased, but our enemy, the Bamar [Tatmadaw] cannot be trusted, because they are good talkers. They say one thing and do another. So even if they weaken their strength [demilitarise] we still cannot trust them, because they attacked civilians in the past and we cannot trust them. We can say that they are demilitarising after the ceasefire. And they do have a relationship with the villagers, and in my opinion, we have to have a relationship with them, but we have to treat them wisely as they are from another ethnic group. Like I said at noon time, we have to treat them wisely using our brain. Your brain must be good. Whatever they do in order to protect yourself from different things in life, your brain must be bright.

**So now, is there a school in your village?**

There used to be a school in the past, but there was displacement and the school is gone now.

**So now there is no school anymore?**

No, no school and no students.

**So, is your village is in a black area or a white area?<sup>122</sup>**

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<sup>122</sup> Tatmadaw expert Maung Aung Myoe explains that the three-phased Tatmadaw counter-insurgency plan, developed in the 1960s, designates a territory as black, brown or white according to the extent of non-state armed group (NSAG) activity. Phase one transforms a 'black area' into a 'brown area,' meaning it transforms from an area controlled by NSAGs where the Tatmadaw operates, to a Tatmadaw-controlled area where NSAGs operate. The second phase is to transform the area from a 'brown area' into a 'white area,' where the area is cleared of insurgent activities. The final phase is to transform a white area into a 'hard-core area,' during which more organisational works are necessary and the government forms pro-government military units for overall national defence. See Maung Aung Myo, *Building the Tatmadaw: Myanmar Armed Forced Since 1948*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2009, p. 31-32; see also *Neither Friend Nor Foe: Myanmar's Relations with Thailand Since 1988*, Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies Nanyang Technological University, 2002, p.71.

It is in a white area.

**So after the government of Myanmar led by U Thein Sein signed the ceasefire, in your opinion, is there anything that you see that the government has improved in your village or in other villages?**

I have seen [some changes] in the town and on the TV.

**Things like they come and build schools or clinics?**

No.

**Why not?**

[No answer]

**Ok, so what is your opinion on this U Thein Sein government? Can you explain it to me? What is your opinion?**

Can we trust him? We have to be alert. We will have a relationship with them but we have to be alert all the time.

**So, the [preliminary] ceasefire between [the government of Myanmar led by] U Thein Sein and the Karen National Union, do you think it is good or not?**

I think like this: the ceasefire, in my mind, I think it may not be sincere, so we do accept [the ceasefire] but we are going into it with all our hearts. So personally I think like this: I would like to say to my Karen people, they [the KNU and the government of Myanmar] use the word 'ceasefire,' but do not trust them wholeheartedly as they are the enemy [the Tatmadaw]. Also, do things in God's name, keep God on the top. There is nothing that God cannot do for our Karen people, we [the Karen people] will be looked after by our God. Even though we only trust Him [God] as a mustard seed [a little], we can get whatever we wish for. He knows our needs. So our Karen people have been oppressed for a long time, and now because of a little change [after the 2012 preliminary ceasefire], we are happy and we want to support it [the ceasefire] so that we will be safe. For that, we need to work together and discuss together. That's what I think.

**How about your opinion on the Karen National Union?**

I used to work [with the KNU] so they are still in my mind. I work among my Karen people, and until now I still love them [the Karen people], but because of the conflict [in the past] it was not easy to meet so it was difficult to discuss things. I will still help them to the best of my ability if necessary. How can we not love them, they are our own people.

**Did you say Myanmar soldiers are based close to your village?**

Yes.

**The army camp is still there?**

Yes.

**Do you know if it is LIB [Light Infantry Battalion]<sup>123</sup> or IB [Infantry Battalion]?<sup>124</sup>**

It is IB #6.

**Do you know their battalion commander's name?**

No, I don't.

**I have asked you many questions already, but is there anything that you want to mention that I did not cover in my questions?**

What I would like to mention is the KNU. Now we meet and we talk about this information, and in my opinion I think that it is very good and I would like to know what will happen to us tomorrow. If you [think that there is something that I should] know, and if you are OK [with sharing it], please tell me about it a little.

**Is there anything else that you would like to mention?**

Mention what?

**It can be anything. Anything that I have not covered?**

In the past, I cannot remember when, sometime around 1999, some Bamar [Tatmadaw] travelled and ran into two villagers fishing with cast nets in Day Loh [river]. They saw the two villagers [fishing] and they killed them both. After that, we did not hear anything about the case.

**How about other things? If you do not have anything, thank you very much for your time and for answering the questions.**

Yes, thank you very much.

#### Source #39

<b>Log #</b>	12-165-S1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Situation Update: T'Nay Hsah Township, November to December 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in March 2013 <a href="http://www.khrq.org/sites/default/files/khrq13b14.pdf">http://www.khrq.org/sites/default/files/khrq13b14.pdf</a>
<b>Location</b>	Nabu Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p>On November 30<sup>th</sup> 2012, I travelled through T'Nay Hsah Township area, Hpa-an District, and the ground situation that I saw will be described in the following.</p> <p>[I] would like to write up the issue regarding paddies that were destroyed: on November 30<sup>th</sup> 2012, I went inside the country [Burma] and arrived at T--- village and E--- village; then, I</p>

<sup>123</sup> A Tatmadaw Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

<sup>124</sup> Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Primarily for garrison duty but sometimes used in offensive operations.

saw that villagers have been grieving over the paddies that were destroyed by paddy bugs. When paddy flowers grew, bugs ate them; when paddy flowers re-grew for the second time, they [villagers] had just a few paddy grains. A flat field farm, which usually produces 300 baskets of paddy grain, can now produce only ten baskets of paddy grain. Based on interviews with villagers regarding paddies that were destroyed, this has badly impacted three village tracts, which are Htee Wah Blaw, Htee Kyah Rah and Meh Pleh. Paddy fields owners who I met and interviewed include a T--- villager named Naw S--- who got 160 baskets from her paddy field last year, but this year, she could get only three baskets of paddy grain. Saw K--- received 180 baskets of paddy grains from his paddy field last year, but this year, he could get only 12 baskets of paddy grains. An E--- villager, Saw N---, received 430 baskets of paddy grain from his paddy field last year, but he could get only 45 baskets of paddy grain from this year. A T--- villager, Naw M---, previously received 250 baskets from her paddy field but she could get only 37 baskets of paddy grain from this year, and numerous paddy field [owners] in this area still remain to be interviewed by me.

### Situation report

I am inclined to report about [the] cutting down [of] trees, bamboos and *t'la aw la* trees [a teak-like tree with large leaves, which fall in dry season and are collected by villagers for roofing thatch], which has caused the biggest negative impact to the place where villagers do livelihoods and find food [forage for vegetables and hunt wild animals].

On December 8<sup>th</sup> 2012, I stayed in A--- and Y--- villages and travelled through village-by-village; then, I heard that many villagers have been grieving because people have cut down *t'la aw la* trees, which are used for roofing thatch. As far as I saw when I went through villages, only ten percent of people use zinc roofing for their houses, that is why they want people to lend a hand to them in order to stop it [the cutting down of *t'la aw la* trees]. Some people make a living by collecting *t'la aw la* [leaves] and selling them. The price of one hundred sheets of thatch is 5,000 kyat (US \$5.82) to 7,000 kyat (US \$8.15), so, from my point of view, *t'la aw la* [leaves] have a huge benefit to villagers. I travelled around and saw villages and village tracts as well as wide *t'la aw* tree hills. People cut them down and replaced them [*t'la aw* trees] with agricultural plantations, which are full of rubber trees. Company workers are people who cut down *t'la aw* trees and have planted rubber trees because they cooperate with Burma government. The Burma government sold the land to the company. Rich people have built a relationship with leaders, and then leaders sold those hills [to them].

I would like to report the information about what I have witnessed and villagers reported the information to me, concerning Border Guard soldiers who have been recruiting soldiers in T-- and E--- villages, T'Nay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District.

On November 30<sup>th</sup> 2012, I met with two villagers from T--- and asked them about the recruitment issue; they voiced that E--- and T--- village heads went to Koh Ko [army camp] and the Border Guard ordered each of them to contribute money for soldiers who choose not to quit but continue serving in the military, even after they have completed military service. After that the village heads came back and started collecting money from villagers with three levels: 1,000 baht (US \$33.48) was collected from people who work and get enough food [upper class]; 800 baht (US \$26.76) was collected from people who work and have not quite enough food; 500 baht (US \$16.74) is collected from people who are in the worst condition. They did not collect the money as before, instead village heads wrote down people names on small piece of paper. For instance, villagers gave me two pieces of paper, which I attached with this report's papers: "*Naw W--- pay 500 baht (US \$16.74); Naw H--- pay 1,000 baht (US \$33.48).*" Border Guard soldiers call the way they recruit soldiers a 'contribution'. I interviewed villagers from many villages and many village tracts, but most of them refuse to pay money. They [Border Guard soldiers] threatened villagers and village heads, that they would arrest people who did not pay anything to them. People [villagers] told them that it is

peaceful, so we do not need to pay it to you anymore. Village heads who get benefits from them [Border Guard soldiers] have the opportunity to do it [collect money from villagers] and they want to do it, but they do not dare carry it out. In addition, Border Guard soldiers worry that the news will spread out [of the local community], so they have carried it out, but they did not dare to accomplish it forcibly. This year, 2012, T--- and E--- villages have to support 13 soldiers and pieces of paper were distributed to them in September, but not everyone has paid it to them yet.

Situation Update written by a KHRG Researcher,  
Nabu Township, Hpa-an District, (Received in December 2012)

#### Source #40

<b>Log #</b>	13-1-T1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Daw A---, August 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village tract, Maw Lay area, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Research Area: Thaton (Doo Tha Htoo) District</b></p> <p><b>Interview Date: August 9<sup>th</sup> 2013</b></p> <p><b>Name: Daw A---</b></p> <p><b>Gender: Female</b></p> <p><b>Age: 46</b></p> <p><b>Village: A--- village</b></p> <p><b>Religion:</b></p> <p><b>Ethnicity: Karen</b></p> <p><b>Family Status: married</b></p> <p><b>Occupation:</b></p> <p><b>Position: Villager</b></p> <p><b>Mu Ghar<sup>125</sup>, please can you tell me your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Daw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>46 years old.</p>	

<sup>125</sup> *Mu ghar* is a familiar S'gaw Karen term of respect attributed to an older woman that translates to "aunt," but it does not necessarily signify any actual familial relationship.

**Do you have family?**

Yes I have family.

**How many children do you have?**

One child.

**Only one?**

Yes.

**What is the age of your child?**

23 years old.

**Male or female?**

Male.

**Where do you live?**

I live in A--- village in Thaton Township.

**A--- [village] is based in which village tract?**

It is based in A--- village tract.

**What about the Township?**

Thaton Township.

**Do you have any responsibility?**

Yes. I'm the Thaton women's organisation leader.

**I want to ask you some questions, if you know you can answer and if you don't then it is no problem. Are there any army camps based near A--- village?**

The army camps which are situated close to A--- village are P'Nweh Klah and Way Raw.

**P'Nweh Klah and Way Raw?**

Yes because A--- village is located [censored for security] [these two army camps].

**So how many hours does it take to go from your village to Way Raw and P'Nweh Klah [army camps]?**

It will be around one hour on foot.

**So that is the distance between Way Raw and A--- [village]?**

Yes.

**How many households are there in A--- village?**

--- households.[censored for security]

**--- households? [censored for security]**

Yes.

**Is there a school?**

Yes.

**How many Standards are there in the school?**

Seven Standards.

**Seven Standards are taught there; so does it get any support?**

In the past it was a self-reliant school but now Max Company has built [upgraded] a concrete school here.

**Max Company?**

Yes.

**How long ago did they build this school?**

They built it in the summer season and now they have finished the construction.

**So they built it in 2010?**

No, in 2012.

**So it has already been built?**

Yes.

**Can students study there at the moment?**

Yes.

**Do you remember the date when they built the school?**

No.

**You do not remember?**

They started building it in December.

**Can you tell us about how Max Company came [to operate] here?**

We do not know the name of the company's owner. They have also planted a rubber plantation in Shway Pu village tract and they have allowed one of their managers to come to construct the school [in A--- village]. That manager went to meet with B---for [discussions about] building the school in Naw K'Toh village but he did not allow that manager to construct the school due to the lack of student number there. He told him, 'if you want to build the school, go do an assessment at A--- village'. When he came for the assessment, it was at the time when we needed [to upgrade] it because the school here was not big



enough for the [number of] students.

**Did you have to help them with anything when they were building the school?**

We helped them [by providing] gravel and sand.

**Where did you get the gravel and sand from?**

From the river.

**How did they ask the villagers [to help]?**

They asked us to do voluntary labour work.

**You did it on a day by day basis?**

The whole village did it.

**When they were building [the school], the whole village had to do labour work, right?**

Yes.

**Did they provide food or pay them?**

They did not provide food payment.

**Did they provide anything [for the villagers] after they had finished the construction?**

No.

**They left straight after the construction [had finished]?**

Yes.

**What about the teachers?**

There are three [Myanmar] government teachers who currently teach in the school.

**Do any of the village's teachers teach there?**

Yes.

**How many of them?**

In total there are nine of them [including Myanmar government teachers].

**So there are six voluntary teachers?**

Yes.

**How do you support the teachers?**

We told them that they should be voluntary teachers and we will support them a little bit as well.

**Can you tell me what you mean by 'support them a little bit'?**

We only give them 60,000 kyat per year.

**To each teacher?**

Last year we only gave them 60,000 kyat.

**So you gave 60,000 kyat to nine of them?**

Yes.

**Including the three [Myanmar] government teachers?**

No.

**So only to six teachers?**

Yes.

**The three [Myanmar government] teachers were paid by the [Myanmar] government?**

Yes.

**How much do they pay them each month?**

They give them 80,000 kyat per month.

**80,000 kyat per month?**

Yes.

**Who is the school principal at the moment?**

Thara U C---

**U C---?**

Yes.

**Does he live here with his family?**

Yes.

**Is he Karen or Burmese?**

Karen.

**What about healthcare? What do your village do for treatment?**

The anti-malaria group from the town came here. I thought they might be funded by other countries. I only know about that group. In the village the [Myanmar] government has selected village health workers and a midwife.

**How long have they been [operating] here for?**

In the last year.

**In 2012?**

Yes.

**Who is in charge of the malaria health workers in your village?**

I do not know. They selected two villagers to work with them.

**Health workers?**

No. They selected two people to check malaria and distribute the medicine [to the villagers].

**They did not use health workers?**

No they specifically selected two people [from the village] to work in the village.

**Where did they go for training after they were selected?**

They went to training in Thaton Town.

**Can you tell me the names of those two people?**

Naw D--- and Naw E---.

**After they were selected and given training and asked to work in the village, did they get paid?**

No.

**They just do it as voluntary work?**

They just work as volunteers for the village.

**They are working as volunteers but what about the medicine?**

They provide them with medicine for free.

**They distribute malaria medicine for free?**

Yes.

**What about the equipment that is needed for the malaria assessment?**

They also provide that equipment therefore they are working as volunteers.

**What do the other health workers do?**

For the other [Myanmar] government health workers they buy everything that they need themselves; therefore when they treat patients they ask for the cost of the medicine.

**So they ask for a fee for the treatment?**

Yes.

**So they [the Myanmar government] did not provide them with any medicine?**

No.

**If they [villagers] get a serious illness, what do they do?**

They go to the hospital in Thaton or Kyeh Htoh.

**Thaton and Kyeh Htoh?**

Yes.

**Is it far to go from here to there?**

Yes in the rainy season we have to go on foot and then continue with boats and cars.

**How many hours would it take us to get there?**

It takes one hour by boat and then one and a half hours by car.

**What about by car?**

It takes more than that.

**So it takes three hours?**

Yes, it takes three hours to reach Thaton hospital.

**How many armed groups are there operating in your village?**

Karen and Tatmadaw armed groups.

**Do 'Karen armed groups' include DKBA and BGF?**

No, just Karen armed groups which is the KNU [KNLA].

**So the KNU and what about the DKBA?**

At present, the DKBA do not operate here.

**What about in the past?**

Yes, in the past they operated here.

**So since 2011 when [ethnic] armed groups moved out [of the area], has the Tatmadaw continued to demand forced labour?**

No.

**They did not demand forced labour but what about tax demands. Do they still demand tax?**

No, but when we go to sell vegetables in the lower parts [areas] they still demand a tax when we pass across the gate in B---.

**So B--- army camp still demands the gate tax?**

Yes.

**Does whether they demand the tax depend on how many materials [supplies] that you bring with you or is it based on the boats?**

They did not demand the tax based on the boats but I am not asking [sure] about that. In the dry season they demanded 3,000 kyat from each car and 500 kyat from each carriage but they demanded more tax from logging trucks.

**Do they still demand money from the villagers?**

No, they do not dare to demand it because the people [villagers] complained to them.

**Are they still asking the villagers to go with them to give them directions?**

No, because they do not usually go around.

**What about the KNU?**

This is a KNU-controlled area so they are already familiar with the area but if they go for a long journey they also call the villagers [to go with them].

**You said the DKBA and BGF do not operate here?**

Yes, I have not seen them operating here recently.

**Are there any development projects in your village or township that are supported by the rich men?**

I have seen the rich men come to do rubber plantations.

**Can you tell me where the rubber plantation has taken place [been built]?**

It was built in Shwe Yaung Pya village tract.

**Only in that location?**

Yes, it was first built in Shwe Yaung Pya village tract and then [expanded] to Kyaito Kon [area]. I have been there but I cannot mention all of those places.

**Is it in the same village tract?**

I am not sure whether it is the same village tract or not because it is a very large plantation.

**How many acres of land have they used for the rubber plantation?**

I do not know about the acres. You can go to have look by yourself. I think it will be over 1,000 acres.

**They plant so much rubber – do they work alone?**

I do not know how many companies they are collaborating with. It is very large and we just say what we can see.

**Do you know [the names of] any other companies that are working with that company?**

No.

**Where is the rubber plantation which was planted by Max Company?**

I think that is the plantation which is planted by Max Company because the manager of the company said that that is the plantation of Max Company.

**Can you tell me the name of that manager?**

His name is Kyaw Gyi.

**Do you know where he lives?**

I do not know.

**Is he Karen or Burmese?**

Burmese.

**Max Myanmar Company and their manager came to run the rubber plantation so do any of the villagers face any problems because of the plantation?**

The villagers have said that there is no land for them to plant [their own crops] because all of the land has been used by the other plantation.

**All of their land has been used up by other people so did they not find any way to protect their land?**

They were actively trying to find a way when the project started and the KNU also came one time but the [KNU] leaders did not take serious action to help them and we did not know about that as well.

**So they submitted it to the KNU?**

Yes.

**After that the leaders did not take any action or submit it to any other groups?**

Some of them went to meet with the DKBA's leader who told them that their land had already been sold so they were not able to do anything.

**Can you tell me the name of that leader?**

Yes. His name is Ta Baw.

**What is his rank?**

I do not know. The people usually refer to him as officer Ta Baw.

**What did he tell them?**

He organised the arrangement [meeting] for them and let them meet with the manager [of the company]. What did the manager tell them? He told them that the KNU's leader Saw Pay

Thi<sup>126</sup> sold all of their land.

**Is that what the manager told them?**

Yes.

**Did he [the manager] do anything for them?**

They did not dare to do anything after they heard about that. They begged me to ask [the KNU] whether he used the KNU to sell the land.

**For how many years have they been planting rubber trees?**

Some of the rubber trees are ready to be tapped.

**Are they still planting new rubber trees?**

How can they plant it when there is no more land for them to plant the new plants?

**Is there any villagers' land in the area where they plant the rubbers?**

A lot of villagers' land is included.

**Can you tell me the names of the villages which are located near the rubber plantation?**

The villages are C---, D---, E---and F---. They also constructed the buildings [huts].

**Where did they construct them?**

They constructed them in D--- [village] and lots of other different places. Every building is constructed with concrete.

**So most of the affected land is in the villages that you have mentioned above?**

Yes.

**Do you know the names of any of the villagers whose land was taken away [by project]?**

I do not know their names.

**Now I am going to ask you about the ceasefire that has been signed between the KNU and the [Myanmar] government. So as you are a villager, can you tell me how you feel about the ceasefire? Tell me based on your own perspective and your understanding?**

In my personal perspective on the ceasefire, I think it was not an accurate sign for me because everything has not been implemented well.

**Do you have any concerns about the effects on civilians in the future?**

I have no idea about that. As you know we can see the faces of Burmese people but we cannot see inside them [their real thoughts]. We can say that even though they are talking about making things better, we do not know what is really inside their minds. They are not

<sup>126</sup> KHRG is in the process of following up to confirm the correct transliteration of this name.



like our Karen people. We can say that our Karen people are straight [honest] but for them [Burmese people] they are not straight [honest].

**So you cannot build trust with them?**

No.

**If the fighting happens like it did in the past do you think it would cause problems for the villagers?**

If it happens like it did in the past then it can cause problems for the villagers.

**Can you give us an example of this at the moment?**

It does happen at the moment.

**I meant if it does happen then could you give us an example of the sort of problem the villagers would face?**

If it does happen again the villagers will face the same difficulties as they have faced [in the past], such as they would have to serve as porters and thing like that will happen again. Currently the villagers do not have to serve as porters or give directions [to the armed groups]. Now if they [the armed groups] want to go somewhere they contact us in advance and let us know the destination and if villagers are available to go they ask them to go with them.

**Do you want to say anything that I have not asked about or do you want to raise anything?**

I want to raise one issue regarding the ceasefire. [Even though] they signed the ceasefire we still have to live with fear and be aware of everything. [Therefore] we cannot live very freely. If we stay without awarding then this is not good for us.

**We came to conduct an interview with you and you have provided as much information as you could. You also suggested for us to be aware of the situation therefore this is very helpful for us. We want to say thank you so much for helping us with this information. In the future if we meet again and if you have time, can we conduct an interview with you again?**

Yes.

Thank you so much.

#### Source #41

<b>Log #</b>	13-5-A4-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Naw M---, Interview Received in January 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>What is your name?</b>	Naw M---.

**How old are you?**

56 years old.

**What is your religion?**

Christian.

**What is [the name of] your village?**

H--- village, Htantabin Township, Toungoo District.

**What is your occupation?**

Cultivation.

**What kind of cultivation?**

I mostly plant cardamom plants.

**What is the responsibility you take in the village?**

I am a KWO [Karen Women Organisation] member.

**What is the difference between the situation in the past and now?**

The situation is slightly different. In the past, there were violent abuses perpetrated by the Tatmadaw. Therefore, we had to face [situations] with difficulty. There was also taxation, forced labour, and portering and we had to carry [porter for the Tatmadaw]. However, there are differences now. We do not have to pay [arbitrary] taxes, [do] forced labour and [do] portering in our village.

**Can you explain to us about taxation asked by the KNU [Karen National Union] after the [2012 preliminary] ceasefire?**

Regarding taxation requested by the KNU, we have to pay them in our village. We have to pay them every year. We have to help them to buy rice. Another tax that we have to pay is the tax for cardamom plantations. Especially those who buy the cardamom have to pay one hundred viss<sup>127</sup> of cardamom for tax for buying cardamom. This is for those who buy a wide range [amount] of cardamom. For those who do not pay one hundred viss of cardamom for tax, they are taxed 300 [kyats] per one hundred cardamom on the road. For the villagers, if we have 100 of cardamom [plants], we have to pay 42,000 kyats

**Is there any difference in the tax that they asked between previous years and this year?**

Yes, there is a difference. In the past, they did not ask for this much money. I think they [now] ask more money to be paid in tax now because the price of cardamom has increased. In the past, they asked for tax depending on the cardamom plantation; if the villagers have a large cardamom plantation, they asked [for] more tax. If the villagers have a small plantation, they asked [for] few [less] tax. One [villager] who has 100 of cardamom [plants] has to pay 42,000 kyats.

**Does asking taxation cause any difficulties for the villagers?**

I did not see that it caused difficulties for the villagers. As we are their civilians [Karen people], we need to understand them. Since some people do not understand them and do not know what challenges our leaders face, they criticise them. As they do not want to pay tax to them, they criticise them. As for me, I understand them. As I am a civilian [Karen], I will pay them [the tax] and help as much as I can. Some villagers have 700 or 800 plants of cardamom, they give [pay tax] only [for the cost of] 100 plants. Therefore, I think that [paying the cost for 100 plants even though they have 700 or 800 plants] is not the right thing. Since they do not understand, love and support our people, they do like that. Paying tax is not a

<sup>127</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

problem for me. Now, we live in our village and our livelihood is going well. The price of cardamom is also very good. The villagers were told that they were not forced to pay the tax. They were just asked to give their names on the list to ensure how many plants they have. Some villagers come to give their names and pay the tax as they have to, but some villagers come and give their names and they have 300 or 400 plants but they do not pay the tax. It makes it difficult for the leaders [KNU] to control the country [Karen State]. I understand it like that.

**How do you see that the KNU sets up gates [check-points]?**

I see that the KNU sets up gates [check-points] on the roads to ensure the food [is carried by the people]. They are going to improve the people's standard [of living]. If the gates [check-points] exist and they prohibit [carrying] not good [illegal] things, it [general standards] will be improved.

**Regarding the cardamom, do people have to pay 300 [kyats] per 100 [viss]?**

Yes, some people pay that tax but some people do not pay the tax. If they pay the tax, they are not disturbed [asked for the tax], they can travel freely.

**Is there any other kind of taxation that you have to pay?**

There is also the tax that we have to pay a bag of rice per house [to the KNU]. I did not heard of anything else that we have to pay tax for.

**Do you want to add anything regarding the tax asked by KNU?**

Regarding the tax, since the leaders have to manage the things [general duties and responsibilities], control the things and work for us, they should ask for tax from the villagers; the villagers should participate [in] that. They have their followers and they [leaders] have to manage food [supply] for them. I understand it like that.

**Is there anything the [Myanmar] government has come and done for the development [of the community] after the ceasefire?**

There is nothing that the government has done for the development [of the community]. They [the government] said that they were going to construct a road for us but they did not do anything.

**Can you explain about the situation of the dam?**

At first, we heard that they were going to stop water [build the dam]. Now, they have built some part of the dam started from L--- [place] to K--- [place]. A teacher who went to work in K--- [place] yesterday came back and said that the plants in K--- [place] have been destroyed. The villagers have to face difficulties since their lands were destroyed. I heard that the water has been near L--- [place].

**Regarding the destruction of the plants, do they pay compensation?**

I heard that they do not pay compensation for the plants that have been destroyed. Yesterday, U W---came to visit in the village [and] conducted the training. He said that he is going to report for those [villagers] whose lands and plants have been destroyed. However, now they [the villagers] have not received compensation yet.

**What is your opinion on the dam?**

We see that it does not bring any benefits for the villagers. It just causes problem [for the villagers].

**Can you explain what you mean by causing the problem?**

Because of the dam, we have lost our bridge [in the village]. It will not be easy for us to travel and carry [transport] the things when we work for livelihoods. Now, we do not have the bridge on the road. Moreover, it caused problems for those who have plantations as their

plantations have been destroyed and lost.

**Do you remember the date that they started stopping the water [with the dam]?**

No, I do not remember.

**What is your opinion on the new road and the old road for travelling?**

For the old road, it causes problems for the villagers as the bridge has been lost. In the past, we did not face with any problems when we carried [transported] the things as we had the bridge. Regarding the new road, we do not know what will happen in the future.

**After the ceasefire, is there any gold mining [being] conducted?**

There were some people who came and had a look in the village but there is no one who conducts the mining yet.

**In this area, are there any problem related to livelihoods or other issues?**

There is no problem [that] happened related to livelihood issues; it is going well with our livelihood. However, selling alcohol for a livelihood causes a problem. It causes a problem for their family [because of people drinking]. What I want to say is that we must have rules. I heard that those who sell alcohol will be given punishment but they are not actually. Therefore, our people need to have accurate rules. We need to respect the rules. We need to live under the rules. For example, if someone is not allowed to sell the alcohol and they will be given punishment if they sell, they should follow the rules if they sell. Since we do not have rules in M--- village, I know that our children [youths] live as they want to. If our leaders set up the accurate rules and we live under the rules, there will be development for us and our village. Now, I have heard that alcohol is not allowed to be sold so people go to buy it in other villages.

**What is your opinion on the ceasefire conducted by the KNU and the [Myanmar] government?**

I think it is the right thing to do. If it is a true ceasefire, it will bring peace for our Karen people, for those who have had to be displaced, and those who live in the mountain areas. After the ceasefire, I see that some villagers come back to live in the village. They can live peacefully; they do not have to be afraid of anything like before. Therefore, I see that it [the ceasefire] is the most right [good] thing.

**What about travelling, can you travel easily compared to in the past?**

We can travel freely now; we can sleep at [our] working places [farms] or in the forest at night time or travel everywhere freely. In the past, when we went to the town, we were disturbed on the way. We were also asked to show identification when we went to town. Now, we are not asked to show identification when we travel. We can also go to our working places [farms] freely; although we come back late at night, we do not have to be afraid of anything. These are the changes [after the ceasefire].

**What is your perspective on the KNU?**

I do not see any special thing or have anything to blame them [for]. I just want the leaders to know that we need to respect time. We need to respect each other. We need to respect our leaders [the KNU] and soldiers' leaders [the KNLA]. I see that we [civilians] do not respect our leaders; therefore, we need to respect them. We need to understand each other; our leaders need to understand the civilians and the civilians also need to understand our leaders and their difficulties. Moreover, we need to have unity and humbleness. We also need to love our nation. Some people do not know or do not want to know what our people need so we blame each other [for what we do not have]. Therefore, we need to love our nation, our leaders, and understand what they need. We also need to hold firmly to the truth. Nowadays, I see that there are less people [who] hold firmly to the truth. There is a proverb that says: *"Karen people love the truth and the guest [honest and hospitable]."* For example,

in our M--- village, when villagers are asked to pay tax, some villagers say that they have only one hundred plants of cardamom even though they have seven or eight hundred cardamom plants. That is a lie, not the truth. I think if people still practice [telling] lies, the people will not improve. Therefore, we need to value the truth. If [we see] anything wrong, we need to correct them. I am supporting them. There is nothing else special to say.

**What is your perspective on the Tatmadaw?**

The Tatmadaw are the same as before. They rule the country from generation to generation. Yesterday, U W--- came and conducted awareness [training] and explained to us about the ruling of the Tatmadaw [Myanmar] government from time to time which is from a monarchy [ruling system] until now [present ruling system]. As I understand, there are injustices when they rule the country from time to time. They love only themselves; they love money. He said: *"I have visited many ethnic groups and I have been to Rakhine State, Chin State, Kachin state, and now I am in Kayin state. People [from other ethnicities] criticised me and said that I am Bamar [ethnicity] and do [act] like that [like the Tatmadaw]. I told them that I am Bamar and it is one of the ethnic groups; it is not the [same as the] whole people [the country rulers]. The people who do [rule the country] are that group of people [the Myanmar government]. They are corrupt people and they are rich people. In other countries, the civilians are poor so the country is poor. In our country, the civilians are poor and our country is poor; but those who govern the country are rich."* He is Bamar but he said to us that those who govern the country do not govern the country in the correct way.

**In your area, are there any problems related to education?**

There are no problems related to education; it is going well.

**Is there any organisation that came into the area and supported anything for the school or clinic [in the village]?**

The government built the school and clinic for us. Nevertheless, they did not support anything [additional to the building needs]. Only the villagers have to support what the school or clinic needs. They, the villagers, have to provide chairs or other things to the school. Regarding the clinic, the government provides the health workers but if we go to the clinic [for treatment], we have to pay money. Therefore, there is nothing special regarding support.

**What about UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund]?**

Last year, I heard that they were going to provide primary school students' uniforms. However, the school parents were asked to pay money [to buy students' uniform]. They were also taking photos whilst paying [giving] students' uniforms to the students for their reputation. They said that they provided support to the students; but the teacher said that this was not support from them [UNICEF]. This was from the villagers' money.

**Do you have anything else to say?**

Regarding the dam, we do not know anything about it [no consultation]. In the past, we heard that they were not building the dam anymore but now they have started building the dam. Therefore, we want to know about it. We also heard that the government is going to construct a road for us but our leaders do not give them permission for road construction; we are not sure about it.

**We also do not know about the dam. What is your opinion if the road is constructed?**

As they constructed the road, they also need to build the bridge for us. If they do not build the bridge, it will be difficult to work for our livelihood. The ceasefire also must be true. If the ceasefire is true and [they] build the bridge for us, it will be very good for us. If the ceasefire is not true, we know for sure that they [the Tatmadaw] is going to come and control our area after the bridge has been built. Therefore, we need to be prepared for [this situation by] ourselves and we need suggestions [about] what we should do.

**Any other things you want to mention?**

There is nothing else special. I only want to say that the ceasefire must be true [adhered to]. Our leaders also need to ensure their administration [local organisation]. I would like to say to our leaders that it will be the best if they can prohibit [drinking] alcohol because alcohol is the thing which makes conflict, [and] decreases respect among one another. Therefore, if our leaders do not drink alcohol, their intelligence will be increased. Moreover, since the civilians also drink, they do not love their people and do not pay [give] respect to each other. In the village, when the youths drink, they are going around and screaming. It is because of alcohol. They do not know that our people need them and they do not have intelligence. If they could prohibit the alcohol very well [enforce the prohibition successfully], it will [bring] benefits for the youths and our leaders. This is my opinion. It will be the best [situation] if there is no alcohol and there will also be development.

**Thank you very much for giving us time and answering the questions.**

Thank you.

**Source #42**

<b>Log #</b>	13-8-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Interview with Naw H---, 32, Toungoo District, January 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>Naw H---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>32.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>K--- village.</p> <p><b>Which District?</b></p> <p>Taw Oo.</p> <p><b>Which township?</b></p> <p>Htaw ta Htoo.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p> <p>Karen.</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b></p> <p>Christian.</p> <p><b>What is your occupation?</b></p>	



[Farmer on a] small plantation, which plants durian and betel nut.

**In your village, do you have any responsibilities?**

Religious Women's Group Leader.

**Have you married?**

Yes.

**After the ceasefire between the [Burma/Myanmar] government army and the KNU [Karen National Union], have there been any changes in your area?**

I have only seen a few changes. The local people can travel well now. On the other hand, bad things have increased, like gambling and drinking alcohol. But for mental [morality and spirituality], it has decreased a lot.

**How about other things?**

On Sunday, respect for religion has decreased. The change is that the people who do bad things are happy because they have [now] got freedom. But for mothers and women, when they face these situations, they say that if the situation is not calm [peaceful], bad things will happen.

**After the ceasefire, in your region, are there projects for the development of the village situation, roads, schools, and hospitals that are provided for you?**

No.

**What is your perspective on the ceasefire? Do you think it is good or not?**

If we consider it, it is good for us but I would like to know whether this is real or not. [If] people know that the situation is real, we will be happy. But if the situation is not real, we have to think what we should do.

**After the ceasefire, have you seen the NPO<sup>128</sup> and other free organisations come to your village to develop and help your village? Like helping schools or healthcare.**

For now, I have not seen this yet. But, one thing comes to mind – we have to consider whether these organisations are real or not. I would be able to accept it if I understood the situation. But I will not be able to accept it yet as I do not understand it.

**Have you heard about the villagers' perspectives on the ceasefire and after the ceasefire – whether their livelihoods are better or worse?**

After the ceasefire, the situation of their livelihoods is good. But, because the situation is getting better, some villagers have gone bad. For example, if they were bad 10% [of the time] in the past, now they are bad 15% [of the time]. Some are happy that they are [now]

<sup>128</sup> It is unclear whether the use of word 'NPO' is a reference to an unnamed 'non-profit organisation' or is a reference to the 'Nippon Foundation'. [The Nippon Foundation](#) is a Japanese NGO currently implementing social innovation and development projects in Burma/Myanmar. KHRG has received several reports from community members on The Nippon Foundation's recent activities in Thaton and Hpa-an Districts, see more at "[Hpa-an Situation Update: Hlaingbwe and Nabu townships, December 2014 to January 2015](#)," KHRG, July 2015; and "[Thaton Situation Update Bilin and Hpa-an townships, June to November 2014](#)," KHRG, February 2015.



able to make a living properly. Some are not happy. I understand [the situation] like this.

**Why are people not happy?**

The reason why people are not happy is, firstly, they have to pay a lot of tax. Regarding the tax, they would like to know about the tax and, if possible, if the authorities come and explain why the villagers have to pay the tax, [then] everyone can pay the tax. But I have seen that some people do not understand everything. As we are human, it is a bit difficult for some people to understand.

**How do they demand the tax?**

Every year, we have to pay [a tax] for cardamom and paddy. Many people say that our leader should make a proper list of the tax, if possible. If the leader made a list of how much money he gets for one year and if everyone got that list, I trust that people would understand and pay the tax. Regarding the list, if it is impossible, I do not know, but if possible, [they could] give us one list for one village. Everyone would be able to see that for one year – how much they pay and the money they receive. If they understand everything they can pay [the tax].

**About travelling between T--- village and K--- village, do the villagers face any difficulty?**

Some people said that there is difficulty. As there are good things, there are also bad things. Some people said it is good but some said it is not good. So, there are two kinds of groups [opinions]. We cannot say exactly.

**What kind of difficulties do they face?**

Now is the cold season and everything is fine. But in the rainy season, there are lots of difficulties.

**What kind of difficulties are there in the rainy season?**

When the rain is heavy and if the road is damaged, people say that we will not even be able to eat rice.

**Why will the road be damaged?**

They built the dam not for our benefit. Moreover, it affects us and difficulties occur.

**When they built the dam, the road was damaged and how have they made it better for the villagers to travel?**

Some people said that they do not know where they will go and whether they will change the place [destination]. If I say, because they do like this, people want to go back and live on the old road. They do not live on the current road.

**Since they built the dam, how have you seen travelling and transportation get worse?**

I have seen that cars are transporting goods. Some people said that they now have to transport [goods] and if it is in the rainy season, it is not easy.

**Why is it not easy?**

If the road is damaged in the rainy season, we will face difficulties.

**Because of the dam, is the price of food different from previous years?**

Yes. Because of the dam, the prices are not the same as before. If the price of a good was 20,000 kyat in the past, now the price is 22,000 kyat.

**How about other things?**

The prices of other goods are not much different. But I see the price of rice is different.

**Have the companies from the cities come to mine for gold?**

I heard people say there are. But I have not seen them by myself. People say there are but if I see them myself, then I will trust.

**Has land in your village been confiscated by the government? Do they confiscate land to build army camps or to construct places to live?**

I heard about it before the ceasefire. But I only heard about it and have not seen them do it with my eyes. Nowadays, if there is land near their place, they say that that land is theirs and they do not give it back to the villagers.

**Do you know exactly about the land confiscation? Do you know whose land has been confiscated and where?**

I know some. But not all about villagers' land.

**Can you tell me whose land has been confiscated?**

Not exactly. But one of my friends told me that the authorities told the villagers not to go near the place and the villagers also do not dare to go there.

**Do you know about the confiscation on the villagers' land?**

Four or five people's land was confiscated near the army place.

**How many acres have been confiscated?**

I have not asked my friends about that.

**Do you know where the place is?**

I do not know how to call the place.

**When they lost their land, did they submit a letter to the authorities?**

I have never talked with the owners.

**When they confiscated the land, did they give compensation to the owners?**

No they did not give [compensation].

**After the ceasefire, has there been sexual harassment of the women in your village by the government soldiers?**

I have seen that there is no harassment. But when the women take a bath, they [the government soldiers] also come and take a bath with us. We do not want them to do this.

**Is there an army camp in your village?**

Yes.

**Do you know the name of the villagers from the army camp? Name and position.**

No. I do not know exactly.

**Is there a school in your village?**

Yes.

**Up to which standard?**

Up to 10<sup>th</sup> Standard.

**Who established the schools? The government or KNU or the villagers themselves? Which NPO<sup>129</sup> came to establish them?**

I do not know exactly. But I heard that our ancestors established the schools for us. After that the governments took ours.

**How much does each student pay for school fees?**

In 2012, primary school students have to pay 1,500 kyat, middle school students have to pay 3,500 kyat, and high school students have to pay 4,000 kyat. That is for everything – books and school fees.

**Is there any other help for education? From other organisation?**

No.

**Do they have a chance to learn the Karen language?**

They learnt before, but now they do not. It has now been 10 years that they do not have the chance to learn the Karen language. Children at that time learnt the Karen language but now they do not.

**Are there parents who ask the teachers to teach the Karen language for their children to be able to learn it?**

Yes there are, but I have not seen a lot at the present time. Because if we say this, the teachers who come and teach are Burmese people. If they tell them how to teach us, they will not believe us.

<sup>129</sup> It is unclear whether the use of word 'NPO' is a reference to 'non-profit organisation' or is a reference to the 'Nippon Foundation'. [The Nippon Foundation](#) is a Japanese NGO currently implementing social innovation and development projects in Burma/Myanmar. KHRG has received several reports from community members on The Nippon Foundation's recent activities in Thaton and Hpa-an Districts, see more at "[Hpa-an Situation Update: Hlaingbwe and Nabu townships, December 2014 to January 2015](#)," KHRG, July 2015; and "[Thaton Situation Update Bilin and Hpa-an townships, June to November 2014](#)," KHRG, February 2015.

**Do you know how many teachers are there?**

15 teachers.

**Where do those teachers come from?**

Most of them are Bamar. There are a few from our village – only two or three teachers. Most of the others are other ethnic groups.

**How much salary does a teacher get?**

I heard that their salary has increased. But I do not know exactly.

**Is there a hospital in your village?**

Yes.

**Who established the hospital?**

It is the same as for the school, as I said.

**Who established it?**

The [Burma/Myanmar] government.

**Is the hospital's equipment adequate?**

No.

**What kind of diseases do your villages currently face?**

I saw the diseases that the villagers face in 2012. I have seen that women face difficulty giving birth to their children. This year has had a lot.

**How about other diseases?**

Stomach ache.

**How much is one tin of rice?**

6,000 kyats.

**How about one pound of meat?**

5,000 kyats. Now, the price has increased a bit. Now I see that people sell 6,500 kyats for the chicken.

**What is your perspective on the military government? Good or not?**

I wonder why they transport food. All of our villagers think about whether their work is honest or not. Even if we do not know their intentions, we can see their actions.

**What is your perspective on the KNU?**

On the KNU I think that, I love our people but I think that they should have the exact records for their work. People would like to know things, such as a list of the money they received or

other information. For myself, I want this. Everyone says that they see the exact information and records. Mostly, people say things like this.

**In which way do your villagers make a living?**

Some work on plantations and some work in commerce.

**When they make a living like this, are there people who do not have enough food for a year?**

No. I see that people work the whole year and if they do not have enough food to eat, this is because they wasted half of their money and used the remainder for food.

**If they do not have enough food for one year, what kind of work do they do?**

If they do not have enough food, some ask for food from other people. They say that they will repay next year. Like this.

**Do they do daily wages work?**

Yes.

**How much do they get paid for one day?**

Our church and our villagers say the rules for each year are like this: they set how much will be paid for those who work for daily wages. Each year, our pastor or church committee members let the villagers and church members know.

**Do you want to tell me any information that I have not asked about?**

We would like to know whether the ceasefire process is real or not. The second thing is we would like to know exactly about the tax that we have paid. At least how much our people [are] able to eat [and] how our leaders arrange the tax. We will not tell about it if we know. Some people would like to see the information. In our church, I held the money. Like we would like to know how much money we get or use. This one is important. Another thing is, the work should keep exact records. We really want to know about these two things.

**Do you want to tell me anything else?**

I have one thing to say. I would like to thank our people so much. Because they stand for our people. We really thank them. We pray for our people. Our church has a fast once a month and we pray for them. It has been three years that we have prayed like this. I hope that God will let you understand even when what I said was not clear. I would like to thank our people's leaders.

**I would like to thank you for giving us your time.**

**Source #43**

<b>Log #</b>	13-9-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Nyaunglebin Interview: Saw A---, December 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Kyaukkyi Township, Nyaunglebin District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Name:** Saw A---

**Gender:** Male

**Age:** 63

Please note this down carefully. The fields numbered 98 and 100 belong to the villagers from the middle of Kyauk Pon [village]. And the fields numbered 101-B and 102-C belong to the villagers from Mea Chaung Gaung [village].

**So all of this land is farming fields?**

Yes, all of this land is used for farming.

**What about the gardens and plantation fields?**

There were no gardens and plantation fields confiscated by the army. They confiscated only the farming fields. They confiscated it [the land] in 1999. I will tell you how they confiscated it [the farming fields]. Infantry Battalion #351, based on the other side of the river, built many buildings when they first arrived. But when General Aye Taung, the headquarters commander, came and inspected the place he gave orders to move to this side [of the river] because the place is very far from Chauk Sel [village]. At that time, they measured the fields that were nearby the camp. In field number 98, the army confiscated plot numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 to be used as U Paing.<sup>130</sup> The fields of Maung B---, Saw C--- and Maung D--- were counted in the plot numbers 1, 2 and 3 in field number 100. These are the lands that were confiscated. At that time I was the advisor of the village because I had resigned from my job [as the head of village]. They started measurement and only this land [referred to above] was included in the list of land being confiscated. And [the land owners of these lands] now had to pay [rent on part of their] paddies [to the commander] to be able to work in the fields. But then they confiscated all the lands from field number 98 in the following year. They also confiscated all the lands from field number 101. Field number 100 is located close to Chauk Sel and borders the fields of Maung E---. We called it field number 100. At first they confiscated only fields 1, 2 and 3 from field number 100. But later they confiscated all the land in field number 100. And also they confiscated all the land from Maung F---'s field. That is how they confiscated the land.

After that we, the farmers, did not dare to say anything about [the confiscation] because it was the era of the military government. Some people gave up working on their land because they did not want to speak [up]. People who wanted to do farming started to work in the fields. But they had to pay with part of their paddies as leasing fees. But after the election [2010 election], President Thein Sein established a farmland law and after that, U Nyan Shwe Win, the Member of Parliament came and told us that we can submit our case to the government if we have land that was confiscated by the army in our area. So we gathered the farmers, for example farmers from Aung Soe Moe village and Kweh Chan village, and asked their opinion on that case [land confiscation conducted by the military]. And they said that they wanted to complain about it. I organized the submission and submitted the case to the President, Defence Minister, Farming and Irrigation Department, Southern Command Headquarters, Land Registration Department and then all together to the eleven departments. Not very long after, 15 days after the submission, the commander summoned me and the administration and asked who led this case. And I replied that I did not lead the case. The member of Parliament [U Nyan Shwe Win] told us that we could submit it when he came to the meeting. So we collected the perspectives of the farmers and we did it together.

<sup>130</sup> The Union of Myanmar Economic Holding Limited (UMEHL) locally known as U Paing is one of the two business conglomerates run by Burma's Ministry of Defence. See "[Myanmar military in the money](#)".

Then he replied that you can submit the case but it is not good to include that you had to pay 15 baskets<sup>131</sup> of paddies to the camp to lease one acre of land. Then we replied that this is the farmers' report and we submitted the true information. Then he said, *"Well. You already submitted the case and we have to wait for the decision."*

The operation commander held the next meeting with all the farmers who submitted the letter to the president on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. The operation commander has a good mind. He talked from the side of the farmers. Then he asked the same question about who coordinated the submission. And I told him everything. And he said that, *"They confiscated the farming fields for the families of the Tatmadaw because the government could not support the families of the Tatmadaw sufficiently. That is why we confiscated the lands and manage the livelihood of the families of the Tatmadaw."* And he continued that, *"It is the right of the villagers to submit the case. So, henceforth, you do not need to give the lease fees to the army camp starting from 2012."* These are the words of the operation commander. Then all the farmers had to sign so that we do not need to pay the lease fees to the army camp.

Not very long after that, the township administrator summoned us in October and told us that the case that we submitted to the president came back to him and he has to solve this case. Now, we divided the fields that confiscated by the army camp and the fields that were not confiscated by the army camp. And he said that he will come and solve the problem later. So our farmers started to ask questions. Actually I knew it all [the information about all of the acres that were confiscated]. For example, Maung G--- asked if his fields were counted in the fields that were confiscated or not. Then the township administrator asked him the field number. But he did not know the number. So I told him that it was the field number 101-B. Then the administrator asked what his name was and he replied that he used his wife's name in the land tenure. Then the administrator opened the book and answered that his land was included in the confiscated lands. Then I stood up and questioned [said] that our farmers want to know which fields were counted in the confiscation and which fields were not. Then the administrator asked me which fields I worked on. And I told him field number 98, U Paing 14/2 and there are 7 acres of land. Then he looked at the book and told me that my land was not counted. He just gave the answer like that but did not explain about it openly.

### **They said they will give back the lands and so have they come and solved the case?**

Not yet. They said that they will come with the administrator U Naing Oo and solve the case after the harvesting because the farmers want to know whether their fields were counted in the confiscation or not.

### **Do you know how many acres of lands were confiscated from all the fields?**

I have the list. I will show you. The member of parliament gave us this document. It includes the date that the headquarters commander and the land registration department came and checked the lands on August 21<sup>st</sup> and the land registration is also reported in this document. This document includes the maps and the list of the land that was confiscated; the fields and land that were not confiscated; and fields that were checked by the land registration department. Here are the fields that are not included in the confiscated area. In the field number 102-A, 133.73 acres of land are not included in the land that was confiscated and there are 16 farmers in that area. I will send you the name list of each farmer if you want it.

### **What about the list of the confiscated lands?**

<sup>131</sup> A basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg. or 46.08 lb. of paddy, and 32 kg. or 70.4 lb. of milled rice. A basket is twice the volume of a big tin.



Here is the land that was included in the confiscation. There are 124.58 acres of land and the land of 17 farmers was confiscated in field number 101-B. Another one is field number 98 and they [Tatmadaw] confiscated 24.96 acres of land from that field number and it was owned by 4 farmers. I will send you the copy later if you want it. There were 39.66 acres of land that were confiscated from field number 100 where four people owned this land. The names of the owners are Saw H---, Saw I---, Naw J--- and Saw L---.

The lands that are not included in the confiscation [not confiscated under the law La/Na (39)]<sup>132</sup> of field number 98 is the land of:

Name list of the land owners	Amount of land
A---	6 acres
B---	---
C---	8.62 acres
D---	14 acres
E---	9.5 acres
F---	9 acres
G---	8 acres
H---	4.89 acres
I---	7.46 acres
J---	6 acres
K---	9.99 acres
L---	2 acres

The other people who's lands were not included in the confiscation in field number 100, the fields that were close to A---

M---	6.96 acres
N---	4.99 acres
O---	6.54 acres
P---	8.30 acres
Q---	26.79 acres

The authority will make the decision according to this document. But for the confiscated lands, the township administrator said that the Government confiscated it according to La/Na (39). La/Na (39) is Ler Naing law [the law that dominates the jurisdiction of farming fields]. La/Na (39) means the farming lands are confiscated by the order of the Government. So, you will not get back your lands if it was confiscated by the law of La/Na (39). And the administrator said that people will not get their lands returned if their land was confiscated by the law of La/Na (39).

### Did he say like that?

Yes he said that. The other thing is cashew plantations. There are 18 owners of cashew plantations, including villagers from B--- and C--- village. They said that this land is the land of the camp and the people will not get it back.

### How many acres of cashew plantations are there?

<sup>132</sup> "La/Na (39) refers to 'subject to Article 39 of the Land Nationalization Act'. According to this Article, the President or the authorities appointed by him to act on his behalf may direct, if it is deemed necessary, that any agricultural land be utilized in such manner as prescribed by him." UNHCR, UN Habitat and Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Guidance Note on Land Issues Myanmar*, page 13. See <https://www.sheltercluster.org/Asia/Myanmar/Documents1/Forms/DispForm.aspx?ID=4>

Approximately, there are 100 acres of cashew plantations because each person owns 5 or 6 acres of cashew plantations. Regarding this case I want to inform the KNU [Karen National Union] that there will be some consequences. I will explain to you how the problems will emerge. For example, the lands owners of the land that was not confiscated by the La/Na (39), they gave up working in their fields and found a new place to work peacefully because they did not want to talk to the camp [personnel]. So the other people came and worked in their fields. So if the owners want to work in their fields they have to register within the coming year. So there will be problems between the land owners and the people who are working in their fields currently.

The problem can occur like this: the land owners will say the land is their property so they have to register it with their name but the people who are working on it will argue that the land belongs to them. So I want the KNU to solve the problem so that it will be a just decision. [If not,] it will be a big problem. I will tell you another thing. I know this because they told me themselves. The eldest daughter of U Dee Dee from Aung Soe Moe told the battalion commander that she wants to work in her fields. U Sein Win [a farmer that took over the land, who is not part of the military] is working in her fields. Then the battalion commander asked U Sein Win if he works in her fields and he replied that he does but he thought that he was working in the fields that were confiscated by the camp and he did not know that they were her fields. So, problems will emerge between the [original] field owners and the people who are working on the fields. It will take a long time if we have to solve this problem with the Government side because we have to go step by step starting with the township level then to the district level and then to the division level. I believe that the KNU has to solve this problem for us in order for it to be a fair trial and it would be faster if the KNU solved the problem.

**What is the perspective of the villagers on the confiscated land [through La/Na (39)] and the land that was also confiscated [but not following La/Na (39)]? The government will return only the land that was confiscated [not using La/Na (39)]?**

They will not return the land that they confiscated [by the La/Na (39) law].

**What about compensation?**

Yes, I asked them if they will give compensation to the people whose lands were confiscated. And he [administrator] replied that land confiscation is practiced in the whole country. You will get compensation if the other township gets it. And the township administrator said that he does not know exactly about it.

**What do the villagers want?**

The villagers want their own lands back because it is their property. They left their fields just because of the bad situation [having to pay rent on their land to the military]. Everyone wants to work on their lands if the situation is getting better. It would be a little bit better if the KNU can help us.

**Did they threaten you when you submitted this case?**

They did not scold but they just said it is not good to mention that you had to give fifteen baskets to the camp for an acre of land. "*It disgraces us,*" he said. We do not know about it. We are just telling the truth [about the fact] that we had to give to them.

**The [original] owners of the land are living around here?**

Yes, they are living around here.

**What about the people who are working in their fields?**

Some are from our own village and some are from other villages.

**What about your lands? Do you work in your fields?**

No, I gave up working my fields since they confiscated them. But a person from our village is now working in my fields.

**What about the leasing fees?**

I do not get the leasing fees. They [the people working on his fields] have to give it to the camp.

**Do you have the land title?**

Yes, I have one.

**Did both of the Battalion #60 and Battalion #351 carry out the confiscation?**

Yes. Both of them carried out the confiscation. They confiscated it according to the [*win sar* (a permission letter from the Government to be a proprietor of the land.)). They had a [*win sar*]. We saw the *win sar* when we went to the land registration office to ask for the list. Then we asked [about] the *win sar* and complained about it [the confiscation] according to the *win sar*. We would not know whether they confiscated the lands or not if we do not have a *win sar* and we used the *win sar* as evidence [for complaint about the land confiscation].

**You did not get a satisfactory answer, right?**

Yes. We were not satisfied with the answer. U Nyan Shwe Win gave this document to me and another copy to the administrator and told us to keep it because we have to solve the problem in the next year. He also told us that they will return the land that was not confiscated by the La/Na Law. For the land that was confiscated by the La/Na Law, they will discuss with the battalion of the Tatmadaw to work on it. And the administrator will come and solve the problem for the land that was not confiscated by the La/Na Law after the harvest.

**The villagers gave up working on their land because they thought that their land was confiscated?**

The villagers knew it, but they did not know which land was confiscated. Only the village heads knew it. We [the village heads] knew only the land that was close to our area. For example field number 100 and field number 98. In field number 98 it included only U Paing 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. And in field number 100 it included U Paing 1, 2 and 3. But, later they confiscated not only this land but all the land.

**Where did you continue working after they confiscated your land?**

We just continued to work on cultivation. We did not want to work in the farming fields because we did not want to talk [argue with the Tatmadaw]. They will summon you if you cannot pay the leasing fees. Some people were even put in the jail because they could not give the leasing fees.

**You mean they worked on their own fields and they could not give the leasing fees**

**and they were put in jail?**

Yes. Some people were put in jail and the village head had to redeem them. It was the era of the dictatorship and we could not complain to anyone. We just had to suffer it in silence. They [Tatmadaw] built their camps in the wild lands [uncultivated lands]. They did not build it in the fields.

**[They] did not the build the camp in the fields?**

No, they did not build it in the fields.

**So they deliberately confiscated the fields?**

Yes, they deliberately confiscated it because the lands are not concerned with the camp. The camp is on the hill and the fields are in the plains. My land was not included in the confiscated lands and they will return it. But they did not speak about when they will return it but we know it according to this document. The administrator did not legally announce when they will return the lands.

**They confiscated these fields at the same time in 1999?**

Yes, at the same time.

Saw A---, (male, 63), Kyaukkyi Township, Nyaunglebin District  
(Interviewed in December 2012)

**Source #44**

<b>Log #</b>	13-9-A4-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Saw A---, December 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>What is your name?</b>	
Saw A---.	
<b>How old are you?</b>	
43 years old.	
<b>What is your father's name?</b>	
Saw S---.	
<b>Where do you live?</b>	
A--- village.	
<b>What is your occupation?</b>	
I work on a betel nut leaf plantation.	
<b>Have any powerful people [businessmen] or companies confiscated villagers' land in</b>	

**this area?**

No, they have not. Only the Tatmadaw confiscates [land]. They confiscate working [farm] lands like paddy fields.

**What is the name of the place [where the Tatmadaw confiscated land]?**

It is called Kyauk Pon The in Burmese. We usually call it Shwe Lan Taung Kwin [paddy field]. Paddy fields #98, #101 and #100 were confiscated.

**Which Tatmadaw battalion confiscated the paddy fields?**

Tatmdaw [Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)] #351 confiscated the paddy fields.

**Was it only one battalion [that confiscated the paddy fields]?**

[Infantry Battalion] #60, which came to stay here in the past, was quiet [caused no problems]. They came and stayed here between 1989 and 1990. [The battalion that started to confiscate the villagers' paddy fields was LIB #351]. They confiscated the villagers' paddy fields. First they asked three baskets [of paddy] per acre of paddy field from the farmers during the first year [that they were in the area, 1991]. Therefore, if [the farmers] had many [acres] of paddy field, they had to give more [baskets of paddy]. In the following year, they asked for six baskets of paddy [per acre]. They [the Tatmadaw] said that they were going to ask for six baskets of paddy a year [per acre]. The following year, they asked for 15 baskets of paddy [per acre]. They continued asking [for paddy from the villagers] until now.

**Is it [15 baskets of paddy] per acre of paddy field?**

When they first came in 1991, they asked for three baskets of paddy per acre of paddy field. In 1994, they asked for six baskets of paddy per acre of paddy field. Starting from 1995, they asked for 15 baskets of paddy per acre of paddy field, [and they continued to demand this until] 2012.

**How many acres of your paddy fields did the Tatmadaw confiscate?**

They confiscated 5.33 acres of my paddy fields.

**How many acres of paddy fields [in total] do you think the Tatmadaw confiscated in this village?**

Yesterday, I heard that they had confiscated 1,000 acres of paddy fields. This includes [different types] of fields such as paddy fields, the plains lands and uncultivated lands.

**How many land owners [have had their lands confiscated]?**

When we [the interviewee and other community members] tried to follow up on the land issue yesterday, there were about 50 land owners who have submitted their names [that their lands were confiscated]. There are also many land owners who have not submitted their names yet. Therefore, there are about 80 land owners whose lands were confiscated.

**How do the villagers continue to work as their paddy fields have been confiscated?**

As our lands are confiscated, if we want to work on [our paddy field], we have to pay money for our land [to rent it back]. We cannot pay money for the land as well as we have to buy the paddy to pay to the Tatmadaw. Therefore, we cannot afford to work on our paddy field and

we have to leave our paddy field. We have to work as day labour [hired labour]. We have to work carrying the things [from place to place] and clearing the grass [in the plantation] for money.

**So, when you work on your paddy field, you have to give 15 baskets of the paddy [to the Tatmdaw]. If you cannot afford to give them, you have to buy the paddy and give to them?**

Yes, we have to buy the paddy and give to them as they ask. We have to pay 15 baskets of the paddy for one acre of the paddy field. We have to pay 15 baskets of the paddy fully. Therefore, as we also have weak point [cannot afford to pay], we leave our paddy field.

**Did everyone leave their paddy fields?**

There are only two or three people who [have continued] working on their paddy fields. As they cannot find any other jobs, they try to work on their paddy fields. They work as they can and they also have to give [as much paddy] as the Tatmdaw asks. They had to give [paddy] to the Tatmadaw every year. In some years, the paddy plants in their fields were not growing well enough and they had to sell their cows and buy some of the paddy [from other farmers] to give to the Tatmadaw. One of the farmers who is working on the paddy field which is next to my paddy field had to sell one of his cows to buy paddy to give to the Tatmadaw this year. He said that he had no choice. As he does not have any other job, he has to work on his paddy field. He is [still] working [on his paddy field]. He told me to work on my paddy field. I said to him that I cannot afford to work on my paddy field as I do not have any cattle left this year. I want to get my land back. If my younger brother works on my paddy field, he might want to offer me [some paddy]. Therefore, I want to get back my paddy fields.

**When you worked on your paddy field, when you could not pay for [paddy for the Tatmadaw], what did the Tatmadaw do to your paddy field?**

If we could not pay for it, they put us into custody [arrested]. It means that the family members who are left at home have to find money to give to the Tatmadaw. If they cannot pay with paddy, they have to pay with money to the Tatmadaw. It was when I worked in the final year. When they came [to our paddy field] while we were working, we were not free to do our own work [because we had to work for them]. When they came to build up their camp, they confiscated two or three of the villagers' land [to build their camp on]. They ordered us to work on their paddy fields every morning. They gave the huts [in the paddy field] numbers from one to ten. If the huts number 1, 2, and 3 went to work on their field one day and then the huts number 4 and 5 have to work on their paddy field on the next [alternate] day. Therefore, the farmers could not work for them [Tatmadaw] any longer and they left their paddy fields. From then, they [the Tatmadaw] started paying money to the farmers who went to work for them. I do not know the name of the first officer who asked for [paddy]. I only know the name of the last officer who asked for [paddy]. He is called Pu Tin Myint in Karen. The Tatmadaw gave him responsibility to control these paddy fields. He was given the name of the list [of the paddy fields by the Tatmadaw].

**Have you ever reported the case of your confiscated land to the Government?**

I never reported it to the Government in the past. I reported it [to the Government] in 2012. I do not remember which month it was. I had reported it once [to the Operation Commander of LIB #351]. After we had reported, the Operation Commander of LIB #351 called us [to their army camp] and told us that he was not satisfied with the case that we reported regarding the land issue. He said *"You are not satisfied with us and you reported about me, [saying that] we confiscated your land."* We replied to him *"It is not like that. We heard that the paddy fields that are confiscated in the town are given back to the paddy field owners. Since we*



*also want back our paddy fields, we report it.” He said that he could not do anything [to solve this problem] and there are also some officers who are higher in rank than him. He then gave a piece of paper to each of us and asked us to write our biographies [description of the complaint]. We had to write [our biography] there [in the camp] and we submitted them to him. Then he said “I will submit your biographies to the minister. When I receive [a reply] from the minister, I will let you know [whether you will get back your paddy fields back or not].” After he had met with us [and had] submitted [our biographies] to him, he took our biography [papers] and then we came back [to the village]. A few days later, the township administer from Kyaukkyi Township ordered us to meet with him. We went to meet with him and he questioned us. He said “The farmers who submit their land cases [to the government] did not come through to me. However, when the submission [reply] is back, I [will] receive it. When it [submission] comes back to me, I have to inform the people [who are involved in the case]. However, if you need [to discuss] anything, come to me. Discuss it with me. If you need anything, I will help you.” However, I think according to his conversation, although he tried to work it out, we will not get back our paddy fields. As we are the normal civilians [not powerful], we have to face many different kinds of difficulties. We want to get our paddy fields back. We do not know what to do.*

**How did you report [write] your submission yesterday?**

We chose U B--- to organize [writing the report]. He noted down our names, the numbers of our paddy fields, the [number of] acres that we have in our paddy fields and the location of our paddy fields. Then he submitted it [to the Tatmadaw]. We reported that we want to get our paddy fields back. If we get our land back, we are going to work on our own [re-gained] paddy fields. That is what we reported.

**Did you receive any response after you [submitted your] report?**

Since we [submitted our] report, we have not received any response. When we went to meet with the township administer from Kyaukkyi Township, we told him to make a list of the paddy fields that were confiscated and the paddy fields which were not confiscated, and then to let us know. However, until now, we have not received any response. We did not know [all the information on] whose lands were confiscated.

**Did [LIB] #351 confiscate all of the paddy fields in that area? Did all of the farmers leave all of their paddy fields?**

When the farmers who are working on their paddy fields cannot afford to pay for paddy [to give to the Tatmadaw], they leave their paddy fields. Since the people who live near the paddy fields want to work on the paddy fields that were left by the farmers, they ask permission [to do so] from the Tatmadaw and they work on [the abandoned paddy fields]. One of the farmers [who works on my paddy field that I have abandoned] told me “If your paddy fields are given back to you one day, we will continue working on your paddy fields and we will pay you the value of your paddy fields. I am working on your paddy fields for my livelihood. It is not like I confiscated your paddy fields. We do not have our own paddy fields to work on.” When I visited them [the farmers], that is what they told me.

**Who did U B--- submit the [report regarding the confiscated] paddy fields to?**

He submitted the paddy fields issue to U Nyan Shwe Win. He said that U Nyan Shwe Win had discussed it with him and asked him to submit the name list of the confiscated paddy field [owners] to him. He [U B---] said that he has submitted [the reports] and that he would work with him [U N---] to get the confiscated paddy fields back. Therefore, he [U B---] called all those whose lands had been confiscated to meet with him. He then submitted [our reports to U N---]. It took us a little bit of a long time to meet with all of the people whose lands had



been confiscated. When all the people had been brought together, we submitted [our reports on] the issue to above [LIB #351]. When the submission came back, LIB #351 then called to meet with us as I have mentioned.

**Do you think the people whose paddy fields were confiscated will probably get their paddy fields back?**

The Tatmadaw mentioned two points regarding the paddy field that are confiscated. The first point is that the paddy fields that were firstly confiscated might not be given back [to the paddy fields owners]. The paddy fields that were lastly confiscated might be given back [to the paddy fields owners]. However, I think I will not get my paddy fields back. Also, I think, they should not have confiscated my paddy field as the location of my paddy fields is very far from their army camp. I think it is not fair that they confiscated the paddy fields. The measurement [of the land for their army camp] was not fair because the way that they measured it did not go straight. When I went and looked at the paddy field of the U Paing [company] field #101, [I found that] four [out of ten] of the paddy field owners had lost their paddy fields. As for U Paing field #98, five [out of ten] paddy field owners' paddy fields were confiscated; so only the five names of the paddy field owner appears [in the list]. Only six paddy field owners [whose paddy fields were not confiscated] appear [in the list]. This is from U Paing # 5 and above. When I went and looked at the list of the names [whose lands were confiscated], my name was not included in the list. I thought that my paddy field was not confiscated; only the other paddy fields were confiscated. Nevertheless, when I went to ask the female clerk, she said that my paddy field was confiscated. When I looked at the list, the names in the list [which mentions whose lands were confiscated or not] and the paddy field that they confiscated is different. We do not know how to solve this problem. I also do not know how they [Light Infantry Battalion #351] will think of this [related to the confiscating paddy field issue].

**How do the farmers want the government to help them?**

I do not know what the farmers think about [the issue]. I do not know whether some of the villagers might think that they were going to continue working on their paddy fields for the whole of their lives, although the Tatmadaw military [LIB #351] confiscated their paddy fields. As for us, the owners of the paddy fields, we want our paddy fields back. We hope the leaders from UN [United Nations] will help us. We do not want this to lead to a conflict. As we want to work peacefully, we want to ask [for our paddy fields] softly [peacefully]. If we do not get [our paddy fields] back, we cannot do anything.

**Do you have a plan to submit the paddy fields issue to the government to get your paddy fields back in the future?**

We want [the government] to arrange for us to get our paddy fields back. However, we [will] also find our own way to get our paddy fields back. If there is anyone who wants to help us to get our paddy fields back, we have to continue working on. If we do not continue working for it and give up it would not be good. Since we have already started working for it, we will continue to work for it.

**Is it only U B--- who is leading on the paddy field issue for farmers? Is there anyone else?**

There are five members in his group. It also includes one woman whose name is Ma C---.

**When they [LIB #351] confiscated the paddy fields, did they build anything [there]?**

There are no buildings in my paddy fields. However, the paddy field that they confiscated is

about two miles away from the where they built their buildings [army camp].

**Did they confiscate all of the paddy fields there?**

They confiscated fields #89, #101 and #102. They confiscated all of the paddy fields in field #102. They confiscated half of the paddy fields in field #98. I know that five paddy fields were confiscated in field #98. They confiscated these five paddy fields permanently. They confiscated the other paddy fields in order to get the fees [paddy from the farmers]. There will be three or four paddy fields.

**So, they confiscated all of the paddy fields there including legal and illegal paddy fields [paddy fields for which the owners have land title and fields for which the owners do not hold formal title]?**

Yes. They confiscated [them] all.

**So, after they confiscated the paddy fields, they didn't build any buildings but they asked for paddy field fees [from the farmers]?**

Yes, they did that. The farmers usually grow groundnut and sesame on the land that is beside the paddy fields. If the farmers get five baskets of sesame, they [farmers] have to give two and half baskets to [LIB #351]. [It is the same with] groundnut oil. If farmers get two big tins<sup>133</sup> of groundnut oil, one big tin of groundnut oil has to be given to them. Even thatch, if people can harvest 100 thatches beside the paddy fields, people have to give 50 thatches to them. They ask the farmers for half.

**Have the Tatmadaw confiscated [land] only in this area? Are there any other places you know of [where the Tatmadaw has confiscated paddy fields]?**

I only know about the Shwe Lan Taung area. I did not hear anything [about the Tatmadaw confiscating paddy fields] in other places like the plains [of Shwe Lan Taung].

**Do you know the name of the officer who confiscated the paddy fields?**

I do not know the name of the officer who initially confiscated the paddy fields. I only know a [recent] officer who ordered the [farmers to provide] paddy as a fee [for working on the] paddy fields. I only know that officer and that officer has already moved from here [to a new duty station and been replaced by another officer]. He moved to Four Miles Town. His name is U Tin Myint.

**For example, if the government cannot give back your paddy fields and gives you compensation for your confiscated paddy fields, do you have any plan [of what you would do]?**

If the Tatmadaw do not give us back the paddy fields and gives us compensation for the cost of each of our paddy fields, we are going to buy new paddy fields near our village.

**How do you want the leaders from other countries to solve the problem for your paddy fields?**

We want the UN to arrange it for or us so that we get our paddy fields back and work on our

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<sup>133</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg. or 23.04 lb. of paddy, and 16 kg. or 35.2 lb. of milled rice.

paddy fields freely [without having to provide paddy to the Tatmadaw].

**Do you have anything to express about your experience and feelings which I have not questioned you about?**

Yes, I do. I want to get my paddy fields back [because] since [our land was confiscated] [our work on] our livelihoods has not been going well, but I have not got anything yet. As a result, I have to face many difficulties. I thought that I could work on another paddy field that I used to work on, which is on the mountain, [but] it was also destroyed and lost, as the situation in the past was not good, so I cannot go to work on it. Therefore, if I get my paddy field back [from the Tatmadaw], I think I am going to work on it, which is near my village. Thus, I would like to report this.

**So you hope that your land will be given to you?**

Yes, I hope so. I also think that the other farmers hope to get their paddy fields [back]. Some of us who live in the mountains have lost our jobs [as our paddy fields have been confiscated]. I thought that I would work on our paddy fields [forever], which we inherited from our parents and ancestors for our livelihoods, because we do not have other jobs to work on. We can get enough food from our paddy fields and it will make it easier for us to make our living. We have to buy food and it is very difficult to [find a job and] get money to buy food each year. If we count our money for buying our staple foods like rice each year, it costs us many hundreds of thousands of kyats. Therefore, if we get our paddy fields back, it will help us very much. [Then] we would not have to buy food as well as we do not have to carry the things [do daily labour] for money. Our families would also have enough food to eat.

**Are there any powerful people who abuse human rights in this village?**

I do not know and I do not see the Tatmadaw abusing human rights in this village. I have no idea about this as there are many different villages and I also do not travel around and do research about this.

**Do you see differences between the recent situation and the situation in the past? Do you have more freedom to travel during the ceasefire?**

If we compare the recent situation to the situation in the past, we have had more freedom to travel since last half year to the end of this year. If we look at the recent situation regarding the Tatmadaw, the building of their army camps has stayed the same.

**Do you want to add more?**

There is no more to add.

**Thank you.**

Thank you.

**Source #45**

<b>Log #</b>	13-9-A6-I1
<b>Title</b>	Nyaunglebin Interview: Daw U---, December 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in July 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/07/13-9-a6-i1/nyaunglebin-interview-daw-u-december-2012">http://khrq.org/2014/07/13-9-a6-i1/nyaunglebin-interview-daw-u-december-2012</a>
<b>Location</b>	Kyaukkyi Township, Nyaunglebin District

## Full Text

**Ethnicity:** Burmese  
**Religion:** Buddhist  
**Marital Status:** Married  
**Occupation:** Farmer  
**Position:** Villager

### What is your name?

Daw U---.

### How old are you?

59.

### What is your father's name?

U N---.

### What is your address?

M--- village, Thonekyi village tract, Kyaukkyi Township, Bago Division.

### What is your occupation?

Farming and cultivation.

### What do most of the people from here do for their livelihoods?

They are doing farming, cultivation and foraging for natural fruit from the jungle to sell. Some people are doing plantation [work]. Lower class, poor people pick fruit and vegetables from the jungle and sell it.

### Is that enough [to live on]?

It is not enough. People who are doing farming and cultivation are also poor and people who pick vegetables and sell it are poorer. Poor people dig for wild yam and pick orchid flowers for their livelihoods. The farmers are poor too. The paddies have been [in poor production] and the weather is not normal [unstable]. We have had to pay leasing fees to the Tatmadaw [in the past], even though we are working on our own farms. So, how to say, it [our livelihood] is very vulnerable.

### Are there farms and cultivation fields that have been confiscated by the Tatmadaw in this area?

Almost all [farms and cultivation fields] were confiscated. 142 acres of farms were confiscated and I am one of the owners of confiscated lands.

### Who or which organisation confiscated the farms?

[Tatmadaw] Light Infantry Battalions (LIB) #351, #590 and #599 and Infantry Battalion (IB) #60 confiscated them and we had to pay 15 baskets (313.5 kg. / 691.2 lb.)<sup>134</sup> [per year] for one acre of farm land to these battalions as leasing fees in the past. The operations commander told us not to give the leasing fees this year.

<sup>134</sup> A basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg. or 46.08 lb. of paddy.

**How many acres of your land were included in the confiscated land?**

I have 20 acres of land [that was confiscated], but only seven acres of land can be worked on. We could not sleep in the jungle or work on our fields during the military ruling era. We had to stay in the village. So trees and bushes grew in our farms and it became overgrown. We have had to clear our land again.

**When did they [Tatmadaw] confiscate the farms?**

They confiscated the farms closest to their [army] camps in 1989 and began asking for leasing fees. Starting in 1994, they asked the people who were working on the land that they confiscated to give them 15 baskets [per acre each year] as leasing fees. We had to pay [that amount] until 2011.

**You had to give 15 baskets for one acre as leasing fees. What if you could not give it to them because the weather was not good and you did not harvest enough paddy?<sup>135</sup>**

**What did the farmers do?**

You had to find money for them if you could not provide them with the paddy. You had to pay the full amount [necessary to buy 15 baskets of paddy]. [Also], they would not allow you to work on the farm land and would let another person work on that farm the next year if you could not pay the fees. In 1998 or 1999, sometimes they arrested people for about five or ten days and their family members had to find the money [for the Tatmadaw] before they would release them. They have not arrested people in the last few years, but people [still] had to pay them money until it reached the amount [equivalent to 15 baskets of paddy]. The operations commander told us that we did not need to pay the leasing fees starting in 2011 and [continuing in] 2012, but they still control the land and have not given it back yet.

**You had to give leasing fees to the Tatmadaw to be able to work on your own farms in the past?**

Yes. We do not need to give leasing fees to the Tatmadaw to be able to work on our farms this year, but we still have not got back our own land. We want our farms back.

**Have the farmers submitted this case to the government authorities?**

Yes, we have. We submitted this case to the Government. We submitted it to the ministers and the president stating that we want to work on our own land without having to pay leasing fees. But there is no response yet. The township administrator summoned us and told us that the farms are still owned by the Tatmadaw and it means that the Tatmadaw will not return the land back to the owners.

**How long does it take to travel from the Tatmadaw camp to your confiscated farms?**

It takes 45 minutes. We can travel up to three miles in one hour. So it is [approximately] two miles from the [Tatmadaw] camp.

**So, the distance from the Tatmadaw camp to the places [farms] that they confiscated is very far?**

Yes, it is very far.

**How many people's lands were confiscated?**

1,420 acres of farms were confiscated. So there are many people, because some people own five acres and some people own ten acres. They confiscated 1,420 point [something] acres, but I do not know the point [decimal number].

**You said that you submitted the case to the Government, but they have not responded to you. So, do the farmers have any plan to submit this case [to other**

<sup>135</sup> Paddy is rice grain that is still in the husk.

**government departments] in the future?**

We have always had a plan [to submit our case again], but we do not know where and who we should submit our case to and ask for help next time. We do not have much knowledge [about these procedures]. We want to submit this case to all of the government departments and maybe the KNU [Karen National Union] to help us get our land back.

**Could you tell me about the difficulties you faced when you farmed on your own land while [at the same time] having to give leasing fees to the Tatmadaw?**

We had no problem providing them with the leasing fees if the weather was good and we produced enough paddy. We gave them [the leasing fees] peacefully. But, sometimes the paddy was destroyed [by inclement weather] or were not in good [production], then we could not give them [the leasing fees]. We would feel stressed and disappointed. One thing is, [there was] no profit left for us every year because we had to give them [the leasing fees]. What we mean by no profit is that it cost 50 baskets (1,045 kg. / 2,304 lb.) of paddy for a farmer to hire a pair of cattle, 50 baskets of paddy to hire a man [to assist the farming] and you had to give 105 baskets (2,194.5 kg. / 4,838.4 lb.) of paddy to the Tatmadaw if you were working on seven acres of land. So, you already spent over 200 baskets (4,180 kg. / 9,216 lb.) of paddy and that does not include the cost of growing paddy and harvesting the paddy. Seven acres of farm produces [approximately] 300 baskets (6,270 kg. / 13,824 lb.) of paddy and this is in the higher range. So we had to use our money from home [to be able to pay the leasing fees]. The paddy we produced was not enough [to survive on] if we subtract from it the leasing, cattle, labour, growing and harvesting fees. Only a bit paddy would be saved if we grew and harvested the paddy by ourselves. Nothing would be saved for ourselves if we were not able to do it [by ourselves; for example, if] we were old and we had to hire everyone. We were not able to save paddy for ourselves for many years.

**What do you want the government to do for the farmers?**

We would be very grateful to the government if they returned our land to us without asking for leasing fees, provided us with good seeds, supported the cost of growing paddy and trained us in good farming techniques.

**What would you like to say to the international people about the suffering of the farmers?**

We want the international people to go to the ground [visit our villages] and have sympathy for the farmers, to help and protect the farmers, to promote an increase in the living standard of the farmers and, please, to help the children of farmers to become educated people.

**Some farms were totally confiscated as the land of the Tatmadaw [which they will not return to the owners] and some were not [which they may return]. In which group is your farm included?**

My farm is included in the confiscated list. [Previously,] they [Tatmadaw] did not divide the land as confiscated land and un-confiscated land. They asked for leasing fees from all the farms that they saw with their eyes and from every place that they could reach. They declared all the farms as confiscated land and asked for leasing fees. But [recently], the Land Registration Office divided the confiscated land [which they won't return] and un-confiscated land [which they may return] after we submitted this case.<sup>136</sup>

**What is the number of your plot?**

My plot number is 101-A.

**Where is that plot located?**

<sup>136</sup> Here the interviewee is referring to La Na Law, in particular La Na 39. Under this law, land was confiscated for use by the Tatmadaw and will not be returned to farmers. However, land that was not confiscated using this law, but rather arbitrarily by Tatmadaw soldiers in the past, may be returned.



It located in B--- field, A--- [village].

**Would you like to say anything else?**

I have nothing [more] to say, [except that] I have a little peace of mind as the situation is gradually getting better. We want to work on our own farms as we like and want to live peacefully and meditate on God's word. People are satisfied if they have enough food to eat. The farm owners would be satisfied if they had the chance to work on their land freely. Now, they are feeling a lot better. Also, we can travel freely because of the ceasefire.<sup>137</sup> [But], we want to be happier than [we are] now. For example, we do not have a clinic in our village and there is no health care group for children and mothers. So, we want that. We also want a day-care. We also want a money grant from the Government. But the main thing is a clinic.

**Do you have clinic in this area?**

No, we do not. There is no rural clinic. It would be better if we had a rural clinic and first aid so that villages like Tha Pyay Gone and other neighbouring villages can come. We could go to our own clinic if we were injured.

**Where do you go when you are sick?**

We have to go to Kyaukkyi city. Health, education and the economy are the main things [that are important to us]. The others things matter less if we have good health, good education and a good economy. [Our community] knowledge is improving as more people are educated. I think there are so many uneducated children [in our area]. We also have children who cannot read and write. So it is difficult to talk to them [about community issues].

**Are there any other human right abuses that were committed by the authorities [armed actors] against villagers in this area?**

There are no [other] human rights abuses and we can say that the Tatmadaw has been good to people for now. They do not bully people anymore.

**So, the only human rights abuse in this area is land confiscation committed by the Tatmadaw?**

Yes.

**What about other abuses?**

The problems are land confiscation by the Tatmadaw, as well as asking for leasing fees for cashew plantations [in our village]. Just these two things. [Otherwise], they [Tatmadaw] are good in other cases.

Daw T--- (female, 59), W--- village, Kyautkyi Township, Nyaunglebin District  
(Received in November 2013)

**Source #46**

<b>Log #</b>	13-9-NB1
<b>Title</b>	Violent abuse and forced labour in Bu Tho Township, November and December 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in July 2013 <a href="http://khrq.org/2013/07/13-9-nb1/violent-abuse-and-forced-labour-bu-tho-township-november-and-december-2012">http://khrq.org/2013/07/13-9-nb1/violent-abuse-and-forced-labour-bu-tho-township-november-and-december-2012</a>

<sup>137</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma government in Hpa-an, the capital of Kayin State. The exact terms for a long-term peace plan are still under negotiation. For updates on the peace process, see the [KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website](#). For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.



<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p>On November 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013, Corporal Saw Maw Nay Say from Border Guard Force (BGF)<sup>138</sup> Battalion #1014, led by Commander Saw Maung Chit, violently abused 45-year-old Saw P---, a cow and buffalo trader in D--- village, L--- village tract, Bu Tho Township, Papun District. According to an eyewitness, <i>“He violently abused Saw P--- by giving him innumerable punches, and it [was] possibly because he didn’t get a share of the tax, or maybe he didn’t know that he had already paid [it] to the commander.”</i><sup>139</sup> Saw Maw Nay Say also confiscated 300,000 kyat (US \$305.12)<sup>140</sup> from Saw P---, despite the fact that Saw P--- had already paid livestock taxes to the area commander to travel and trade freely.</p> <p>Furthermore, on December 5<sup>th</sup> 2012, forced labour occurred in Meh Mweh village, Meh Mweh village tract, Bu Tho Township, Papun District. The person who was asked to labour was the KHRG community member researching abuse in the area. While documenting abuses, he visited K’Ter Tee village and encountered a BGF Battalion #1013 commander named Htee Theh Htoo near a river bank intending to transport milk, rice, oil and uniforms by boat. At first, the commander planned to rely on a local boat owner for transporting his rations, but he was unable to find him. As such, he found the KHRG community member nearby and turned to him for his demands.</p> <p><i>“I think he didn’t know that I am a KHRG researcher, so when he couldn’t find the boat owner, he just thought of me as a villager and told me to porter his rations. I had no choice but to do as he told me, and I asked him where I should porter it to and he told me to porter it to Meh Mweh village where they [Battalion #1013] are based. I would smile alone whenever I think about it and I’m not even sure if it was a lucky day or an unfortunate day,”</i> the community member reported.</p> <p>Normally the BGF would rely on area boat owners to transport their rations without compensation. The community member also reported that BGF soldiers were still conducting forced labour with villagers following his own experiences. Judging by this information, it is likely that the abuses of the villagers’ rights were still happening as of late 2012, and it is likely villagers are still suffering because of it.<sup>141</sup></p> <p style="text-align: right;">News bulletin written by a KHRG member, (published in July 2013)</p>

**Source #47**

<b>Log #</b>	13-16-A9-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Saw A---, February 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District

<sup>138</sup> 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 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.

<sup>139</sup> This information was included in an unpublished incident report submitted to KHRG by a community member in Papun District.

<sup>140</sup> As of July 15<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 983 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>141</sup> This information was included in an unpublished incident report submitted to KHRG by a community member in Papun District.

**Full Text**

**How many children do you have?**

Six children.

**How old is the oldest child?**

My oldest child is 19 years old.

**What about the youngest one?**

The youngest one is four years old.

**How long ago did you go?**

Me?

**Yes.**

I came back and slept for three nights. I returned the same day.

**So, you only went for one day?**

Only one day because people asked me to come back, [so] I came back.

**Why did they ask you to come back?**

They told me to order [arrange] villagers [to work]. They [people in-charge] told me that, "*You were selected as 'a parent' [as a village head]. Because villagers have to do forced labour for Hpuh [grandfather] Lay Wah, you have to balance [the amount of time that the villagers work] and help us.*" I came back then.

**Who ordered people to construct the bridge?**

Actually, the person who ordered [the] people is the Noh Hta village head. He is called Ma Mway Pah and was selected as a representative.

**Who selected him?**

I don't know who did. I don't know the details.

**Who is in charge of the bridge construction?**

I don't know who is in-charge of the construction. The people [in-charge] ordered the village head and they said that they would fine us if we would not go, or something similar. We think it is forced labour. And there are two sides [forced labour for Hpuh Lay Wah and work on the bridge construction<sup>142</sup>] so we have to do them both as much as we can. We also have to work on our own work.

**Will the people be fined if they don't go?**

<sup>142</sup> The interviewee explained that they have to do labour for a bridge that is under the order of monk Hpuh Law Wah, and that they also have to do forced labour for Hpuh Law Wah.

They said that we would be fined if we don't go.

**How much per village?**

We don't know. They just said that they would fine [us].

**Was that included [explained] when they wrote you a letter?**

No, it was not included in the letter. They just said, "*Come and do a 'labour donation'* [for Buddhist merit]. *Come help us and we will work collaboratively for the donation.*"

**Would they fine you [if you wouldn't comply], even if it's labour donation?**

Yes. They said they would fine [us] if nobody goes.

**Who said that?**

I think the person [who] wrote the letter, Ma Mway Pah. I don't know whether a person on top would say that.

**So Ma Mway Pah would fine a lot of people?**

There is a person in charge of that. He [Ma Mway Pah] is not the person who builds the bridge. We are not sure whether it is the monk who builds it [the bridge] and we don't know which monk. We don't know who is the person in charge. The day I went there, I saw the support beams of the bridge. I measured them and each beam was 11 hand-spans wide, as it has been designed for two trucks to travel in both directions. They did not [finish] constructing it [the bridge] yet and they say it will be finished in three years. They have to pause [the bridge construction] during the monsoon season.

**How long ago did they start the construction?**

They ordered us [to start] in the beginning of last month. They ordered us to help them during this month, *Ta Po Twe* [February], and we were to finish [a certain amount of labour] by the end of February. They order us to send one person every three days [who also had to] sleep there.

**People have to go [rotate] once every three days. How many people go each time?**

Three people.

**So the three people have to replace [each other] once every three days since they [started to] construct the bridge?**

Three people will come back this evening and three people left [to replace them] this morning. They started last week. They ordered us for a long [period of] time because Hpuh Lay Wah asked for it. They keep ordering. They said that they would fine us if we wouldn't go for a while. They can fine us and we cannot do anything, because we have to work for our food, such as salt and sweet powder [monosodium glutamate].

**They say it is for a donation. What if people don't want to go?**

At first, we were talking about this and it is okay if we didn't go. Then they said, "*If you don't go, we will fine you.*" We don't know whether they would fine us a little or a lot. We don't think anything and just help [do the work].

**They didn't say how [much] they would fine [you]?**

They didn't say that. If they fine [people], they fine for money. They would demand the people to fine one another. For example, you destroy my land, my things and my agriculture [lands], so I fine you [ask for compensation]. It is not [the same as when] you borrow my cart and hurt my cattle and I fine you one chicken and one egg.

**What do you think is the monk's aim to build this bridge?**

We don't know what their plan is. When we were children, we never heard about the bridge. We only heard about Hpa-an's bridge. But now they will build one here. They might have some plan.

**You said it [the bridge] is designed for two trucks [has two lanes]?**

Yes. On [one lane of the bridge trucks] they go [in one direction] and on the other [lane] they come back. I think they plan to reach Meh Si [village] and go up to Noh Hta [village]. They would travel in between these places, but we don't know what they would carry [inside the trucks].

**Their project lasts three years?**

Yes. It will be completed in three years.

**How many hours does it take from B--- village to the place where the bridge is constructed?**

Currently, people usually go by motorbike.

**What about walking?**

For example, when we go to the K'Ma Moh to buy food, we leave early in the morning and arrive at around 1:00 pm.

**So it is half a day?**

Yes. It is half a day away. We left in the morning when the light [sun] rises and we carried only one bag of money [worth] 10,000 [kyat] (US \$10.18).<sup>143</sup> We planned to buy a knife to use on our hill farm. I already went many times [to the bridge to help with the construction].

**How much do you have to pay if you hire a motorbike for half a day trip?**

1,500 kyat (US \$1.53). It also costs 3,000 kyat (US \$3.05) to come back.

**So it would cost a lot if three people go?**

Yes. When it would cost 4,500 [kyat] (US \$4.58) and also 4,500 kyat to come back.

**What difficulties do you and the villagers encounter when you assist the people there [work on the bridge]?**

<sup>143</sup> As of 13<sup>th</sup> of January, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 kyat to the US \$1.

The difficult thing is that we have to carry iron and sand.

**Is that what they have to bring to work?**

Yes.

**With problems I meant: what difficulties do you have to deal with to plan your work when you leave your home and [how do you deal with] the travel cost?**

We have to leave our [usual] work, like cutting bamboo and splitting the bamboo for the thatched shingles, but we must [instead] go there [to the bridge].

**You have to leave your usual work [livelihood] for two or three days. How much do you have to pay per day to hire people?**

2,500 kyat (US \$2.53).

**What if you were to be absent from your work for three days?**

7,500 kyat (US \$7.60).

**If you hire a motorbike for a return trip, for 3,000 kyat (US \$3.04), you would have to spend 10,000 kyat (US \$10.13), right?**

Yes.

**And three people have to go each time?**

Three people always have to go, but only this month. I won't let them go after this month because people have to work for themselves.

**Do the villagers go on duty?**

Yes, they rotate.

**How many households in your village can work? Excluding widows, orphans and elderly people?**

We do ask the widows who have little children. They sometimes help if it is for donation. We do not ask them for money and forced labour. There are 42 households who help.

**So 42 people have to work all the time?**

Yes, 42 people, including myself and our two village heads. Even though we do not have to work, we have to travel all the time.

**Are women included?**

All, especially the ones who are able to work.

**You asked women to work on the bridge construction?**

Yes. We asked them all, including children who are 14 or 15 years old.

**How many women can you order to work?**

I don't know, because some of them ask their children [to work instead].

**Can you estimate the approximate number?**

I cannot estimate [a number], because some women go by themselves and leave their children if their children don't want to join. And some of them ask their children [in their own place] because they are not available. We start the second term [an unknown period of time that villagers have to do forced labour] now.

**But they [the women] will be included, right?**

Yes, if they go. Currently, women have not been included in any term yet.

**And it is not sure whether that will change?**

We can't tell yet, because it is [the start of the] second term right now.

**Women definitely participate, right?**

Right.

**Are children included?**

There are many children there.

**Under 18 years old?**

[They are] between 15 and 18 years old.

**How many of the children did you see working on the bridge?**

I forgot to count [them] because it included many villagers. I think there were one hundred people.

**One hundred children?**

No, not only children; [the workers] including married men and women who are the same age as you and me.

**People who work on the bridge construction include married women?**

Yes, and they also include elderly people. Many elderly people from Meh Pree [village] go.

**Are there also children included that you forgot to count?**

Yes, I forgot to count [them]. I don't know how many of them are [working on the bridge as] carpenters, because when I arrived I was asked to come back, so I did.

**Do the carpenters get paid?**

I think they do. People [carpenters] would not work if they don't get [paid]. I heard people say that they cooperate with the great monk and they get special [payment].

**So the followers [the people who work closely with] Monk Hkaw Taw get [paid]?**

I think that they do. They get rice because they do receive anything else. When I went there, I saw people who were carrying sand and they did not talk to each other. They also carried one saw, a chisel and a drill with them. If they need something [a tool to work with] they bring it themselves.

**Did you see any of the rich people there?**

No, I didn't see any one of them because I [only] went once as I told you. I ate a meal and came back. I didn't sleep there.

**As you mentioned, do you think that the carpenters get a salary?**

Yes. They wouldn't do if they did not get [a salary], because they all have a wife and children.

**What about the villagers?**

They do not get paid. For example, if I go by boat, I have to pay 500 kyat (US \$0.51) to go and 500 kyat to return. If you don't pay money, they cannot buy petrol. The boats are from Meh Pree [village] and Meh K'Naw [village] and they charge 500 kyat per ride.

**Do the people in charge of the bridge construction arrange boats or motorbikes for the villagers to travel to work?**

No. They have not arranged [anything] yet. People take the boat that goes to K'Ma Moh and they have to pay 500 kyat. When they want to return by boat or motorbike, they have to pay themselves. If you don't have money, you have to walk.

**Do they set a maximum fee per boat and motorbike ride?**

Yes.

**You don't have to pay more than 500 kyat?**

No, you only have to pay 500 kyat.

**They [the people in charge] do not pay it [the 500 kyat], right?**

No. They do not pay.

**Do the people who go to work pay themselves?**

Yes, at least 500 kyat. If we buy food in K'Ma Moh, such as salt and sweet powder, we use the same boats as they do and we have to pay 1,000 kyat (US \$1.01) for a return trip. When they make an order for people to do 'labour donation', we have to pay 500 kyat back and forth [to use the boat]. They [the persons who own the boats] also said that it's okay if we [the villagers] do not pay because we go to do labour donation, but we [the villagers] sympathise with the people [boat owners] because they have to buy the petrol by themselves.

**You don't exactly know who is in charge of the bridge construction?**

No. I don't exactly know.



**You don't know who builds the bridge?**

No. I don't know. If we would stay there [around the bridge construction] for one or two days and ask people, I think we would know.

**Where do they build the bridge?**

I'm not sure if you [the interviewer] have ever been to that place. The place is called Htwee Daw Kyoh or Htee Lah Beh Hta. There is also a yellow pagoda.

**Which village is that place close to?**

It is close to Noh Hta village.

**In which village tract<sup>144</sup> is Noh Hta [village] located?**

Noh Hta is located in Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract.

**Which township is Htee Th'Daw Hta located?**

I don't know.

Saw A--- (male, 40), Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District  
(Interviewed in February 2012)

**Source #48**

<b>Log #</b>	13-19-NB1
<b>Title</b>	Rape and sexual harassment in Hpapun District, June and August 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in November 2013 <a href="http://khrq.org/2013/11/13-19-nb1/rape-and-sexual-harassment-hpapun-district-june-and-august-2013">http://khrq.org/2013/11/13-19-nb1/rape-and-sexual-harassment-hpapun-district-june-and-august-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p>Villagers reported two cases of sexual harassment to KHRG that occurred in Hpapun District and were committed by different actors in the summer of 2013. The first incident was a rape committed by a staff member of the Burma Government Hpapun Agriculture Department, Ko Ah Ei, also known as Ko Ja Ei, and a case of forceful kissing was committed by Border Guard Force (BGF) Battalion #1014 Sergeant Saw Dah Tu. In each case, villagers say insufficient compensation was given to the victims.</p> <p>On June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013, 25-year-old M--- villager Ma L--- went to Ko Ah Ei's house close to the village water pump to take a shower and wash her clothes. U Ah Ei, a 31-year-old employee of the Burma Government Hpapun Agriculture Department, was home alone at the time. Ko Ah Ei took advantage of this and raped Ma L--- in his house. Ko Ah Ei has a reputation for frequent drinking and gambling, and he is the son of Hpapun Agriculture Department Administrator U Htun Hla Shwe. He has four siblings, and one older brother works as a captain for the Burma Government and another is a police officer. Because of the crime he</p>

<sup>144</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

committed, Ko Ah Ei is kept in the Hpapun Town jail. His father paid Ma L--- 300,000 kyat (US \$308.25)<sup>145</sup> and Ko Ah Ei remains in jail.<sup>146</sup>

Likewise, on the afternoon of August 21<sup>st</sup> 2013, BGF Battalion #1014 Sergeant Saw Dah Tu and his soldiers came to D--- village with the intent of attacking KNLA soldiers in retaliation for several injuries suffered by BGF soldiers in a skirmish with KNLA forces in Weh Gyi two days prior. When they arrived in D--- village, they stayed at Ma S---'s house. According to Ma S---, that night, Saw Dah Tu became intoxicated and went into Ma S---'s room, where he forcefully kissed her without her permission. After learning of this, Ma S---'s mother, Ma P---, went to Saw Dah Tu's commander, BGF #1014 Officer Saw Tin Win, and talked to him about what Saw Dah Tu had done to her daughter. Ma P--- said, *"When the incident happened, I was home actually, but I didn't know that. When I found out about it from my daughter I was very angry, so I went to meet with the commander of the perpetrator. The commander also promised me that he will not let something like this happen again in the future."* Officer Tin Win compensated Ma S--- with 200,000 kyat (US \$205.50) after the meeting.<sup>147</sup>

The victim's mother reported that her daughter, Ma S--- is to be hospitalized in Myaing Gyi Ngu hospital due to trauma from the incident. The victim is reported to be questioned so many times by the BGF commander and the KNLA authorities after the incident happened. The community member also explained that Ma S--- is afraid to report the incident to local authorities [BGF and KNLA officials] because she is unsure of the consequences of such action. Given the amount of compensation given to Ma--- S---'s family by Saw Dah Tu and the trauma she suffered, there is some indication that the incident could have been more severe than reported by Ma S---.

News bulletin written by a KHRG member, (Published in November 2013)

#### Source #49

<b>Log #</b>	13-21-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Daw A---, February 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Bilin Township, Doo Tha Htoo [Thaton] District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Date Received: February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2013</b>  <b>Interview No. 2. February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2013.</b></p> <p><b>Could you please tell me your name?</b></p> <p>Daw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>55.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p>	

<sup>145</sup> As of November 14<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 977 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>146</sup> This information was included in an interview received by KHRG in February 2013 from a KHRG community member from Hpapun District.

<sup>147</sup> This information was included in an interview received by KHRG in February 2013 from a KHRG community member from Hpapun District.

A--- village, B--- [area].

**Which village tract?**

Yo Klar village tract.

**Which township?**

Bilin Township.

**Which district?**

Doo Tha Htoo District.

**What is your ethnicity?**

Karen. Buddhist.

**What is your occupation?**

I am a farmer.

**Do you have a family?**

Yes. Husband and children.

**How many children do you have?**

Seven.

**How old is your oldest child?**

25.

**How about the youngest one?**

14.

**What kind of responsibility do you have in the village?**

Public representative.

**Since the 2010 election, has the [Myanmar] government army [Tatmadaw] come into A--- village?**

Yes they come. But they do not force the civilians to work. They live [amongst] themselves and look [observe] at the situation of the villagers.

**Do you know for what reason they come [to the village]?**

They just come and live by themselves. We do not know what they will do. They live in their army camp. Sometimes they come and go. They do not ask for anything from us. They do not talk with us. They just look [observe] our situation.

**Do they ask [the villagers] to do any volunteering jobs [forced labour]?**

I do not see them ask.

**When they transport their food and weapons, how do they do it? By themselves, or do they ask somebody to do it for them? Which way? By car or some other way?**

In the rainy season, they come on foot and carry it by themselves. But before, not so long ago, they came with five cars.

**Do they come to your village?**

Yes they come and head [go] to Yo Klar [village tract]. I heard that they transport food. I saw that the cars are full with supplies.

**When they transport things, are there any other things except for food? Like weapons and bullets?**

Perhaps they bring [weapons and bullets].

**Is your village close to the army camp?**

The army camp is in Yo Klar [village tract].

**How long is your village to Yo Klar [village tract]?**

About X minutes [censored for security].

**In the past, do you have to volunteer to work for the soldiers in the army camp [i.e. forced labour]?**

Yes, they ask us to do that two years ago. They asked [for workers] but, when people went to them, they asked them, '*what are you coming for?*', and we answered that our village leader told us to come and work for you, but they answered that, '*we do not need you and you can go back.*' And for this year, we do not need to go at all and our village leader has not ordered us to go either. We have not seen them [Tatmadaw] go to the village leader's house.

**Is there a difference in the treatment of the villagers [by Tatmadaw] if [you] compare now with the previous years of 2010 and 2011?**

Yes, different. They [Tatmadaw] do not communicate with us.

**Do you know why?**

I do not know. We do not know what they are planning to do to us.

**How many houses are there in your village?**

I do not know. I never asked the village tract leader. Maybe over [number censored for security].

**For the health sector, is there a [medicine] dispensary in your village?**

No.

**So, if you are sick, where do you go?**

I go to the health workers who have attended the health training to get the medicine. If [the

illness is] serious, I go to the city. Some [villagers] go to the hospital in the north, in Kaw Thu Lay region.

**When people go to the city, do they have to pay for the medicine?**

Of course.

**For the patients who do not have money, what will they do?**

One time, a girl only had to pay money as a donation. The patients have to use their own money to stay [at the health centre] and to eat. The clinic gives a medical prescription and the patients have to go and buy the medicine by themselves. They vaccinate the patients. For vaccinations, people can donate to the clinic.

**For the KNU hospital, do they take money for medicine?**

We do not need to pay money [for medicine at KNU hospitals]. They provide us food as well. They look after us and take responsibility for the medicine as well. We do not pay for anything. If we want to donate [something], we bring brown slab sugar or fish paste and eat together. For other things, it costs nothing.

**How about education here? Is there a school here?**

Yes. There is a school until Grade 8.

**Is the school self-funded by the villagers or is it [Myanmar] government-funded?**

Every side [group] helps the school. Self-funded [individuals], the [Myanmar] government, and the KNU as well.

**For school teachers, as you said the [Myanmar] government also help the school, does the [Myanmar] government help arrange for [provide] the teachers?**

Yes. Teacher Saw B---. He is a headmaster. And also there are the teachers. But I do not know how many teachers.

**For the teachers that the [Myanmar] government posted here in the village, do you need to give them money?**

We do not need to give them a salary. But we have to pay the school fees. Last year, [the amount] we had to pay depended on the Standard<sup>148</sup> of the student. My youngest child is at Standard eight and [therefore] we have to pay 11,000 kyats.

**Is that for the whole year?**

Yes. The whole year.

**Do the students need to buy books and some other things?**

No. They do not need to. For those things [school materials], some are given by the

<sup>148</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Burma/Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

[Myanmar] government and some have to be bought from other places.

**For the things that come from the [Myanmar] government, do you need to buy them?**

No.

**How about the KNU?**

They do not need to buy them either.

**How many years has it been that you have not had to pay for your children's school fees?**

Since my youngest child attended Standard six until now. [So] It has been three years.

**What is your opinion on the Ceasefire<sup>149</sup> between the KNU and the [Myanmar] government?**

As there is the peace, I think it is good. If we look at the past, our situation was not good. We suffered from difficulties. Now, it is good. But it [the Ceasefire] should be sure [guaranteed]. I want that. In the future, the situation will be better and there will be development for the new generation. I trust them. The way I see it is [that it is] good.

**So you see [think] that the peace process and the Ceasefire between both sides are good and you want it to be sure [permanent], but how is your opinion on their agreement? Whether their agreement will be broken or kept?**

For me, if I say that I do not trust it, then it will affect them. I would like to say as a proverb, "Trust and do also". About the Burmese [Bamar] people, we have a story. Once upon a time, there were two friends. They go out and work. They eat with the same rice pot. When one of them [the Bamar friend] is going to die, he orders his [Karen] friend to put the stick in his buttock after he dies. And the Karen guy does as his friend told him to and he [the Karen friend] goes and tells his friend's family that he is dead. When the family sees [what happened], they say that he [the Karen friend] put the stick in his buttock and that killed him. So like that, the Burmese [Bamar] people bring about the Karen people's ruin.

**Has there been an effect on you because of the Ceasefire?**

No. They do not do anything.

**After the ceasefire, have companies or armed groups come and started development**

<sup>149</sup> On October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, after a negotiation process marred with controversy over the notable non-inclusion of several ethnic armed groups and on-going conflicts in ethnic regions, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed between the Burma/Myanmar government and eight of the fifteen ethnic armed groups originally invited to the negotiation table, including the KNU, see "[Myanmar signs ceasefire with eight armed groups](#)," Reuters, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015. Despite the signing of the NCA prompting a positive response from the international community, see "[Myanmar: UN chief welcomes 'milestone' signing of ceasefire agreement](#)," UN News Centre, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, KNU Chairman General Saw Mutu Say Poe's decision to sign has been met with strong opposition from other members of the Karen armed resistance and civil society groups alike, who believe the decision to be undemocratic and the NCA itself to be a superficial agreement that risks undermining a genuine peace process, see "[Without Real Political Roadmap, Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement Leads Nowhere...](#)," Karen News, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. The signing of the NCA followed the January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 preliminary ceasefire agreement between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the preliminary ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

**projects in the village?**

They come and do [projects] about natural disasters.

**Tell me what kind of work do they do about natural disasters?**

They mention the topics and other information but I forgot as I am old. Young people know and recorded the information. They [developers] come and make the committee. A--- Village is divided into three parts: B--- part where we live, inner A--- part, and C--- part. The leader of C--- tract is Daw C---. The leader of A--- tract is Daw D---, and for B--- [the leader] is me, Daw A---.<sup>150</sup>

**So they [the developers] form three committees then?**

Yes three committees.

**When they do this, what is their main purpose?**

They draw a sketch map of B---. They draw streets, roads, houses, and everything really well and they take photos. And they ask us about the natural disasters, such as flooding, fire, wind, and war. And we answer [their questions] about flooding and fire disasters. For fire disasters, there has been no fire in the village but [there has been fire] in the forest. But in the rainy season, [censored for security] we have to worry about water [flooding] and [we] live in the water [in flooded areas]. [We worry about] River bank erosion and [river bank] collapse. For the purpose of developing the houses in the village, they [the developers] come and draw sketches and take photos. They draw with colour pencils well. For B---, they draw a sketch well and they form the group. And in A--- tract, they also form one group and draw a sketch of the village. In C--- they also form one group and draw a sketch. So they draw three sketches for the three villages. And they draw an *Eain Mat Pa Mar* map. The definition of the [type of] map is to make [develop] the village into a city; [they] draw the details on the map of the office, pagoda, monastery, school, road, and bridge construction.

**When they come and draw a map like this, did they give you any hope for help that [they] will come in the future?**

They said and promised that they will submit [an application] to the relevant [government] department and arrange for the benefit [to come to the local area].

**When they [the developers] formed the committee, do you know the date, month or year?**

The secretary recorded everything. In that person's hand, there are the records of the name, age and dates; everything.

**Do you remember the name of their organisation or the people's names?**

They introduced everyone by themselves. I do not remember [their names].

**Are there any other projects from companies, armed groups or businessmen [people]?**

No. I don't hear about them. Maybe there will be that kind of project because when they come [to the local area] there are many kinds of organisation [in existence].

<sup>150</sup> KHRG is in the process of clarifying this additional information.



**Do you hear about companies or businessmen [people] who will come and conduct agriculture projects or industrial projects?**

I do not know. Maybe there will be.

**Is there a rubber plantation?**

Yes. But the businessmen do not come and plant them. It is just the villagers who plant them. We plant rubber at our house.

**Are there any other things that I have not asked you and that you would like to say?**

I do not want to say for myself but I will say for other people. We would like to move our houses to a place outside of the village called B---. But we do not know what kind of difficulties we will face. Villagers have said that [they want to move] many times.

**Why do you want to move? Because there are no more places to live?**

The houses are close to each other. We do not have the space for plantations and to build pig, chicken, cow and buffalo shelters. So there is a difficulty [for our livelihoods]. If we move to another place, we could plant and build the shelters. But [now] we do not plant the rubber trees. The villagers want a house with a garden and trees. Some have one or two children and want to move house.

**Do you have anything else to say?**

For education, we would like to send our children to the school in the city but we cannot. Some children are going to attend Grade 8 or 9 and would like to go to Kwee Lay, in Kaw Thoo Lay place but they cannot attend school. Some people are not able to send their children to school as they have to pay three baskets of rice [to send their children to school] and when they need their children for help [in the fields], the children will not be with them if they send their children to school. It is difficult for villagers to send their children to school in the city and in Kwee Lay as well. In my opinion, a company owner from Bilin [Town] encourages the education of the students. He said to come and send the students who are in Grades 8, 9, 10 who did not pass the school [exam] to him [to finish their education and then work for the company]. [It's] not that I do not love children, I love [them], but if I lead the children like this [to work], I have a worry. As there is a proverb that says, 'One daughter is equal to 1,000 cows,' and if he accepts many daughters and the children will have to live in the city- I have to worry about it. So even people say, I do not do [this] and live peacefully myself. So, I told my children that in the city, even if people [from the company] take responsibility, there is a concern to live for a girl. Do as you like. The company takes the responsibility. Some villagers who have connections [in Bilin Town] send their children, but for me, I am just afraid.

**So you said that children would like to go and attend school in Kwee Lay. Is there a high school in Kwee Lay?**

Yes. Up to Grade 10.

**Who established the school? Which organisation? The KNU or the Burmese [Myanmar] government?**

I do not know. People say that the support comes from the authorities. Perhaps, the [Myanmar] government teachers also teach in that school.

**Like you said, the villagers have to pay three baskets of rice if they send their children to school, right?**

Yes.

**Do you have to give anything else? Like food?**

No. Only three baskets of rice.

**How about books? Do they need to buy them?**

No.

**If people send their children to the city, how much does it cost for the higher grades, per year?**

A company give support. They take care of everything. But [our children] have to attend school until they pass Grade ten. They do not like it if students do not pass Grade ten. If they pass Grade ten they will get a job. But they [the company] do not give a job in other places but only in their company.

**If people send the Grade 10 children to the government on their own without help from the company, how much would it cost?**

It will cost. But I do not know [how much] as I do not send my children to school there.

**Among your friends, is there anyone who sends their children to school in the city?**

My sister. Her child stays outside of the school at another person's house. When attending school, there are fees for tuition, guide, food, and it costs 500,000 kyats each year. Sometimes, for grade 10, it costs 1,000,000 kyats.

**For those who do not have money to send their children to school, what do they do?**

The children cannot attend school and have to work and help their parents.

**Is there that kind of situation here?**

My niece is now at Grade 9 and her parents cannot send her to school and now she has to stay [at home] like this. I feel pity for her. There are one or two people; they are enthusiastic to attend school. She [niece] asked me to find a job for her in the company next year. The company is also cooperating with the [Myanmar] government. If she works, I suggested to her to go and live in Kwee Lay [village], 'In Kwee Lay [village], there is my daughter and you can go and live there. If you go, we will send you.' But her mother does not like [the idea]. If she goes and lives there, there will not be [much to] worry [about], but if she goes to the city [Bilin Town], she will come back if she is not happy, and we worry for her that she will be [morally] corrupted.

**Is there anything else you would like to say?**

Yes. But this is enough. Can I state the situation of myself?

**Yes you can.**

I would like to send my daughter and niece to Kwee Lay next year. That's all.

**Anything else?**

No. That's all.

**Thank you.**

**Source #50**

<b>Log #</b>	13-35-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Interview, Ma A---, received March 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Section #4, Myawaddy Town, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**[Interview begins abruptly]**

**Is it the same as protesting?**

No, it is not protesting. We do not do protesting. We just want to live peacefully. We want our land back peacefully.

**Yesterday, what I understood was [people] want to protest.**

Not to protest. We will gather ourselves and go to the office.

**Who will you meet with?**

They will meet with the District Peace and Development Council Chairman. They want to meet with the District Peace and Development Council chairman.

**For what reason do they want to meet with him?**

They want to meet [him] because of the land issue. The lands which have been confiscated, we bought them and lived there. So, we want to live bravely [resist the confiscation, but] we have to be afraid.

**Which office did you go to?**

The office that we went? It was the KNU [office].

**No, [I mean] the office which you will gather and go.**

The District Peace and Development Council office.

**Who will lead?**

No one will lead. Nobody wants to lead. We will go with love and we will ask them to solve [the problem] for us. We will request them to solve [the problem] with the organisations which invaded and built houses in our orchard.

**Related to the land issue?**

Yes, related with the land [issue]. We will ask with love [for them] to solve the problem regarding the land which we bought and lived [on].

**How many acres?**

For the acre of the land, it is 60 or so, 0.81. They took around this [size]. We bought the land from the staffs.<sup>151</sup>

**What about [acres of land] in total?**

We don't know. We don't know how many acres of land in total but we do know how many pieces of land.

**How many pieces?**

There are about 120 pieces of land in total that they have confiscated.

**What do they do with the land that they confiscated?**

They will sell them. They said that, they will sell and they also said that they will distribute to the Battalions of the KNU and KNLA [Peace Council].

**They will distribute [the land] to the KNU and KNLA battalions?**

To the soldiers of their battalion. They will distribute to them to stay [on the land].

**Did you hear [the information] like that?**

[No], Not [that] I heard like that. They said [information] like that in the field. They have their guards in the field [Peace Council soldiers].

When we go there [to the field], they said [information] like that.

**The government said that they will be at our side [supportive], right?**

It is because they told peacefully [without causing conflict] so that the public do not know. Now, recently, they make peace but they target to the public [civilians] and the public realize that now. The public have to suffer what they bully [force civilians to accept].

**Will the companies come into the place [onto the land]?**

No. It is only to live on but even for living, the problems happened because we can't afford to build house. We sold all of our gold and diamonds to buy the land. We fenced the land because we don't have money to build a house but they destroyed the fence and [now] live on that land.

**Did the government distribute the land before?**

Yes, the government did distribute [land] with La Na [land law] #39. We have met with the leaders from the land distribution order.

**When did they start to confiscate?**

It was about a year [ago]. It was last year, in 2012.

**When they started, were there any houses [on the land]?**

<sup>151</sup> KHRG is unable to clarify this actor.

No, firstly, the whole land was *ah tar lot*<sup>152</sup> plantation. At that time, there was only a hut at the *ah tar lot* plantation. They finished the *ah tar lot* plantation after they signed a three year agreement. After the three year [contract] was finished, they started to build a road. They started to build a road with a bulldozer with the order of the District Peace and Development Council. When they were building the road, there was [not] anyone to bother them. At that time, our civilians bought the land. When we bought [the land], there was no one who came and bothered [us]. The civilians lived on the land where they [now] distribute [confiscate and divide up]. The civilians sold their diamond and gold then bought the land. They pawned [their possessions] and bought the land. While we are doing that to stay, there was nobody who came and bothered [us]. The first person who came and bothered [us] was Ju Thar [also called] Sein Aung Min.

### **Sein Aung Min?**

Sein Aung Min also called [known as] Ju Thar. After that, Ba Soe Gay posted their signboard. Then, thirdly, U Saw Yin Nu posted the signboard. His followers are in the field. We dare not go and see our land.

### **Have you already reported this issue to the government?**

Yes, [we] already reported [it]. The government will inform them.

### **Did they say like that? Did you report it a long time ago?**

Not yet, it was only days [ago].

### **They haven't replied anything yet? Any special news?**

No special news. Despite no new special news coming, the Karen people are building houses and it [the land] is full in half of my orchard.

### **How did you report about the land?**

When we reported to the government, we just report to solve the land problem. We just reported to stop the tenants. We are not educated so we just went and reported the leaders orally. Because we are not educated, we need to be afraid of everyone. Because we are not educated, we can't write and the Karen people abuse us and the other people also abuse us. We don't know who we have to be afraid of.

### **When did they start confiscate?**

It was one year ago.

### **When did they hoist the flag?**

It was a year ago. They hoisted the flag during this year so hoisting the flag is about one year ago. It was nearly to be a year.

### **When they confiscated, it included both the staffs' land and the villagers' land?**

The villagers have to buy from the staffs and live there. So, the civilians have to face more. The staffs who get [the land] are the ones who have never received. The ones who get the land now are the retired staffs. Some are nearly to get retired. Some are old services and old. They give the people who were shot by gun [injured]. Now, the people who were shot by

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<sup>152</sup> A vegetable similar to sweet potato

guns are just still felt happy, the KNLA come in and disturb.

**KNU and KNLA?**

The KNU come in and intervene.

**KNU or KNLA?**

KNU or KNLA, we don't know which group. It is labelled that KNU and KNL [KNLA] and it is written Colonel Pa Soh Gay and another one is Saw Yin Nu.

**Saw Yin Nu?**

General Saw Yin Nu. It is included in your photos.

**What do you want to say regarding this issue?**

What we want to say is, they make peace should be with the public. It should not be to abuse the public. If they want, they should go and ask at the office and give back the ones which were given to the public and to the staffs who were shot by gun. If they are not satisfied with the government, they should go and tell the government. Now, they do not talk to the government. They make peace with the government and the head of their gun is aim at the civilians. We just want to report that and also their headquarter to come and check on the group to know the situation. They live in the border but people from the border will not respect them anymore because they themselves abuse the civilians. If the other country [Thailand] knows, it is shameful. The Karen people also lose their dignity.

**Is the KNU and the KNLA are the groups which make peace?**

It is Major General Htein Maung, but Major General Htein Maung might not know anything.

**What about you? What do you want to say?**

2<sup>nd</sup> interviewee- The work that the leaders did is not a child game. We want to know exactly. If they are leader, they should do as leaders. For us, we had to buy it [the land].

When we bought the land, we only got 30,000 kyat as salary. We saved the money without eating and bought them. The staffs also have gotten the land just once.

Finally, even we are retired, the only thing that we have is this one.

For our staffs, people only look at us when we are with position. No one will look at [care about] you after you retired. The country [government] gave us the land for our livelihood but now, they are confiscated. So, we should also think about the time we have served as staffs and the civilians who have to buy to live there, for justice. What can they do for us?

For some cases, the subordinates do it and the above leaders do not know about that.

Don't the leaders know what their subordinates are doing or do the leaders ask them to do?

The leaders who we are talking about are Saw Yin Nu and don't they know about it? If they know, why the government confiscates the land that they distribute to the staff?

**When you go and look at your orchard, did they threaten you?**

Yes.

**How did they threaten you?**

When we went and had a look for first time to fence the orchard, they fenced it improvised. We said that we will also fence and they replied, don't fence. Their leader Gyo Tha ordered them to take action towards the people who come and fence and he will take responsibility for the consequence problems. How can we dare to go and fence?

The people who guard now are the people who dare [to commit abuse]. We do not even dare to reply them back.

We have to be afraid of every side. Do the make peace with the country [government] or with the public?

For our staffs, after we retired, we can't do anything else. As we get this orchard, we only have hope on this orchard when we are retired and can't do any work. We are just happy but it happens like this and we fell sad.

For some staffs, they sell to the other people and the people who bought the land bought with the money they get by working hard. But now, because the problem happened, they don't know whether they will get the money back or not.

The main thing is that whether Colonal Saw Yin Nu knows about it or not. If he doesn't, it is done by his subordinates. If he knows, we appeal them to give [the land back].

Does the government already give the land to them? If they have already given, they should give the staffs [other land] as replacement. But it shouldn't take so long as it has been a year.

This problem should be solved quickly as some of the people have already came in and built houses. It will be very complicated. It is not only one person, it's over one hundred people.

**Where is the place?**

#4, Myanmar street, section one.

They are talking about General Htein Maung. But, does he know about that? If he knows, the leaders should come and solve it. The land is which the staffs have received. The staffs think that this year, they will fence it then they will plant trees next year. It is for the simple staff, not for the corrupted staff who are rich. We think we will save, the poles and build house [step by step] like ant hill. Now, some lands which are fenced were destroyed by bulldozer.

Even we fence with brick, they destroyed with bulldozer. If it is with bamboo, no need to express.

**Now, I do not take your photos and just record your voice. Is there any problem for you?**

No. No problem.

**What do you want to say more?**

For our Karen people, we love our ethnicity. But when our ethnic people do like this, the other people look down on our ethnic group. We live here and we have to suffer what the



Karen people abuse us.

If the above leaders know, it is ok. The above leaders are making peace above but their subordinates are abusing the people. We asked people and [it seems] the leaders don't know. If they know, we want them to solve it for us.

How will they solve for us? We want them to solve for us. We live peacefully in our village. We are living in our village and we want to live with no worry and with thumb up. We don't want to live with the situation where we have to afraid both our Karen people [KNU] and the government. The government is not that fearful. We can go according to law. For KNU, we can't do according to the law.

It is better to record from the beginning. Now, the points are not in order. We just said as we want.

#### Source #51

<b>Log #</b>	13-38-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw A---, January 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in December 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/12/13-38-a1-i1/hpapun-interview-naw-a-january-2013">http://khrq.org/2014/12/13-38-a1-i1/hpapun-interview-naw-a-january-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Buddhist</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Teacher</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Villager</p> <p>I met and interviewed a female B--- villager in another person's house in B--- village, Waw Muh village tract.</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw A---.</p> <p><b>You have only this name? Do you have any other names?</b></p> <p>No, I do not.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 36 years old.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p>	

I live in B--- village.

**Which village tract is it in?**

It is in Waw Muh village tract.

**Which township is it in?**

It is in Dwe Lo Township.

**Which district is it in?**

It is in Mu Traw [Hpapun] District.

**What is your religion?**

I am a Buddhist.

**Are you Karen?**

I am Karen.

**What is your occupation?**

I work on paddy fields and plantations.

**Are you single or married?**

I am married.

**How many children do you have?**

I have three children.

**How old is the eldest one?**

Eleven years old.

**How old is the youngest one?**

Seven years old.

**Do you have any responsibilities in the village? If so, can you tell us about it?**

I am presently teaching in the nursery school.

**Now, I want to interview you. Can you give us some information?**

I will give you as much as I can.

**Are there any Tatmadaw soldiers staying near your village?**

Yes, there are. There is also an army camp.

**Is it very far from the village?**

[It is] not very far.

**Is it to the east or west of the village?**

It is at the source of the river.

**How long have they lived there?**

They have lived there since I was young.

**So it has been for a long time.**

Yes.

**So how often do they change [rotate] their soldiers?**

In the past, they changed once every four months. Now, I think they change once every four months, too.

**Is the Tatmadaw [unit] that lives at the source of the river far from your village?**

[It is] not very far. It is the lower part of the monastery of B--- village. It is very close to the village.

**Which battalion is that?**

It is Infantry Battalion (IB)<sup>153</sup> #96.

**Do you know the name of the commander?**

I do not know the name of the commander.

**As they live near your village, do they force the villagers to cut down trees and bamboo for them?**

Yes, they do ask.

**Can you tell me about it?**

When they needed a pole of bamboo, they said: "*Sister, ask the messengers [people forced to work as messengers for the Tatmadaw] to cut down a pole of bamboo for bamboo slats.*" If they want even one pole of bamboo, they come and demand it from the messengers. Another time was on the full moon day of [the traditional Burma/Myanmar calendar month of] *Ta Saung Mon* [a religious festival which had last taken place in November 2012]. As it was a full moon day and we are Buddhists, we went to the monastery. They needed the people to send a sack for them without fail in the evening. Therefore, I had to go and send [the sack] by myself. Why didn't they ask [me] to send it in the morning? No, it was not like that. It needed to be sent that evening to Meh Pree Hkee camp. Therefore, they asked for a lot [of forced labour].

**Does the person who asked you for forced labour still live in the camp of IB #96?**

<sup>153</sup> Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprised of 500 soldiers. However, most Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Primarily for garrison duty but sometimes used in offensive operations.

Yes.

**Is his name Saing Ko Ko?**

It is probably him. I do not know.

**When I asked another villager [his name], he said that he was an officer of Mon<sup>154</sup> [ethnicity].**

Yes.

**So, when he asked people to cut down a pole of bamboo, did he ask you or your friends?**

When he came to the village, he knew me and he asked me and other villagers.

**If the villagers did not cut down a pole of bamboo when he asked them to, did he ever scold or punish them?**

He did not disturb the villagers [physically] but he scolded the villagers and he used harsh words with the villagers. He said: “*Why can’t you cut down just one pole of bamboo?*”

**What was he going to do with the pole of bamboo?**

He said that he was going to fix his hut in the camp, so he needed a pole of bamboo. He also needed bamboo slats, wood, and shingles for building a store house.

**When you said you had to send a sack to Meh Pree Hkee for them, what kind of sack was that? Can you tell us about it?**

As it was in the full moon day of *Ta Saung Mon*, they asked me to send a sack of flowers similar to *Ka Thi Hpghaw* [the name of a type of flower in Karen] They said they needed them urgently. It was almost getting dark and if I had asked the [other] villagers, they would not have dared to send [the sack] as it was a full moon day. The other villagers would not go as [they believed that] there were ghosts on the way. I myself had to go and take it to Meh Pree Hkee.

**Who did you go with?**

I went with Naw C---’s mother.

**How long did it take you to get there?**

When we went there, we were [to be] sent by boat, and when we arrived at the source of the Meh Pree River, we saw a messenger by chance and we sent [the sack] through him. If we had not seen any chance messenger, we would have had to take it ourselves. It would have been a dark night and we would not have dared to come back [to our homes afterwards].

**Is there an army camp at Meh Pree Hkee?**

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<sup>154</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/Myanmar 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.

Their operations commander<sup>155</sup> lives there.

**Do you know the name of the operations commander?**

No.

**Is that the army [unit] that villagers told me was IB #44?**

It might be.

**So you had to send the sack to him [the operations commander]?**

Yes. He is not patient.

**Have you ever responded to him that you dared not go or you could not go when you were asked to send something?**

I responded to him that two or three soldiers usually came and took the things that were supposed to be given to him. He said: *“Do not talk back to me with those kinds of words. I don’t want to use aggressive words with you. If I do not use harsh words, it does not work. If I use soft words, the villagers do not respect me.”*

**So he still scolds the villagers?**

Yes.

**Has he forced the villagers to carry any things for him?**

Yes, he asked recently.

**Was it this month, January 2013?**

Yes.

**Which day was it?**

I do not remember the day.

**When you said he forced you to send the sack, was it on the full moon day of *Ta Saung Mon* which was two months ago?**

Yes. You can check in the calendar later.

**What about the other time?**

Wait a minute. It was on Thursday, so it was five days ago.

**So that would be January 24<sup>th</sup> 2013, right?**

Yes.

**So what did he actually ask the villagers? Can you tell me about it?**

<sup>155</sup> Operations commander (G3) refers to a lieutenant colonel or colonel. In the Tatmadaw they are also known as strategic and/or tactical commanders.

He asked to use the [villagers'] boats. Currently, since there is not much water in the river the villagers cannot travel with boats. He said that it needed to be done without fail. He asked the villagers to pull down all of the boats and the boat engines that were on the land into the river. Their rations were kept under the B--- monastery. The food had to be taken down to the river and sent to Meh Pree Hta and then to Meh Pree Hkee village. He first said that the villagers did not need to carry [anything], and that he would only use their boats. However, he asked ten of the villagers to carry rice sacks for them and some of them ran away and came back [to the village].

**Were there ten messengers [porters] who had to carry the rice sacks?**

Yes. Not all of the villagers went to carry the rice sacks; they were afraid as there were a lot of rice sacks that they would have had to carry. There were thousands of rice sacks.

**Where did the villagers have to carry and send the rice sacks to?**

They had to send them to Meh Pree Hta and then to Meh Pree Hkee.

**How long does it take [to travel] from the village to Meh Pree Hkee?**

It is a 45 minute walk.

**Was it only rice sacks? What about other things?**

It also included beans, milk, and oil. They had to send all of their food.

**How many days did it take?**

They had to send all of the food within a day.

**Did they carry it with the boats?**

Yes, the villagers and soldiers had to carry it with the boats. When the food arrived [at Meh Pree Hta], their soldiers had to carry it to their camp.

**How many boats did they use?**

As far as I know, they used three boats while sending their food.

**Did he give any payment for the boats that they used?**

No, he did not give any.

**So he used the boats for free?**

Yes, but he covered the cost of the fuel.

**What about the villagers, did he pay them money?**

No, he did not.

**Did he scold the villagers while they were working?**

The villagers did not say that he scolded them. They just said that they could not work for him and ran away to come back [to the village].

**Is there any other kind of labour that he asks for?**

Yes, he still asks the villagers for forced labour like messenger [duty].

**How many villagers does he ask per day?**

He asks two villagers per day, and [at least] one messenger has to be sent to him every day.

**Do the messengers have to stay at the camp or in the village?**

The messengers stay in the village. If he needs to ask something, he comes to ask the messenger to send the letter to Meh Pree Hkee. If he writes a letter to the village head, he asks the messenger to send the letter to the village head.

**Is there any other labour that he asks for?**

No, there is no other labour. He only asks for messengers and people to cut down bamboo and trees.

**Do those kinds of labour still happen?**

Yes.

**Have they ever visited the village as they live close to the village?**

Yes, they have come.

**Did they engage in any sexual violence against female villagers?**

No, they did not.

**Have they ever forcibly taken the villagers' gold or money or looted the villagers' chickens?**

No, they have not. However, the villagers have lost their chickens [possibly after being killed by dogs belonging to the Tatmadaw]. His [referring to Saing Ko Ko] dogs also bit the villagers' goats and the goats died. The villagers dared not report it to him.

**Did they raise the dogs?**

Yes, they raised many dogs.

**Did they raise them in their camp?**

Yes, they raised them in their camp. When their dogs came into the village, they bit the villagers' goats and the goats died. Some goats came back [to their owner's houses], having lost their legs.

**When the goats died, did the owner of the goats report it to him [the operations commander]?**

If the owners of the goats had gone and reported it to him, he would have said that it was not his dogs. However, people mostly didn't dare to report it to him. His dogs are clever. They have even bitten my pigs many times.

**Like you said, at the moment, the villagers have to do forced labour for him, like**



**carrying rice sacks for him and the villagers' boats were taken to send food to Meh Pree Hkee. Did you hear about these [incidents] or did you see these incidents with your own eyes?**

I personally saw those incidents with my own eyes. They happened to me too. I had to call and organise the villagers [to do forced labour] for him at that time. A villager named Maung D--- had to organise the villagers' boats for him. The villagers came back and told me: "*You said that we just had to move the boats down into the river, but we also had to carry the rice sacks.*"

**Is there any other forced labour that they ask for?**

No, there is not. There is only one thing, they asked for some things from us and they did not give them back to us.

**What kind of material did they ask from the villagers?**

They asked hoes [and other materials] from the villagers.

**So they did not give them back after they had taken them?**

No, they did not.

**Did they lose them?**

Yes, they lost them all, like a saw, knife and a hammer. They asked for them from the villagers and lost them all. Recently, they asked for one of my hoes and they have not given it [back] to me yet.

**What about other forced labour? Do you have any other feelings or concerns?**

No, I haven't recently. There are only these incidents [that I stated above].

**Is there any school in the village?**

Yes, there is.

**Was the school built by the villagers, the KNU [Karen National Union] or the Burmese government?**

It was built by both the KNU and the Burmese government. There are two types of teachers, which are Karen teachers and Burmese government teachers. There are four or five teachers that the government employs in the school. The KNU also employs some teachers who live in the village. They [Karen teachers] are selected and employed as teachers at the school.

**How many standards [grades] are there in the school?**

[There is tuition] up to seventh standard.

**How many languages are taught at the school?**

Burmese and English. Karen is not included. Karen has not been taught recently. It was not taught when Saw G--- left the school as there are no other teachers who can teach Karen. The teachers also do not receive any Karen textbooks.

**Is the reason they cannot teach Karen at school that the teachers cannot read and write Karen or because the Burmese government does not allow them to teach Karen?**

No, when I was a student, the Karen textbooks came from above [the KNU]. Now, the Karen textbooks do not come from above and the teachers here also cannot teach [do not know how to make up the lesson plans by themselves].

**So, it is not because the Burmese government does not give permission; it is because the teachers do not have Karen textbooks and they cannot teach?**

Yes.

**As you do not have Karen textbooks, don't you ask for help from the Karen Education Department (KED) who work around here so that you can get Karen textbooks?**

They [school headmasters or headmistresses] might have asked for help but the textbooks might not have arrived yet.

**How many students are there at the school?**

There might be about 1,000 students<sup>156</sup>. The school is full of students.

**How many teachers are there at the school?**

There are 15 teachers at the school.

**Do the students have to pay the salary of the teachers that the Burmese government sends?**

No, they do not have to.

**What about their [government teachers'] food? Do the villagers have to take responsibility for that?**

Yes, the villagers have to.

**What about the [Karen] teachers who are from the village?**

The KNU pays some money for their salary and the students' parents pay some money for their salary.

**Can you tell me what the school fees are for the students, like how much money the students have to pay if they are in the first standard, second standard or third standard, etc?**

Each kindergarten student has to pay 5,000 kyat (US \$5.03)<sup>157</sup>[annually]. Each student who is in the first standard, second standard and third standard has to pay 7,000 kyat (US \$7.04), and each student who is in the fourth to seventh standards has to pay 35,000 kyat (US \$35.21).

**So, can the students go to school and study peacefully? Are there any disturbances**

<sup>156</sup> This was an overestimation by Naw A---, the actual number of students at the school is between 270-280.

<sup>157</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the October 16<sup>th</sup> 2014 official market rate of 994 kyat to the US \$1.

**for them? Are the students asked to do labour if there are any [demands for] forced labour by the Burmese government?**

No, there aren't.

**So, everything is going smoothly with the students?**

Yes.

**You teach in a nursery school; was the school built by the villagers? Who built it?**

The school was built by the villagers. The logs and bamboo came from the villagers. We did not get any support [from the government or the KNU] to build it. However, the teachers' salaries, pocket money for the children, money for cooking and money for buying toys for the children are provided by the Karen Women Organization (KWO).

**So it is not connected to the Tatmadaw?**

No, it is not.

**As a teacher in a nursery school, do you have any difficulties with school materials?**

We actually do not have enough school materials. Some children are naughty and some children are clever. As the school was built by the villagers, if anything is broken, the villagers have to repair it themselves. The nursery school is not well built, but we have to use it and teach in it.

**Has the Tatmadaw ever come and given any money to the nursery school or middle school in your village?**

No, they do not support the nursery school. They don't support the middleschool either. They have built only one [middle] school in the village.

**So is there a clinic in the village?**

No, there isn't.

**If there is no clinic, where do the villagers go to get medicine or medical treatment if they are sick?**

There is no place to go. We have to call the villagers who have attended basic health training and have some knowledge about health. If they cannot cure [the illness], we have to call the Tatmadaw's health workers. If the Tatmadaw's health workers cannot cure it, we have to go to the hospital in the town. If we do not go to the town, we will die.

**How much do you have to pay if you take medicine from the villager's health workers or the Tatmadaw's health workers?**

We have to pay the cost of the medicine to the villager's health workers, but we have to pay less money to the Tatmadaw's health workers [than the villager's health workers].

**If the villagers get serious diseases and go to the hospital in the town, do you have to pay the cost?**

Yes, we have to.

**What about the villagers who do not have money?**

They do not go [to the hospital in town] and they just stay like that until they die.

**So there is no way for them to get support and get to the hospital?**

No, there isn't.

**Is there any gold or stone mining in your village?**

Yes, there is.

**Could you tell me whether there are any benefits from the gold or stone mining for the villagers?**

I cannot tell you very much about it.

**Can you tell us your opinions or your feelings?**

I do not see any benefits for the villagers. There might be benefits for some villagers. As I am a poor person, they [the company engaging in mining] would not allow me to work with them. I cannot go and sell food to them as they buy their own food from the town. We cannot work with them as day labourers as they hire their own workers when they come. I do not see any benefits for the villagers.

**Since you mentioned that there are some villagers who benefit and some villagers who do not benefit from gold mining, what percentage of the villagers get some benefit?**

There are more villagers who receive no benefit than villagers who do benefit.

**So 10% of the villagers benefit and 90% of the villagers don't [receive any] benefit? There are significantly more villagers who are [not benefiting]?**

Yes.

**Do people conduct gold mining around your village?**

Yes, they conduct gold mining near my house.

**Is it very far from your house?**

Not far away. Walking would take less than ten minutes.

**So, it is not very far. So, do they destroy any of the villagers' land when they conduct gold mining here?**

The villagers sell the land to them, so there is no destruction of land [which belongs to villagers].

**What about the destruction of other things like plants or water?**

There is some destruction of the wells.

**What did you [the villagers] do then?**

They [the mining company] said they were going to dig wells for the villagers whose wells were destroyed. They did not dig wells for some of the villagers [but did for others] and they went back [left the area after they had conducted the gold mining].

**How long has there been gold mining here?**

It started in 2010.

**So it is after the DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army]<sup>158</sup> [started conducting gold mining] and [it has continued] until now?**

Yes.

**Are the people who conduct the gold mining Karen people or people from the town?**

Actually, the [Karen] people from here started this first. They went and called the people from the city to come and conduct gold mining, so they are like brokers.

**So, they [local villagers] organised that?**

Yes.

**Do you know any names of the leaders of the people who came to conduct gold mining from the town?**

I do not know exactly. I heard that the organisation who conducted it in Baw Baw River is U Mya Phu [from Shwe Pu company]. This is one group and another group that conducted the gold mining [in Baw Baw River] is called the Chit Lin Myaing [company] and the DKBA stayed there and did security for them. There is also Pok Ka La [an individual person] who came [and conducted gold mining in Baw Baw River] but he represented the [unknown] company. Some people came and conducted gold mining but they represent the companies.

**Does the water get murky [polluted] when they conduct gold mining?**

Yes, it does.

**How do the villagers deal with the water problems like when they cannot drink clean water and the cows or buffalos drink unclean water since the water is murky?**

Yes, there is the problem that the animals have to drink unclean water. There are also some animals that died because of drinking unclean water. My female buffalo [drank unclean water and] died with a lump of mud inside her stomach. She could not endure it. Two of my female buffalos have died.

**When did it happen?**

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<sup>158</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma/Myanmar government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma/Myanmar at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "[Inside the DKBA](#)," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.

One female buffalo died in 2011 and another one died in 2012.

**Was it because they drank murky water?**

Yes, they drank unclean water which was bad because of the gold mining. The buffalo also went to pasture in the forest and they ate something [poisonous] made by the company. That was my own buffalo.

**Have any of your friends' animals had to face the same problems as yours?**

Yes, they have.

**As the river water is murky, where do the villagers go to find clean water to drink?**

Currently the villagers are provided with some water pipes.

**Do they get enough water from the water pipes?**

They take it from the water pipes but they do not get enough water.

**So where do the buffalos drink clean water so that they will not have to drink murky water and die?**

They do not have clean water and they have to drink the murky water.

**So do the animals die often?**

They die. If they know that the buffalos are not healthy, the villagers sell them.

**So, there are a lot of animals that have died? How many have died?**

A lot of animals died. I do not know exactly [how many]. About 10 or 20 died.

**Are there any benefits for the villagers, like could they build a nice house after they conducted the gold mining from 2010 to 2013? Did they [the company] help the villagers to build their buildings or any development?**

[Regarding the benefits] I have only seen the water [that they provided for the villagers]. I have not seen anything else as I am a poor person. There might have been some benefits for the rich villagers.

**Did they ask permission from the Tatmadaw or the KNU when they conducted the gold mining.**

I do not know. They might [have asked for permission] from KNU leaders. They might have also asked for permission from the Tatmadaw. I do not know. In Brigade #1 [Thaton District], only the Tatmadaw conduct gold mining like the [Tatmadaw] battalion commander and the [Tatmadaw] operations commander. They bought the land from the villagers and they conducted gold mining and they got a lot of gold.

**So, there is no one who disturbs them?**

There is no one.

**The [KNU] 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade leader might have given them permission. So, are there any**

**other benefits for the villages from gold mining when we look at all of the villages?**

If we look at all of the villagers, there are no benefits.

**So it only benefits the people who are brokers?**

Yes. I was asked to collect the rice from the villagers for the KNU district leader. When I asked for rice from the villagers, the villagers said that they [the KNU] sell the gold and buy their bullets. As the villages are poor, they complained to me: *"Are you coming and asking for rice again? As the water is murky, the paddy that we grow does not grow well enough."* They complained because they are poor, married women. Those who were not poor did not complain.

**Does gold mining destroy the pasture for the cattle?**

No, it does not. It only destroys the water.

**Is there any other destruction of the trees, bamboo and the environment?**

There might be some destruction of the trees and bamboo as they are conducting a huge gold mining [operation].

**Do you think that the [KNU] leaders should stop them or allow them to conduct gold mining? What is your personal opinion?**

I think the leaders have more knowledge than us. It is up to the leaders.

**What about your personal opinion?**

In my opinion, I cannot do anything about whether the gold mining is going to be allowed or stopped.

**If the gold mining was stopped, would you be happy or sad?**

If the gold mining was stopped, we, the villagers could go and pan for gold to get a little. If it is ongoing, we will not have the chance to pan for gold.

**So, they do not allow you to pan for gold with them [while they are conducting gold mining]?**

No, they do not allow us to pan for gold with them, as they have already bought the land to conduct it [gold mining].

**So, it causes a big problem for the villagers' livelihoods that the villagers are not allowed to pan for gold together with them?**

Yes.

**In the past you could take your pans and pan for gold any time you liked?**

Yes. We went to pan for gold for half a day in the morning or evening and we came back and we sold the gold that we had panned. We could drink clean water, plus the cattle could also drink clean water. Now, they are doing gold mining and it does not matter if they allow us to pan for gold together with them. They said that they have bought the land, so we have to face that problem.



**Was there anything else that you personally had to face when the company came to do gold mining?**

There was nothing else, I just can't work on anything [do gold mining or panning for gold].

**Where is your village located? Is it located beside the Buh Law River or at the bottom of the mountain?**

I live next to the monastery.

**I mean the location of the whole of your village.**

The whole village is located between the Meh Kleh Law River and the Buh Law River.

**What villages are there to the east of the village?**

Meh Pu Hta village is to the east of the village.

**Is the Buh Law River between your village and H--- village?**

Yes.

**What about to the west of your village?**

I--- village is the closest village to the west of our village. The Meh Kleh River is between our village and I--- village.

**What about at the source of the river?**

Hpoh Kheh Hta [village] is there.

**What about the mouth of the river?**

Wah Lay village is there. And there is a Tatmadaw army camp at Wah Lay village.

**How long has this village been located here?**

This village has been here since I was very young.

**How many households are there in the village?**

There might be about [censored for security] households in the village.

**What do the villagers mostly work on for their livelihoods?**

They mostly work on the paddy fields and hill fields.

**Do they all have enough food?**

No, not all of them have enough food.

**Do the villagers who have enough food help the other villagers who do not have enough food?**

No, they do not.

**How do the villagers who do not have enough food manage?**

They have to borrow food from the others and later they have to pay them back. No one says, "*Here is one big tin<sup>159</sup> of rice, take it and you do not need to give it back.*" If someone borrows a big tin of rice, someone has to give back one big tin and four bowls<sup>160</sup> as interest.

**As the villagers work on paddy fields and hill fields, do they have any other businesses to earn money?**

There are no other ways [to earn money]. There is only work on the paddy fields and hill fields plus panning for gold and cutting down trees and bamboo to sell. There are no other business [opportunities].

**In this interview, do you have any other things you would like to mention which I have not asked you about?**

Some villagers are poor and some villagers are rich. The poor villagers are extremely poor and do not have enough food to eat. The rich people are extremely rich. The poor villagers have to borrow money from them and have to pay them back with interest. If the villagers do not have money, they have to work on the paddy fields and pan for gold and cut down trees and bamboo and sell them to get money.

**How are the rich villagers getting rich?**

The rich villagers are getting rich because they inherit [wealth] from their parents and they meet with good friends who have a relationship with the Tatmadaw and the KNU and their work is going well. As for the poor people, they do not even have capital and they do not have their own paddy fields or plantations. Therefore, they have to do hill farming. They do not get anything if the buffalos eat their paddy or there is a lot of rain.

**What about the villagers who do not have enough food; is it because they are lazy or because their work does not go well even though they work?**

Their work does not go well even though they work very hard on the paddy fields and hill fields. It is because the mice eat their paddy and there is a lot of rain.

**Do the Tatmadaw or KNU support the villagers whose work does not go well with money or food?**

Last year, KORD [Karen Office of Relief and Development] came and supported the villagers with money. I do not see anyone supporting [the villagers by giving them] money this year.

**Is there anything else you would like to mention?**

The KNU mentioned that they would sell the land and would buy bullets. We cannot buy bullets for them as we are poor. They sell the land and buy bullets. We cannot stop them from selling the land as we cannot help them. Although the Tatmadaw said that they are engaging in the ceasefire,<sup>161</sup> we do not know what is on their mind. They might have many

<sup>159</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg. or 23.04 lb. of paddy, and 16 kg. or 35.2 lb. of milled rice.

<sup>160</sup> A bowl is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One bowl is equivalent to 1.28 kg. or 2.88 lb. of paddy, and 2 kg. or 4.4 lb. of milled rice. A bowl is also equivalent to 1/8 of a big tin.

<sup>161</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace process, see the KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG's analysis of

different plans. We cannot stop the KNU selling the land. We cannot say; “KNU, can you stop [selling the land]?” And if something [fighting] happens with them, they do not have any place to get bullets. As they are KNU soldiers, they do not have money to buy bullets. If we look at the villagers’ side, the villagers also cannot buy bullets for them. The villages just provide them with some rice and some sesame paste each year. They also do not have enough [rice and sesame paste provided by us]. Therefore, we cannot stop them [from selling the land] as their leaders may think that it is the right way.

**When you said the KNU sells the land, does the KNU sell the land of the villagers to the people who are conducting the gold mining?**

No, I do not see anything like the forcible confiscation of the villagers’ land.

**So they are going to demand tax from the villagers and buy bullets?**

Yes, they said that when I went to a meeting in Hpoh Kheh Hta village. They said they would sell the land and then they were going to buy the bullets.

**Who said that?**

Officer Nay Toe said that. He said it in front of Ma E---s house. Teacher F--- who is from our village said “*You [the KNU] opened the gold mining and it is true that you are going to buy bullets. So, are there any benefits for the villagers?*” He asked like that. I did not hear that there would be benefits for the villagers in the meeting. I only heard him [Nay Toe] say “*I sell the land, and the logs because I have to buy bullets. The villagers cannot buy bullets for us. I have to buy them.*” When I listened to him, [I understood that] it is true that we cannot buy the bullets for them. Although the gold mining does not benefit us, it does not matter if we can live without debts.

**Is there anything else?**

No, there is not.

**Thank you very much for [letting us] get this information from you.**

Thank you.

**Naw A---, (female, 36), B--- village, Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District, (Interviewed in January 2013)**

#### Source #52

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<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Introduction</b>	

changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

In the previous years 2009 to 2010, the civilians in Dwe Lo Township had to suffer from the DKBA's [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army]<sup>162</sup> and SPDC's [Tatmadaw's]<sup>163</sup> forced labour and portering. Also when the DKBA came and mined gold in Baw Paw, Meh Kleh, and Meh Toh rivers, they confiscated the civilians' lands in order to mine gold. The civilians' vegetation, dog fruit<sup>164</sup> plantations, farms and the environment were damaged a lot. Since 2011, the civilians have not suffered forced labour, looting or gold mining from the SPDC and DKBA anymore. Even though the things like forced labour, demanding and looting of peoples' chickens and goats from the SPDC army that's active in our area have decreased, some remains.

Since 2011 until now, the greatest difficulty that the civilians had to suffer was when the company came and mined gold in Meh Kleh, Meh Toh and Baw Paw rivers. The civilians' properties, vegetation, lands, trees and bamboos were damaged a lot. If the civilians, whose properties were damaged, asked for compensation, [the company] did not provide [it as] completely as the civilians had asked. Currently, since the gold mining has been carried out, the civilians have suffered from [a lack of access to] fresh water because the water is polluted all the time. Moreover, because the flowing of polluted water contains chemicals, when cattle, buffalos and fish drink the water, it causes disease and, as a result, some have died.

### **Forced labour, demands**

The SPDC army based at Waw Muh army camp is IB [Infantry Battalion] #96. On December 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, the Battalion Commander Yaing Ko Ko ordered Naw P--- to send one packet of letters for MOC [Military Operations Command] #44's camp commander. Naw P--- lives in Dr--- village, and the distance between Dr--- village and Meh Pree Hkee [village] is approximately five miles. Yaing Ko Ko ordered Naw P---, and Naw P--- went [as she was ordered] with fear.

On the same day, IB #96 Waw Muh Camp Commander Yaing Ko Ko demanded and ordered Dr--- villagers who have boats to transport their [army] rations to Meh Pree Hkee army camp. Again they ordered 10 of Dr---'s villagers per day in order to carry the sacks of rice, oil, peas and other supplies from the army camp to the boat. It [the order] started on January 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 [and was enforced] to January 28<sup>th</sup> 2013 until their [Tatmadaw] rations were all delivered.

On August 28<sup>th</sup> 2012, the SPDC army based in Kay Kaw army camp, IB #96 Company and Camp Commander Lin Htet ordered his followers [soldiers] to cut bamboo and [collect]

<sup>162</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "Inside the DKBA," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.

<sup>163</sup> In Karen, the Burmese phrases Na Ah Pa (SPDC) and Na Wa Ta (SLORC) are commonly used to refer to the Burma government or to Burma's state army, the Tatmadaw. Many older Karen villagers who were accustomed to using the phrase Na Wa Ta (SLORC) before 1997 continue to use that phrase, even though the SLORC has not officially existed since 1997. Similarly, despite the official dissolution of the SPDC in March 2011, many Karen villagers continue to use the phrase Na Ah Pa (SPDC) to refer to the Burmese government or to the Tatmadaw; see: "Mission Accomplished as SPDC 'dissolved'," Myanmar Times, April 4-10th 2011. The term Na Ah Pa was used by the villager who wrote this conducted this interview and interviewee and "SPDC" is therefore retained in the translation of this interview.

<sup>164</sup> Dog fruit, also known as jengkol, is a bean containing sulphur and a mildly toxic amino acid. It is native to Southeast Asia and is commonly eaten with rice and fish paste.

thatch shingles in A--- villager Saw T---'s [garden]. [They took] five giant bamboo canes and 20 thatch shingles without asking permission from the owner of the bamboo and thatch shingles. They [Tatmadaw soldiers] just went and cut [the bamboo canes] forcibly. Saw T--- planted and kept those bamboo canes and thatch shingles to use for building a house.

On August 25<sup>th</sup> 2012, IB #96's Camp Commander Lin Htet ordered his followers again to go and take Maung E---'s thatch shingles in order to repair their location [army camp]. They [Tatmadaw soldiers] also forcibly took it and stole it, but Maung E--- dared not go to talk to Lin Htet, so he had to suffer like that.

On August 29<sup>th</sup> 2012, officer Lin Htet ordered an A--- villagers to cut 50 *wa thoh*<sup>165</sup> in order to repair their army camp.

On September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012, Zaw Lin Htet ordered and demanded A--- villagers to make 100 thatch shingles in order to repair the roofs in their army camp.

On October 26<sup>th</sup> 2012, IB #96 army's Zaw Lin Htet ordered A--- villager Saw H--- to go to get alcohol, oil and beer in Hkoo Thoo Hta [village]. The distance between A--- and Hkoo Thoo Hta [village] is four miles.

### **Stealing and dog attacks**

IB #96 Camp Commander Zaw Lin Htet raises one dog and, on August 24<sup>th</sup> 2012, his dog bit and killed one goat belonging to A--- villager Saw B---.

On August 27<sup>th</sup> 2012, Zaw Lin Htet's soldiers stole one rooster belonging to an A--- villager Naw M---.

On September 4<sup>th</sup> 2012, Zaw Lin Htet ordered his soldiers to go to steal 30 thatch shingles and cut 20 *wa thoh* belonging to A--- villagers.

On September 16<sup>th</sup> 2012, Zaw Lin Htet's soldiers stole one goat belonging to an A--- villager Saw G---.

On September 26<sup>th</sup> 2012, IB #96's Camp Commander Zaw Lin Htet's (who is based in A--- [village]) soldiers stole one pig belonging to Saw U--- on this day.

On November 26<sup>th</sup> 2012, Kay Kaw's Camp Commander Zaw Lin Htet's dog bit and killed one goat belonging to SPDC's<sup>166</sup> village head.

On November 27<sup>th</sup> 2012, Zaw Lin Htet's soldiers stole one rooster belonging to an A--- villager Naw S---.

On November 28<sup>th</sup> 2012, Zaw Lin Htet's soldiers stole three families of fowl, including a hen and chicken belonging to A--- villager Naw W---.

On November 29<sup>th</sup> 2012, Zaw Lin Htet's soldiers stole one family of fowls belonging to an A-- villager Naw K---.

As of 2013, the armed group that was based in Kay Kaw army camp, IB #96 Company Commander Zaw Lin Htet, is not based in Kay Kaw [army camp] anymore, and there is a new battalion that has come and is now based there.

<sup>165</sup> *Wa thoh* is a smooth species of bamboo with long joints and medium-sized leaves.

<sup>166</sup> The community member used SPDC here to indicate that the village head was either appointed to his position by the SPDC during its existence or more recently by Tatmadaw authorities.

### Logging

Logging is still ongoing in Dwe Lo Township. Forest administrator Kyaw Hpoh said that headquarter [KNU] and district [leaders] forbid the logging decisively. When I compare what he said and what he did, it does not match. He said logging is forbidden, but when rich men, Maw Ra and Kay Mee Kaw, requested to do logging, he gave them permission to do logging since November 10<sup>th</sup> 2012. Until now, they continue to log [trees], which are ironwood and teak [trees] in Meh Way village tract, and they said [they are allowed to log the trees because they] are [unclaimed]. They send the logs that they [cut] to Ma Lay Ler and Kwee T'Ma [villages], then they transport [them] with a truck and go to sell [the logs] in the town. This still happens continuously. Some civilians said that the leaders said to develop the forest, but what the leaders said and did do not match. As the proverb says, the villagers say that the leaders are now just “writing by hand and erasing by leg.” One villager said, *“Is it good to develop the forest or not good? I hope many leaders decide it collectively. If they would develop the forest, they have to forbid it decisively. The logging and sending the logs to the town should not occur anymore.”*

### Confiscation

In Dwe Lo Township, there are two places where the BGF [Tatmadaw Border Guard Force]<sup>167</sup> confiscated civilians' lands, farms, rubber plantations, thatch plantations and bamboo plantations in order to set up their residence [army camp].

The first place is in between Kh--- and Bc--- [villages]. Since March 2012, the BGF built up a barrack and finished some [buildings], and until now they continue build up more [buildings]. The group of BGF that came to set up the residence is Battalion #1013's Battalion Commander Htoh Loh. It is led and constructed by Battalion Deputy Commander Hla Kyaing. The BGF set up a barracks and confiscated villagers' lands, rubber plantations, farms and many other lands as reported in this update.

Victim Name	Village Name	Acre of lands
1. Christian cemetery	Kh--- village	
2. U D---	Kh--- village	Two acres of farms and four acres of rubber plantation
3. Saw C---	Kh--- village	One acre rubber plantation and 10 acres of farms
4. U J---	Kh--- village	One acre of farm
5. U Ky---	Bc--- village	One acre of rubber plantation
6. Daw N---	Bc--- village	Five acres of rubber plantation
7. U Th---	Bc--- village	Two acres of farm

The BGF set up this residence and they plan to have a 360-acre-wide residence. They confiscated these civilians' lands, and they did not consult with the civilians [to see if] civilians agreed or did not agree. They came directly and cleared the land then set up the residence. They confiscated it [the lands] and provided compensation as they desired to the civilians. Even though the civilians did not agree, they [civilians] had to take it [compensation] quietly because they were afraid.

<sup>167</sup> 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 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.



Because the civilians' lands and plantations were destroyed [confiscated] the problems that it will cause in the following year are that there are no more farms to plant paddy. There are no more rubber trees to drain.

The second place is BGF Battalion #1014's Battalion Commander *Bo* [Officer] Maung Chit with 30 soldiers. They set up barracks in Kha Hpa Doh Koh place in eastern Tha Aw Klay village on February 10<sup>th</sup> 2011. The structure of their residence that they finished constructing is 10 households for the officers, 20 buildings with four living spaces in each and 40 buildings with six living spaces in each. They planted a lot of rubber [trees] in the vicinity. The BGF set up this residence and confiscated civilians' properties, thatch plantations, bamboo plantations and the other wide places. In Pc--- [village], two acres of Saw R---'s *k'haw la*<sup>168</sup> plantation [were confiscated]. [In] Z--- [village] [there were] two acres of Saw Y---'s *k'haw la* [that were confiscated]. [In] Z--- [village], [there were] 20 acres of bamboo plantation that villagers protected to use for building houses [that were confiscated]. 50 acres of bamboo plantation that villagers protected to use for house building [were also confiscated]. One hundred acres of *t'la aw*<sup>169</sup> hill in the three villages, which are Z---, Pc--- and Ng--- [villages], [that were being] protected to use for roofing [were confiscated]. Now, they cleared that *t'la aw* hill and planted rubber [trees] so in the coming year, the civilians from the three villages will have to deal with the problem that they will not have any place for roofing their house's roofs. Another thing is [civilians] do not have any bamboo to cut in order to build a house and make a fence.

### Gold mining

The gold mining in Dwe Lo Township has been carried out since 2006 and, until now, it has damaged a lot of lands, trees, bamboo, natural resources, the source of the river and civilians' lands. Because the gold mining was carried out, the civilians have had to deal with [problems] such as damaged properties and, moreover, the polluted water that contains chemicals coming from the gold mining<sup>170</sup> flowing in the river, so [that] when the civilians drink [water] it causes sickness. Moreover, there were many cattle, buffalos and fish that got sick after they drank water and [as a result] they are dead. The gold mining started in Baw Paw River. The civilians from the town came and asked permission from headquarter [KNU] department Baw Lah, and Baw Lah gave them permission and they could do it. At that time, there was no truck [bulldozer] that was used in the gold mining.

While the gold mining continued to 2009 and 2010, DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army] Lieutenant Chit Thu<sup>171</sup> came and carried out gold mining with many of his soldiers. They mined gold in Meh Kleh, Meh Toh and Baw Paw rivers. At that time, the civilians had to suffer and carry things [for the DKBA]. They [civilians] had to work for the DKBA without resting. Moreover, when they [DKBA] mined gold, civilians' lands and vegetation were damaged but they [DKBA] did not pay compensation.

The civilians were very happy after the DKBA came and mined gold and left. Again, starting

<sup>168</sup> *K'haw la* is a kind of palm tree with leaves that can be fashioned into thatch shingles.

<sup>169</sup> *T'la aw* trees are teak-like trees with large leaves, which are traditionally collected by villagers and used to make thatch shingles for the roofs of houses.

<sup>170</sup> It is possible the chemicals referenced here might be a consequence of gold cyanidation. This process involves placing crushed ore into piles where a cyanide solution is poured over it to dissolve the gold and allow it to "leach" out of the pile and also into the ground. This process risks contaminating the surrounding area and is heavily regulated by many nations.

<sup>171</sup> Maung Chit Thu was the operations commander of the then-Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) Battalion #999 prior to the DKBA transformation into the Tatmadaw Border Guard, which began in September 2010. His role has grown considerably since the transformation, and he is now second in command of BGF forces. Abuses committed by Maung Chit Thu have been cited in previous KHRG reports, including ordering the forcible relocation of villagers from eight villages in Lu Pleh Township in July 2011, while acting as a Border Guard commander, see, "Pa'an Situation Update: June to August 2011," KHRG, October 2011.



in 2011 and until now, many companies have come, including a Chinese [company]. They came and asked permission from the headquarters of the metal [mining] department Governor Baw Lah, [KNLA] Battalion #102 Battalion Commander Kyaw Thein and Military Intelligence Commander Toh Nyoh. They gave them permission and the companies entered and [mined gold] in Meh Kleh, Baw Paw and Meh Toh rivers until now, and have damaged a huge [part] of the natural environment of these three rivers, civilians' lands and vegetation.

Moreover, if we look at the current leaders, they have to improve in everything, right? When I look at Dwe Lo farm department in charge Win Maung and his follower Nyut Win, [they] supported the traders [businessmen] and arranged the gold mining places for them. He [Win Maung] forced the civilians who did not want to sell [their lands] to sell. If they could arrange one piece of land for the people who came to mine gold, people gave them three million, four million [kyat] (US \$3,0657.50, \$4,090).<sup>172</sup> When gold mining happened they got a lot of money and they became rich. In my opinion, since the gold mining happened there is no benefit for the civilians. It will be for the best if it is decisively forbidden.

This year, civilians who [mine] gold requested to headquarters, brigade, battalion, district and township [KNU/KNLA leaders that] they work for themselves this year. But, when they requested to mine gold and people [including those from headquarters, brigade, battalion, district and the township's leaders were going to allot them land on which to mine gold], they were [instead] looking [out for the interests of] the rich people in the town and sold [the land to them instead]. They got a lot of money. Moreover, some people in charge suggested to them that [since] they did not get a truck [for mining] this year, they write up a letter [using the civilians' names in order to secure a truck for their own mining purposes, which the civilians would not be able to use]. They wrote up a fake letter and betrayed the civilians.

Is the gold mining forbidden? No way. On March 7<sup>th</sup> 2013, the leaders from the [KNU] metal [mining] department gave [permission] to mine gold with a truck [bulldozer]. There are approximately 90 percent of the civilians who do not want gold mining [occurring in their area] and whose lands are damaged. There are 10 percent of the civilians who are good at speaking and lie to the leaders, and leaders trust them. In our grandparents' era, if the civilians did not have food to eat, then they could go to pan for gold as they wished. Now, if civilians go to pan for gold they have to go get a permission letter from the people in charge of the gold mine. For one permission letter for one month they have to pay 15,000 kyat (US \$15.33).

Currently, [regarding] the gold mining which has happened, the consequences and problems that will occur in the following year to the civilians are [that] lands will be damaged, vegetation will be damaged and [villagers] cannot pan gold anymore. These consequences and problems will still occur in the new generation.

## Conclusion

The human rights abuses that I have reported are included in the pages in this update. The human right abuse in this update is about the events happening in my area and the civilians having to suffer from it enormously. The information that I collected and sent truly occurred and is reliable. The things like ordering, demanding and stealing are still happening at the current time. I think that the things the civilians have to deal with [like] problems and their rights that are abused will decrease and lessen in the coming year.

Currently, the recent abuse of civilians' rights that they have to suffer is that BGF Battalion #1013's officer Htoh Loh set up a residence in between K'Ter Tee and Noh Hpaw Htee

<sup>172</sup> As of July 10<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 978 kyat to the US \$1.

[villages]. [Regarding] the civilians who live near to the residence of the BGF construction, the problems that they have to suffer are land confiscation, [the confiscation of] rubber plantations and [the confiscation of] farms. In the coming year, the problems that the civilians will have to suffer are that they do not have farm to plant paddy and they do not have rubber plantations to drain. The new generation will deal with many difficulties.

Another thing is the BGF Battalion #1014's Battalion Commander Maung Chit set up their residence in Kha Hpa Doh Hkoh beside Tha Aw Klay village, and the civilians have to deal with the problems such as the confiscation of bamboo plantations and *t'la aw* plantations from the three villages, which are Z---, Ng--- and Pc---. They go to get thatches for roofing their house roof in that place. Now, there are no *t'la aw* trees. The civilians have to deal with the problems [including that] they cannot find thatches to roof their houses. They cannot find bamboo to cut. The new generation will have to deal with many problems in the coming year.

Since the gold mining in Meh Kleh, Meh Toh and Baw Paw rivers has existed the difficulties that the civilians had to deal with are lands that are damaged, vegetation that is damaged and water that is polluted. When cattle, buffalo, fish and humans drank the polluted water some got sick and [some cattle] died. Since the gold mining was implemented there has been no benefit for the civilians' buildings. In my parents' era, the civilians who lived near to the rivers where gold exists, the gold mining was not mined with machine or truck [bulldozer]. The indigenous people there worked in the swidden [agriculture] and, sometimes, if the paddies were dead or the mice ate all the paddies, they made their livelihood from these three rivers. They went to pan gold, and after they sold it they bought rice. But now, the gold mining is done with machine and truck, therefore the places and rivers are all damaged. In coming years, if the civilians' paddies are dead, they will not have place to pan gold in order to buy rice, and there will be many consequential problems.

Situation Update written by a community member, Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District, (Received in May 2013)

### Source #53

<b>Log #</b>	13-52-S1
<b>Title</b>	Situation Update   Te Naw Th'ri Township, Mergui-Tavoy District (August 2012 to March 2013)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in August 2013 <a href="http://khrq.org/2013/08/13-52-s1/mergui-tavoy-situation-update-te-naw-thri-township-august-2012-march-2013">http://khrq.org/2013/08/13-52-s1/mergui-tavoy-situation-update-te-naw-thri-township-august-2012-march-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Te Naw Th'ri Township, Mergui-Tavoy District
<b>Full Text</b>	

#### Introduction

This situation update reports the situation from August 1<sup>st</sup> 2012 to March 27<sup>th</sup> 2013. This report includes the human rights abuses that occurred in Te Naw Th'ri Township region. This report discusses the Government military [Tatmadaw], which is based in Te Naw Th'ri Township, KNU, Burmese military police, local forces, soldiers, fire forces, Government [officials] and teachers [in an effort to band together] and destroy the *beh htee* plants in Ta Keh region. This report also includes [information] about land confiscation and consequential problems to villagers' plants and the villagers' health and education.

#### Burmese military [Tatmadaw]'s activity

There are five regions in Te Naw Th'ri Township, and they are (1) Ta Keh region, (2) Kay region, (3) M'Noh Roh region, (4) along Pa Wa region and (5) Moo K'Hpaw region.

The Burmese government military [Tatmadaw] that is based in Ta Keh region is LIB [Light

Infantry Battalion] #561, and we do not know the one who leads it, but the military is based in Hton To. This military group is always based there, and during this reporting period they did not have any activity.

As for Kay region, the military group that is based [in the region] is IB [Infantry Battalion] #594 and we do not know the commander's name. In this reporting period, we did not see any of their special activity. Because this military group is a patrol group, they stay in the monastery or in villagers' houses. In the past, if the military group stayed in the villagers' houses, villagers had to be afraid. However, now, we can see that the fears of the villagers are decreasing.<sup>173</sup> This military group is active when their leaders come, and they have to take responsibility for the road security.

The Tatmadaw [battalion] that is active and based in Ma Noh Roh region is LIB #558, and the one who leads it is Battalion Commander Soe Lwin.

Regarding Tatmadaw activity in Pa Wa region, during this time there was no more Tatmadaw activity. There is only militia in the village, and it does not seem that this militia is active either.

For the Tatmadaw activity along Moo K'Hpaw region, IB #101 [is active] and the leader is Than Hlaing Win.

#### **Destruction of drug (*beh htee*)**

The plan started on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2013 as the Burma government and KNU [Karen National Union] leaders from Te Naw Th'Ri Township gathered themselves and destroyed the *beh htee* in two places, which are Th'Mee La and Koh Daw in Ta Keh Region, Te Naw Th'Ri Township. The Burma government [official] who led the destruction of the *beh htee* was police officer Kyi Lin from Te Naw Th'Ri, and from the KNU side, the one who led [the eradication efforts] was township secretary P'Doh Htee Wah.

Regarding this plan, because there were two places of *beh htee*, they had to divide up into two groups in order to destroy the drugs. Group #1 destroyed *beh htee* in Th'Mee La and group #2 destroyed *beh htee* in Koh Daw. The number of people from group #1 who destroyed *beh htee* totalled 272 people. They started destroying *beh htee* at 8:45 [a.m.] and they set fire [to the plants] at 10:00 [a.m.]. The owner of this *beh htee* is U B--- from X--- village. For group #2, they had to go and destroy [*beh htee*] in Hpeh Koh Daw village tract, and there were 166 people total. They started destroying the *beh htee* at 9:00 a.m. and finished at 11:30 a.m.

As their [villagers'] *beh htee* was destroyed, in order not to face [financial] difficulty [with the loss of the crops] and to be able to find another job, Burma government police officer Kyi Lin said that he will help the first person, U B--- from X--- village with 20.8 million kyat,<sup>174</sup> (US \$21,074), and for the person from Y--- village he will give 2.08 million kyat (US \$2,107.40). Regarding this information, I went and got it on my own.

#### **Land confiscation**

Starting from February 26<sup>th</sup> 2013, I received information about the rich people's (Ngway K'Ba) Korea Company, whose coordinator is (Daw Nah Rih), confiscating the villagers' land and destroying the villagers' land, including their plantations, in L--- village, Pa Wa region, near the coast, Te Naw Th'Ri Township. This company confiscated the villagers' land and

<sup>173</sup> Although the cause for this decrease is not entirely clear from the community member's report, evidence suggests it might be a result of the January 2012 ceasefire between the Burma government and the KNU.

<sup>174</sup> As of July 12<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 Kyat to the US \$1.

destroyed the villagers' land and plants, but they did not give compensation.

Regarding [the villagers to whom] the company paid the compensation for destruction of the civilians' land and plants are;

- (1) In 2011, they gave 160,000 kyat (US \$162.10) of compensation to *Hpah Tee*<sup>175</sup> P--- for a five-acre-paddy field
- (2) In 2012, they gave 75,000 kyat (US \$75.99) of compensation to *Hpah Tee* Q--- for an eight-acre-paddy field
- (3) In 2010, they gave 80,000 kyat (US \$81.05) of compensation for *Hpah Tee* S---'s cashew plants that provide fruit and two acres of four-year-old betel nut plants

Regarding the people whose land was confiscated and destroyed, but were not given compensation are:

- (1) 11 acres of *Hpah Tee* T---'s pasture land
- (2) 17 acres of *Hpah Tee* P---'s pasture land
- (3) *Hpah Tee* U---'s paddy threshing ground
- (4) *Hpah Tee* V---'s paddy threshing ground
- (5) *Hpah Tee* W---'s paddy threshing ground, and these grounds were destroyed as the sand falls into the land [the threshing ground was destroyed by development projects].
- (6) *Hpah Tee* Y---'s cashew plants and three acres of land
- (7) *Hpah Tee* Z---
- (8) *Hpah Tee* C---
- (9) *Hpah Tee* G---
- (10) *Hpah Tee* E---
- (11) *Hpah Tee* F---
- (12) *Hpah Tee* D---
- (13) *Hpah Tee* J---
- (14) *Hpah Tee* M---
- (15) *Hpah Tee* K---
- (16) *Hpah Tee* H---
- (17) *Hpah Tee* W---
- (18) *Hpah Tee* Ht---

We got the information about this company because they destroyed over 70 villagers' land, including [the land of] the [ethnic] Burmese people. The people, to whom the company has not given the compensation yet, said that the company would give them compensation during this year. Regarding the people whose lands were destroyed, some of them do not have another job, so they have to go and work at the company. Some people go and work at another company and some people have to go and work in other places. This information is accurate information because we got the information from an L--- villager.

### **Confiscation of villagers' land and destruction of the villagers' plantation**

Starting from March 13<sup>th</sup> 2013, we received information about a rich man, U Than Htay, 52 years old, [who] came into Blii [Mergui-Tavoy] Town and planted rubber in Te Naw Th'Ri Township, Pa Wa region, near the coast, Sh--- village [Chaung Kauk Naung Hpyu river] in 2011, and he confiscated villagers' land and destroyed plants but he did not give compensation to the villagers. Than Htay has a desire to plant a 1,200-acre rubber plantation in that area.

Related to land confiscation and destruction of the plantation, [the land that was destroyed was comprised of] (1) Saw Ch--- [s land], (2) eight acres of Naw Hs---'s farm, (3) five acres of *Hpah Tee* St---'s farm and (4) four acres of *Hpah Tee* Lh---'s farm, [including] 20 coconut plants and over 10 cashew and rubber plants, were destroyed. The people whose lands

<sup>175</sup> 'Hpah Tee', meaning 'uncle', is a familiar Karen term of respect attributed to an older man; it does not necessarily signify any actual familial ties between the 'uncle' and the villager who wrote this report.

were confiscated and plants were destroyed were not given any compensation.

Regarding this issue, Te Naw Th'Ri Township Secretary Saw Htee Wah came and negotiated on March 13<sup>th</sup> 2013, and U Than Htay admitted that he would arrange [compensation] within a few days. For the villagers whose land he has confiscated and plantations destroyed, at present, they have to find work in other places for their livelihood and do odd jobs. An HI--- villager gave me this information.

### Education

During this year, when we look at the situation of education, it has not changed a lot. As we know, when you register [for school] it is free, but the amount of the school fee has not decreased. When we look at the Te Naw Th'Ri Township, now, the parents cannot send their children to primary school, so they [children] just have to live idly.

For middle school, we see that children passed 7<sup>th</sup> standard, and parents cannot send them [to school] because they have to fulfil their needs at home [on account of financial hardship, as they cannot afford the school fees]. For high school, we can see that [the students] who attend 10<sup>th</sup> standard cannot pass the exam within one year, and they also have difficulty taking the exam a second time because of the household and financial needs. In Te Naw Th'Ri Township, there are few people who passed the 10<sup>th</sup> standard and college.

### Healthcare

In Te Naw Th'Ri Township, people who face health problems are only a few. The illnesses that we mostly see are (1) malaria; (2) anaemia; (3) long coughing; (4) coughing and illness; (5) pink eye [conjunctivitis], for this disease we see it mostly in children; and (6) sore and swollen eyes. During this year, regarding the diseases that they get, we see that because the situation gives a chance for the backpack team [Backpack Health Worker Team] to come and take care of the patients, and also set up a clinic [because access to the region is less restricted than in previous years]. Therefore, they [villagers] do not face diseases that are so serious that they can cause death. In previous years, we could see that people who got sick had to go to the other places to have medical treatment. This year, we can see that there are not a lot of people who face serious health problems.

### Livelihood

When we look at [the situation] during this year regarding the civilians' livelihood, travelling and living places have changed. In the previous years, the civilians who had to go and work outside of the village had to be afraid and needed to write recommendation letters in order to get permission to work. But, this year, the villagers who went and worked outside of the village did not need to [get] recommendation letters and did not need to be afraid, and they even rarely come back to the village [to sleep in their farms, which was previously prohibited by Tatmadaw-area authorities]. Regarding their livelihood, the difficulties they are facing that we see are weather conditions and creatures such as wild pigs, monkeys and squirrels. During this whole year, we did not see civilians face serious food problems like in the previous years. At the same time, there are also changes when we review the situation. There is also natural destruction [environmental degradation caused by] monkeys, squirrels, wild pigs and weather conditions. Even though they have to face natural destruction, they do not face difficulties as serious as in the previous years.

### Source #54

<b>Log #</b>	13-59-I2
<b>Title</b>	Incident Report   Paingkyon Township, Hpa-an District (February 2013)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in November 2014



	<a href="http://khrgh.org/2014/11/13-59-i2/hpa-an-incident-report-land-confiscation-paingkyon-township-february-2013">http://khrgh.org/2014/11/13-59-i2/hpa-an-incident-report-land-confiscation-paingkyon-township-february-2013</a>			
<b>Location</b>	Paingkyon Township, Hpa-an District			
<b>Full Text</b>				
<b>Part 1 – Incident Details</b>				
<b>Type of Incident</b>	BGF [Border Guard Force] <sup>176</sup> confiscated and cleared a villager's land in order to grow rubber trees.			
<b>Date of Incident</b>	February 1 <sup>st</sup> 2013			
<b>Incident Location</b>	A--- village, Taw Soe village tract, Ta Kreh [Paingkyon] Township, Hpa-an District.			
<b>Victim Information</b>				
<b>Name</b>	H---			
<b>Age</b>	50			
<b>Sex</b>	Female			
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen			
<b>Family</b>	Married			
<b>Occupation</b>	Trade [shop owner]			
<b>Religion</b>	Christian			
<b>Position</b>	Villager			
<b>Village</b>	A---			
<b>Perpetrator Information</b>				
<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander's Name</b>
Maw <sup>177</sup> Kya Aye <sup>178</sup>	Cantonment Area Commander	BGF Battalion #1015 & Battalion #1016	Hlaingbwe	
<b>Part 2 – Information Quality</b>				
<b>1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.</b>				
I met with H--- on February 28 <sup>th</sup> 2013 and she told me about the incident. Commander Kya Aye arrived at H---'s land on February 1 <sup>st</sup> 2013 and ordered the villagers to clear it; he then claimed it was his own land, so he could grow rubber trees.				
<b>2. Explain how the source verified this information.</b>				

<sup>176</sup> 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 Burmese 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.

<sup>177</sup> Maw is a S'gaw Karen title used for men, before their name.

<sup>178</sup> Cantonment Area Commander Kya Aye has committed multiple human rights abuses in Hpa-an District; for more information see the previously published KHRG reports: "Hpa-an Situation Update: Paingkyon Township, June to November 2013," KHRG, June 2014, "Hpa-an Incident Report: Extrajudicial killing in Paingkyon Township, June 2013," KHRG, June 2013, and "Human rights violations by Cantonment Area Commander Kya Aye in Paingkyon Township, Hpa-an District, February 2013 to July 2014," KHRG, September 2014.

H--- inherited this land from her parents, and she also has the land title, which is checked once per year by the responsible people [from the Burma/Myanmar government land registration department]. She is attempting to get her land back now. She wants to report this incident to the BGF and to the Burma government. She has not been able to report it yet, but she is still trying.

### **Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident**

**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 an attachment if needed.**

BGF Commander Kya Aye confiscated the land of H---, which is located beside A--- village (which we usually call O--- village) on February 1, 2013, in order to grow rubber. H--- obtained the land title for this land a long time ago. No one initially informed her that her land had been confiscated and cleared [her home is located elsewhere]. There are many places [land] around this land [H---'s land, which was confiscated] but we have not heard anything about the other land [being confiscated].<sup>179</sup> This BGF Commander is the one who causes the most problems in this area. He has confiscated people's land, conducted logging on people's land and in the forest, conducted mining, built pagodas, and constructed roads. He is doing these things for his own benefit. Battalion #1015 and Battalion #1016 [BGF] are under his control because he is the Commander of Cantonment Area #2. Some of his soldiers do not accept [agree with] the things that he does.

There are many human rights abuses that he committed. No one reported him to his superiors because people are afraid of him. He is a Buddhist. [In 2012] he also confiscated the land of the senior monk of D--- village, Noh Kwee village tract, Ta Kreh [Paingkyon] Township, which is located beside the monastery. The monk assumed that he would not need to report him [Commander Kya Aye] because he is a leader. Later, the monk asked his disciples to report him [Commander Kya Aye]. I do not know if this case is stalled or ongoing. I will follow up on it and report next time.<sup>180</sup>

### **Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details**

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

H--- requested that I report the perpetrator to the Burmese [government]. She [H---] did not want me to take a photo of her. I could not take a photo of her confiscated land because I met her far from it.

#### **Source #55**

<b>Log #</b>	13-65-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Interview: Naw A---, July 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in October 2014 <a href="http://khrhg.org/2014/10/13-65-a1-i1/dooplaya-interview-july-">http://khrhg.org/2014/10/13-65-a1-i1/dooplaya-interview-july-</a>

<sup>179</sup> The researcher followed up on this case in October 2014, and discovered that Mu Ghah Si's land had been returned to her, but she had been forced to cover the cost of clearing the land when it was first confiscated by Maw Kya Aye.

<sup>180</sup> After following up on this case in October 2014, the researcher found that the land confiscated from the monk had yet to be returned.



	<a href="#">2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Doooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Villager</p> <p><b>Do you know what my name is?</b></p> <p>I do not know.</p> <p><b>My name is C---. I am working with KHRG. Do you know the meaning of KHRG?</b></p> <p>I do not know. I do not know anything.</p> <p><b>KHRG helps the Karen people related to their rights. So now I want to ask are there any difficulties that you have to face in your village here?</b></p> <p>Yesterday, when I went and talked to my friend, she told me to report the information if I have any difficulties. When I came back [to my village from D--- village], my plot of land [where I had intended to build a house] had already been destroyed. I was told that a plot for a new house would be found for me. Now, it is already the time [of year] for house building<sup>181</sup> and I do not have any place to build my house yet. As I still do not have a place [to build my house] yet, it would be better if I could get some support. I will also [try to] find some support by myself. Some of my siblings and [other] relatives have sympathy for me.</p> <p><b>How big was your plot that they [the government] destroyed?</b></p> <p>When the school was built, it took over my whole plot. All of the plants that I had planted were destroyed.</p> <p><b>How many kinds of plants were destroyed?</b></p> <p>I had planted many plants like palm trees, mango trees, jack fruit trees and coconut trees in my plot and we decided that we were going to live on our plot but they destroyed all of it.</p> <p><b>So what about the place that you are going to live in right now?</b></p> <p>I do not have any place [to live right now]. My mother-in-law also does not have any children or a husband beside her and I have already asked her to come and live with me. However, as my plot has been destroyed, we have to live in other people's houses. If I have more children and if they [the owner of the house where she is temporarily living] do not provide me with any place to live, I will have no place to live and I might have to go and live in the forest. And if we do not dare to live in the forest, there is only one other option; I need to go to live in a refugee camp.</p> <p><b>Who are the people that destroyed your plot?</b></p>	

<sup>181</sup> Karen villagers typically construct new houses in the early summer before the start of the rainy season.

At first, people said that the government would support me. However, no one came and told me anything even though it is already the time [of year in which I need] to build my house.

**How long has it been since they destroyed your plot?**

They [the government] started to plough [my plot] last year. We started to move last year [from our village] and went to live in D--- village. People told me to come back [to the village]. By the time I arrived, my plot had been completely destroyed. People said they [the government] are going to find a plot for me.

**When they [the government] destroyed your plot, did they ask permission to destroy it from anyone?**

I do not know whether they asked for permission from anyone or not. I myself was not here.

**So, they did not ask permission from the land owner [you]?**

No, they did not. I was living in D--- [at that time].

**Did you tell them [the government] that you wanted support [compensation] from them since they destroyed your plot?**

I did not tell them. In the meeting yesterday, people [the village head] said that they [the government] are going support the villagers. I asked my friend; What kind of support are people going to give? She said that if I have any serious problem, I could report it. I went to ask my friend and my friend went to ask the village head.

**What did the village head say?**

I do not know. My friend was asking about this. [At this point, a friend of the main interviewee who was also present during the interview interjected: The village head was trying to request [compensation from] him [the government] but they had not given [compensation] to the village head. – interjection ends] I do not see this as the fault of the village head.

**But the village head was trying his best to get compensation?**

Yes, he tried to do his best. He has to [work] very hard to plan and manage [affairs] for the villagers. We do not see this as the fault of the village head.

**When people came to have the meeting and explain to you about the difficulty [that you can report], were they the government? Or were they Karen [Karen National Union (KNU)]?**

They were the government. I did not go when people went to the meeting yesterday. My mother-in-law went and told me about it.

**Did they say that they would help you if you had any difficulty?**

[At this point, a friend of the main interviewee who was also present during the interview interjected: They are going help regarding livestock. They are going to give injections of medicine for the cattle, buffalos, chickens and pigs. They noted down how many cattle, buffalos, chickens and pigs the villagers own and they said when all of the villagers are together, they are going to inject the medicine for their animals. – interjection ends] I did not go yesterday and people came back and told me back about this information.

**Did they tell you that they would help you with things as they had destroyed your plot?**

No, they did not tell me anything.

**So they are only going to help with the animals like cattle and buffalos?**

[At this point, a friend of the main interviewee who was also present during the interview interjected: No, they are not going to help [by giving new livestock]; they are going to help the villagers who [already] have cattle or buffalos. They are going to give injections of medicine to them. They are not going to help [give] new animals, but they will give medicine injections to the villagers' buffalos and cattle. – interjection ends]

**So it is medicine that prevents decease in animals?**

[At this point, a friend of the main interviewee who was also present during the interview interjected: Yes, the village head told us that when we had the meeting. There is nothing else. The village head tried to request [compensation] for the plot when it was destroyed. The village head requested [compensation] from the battalion commander as well as the [government] leader who came to work here [build the school]. However, he was unable to secure [compensation] and he told me that he could not do anything else. He said that if there is any support [available from any organization which will help you] that you can find, just report it [to that organization]. – interjection ends]

**How many family members do you have?**

There are five members.

**So you have three children?**

I have two children and my father [also lives with us].

**Are both of them males or females?**

I have one son, and one daughter.

**So you have to face a difficult problem, as you do not have a place to live?**

Yes, I do not have a place to live. Now, I am going to build my house but I do not have a place to build it. I am waiting for the people [the village head]. People [the village head] said that they will find a small plot for us. [At this point, a friend of the main interviewee who was also present during the interview interjected: All of the government [workers] who came and built the school here have gone back. They will not help you. – interjection ends] Regarding this case, I do not see that it is the fault of the village head. It does not matter whether I get [a new plot] or not. I am just telling you about it.

**Are there any other villagers who have also faced difficulties in the village?**

I do not know. E---'s land is also close to my plot and the government has also destroyed her land. She only has a little bit [of space] left.

**Her land was also destroyed?**

Yes, she also built her house on her plot. People [the government] also destroyed her plot and she only has a little bit of space left. As for me, I do not have any space left.

**When you reported to the village head to [seek] help regarding your plot, did [the government] not say anything to the village head as to how they are going to do [arrange a new plot for you]?**

As for me, I did not report it to the village head. I also do not know whether my husband talked to the village head about our plot or not as I have not asked him. He is also not at home now.

**So for example, you have a hope that they [the government] are going to help you to get a plot to build your house on?**

Yes.

**You want a plot to build your house on?**

Yes, I want a plot to build my house on. Now I am living on another person's plot. As my children are growing up, I also want my own plot. I am living in another person's plot and if the owner did not let me live here, I would not have a place to live.

**You also have five members in your family like you said?**

Yes.

**Do you have to face any other oppression [by the government] regarding your occupation?**

Regarding my occupation, I do not have [any problem].

**Do you have any trouble with your livelihood?**

Yes, I have to face trouble in [managing] my livelihood, which is not going well. I had to face the destruction [of my paddy] in my work.

**I forgot to ask your name, what is your name?**

A---.

**How old are you?**

Twenty seven years old.

**Were you born in B--- village and have you always lived in B--- village?**

Yes, I was born in B--- village. My parents are also from B--- village.

**So you had a plot in B--- and you do not have any plots anywhere else?**

Yes.

**So, do you agree [give consent for me to] ask you many questions and send the information about you to the authorized persons [other KHRG staff, for processing]; may I take a photo of you?**

Yes.

**Is there anything else you would like to tell me about the issue that you have had to**

**suffer with?**

No, I do not have [anything else to tell you].

**That is all?**

Yes, I think it will be good if I get a new plot, but it does not matter if I do not get [one]. I do not think that it is the fault of the village head. At first, the government said they are going to find a plot for me. Now they have already gone back to their homes and they are not going to find a plot for me.

**Do they not have any arrangement to hand over responsibility [for finding a place for you to build a house] to anyone?**

No, they do not.

I want to know about what you have suffered because I believe there are also other villagers who are suffering from the [same] things as you but they cannot explain it to me. Now that I know about it, I will let the authorized persons [other KHRG staff] know.

Thank you. Do you [want to talk about] anything else?

No.

Thanks.

Naw A---, (female, 27), B--- village, Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District  
(Interviewed in July 2013)

**Source #56<sup>182</sup>**

<b>Log #</b>	13-65-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Interview: Ma A---, May 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in January 2015 <a href="http://www.khrq.org/sites/default/files/13-65-a2-i1.pdf">http://www.khrq.org/sites/default/files/13-65-a2-i1.pdf</a>
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Ma A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 44 years old.</p> <p><b>How many family members do you have?</b></p> <p>I have four family members.</p>	

<sup>182</sup> This source document has been logged under both Source #56 and #57 due to a logging error. KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that may result from this.

**Do you live in B--- village?**

Yes.

**Is it in Kawkareik Township?**

Yes.

**Are there any challenges that you have to face in your occupation or your life in this village? Can you tell me about that?**

I have only one thing: that people [Burma/Myanmar government] have taken my land and I do not feel good [about this]. At first [in 2011], they [Burma/Myanmar government] told me for sure that they were going to do [measure] my land [in order for me to obtain a land title]. I bought some food and we [Ma A--- and government workers] went up to the hill [to measure my land]. People [Burma/Myanmar government] had noted how many palm trees and plants there were on my land. [At that time in 2011, fighting happened and] we fled from the village for two years. I came back this year [2013] and I see that they have destroyed all of my land. I paid them [Burma/Myanmar government] money to measure my land and they said that they were going to do it for me. However, we do not see anything [to do with our land being measured]. The village head should have reported [to the government] about it [the Burma/Myanmar government building on her land] and arranged [compensation] for me, but he has not done it. I have only one part of my land left and I do not let them [Burma/Myanmar government] work on my land. The village head told me that they [Burma/Myanmar government] were not going to conduct [a well building project] on that part. After a while, they came and conducted [the well building project] on my land and I went to ask a female government worker to ask [the village head] for me [whether he allowed the government workers to use my land]. She said that the village head promised her [that the government would not dig a well on my land]. I told her, "*The village head has promised not to conduct [the well] on my land and if you conduct [the project] on it, you have to pay me money [for my destroyed land]*". She said, "*I cannot pay you money [for your land]*." She said to me, "*If you do not give me permission [to dig the well], I am going to conduct [the project] up on the hill [away from your land]*." And I said "Yes, just go and conduct it [in another area]". She said, "*I am digging the well for the villagers to drink*." I tell her, "*I do not drink the water from your well. I have my own well. I drink from my well*." Then she moved to another place to dig the well which is on my friend's land. That place was also our land in the past, but my father gave it to my friend to build her house [on]. We mark the boundary [of my land and my friend's land] with the [single] jack fruit tree between our lands. My land is wider and the place where they [Burma/Myanmar government] built the school is on our land. Another side is Naw C---'s land [which is next to my land]. This side<sup>183</sup> is my land and we have marked the boundary [between our lands]. The land is wide enough for three houses and they destroyed all of our land. If they did not destroy my land, I could plant a lot of vegetables on it. However, they are taking all of our land and we cannot do [plant] anything. I feel sad because they said that they have given me money for taking my land, but I did not get anything. They [Burma/Myanmar government] give money to those [villagers] whose lands have been taken by them which are smaller than mine. They even gave 5,000 kyat (US \$4.84) to one of my nephews as they have taken his land which is very small land and they also gave Saw D--- 4,000 kyat (US \$3.88) [for his land] which is the other land [close to my plot]. This is a very small [amount] of land and they even gave [him] 4,000 kyat [as compensation for it]. They should have also paid me [money] but they have not. If we compare my land with the market price of the land in Thailand, my land [in Burma/Myanmar] is worth around 100,000 [kyat] (US \$3,045.49). With 100,000 kyat in Thailand, we would get a smaller size of land [than in Burma/Myanmar for the same price]. So, it does not make me

<sup>183</sup> This interview was conducted in sight of the interviewee's fields. Here she is pointing towards her land.

feel good [that they take my land without at least compensating me for 100,000 kyat]. Later, I was waiting for the village head [to arrange compensation for me] and the village head came to meet with me and he said he was going to mark [the boundary of] my land for me and I also agreed with him. He came and put the stones [at the boundary of my land] but I did not go and look at him [while he did it]. I have only a small part of my land left and I am worried that it will also be confiscated. My children are going to school and I think I am going to build a hut on my land. We also think that we are going to build our house [on our land]. The house that we are living in right now is another person's house. It is not our house and people let us live here. Our land is in that place and if possible we think that we are going to build our own house.

**What kind of plants did they [Burma/Myanmar government] destroy on your land?**

It included coconut trees, palm trees, banana trees, jack fruit trees, mango trees and marian trees. They [trees] were going to fruit soon, [maybe] in one or two years, but they [the Burma/Myanmar government] destroyed all of them. We also planted orange trees and they were going to grow. At first, we grew everything on our land as we planned to work on our land [for the rest of our lives]. My husband planted a lot of palm trees, but they destroyed all of them.

**How large is your land if you plant paddy?**

If we plant paddy on our land, we can approximately plant [and produce] three (31.35 kg. or 69.12 lb.) or four (41.80 kg. or 92.16 lb.) big tins of paddy.

**Was your land filled with plants?**

Yes, it was filled with our plants and they destroyed all of them. The fruit of banana [trees] grows very plentiful. Our land was full of plants that we planted. They were growing very big and we almost got their fruits. There were also some jack fruit trees and mango trees which we could get their fruits from. As well, the fruit of marian trees were almost maturing. They destroyed all of them and there were no more trees left. We planted everything on our land.

**Did they not tell [consult] you [about] anything before they were going to destroy all of your trees?**

They did not tell us anything before they destroyed the trees.

**Did they also say to you that they are going to give you some compensation?**

No, they did not tell us anything. At first, the village head said that they were going to help us, but we have not seen anything [compensation] yet. I have heard from people that they [the Burma/Myanmar government] said that they bought the land for 100,000 kyat (US \$96.93). I said "*They said that they bought the land for 100,000 kyat? But I did not get any money. When did they give it to me? I did not know.*" This point makes me very unhappy. I am also not satisfied with my palm trees. If they had not destroyed my palm trees, they would have been very big by now. I had planted 50 palm trees and 40 of them grew, but the Burmese [government] have ploughed and destroyed all of them. If they had not destroyed them, they would be very big at this time, like the ones which are in front of my house [where I am staying] that you can see right now. I could have also gotten enough leaves [from them] to roof my house, but the Burmese [government] have ploughed and destroyed all of them. I heard that the village head said that he will help me with 100,000 kyat. It does not matter if I do not get 100,000 kyat and it is fine even if I get 20,000 kyat (US \$19.38) or 30,000 kyat (US \$29.08) or 40,000 kyat (US \$38.77), I will be satisfied.



**They took your land and it is very wide?**

Yes, they took my land which is very wide and they are building buildings [on it].

**What kind of buildings did they build [on your land]?**

I do not know exactly. I think they built the hospital or the school. They said that they built a school and it is very big. They also built the house for the teachers, a hospital and their [hospital] office, and the police station. They built a lot of buildings; I cannot name them all.

**Are all of these buildings that they built on your land?**

Yes. They all are on my land.

**So there is no more land left for you to live [on]?**

Yes, [there no land left to live on, except] there is only one small plot of the land left where I can build only a house.

**Is there anyone [in the Burma/Myanmar government] who will come and say “Oh! Yes, we have destroyed your land and we will give you some compensation?”**

No, there is no one.

**Who is working on your land?**

The Burmese [government].

**How long has it been [since they built on your land]?**

It was two years ago that they built their buildings.

**Have you ever said to a [Burma/Myanmar government] leader: You are doing [building] or ploughing on my land and you need to give me some compensation?**

We have not met with any of them [Burma/Myanmar government leaders yet]. We do not know the name of the [Burma/Myanmar government] leader who is working on our land. The village head instructed them [to build on] the land and they were working on our land. We did meet with the village head in person [when they constructed buildings on our land]. When we came back to the village [in 2013], we asked the Burmese [government builders] “*Why are you ploughing on my land?*” They said “*The village head instructed us to plough on this land.*” As the village head instructed [them to build on] the land, the Burmese ploughed. Nevertheless, we did not get any compensation.

**So the village head is very much trying to solve the problem for you [to get compensation] but the Burmese do not listen to him?**

I do not know about the village head [trying to arrange compensation for us].

**Did the village head arrange for you to meet with the people [Burma/Myanmar government leaders] who were ploughing on your land at any time?**

No, we did not meet with them at any time. The village head asked the vice village head to meet with me; I cannot recall his name. He is the one who worked together with the government and he gives speeches in the [village] meeting [sometimes]. He can speak

Karen a little bit.

**I am going to give all of the information that you are telling me now to the responsible persons [KHRG and Non-governmental organisations] step by step. That is OK right? Can I take a picture of you?**

Yes.

**Do you want to say anything else?**

I do not have any special thing to talk about. I want some support if I can get.

**[You want that] the people [KHRG staff or any organisation] will help you in talking about the issue for you?**

Yes.

**Your hope is that the people [KHRG staff or any organisation] will help you and arrange for you to get the support that you need?**

Yes, I need to get some support. In the past, people said in the [village] meetings that if someone destroyed anything about the land, they are responsible to give compensation and we can report about the issue. However, people [Burmese/Myanmar government] are taking our land and we cannot get any compensation. Therefore, I do not feel good about that.

**So, thank you very much for your answers.**

Thanks.

**Ma A---, (female, 44), B--- village,**

**Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District, (Interviewed in May 2013)**

#### Source #57<sup>184</sup>

<b>Log #</b>	13-65-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Interview: Ma A---, May 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in January 2015 <a href="http://www.khrq.org/sites/default/files/13-65-a2-i1.pdf">http://www.khrq.org/sites/default/files/13-65-a2-i1.pdf</a>
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Ma A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 44 years old.</p> <p><b>How many family members do you have?</b></p>	

<sup>184</sup> This source document has been logged under both Source #56 and #57 due to a logging error. KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that may result from this.

I have four family members.

**Do you live in B--- village?**

Yes.

**Is it in Kawkareik Township?**

Yes.

**Are there any challenges that you have to face in your occupation or your life in this village? Can you tell me about that?**

I have only one thing: that people [Burma/Myanmar government] have taken my land and I do not feel good [about this]. At first [in 2011], they [Burma/Myanmar government] told me for sure that they were going to do [measure] my land [in order for me to obtain a land title]. I bought some food and we [Ma A--- and government workers] went up to the hill [to measure my land]. People [Burma/Myanmar government] had noted how many palm trees and plants there were on my land. [At that time in 2011, fighting happened and] we fled from the village for two years. I came back this year [2013] and I see that they have destroyed all of my land. I paid them [Burma/Myanmar government] money to measure my land and they said that they were going to do it for me. However, we do not see anything [to do with our land being measured]. The village head should have reported [to the government] about it [the Burma/Myanmar government building on her land] and arranged [compensation] for me, but he has not done it. I have only one part of my land left and I do not let them [Burma/Myanmar government] work on my land. The village head told me that they [Burma/Myanmar government] were not going to conduct [a well building project] on that part. After a while, they came and conducted [the well building project] on my land and I went to ask a female government worker to ask [the village head] for me [whether he allowed the government workers to use my land]. She said that the village head promised her [that the government would not dig a well on my land]. I told her, "*The village head has promised not to conduct [the well] on my land and if you conduct [the project] on it, you have to pay me money [for my destroyed land]*". She said, "*I cannot pay you money [for your land]*." She said to me, "*If you do not give me permission [to dig the well], I am going to conduct [the project] up on the hill [away from your land]*." And I said "*Yes, just go and conduct it [in another area]*". She said, "*I am digging the well for the villagers to drink.*" I tell her, "*I do not drink the water from your well. I have my own well. I drink from my well.*" Then she moved to another place to dig the well which is on my friend's land. That place was also our land in the past, but my father gave it to my friend to build her house [on]. We mark the boundary [of my land and my friend's land] with the [single] jack fruit tree between our lands. My land is wider and the place where they [Burma/Myanmar government] built the school is on our land. Another side is Naw C---'s land [which is next to my land]. This side<sup>185</sup> is my land and we have marked the boundary [between our lands]. The land is wide enough for three houses and they destroyed all of our land. If they did not destroy my land, I could plant a lot of vegetables on it. However, they are taking all of our land and we cannot do [plant] anything. I feel sad because they said that they have given me money for taking my land, but I did not get anything. They [Burma/Myanmar government] give money to those [villagers] whose lands have been taken by them which are smaller than mine. They even gave 5,000 kyat (US \$4.84) to one of my nephews as they have taken his land which is very small land and they also gave Saw D--- 4,000 kyat (US \$3.88) [for his land] which is the other land [close to my plot]. This is a very small [amount] of land and they even gave [him] 4,000 kyat [as compensation for it]. They should have also paid me [money] but they have not. If we compare my land with the market price of the land in Thailand, my land [in Burma/Myanmar]

<sup>185</sup> This interview was conducted in sight of the interviewee's fields. Here she is pointing towards her land.

is worth around 100,000 [kyat] (US \$3,045.49). With 100,000 kyat in Thailand, we would get a smaller size of land [than in Burma/Myanmar for the same price]. So, it does not make me feel good [that they take my land without at least compensating me for 100,000 kyat]. Later, I was waiting for the village head [to arrange compensation for me] and the village head came to meet with me and he said he was going to mark [the boundary of] my land for me and I also agreed with him. He came and put the stones [at the boundary of my land] but I did not go and look at him [while he did it]. I have only a small part of my land left and I am worried that it will also be confiscated. My children are going to school and I think I am going to build a hut on my land. We also think that we are going to build our house [on our land]. The house that we are living in right now is another person's house. It is not our house and people let us live here. Our land is in that place and if possible we think that we are going to build our own house.

**What kind of plants did they [Burma/Myanmar government] destroy on your land?**

It included coconut trees, palm trees, banana trees, jack fruit trees, mango trees and marian trees. They [trees] were going to fruit soon, [maybe] in one or two years, but they [the Burma/Myanmar government] destroyed all of them. We also planted orange trees and they were going to grow. At first, we grew everything on our land as we planned to work on our land [for the rest of our lives]. My husband planted a lot of palm trees, but they destroyed all of them.

**How large is your land if you plant paddy?**

If we plant paddy on our land, we can approximately plant [and produce] three (31.35 kg. or 69.12 lb.) or four (41.80 kg. or 92.16 lb.) big tins of paddy.

**Was your land filled with plants?**

Yes, it was filled with our plants and they destroyed all of them. The fruit of banana [trees] grows very plentiful. Our land was full of plants that we planted. They were growing very big and we almost got their fruits. There were also some jack fruit trees and mango trees which we could get their fruits from. As well, the fruit of marian trees were almost maturing. They destroyed all of them and there were no more trees left. We planted everything on our land.

**Did they not tell [consult] you [about] anything before they were going to destroy all of your trees?**

They did not tell us anything before they destroyed the trees.

**Did they also say to you that they are going to give you some compensation?**

No, they did not tell us anything. At first, the village head said that they were going to help us, but we have not seen anything [compensation] yet. I have heard from people that they [the Burma/Myanmar government] said that they bought the land for 100,000 kyat (US \$96.93). I said "*They said that they bought the land for 100,000 kyat? But I did not get any money. When did they give it to me? I did not know.*" This point makes me very unhappy. I am also not satisfied with my palm trees. If they had not destroyed my palm trees, they would have been very big by now. I had planted 50 palm trees and 40 of them grew, but the Burmese [government] have ploughed and destroyed all of them. If they had not destroyed them, they would be very big at this time, like the ones which are in front of my house [where I am staying] that you can see right now. I could have also gotten enough leaves [from them] to roof my house, but the Burmese [government] have ploughed and destroyed all of them. I heard that the village head said that he will help me with 100,000 kyat. It does not matter if I do not get 100,000 kyat and it is fine even if I get 20,000 kyat (US \$19.38) or 30,000 kyat

(US \$29.08) or 40,000 kyat (US \$38.77), I will be satisfied.

**They took your land and it is very wide?**

Yes, they took my land which is very wide and they are building buildings [on it].

**What kind of buildings did they build [on your land]?**

I do not know exactly. I think they built the hospital or the school. They said that they built a school and it is very big. They also built the house for the teachers, a hospital and their [hospital] office, and the police station. They built a lot of buildings; I cannot name them all.

**Are all of these buildings that they built on your land?**

Yes. They all are on my land.

**So there is no more land left for you to live [on]?**

Yes, [there no land left to live on, except] there is only one small plot of the land left where I can build only a house.

**Is there anyone [in the Burma/Myanmar government] who will come and say "Oh! Yes, we have destroyed your land and we will give you some compensation?"**

No, there is no one.

**Who is working on your land?**

The Burmese [government].

**How long has it been [since they built on your land]?**

It was two years ago that they built their buildings.

**Have you ever said to a [Burma/Myanmar government] leader: You are doing [building] or ploughing on my land and you need to give me some compensation?**

We have not met with any of them [Burma/Myanmar government leaders yet]. We do not know the name of the [Burma/Myanmar government] leader who is working on our land. The village head instructed them [to build on] the land and they were working on our land. We did meet with the village head in person [when they constructed buildings on our land]. When we came back to the village [in 2013], we asked the Burmese [government builders] "*Why are you ploughing on my land?*" They said "*The village head instructed us to plough on this land.*" As the village head instructed [them to build on] the land, the Burmese ploughed. Nevertheless, we did not get any compensation.

**So the village head is very much trying to solve the problem for you [to get compensation] but the Burmese do not listen to him?**

I do not know about the village head [trying to arrange compensation for us].

**Did the village head arrange for you to meet with the people [Burma/Myanmar government leaders] who were ploughing on your land at any time?**

No, we did not meet with them at any time. The village head asked the vice village head to meet with me; I cannot recall his name. He is the one who worked together with the

government and he gives speeches in the [village] meeting [sometimes]. He can speak Karen a little bit.

**I am going to give all of the information that you are telling me now to the responsible persons [KHRG and Non-governmental organisations] step by step. That is OK right? Can I take a picture of you?**

Yes.

**Do you want to say anything else?**

I do not have any special thing to talk about. I want some support if I can get.

**[You want that] the people [KHRG staff or any organisation] will help you in talking about the issue for you?**

Yes.

**Your hope is that the people [KHRG staff or any organisation] will help you and arrange for you to get the support that you need?**

Yes, I need to get some support. In the past, people said in the [village] meetings that if someone destroyed anything about the land, they are responsible to give compensation and we can report about the issue. However, people [Burmese/Myanmar government] are taking our land and we cannot get any compensation. Therefore, I do not feel good about that.

**So, thank you very much for your answers.**

Thanks.

**Ma A---, (female, 44), B--- village, Kawkareik Township,  
Dooplaya District, (Interviewed in May 2013)**

#### Source #58

<b>Log #</b>	13-66-P1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Photo Notes: Paingkyon Township, Received in July 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Paingkyon Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><i>[These photo notes are drawn from a longer document providing details for photographs taken in Hpa-an District in June 2013. The other notes were not relevant to land confiscation in Myanmar since December 2012 and have been omitted for brevity.]</i></p> <p><b>Photo #: 2568 - 2572</b></p> <p>I took these photos on June 6<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Hteh Boo village, Noh Kwee village tract, Ta Kreh [Paingkyon] Township, in Hpa-an District. These photos show villagers' land [that was] confiscated by BGF soldiers [for] planting rubber trees. The name of the BGF commander is Poh Kya Aay. His camp is based in Paw Yay Poo village, Paw Yay Poo village tract, Ta Kreh [Paingkyon] Township. This BGF commander has taken many villagers' land from different places.</p>	



**Photo #: 2555 - 2559**

I took these photos on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2013. In the photos, you can see a woman and [her] land that has been confiscated. I took [pictures of] the view in A--- village, Taw Soh village tract, Ta Kreh [Paingkyon] Township, Hpa-an District. The name of this female villager is Naw B---. She is 51 years old. She lives in A--- village and six acres of her land has been confiscated by BGF Commander Poh Kay Aay. Naw B--- really wants her land back. She tried to go to Commander Poh Kya Aay and he said, *"If you want your lands back, come and give me 600,000 kyat (US \$548.94) and I will return the land to you."* Naw B--- went back, sold her gold and five cows and gave the money [to Poh Kya Aay]. After he [Poh Kya Aay] received the money, he returned the land to the woman without giving her any [land] document. [The commander] then said, *"We will no longer bother your land."*

Photo note written by a KHRG Researcher,  
Nabu Township, Hpa-an District, (Received in July 2013)

**Source #59**

<b>Log #</b>	13-66-S1
<b>Title</b>	Situation Update   T'Nay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District (March to May 2013)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in August 2013 <a href="http://khrq.org/2013/08/13-66-s1/hpa-an-situation-update-tnay-hsah-township-march-may-2013">http://khrq.org/2013/08/13-66-s1/hpa-an-situation-update-tnay-hsah-township-march-may-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Tnay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Land confiscation by Tatmadaw**

I want to report the consequences of the military government confiscating lands in K--- village, T'Nay Hsah Township from 20 years ago.<sup>186</sup>

Regarding the land issue in T'Nay Hsah [Township], the villagers struggled to get their farms and plantations back. In May 2013, they [villagers] went to get [land] documents at the Kawkareik [Burma government] office. And then, they brought the land grants back in order to be able to work on their farms again. When they brought them [land documents] and went and showed them to [Tatmadaw Light Infantry] Battalion #548's Battalion commander, the army [commander] told them that, *"Your documents are illegal so you cannot work on your farms. They [the farms] are military lands."* Therefore, villagers are disappointed with this issue. In K--- village, there are 30 households and 150 people whose lands were confiscated by the army, and then they came back and stayed in the [K---] monastery garden. These villagers are [there] because people confiscated their lands. There are many villagers who left their village and were displaced to other villages because some villagers do not have land anymore. There are over 1,000 acres of lands that were confiscated by the military. The military [units] that confiscated these lands are army Battalions #547, 548 and 549.

**Drugs**

I would like to report the situation in the area about the drug *k'thee k'thay* [yaba]<sup>187</sup> issue from what I saw, knew and heard in T'Nay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District.

<sup>186</sup> Although the community member writes that the land confiscation occurred 20 years ago, unpublished interviews received by KHRG suggest the events likely occurred in 1995. About 30 households have resided on the monastery grounds since their lands were confiscated.

<sup>187</sup> *Yaba*, which means "crazy medicine" in Thai, is a tablet form of methamphetamine. First developed in East Asia during World War II to enhance soldiers' performance, methamphetamine has become increasingly popular



On March 11<sup>th</sup> 2013, one 16-year-old student who used the drug spent all his money on the drug and then went to pawn his motorbike for 30 *k'thee k'thay* [tablets]. When this kid used all the drugs and came back to his parents, people [started] asking him, "*Where do you keep your motorbike?*" His father asked him nonstop, therefore he answered his father. His father told him, "*My son, I bought this motorbike for you with 38,000 baht and you traded it for 30 k'thee k'thay. So, here is the money, go and redeem your motorbike. How much does it cost for one tablet of the drug, it costs only 3,000 kyat (US \$3.08)*"<sup>188</sup>? Then, the kid picked up the money, 90,000 kyat (US \$92.31), and went to the place where he pawned his motorbike. He met with the owner who sells the drug and asked for his motorbike. The owners who sell the drug were worried that the information would appear [publicly] when he gave the money to them. Therefore, they arrested the kid, and then they hit and killed the kid with a piece of brick. The kid lived in Y--- village and the people who murdered him were BGF [Border Guard Force]<sup>189</sup> soldiers. This event is accurate, although I heard it when villagers told me.

### **The *k'thee k'thay* issue that I heard**

On May 13<sup>th</sup> 2013, I started meeting with villagers in Yaw Kuh village tract, T'Nay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District. Villagers reported that the most important problem is the *k'thee k'thay* issue. [Villagers reported that], "*The k'thee k'thay destroys our children, husbands and destroys many of our children and grandchildren. There are some people who became crazy because of k'thee k'thay; some lost their farms and some lost their motorbike. We dare not submit this issue to any armed group because the armed groups do it [manufacture and sell the drug]. There are also some villagers who have good relationships with the armed groups, and the armed groups provide them [permission] documents that allow them to sell k'thee k'thay. The armed group that established the [permission] document for selling k'thee k'thay is the BGF. If we speak openly, there are five groups that use the drug and sell the drug in our area. They are the Tatmadaw, KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army], DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army], KNU-KNLA Peace Council and BGF. None of them do not do it. So, we dare not speak carelessly. If we were to say so, we are afraid that people would come and kill us. We do not want it [the drug], but we cannot do [anything].*" This is what the villagers who came to the meeting said.

### **The second drug issue**

On March 27<sup>th</sup> 2013, there was also [an incident] that happened related to the drug [concerning] a grandma; the villager [I spoke to] did not know her name; she was 62 years old and lived in Htoh Kaw Koh village tract, T'Nay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District. This grandma was well known, as she spoke openly and publicly. The cause of the event happened because of the money issue. This grandma told BGF's people that, "*You all are Burma's [Tatmadaw] people. You became rich because you sell k'thee k'thay. I don't respect you.*" She argued with BGF Battalion #1016 [soldiers], and then four of Battalion Commander Mya Khaing's soldiers murdered grandma in G--- village at the riverside. The

in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia Vietnam, and in Burma where it is typically manufactured. See "Yaba, the 'crazy medicine of East Asia,'" UNODC, May 2008.

<sup>188</sup> As of August 8<sup>th</sup> 2013, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 975 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>189</sup> 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 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.

process by which they murdered grandma was that they tied grandma's neck with rope and hit grandma's head with stone. A villager who told me this saw it by himself. He was worried that people would know what he reported and he was scared. He did not allow me to record his voice or take a picture. [The BGF soldiers] said that they murdered grandma because they were worried that grandma would say that they are selling *k'thee k'thay*. This event is true and I got it from one villager who told me.

### Land confiscation by BGF

I would like to write up a situation update in Ta Kreh Township about BGF members who are fearless [approach with impunity] regarding the land issue.

In H--- village, Taw Soh village tract, Ta Kreh Township, Hpa-an District, [an incident] occurred involving two of BGF's veteran [officers], whose names are Poh Kyaw Hay, also known as Dee Hter Ler, and Poh Kya Aye, also known as Hpah T'Kaw, who live in R--- village, Poh Yay Hpoo village tract, Ta Kreh Township, Hpa-an District. These two men confiscated villagers' lands, and the villagers whose lands were confiscated are Naw M---, who lives in H--- village, and Naw E---, [who also] lives in H--- village. The places where they [two BGF veterans] confiscated the lands were in Lay Nah Htoh and K'Mler Wah. The lands that were confiscated are about 20 acres. These villagers' lands have official land grants that they got from the military government. BGF officers Poh Kyaw Hay and Poh Kya Aye told them [two female villagers] that, *"Your land grant is illegal, so we will take your lands."* Because these villagers want their lands back, they therefore went to the KNU's governor in charge from Ta Kreh Township, but [KNLA] people could not do it for them. The BGF soldiers told them that, *"If you want your lands back for Naw M---'s land, you have to pay us 600,000 kyat (US \$615.40), and for Naw E---'s land, you have to come and pay us 500,000 kyat (US \$513.83). And then you will get your land back."* The villagers told them that, *"We don't have money."* Then, they made trouble for the villagers [by making] many threats against the villagers. Therefore, the villager named Naw M--- had to sell her gold and went to pay them money, and Naw E--- had to sell one of her motorbikes and went to pay them. They told the land owners that, *"It will be done early if you do like this."*

### Source #60

<b>Log #</b>	13-69-I2
<b>Title</b>	Incident Report   Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District (January 2013)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in June 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/06/13-69-i2/hpapun-incident-report-attack-villager-bu-tho-township-january-2013">http://khrq.org/2014/06/13-69-i2/hpapun-incident-report-attack-villager-bu-tho-township-january-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	P--- village, Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Part 1 – Incident Details</b>	
<b>Type of Incident</b>	Attack on villager
<b>Date of Incident</b>	January 15 <sup>th</sup> 2013
<b>Incident Location</b>	P--- village, Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Victim Information</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Naw M---
<b>Age</b>	23 years old

<b>Sex</b>	Female
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen
<b>Family</b>	Yes
<b>Occupation</b>	Housewife
<b>Religion</b>	Buddhist
<b>Position</b>	No
<b>Village</b>	P---

#### Perpetrator Information

Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Saw Day Day	Warrant Officer	BGF [Border Guard Force] <sup>190</sup> #1014	Meh Seik BGF army camp	Commander Ye'Thway

### Part 2 – Information Quality

#### 1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

On January 15<sup>th</sup>, the KHRG community member received a telegram message from the KNU [Karen National Union] regarding an attack on a villager. As soon as I [the KHRG community member] heard the news, I immediately left the KHRG Northern Office and went to P--- village, where the attack happened. In order to find out if the news was true, I met with the victim and her son; the victim's aunt Daw S---; and the victim's uncle U T---. I interviewed them to get strong evidence. I interviewed the victim, Naw M---, first and she told us about her suffering, and after that I also interviewed her uncle and aunt, who are her neighbours and witnessed the attack.

#### 2. Explain how the source verified this information.

I have documented the incident in this report after interviewing the victim, Naw M---, and her son. The witness, Daw S---, who is the victim's aunt and also her neighbour, explained that [Naw M---'s account] of the incident is true. Daw S--- said, *"The warrant officer's mortar didn't accidentally go off, but he intentionally fired it."*

### Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

**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 an attachment if needed.**

The human rights abuse that I am going to report now happened on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2013 in P--- village, Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District.

The incident happened when Naw M--- was sitting at the back of the house and a warrant

<sup>190</sup> 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 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.

officer of Border Guard Force [BGF Battalion] #1014 fired the 44 mm mortar at her, so Naw P--- and her son were injured. The person who committed the abuse is BGF #1014 Warrant Officer Saw Day Day, led by Company Commander Bo Ye Thway and Battalion Commander Saw Maung Chit.<sup>191</sup>

Warrant Officer Saw Day Day travelled from P--- village army camp and then came into the village.<sup>192</sup> While he went around the village and arrived at Naw M---'s house, he saw that she was sitting with her son, Saw K---. The time was around two in the afternoon. At that time, Saw Day Day was slightly drunk, so when he saw Naw M--- and her son, he asked if she had gasoline or not. Naw M--- replied to him that she did not have it. Saw Day Day told her that he would fire a 40 mm mortar [grenade launcher] at her. A few seconds after he started [aimed] the mortar, the sound of the mortar [being fired] went off. So, it hit Naw M---, who was breast-feeding her son, on her calf and the grenade grazed her son's back. The bullet [grenade] stopped four yards away from the mother and son. Fortunately, the bullet did not explode.

#### **Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details**

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

U T--- allows [KHRG] to use this information as it is needed.

#### **Source #61**

<b>Log #</b>	13-69-I3
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Incident Report: Bu Tho Township, January 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b><u>Part 1 – Incident Details</u></b>	
<b>Type of Incident</b>	Attack on villager
<b>Date of Incident</b>	January 15 <sup>th</sup> 2013
<b>Incident Location</b>	A--- village, Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Victim Information</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Saw B---
<b>Age</b>	One year and five months old
<b>Sex</b>	Male
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen
<b>Family</b>	No
<b>Occupation</b>	-
<b>Religion</b>	Buddhist
<b>Position</b>	-
<b>Village</b>	C--- village

<sup>191</sup> Commander Maung Chit, also referred to as Maw Hsee, is the commander for Tatmadaw Border Guard Force (BGF) battalion #1014 in Hpapun District. Maung Chit is not to be confused with Maung Chit Thu (typically referred to as Chit Thu), who is a senior level BGF commander overseeing battalions #1017, #1018, #1019 and #1020 in Ko Ko, Hpa-an District.

<sup>192</sup> The army camp is based next to P--- village and is therefore called P--- army camp.

Perpetrator Information				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Saw Day Day	Warrant Officer	BGF [Border Guard Force] <sup>193</sup> #1014	Meh Seik BGF army camp	Commander Ye'Thway

## Part 2 – Information Quality

### 1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

The KHRG researcher went to C--- village as soon as he heard about the shooting while he was at the [KHRG] office. I [the researcher] met the victims B---, his mother Naw D---, her aunt Daw E--- and her uncle U F---, who are also the witnesses.

### 2. Explain how the source verified this information.

The people who reported this abuse are the victims B--- and his mother Naw D---, who faced the abuses. [The other sources] are the witnesses, Naw D---'s aunt Daw E--- and uncle U F---. U F--- is [also] the victims' neighbour, [and that is how] he witnessed the abuse.

## Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

**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 an attachment if needed.**

The human rights abuse that is described below took place earlier this year [2013]. This incident happened on January 15<sup>th</sup> 2013 in C--- village, Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract,<sup>194</sup> Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District. A soldier from the BGF [Border Guard Force] #1014 fired a 44 mm mortar at a villager who had done nothing wrong. The victim is B---, who is only one year and five months old and a villager of Meh Seik village. The perpetrator is Saw warrant officer who is [ranked] below camp Commander Bo Ye Thway and the Battalion Commander Maung Chit.<sup>195</sup> The weapon that he used is a 44 mm mortar, so it is a kind of a heavy weapon.

When the officer came to C--- village from their army camp, he saw that B--- was sitting with his mother, Naw S---, who was breastfeeding him. He asked B---'s mother Naw Aye

<sup>193</sup> 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 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.

<sup>194</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

<sup>195</sup> Commander Maung Chit, also referred to as Maw Hsee, is the commander for Tatmadaw Border Guard Force (BGF) battalion #1014 in Hpapun District. Maung Chit is not to be confused with Maung Chit Thu (typically referred to as Chit Thu), who is a senior level BGF commander overseeing battalions #1017, #1018, #1019 and #1020 in Ko Ko, Hpa-an District.



Aye Win if she had gasoline and Naw S--- answered him that she did not have any. Then he readied his mortar and Naw S--- did not think that he would really fire it. But a few seconds later, a shell came out of the mortar.

The bullet grazed B---'s back while he was being breast-fed and his mother was struck on her calf by the grenade. The shell went between the mother and son and landed four yards away from them. Fortunately, the shell did not explode. The villagers already threw the shell far away by then. Even though the bullet did not explode and did not hit the villagers badly, it landed between the mother and her son, who was grazed [by the bullet]. B--- was taken to the Myaing Gyi Ngu Hospital and he needed six stitches on his back. B--- and his mother received treatment in Myaing Gyi Ngu Hospital and they spent 250,000 kyat (US \$253.29)<sup>196</sup> for his treatment. Commander Ye Thway [Tatmadaw] supported them with 100,000 kyat (US \$101.32). Just like this incident, when incidents happen the Meh Seik villagers want to report them to the media, but they do not see any media group. They continue to stay quietly in their village. The BGF Commanders did not punish the perpetrator, Saw Day Day.

Incident Report written by a KHRG researcher  
Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District  
(Received in August 2013)

#### Source #62

<b>Log #</b>	13-74-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Daw A---, July 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in May 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/05/13-74-a1-i1/hpapun-interview-daw-july-2013">http://khrq.org/2015/05/13-74-a1-i1/hpapun-interview-daw-july-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen  <b>Religion:</b> Buddhist  <b>Marital Status:</b> Married  <b>Occupation:</b> Farming, logging and sugarcane plantation  <b>Position:</b></p> <p><b>What's your name?</b></p> <p>I am Daw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 47 years old.</p> <p><b>What ethnicity are you?</b></p> <p>I am Karen.</p> <p><b>How about religion?</b></p>	

<sup>196</sup> As of 13<sup>th</sup> of January, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 kyat to the US \$1.

I am a Buddhist.

**How about your village?**

I live in B--- village.

**What do you do for your livelihood?**

I do logging, work on a sugarcane plantation and farming.

**How many children do you have?**

I have five children.

**How old is the eldest?**

The oldest is 22 years old.

**How about the youngest one?**

Four years old.

**Could you tell me how many houses are in your village?**

Currently, there are *[censored for security]*. People just move from place to place [are now internally displaced]. There are no people [not as many people live here, compared to a big village].

**Why do they have to move from place to place?**

Because they hear the sounds of scattered gunfire from different places and it is uncomfortable for them [villagers].

**Is there BGF [Border Guard Force]<sup>197</sup> in your village?**

Yes, there is.

**Including Burmese soldiers?**

They [the BGF] said there are Burmese deserters<sup>198</sup> that joined them.

**Did they [the BGF] say it like that?**

Yes, they did.

<sup>197</sup> 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 Burmese/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.

<sup>198</sup> By the time of publication KHRG was unable to determine where these Burmese deserters had deserted from and why.



**Do they [the Burmese deserters] speak Karen?**

One or two [Burmese deserters] cannot speak Karen.

**The BGF said the Burmese are deserters and that they joined the BGF?**

Some [Burmese deserters] understand [Karen] but cannot speak it.<sup>199</sup>

**In B--- village, you said there are BGF. Do you feel that you are free in terms of working?**

No, not free. If it was free, we would be able to do sugarcane grinding. It is not free [in regards to working] and I had to abandon my sugarcane plantation. If we could do sugarcane grinding we could make 500 viss<sup>200</sup> packs of brown slab-sugar. [However] there are landmines and other explosives in the plantation.

**They have planted landmines in your sugarcane plantation?**

Yes, recently a buffalo was wounded [by a landmine] in the sugarcane plantation.

**Was it your buffalo that was wounded?**

Yes, my buffalo.

**Did they [the BGF] eat it [the buffalo]?**

Yes, they did. After the buffalo was hit by the landmine I thought that I would sell some buffalo meat, but they [BGF] ate it and I could not sell the meat.

**After the buffalo was wounded by the landmine, did the buffalo die immediately or did they shoot and kill it?**

[The buffalo] did not die immediately; they shot and killed it.

**Did you let them shoot and kill the buffalo, or did they decide to kill [the buffalo]?**

They were about to kill the buffalo when I saw them, and after they saw me, they asked me, "*What should we do?*"

I replied "[The buffalo] *is dying, do what you want.*"

**Male buffalo or female buffalo?**

Female buffalo.

**How much money were you going to make if you sold that female buffalo?**

[I could get] 500,000 [kyat] (US \$507.10),<sup>201</sup> for the buffalo and two other calves. You know the current market price [for buffalos]. It was a fat female buffalo.

<sup>199</sup> The interviewee was still answering the previous question, giving further information on whether the deserters spoke Karen, while the researcher had moved on to another question.

<sup>200</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg. or 3.52 lb.

<sup>201</sup> All conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014 official market rate of 986 kyat to the US \$1.

**Did they pay you any money?**

No, they didn't. I could sell only 12 viss (19.2 kg. / 42.24 lb.) [of meat]. I made 24,000 [kyat] (US \$24.34).

**Twelve viss of meat is the amount [of meat] that you could sell?**

Yes. I got 24,000 kyat [from selling the meat]; 2,000 kyat (US \$2.03) for one viss.

**Did they [BGF soldiers] pay for the meat they ate?**

No, they didn't.

**Is the distance between the place they planted the landmines in your sugarcane plantation and your house far?**

It is about a two or three minute walk from my home.

**The eastern or western part of you sugarcane plantation?**

The eastern part at Hkoh Law River side. I talked [reported] about [the landmines] to the 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant [from the KNU] because they [BGF] told us [about the location of the landmines] that they planted. But I did not know if they were telling the truth or not.

**While they were in your village, who lead them [BGF]?**

Now, the leader is called Ta Thoo.

**Is he there now?**

He just got back yesterday, when it was getting dark.

**What is the real name of Ta Thoo?**

They call him Tha Beh.<sup>202</sup>

**Is Tha Beh nice to you and other civilians?**

In the past he was not nice [to me]. [He was nicer to me] when my kid was hit by the gun and I went to court.

**He was nicer after that?**

Yes, he was nicer after that.

**So, you said your kid was hit by a gun; were you also hit?**

<sup>202</sup> Saw Tha Beh is a 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant in Border Guard Force (BGF) Battalion #1014 in Hpapun District. KHRG has received multiple reports of Saw Tha Beh committing human rights abuses in Hpapun District, including forced labour, arbitrary taxation and violent abuse. For more information see: "[Violent abuse and forced labour in Hpapun District, November 2013 – January 2014](#)," KHRG, September 2014; "[Hpapun Incident Report: Forced labour and violent abuse in Bu Tho Township, January 2014](#)," KHRG, August 2014; "[Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, November 2013 to February 2014](#)," KHRG, August 2014; and "[Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, August to November 2013](#)," KHRG, December 2013.

No, I was not hit. It hit my daughter and one of my grandchildren. I was at the sugarcane furnace.

**How did they get hit by the gun?**

When my husband was moving our boat from the eastern side of the river, he was unfolding waterproof canvases from the boat to set it up. After that, he also went to the sugarcane stove. He [the BGF soldier who was also at the river] said, "*Ta, I will go too.*" [My husband responded], "*If you go, then go ahead.*" I was at the sugarcane furnace and I was walking. After the meal he [the BGF soldier] followed your brother<sup>203</sup> [to come back to my home] and when they had arrived home, he [the BGF soldier] asked "*Ta, can you give me one gallon of petrol?*" and [her husband replied] "*I have only three or four bottles of petrol.*" He said "*Ah, I want one gallon.*"<sup>204</sup> He [her husband] replied "*I don't have a full gallon.*" My daughter then said "*My father has told you it is not a full gallon; there are only three or four bottles of petrol.*" He [the BGF soldier] then picked up the M79<sup>205</sup> and he opened and loaded it, and said "*Should I shoot you in the head with this M79?*" My daughter replied "*You really want to shoot us and you don't understand that gunshots kill people?*" [sarcastically challenging the BGF soldier]. He opened and loaded the M79 and placed it on the ground pointing toward my daughter. When my daughter was standing, about to leave with one of her babies, while nursing him, the bullet<sup>206</sup> came out.

**What is the name of the sergeant major that placed the gun facing [your daughter]?**

He is called Sergeant Major Hpah Day Day.

**Is Hpah Day Day still there [in that battalion]?**

No, he is not [there].

**Did your grandchild get hit? Did he die?**

No, he did not [die].

**Did they take good care of you after you went to court?**

They said they would pay me 250,000 [kyat] (US \$253.55) for the medical treatment and I have received 100,000 [kyat] (US \$101.42) from them. They will pay another 100,000 [kyat] this month. It is now the beginning days in February.

**When did they get hit?**

They were hit on January 15<sup>th</sup>.

**In 2013?**

<sup>203</sup> Here and throughout the interview, the interviewee refers to her husband as 'your brother'; this does not mean biological brother, but rather is a term of endearment used in S'gaw Karen.

<sup>204</sup> When recounting the words spoken by the BGF soldier, the interviewee appears to imply that the soldier was inebriated, by changing her intonation and slurring her words. The interviewee did not state this explicitly.

<sup>205</sup> The M79 grenade launcher is a single-shot, shoulder fired, break-action grenade launcher, which can fire rounds of various types. It is commonly used by infantry throughout the world.

<sup>206</sup> While the interviewee uses the S'gaw Karen term for 'bullet' an M79 is a grenade launcher, and can fire various types of grenade rounds, such as explosive, illumination, smoke, etc. It is unclear what type of round was fired from the weapon in this incident.

Yes.

**After they were injured did you go to the court immediately?**

I went [took them] to the hospital first.

**You sent your daughter to the hospital first, and you went to the court after that?**

Yes.

**What [BGF] battalion is that?**

It is Officer Maung Chit's battalion, #1014.

**How did you report the case [to them]?**

The baby was hit by a Klo<sup>207</sup> [M79] and people who come stay here [other villagers from the area] spread rumours, saying: "*The B--- village head has a walkie-talkie and a gun.*"

**They accused your husband [of having a walkie-talkie and a gun]?**

Yes. People who live on the other side of the river said that first. There are also some soldiers who love your brother [my husband].

Regarding whether the people's accusations were true or not, he [my husband] said: "*I am doing my work honestly and I have my dignity regarding that. You can search and explore, and if you find there is a [military use] walkie-talkie and a gun with me, I will cut my own throat. You don't need to do that. If you do you will be tired [by cutting my throat].*"

And not very long after, [the BGF] from B--- invited your brother and they asked him questions [about it]. They asked your brother: "*Hta Wah said you own a walkie-talkie and a gun*". He [my husband] said "*I don't own those.*"

He [her husband] continued: "*In the past, during peaceful times, one of my friends [who was in the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA)]<sup>208</sup> who lives in Ta Hkaw Poe [village] was very friendly with me and I used to go hunting a lot [with that friend]. He trusted me and he let me use his gun [a G3 rifle]. When the BGF was split [from the DKBA], he [the soldier] was sent word to return them [the gun and walkie-talkie], and he returned them. He returned them a long time ago.*" In that complicated situation we worry [for our security].

I told you brother that I was worried for my daughter [and her baby] was injured, and I also have to worry about the accusations [against my husband]. Your brother said "*Do not go otherwise they [people] will say we make trouble by reporting [to the authorities] and you [his wife] also need to have sympathy for the front line people [the BGF leaders].*"

<sup>207</sup> Klo is a Karen word for gun.

<sup>208</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma/Myanmar government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma/Myanmar at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "[Inside the DKBA](#)," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.

I replied to him “*No, I do not need to have sympathy, because for me there is nothing that can replace your life.*” Then I myself went to the military office to report it to them and they said to wait a couple days until the commander is back. After the commander got back he sent word for me to go and see him. I went there to see him and the officer told me “*Friend, do not report about this to other organisations, like the KNU, etc. We apologise to you for this and if you report it, the news will come out on the BBC and be published in the newspaper and that is not good.*” [After I returned from the office] I told this to your brother and your brother said “*We will not report it, investigate it yourself* [meaning the BGF] *and report it yourself* [to other organisations].”<sup>209</sup> I cannot remember all the words he [the officer] said.

**Do you know the name of the officer?**

No, I don't.

**Where is he from?**

He is from Pweh Kay village.

**Where does he live?**

He lives at the BGF *gon*.<sup>210</sup>

**What do people call it?**

I don't know. You should ask Saw W--- he knows. For me I cannot remember all.

**You just returned after you reported to him? Or did he give you money at the same time?**

He did not pay at the same time [as when I met him]. He said he will pay me but I haven't received [all of] it yet. I met him recently and he said he will pay me when he comes back again.

**So now he is living in B--- village and after the accident is he [BGF Battalion #1014 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant Tha Beh] nicer to the villagers?**

Yes.

**Did his leaders punish him?**

No, he was not punished.

**Is he still there now?**

Now he is staying at the lower part [down river]. I requested that he [the soldier whose M79 discharged] come and see me but he didn't come and see me.

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<sup>209</sup> The BGF Commander told him not to report the incident. He then goes on to explain that he believes the BGF should investigate the incident and report it themselves to other organisations – they should take responsibility for what they did.

<sup>210</sup> A ‘*gon*’ refers to a camp which is situated on a gradient (hill) – in this instance the camp belongs to the BGF however the term ‘*gon*’ does not refer solely to BGF camps, it can refer to any type of camp located on a hill.

**He did not come?**

No, he did not come and see me. I just want to tell [discuss] the truth. I don't know if he is scared to see me or ashamed to see me.

**When they [BGF] live there [in the camp] do they demand things [from the camp] to eat?**

No, they do not demand things to eat. We also help them with boats and bamboo rafts [for transportation]. We thought [assumed] that it is ok for us if we can work freely even though we have to help [providing] them with boats or bamboo rafts [for transportation] and we do not complain even though they take it away for one or two days.

**Do they pay for using them?**

No, they don't.

**They do not pay for petrol either?**

Yes, they do sometimes. If we go with them they pay for petrol. If they go by themselves they just fill it themselves.

**They use it as their own boat?**

Yes, they use [the boat] and the boat engine, and sometimes they return it and it is not functioning, but we do not complain about that. We expect only for them to be peaceful and their [the BGF] work to go smoothly.

**Are there only [censored for security] houses in your village?**

Yes, there are only [censored for security] houses and they [the people who live in them] are my siblings.

**How about in the past? How many houses were in the village?**

There were 34 houses before the conflict.

**Now, where have the [people in those] houses gone?**

They moved to Hkaw Taw Poo Town.

**How long ago did they move to Hkaw Taw Poo?**

Some people moved one year ago and some people moved two years ago, at the time when the BGF was founded. The BGF have been founded for two years already now.

**They moved to Hkaw Taw Poo after the BGF was founded?**

Yes.

**So, you dare not go around your village as you want?**

No, I dare not.

**Why?**

When they [BGF] first came [in the village area], they announced that they have planted some landmines [in village area] and [since then] I dare not go around freely. People said “*You can avoid the wild elephant but you cannot avoid landmines,*” because you don’t know where they are [planted].

**So let’s go back to the case of your daughter and her baby. Did the [grenade launched from the] M79 explode?**

It did not explode.

**Did it [the grenade] hit her hand or leg?**

It hit her leg and she has not recovered [from her wound] yet.

**Left leg or right leg?**

Right leg.

**How about your grandchild?**

My grandchild got hit in his back. It occurred when he turned one year old. He was injured at his waist.

**Was he seriously injured?**

No, his wound was between his skin and muscle. He had to get two stitches in his muscle and four stitches on his skin.

**Which hospital did you take him to?**

[The hospital] in Hkaw Taw Poo. It is about politics [due to BGF involvement] and many people came and asked me [about how it happened] as they were interested to know.

**It was against the citizens and it was not the right [thing to do].**

Yes, it was not the right thing to do. I’ve been sick and I’ve went to the hospital but people [the media] did not come and interview me like that. Now, many [media members] come [for interviews] I don’t know where they are from, or from which organisation.

**Do they speak Karen?**

Yes, they do.

**Did people who cannot speak Karen come as well?**

Mostly, they speak Karen.

**Are they Karen or other ethnicities?**

They took photos as well when I was holding my grandson and my daughter’s leg also.<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> The interviewee is answering the previous set of questions, pertaining to the individuals she perceived as being ‘the media’. She did not answer this question regarding the other ethnicities.



**When was your buffalo hit by the landmine? On what day? How many days ago?**

It has not been a long time. Just four days ago.

**When?**

What day is today?

**Today is [February] 8<sup>th</sup> [2013]. It must be on the 4<sup>th</sup> [of February]. Five days ago? [Including the day he conducted interview].**

On the fourth, in the evening, sometime after eight o'clock.

**So they [BGF] came and killed the buffalo the next day, on the 5<sup>th</sup>?**

Yes.

**This year, do you think you are free to conduct your livelihood activities?**

No, it is not free. There is hill side land which is free for farming but people [villagers] dare not do cultivation [as there are landmines planted] and they run away [move] one after another.

**Were they [the BGF] staying in the village, or outside the village when they were there?**

They built up their camp outside the village, on the highland, and there are also [BGF soldiers] in the village and in the monastery.

**Did they build their camp on villagers' plantations or land that belongs to others?**

On my older sister's land. My oldest brother's wife.

**What did they plant on their land?**

They planted betel nut trees and dog fruit<sup>212</sup> trees.

**Did they [BGF] buy that land?**

No, they didn't.

**They didn't buy [the land]? They just confiscated the land and built their camp on the land? Did they force villagers to go and build the camp for them?**

No they didn't. They brought people from the lower part<sup>213</sup> in order to build their camp.

**Are there any [BGF] groups that demanded forced labour?**

<sup>212</sup> Dog fruit, also known as jengkol, is a bean containing sulphur and a mildly toxic amino acid. It is native to Southeast Asia and is commonly eaten with rice and fish paste.

<sup>213</sup> In this area of Bu Tho Township, when villagers use the term 'lower part', they are referring to the southern portion of the township, at the confluence of the Salween and Yuzalin rivers, which is more developed, and has a higher concentration of towns and villages. Conversely, 'upper part' refers to more remote areas further up river, which are sparsely populated.

No. They demanded people from the lower part [from town] only.

**Are they still demanding forced labour now?**

In the past two or three days they cleared plantation land and they were carrying bamboo [to build their camp]. They bring people from the lower part [from town] for forced labour. They [BGF] said they hired them for labour.

**Have they finished building it?**

I do not live in the village, I moved to the other side of the river.

**Eastern part?**

Yes, it is in the eastern part. After my children and grandchildren got injured by the gun, they [her daughter] no longer wanted to live in the village, and I was also not happy to stay alone [at home in the village].

**So you also moved to the other side of the river as well?**

Yes, and now [on the other side of the river] there is a monk, a monastery and my oldest brother's house.

**How about the monk? Where does the monk get food?**

My brother takes care [of him] and we send [donate] him rice, oil and food.

**How does it feel because of that [incident]? What kind of thoughts do you have and how do you feel about it?**

It think it could be better if there is peace. Currently, sometimes I feel confused and living is not free. I don't like to live [in my area]. There are many villages in the lower and upper parts of my area but they are ok, it is only my village [where an incident occurred recently].

**How about the surrounding villages? Did they also move?**

There are no houses left in M--- [village].

**No houses left?**

No, not in the upper part of B--- [village tract], it is called M---.

**What is their [BGF] purpose for living there?**

I don't know what their plan is because I did not find out about that.

**How about the [Hatgyi] dam? Do you know anything about the dam?**

In the past they said they will do it but now I don't know because I have not researched that and I don't know about it. I don't know if they will implement it or not, I am not sure.

**If the dam project is started, do you think you still can stay here?**

If the dam project is started, I don't think I can stay [in the village].

**Have you ever been in a dam discussion meeting?**

Yes, I have been there once.

**What did they say [in the meeting]?**

They said don't worry, it is going to be in the lower part [of the area]. For the upper part it will cause damage to how many villages [interviewee asking herself]? They mentioned it but I can't remember.

**You can't remember?**

No, I can't remember. They also showed a movie on the screen.

**What did the screen show?**

The dam and the Salween River's geographic location from the source. They showed a picture of the villages that will be flooded [if implemented]. They showed the area that is going to be flooded. They said it is ok for the lower part. They said it is ok but if they [start to build] it will become uncomfortable due to the soldiers.

**Have they built any shelters or buildings [for the workers]?**

No, not yet. Last year they brought the materials [for building the dam] and people destroyed them [the materials].

**What is the name of the person that organised the meeting?**

He is called U Myint Shwe.

**Is he Burmese, Chinese, Thai or Shan?**

He is Burmese.

**Did they provide anything during the meeting?**

They provided a torch light for each house.

**For use at home or generally?**

Home use.

**Do you think there are benefits for you if the dam project is implemented?**

I don't think so. We [I] do not have an education and [we] don't know. That is what I think.

**Do you think they will sell it [the electricity] to foreign countries only?**

Yes, I think so.

**Do you think that if you have to pay monthly [for electricity], you can afford it?**

Maybe if my work is going well. Currently, in this situation I don't think I can afford it.

**This year how much brown slab-sugar did you produce from your sugarcane**

**plantation?**

Last year I produced 8,000 (12,800 kg. / 28,160 lb.) [viss of brown slab-sugar, in *t'la aw*<sup>214</sup> leaf packages]. This year I could produce only 900 (1,440 kg. / 3,168 lb.) A lot of them [sugarcane trees] were damaged. I thought I would be able to produce about 3,000 (4,800 kg. / 10,560 lb.) but I could make only 900.

**How about the [sugarcane trees] that you abandoned; if you could produce brown slab-sugar from those, how much do you think you could produce?**

I guess 700 (1,820 kg. / 2464 lb.) or 800 (1,280 kg. / 2.816 lb.) [viss].

**So they [BGF] did not remove their [landmines] for you?**

No, they didn't. I asked them to remove them they did not. They said the grass has grown tall and hidden the landmines, so they dare not [try] to remove them.

**Can you let your cows and buffalos go freely?**

No, I can't, so I tie them up there.

**So you are grazing your buffalo now?**

Yes.

**How about your other property, like your chickens, etc?**

The buffalo baby [calf] was left behind [after the mother died].

**Is that small buffalo still nursing?**

Yes. It is just over two months old.

**So you still have to take care of that [calf]?**

Yes.

**So now what do you feed that [calf]?**

I haven't found it [the calf] yet.

**[The calf] has been missing for two or three days, maybe it is dead already? And it is still nursing.**

I think if I take care of it [the calf] carefully, it could live on.

**You feed it [the calf] milk?**

Yes.

**Is there a school in B--- village?**

<sup>214</sup> *T'la aw* trees are teak-like trees with large leaves, which are traditionally collected by villagers and used to make thatched shingles for the roofs of houses.

No. It has been two years now [without a school]. Usually, [in the past] there is a school.

**So, there was no school after the BGF was founded?**

No.

**So your children are not able to go to school?**

No.

**Do you have children who are of school age?**

Yes, I send them to study in Hkaw Taw Poo [Town]. I can afford to send just some of my children to school.

**Do you have to pay expenses to study in Hkaw Taw Poo?**

Yes, there are costs because they have to stay in somebody's house. If they could stay in their own house there would be fewer costs.

**So do you have anything else to say about your work or livelihood?**

I think in my mind I am not happy [here in the village], I want to move. It is not free and I am not happy.

**If you could move, where would you want to move?**

I think I will move to D---.

**Is it in the eastern part or western part [her village]?**

Eastern part.

**Do you wish for the dam project to be implemented or not?**

This should not be happening. We could not stay [in our area] if it is implemented. I just wish for it not to be implemented. Recently, I wished to send [my children] one buffalo thigh. It was not free [to move in the area] and I could not send it.

**How much do you have to spend for your children's schooling per year?**

The cost is higher as their grade is higher. I let them stay in their uncle's house and there is not too much cost. [I have to provide] just for food. I have only one child that goes to school [now].

**How much do you have to spend per year?**

It is about 700,000 [kyat] (US \$709.94) per year.

**What standard is he in?**

Eighth standard.<sup>215</sup>

<sup>215</sup> Those in eighth standard are aged 13-14 years. This is therefore the equivalent of US grade 8/9.

**If your child is not staying in their uncle's house then there would be more expenses than that?**

Yes, right. You have to pay for book fees, clothes, etc.

**You are living just right above the river side?**

Yes, I am.

**So, if the dam is implemented, you probably can [remain] here?**

No, I can't. It is not only me among the people who live around here [that] hope the project is not implemented.

**What villages are situated in the upper part of the river?**

There are Taung Kyah [village], Hpa Yah Kyaw, Pa Deh Hta and in the lower part, they depend on the Salween River.

**Where do they plan to build [the dam]?**

They said at Taung Kyah.

**Are there still plans for this project? Or they have cancelled it?**

I have not heard [for a while] already.

**Now, you live close to the BGF and sometimes you have to meet with the KNU [if they request a meeting]. What do you think of them? Which group is heavier [worse]?**

I cannot say which group [is better] we are Karen and we love Karen people.

**Do they [the BGF] get a salary?**

Yes, they do. They get a salary from the Burmese [Tatmadaw].

**From the government?**

Yes, from the government.

**Do you think it is ok that they get a salary from the government and from that side [KNU] there is no salary?**

For this group [the KNU] they do not receive the salary from the government and they are ok. We can tell openly [if there is problem with them].<sup>216</sup>

**How about the other groups? How about the BGF? Is it ok to admonish them?**

No, they won't listen if you say so [admonish them]. Before the day my child [and grandchild] was hit by the gun, a [BGF soldier] broke my boat lock and was rowing the boat for fun. He came back above the riverside and said "*Aunty I will eat one of your betel-nuts.*" I replied

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<sup>216</sup> The researcher is asking if the interviewee thinks it is fair that the BGF receive a salary from the government and the KNU do not. The interviewee replies that the KNU do not need or expect a salary from the government. If there is a problem with KNU soldiers, the leader of the KNU can be approached easily.

"Eat," and I placed the box before him. I called him sergeant major. I told him "*Master sergeant major, you are old enough and you should know what is good and what is bad. The lock can be broken [if you try to break it]. We do not want to interact [with soldiers], we want to live separately [from soldiers].*" He replied "*We are not married men, we are single.*" [After that] I stopped talking [to him]. The more that is spoken, the greater the chance there will be misunderstanding. I do not want to talk and there are worries for us too.

**How about other things?**

No, I do not have other things [to express].

**If so we will talk later if we have [things to express]. Thank you.**

Daw A---, (female, 47), B--- village, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District (Interviewed in February 2013)

**Source #63**

<b>Log #</b>	13-74-A22-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Daw A---, May 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Lay Wah village tract, Bu Tho Township Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Interview Date:</b> May 12<sup>th</sup> 2013</p> <p><b>Interview Place:</b> Hpapun District</p> <p><b>Name:</b> Daw A---</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> Female</p> <p><b>Age:</b> --- [censored for security reasons]</p> <p><b>Village:</b> A--- village, Lay Wah village tract, Bu Tho Township Hpapun District</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Christian</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Family Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Farmer</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Village head</p> <p><b>What is your name, sister?</b></p> <p>Daw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p>	



---. [Censored for security reasons]

**Karen, Shan, Bamar or what?**

Karen.

**How about your religion?**

Christian.

**How about your work?**

I do farming.

**Are you married?**

[Nods her head]

**What village do you live in?**

A--- [village].

**How about the village tract?**

Lay Wah [village tract].

**Do you know which township?**

Bu Tho [Township].

**How many children do you have?**

Two.

**How old the eldest one is?**

The oldest one is 18 years old.

**How about the youngest one?**

Over 16 years old.

**In A--- village, how long have you been in the village head position?**

Two years.

**How many houses are there [in A--- village]?**

[Censored for security] houses altogether including widows and orphans.

**What do people in A--- do for their livelihood? Do they do any business?**

They do farming, hill farming and buying and selling etc.

**So they mostly do farming?**

[Person #2 male:] They do farming and day labouring..

**Does the BGF [Border Guard Force] come to A--- village?**

They do. There is his house here [a BGF soldier's house] in the village.

**He stays with his family there?**

Yes.

**How many houses are there?**

There are nine houses, they said.

**They live here and they work like their friends do here?**

In the village?

**Yes.**

No, they do not [work].

**Do their leaders provide their salary?**

Salary?

**How much do salary do they get paid?**

Some get over 70,000 kyat and some get over 100,000 kyat.

[Person #2 male:] Their leader gets over 100,000 kyat.

**So they do not get the same salary?**

No, they do not. Their leader and their privates [lower ranking soldiers] get different salaries.

**So you do not know exactly how much?**

I just know some people get 70,000 [kyat] and some people got over 100,000 [kyat].

**They live there. Are there things like: do they demand forced labour or other things from the villagers?**

Now, they do not anymore.

**Do they threaten the villagers when they sometimes come back [to the village]?**

No. No questions either since it [the ceasefire] happened recently.

**How long has it been?**

Not long ago. It was recently.

**Has it been about one year?**

Not one year yet.

**How many months ago? Can you guess?**

It must be about five or six months ago.

**There has been no more money demanding [arbitrary taxation]?**

No.

**For you, living here is free? Are there things you need to get like travel documents or other things?**

No. It was not a long time ago. In the past ... now it is different.

**Could you tell me about the start of the change?**

It is like they do not order us, they do not demand [forced labour], and they do not question us if they see us. There have been changes with these things.

**For example, do their families who live here demand you to do anything for them or other things?**

No.

**Do they demand bamboo or wood? Not anymore?**

Not anymore this year but they did last year.

**So it still happened in 2012?**

Yes.

**So it stopped in 2013?**

Yes, it changed at the beginning of 2013.

**Did they explain to you about the situation and why those things had stopped?**

No they do not.

**So if we compare the previous year with now. Has it [the situation] got better?**

It has changed.

**They [the BGF leaders] do not build a place for them [here]?**

Now, people said they build [a place] for them in Ka Ter Tee.

**They do not go back and stay there yet?**

No they do not go back yet. They said it is not finished yet. They do not go back yet and maybe not for a long time yet.

**What battalion is based in Ka Ter Tee? #1013 or #1014?**

[She asked someone besides her:] Bo Hla Kyaing is based in what battalion?

Ka Ter Tee is in the Bo Hla Kyaing controlled area.

**#1013 or #1014?**

We do not know. We did not write it down. For Tha A'Aw P'Lay, Bo Maung Chit [controls the area]. Here is [controlled by] Bo Hla Kyaing.

**They do not demand things in A--- village? And are there any development projects that the Myanmar government has done? Do they have any plans?**

The plan is to build this school. They said that in the [Myanmar] government's national plan.

**So how do they plan for that? How will they pay?**

I do not know exactly. I heard people say that the money has been sent [for the first quarter]. I did not ask about it. The money has been sent and now they have built a toilet.

**How much do they plan to spend in the proposal?**

People said about 16,000,000 kyat.

**You have not seen the money?**

No, I have not seen money.

[Person #2 male:] There is a rumour about it but I do not know.

**If they cancelled it would you be happy or sad?**

I wish it [USDP-led government money for constructing the school] doesn't come. I wish it doesn't come, if it comes, it will create more work [as villagers will have to take responsibility for it]. This whole thing is not only in his hands, it passed from the last person [who was in this position]. It was started step-by-step.

**So up to what standard does the school teach?**

Standard 4.

**How many teachers are there?**

Like last year, two teachers. They [the Myanmar government] pays for one [teacher] and the villagers pay for the other one.

**So how much you pay for the one you hire?**

We pay 150,000 [kyat] and there is 150,000 [kyat] support from the superior.

**Is the superior from the KNU or from the [Myanmar] government?**

From here. From the KNU.

**Might that be the KED [Karen Education Department]? 150,000 kyat?**

Yes.

[Person #2 male:] He also received 70,000 kyat. They give it him as expenses money as he was there [at the KED Department] by chance. They told him they are not going to give him it next year.

**How much does that Myanmar [government] teacher earn each month?**

Last year, it was over 70,000 [kyat].

[Person #2 male:] Now, people said he has earned about 100,000 [kyat] already.

[Daw A--- said:] He [the teacher] said it has increased to 100,000 [kyat].

**Are the teachers single or married?**

The one that they [the Myanmar government] support is married.

**Do they take of them?**

Yes, they take care of them.

**Are there things you do to help them or something?**

No, not for that person. Only for the one that we hire.

**So you only have to support that teacher? Do they help him [the local teacher] with anything?**

No, they do not.

**They only give to the other teacher [from the Myanmar government]?**

Only to that person.

**You said there have been no human rights violation and no violence in your village, are there problems in your work place or anything that causes you problems?**

No, not now.

**Are there any business [projects] here?**

No, not here at the moment..

**Are the BGF [Border Guard Force] planting anything on your crops or plantations? On your land?**

No, but last year there was one [incident]. Battalion Commander Bo Htoh Loh came and set up a rubber plantation beside the village.

**How far is it from your village?**

Just beside the village; beside the houses.

**So is that rubber plantation causing problems for the villagers?**

I have no idea. Some villagers' goats come back with broken legs and I don't know if it was because they [goat] went to their plantation or not. I don't know what happened as the owners did not see what happened.

**Did they [BGF] buy the land or did they confiscate it forcibly?**

They bought it. People sold it to him and they came and planted rubber [trees].

**So how many acres is the land?**

[Daw A--- asked person #3:] It might be many acres; five or six acres.

**So now who have they asked to take care [of the plantation] for them?**

They asked people here [who are at the plantation].

**His BGF [soldiers] or the villagers?**

[Person #3:] Around his land there are his people and they take care of it.

**So if the rubber trees grow bigger and bigger, will there be problems [for villagers] working here?**

Like people said, there might be [problems] when they get bigger and bigger.

**So do you not dare to tell them not to do it [plant rubber trees]? Do you?**

No, I do not dare to because they have already started it.

**Do you think you would dare to tell them to stop?**

No, I would not dare to.

[The third person said:] There was a time when they cut [the villagers'] bamboo and we told them [to stop] and we were going to physically stop them.

**They cut the villagers' bamboo?**

Yes, the villagers' bamboo. That one is different and their soldiers' [bamboo] is also different.

**Is there a clinic for healthcare [in your village]?**

No, there is not.

**Around here, have you heard of people using landmines?**

No, not anymore.

**Are there any people who have gone to Thailand or other countries and come back and persuaded their friends here [to go to work in other countries]?**

I don't know about that. There might be some.

[Person #3:] In this dry season two people have gone [to work abroad].

**So they just come back and talk about their experiences, which do not amount to**

**human trafficking?**

No.

**Are there any companies that come to your area here? Do they come here and do work such as agriculture or logging trees or bamboo?**

Not yet. I haven't heard anything about that yet.

**For people who live here, are there good opportunities for work?**

Yes, good.

**Individually, do you have enough food [for the whole year]?**

No, not enough. Most people do not have enough food.

**So how do those people do [survive]?**

They just go to work as day labourers here and there like that.

**How much do they get paid each day for day labour work?**

If you work in Ka Ter Tee, [you get paid between] 3,000 and 2,500 [kyat] each day. Some people do log rafting [and sell them] but not [anymore because] it has been banned and they have to work on other things.

**How much does it cost for one big tin of rice here?**

6,000 kyat for one big tin of rice.

**How about chicken? How much does it cost for one viss<sup>217</sup> of chicken?**

6,000 kyat for one viss of chicken.

**How about pork?**

It is 30,000 kyat for one viss of pork.

**Is there any way of doing business? For example, the place where people can work every day and earn a daily income?**

No, there was in the past with doing logging and other things.

**That is only temporary. Are there always logging businesses here?**

You can only work when they are open. If they are closed, you cannot work. For bamboo or log rafts or other things.

**Is it far between Ka Ter Tee and the place where you live now?**

Not far.

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<sup>217</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.



**What is between?**

There is Khoh Law River between. The other side of the river.

**So Burmese [Tatmadaw] soldiers are situated nearby?**

They stay on the top of the mountain.

**Do they come to your village?**

They used to sometimes come in the past. Now, I have not seen them come.

**Have they been in 2013?**

No.

**How about in 2012?**

They came in 2012.

**They came and what did they do?**

They just went around and stayed for one or two days [in the village] and then they left in the morning.

**They didn't cause any trouble for you?**

No, they didn't.

**Now, there is no more porter [forced labour]?**

No more.

**Have you ever heard of the ceasefire?**

Yes, I have heard of it now.

**As a civilian, do you think there is benefit from it?**

I don't know as many people talk about it differently. So I don't know if the ceasefire has benefits or not. How about you? What do you think? Do you think there is a benefit from the ceasefire? It is a little better for the villagers and there is no sound [of fighting].

**If it is goes back to how it was in the past like before, will they [the villagers] be afraid?**

Of course, yes. No doubt about that.

**Do you think there will be problems for the village head or the villagers if fighting happens like in the past?**

Yes. [They would] Have to go [to fight]; have to go here and there. If you dare to not go then you have to hire someone to go [in your place]. You have to find [someone] if you don't go.

**Is there recruitment in your village by the BGF?**

Now, they don't.

**So only in the past?**

Yes, only in the past.

**Those people [the BGF], are they doing well with their livelihoods for their families?**

I don't know if they are doing well or not. They just eat and find [food to eat]. I have no idea. I will say it is not very good [their livelihood] if I have to say something because they have to work hand-to-mouth [subsistence farming].

**They get a salary and they are doing fine with their livelihood? Is that any different to you?**

I thought you were talking about the villagers?

**I meant the BGF soldiers' children and wives. They might be doing well because their salary has increased as well. The people [BGF soldiers] who are married. They have to take care of their children separately?**

No.

**So they just share their income [with their family]?**

They do like that. Now, the Tatmadaw give them a salary in money and they have to buy [food] by themselves. They are not paid with rice anymore.

**They don't get paid with salt or fish paste anymore?**

No, they don't. They only just paid with money.

**So they increase their salary to cover those things?**

Yes.

**So how about their wives? The villagers here have to take care of them? Is there an order?**

No.

**Nothing like you have to help them with rice or other things?**

No.

**Do you have anything to tell me about any other things?**

No, I don't think so. You have covered them all I think.

**So what are your hopes for the future?**

Hopes for the future?

**Yes. The future for your life with your family, children and in your village.**

I wish for more peace.

**So thank you.**

Thanks.

#### Source #64

<b>Log #</b>	13-81-l1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Incident Report: Sexual assault and attack on villager in Nabu Township, June 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Nabu Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>The problem started when Naw B--- went to ask Second Lieutenant Aung Nay, who is under the command of Saw Ler Wah from Battalion #101 of the KNLA based in A--- village, if she could let other people rent her hill field to work on. He told her that it is fine for her to let other people rent her hill field and there was no problem with that. She was so happy because of his answer that when she got home, she bought fish and alcohol for him to show her gratefulness and asked her daughter, Naw C---, to bring it to him. The battalion is currently under control of Commander Saw Hpaw Doh.<sup>218</sup></p> <p>When Naw C--- arrived at the army camp, Lieutenant Aung Nay was drunk and he jokingly said he would touch Naw C---'s vagina to see how big it is and he actually did touch it over her sarong.<sup>219</sup> Naw C--- felt very upset about it and when she arrived home she told her mother about it and her mother told her not to say anything as the lieutenant could be joking. However, the rumour spread to the lieutenant and he was very angry about it and wanted to hide what he did.</p> <p>A few hours after he touched Naw C---'s vagina, he came to Naw C---'s house with a gun and shot the gun once in front of Naw C---'s house. Later, Lieutenant Aung Nay and two of his friends came to Naw C---'s house again and when Naw C--- heard about that she and her family hid. A night later on June 17<sup>th</sup> 2013, Aung Nay went to look for Naw C--- again and asked the mother where her daughter was. Aung Nay told the villager [Naw B---] that he wanted to ask Naw C--- if he really touched her vagina. He pulled the daughter [grabbed her by her arm] and the daughter was crying loudly. The mother tried to help her daughter and told him not to do [treat her] like that.</p> <p>When the mother pulled back her daughter [away from the lieutenant], the soldier, Hsaw Wee Kaw, who came together with the lieutenant, shot her and the daughter escaped. The soldier shot her twice with an AK [assault rifle]. Both of the bullets hit her above her navel. One of the bullets exited her body through her buttocks while the other one remained lodged in her stomach. When he shot the mother, the mother fell down. The lieutenant tried to chase the daughter but his feet went through a hole in the floor of the house causing him to fall and allowing the girl to escape. When the woman [Naw B---] fell [after being shot], she heard soldier Hsaw Wee Kaw, one of the soldiers who came together [with the lieutenant], tell the lieutenant that this incident has nothing to do with him as the lieutenant ordered him to shoot so he shot. The lieutenant told Hsaw Wee Kaw, <i>"This incident has nothing to do with you and you only shot because I ordered you to. I was going to kill myself after killing</i></p>	

<sup>218</sup> At the time of the incident, Saw Ler Wah was the battalion commander. However, since then Saw Hpaw Doh has taken over the position.

<sup>219</sup> A sarong is a garment consisting of a long piece of cloth worn wrapped around the body and tucked at the waist or under the armpits, traditionally worn in southeast Asia

them [Naw B--- and Naw C---]. *I can take responsibility of what I have done so you don't need to worry.*" After they were done talking, they headed back to their army camp. Naw B--- was sent to the hospital. When the woman was hospitalised the village head, Saw D---, helped her [by providing her with] 8,400 kyat (US \$7.56)<sup>220</sup> and one big tin of rice.<sup>221</sup> Hsaw Wee Kaw who shot Naw B--- had been punished and as for Lieutenant Aung Nay, the KNLA headquarters dealt with it but the [specifics of the] punishment were not revealed.

**Source #65**

<b>Log #</b>	13-86-T1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: A---, August 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in July 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/07/13-86-t1-i1/toungoo-interview-august-2013">http://khrq.org/2014/07/13-86-t1-i1/toungoo-interview-august-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen  <b>Religion:</b> Christian  <b>Marital Status:</b> Married  <b>Occupation:</b> Teacher  <b>Position:</b> Villager  <b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>31 years old.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>C---, Thandaung Town, Thandaunggyi Township, Brigade Two,<sup>222</sup> Toungoo District.</p> <p><b>What is your occupation?</b></p> <p>Plantation [worker].</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b></p> <p>Christian.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p> <p>Karen.</p> <p><b>Are you married?</b></p>

<sup>220</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the June 11<sup>th</sup> 2015 official market rate of 1,111.12 kyat to the US \$1

<sup>221</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg, or 23.04 lb. of paddy, and 16 kg. or 35.2 lb. of milled rice.

<sup>222</sup> This is referring to the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) Brigade #2, which comprises the same geographic area as Toungoo District.

Yes.

**Do you have children?**

Yes.

**How old are they?**

One and half years old.

**We have heard some information about you. Can you tell us about it?**

Yes, I can tell you about it.

**How did it [the incident] happen to you? Could you tell us specifically about it?**

The incident took place on June 26<sup>th</sup> 2013 in front of the Tatmadaw camp close to B--- village. Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun, two of his officers, one young man from Tai Pho [village] and the school headmaster U Moe Lwin were standing at the crossroad where the road turns off toward B--- village, and were having a conversation. When we arrived there on motorbike, they made us stop and they asked my friend D--- about an incident [with a car] that happened in the area [B--- village] last night. My friend D--- was trying to explain to him, saying *"I do not know when the car passed [by my house]; it was while I was admonishing my brother-in-law. I did not notice it. [I was asking my brother-in-law] why did you do that? Since my brother-in-law had taken my motorbike, I could not go to work and I was admonishing him. So I did not notice the car was passing."* Then, [Commander Hsan Htun] turned to me and asked me what I did yesterday. I explained to him [that I did not know anything about the incident], but he did not accept my response and he kicked me in the chest. I continued to explain to him, but he did not listen to me and he punched me in the face. He was not yet satisfied and he kicked me and my motorbike. At that time, I got off the motorbike and then I heard him say to the two officers *"This teacher [A---] is coming back from the city, so take him into the camp."* I went to the camp, [but] as I was going to give a receipt for dog fruit<sup>223</sup> to the daughter of the village head in B--- village, [I left the camp to finish my errand]. When I arrived at the village, I was talking to the village head. After a while, I told him that I was going back [to the camp]. However, as my motorbike does not have headlights, I left my motorbike at the village head's house and I asked for a flash light from him. Then I gave my motorbike's key to the village head's son-in-law and I went back alone [to the camp on foot]. When I arrived in front of the camp, five soldiers of Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun were waiting for me and took me to the camp. When I arrived at the camp, they told me that the reason they were calling me into the camp was due to the orders of Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun. Then I sat and talked with the soldiers [for the rest of the night]. [The next morning] at 8:45 am or 9:00 am, I heard the sound of gunfire toward the Roman Catholic Church. [When they heard the shooting] the soldiers [in the camp] took their places and said, *"They [Hsan Htun and his soldiers] are drunk and they are rough."* Then one of the soldiers came to me and told me not to be scared and then another one also came near to me and told me not to be afraid. I have never faced anything like this in my life. They also told me to stand up and stay still and if the Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun comes back to you, [every time] reply "Yes" to him [to whatever he asks or says] or he will punch you. After a while, he [Hsan Htun] came back and said to me *"Ha! You are already back."*

**When you heard the sound of gunshots, who was shooting?**

<sup>223</sup> Dog fruit, also known as jengkol, is a bean containing sulphur and a mildly toxic amino acid. It is native to Southeast Asia and is commonly eaten with rice and fish paste.

[I was told by the soldiers that] Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun was firing.

**Where was he when he was shooting?**

He shot [from the camp] toward the Roman Catholic Church and the school.

**What was the purpose of shooting like that?**

I do not know about that since I was in the army camp at that time, so you can ask the villagers and village head about that and you will know. I think they will know. It was when I was talking to the soldiers [in the camp].

**Was he shooting because he was drunk or was he just shooting like that [for fun]?**

According to his soldiers, he was drunk and he was in the camp the whole day. Even his [Hsan Htun's] soldiers were afraid that they would be punched by him. When the commander [Hsan Htun] arrived back where I was, he told me, *"I am not a teacher. Do you think I'm a teacher?"* He treated me in a wild and bad manner. He asked me, *"Do you not know how to fire a gun? Do not go."* He called me to the tent where people usually eat food [in the camp]. When I arrived at the tent to take the food, one of the officers said to me, *"Go and pour alcohol into the cup!"* I was shocked by that. I was sitting and he asked me, *"Do you not drink?"* Then he scolded and ranted at me and I had to drink with an unhappy mind. He poured [another cup] and asked me to have another drink and I said to him that I would not have another drink as I had to help my wife prepare paperwork for the school. He did not accept this. He asked me *"Where is your motorbike?"* I replied to him that I left it at the administrator's house in B--- village. As my motorbike does not have a headlight and I cannot drive my motorbike [at night], I left it there and I came back alone. Then he scolded and ranted at me and then I had to have that drink. Then he poured the third drink and asked me to drink that. I said I would not drink it. But I did drink it and then I went back to the village. I had begged and asked him [to let me go]. *"So drink it and I will send you back"* he had told me. After I had drunk it, I came back [to the village]. Then I arrived [in the front of the school] where the teachers were. At that time, as I wanted to urinate, I thought I would go past the [school's] fence [to the back toilet] and then I would urinate. When I turned [back around], he said *"Bullshit"* and Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun, [who followed me back to the village], punched me and kicked me and I fell down. Two of his soldiers [picked me up and] were holding my hands and he punched me as he liked and I fell down again. Then he hit me with the gun, kicked me and punched me and I fell down [again]. At that time, one of the teachers [who was watching] said, *"He is dead."* Then they [Hsan Htun and his soldiers] all went back to the camp. One of the officers who had left [went to] my wife and said, *"Teacher! Come and look at your husband. I do not know what happened to him?"* Then my wife ran over to look at me and I was bleeding a lot. She was crying and she asked for help from the villagers. My friend D--- was running to me and he carried me to my house. When I arrived, one of the students and my wife cleaned up my blood. At that time Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun was coming back to the village and my friend D--- was trying to hide because he was frightened. I then asked a school committee member to stitch up my open wounds. When the Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun came back [again], he said to the school committee *"What kind of person are you? Who the hell is he [A---]? Do not stitch him up."* Then he kicked me. My wife was crying and he told my wife, *"Why are you crying? We are not asking you to shoot a film. Do you think of yourself as the [Burmese] actress May Thet Khaing?"* He scolded her. Then he said that he would order me back to the camp and my wife was crying and begged him not to order [me back]. Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun said, *"Starting from tomorrow, I do not want to see both of you."* He said that to us and drove us out of B--- village.



**When you say he was hitting you, why did he hit you?**

I do not know the reason why he was hitting me like that. I have been going to work in B--- village for three years, including this year, as my wife has been working as a teacher there. I have never had to deal with a problem like this. I'm always used to getting along with the [soldiers at the] army camps. There is the proverb that says: the fields depend on the island and the island also depends on the fields. Nevertheless, I do not know what is wrong with this army camp. We are trying to stay on the best terms we can with them, and we have been staying here [B--- village] for three or four weeks [already this year]. In the first two weeks, I was also helping teach in the school [in E--- village], as there were not enough teachers. This year I would like to continue to help teach in the school like I did in past years. If they ask for help from me, the villagers and the village head will know the most how I have helped them. While I was teaching, they also came and looked at my teaching [abilities], whether I was teaching in the correct way. Some of them liked my teaching style and they do not want to blame me [for what happened].

**Do you still remember the name of the operations commander (G3)?<sup>224</sup>**

The name of the operations commander (G3) is Ye Htunt.

**Could you also tell me how many times the Battalion Deputy Commander [Hsan Htun] hit you with his gun?**

He hit me with his gun about five times in total. He also hit me many times with his hands and legs, but I want to say it was about six times in total.

**Did you get serious wounds?**

Yes, I got serious wounds. They are all over my face, eyes, left cheek and lip. My upper cheek was hit by the gun, my chest was hit by the gun, my neck was strangled by hands, my waist was hit by the gun and my thighs were kicked. I have suffered from these wounds very much.

**I also heard that you suffered from many open [bleeding] wounds caused by his hitting. Could you tell us about that?**

I have suffered from the open wounds a lot. A medical teacher from Leik Tho [Hospital] has stitched up the open wounds for me and I was able to recover.

**How many places did the medical teacher have to stitch up for you, [because of the] open wounds?**

There were ten places stitched up in total. It could also be more than ten places. I do not remember all of them, as I was suffering from the pain at that time.

**What about your eyes?**

It is said that there are still white cells inside my eyes [cloudy corneas from being hit]. Right now, I am curing it with medicine by myself.

**When he punched you did your eyes go red [haemorrhage]?**

<sup>224</sup> Operations commander (G3) refers to a lieutenant colonel or colonel. In the Tatmadaw they are also known as strategic and/or tactical commanders.



Yes, they did. I can only see [well] with one of my eyes. As I could not afford to pay money for treatment, I am trying to cure my eyes by myself. I asked my friends [how to cure them] and I am trying to cure them that way.

**After you were punched, did they [Hsan Htun and his soldiers] leave you like that? How did you get to the hospital?**

The school committee informed the village head leader from E--- village [where my wife is a teacher]. The village head came to look after me and said, “*You cannot stay like this! We need to send the husband of the teacher [to the hospital] as he has been bleeding for the whole night. There is still blood around his mouth this morning.*” He was going to send me to the hospital as he was worried for me. But he sent me to the Thauk Yay Khant clinic first. When I was at the clinic, my wife went to meet with [Representative] Ko Win Myint at the Parliament [Assembly of the Union<sup>225</sup> in the capital Nay Pyi Taw].<sup>226</sup> She talked about the issue concerning me. Ko Win Myint left to send an NGO [non-governmental organisation] and UNICEF [from Nay Pyi Taw] and he then came back [to Parliament]. He then sent the information [about my eye condition] to the battalion commander from IB [Infantry Battalion] #30 [to arrange medical treatment for me]. As for renting a car, Ko Win Myint himself rented the car for me [to send me to the military medic in the camp]. After we had passed the river and the bridge, [we arrived at camp and] the battalion commander [from IB #30] himself was examining my eyes, which were in serious pain. My eyes were also bleeding. He did not stitch up [my wounds] for me and he wrote down the address of Leik Tho Hospital and he sent me there.

**How long did you have medical treatment at Leik Tho Hospital?**

It was nearly one month at Leik Tho [Hospital].

**Did you arrange [the cost of your medical treatment at the hospital] by yourself?**

It was by my arrangement. As well, the battalion commander in IB #30 himself asked his soldier, Sa Aa Pa, to give me 50,000 kyat (US \$51.60)<sup>227</sup> and some snacks. I did not want to accept it, but it was an officer offering it to me, so I [had to] accept it unwillingly. This money is still in my hands right now.

**Do you feel better now?**

Recently, I have had stomach pain again. The wound in my cheek is also sometimes in pain as it was hit by the gun. I have had to suffer from this pain.

**Is there any special danger from the processes used when you had medical treatment with the doctor?**

According to operations commander (G3)’s examination, he said that my eyes need to have special treatment. However, as I cannot afford to cure [my eyes with special treatment in the hospital], I tried to have the medical treatment by myself [at home].

**When you had the medical treatment, did he [operations commander (G3)] say that he**

<sup>225</sup> The Assembly of the Union is the national legislature of Burma established by the 2008 national constitution.

<sup>226</sup> *Nay Pyi Taw* is the capital city of Burma. In 2005 the military regime moved the capital from Rangoon to a greenfield at its present location, 320 kilometers (200 miles) north of the city. See “[Nay Pyi Taw now less of a ghost town](#),” *Bangkok Post*, December 11<sup>th</sup> 2013.

<sup>227</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the July 8<sup>th</sup> 2014 official market rate of 969 kyat to the US \$1.

**would pay for you to have the medical treatment?**

No, he did not say that he would help me pay to have the medical treatment.

**So, according to what you have said, they are not taking full responsibility [for your injuries]?**

No, they are not taking full responsibility. I also do not want them to help me.

**Is there any [Tatmadaw] officer who will take action on this case?**

The Tatmadaw have said they will take action on this case in words [only], but in reality, they have not taken any action on this case. We also have heard they are having a conversation [about a ceasefire]<sup>228</sup> between the two groups [the Tatmadaw and the KNU (Karen National Union)]. The way that they [Tatmadaw] are taking action [on this incident] is not good enough yet.

**What do you mean by not enough?**

I mean the appropriate punishment. They have [a form of] punishment in their army camp, and we also have the law for the people in the country.

**They have not given punishment according to the law?**

As far as I know, they have not given any punishment yet.

**Do you think you will have difficulty in the future [because of your injuries]?**

There will be many kinds of difficulties in the future. I have to lay in bed [sick]. We are faced with many difficulties. As they [Hsan Htun and his soldiers] have never faced the difficulties [I have], they do not have any concerns. As for me, I am not able to participate in my work [earn a living]. Since I have to suffer with many wounds, I have to rest and stay in bed. My wife is a teacher. I have to stay like that and I have to depend on my wife's salary. As I am suffering like this, I have difficulties and I cannot participate in my work.

**You and your wife are both government staff [teachers] and he [Hsan Htun] is also government staff [a soldier], was that officer [Hsan Htun] not charitable to you?**

Regarding being charitable, he [Hsan Htun] even said that he did not want to see me and my wife teaching in E--- village's nursery school. He drove us out of that school.

**That battalion deputy commander fired you two from the school [in E--- village]? Do the staff not know about this?**

I do not know about that. It may be that he used his power [as a Tatmadaw commander] and did that. I would like to ask why they still need to use their power in this time when our country is a democratic country. I was summoned on the 23<sup>rd</sup> [of July] to go to LIB [Light Infantry Battalion] #124's camp, but I did not go on that day as I was seriously ill. The operations commander (G3) had ordered LIB #124's deputy headquarter commander to call

<sup>228</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma government in Hpa-an, the capital of Kayin State. The exact terms for a long-term peace plan are still under negotiation. For updates on the peace process, see the [KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website](#). For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

me at my mother-in-law's house. I said to him that I could not go [to the camp], as I was not [feeling] well and that I would go tomorrow. According to the deputy headquarter commander of LIB #124 the operations commander (G3) had told him that he would support [me in treating my injuries]. The next morning, on the 24<sup>th</sup> [of July] I arrived at LIB #124's camp and gave the information [about what happened to me]. The operations commander (G3) had asked one of the soldiers to send me to Leik Tho [village]. When I arrived at Leik Tho, I entered the Leik Tho Hospital to show my wounds to medical teacher G---. She then gave me medicine for my eyes and I asked her about money for the cost of the medicine. Medical teacher G--- helped me with everything from the beginning to the end, such as the cost of medicine, stitching me up, as well as for the cost of living and food. She took care of me as her own son. When I went to the office of the operations commander (G3) [to continue to have medical treatment for my wounds], she was worried for me and she herself went with me. When I went there, the vice school headmaster teacher F--- and medical teacher G--- were together with me when I arrived. Once at the operations commander (G3)'s office, the deputy headquarter commander of IB #30 told me, *"You are getting handsome again and your wounds are also getting better."* I told him *"No, I am not. My wounds are getting painful again. I am not lying to you. I do not know what is wrong with my wounds these days. But I hope to be better soon."* I wanted to say to him that I still have a wounded nose, but I did not [say this] as I am not an authoritative person. I was standing there as a civilian and I did not have the right to talk back as I am a victim. I did not have the energy to talk and I was sad. But I stood up and talked to the deputy headquarter commander [IB #30] about my eyes that needed to be shown to a specialist doctor according to the operations commander (G3). He said, *"You do not need to worry. The eyes are like that."* He commiserated with me cheerfully. Then, the operations commander (G3) arrived and he talked to me. He stood up and begged me [for forgiveness]. Then he sat down and begged me. Actually, he does not need to beg me. The person who needs to beg me is the Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun himself. I do not want them to involve only one person in the process to address the issue [and for those discussions to occur] without them [the perpetrator, Commander Hsan Htun]. I want to do this when there are both sides of us [here], because the person who did the thing [violent abuse] was Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun in IB #35. I would like to know how people are going to take action against him when he is here.

#### **What did they do when you were there?**

What I saw is that they were keeping the file [about my incident] in front of me. When I arrived at the office of the operations commander, he showed me the file and I looked at it once and I saw that it did not include the Battalion Deputy Commander Hsan Htun's name. I felt very sorry. Then, I did not continue reading it. I signed my name and then he asked me to provide my fingerprints on the paper. I turned to the next page and I saw that there were only six sentences. After I had read it, I did not want to sign my name [anymore]. However, I had to sign my name, provide my fingerprints and give the number of my ID card, although I did not want to. They said that they would give me 10,000 kyat (US \$10.32), but I did not want to accept it. However, as it was an officer offering it to me and also, I am a civilian, I could not deny it and I had to accept it in a frightened manner.

#### **Finally, what would you like to add?**

Finally, I would like to say that the country has just started on the road to democracy. According to the wounds that I have had to suffer from, from the punching and hitting, our Karen people, especially, have been suffering from oppression, abuse and torture since the past. [Now], we have democracy in our country and we also have hope from it. However, because authoritarian persons are misusing their power, I do not want civilians to suffer from it in the future. Also, I would like to speak to everyone in advance and [recommend that they] analyse the incident by themselves so that they will not find themselves in the same situation and have to suffer from the wounds of these kinds like me, such as hitting and punching, in

the future. We all want peace all over the world and if all of the ethnic people are in unity, the whole world will be in unity. If only one person [works alone], there will be no unity. Only if all of the people are helping one another, will [unity] be manifest. That is all that I would like to say. One more thing that I would like to add is that in Burma's history, a king produced a law, which instructed [people] not to wipe [hands that are dirty] on the lime wall when chewing betel nut.<sup>229</sup> Nevertheless, the king forgot about the law and wiped [his dirty hand] on the lime wall when he was chewing betel nut. A duke saw the king wipe his hand on the wall. When there was an interrogation, no one knew who had done it. Finally, the duke told what he had witnessed: only the king had wiped his index finger on the lime wall. Thus, the index finger of the king had to be cut off. All of the people from students to the elderly have memorised it. I would like to say to the person who has done this to me to analyse and see themselves by looking at that story. In conclusion, I would like to say that the authoritarians [Tatmadaw] still have the power now.

**Thank you so much *nyi lay* [brother].**<sup>230</sup>

Thank you.

Saw A--- (male, 31), B--- village, Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District (Interviewed in August 2013)

#### Source #66

<b>Log #</b>	13-86-T1-I2
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Naw M---, August 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo Division
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Naw M---  <b>Gender:</b> Female  <b>Age:</b> 51  <b>Village:</b>  <b>Religion:</b> Christian  <b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen  <b>Family Statue:</b> Married  <b>Occupation:</b> Teacher  <b>Position:</b>  <b>August 9<sup>th</sup> 2013:</b> Meeting with a person who is in Daw Hpa Khoh [Thandaunggyi] Township.</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>Naw M---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>51 years old.</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b></p>	

<sup>229</sup> Betel nut is the seed from an areca palm tree (*Areca catechu*) which is commonly chewed in Southeast Asia. Chewing betel nut produces a colourful red liquid which leaves a distinctive stain on surfaces.

<sup>230</sup> In Burmese, *nyi lay* is a familiar term of respect toward someone younger than you. Although it translates into 'brother' in English, in Burmese it does not necessarily imply actual familial ties between the 'Brother' and the KHRG researcher who conducted this interview.

Christian

**What is your ethnic group?**

Karen.

**Where do you live?**

Thandaung Town.

**Toungoo District, Daw Hpa Hkoh [Thandaunggyi] Township?**

Yes.

**Do you have your own family?**

Yes

**How many children do you have?**

I have four daughters.

**How old is the eldest one?**

24 years old.

**How old is the youngest one?**

14 years old.

**Is there any difficulty in your family for the [your] livelihood?**

Concerning livelihoods, we are working a little bit on agriculture. We are working a little bit on the tea plantations. We have collected some tea leaves. They are a little bit destroyed and we hope to keep the seeds. We have also planted some dog fruit trees in the plantation. Right now, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)<sup>231</sup> came and worked here and the villagers come to stay here. This plantation has a land title from the Tatmadaw.

**Have people confiscated the plantation?**

We can say that they are confiscating the plantations because the number of the land acres [the amount of acres] is not the same on the land grabbing forms. Then they confiscated the land which has the small acres [land which is not as large]. When they came to measure, they measured only 3 acres of lands. However, because the land is in different places and [there is] no communication between one another, we have to give them our land and it is a kind of confiscation of the land. Our belongings are on the plantation and they [UNICEF workers] destroyed them.

**Regarding your land confiscation, does the perpetrator belong to any organisation?**

In terms of whether the perpetrators who came and confiscated our land and whether they

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<sup>231</sup> The interviewee mistakenly refers to UNHCR, when in actuality it is UNICEF.

belong to any organisations - we know the leaders who are leading the confiscation are Pastor Per Tha, teacher Nay Than, Gher Wah Pa [Gher Wah's father] and the village head.

**What is the name of the Gher Wah Pa?**

The name of Gher Wah Pa is U Ta Pin Shwe Htee.<sup>232</sup>

**What did they do after they confiscated your lands?**

They gave the confiscated land to the villagers from Eastern Day Loh.

**So they are doing development?**

Yes. Some of the villagers who come to live there have their own houses in Thandaung [Town]. But some of them do not have their own land and they even do not get a place to live. We do not agree with that. We are happy to give them the lands to those who do not have a place to live at all. But when it happens like this, we are unhappy about that.

**When they confiscated the land, did that only include your land? Are there any other people's lands which have been confiscated?**

Yes, there are [other people] and some people have already planted trees in their plantations. We love [our land] like our children so if people destroy ours [it], we feel disappointed.

**How many other peoples' lands have they confiscated?**

It also includes the land of the teacher Saw R--- However, as he does not have the land grant he does not dare to talk very much. And it also includes the two land plots of a widow. She has not received anything [in terms of compensation].

**When they confiscate the villagers' lands and they do not give compensation for the lands, are these lands inherited from their parents or have they bought it themselves?**

I do not know whether they bought it or inherited it from their parents. However regarding compensation, I heard that they got compensation but we did not get compensation.

**How many houses are there in that area that people have built?**

There will be about 25 houses in that area.

**Do they have a plan to construct more houses in the future?**

For the plan, people are cutting down the trees in the hot season. I heard that as they [the trees] are on the other people's lands, they are going to stop doing [that].

**The villagers who come to live in that area, do they give the cost of [pay for] the lands that they take?**

One young man said he gives 20,000 kyat (US \$19.33) for building a house.

<sup>232</sup> In Karen, if a man is married and has children, they are usually addressed by the name of their first child followed by 'Pa' which means 'father' in English. In this case therefore, 'Gher Wah' is the name of U Ta Pin Shwe Htee's first child. U Ta Pin Shwe Htee is therefore referred to as 'Gher Wah Pa.'



**Does he give 20,000 kyat to the regional owner, the person who builds the house or the leader?**

They have to give it to the person who is leading [the construction]. They said that it is the cost of travelling. Nevertheless, the person who is talking to me like that [about having to pay 20,000 kyat for building a house] has not been included in the 25 houses [which have already been built in that area].

**Has he submitted it yet?**

Yes, he has.

**And has he given the money?**

Yes, he has given 20,000 kyat.

**What do you think of the houses that they are building?**

The houses are not as good as they have estimated. When they estimate the cost for the toilet they said it will be 100,000 kyat (US \$96.66), however 100,000 kyat is actually not enough for a toilet. By looking at the toilet they built, you will know how the houses they built will look like.

**They also will say that they are going to build up more houses in the future. So right now, which NGO is coming to support?**

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF).

**When they came to build the houses, did they come and meet with the village head?**

Before they took the lands, they did not notify us about anything. We went and saw that our lands have been destroyed and we reported to them. Then they come and worked together with us.

**You also have the land title form; why do you think they confiscated your land?**

When they came and confiscated our land, the persons who were leading [the project] were our two teachers, and the village head and the person who is connected to the land department. They came together when they were working on the land issue.

**Did they also give you your land compensation?**

No, they did not give [it to] me.

**Then what do they tell you about the future?**

They did not tell me anything about the future. They designated the boundaries of our land that we have left. However, they are not the same as before. There are many plants that we planted in the lands where the houses are being built meaning they all are destroyed and we are upset with that.

**You said you have a land title form, when did they start providing the land title forms?**

In 2004. And the next time they are going to conduct it is in 2007. But they don't know exactly when they are going to do it again. We have our land grabbing forms and if they



accept it we will submit it.

**Do they also say that they are going to build more houses in 2007?**

Yes, they said that they are going to construct buildings in 2007. Nevertheless, the situation of the country is not stable yet. There are some people who come and measure land.

**When they come and measure the land that they are going to build their houses [on], is there any time where they have discussions with the owners of the land?**

There is no time for discussion with us. We just know that they are coming and measuring the lands. We know that we have our own land title forms and we follow the case later.

**When you try to follow your land [case] later, do they give back some of your land?**

Yes, they gave me back some of the land.

**The other people also got back [their land]?**

No, they did not give [it all] back.

**What is your opinion? How will the owners who have left their land face the people who are building their houses and living on their lands? There are also some plantations, is it alright for you to work on your land? Will it be alright?**

Sometimes, I think that the plants will not grow very well as people are living close to them. As they are living with their children, their children might also destroy the plantations. The plantation also will die and as they are living around there, the environment will also be dirty. We are not happy about that because it causes all kinds of obstacles for us.

**I cannot hear clearly**

Regarding the development project, I think if we are doing it, we need to consider it very carefully to benefit those who will agree with the project. It should not be one which will impact the people. We can see that there are many people conducting development projects related to UN work. Some development projects are good while some have negative results because of laziness. Villagers will receive those kinds of bad impacts if the project is completed with laziness. So if we do it, we need to look at everything and the people who agree with the projects will have the real advantages. The people who are working on the development projects need to be eager for real development. If we look at the recent situation, we are disturbed by one another. We, the Karen people are living with one heart [unity] and this is also really important. Therefore, we should not be committing abuses on each other which will separate us from one another.

**Thank you**

Thank you.

Naw M---, (female, 51), Thandaung Town  
Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District, (Interview in August 2013)

**Source #67**

**Log #**

13-98-P1

<b>Title</b>	Doplaya Photo Notes: Kawkareik, September-October 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village - Kawkareik Township, Doplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Date: September 23<sup>rd</sup> 2013</b>  <b>Location of photo taken:</b> A--- village - Kawkareik Township  This photo is of A--- village students. There were few enrolments [at school] and not many students last year [2012] because of the unstable situation and they were always scared of the fighting [from the] State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The SPDC reduced the [amount of] military conflicts this year. Therefore many students tried to come and study at school [this year].</p>	

**Source #68**

<b>Log #</b>	13-99-P1
<b>Title</b>	Doplaya Photo Notes: Kawkareik Township, Received in October 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Doplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><i>[These photo notes are drawn from a longer document providing details for photographs taken in Doplaya District in October 2013. The other notes were not relevant to land confiscation in Myanmar since December 2012 and have been omitted for brevity.]</i></p> <p><b>Photo #: 0307</b>  This is Ma C--- and her friend Ma P---. They live in Yangon. They arrived in the countryside and we can see them in Meh Naw Aa village. We saw them and we took photos of them. Both Ma C--- and Ma P--- are Burmese. They cannot speak Karen. Since the [Myanmar] government came to check on the process of the road construction they [government officials] followed them. Ma C---, she said she has three siblings; two females and one male. One male is the youngest and the oldest female is named Ma C---. I do not know the names of her younger brother and younger sister. Her younger sister has already gotten married and her youngest brother is not married yet. She said she cannot work and there is not enough space in her village. As for her youngest brother, he repairs bicycles and repairs broken motorbikes. Their mother and father are old. Ma C--- is 31 years old. She has no work in the village and she came to the countryside following the person who built the road, and the people who came to check on the bridge. The person in charge of the construction and oversees the construction is U Aung Win. He gets 30,000 kyat (US \$29.00) per month. He said there is no work in the city and so he followed the others and people gave him 30,000 kyat. U Aung Win is the manager.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0304, 0305</b>  We see U Aung Win in Meh Naw Aa village. Teacher Hkaw Eh Hklay discusses with him about the construction of the road and bridge. He is the manager. He talks about the cost of his work 400,000,000 kyat (US \$386,280.10). U Aung win has to build the road and it will take many months. He has to build the bridge and road until it is [completely] done. The [Myanmar] government asked him to build 12 roads and three big bridges. The government asks him to build the road while there is no civil war. At present, it is peaceful and we do not know what will happen in the future years. After they have built the road and bridges, if there is peace, it makes it easier for the villagers to work and earn a living. U Aung Win said that he was a major in the Tatmadaw in the past and now he said that he is not [part of the Tatmadaw anymore]. [The photo record which we have taken is not showing us interviewing</p>	

him. It is the teacher [Hkaw Eh Hklay] interviewing him. We took photos and we wrote about him.

Photo Notes written by a KHRG Researcher,  
Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District, (Received in October 2013)

#### Source #69

<b>Log #</b>	13-100-P1
<b>Title</b>	Photo Note: Dooplaya District, Received October 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>On October 4<sup>th</sup> 2013 at 9am, I met with Naw A--- who I questioned about the elephantiasis disease. She said that this medicine must be taken. They threatened that if people do not take it, they will be punished. Therefore, she took this medicine. She also has high blood pressure, an abscess on her right arm, mumps on the left side of her cheek and she cannot open her mouth. At present, her high blood pressure is becoming worse. Photo record - (KHRG)</p> <p>On October 4<sup>th</sup> 2013 at 10.30am, I met with A--- villager Daw B---and I questioned her about the elephantiasis vaccine and I recorded her voice. This grandmother is about 60 years old and she is Pwo Karen. "This medicine is a must [essential] and I take this medicine. I sat in front of the nurse she asked me to open my mouth. She herself put the medicine together with water into my mouth. Then she asked to open my mouth again because she was afraid that I would not swallow the medicine." Daw B--- has six children and three grandchildren. She also told the nurse that she has high blood pressure. "The nurse said it did not matter and she asked me to take the medicine. Now I have some itchy [rash] on my body."</p>	

#### Source #70

<b>Log #</b>	13-100-T3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Interview: Daw A---, June 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Research area:</b> Dooplaya District</p> <p><b>Name:</b> Daw A---</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Buddhist</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Interview Date:</b> June 30<sup>th</sup> 2013</p> <p><b>Location:</b> A--- village</p> <p>We [have] come to A--- village. We [have] come and met with the government medical staff in A---village. The date is June 30<sup>th</sup> 2013. Her name is Daw A---. I [have] come and [I will]</p>	

ask her about the situation.

**I ask about the elephantiasis vaccination.**

Elephantiasis vaccination?

**What is your name?**

Daw A---.

**How old are you?**

39.

**Education?**

Standard 10. B--- School.

**School from where?**

A--- [village].

**What is your occupation?**

Midwife.

**Do you have a family?**

Yes.

**How many children do you have?**

Three children.

**What is the name of your oldest child?**

B---.

**Male or female?**

Saw B--- [male].

**What is the name of the other one?**

C---.

**Age?**

One year old.

**What is your responsibility in the village?**

Midwife.

**Ethnicity?**

Karen.

**Religion?**

Buddhist.

**How many years have you been working as a midwife?**

Since December 1999 until now.

**So 14 years?**

Yes. I have been working as a government employee for 14 years.

**Which government?**

The Burmese [Myanmar] government.

**Whose government? Thein Sein's government?**

Yes. Thein Sein's government.

**Which township are you from?**

Kya In Seik Kyi Township [based on Myanmar government boundaries] or Kawkareik [based on KNU boundaries].

**How about the village tract?**

A Zin [Chaung Pya] village tract.

**As you are the midwife of A--- village, how many villages do you have to take responsibility for?**

Now it is the RHC [Rural Health Clinic that] gives permission [to work in different villages]. So the A--- [village] sub-centre expand out from this centre now. Here are some villages which are included under the RHC. These villages are A---, C---, D---, and E---. Four villages.

**Can you tell me about RHC?**

A--- was the sub-centre. Not the centre. And later I asked for permission from the authorities to become a centre and it has now become a centre. Now, the sub-centres are F--- sub-centre health centre, G--- sub-centre health centre, H--- sub-centre health centre, and I--- sub-centre health centre. Those sub-centre health centres are under the A--- health centre. Now, A--- is the main [health centre].

**So do you have to take charge of those four villages?**

Yes. I have to take charge of those four villages.

**So, who gave you this responsibility?**

The Myanmar government.

**Can you tell me the name of the head of that ministry?**

You mean the Health Ministry?

**Yes. Can you tell me the name?**

I do not know.

**Tell me the date when you were hired.**

December 1<sup>st</sup> 1999.

**Did you become a midwife because you wanted to yourself or because of your villagers wanted you to?**

At first, people asked me to attend that [medical] training and I was not that interested. But when I looked at the situation of my place [village], none of the medical staff could come and live here. So, as this is my place and my people, I attended the training and I have taken care of my people.

**Where did you attend [the training]?**

Hpa-An.

**What is the name of your trainer?**

Sister Daw D---

**On what date did you attend the training?**

January 1<sup>st</sup> 1998.

**How many trainers?**

Two.

**Who are they?**

Daw E---

**What trainings did they give you?**

As we attended the midwife training, we were trained to deliver babies.

**What diseases are seen commonly here?**

Malaria. Mostly malaria.

**Who ordered you to come back and work in your village?**

After the training, the Ministry of Health employed me and ordered me to do this.

**What is the name of the person from the Ministry of Health who employed you?**

I do not know the current one. I know the person from the past. When we attend the training,

that person was Chin ethnicity. I do not remember the name.

**How about the date?**

The date that I was employed here? December 1<sup>st</sup> 1999.

**You had to come and work in A--- [village]?**

Yes in A--- [village].

**Which township is A--- [village] in?**

Kya In Seik Kyi Township. Township or Division?

**Division.**

Dooplaya Division.

**What do you do to help here?**

I look after pregnant women, infants and mothers. I give vaccinations to the children to protect them from the diseases. To be able to give birth easily [without problems], the pregnant women have to come to us for antenatal care once a week, once a fortnight, once a week, and then when they are at the advanced stage of the pregnancy, we give them a pregnancy tonic. When there are the [disease] eradication [campaigns], we have to give prevention vaccinations. For example, the polio vaccination.

**Where do you get the vaccinations from?**

The government.

**Which government?**

The Burmese [Myanmar] government.

**Are there enough vaccinations for the civilians [in your village]?**

Not enough. They do not even cover half [of the people here] sometimes. They cannot give enough of them yet. Since the start of U Thein Sein's government, there has been a good supply of vaccinations.

**Does the Thein Sein government give enough vaccinations? What do they do for pregnant women during their pregnancy? How do they arrange for vaccinations?**

Vaccinations that we have to give? When the woman get pregnant they come to us for antenatal care.... [Recording unclear]

**How about for malaria?**

For malaria, there is not enough [care]. Here there are many organisations that work for malaria. Lots of sub-departments. Their help is not enough. The vaccinations are given with a quota. Only one box of vaccinations is given every one or two months as a quota. There are 25 cards in a box. That's not enough. Each month there are more than 25 patients.

**In which sector do you work?**



The Myanmar government's sector. Other organisations do not help. The help comes from the [Myanmar] government.

**What do they call it?**

The Ministry of Health.

**What kind of sector?**

NGOs come into Myanmar. But they do not help. NGOs will come tomorrow.

**Which NGO will come tomorrow?**

Maybe MAP [Migrants Assistance Programme Foundation].

**What is MAP?**

I do not know. I have not met with MAP yet. I have to call them today.

**What are they doing here?**

They come to check for malaria. They check the villagers. Only for malaria.

**Have you seen any other diseases except for malaria in the village?**

There are [other] diseases but they are do not happen very often. Mostly it is malaria. There are many other diseases like TB and diseases like hypertension which are not chronic diseases.

**As it is a remote area here where people do not have mosquito nets, who gives [people] the mosquito nets? What kinds of vaccinations are given for what kinds of diseases?**

In A---, Tharamu Naw Naw's group [a local healthcare NGO] provide the mosquito nets. There are many vaccinations here. I will not talk about the vaccinations for the children. Currently we have the elephantiasis vaccination.

**When was it first given?**

This September.

**Which day?**

The vaccination arrived to us on [September] 7<sup>th</sup>. We had to start giving the vaccination on [September] 9<sup>th</sup>. Our situation is not the same as in the city. The villages are far from each other. Actually, the vaccination has to be given after 4pm. But as we are not free [to travel], we start giving it at 1pm.

**Where did you get it?**

Got it from Kya In Seik Kyi Township Office.

**Did you go by yourself?**

No. My senior went.

**What is her name?**

Daw F---.

**What is her position?**

LHV [Lady Head Visitor]. Currently, she is in A--- [village]. Her responsibility is in A--- and she is in A---. Now she has gone away for training.

**Who employed her?**

The government.

**Which government?**

The Myanmar government.

**Which Myanmar government?**

Thein Sein's government.

**Why does she want to help the region?**

Of course she wants to because she is Poe Karen. Not Burmese [Bamar] or Mon.

**Where does she get the medicine from?**

She takes it from the [Myanmar] government as well. From the same place.

**When you have been helping with the civilians' health, have you had any problems with the medicine? If you have, please can you tell me about it?**

Sometimes there is no medicine for the patient. The disease and medicines do not match. The medicines [we have] are not for serious diseases but only for minor diseases.

**What do you think about the elephantiasis vaccination?<sup>233</sup>**

I have not seen the elephantiasis vaccination here before. It started after the project began in Myanmar. I have never seen it like this in my 14 years of experience. In my opinion, I see that they [Myanmar government] giving the vaccines [pills] like this is good. This is for civilians' sake. If people get that [lymphatic filariasis] disease, their life will not be normal. I see this [treatment] is good. Some people criticise it. I do not know where the rumours come from. I have heard what people have said and I inquired about the information but it was nothing. Some people said that the vaccination come from India. The vaccination is in my hand. It is not from India, it comes from France.

**How do you know that it comes from France?**

I read the label.

**How is the label?**

<sup>233</sup> Throughout the interview both Daw A--- and the KHRG researcher refer to the elephantiasis medicine as a vaccination. Wider research suggests that the treatment was an oral pill given to villagers to eradicate potential elephantiasis.

It has which country is it made by written on the label. I can read it and I know where it is from.

**How many houses are there in A--- village?**

Over 200 houses.

**Over how many?**

236 houses.

**Have you given the elephantiasis vaccination to many people?**

I have not given it to everyone; only a few will be left.

**Why do you give the vaccination?**

We do as we are ordered to. They order us to [administer] how many [vaccinations] or who we have to give the vaccination to. For example, we have to give vaccinations to children above 2 years old. We cannot give [this] vaccination [treatment] to pregnant women, chronically ill patients, and the patients whose kidneys are not good. We give the vaccination [treatment] to the people who are healthy like us. They give orders as to how much [of the vaccination] we have to give for two to five year olds, six to 14 year olds and children above 14 years old.. Like this.

**How many people have you given the vaccination to?**

Over 1,000 people. If there are people who have not taken the vaccination, there are only 10 or 20 people left. Here there are more than 1,000 people in A---.

**How about the other places that you take responsibility for?**

I went to give vaccinations in D--- [village] and 60 people received the vaccination there. 24 people in C--- [village] received the vaccination. For E--- [village], we did not give [the vaccination] because the rumour had spread. Now we rest for a while. If we go there people kill us. We cannot do anything. We will go insane. We dare not to do that. We are checking the situation. If the situation is not like the rumours, we will go to give the vaccination.

**Can you tell me how you heard about the rumours?**

We had the responsibility to give the vaccination [pill] and we went to give it village-by-village and we did not know about the [rumours] situation. When we came back, we heard that people from Bangkok phoned their family and told them not to take the vaccination [pill]. 'If the people take the elephantiasis vaccination [pill], they will die' [said the people from Bangkok]. For children, they will die within two months. For adult, they will die within three months. I felt sad and inquired about the information. The situation is that I was even threatened. I feel sad because people will come and kill me. The government gave me [this] vaccination [pill]. I am a government staff. It is not possible for me to not go give the vaccination [pill]. I take the [Myanmar] government's salary. I have to go to the villages. I go to give it as I have been ordered to and as written in the book. We give vaccinations but people said that if people take that vaccination, they will die. We do not know. Later, I phoned my senior who is in training. She did not hear anything.. Here there are lots of organisations. People said that if people die because of the vaccination [pill], they will kill the midwife. I am afraid. I have to inquire [further about] the case. The cause was the rumour

from the phone calls from Bangkok and then it spread.

**What is your senior's name?**

Daw F---.

**Where does the vaccination come from?**

From France.

**Can the civilians not take it?**

We do not force them. We do not force them so it is possible not to take it. If they want to, they can take it. We have responsibility to give it to every civilian. I have been working here for 14 years. We cannot force them. When we have to give the vaccination [pill] and if the people do not come, we tell them about the kinds of diseases the children could get. But it is okay if they do not want to take [the treatment]. We do not force. We give the vaccination [pill] and if they do not come [to be treated], it is done then.

**Can you tell me how the vaccination problem has happened?**

I do not know. I ask people about the cases. People from Hpa-An called me and I phoned to the state level. They do not know anything. Later, I heard that people have died at the [Thai] border. I inquired about it. I phoned to Myawaddy and Pa Lu but nothing had happened. Nothing had happened here. If something had happened here then we would know about it as this is our place. And later, it was not at the [Thai] border, but in Thar Ma Nya [Town]. And the people called their parents who live in Thar Ma Nya [Town] but nothing had happened there.

**Have you heard about the problem happening in the places where you gave the vaccination?**

No. I have not heard anything.

**Is it true that people who take the elephantiasis vaccination vomit and get dizzy?**

Yes. The vaccination should be taken after a meal. If there is no food in the stomach and you take the vaccination and do a lot of movement, the person can get dizzy. So we give the vaccination in the evening. People will sleep after taking the vaccination. So, we give the vaccination [in the evening time] because of the situation in our region and that is why people get dizzy. People who move around a lot [after taking the vaccination] may even vomit.

**When you give the elephantiasis vaccine, do you examine whether there are any people with the elephantiasis disease in the region first and later give the vaccination?**

No. This is prevention. It is not that we are giving [treatment] to the people who have the disease. We give the vaccination to protect everyone. We do not examine people.

**Have you done research on how much of the vaccine you have to give to civilians?**

The instruction have already come for how much we have to give to two to five year olds, six to 14 year olds, and children above 14 years old, and we give the vaccination according to

the instructions.

**Is it possible not to take it?**

In my opinion, it is not possible. Because we try to protect the whole village and the disease can spread to other people. We do not force people to take the vaccination. We tell them to come take the vaccination. There are some people who do not come take the vaccination. We hope that everyone will take the vaccination [pill] because it is not that there are no mosquitos here. Here is a place where mosquitos [do in fact] exist. There is no research on the mosquitos and we do not know whether [the mosquitos] here are the Aedes mosquitos, Anopheles mosquitos, or Johnbelkinia mosquitos. So that, for example, if someone has the [lymphatic filariasis] disease, and do not have the symptoms and are bitten by a mosquito, and that mosquito goes and bites another person - that person will get the disease from the first person. In my opinion, it is better to give [the treatment to] everyone.

**How do you give the vaccination? Do you go by yourself or do you give the vaccinations to the section leaders or village tract leaders?**

I give it by myself. I do not give it to anyone else. I give the vaccination by myself.

**Why does the vomiting occur?**

It is because of the side-effects of the vaccination. The vaccination can make people dizzy. This is just the side-effect of the vaccination.

**If the people who do not have the elephantiasis disease take the vaccination, are there any side-effects?**

No, because this is a vaccination that does not have side-effects. The side-effects are not written [on the label].

**What would you think if the [Myanmar] government did not give the vaccination to the civilians?**

If the [Myanmar] government did not give it, if there is a disease, the civilians would get the disease.

**How many people have got the elephantiasis disease in A---?**

Nobody. It happened in F--- and C--- during the Kaw Thoo Lei time [the KNU time; in 2011 before the preliminary ceasefire agreement], in Paw Taw Mu hospital, Daw G--- found out that she had the elephantiasis disease. Now in F---, Naw H's mum has got the disease. In our neighbourhood, our A--- village, the disease has not been found yet.

**Currently, how many people have been found to have the disease?**

Two people.

**How did you know and where did you check these two people?**

Naw G's mum was checked in Umphang [District].

**From Myanmar?**

No.

**How about later on when you took on the responsibility in the region? Anyone?**

Nobody got the disease.

**Nobody; and why do you give the vaccination?**

I thought that when these two people had got the disease and that Daw [G---] had not been treated well. She had not taken the vaccination until the virus had gone. The disease could spread [to other people] from her. For Daw G---'s mum, she went to take the vaccination in the camp and the treatment course was finished. The disease can still be spread through that aunty [Daw G---] but if the people take the preventative vaccination, they will have resistance to the disease so there will be no disease.

**The disease does not happen here, you give the vaccination, and what do you think about that?**

Nothing like that happened here but prevention is better than curing.

**Have you examined the situation of the people that you gave the vaccination to?**

The situation of their health? We do not have to check. No, I do not.

**Why do not you examine?**

There are lots of people. For example, if one is sick and gets malaria, I do not give them elephantiasis vaccination. If someone gets dizzy and appears sick, we do not give them the vaccination. We give the vaccination to everyone who is healthy.

**How about people who are on a trip?**

We do not give them it.

**As you are a midwife [working] for the Thein Sein government, why do you think that the vaccination has to be given in A--- village?**

I cannot tell whether there is no disease here. We cannot see the disease with our eyes. I cannot know myself whether I have the disease or not.

**Have you examined [the villagers]?**

We cannot examine them here. We have to go to the city. We do not have the equipment to examine them.

**You do not have any equipment; why do you give the vaccination?**

Because people order us to give the vaccination.

**Do you have to do everything that they order?**

We have to do as we are told [because] we take their salary.

**How do you take the salary?**

Do you mean how much?

**In which way and how much? Why take the salary?**

The [Myanmar] government employed me and they give me a salary.

**How much?**

Currently, it is 174,000 kyats.

**For one month?**

174,000 kyats for month.

**Before you take the salary, do you have the objective that you will help the development of your civilians?**

I care for my civilians. If I did not, I would not even attend the training. I was not going to work as a [Myanmar] government employee. I had many job opportunities. But I care for my civilians. None of the health workers can live here in the long term. So, I care for my civilians and I work as a [Myanmar] government employee.

**If there were no salary, would you still work?**

Even [if I got] no salary, I would work. I work for society.

**Have you ever thought about if the vaccinations are not good for the civilians?**

I have not thought about it. If the order comes, we do it.

**So you have to do as you are ordered to. Where do the orders come from?**

The orders from the Ministry of Health.

**Who is the authority [leader] of the Ministry of Health?**

I do not [know] the name.

**Where do you get the vaccinations from in practice?**

As we are in the Kya In Seik Kyi Township, we have to get it from the Township Office.

**Township Office is where?**

The Township office in Kya In Seik Kyi.

**What is the name of the officer in charge of healthcare?**

In charge or the highest positioned health worker? I do not know the name. Now there is a new one.

**Now you have heard about the situation and how do you think about it?**

I have no idea. Probably, people who are jealous of our work attack us or it has really happened. When I inquire about it, I hear that it has not happened. So, there must be someone somewhere who causes the rumours.

**How did you hear that?**

I have not heard anything.

**So, is the work good or bad?**

Which work? The work of giving preventative vaccinations?

I see as it is good.

**Do you examine everyone?**

No. How can we know [whether they have the disease]? Their legs are not getting bigger. We cannot see the symptoms.

**If you do not know, why do you give the vaccination?**

I told you. The order comes from the authorities. It is impossible to if the order does not come. We have to do as we are ordered to do.

**Why is it impossible?**

Because I am a [Myanmar] government employee. I work under the Ministry of the Health. If we do not do as we are ordered to do, it would be like we are against them.

**So you do as you are ordered to do by the authorities. You do not examine them. If**



**something happens, who will take the responsibility?**

I told the civilians that if something happens, they should contact us. And then, we have to contact the Kya In Seik Kyi Township Office. We cannot say who will take responsibility and solve the problem.

**Do they order you as to how to solve the problem?**

They do not order anything [like that].

**How do you think about the kind of work you are doing now?**

I work for the civilians.

**So you work for the civilians and if someone who took the vaccination vomits and dies, who will take responsibility?**

If people come to take the vaccination and get itchy and if we find allergic symptoms, we can cure them and give them the medicine. If it is very serious we have to hand them over to the township level. The township level will solve it.

**Who will take responsibility for the money that [that treatment] costs?**

We do not know. There is no help and we cannot say.

**So do you have to use your own money?**

I do not use my own money. The patients have to use their money.

**Are the health workers who help the civilians experts?**

I do not think that I am an expert myself. I just help as much as I possibly can.

**Why do you want to do this job?**

I want to help my civilians. I love my civilians. So I work.

**You want to help your civilians. Now, you give vaccinations to someone and if there are consequences that happen to you, what will you do?**

So, I have to inform the leaders from Hpa-An. We all have to solve the problem together.

**Who will pay for the cost then?**

I cannot say. It has not happened yet and I do not know who will pay.

**As you said before, who has misunderstood you?**

The rumours have spread and there are some civilians who are knowledgeable and some who are not. People who are knowledgeable will think that our work is good. And for the people who are not knowledgeable, when the rumours spread like this they will think that we gave them a poisonous vaccination. I am the one who gave the vaccination and they will wrongly think that I gave them a poisonous vaccination. So, people will come to kill me. I have to be concerned for my security.

**How do you think about that you gave vaccinations to the civilians?**

I gave the vaccinations and I think that this is good. I do not think that this is bad.

**How do people think about that?**

When they took the vaccination, they will think that this is good. After they heard the rumours like this they doubt [that the vaccination is good]. For example, if I were not a health worker but a civilian who is not educated, and if I received the vaccination and heard that people who took the vaccination have died, then I would doubt it as well. I can understand them. I would doubt it as well.

**Has this happen like this here?**

Not in the area that I take responsibility for.

**If it happens, what will you do?**

I would have to inform my seniors.

**Who will take responsibility for the costs?**

I told you that I do not know.

**If you do not know, how many medical staff are there in your region?**

The government medical staff are me, F---, H---, I---, Naw J---, and K---. In total there are six people.

**In this region?**

In A--- [village] and A Zin [Chaung Pya village tract].

**How many villages does K--- take responsibility for?**

Four or five villages.

**How about another one?**

Naw J---.

[Silence for some time] [Mute for a while and start again]

I---.

**In J--- [village]?**

Yes J--- [village]. Five villages.

**Which villages?**

J---, K---, L---, M---, and N--- [villages].

**Who take responsibility for these places?**

I---.

**Where does she live?**

The place she lives?

**Her village.**

O--- [village].

**Who sends her there?**

She goes by herself. As the government employ her and she has to go by herself.

**Which government?**

The Myanmar government employ her and when the order is given the staff have to go.

**Which government?**

Thein Sein's government.

**What is the name of your minster who gives the order and where does he live?**

He lives in Nay Pyi Taw.

**How do they come?**

After they finished the training, they take responsibility for the areas that are vacant. For A---

[village] there are no staff yet and the government employ them. They are promoted from the Kya In Seik Kyi office.

**From which village?**

O--- [village].

(Mute)

#### Source #71

<b>Log #</b>	13-108-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Daw A---, August 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Thaton Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>How do people address you, aunty?</b></p> <p>Daw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 52 years.</p> <p><b>Do you live in A--- village?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Is A--- village situated in a village tract? In A--- village tract?</b></p> <p>Yes, they call it A--- village tract.</p> <p><b>How about the township?</b></p> <p>It is in Thaton.</p> <p><b>How about district?</b></p> <p>I do not know.</p> <p><b>It is called Thaton district?</b></p> <p>Yes, it is.</p> <p><b>How about your religion?</b></p> <p>Buddhist.</p> <p><b>How about your work?</b></p> <p>I am village head and I do not have any other job.</p> <p><b>Village head from Burma/Myanmar side or Karen side?</b></p>	

Both sides.

**Do you have family?**

Yes.

**How many children do you have?**

I have two children. Three grandchild.

**How old is your eldest son?**

28.

**Youngest?**

25.

**As a village head, were you appointed by the Burma/Myanmar government or the KNU [Karen National Union] organisation?**

Appointed by the villagers.

**How long have you been in the village head position? Could you remember the date or the month?**

It has been 11 years already.

**You have been a village head for 11 years and could share your experience with us?**

Experience, in the past we did not have time to rest. There are Burmese and Karen [groups]. We had to go to Burmese and Karen [groups].

**Did you face any problem?**

We had in the past.

**What [problems] did you have?**

Burmese [soldiers] come to us. They said their soldier had deserted and we found them in the school. In that year, I had just taken the [village head] position. We, four or five people, went there to meet him. Hpa Tee Tha Ya<sup>234</sup> was there as well. And I asked him [the Burmese soldier], "will you stay with us or go back to your people [military]? He replied to me that he does not dare to go back; if he goes back people [the other soldiers or his commander] will kill him. And he said he will stay in Kaw Thoo Lei<sup>235</sup> and he asked to be sent there [Kaw Thoo Lei]. Hpa Tee Tha Ya was with us and we gave [the deserter] to him. And he took him. On the same day, Burmese soldiers [Tatmadaw] arrived [in the village]. They [the Tatmadaw soldiers] asked us to prepare food parcels [for us] to go to find him [the deserter]. We did not dare to mention [about the deserter] when we met them. And they demanded villagers from each village; altogether four, five, ten people and 20 people to find him in different places. They could not find him when they came back and they [the Tatmadaw soldiers] trusted

<sup>234</sup> KHRG cannot confirm the official position of this individual.

<sup>235</sup> The term *Kaw Thoo Lei* refers to Karen State as demarcated by the Karen National Union (KNU), but the exact meaning and etymology is disputed; see: Jonathan Falla. *True Love and Bartholomew: Rebels on the Burmese Border*, Cambridge University Press: 1991.

[believed] that [the villagers could not find him]. And he asked [the villagers] around the village and there are many people in the village and maybe someone told them [about the deserter]. I did not know and they sent someone to call me [to go meet them]. When I got there, they said “you, village head, cheated me, you saw a soldier and you did not send [him] back to me and you sent him to the KNU.” And I replied, “I did not know.” And I carefully listened to what he was saying. And he [the soldier] said, “it was your villager who sent him [the deserter to the KNU].” And when I heard what he said about my villager, I realised that the person who told him about the story did not use my name. I can say that. And I replied to him, “I did not know about him [the deserter] because only the villagers saw him and they did not tell me about it. And there were one or two Phyi Thu Sit [militia soldiers] from Pa Ngweh Klah [that came together with the Burmese soldier]. I told them that “only the villagers knew and they did not tell me about it and I did not know” and they replied, “yes, you are right”. They came [to and from the village] and called for us often and they did not say anything special [to follow up on the case]. We were back and forth for many times and they did not say anything special. The secret did not spread out and we thought that we will just keep staying like that. We did not see that they continued asking that [for information on the deserter]. Later on, they came back again.

**The same Burmese soldier group [Tatmadaw]?**

Yes, I was in the monastery getting prayer beads when they came. I can't remember if it was in *Wa Goung* or *Tawthalin* month. It was a full moon. They called me and I came down with prayer beads after I bowed to the ground in front of the pagoda. And they followed me with guns. I was walking with them and I was extremely anxious and I was reciting prayers in my head. And they [some of them] were waiting for me at M---'s house. And when I arrived at the front of M---'s house, they asked me, “Oh mom, did you go to the monastery and improve your merit?” “Yes”, I replied. He [the Tatmadaw officer] did not ask me anything else. And they were going back via the monastery and I was following them [as she was going back to the monastery]. The surrounding people were looking at me and thought that the Burmese soldiers [Tatmadaw] were taking me [somewhere]. And I went up to the monastery and told them [the people who were looking at her] that the Burmese soldiers did not take me. And they did not ask me anything.

**Do you have any other serious things that you have faced or experienced since you took the village head position?**

[There] Have [been] many steps. I just can't remember.

**Did you remember the Tatmadaw group battalion number that that this soldier deserted from?**

No, I can't remember.

**How about his commander's name?**

No, I can't remember. I did not dare to even look at his face.

**How about now? Do Burmese soldiers [Tatmadaw] reach your village?**

Yes, they do.

**Do they have their military camp in your village?**

No they do not. They stay at the monastery.

**So they are still coming?**

Yes.

**Do you know which soldiers [battalion] come to your village?**

The last group of soldiers that just left lately was [Battalion] #558. They always come. Many groups [Tatmadaw battalions] come.

**Was that the Light Infantry Battalion [LIB] or Infantry Battalion [IB]?**

It was MOC [Military Operation Command] #13.

**When did they go back? Was it a long time ago?**

It was this month.

**Can you remember the day?**

At the end of *Tawthalin* month maybe. When I was improving my merit [at the monastery] they had already left. I do not know on which date. It might have been on full moon [number] 13.

**It was on *Tawthalin* [number] 13?**

Yes.

**When did the new [Tatmadaw] group come in?**

It has been four days [already] including this afternoon.

**So it was on English month number ten?**

Yes. They slept in A--- [village] for two nights and they now are in C--- [village].

**How about the current group [that are presently here]? Their battalion number?**

It is #559.

**Do you know their commander's name, aunty?**

Their commander's name is Thein Htike Oo.

**Is he battalion commander?**

Yes, he is. The deputy battalion commander is U Myo Hla. He lives in Tat Paung.

**The previous military group and the current group, what do they do when they come here? What do they say? How do they behave towards the local civilians? Anything different?**

Nothing different. While [LIB] #558 was here, they requested to go to B--- [village]. The soldiers [KNU] here did not allow them to go.

**KNU soldiers?**

Yes, our KNU soldiers did not allow them to go. They [the KNU soldiers] told us like that but they said that they will go. Their superior leaders asked them to go. I told them not to go and I said they will shoot you if you go. I told them [the Tatmadaw] that we were told openly that they will get shot if they go. And they replied to me that “mom, there is a ceasefire.” And I replied that even though [there is a ceasefire] they do not allow you to go and they will shoot you if you go. I told them that they [already] allowed you to come this far to M--- only so that they [KNU soldiers] asked us to stop you. And he replied to me that “mom, do not stop [us]” and I replied, “I am not stopping you.” I told him [the Tatmadaw officer] that “for me, I am not stopping you from going anywhere that you want to go. There are people [KNU soldiers] who stop you from going, that is why I am telling you, son.” And he replied to me that [I should] “understand for us as well.” And I replied they [KNU soldiers] understand you this far only. I told him, “you can eat and sleep, what is the problem? You will get tired even if you go.” And he replied to me that “it is not like that, it is the order from the superior.” I could not stop him. They were getting ready and said “I need to go.” And I told him, “son, go if you want to as I cannot stop you.” And he asked me to provide a sentry. And I replied, “no, I am not giving you a sentry.” He asked me to go and I replied that “I am not going either, I do not dare to die yet”. I told him that “it is surely going to happen [you would be shot] if you go.” I told them that “I was told to tell you not to go, they [the KNU soldiers] are waiting for you, you will surely get shot if you go.” And he called on the phone to Pa Ngweh Klah [army] base to Yay Wine to pass it [the information] on to the battalion commander [of the Tatmadaw military camp or base]. He was talking in front of me. He said [during his conversation with Yay Wine] that “there is an obstacle on the way that we are supposed to go” and he [Yay Wine] replied “why?” And he [the officer who was with the village head] replied that “it is OK if I can’t stop, if anything happened, do not blame him.” He was talking in front of me. And he was told to wait and talk to the mother of the village [village head] and discuss, and go if it is OK. And they calmed down. And they requested to go to Noh Ta La Aw. And I told Hpoh Chit Thu that he had told me “do not allow them to come.” And he said, “understand me, I am going to Noh Ta La Aw only and I will come back.” And he said “you do not allow us to go to either B--- or D--- [village]; let us go to D--- [village]. My older sister has invited me [to go].” Our KNU told us that you are only allowed to go for 50 yards. And I told them that maybe your leaders lied to the leaders from this [KNU] side. And he replied, “I do not know either. For us, it is the order from our superior. I do not understand that and I do not know how the leaders did it [have agreement with KNU]. They did [the agreement] on their own and I also do not understand it anymore”.

### **He told you like that?**

He told us like that. I could not tell him because it was the order from the leader. He told me that he came because it is the order from the superior. Otherwise, why would he come here. I will just stay beside the road, eat and sleep and I do not need to wear myself out. And I did not know what to tell him.

### **Now, there is a ceasefire between their leaders and KNU leaders for peace. The agreed limited territory between the soldiers like you said before [is] that they can only go 50 yards. What is your opinion on their trespassing like this?**

I do not know anymore. It is far, 50 yards and [the distance to] A--- [village]. It [the distance] is over [50 yards]. I told him and he told me that it is not like that. He said there are many groups and it is confusing that they said like that [the 50 yards rule]. And I replied that “I don’t it anymore”.<sup>236</sup>

### **The current Burmese Tatmadaw officer [is] Thein Htike Oo?**

<sup>236</sup> KHRG is currently following up on the meaning of this sentence.



Yes.

**[When] Thein Htike Oo comes here, how do his activities compare with the previous group?**

I think [that] I don't know if he will be better or not. I have no idea. But there is no [special] difference.

**Same activities?**

Yes.

**They come and stay in A--- village, you said they are staying in the monastery, right? If they go around the village, do they carry their weapons with them?**

The privates do not carry guns if they only go around [the village]. If they go with their leader, the privates carry guns like guards.

**Living in the village, have you seen them steal villager's materials, vegetables or other things?**

No, they buy all [of what they need].

**Do they cause trouble in the village?**

No, they don't.

[Second woman speaks:] the group that left, their privates went out at night time and looked for alcohol. Not usually in our [village] part; it mostly happened in F--- part. [They would] Look for alcohol to drink and get drunk and harass [people]. A [local] woman doesn't have a husband and her mother is a widow. In the evening, he went once when she was hanging the mosquito net. [The woman] said he opened her mosquito net. She asked him, "where are you going?" and he replied that he is coming to buy alcohol. And [the woman] said, "I do not have alcohol. Go back." He went back and he came back again at 1:00am. He felt her body and she woke up and said "Ahay, who is this?" and she called out for her mom and her mom got up with a machete. If her mom had wanted to cut him intentionally, she could have done but she did not. Her mom said she was afraid to cut him because if she did that he will be [bleeding with a] big opened injury. He [the soldier] jumped down and ran away back to the monastery. [He is] From the [military] group that left.

**How many days ago?**

We tried to remember it [the date] before, [we] just cannot recall it.

**You cannot remember the date. Do you know the name of the woman [daughter]?**

Yes, I know.

**What is her name?**

Her mom's name is Naw K---.

**How about her daughter's name?**

Her name is P---.

**Guess; how old do you think she is?**

She might be --- years-old. [Age censored for security]

**You said she does not have a husband?**

No, her husband is in Malaysia [for work].

**The soldier that went to the woman, was [he] just an ordinary soldier or an officer?**

He is an ordinary soldier. He might be a military officer. I guess 1 star ... it could be either one or two stars.<sup>237</sup>

**Do you know this man?**

I do not know his name. [The] Burmese soldiers, when their battalion went down [to another base or town], there was a military officer lower in rank [Battalion Deputy Commander], and we told him [about the attempted rape case] and he came and met with us. And what he said to us was, we did not ask him [the Battalion Deputy Commander] the soldier's name and we showed [the soldiers] to the woman from [a distance] far away and asked her do you remember [recognise] him [who attempted to rape her]. "Yes", she replied. And he [the officer showing her around], when he was showing [her around] at the entrance of the monastery, asked her if it was him [the perpetrator] or not. And she replied, "yes, he is [the perpetrator]. He wore that shirt when he went there [to her house]."

**Did he physically abuse her when he was there?**

He couldn't do that. He climbed on top of her and she woke up. It was in [under] the mosquito net. He couldn't do that [rape].

**As you are village leader, did you report the case to their military officer?**

Yes, we did. We reported it to the Battalion Deputy Commander, am I right?

[Woman #2:] It was just an officer. When the battalion came, we couldn't report it to him. He [the officer] said, "you do not need to report it to the battalion commander, cover it from here."

**The officer said like that?**

Yes.

**What is the name of the officer?**

I can't remember.

[Woman #2:] I wrote down every single name of theirs [on paper], [but] a group of students played with the papers and [after] I couldn't find [the paper].

**So you reported the case to the officer and he told you to cover up the case and you just stopped the case there?**

He said do not report [the case] to his battalion commander. We asked the children [people] around there [where the incident took place] and they said in the future do not allow them to

<sup>237</sup> A star system on uniforms is used to denote military rank.

go [around there]. He [the officer] said, “we will ask people [other soldiers] to punish him there [at the monastery where they live] and you [will be] satisfied.”

**What did he say?**

His officer asked us, “what should we do so that they [the victim and her family] are satisfied?” I told her [the victim] that I was asked by the officer what should he do in order to make you satisfied? And she said it is OK as long as they don’t come to us [disturb again].

**The woman said that?**

Yes, she did. She said it is done [resolved] if he not does not [come to her house] anymore. And I replied to him [the officer] like that; “punish him for us a little; do not let him come again. If he comes in the future, we would do something to your soldier and [it] will bring something [bad] on us.

**So the woman told you that you should conclude the case like that?**

Yes.

**And they still going [present in the village] anytime? Not anymore?**

No.

**So aunty, is there any other thing that happens in your village that I missed, as Burmese soldiers [Tatmadaw] always stay in your village?**

And then they left. They were going to Pra Thoo and they [the KNU] did not allow them to go. And another group came and they did not allow them to go either. There were two different groups. From M---’s side, they wanted to go to Tha Reh Hkee, and said they will just go to Tha Reh Hkee and [then] they will come back and they [the KNU] allowed them to go. They [the KNU] told us that they first said that they will follow the path [or road] but they didn’t. They went [a] different way through the bushes. And they came back [to A--- village] and then back to A--- [village] again and we told them not to go as there was a religious occasion [in A--- village]. Last year it was in *Ta Koo* month. [The KNU] brigadier will also come back to B--- village and will pay respect to the elders [at the religious occasion] or something so I told them, “do not go; if you want to stay you can stay here and if you want to take things [supplies], take them from here.” They said they will go and they are not going to do anything [there]. They will go as they have decided to go – it is like that. And when that person [the KNU brigadier] came back and the Burmese soldiers were around, he got angry. From then on, they do not allow them to go even though they request to go. He said, “do not allow them to go.” As they agreed in the meeting, they are supposed to be present on the road or somewhere around only [not walking in the bushes]. They were told not to go further. He [the KNU officer] said, “you do not dare to tell him?” “Yes”, she replied. I also told the previous Burmese group [of soldiers] and he [they] replied to me that, “now, they have not defined the limits of the territory yet, we can go wherever we want.”

**So, as a villager, now the Burmese [Myanmar government] have agreed a ceasefire with the KNU government, what is your opinion on the Burmese Tatmadaw not following the rules for crossing the territory boundaries? Do they not want peace or do they want to cause a conflict?**

I think like that but what they said was [they want] peace. What they said and what they do don’t match. They come here [to the village] and go back. For example, [KNU] Officer Htoh’s children [soldiers] travel around this way and he called us to say that “in the past, the

soldiers' group travelled from Hpa Paung way and they follow the way [there]." And now the current group, they do not travel along the Hpa Paung way, they travel along the Ta Lah Ngo way on the other road [next to Hpa Paung road]. And Officer Htoh told us to "tell them that they are not following the road and that they go the way through the bushes. Ask them to travel along the Hpa Paung [road] way. My children [soldiers] also have to travel. It is not good if they meet in the bush [jungle] because you have a gun and I have [a gun]."

[Woman #2] "I told him [the Tatmadaw officer] and he said 'forgive me for this time. I will go only one more time because that way is closer now'."

**[Was it a] Burmese officer?**

Yes, [it was a] Burmese officer, a battalion commander. That way is closer, and I only allowed him [to go that way] once. We will hide if they [KNU] see us in the jungle. I told him, "I do not know for [sure about] that. I was told to tell him so I told him that." Then they said that they never travel from Kleh Hpah Ghaw [on the gravel road]. They [will] go the same way and they will not go the other way.

**Did they inform KNU when they travel between villages?**

They informed us.

**They informed you and you passed it on to the KNU?**

Yes. But for this group of Burmese [Tatmadaw] soldiers, what they said they do, and what they do does not match. For other groups, they phone us when they are going to leave [the place]. And they arrived long after they called [the village head], because [of] that distance. The group that just left, they called us and they are in the village already with the sentry. The sentry arrived at Noh [place] and they [the soldiers] were there already. On the first of two times we told them [to call] but they did not care so we stopped telling them.

**So do they still demand a sentry now?**

Yes, they do. But they pay money. I don't know about Battalion #558. I have not seen people who serve as sentries to find out how much money they get for serving as sentries.

**How much do they pay sentries for each time they call them?**

Last time, they took [sentry] as well. We went with three people and they paid 5000 kyat. It was just paid to Noh Poe. They told us not to say that we called [took] you [as sentries] because we do not know the way.

**Why did they tell you not to tell [others]?**

They said do not take it as if we are ordering you. Take it as if [you] are helping us. And I replied, "of course yes."

**Do you think they are saying that because some of them are afraid of something?**

They said "mom, tell people here [KNU] for us not to think anything [bad] about us. We are coming on the orders of superiors. We are not going to do anything where we are going." They told me the same thing last time. They asked me to buy 100 thatch shingles and 100 bamboos for them. They will build [maybe a shelter]. They said they will not stay in the monastery. They will only stay in the monastery compound. There is a full moon [Buddhist religious ceremony] and when people come to the monastery they will be scared of us. They

said, “they will keep to themselves.” And I replied, “that is good.” Actually, they should not come to our village. They should just stay on the road [and make a shelter there].

**So have you bought the thatch shingles and bamboo for them yet?**

They have given me money to buy them.

**How much money did they pay for 100 thatch shingles?**

10,000 kyats. And they asked me, “is the bamboo 10,000 kyat as well?” And I replied, “I don’t know.”

**So they said they will build their shelter on their own place outside?**

Inside the monastery compound.

**So they will stay separately [from the civilians]?**

Yes. If they are in the monastery, the people will see them and will be afraid to come to the monastery.

**What is your opinion on the ceasefire between the KNU and Burma government/Tatmadaw?**

I don’t know.

**You see it as good or bad?**

It is good to have a ceasefire if they are willing to stop [fighting]. They said “ceasefire” and if they do what they say they will, that will be good. Burmese [soldiers] are not doing what they say they will so they might have a plan. We should think about that. He said that Bo [officer] Chit Thu<sup>238</sup> or someone can meet with them if they want to. I replied to him that “I have not seen him [for a while], the leaders are always busy.”

**After the ceasefire, are there any non-government Organisations (NGO) or government organisations coming into your village or your neighbouring villages?**

There is a rich man that came and built the school. What is his name? I can’t remember his name. Zaw Gyi’s subordinate built a school.

**You mean U Zaw Zaw?**

Yes, U Zaw Zaw. He is U Zaw Gyi’s master. He built a school.

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<sup>238</sup> Maung Chit Thu, commonly referred to as Chit Thu, was the operations commander of Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) Battalion #999 prior to the DKBA transformation into the Tatmadaw Border Guard Force, which began in September 2010. His role has grown considerably since the transformation, and he is now second in command of Tatmadaw BGF forces, overseeing BGF battalions #1017, #1018, #1019 and #1012 based in Ko Ko, Hpa-an District. Abuses committed by Maung Chit Thu have been cited in previous KHRG reports, including ordering the forcible relocation of villagers from eight villages in Lu Pleh Township in July 2011, while acting as a Border Guard commander, see, “[Pa’an Situation Update: June to August 2011](#),” KHRG, October 2011. For more information on the DKBA/Border Guard transformation, see, for example: “[Border Guard Forces of Southeast Command formed in Paingkyon of Kayin State](#),” *New Light of Myanmar*, August 22nd 2010; and “[Border Guard Force formed at Atwinkwinkalay region, Myawaddy Township, Kayin State](#),” *New Light of Myanmar*, August 25<sup>th</sup> 2010.

**He built a school in A--- village?**

Yes, in A--- Village.

**How long ago was it built?**

It was last year. They paid for everything but the villagers helped them [to build it].

**What about other things such as a clinic or anything else?**

No, the administrator said he has sent the proposal [to the Burma/Myanmar government] already.

**What about road [construction]?**

No, no road yet.

**What about land confiscation? Has there been any land confiscation?**

No.

[Woman #2:] It is happening already, such as in Hpa Paung or other places. It is in Thaton Township [District].

**Do you know any of the outsiders who came in and confiscated the land in B--- [village]?**

B--- and C--- [village], they are all in Thaton township [District]. In those places, the outsiders came in and the villagers had already gone. The outsiders plant rubber plantations. They are all outsiders. They [the outsiders] and local people have arguments.

**Are there problems from them coming into the area?**

Of course there are.

**Could you tell me how?**

Some people's land has been confiscated and they get unfairly paid [compensation]. Some villagers said, "it is our land and we are not allowed to work on it". They [outsiders] took it. I don't know the beginning part as it is not in the area where I manage – I am telling it as I heard it. Some [villagers] come to us to help them raise the case at the township level or to help them negotiate [to get back their land]. They [villagers] said, "it is our own land and we do not know what they do with the land, we are not allowed to work on it. They said it is theirs. They [outsiders] applied for *Pyay Sa* [land document] and sold it [the land]. It is our land and we cannot work on it". For some villagers I told them to meet with the leaders and see what they can help you with. [The villagers said] we do not have knowledge [about the process] and we would get hurt if we cannot get our [land]. And I did not ask them what they are going to do next.

**How many houses are there in A--- village?**

Over [censored for security] houses. If we have to distribute things, there might be about [censored for security] houses.

**Villagers in A--- village, what do they mostly do for their livelihoods?**

Farming, hill farming and plantation farming.

**Do they have enough [food] from farming or hill farming each year?**

Not enough.

**It is not enough then – how did you figure it out?**

We sell our *Ta La Aw* leaves or bamboo and buy rice and pay for alms-giving. That's it. Some people do not have food even though they sell those things and they go to work as day labourers if other people [from other villages] need day labourers, they go and work for them and buy food, it is like that.

**You said you do not have enough rice, so is it easy if you want to buy rice or other things?**

Now, it is easy. It used to be difficult. It was difficult to carry [transport rice] even though you bought with your own money. Burmese [soldiers] banned [carrying rice] and arrested [villagers] if they saw them carrying rice. If they saw that you are carrying rice, they would confiscate your rice and beat you as well. But after the ceasefire, transportation is becoming easier.

**How about now? How is farming, hill farming or plantation farming this year?**

There was a lot of damage [to paddies] this year.

**Why?**

Because of the water. There was flooding and the paddies died. And when the water had gone they [farmers] planted paddy again and the flooding came again and again and they [the paddies] all died. Some villages could save some of their paddy [in elevated areas]. The soya beans as well – they were planted recently and they died when they were flooded. This year we had lots of difficulties. We still have no idea for next year.

**Only collect Ta La Aw [leaves] and sell them?**

Yes, I am not sure if the money will cover the debt [from buying food].

**How about other things such as healthcare or other things? Is there a clinic in A--- village?**

No, but there is a midwife and a health worker. A health worker, after the flooding, I do not know what happened to him [where he went]. After the flooding, [villagers] died often and it then stopped for a month and now [people] start to die [again]. It was too quick.<sup>239</sup> They [villagers] come and call me at my house and I couldn't get there [to save them]. He was fat [i.e. in poor physical condition] and died [immediately]. Many things [like that] happened.

**So like you mentioned health workers, do they take care of the people in the village?**

They take responsibility to take care of people but it costs money. They have the money to pay but he is the only medic that we have and he is super busy. Sometimes people come

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<sup>239</sup> KHRG is in the process of following up to clarify the meaning of this point.



and call him often. Sometimes he has to hide [not work, because of people calling him too often].<sup>240</sup>

**Did he buy medicine himself or did the government pay [for the medicine] for him?**

He bought [medicine] with his own money.

**Where do you send them to when there is a patient with a serious sickness?**

We send them to Kyaik Kaw or Thaton [town].

**Thaton and [Kyaik Kaw], you go by boat or car?**

We go by boat.

**How far is it? How many hours does it take?**

It might be one or two hours.

**So you said if there is a serious sickness you have to go to the town – do you go to a private hospital or a military [government] hospital?**

Government hospital.

**Do you have to pay for medicine in government hospitals?**

Yes, we do. We have to pay full [the entire cost].

**They are the government and why do they not take care of the civilians?**

I have no idea. In Wah Pa hospital, there is a female medic who talked impatiently. My friend took his kid to the hospital. His kid passed out [unconscious]. It was last year in rainy season. They said “go to Thaton [hospital]”. And they went to Thaton [hospital] and they at arrived 8[o’clock]. Not 8 o’clock, it was 5 o’clock. They were waiting and the doctor did not come. It was 8 o’clock already but the doctor had not arrived yet. *Thara* [medic] asked him “did you bring money?”

**The medic asked the patient?**

Yes, and [he or she] replied, “I have money – that’s why I came. I was told to come here [by another medic from Kyaik Kaw]”. He [the medic from the hospital] asked, “medics from where?”, “medics from Kyaik Kaw,” he replied. And he [the medic from the government hospital] said, “not a good medic maybe”. “If he is not good I will go back and discharge him now”, [the parent] replied. And [the parent] started saying with no fear that “my kid should not die”. Because [his] kid had passed out. [He] said, “My kid should not die; I came in time. I have been [at the hospital] since 5, 6 and 8 [am] and there has been no medical treatment yet. My kid should not die. If my kid dies you will see [hear from] me. I can pay for the medicine, even if it costs one million kyats (US \$1,026.70) for one intravenous medicine and ten is fine as well [they did not actually have this sum of money with them], as long as my children don’t die. If my kid dies I will get many of you fired from [your] positions”. And then they came out and he did not have anything to do. They might think that this man [or woman] is small but not easy [to deal with]. He said I will go back and discharge that *thara* [medic], and they [medics in the hospital] replied, “oh, do not do that”. It cost over 1,000,000 kyats

(US \$1,026.70) [for medical treatment].

**What if he did not have money?**

He had to sell his house and he not has not repaid all the money [for the medical treatment] yet.

**He sold his house?**

Yes, he sold his house but [that money] did not cover all of the costs.

**What if people are sick and do not have money [to go to hospital]?**

I don't know. I do no dare to speak about it [because it is a bad situation].

**They have to wait until they die?**

Have to wait until they die. Now [recently] they had a meeting and they said, "if [villagers] get sick, come to the medics in the village and if they find a virus in the body, they will send them to the hospital and pay \$100 as support money.

**Give to the patient?**

Yes, to the patient. Support for the medical treatment.

**The Burma [Myanmar] government said that?**

No, the people who take care of the sickness [medics].

**Is it called MIO?**

Yes, it is. It comes from another country.

**Where do they set up their place?**

They do not have a permanent place. They just set up in the house. They organised each villager from A--- village, D--- village, E--- village and B--- village.

**So it means those people will take of the sickness [viruses] and if they have a virus they will send them to the hospital. And if they send them to the hospital, they will provide \$100 [for medical fees]. Like that?**

Yes, they said like that.

**Is there any other thing that I have not mentioned that you would like to talk about? Anything?**

During this year, A--- and E--- [villages] have to suffer. Now, we are surviving on debts. You borrow from me and I borrow from you and return when you have [money or things or rice]. You have to spend and it costs a lot to eat each day for each house[hold]. So, most people have debt. All people have debt. No one is safe from debt. A--- village and E--- [village] were in difficult situations from flooding. There was flooding in all places. [It flooded]Two or three times and they [the paddies] died. There were still paddies on some pieces of the paddy fields. And you had to hire four or five children for the harvesting and they just worked until they were tired. You could not harvest paddies that were flooded and you lost them.

**Many of the paddies were destroyed?**

Of course, yes. It damaged half of the paddy fields. You could not save them. There was flooding last year and this year was the same. Villagers' pigs, chickens [died] and villagers died.

**After the ceasefire, the government group did not come and take care of you?**

No they didn't. There was a group that came and help. They were Aung Sun Su Kyi's group. A small group of them came.

**NLD?**

Yes, NLD.

**Did they come and support you with anything?**

They gave six bowls of rice to each house for those who had nothing to eat. Not every [house] got it. One hundred houses got it. One hundred houses got rations, including soap and one pack of candles. There were nine candles in one pack of candles.

**Is there any other organisation that came?**

Kayin Sa Pay group come. They [NLD] combined with Kayin Sa Pay group. There were many donors. There were about 50 donors. There were two boats [that carried the provisions].

**Anything else that you want to mention? Take your time to think.**

If they do not pay [support the village], there is nothing to eat. It affects the whole village. The people in the village that use money a lot also complain [of the difficulties]. They try to borrow some money from others. They do not have money.

**Is there no other way of doing business or working to make money?**

No, there are people who do logging cutting bamboo. That's it. Villagers do logging and they are banned from logging. They do not know what to do. Only cutting bamboo and the bamboo is almost gone. After harvesting, they [villagers] usually do logging and cut bamboo [to sell them] after doing plantation [agriculture]. Some people do plantation [farming] and they have lots of debt from doing that. If they make enough money from plantation [farming], they can pay back their debt. If they do not make [a lot of money], they are left behind. T--- couple [husband and wife] did soya bean plantation and long bean [farming] and they did not make enough profit and her husband went to Thailand for work and now they have not yet repaid all of the debt and the interest that they owe. [They owe] A lot of interest [on the loan].

**So there is a big problem.**

Yes, there is.

**Anything else, aunty?**

If I talk, there will be a lot. I do not know what to say next.

**So thanks.**

**Source #72**

<b>Log #</b>	13-108-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Incident Report: Attempted rape in Thaton Township, September 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in August 2014 <a href="http://khrhg.org/2014/08/13-108-i1/thaton-incident-report-attempted-rape-thaton-township-september-2013">http://khrhg.org/2014/08/13-108-i1/thaton-incident-report-attempted-rape-thaton-township-september-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Thaton Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Part 1 – Incident Details**

<b>Type of Incident</b>	Attempted rape <sup>241</sup>
<b>Date of Incident</b>	September 27 <sup>th</sup> 2013
<b>Incident Location</b>	A--- village, T'MawDaw village tract, Thaton Township, Thaton District

<b>Victim Information</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Naw B---
<b>Age</b>	27
<b>Sex</b>	Female
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen
<b>Family</b>	Married with one child
<b>Occupation</b>	Hill farming
<b>Religion</b>	Buddhist
<b>Position</b>	Villager
<b>Village</b>	A---

<b>Perpetrator Information</b>				
<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander's Name</b>
	Solider with one chevron <sup>242</sup>	Column #1, LIB [Light Infantry Battalion] <sup>243</sup> #558, MOC [Military Operation Command] <sup>244</sup> #13	P'New Klah army camp	Battalion Commander Thein Htun Aung

**Part 2 – Information Quality****1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.**

<sup>241</sup> In an unpublished interview with a villager regarding the same incident, the soldier is described as entering Naw B---'s mosquito net, removing her blanket, laying on top of her, and beginning to grope her, before she wakes up and begins screaming for help.

<sup>242</sup> In the Tatmadaw, soldiers with one chevron are lance corporals. They are second-in-command of one section of a platoon.

<sup>243</sup> Light Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprised of 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Primarily for offensive operations but sometimes used for garrison duties.

<sup>244</sup> Military Operations Command. Comprised of ten battalions for offensive operations. Most MOCs have three Tactical Operations Commands (TOCs), made up of three battalions each.

Regarding this case, Naw C---, the A--- village head, gave me this information as the victim reported it to her.

## **2. Explain how the source verified this information.**

The people who know this information are Naw C--- and Naw D---. The victim Naw B--- reported it to the village leader on the evening that the incident occurred.

### **Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident**

**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 an attachment if needed.**

On September 12<sup>th</sup> 2013, the Burmese Military [Tatmadaw] LIB #558, which is under MOC #13 from E--- village, came into A--- village and has been based in the village since. [On September 27<sup>th</sup>, 2013] as the military group [LIB #558] had been staying in the village [since September 12<sup>th</sup> 2013], their soldiers went to search for alcohol to buy in the village. In the evening at 7:00 o'clock on September 27<sup>th</sup> 2013, [a soldier with one chevron] went [into Naw B---'s house] and lifted up her mosquito net and Naw B--- asked him, "*What are you doing here?*" and he replied that he had come to search for alcohol. Naw B--- told him that there was no alcohol, so [he should] go away. That is why he went away. The same soldier came again at 1:00 am [September 28<sup>th</sup> 2013] and began to grope Naw B---. She awakened and shouted to her mother [Naw D---] for help. Her mother awoke and came over with a knife. If she stabbed him, [she feared] he might die, so she dared not [attack him]. [He then left] and they at once went and told the village head [about the incident] who went and told the [LIB #558] deputy commander, because at that time the battalion commander [had already] gone back to military headquarters. The commander [that she reported the incident to] told her not to report [the incident] to the battalion commander and he asked her what they could do to appease [the victim]. The village leader went back and told Naw B--- about what the commander had said and about [his question] regarding what he could do for her. Naw B--- replied to her to just take care of it [on her behalf] and if the soldier did not come again, it was fine. The case ended there.

### **Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details**

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

[Naw C---] gave us permission to use or publish this case as [she said] the situation was getting better.

Incident report written by community member  
(Received in September 2013)

### **Source #73**

<b>Log #</b>	13-110-S1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Situation Update: Thaton Township, July to November 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published

<b>Location</b>	Thaton Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>July to November 2013 situation update</p> <p>Thaton Township, Thaton District</p> <p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>In order to let the KHRG leaders know [about the situation], I am sending a Thaton Township situation update.</p> <p><b>Township's location</b></p> <p>The township is up until [reached by] Yangon-Hpa-an highway. In the township, there are 13 village tracts.<sup>245</sup></p> <p><b>Civilians' livelihood</b></p> <p>Most of the civilians are working on flat field farming, hill farming and plantation. Even though they are working on farming and plantation, there are only a few people who get enough food for the whole year. Mostly, they have to search for [food] before the time of harvesting. Therefore, we see that some of the people do daily wage jobs and some cut and sell bamboo [to earn money]. For some of the people whose children are able to work, [they] go and search for work in other countries such as Thailand and Malaysia. Moreover, they also work on rubber plantations. Therefore, for the farms that do not produce much rice, they [villagers] plant rubber trees. The price of the rubber is 800 kyat (US \$0.81)<sup>246</sup> for one pound of rubber and sometimes they get 900 (US \$0.91). Thus, some of the people's household problems have been reduced.</p> <p><b>Education situation</b></p> <p>In this township, almost every village has a school. Most of the schools are Myanmar government schools and some are the joint schools of the Myanmar government and Kawthoolei government [KNU]. In every school, there are Myanmar government teachers and Kawthoolei civilian teachers and they are teaching together. However, one problem is that the Myanmar government teachers have to go back to the city to get their salaries and if they go back once, they disappear for over one week or two weeks and it causes problems for the civilian teachers and also affects the students' learning. Therefore, the parents hope and wish [for] the Myanmar government teachers to commit themselves to full time teaching. Likewise, in October, the Myanmar government sent daily wage teachers to every school. It causes problems for the civilian teachers as they do not know what to teach as there are many teachers.</p> <p><b>Healthcare situation</b></p> <p>If we look at the healthcare situation for this township, there are many needs. In some villages, the government comes and sets up the clinics but after they set up the clinics, as there are no medics and no medicine, it mostly becomes places for the goats to sleep. We also see that there is only one backpack [Back Pack Health Worker Team (BPHWT)] clinic in</p>	

<sup>245</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

<sup>246</sup> As of January 13<sup>th</sup> 2014, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 987 kyat to the US \$1.



the whole township and they cannot travel to every place.

### **The organizations that come in**

The organizations that come in and are active in Thaton Township are UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund], UNDP [United Nations Development Programme] and KSEAG [Karen State Education Assistance Group] and World Concern. UNICEF came in and does such as providing materials for the students, setting up the nursery schools and giving elephantiasis medicine. In 2013, the UNICEF provided each student with a backpack, ten notebooks and student materials. They divide up the primary school so that they set up into three steps and the steps are A, B and C. For the A step, they provide 700,000 kyat (US \$709.22), 300,000 kyat (US \$303.95) for the B step and 150,000 kyat (US \$151.98) for the C step.

UNDP came in and built schools and toilets for the schools and a well for the schools. However, they can only do it in some villages. Likewise, KSEAG also helped the schools with books, playthings for the students and a small amount of salaries for the teachers. World Concern also comes in to some places and they provide farm loans and also micro-finance services. All these organizations come through the Myanmar government and only KSEAG is not related with the Myanmar Government.

### **Burmese military [Tatmadaw] activities**

In this township, the Tatmadaw is set up firmly in P'Nweh Klah camp and Wee Raw/Wa Pa and in Htee Hpoh Nya Lee. Their most active group is P'Nweh Klah military group. Since the beginning of 2013 until now, the military groups that come and stay in P'Nweh Klah army camp are Military Operation Command [MOC] #13 and under its [control] is Infantry Battalion [IB] #44. Infantry Battalion commander's name is Lin Aung. The Battalion that starts based [in the camp] was LIB [Light Infantry Battalion] #558 and the battalion commander is Thein Htun Aung. This Military group is more active than others. They started a base at T'Maw Daw monastery in June until now. P'Nweh Klah and T'Maw Daw villages are far, over two hours or three hours on foot. Because they come and always stay in the village so that it becomes trouble and difficulties for the villagers as they search for food at night time. We are not sure whether this military group [stays in the village] because of orders from senior leaders. They have stayed in T'Maw Daw village for four or five months. The leaders said that they have done the ceasefire but because they [Tatmadaw] expand their area and enlarge their area, KNLA armed group do not trust them anymore and the villagers also worried that the groups would fight against each other again. If we look at [the situation], their army camp, P'Nweh Klah and T'Maw Daw are not close to each other. T'Maw Daw is close to the KNLA location. Therefore, the villagers are worried because of these Tatmadaw groups. On October 9<sup>th</sup> 2013, the LIB #559, which is led by Battalion Commander Thein Htike Oo, came and replaced LIB # 558 in P'Nweh Klah army camp. This new military group came and stayed in T'Maw Daw on October 10<sup>th</sup> 2013. They went around in Noh Per Baw village and on October 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2013, they went and built a temporary camp above the Noh Per Baw monastery. On October 20<sup>th</sup> 2013 until the end of the month, they came back and stayed in T'Maw Daw monastery compound.

### **Rich people's business situation**

In Thaton Township, the rich people who came in and confiscated villagers land are Max Myanmar Company. Likewise, Artillery #314 also came and, as we mentioned before, they confiscated the land of the villagers from Kyeik T'Raw Htee Hpoh Nya Lee area. The people who mine gold are from Plaw Hpoh gold mining place.

Max Myanmar Company came and forcibly bought the villagers' land in Shwe Yaw Pya



village tract and they set up a rubber plantation project. As I was directed [by KHRG] to go and check to make sure [about the cases], I went and checked back the cases. The company does not give back any of the villagers' land. They only give the payment for the land. They gave 200,000 kyat (US \$202.63) for one acre of land. However, not all villagers have gotten the payment for their land. Some people have gotten [the payment] but some have not. The name of the villagers whose land were confiscated by Max Myanmar Company and the area of their land are mentioned in the attachment document. [Document #1]

Likewise, Artillery #314 also confiscated villagers' land in Htee Hpoh Nya Lee and as of yet, the villagers do not receive the payment for the land. They also do not get permission to go and work on the plants [in their plantation] such as durian and rubber plantation. The name of the villagers and the area of their land are also mentioned in the attachment document. [Document #2]

In Thaton Township, the place where people mine gold is in Plaw Hpoh area. The people who mine gold are not a company but individuals [businessmen]. Gold mining does not affect the villagers' land but because of the gold mining, the lands are destroyed so that it causes problems for the villagers to do farming and the pasturelands for the cows and buffalo are also destroyed. People started to mine this gold in 2010 and the people who mined gold were U Win Hlaing, Daw Aye and Tee Win. In 2011, the person who mined gold was Daw Sanda Aye. During 2012 to 2013, the people who mined gold are U Maung Lu, Mya Hpoo, Hpyo Way Htun and Zin Min Htun. On October 10<sup>th</sup> 2013, Saw Law Eh and Sanda Aye came and asked permission to test [the land for gold mining] for one month.

#### Attachment #1

##### Payment list for 2005-2006 Shwe Yaung Pya rubber plantation A--- (B---)

No.	Name	Acre	10 <sup>th</sup>	Father's name	Amount of money received	Address	Note
1	U C---	15	0	U D---	300,000	Zee Won	
2	Daw E--	11	0	U F---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
3	Daw G--	7	0	U H---	170,000	Zee Won	
4	U I---	6	0	U J---	120,000	Zee Won	
5	U K---	10	0	U L---	200,000	Zee Won	
6	U M---	6	0	U N---	2,500,000	Zee Won	Agree
7	Daw O--	5	0	U P---	150,000	Zee Won	
8	U Q---	5	0	U R---	130,000	Zee Won	
9	Saw T--	2	0	U U---	50,000	Zee Won	
10	U V---	8	0	Saw W--	200,000	Zee Won	
11	U X---	5	0	U Y---	80,000	Zee Won	

12	Daw Z---	3	0	U Aa---	3,000,000	Zee Won	Agree
13	Daw Ab---	3	0	U Ac---	300,000	Zee Won	
14	U Ad---	8	0	U Ae---	200,000	Zee Won	
15	U Af---	2	30	U Ag---	1,700,000	Zee Won	Agree
16	U Ah---	10	0	U Ai---	160,000	Zee Won	
17	U Aj---	10	0	Ak---	200,000	Zee Won	
18	U Al---	5	0	U Am---	100,000	Zee Won	
19	Daw An---	7	0	Daw Ao---	100,000	Zee Won	
20	Daw Ap---	4	30	U Aq---	1,700,000	Zee Won	Agree
21	U Ar---	20	0	U As---	200,000	Zee Won	
22	U At---	5	0	U Au---	100,000	Zee Won	
23	U Av---	5	0	U Aw---	100,000	Zee Won	
24	U Ax---	2	0	U Ay---	2,000,000	Zee Won	Agree
25	Daw Az---	6	0	U Ba---	2,850,000	Zee Won	Agree
26	Daw Bb---	3	0	U Bc---	No	Zee Won	Confiscate
27	Daw Bd---	3	0	U Be---	40,000	Zee Won	
28	U Bf---	1	0	U Bg---	120,000	Zee Won	
29	U Bh---	4	0	U Bi---	7,500,000	Zee Won	Agree
30	Naw Bj---	1	0	U Bk---	600,000	Zee Won	Agree
31	U Bl---	10	0	U Bm---	No	Zee Won	No

**Shwe Yaung Pya rubber plantation****List of villagers' farm, plantation, land (Shwe Yaung Pya)**

No.	Name	Acre	10 <sup>th</sup>	Father's name	Amount of money received	Address	Note
1	U Bn---	5	0	U Bo---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
2	U Bp---	4	0	U Bq---	800,000	Zee Won	
3	Naw Br---	5	0	U Bs---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
4	Daw Bt---	17	0	U Bu---	3,000,000	Zee Won	

5	U Bv---	5	0	U Bw---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
6	U Bx---	1	0	U By---	200,000	Zee Won	
7	U Bz---	1	0	U Ca---	200,000	Zee Won	
8	U Cb---	1	0	U Cc---	200,000	Zee Won	
9	U Cd---	5	0	U Ce---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
10	U Cf---	5	0	U Cg---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
11	U Ch---	1	0	U Ci---	200,000	Zee Won	
12	U Cj---	5	0	U Ck---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
13	U Cl---	2	0	U Cm---	400,000	Zee Won	
14	U Cn---	5	0	U Co---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
15	U Cp---	2	3	U Cq---	460,000	Zee Won	
16	U Cr---	3		U Cs---	6,000,000	Zee Won	
17	Maung Ct---	3		U Cu---	6,000,000	Zee Won	
18	U Cv---	20		U Cw---	4,000,000	Zee Won	
19	Daw Cx---	10		U Cy---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
20	Daw Cz---	10		U Da---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
21	Daw Db---	4		U Dc---	800,000	Zee Won	
22	Daw Dd---	5		U De---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
23	Daw Df---	10		U Dg---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
24	Daw Dh---	8		U Di---	1,600,000	Zee Won	
25	Maung Dj---	3		U Dk---	600,000	Zee Won	
26	U Dl---	5		U Dm---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
27	Daw Dn---	5		U Do---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
28	Daw Dp---	5		U Dq---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
29	U Dr---	3		U Ds---	600,000	Zee Won	
30	Daw Dt---	12		U Du---	2,400,000	Zee Won	
31	U Dv---	5		U Dw---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
32	Daw Dx---	5		U Dy---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
33	Daw Dz---	5		U Ea---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
34	Daw Eb---	5		U Ec---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
35	Daw Ed---	6		U Ee---	1,200,000	Zee Won	
36	Daw Ef---	5		U Eg---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
37	Daw Eh---	5		U Ei---	1,000,000	Zee Won	

38	Daw Ej---	7		U Ek---	1,400,000	Zee Won	
39	U El---	5		U Em---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
40	U En---	10		U Eo---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
41	U Ep---	5		U Eq---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
42	U Er---	5		U Es---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
43	U Et---	10		U Eu---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
44	U Ev---	5		U Ew---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
45	Daw Ex---	10		U Ey---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
46	Saw Ez---	10		U Fa---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
47	U Fb---	10		U Fc---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
48	Daw Fd---	4		U Fe---	600,000	Zee Won	
49	Daw Ff---	6		U Fg---	1,600,000	Zee Won	
50	Daw Fh---	2		U Fi---	400,000	Zee Won	
51	Daw Fj---	5		U Fk---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
52	U Fl---	6		U Fm---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
53	U Fn---	6		U Fo---	1,600,000	Zee Won	
54	U Fp---	4		U Fq---	800,000	Zee Won	
55	Naw Fr---	8		U Fs---	1,600,000	Zee Won	
56	U Ft---	10		U Fu---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
57	Daw Fv---	2		U Fw---	400,000	Zee Won	
58	U Fx---	6		U Fy---	1,200,000	Zee Won	
59	U Fz---	10		U Ga---	2,000,000	Zee Won	
60	Daw Gb---	5		U Gc---	1,000,000	Zee Won	
61	U Gd-- -	15		U Ge---	3,000,000	Zee Won	
62	Daw Gf---	6		U Gg---	1,200,000	Zee Won	
63	Daw Gh---	3		U Gi---	6,000,000	Zee Won	

**Attachment #2**

No.	Name	Father's name	Age	Address	Acre [amount of land]	Paym- ent	Artill- ary
1	Saw Gj---	Saw Gk---	38		20	No	
2	Saw Gl---	Saw Gm-- -	33		10		
3	Saw Gn---	Saw Go---	43		5		

4	Saw Gp---	Saw Gq---	76		2		
5	Saw Gr---	Saw Gs---	25		3		
6	Saw Gt---	Saw Gu---	30		10		
7	Naw Gv---	Saw Gw-- -	65		8		
8	Naw Gx---	Saw Gy---	28		2		
9	Naw Gz---	Saw Ha---	29		5		
10	Saw Hb---	Saw Hc---	50		5		
11	Naw Hd---	Saw He---	33		5		
12	Naw Hf---	Saw Hg---	44		5		
13	Saw Hh---	Saw Hi---	66		5		
14	Saw Hj---	Saw Hk---	70		5		
15	Saw Hl---	Saw Hm-- -	50		8		
16	Saw Hn---	Saw Ho---	56		15		
17	Naw Hp---	Saw Hq---	35		15		
18	Saw Hr---	Saw Hs---	45		5		
19	Naw Ht---	Saw Hu---	50		10		
20	Saw Hv---	Saw Hw-- -	60		5		
21	Saw Hx---	Saw Hy---	75		5		

The [above table is] the list of the land which was confiscated by the Artillery.

There are 153 acres and no one gives money.

Situation Update written by a KHRG researcher,  
Thaton Township, Thaton District  
(Received in November 2013)

#### Source #74

<b>Log #</b>	13-111-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Daw A---, November 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Research Area:</b> Thaton District	

**Interview Date:** November 2013

**Interview Place:** A--- village

**Name:** Daw A---

**Gender:** Female

**Age:** 40

**Village:** A--- village

**Family Status:** Children

**Occupation:** Collect bamboo

**Position:** Unknown

**Tell me your name.**

My name is Daw A---.

**How old are you?**

I am 40 years old.

**Do you have family?**

Yes I do.

**How many children do you have?**

I have children.

**How old is the eldest child?**

19 years old.

**How about the youngest?**

The youngest one is 11 years old.

**Where do you live? What is the name of your village?**

A--- village.

**What do you do for your livelihood?**

In the dry season, I cut bamboo and I also buy bamboo. The Burmese [Bamar people] come and take [buy] them. Villagers go and cut them [bamboos]. We do this as the whole village and we share the profits. I do not take an unfair share of the profit from it. I take a fair share of the profit.

**So you buy and sell the bamboos. How much do you buy 100 sticks of bamboo for?**

2,500 kyats and the Burmese [Bamar people] buy it for 3,000 kyats.

**Do you know how many houses there are in your village?**

There are almost 200 houses in the village.

**What do most of the other villagers do?**

They do different things, such as making thatch shingles and cutting bamboo.

**Are there villagers who do farming?**

In rainy season there are villagers who do farming, clear vegetation and do hill farming.

**Do all of the villagers have enough rice for the whole year?**

Some have enough and some do not.

**For those who do not have enough rice, where do they go and buy [more rice]?**

They buy [rice] in the village in the shop.

**How much do they have to pay for one basket of rice?**

They sell rice in the dry season. They sell it for 20,000 [kyats] ... I cannot remember how much and I have not bought rice there but they sell it for 950 kyats for one bowl of rice.

**Is there a monastery in your village?**

Yes, there is.

**Is there church?**

No.

**Are there only Karen people [in your village]? Are there any other ethnic [groups] as well?**

It is mostly Karen people. There are some Burmese [Bamar] people as well.

**How many Burmese [Bamar] people are there here?**

There are fewer Burmese [Bamar] people than Karen people. There are more Karen people because it is a Karen village.

**What do they mostly do [for work]?**

They come and buy and sell things.

**Is there a school in your village?**

Yes, there is.

**How many teachers are there?**

There are six teachers, including male and female teachers. Five female teachers and two male teachers. How many is that?

**Seven.**

Yes, there are seven teachers. Four ethnic Burmese [Bamar] teachers; there is one from our village and two Burmese ethnic [Bamar] teachers.

**Was your school set up by the [Myanmar] government?**

Yes, there is also free [education] set up by the [Myanmar] government. We do not need to pay money to send our children to school. In previous years, we have to spend money for books and school registration etc. No expenses this year.

**How about teachers? How do you take care of them?**

We have to contribute 5,000 [kyats] each year.

**Is that for teachers' food or what?**

Yes, it is for them to spend. It is like support money from the villagers.

**What standard does the school go up to?**

It is a primary school up to Standard 4.

**Is there a clinic in your village?**

There is no clinic but there is a health assistant.

**Where is the health assistant from?**

He is from B--- village.

**Is he Karen?**

Yes, he is.



**Was he appointed by the [Myanmar] government?**

No, not from the [Myanmar] government. I am not sure if he was appointed by the [Myanmar] government or not. Ask them [points to a person nearby].

[Person beside her said:] You can say as far as you know.

**Yes, you can tell me as far as you know and if you don't know, tell me that you do not know.**

You can either say that he is from the [Myanmar] government or not from the [Myanmar] government. I do not know how to say. Because he was trained by the [Myanmar] government's [training centre].

**If a villager is seriously sick, where do you send them to?**

We give them to the health assistant and if he cannot deal with it, he suggests that we send them to the lower part [town].

**To where?**

To Bilin [Town].

**You send them from here on foot or by car?**

We carry them [from the village] to the vehicle road and then take them by car [to Bilin Town].

**By car, how long does it take to go from here to Bilin [Town]?**

It is very far. I do not usually go there. It might be an hour or more.

**So if you go to the hospital in Bilin [Town], does it cost money?**

Of course, yes.

**Can we go to the hospital in Bilin [Town] for free?**

I don't think so. I don't know because I have never been there.

**So how about the villagers who do not have money. What do they do?**

I don't know about that. They do not usually go to the hospital. We give them to the health assistant and usually they recover with the treatment here [with the health assistant].

**Is there no organisation that comes and helps you?**

So World Concern has not started [the health care project] yet. Now, there is a children nutrition [project]. So now World Concern is doing that. They distribute food to the children who are below the normal weight and who are small.

**When they come and do that, did they say anything about doing it in the future?**

I don't know. I do not have a baby and I did not go and listen [to their campaign]. They did not come and campaign at my house but sometimes they come and bring [supplies].

**How about education? Is there any support?**

We can say that they support us by building our school. They help us build [the school, and] we do not need to spend our money. They do it by themselves and use their money [for all the] expenses, and we help them with collecting sand or stones for them [to build the school].

**So there is no other organisation that comes and helps with other things?**

No.

**So as you are living here, are U Then Sein's soldiers [Tatmadaw] situated nearby?**

I have not seen Burmese [Tatmadaw] soldiers around here. There are only our village

guards. They are our villagers.

**So are the soldiers ever present around here?**

I have not seen them.

**Did they use to come before?**

Yes they did.

**Was it a long time ago? How long has it been?**

It might have only been a few years ago. One or two years. I think over two years.

**So they do not come anymore?**

No.

**In the past, did they ask the villagers to work as porters?**

They demanded porters a lot.

**What do they mostly ask you to do?**

They ask uncles [men] to work as porters and to do forced labour. They have to go to Prah Tha and do forced labour. They also have to go and help them with the dam. People have to go and do forced labour.

**So they have to go and do forced labour for the dam; was that long ago?**

It has been a long time. The dam has already been destroyed.

**The villagers that they [Tatmadaw] asked to serve as home guards, do they still demand that now?**

Now?

**Yes.**

Yes, they are still doing it.

**Do the villagers want to do that?**

We are Karen, we have to stay united and if our village head asks us to do that then we have to do it together and work together. Isn't it? We have to respect our village head like our parents. Isn't it?

**Sure. So if the villagers serve as home guards, do they provide a salary?**

No, they do not.

**How many days does each villager have to do?**

I don't know how long but we have to do five days a month.

**So if you do not do it yourself, you have to pay money?**

If we do not do it ourselves we have to do something else. If we do not serve as a home guard, we have to serve as a sentry. And if you are 60 years old, you can quit [not work].

**How do you feel about the ceasefire between the Myanmar government and the Karen National Union?**

Myanmar government and Karen government?

**Yes.**

For us, we are really happy because there is peace. It is the same [peaceful as before]. If a separation happens, you and I would not be able to meet anymore. True?

**Yes, it is. So it means you are worried?**

Yes, it does.

**So what do you hope for?**

I wish they are gone [separation].

**So now because of the ceasefire there is peace in the village. In the future, if things get better will the main vehicle road reach here, right?**

It [the vehicle road] reaches up to the place where they keep bamboo [for sale]. It is only good in the dry season. In the rainy season, the cars cannot travel because it [the road] is muddy.

[Third person said:] Sometimes it reaches up to the village.

[Second person said:] Like the wood that I collect for the Burmese [Bamar people], they [the Tatmadaw soldiers] do not come and take it forcibly. I am there if they do.

**So with things like that you have to work together. They live in the town and they come to buy it?**

Yes. They come but they do not cut villagers' log. I am still there [to protect it] if they do.

**It is good if there are people like you, aunty. So you try to protect [the villagers' property] so that they are safe from oppression. Now you answer my questions well. So regarding the village agency workshops that we do like this, what is your opinion of them?**

Like this afternoon?

**Yes.**

I think it is about peace, good and improvement. Isn't it?

**So is there a benefit?**

Yes there is.

**Can you tell me a little about how it benefits you?**

The benefit is that if you [KHRG's organisers] did not come and do this, then we would not know, see and understand [the issues discussed]. And now you came and tell us like this, we understand and understand [more and more]. And that benefits us. Thanks you very much.

**What is your hope for the future? For the coming year.**

In the coming years, if the situation is good, you will still be able to meet us and talk. And if the ceasefire breaks then we will not be able to meet.

**Thank you for answering my questions. For instance, if we come in the future, can we still interview you?**

Yes.

**You are happy to answer [my questions]?**

Yes, thank you a lot if you do.

**Say hello if you see me in future.**

Yes.

**Thank you.**

Yes.

**Source #75**

<b>Log #</b>	13-116-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Incident Report: Extrajudicial killing in Paingkyon Township
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in May 2014 <a href="http://khrgh.org/2014/05/13-116-i1/hpa-an-incident-report-extrajudicial-killing-paingkyon-township-june-2013">http://khrgh.org/2014/05/13-116-i1/hpa-an-incident-report-extrajudicial-killing-paingkyon-township-june-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Paingkyon Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Part 1 – Incident Details**

<b>Type of Incident</b>	Killing
<b>Date of Incident</b>	June 11 <sup>th</sup> 2013
<b>Incident Location</b>	A--- village, Pee Ta Hka village tract, Ta Kreh [Paingkyon] Township, Hpa-an District

<b>Victim Information</b>								
<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Religion</b>	<b>Family</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Village</b>
Hpa Htay Poe	60	Male	Karen	Buddhist	Married	Farming	Villager	Ta Nay Traw
Naw Muh	55	Female	Karen	Buddhist	Married	Farming	Villager	Ta Nay Traw
Naw Tha Pgeh	28	Female	Karen	Buddhist	Unmarried	Farming	Villager	Ta Nay Traw
Naw Hpaw Hkler	13	Female	Karen	Buddhist	Unmarried	Farming	Villager	Ta Nay Traw

<b>Perpetrator Information</b>				
<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander's Name</b>
Commander Kya Aye	Cantonment Area Commander (2)	Border Guard Force <sup>247</sup> [Battalion] #1015	Ya Tah	Unknown

**Part 2 – Information Quality**

<b>1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.</b>
I did not hear [know] about the incident at the time and I received the information during the last three months. When I heard about it, I immediately went to A--- village, asked the

<sup>247</sup> 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 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.

villagers and met with B--- [a villager from A--- village]. He told me about a group of victims. Many people said, *"The father in that family is able to chant spiritual words."*<sup>248</sup> The BGF #1015 Commander Kya Aye heard that and said, *"We should not keep alive someone who is able to chant the spiritual words."* He [Commander Kya Aye] killed him and many other people. I know this information because an A--- villager told me about it.

## 2. Explain how the source verified this information.

BGF soldiers told Saw B---, a villager from A--- village, who killed the necromancer. The [BGF soldiers] asked Saw B--- to bury the bodies [of the family]. Maybe these soldiers were absent-minded to let Saw B--- know [that they were responsible for the murder]. The information is a little bit more detailed, because one or two BGF #1015 soldiers are from Hteh Ra village and lived close to A--- village, and knew Saw B---. That is why we know that they [the BGF soldiers and Saw B---] trusted each other and dared to tell [the information]. Therefore, I believe this information to be the truth.

## Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

**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 an attachment if needed.**

This incident happened on June 11<sup>th</sup> 2013 at around 10:00 pm, at the side of A--- village, Pee Ta Hka village tract,<sup>249</sup> Ta Kreh [Paingkyon] Township, Hpa-an District. There were four people in the family: (1) The father – Hpah Htay Poe, who was 60 years old; (2) The mother – Naw Muh, who was 55 years old; (3) The first daughter – Naw Tha Pweh, who was 28 years old; and (4) The second daughter – Naw Paw Hkler, who was 13 years old. Their village is called Ta Nay Traw (although they temporarily lived in A--- village), Ta Kreh Township, Hpa-an District.

The BGF #1015 Commander Kya Aye asked his men [soldiers] to shoot and kill them all [the man accused of practicing witchcraft and his family]. BGF #1015 Commander Kya Aye said that Hpah Htay Poe [the father] could practice black magic and that he would be able to kill other people with his black magic, so he killed him, his wife and his two daughters. The BGF #1015 Commander, who lives in the Ya Ta BGF #1015 army camp, went to S--- village, Noh Hkwee village tract, Ta Kreh Township, Hpa-an District. He drove a red 'tiger car' with around ten of his men. He arrived in S--- [village] at around 3:00 pm. On June 11<sup>th</sup> 2013, they [the BGF soldiers] had a pork curry dinner together, with a pig that was about 20 kilos. After the meal, they planned to kill Hpah Htay Poe's family members. He asked his six men to kill them, and two of his soldiers named Nyay Maw and Naw Kay accomplished the plan. Before they went, Commander Kya Aye told his men, *"Don't question anything, just kill them all. If you leave any of them alive, they will keep on killing other people with their [black magic]."* So the BGF #1015 soldiers killed Hpah Htay Poe, his wife and his daughters.

This family used to live in Ta Nay Traw village, Meh Pra village tract, Ta Kreh Township,

<sup>248</sup> This is the Karen translation [expression] for someone who practices necromancy.

<sup>249</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

Hpa-an District. When the DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army]<sup>250</sup> was formed during the war, they moved temporarily [from Ta Nay Traw village] to the A--- side of the village and then they lived in A--- village at the eastern part of the riverside called E---. They had lived there for over 20 years already. The KNU [Karen National Union], the KNLA-PC [Karen National Liberation Army/Karen National Union-Peace Council]<sup>251</sup> knew [about the assassination], but they did not have any proof, so none of those armed groups dared to do anything. They just heard people say that, *"Hpah Htay Poe can kill people with his witchcraft."* No one knew exactly if the people who had been killed were able to kill people with their witchcraft.

When the BGF #1015 soldiers arrived at Hpah Htay Poe's hut, they told Hpah Htay Poe to come down [the ladder of] his house and they shot him in his chest. He [Hpah Htay Poe] was dead before he climbed down the ladder. Then they called Naw Muh and her two daughters to come down and [after the family did], they [the soldiers] shot and killed them [the family] all at the same time. After that, they pulled down Hpah Htay Poe's dead body from the hut. They searched his hut and they found two golden necklaces and some Myanmar money. After that, they burned down the whole hut.

Regarding all of this information: we knew [about what happened] when BGF #1015 soldiers returned and told A--- villager, Saw B---, what had happened. His [Saw B---'s] village was close [to the village where the incident occurred] and they [the BGF soldiers and Saw B---] knew each other. The BGF soldiers also asked Saw B--- to bury the dead bodies [of the four persons] that they had killed. After one and a half days, the A--- villagers buried the dead bodies of Hpah Htay Poe's family.

These six BGF #1015 soldiers fulfilled the order completely. They gave the two golden necklaces and the Myanmar money that they brought to their commander, but the commander did not accept those things. I know that he gave those things to his soldiers who went [fulfilled the order].

When I took the [below] photos, I was standing next to Hpah Htay Poe's hut at his grave. I also mentioned the date [in the photo set] when the photos were taken. The district leader asked me for some photos, so I had to give him some photos. I gave him only five photos and kept all the remaining photos for KHRG.

There were two sets of photos: (1) the hut and compound that was burned down, and (2) the grave where the dead bodies were buried. I took the photos on the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2013 I went along with A--- villager called Saw B--- to take the photos.

Finally, Hpah Htay Poe's [third] daughter got married, and she is currently living in Brigade #6 [Dooplaya District] at the side of K--- [area]. I heard that she was looking for ways to get help after what had been done to her parents and siblings. Because she lives far away from me, it is not easy for us to meet each other. I cannot say exactly what her opinion is

<sup>250</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "Inside the DKBA," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.

<sup>251</sup> The KNU/KNLA Peace Council (also called the Karen Peace Council or KPC), is an armed group based in Htoh Gkaw Ko, Hpa-an District, which split from the Karen National Union (KNU) in 2007 and subsequently refused to comply with orders from the then-SPDC government to transform its forces into the Tatmadaw Border Guard. See: "[KPC to be outlawed if it rejects BGF](#)," *Burma News International*, August 30<sup>th</sup> 2010.

about that case and whether [action will be taken] in the future.

#### **Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details**

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

Because the victims' daughter is not living close to the place that the accident happened, I think we can use and mention [publish] the information as necessary.

Incident Report written by a community member, A--- village, Paingkon Township, Hpa-an District, (Received in November 2013)

#### **Source #76**

<b>Log #</b>	13-117-A6-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw M--- (female, about 50), received on November 13 <sup>th</sup> 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>I am M---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I do not know. It might be about 50.</p> <p><b>What type of Karen [ethnicity] are you? Shan, Burmese or Karen?</b></p> <p>Karen, I live among Karen.</p> <p><b>What religion do you believe in?</b></p> <p>Buddhism.</p> <p><b>What do you do for your livelihood?</b></p> <p>I am a farmer.</p> <p><b>Do you have family?</b></p> <p>Yes, I do.</p> <p><b>How many children do you have?</b></p> <p>I have four children.</p> <p><b>How old is the eldest one?</b></p> <p>30 years old maybe.</p>	



**What about the youngest?**

The youngest one is seven years old.

**What village do you live in?**

I live in M--- village.

**Have you lived in M--- village all of your life?**

I used to live in M--- P---- when I was unmarried.

**Has it been long? Did you live anywhere else after living in M--- P----?**

I married a villager from M--- and I live in M--- village.

**Has any armed group reached your village? People who carry guns? It can be any group. For example, have the KNU reached your area?**

Yes, they have.

**What else? How about the BGF [Border Guard Force]?**

Yes, they have reached [the village] as well.

**What about Their Sein's government soldiers? Have they reached here?**

I do not know if they have reached here or not. I don't think so.

**So are there any armed groups in the village now?**

I do not travel much. [She asked someone at her house] "Are they?" [He answered] Yes, they are.

**Currently in M--- village?**

Yes, they are.

**Which group? KNU, BGF, DKBA or Tatmadaw?**

BGF.

**Do they [just] come occasionally or do they stay there [permanently]?**

They stay there.

**How long have they been there? Has it been long time?**

It might be for periods of months because they stay in rotation in months.

**They always rotate?**

Yes, I do not know how they call them [time period].

**When they stay in the village how do they behave towards the villagers? Are they**

**abusive? Good or bad?**

I don't know. You would have to ask the elder [village head].

**Ok.**

I do not travel much.

**Have the BGF ever been to your house to visit?**

They visited during the happening [conflict].

**How did it happen?**

The one that you told me.

**Ok, what problems happened? It happened with you not with me.**

I don't know. I have to go [often] and I am tired of going.

**Go to where?**

They call us to go [to] M--- K---, T—L--- etc.

**What did they ask or tell you when you got there?**

They asked us to stay good and eat well.

**Who caused the problems?**

I don't know. What is his name [asking to someone beside her]?

**Your children or who?**

It was my daughter.

**What is the name of your daughter? Ma T--- or Ma S---? Ma Z---?**

Yes, Ma Z---

**Oh, what I knew was Ma S---. How old is she?**

She might be 27 or 28.

**Is she married?**

No she is not. She stays with me.

**You said Ma Z---. What is her problem?**

It was nothing [special]. That guy did her and she became like that and we have to go.

**Who was the guy who did her?**

What is his name? [She asks someone besides her]

**You do not know his name? It is OK if you don't. Is he a villager or a soldier?**

Soldier.

**Which soldier? BGF or Tatmadaw?**

Might be BGF.

**Do you know his commander?**

I don't know.

**You don't know? He lives in your village?**

Yes.

**What did he do to your daughter?**

He kissed her.

**How about other thing? Was there anything else [that he did]?**

No other thing.

**He kissed her in your house or where?**

In my house.

**Were you at home when he kissed her?**

Yes, I saw it.

**Oh, it is difficult that [she] did not know his name. When did the incident happen?**

It was a full moon.

**Which month?**

It was in Wa Gaung month.

**So [according to the Western calendar] it was on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2013. How about after that [kissing]? Did you report it to anyone?**

I was angry and I went to his commander.

**Who is his commander?**

I do not know [how people address him] but I call him Pweh Kay.

**It was good. You did not know his name but you went to him [to report]. How did they plan then?**

They said no more things like that [would happen] in future, stay good.

**When they did that, was M--- village head there?**

I took Maung J---'s father to accompany me.

**So the village head was there?**

Yes.

**What did they do then after abusing your daughter's dignity? How did they apologise to you or appeal to you?**

They paid one or two hundred thousand kyat.

**One or two? Can you tell me exactly?**

I don't know one or two because I was not there when they came the second time because I cannot walk [far].

**Has she received one or two hundred thousand?**

She might have received all of it.

**Tell me exactly. Say yes if she has received all of it and say no if she has not received all of it.**

I cannot go [to the meetings] anymore.

**How much did they pay?**

Two hundred.

**Thai Bath or Burmese Kyat?**

Burmese Kyat.

**How about after their arrangement. How was her health?**

She passed out and seized up as she was thinking too much [about the incident].

**So where did you go for medical treatment?**

She might take the medicine that is good for [treating] seizing up action [fainting].

**Where did you go?**

To the town.

**Which town?**

Big town.

**Does it have another name? Big town like Mawlimyune or Yangon?**

No, not like Yangon. The town that Pu Thaw Hka [Myaing Gyi Ngu Monk] lives in. We call it big town.

**Pwe Hta grandpa Monk?**

No, Myainggyi Ngu town.

**In Myainggyi Ngu town?**

Yes.

**Oh, you call it Myainggyi Ngu big town?**

Yes.

**So now your daughter is receiving medical treatment there?**

Yes.

**So her part [involvement] with the BGF is now finished?**

Yes.

**So you have been questioned a lot. Do you have anything to add that I did not cover in my questions? You can talk more if you would like to.**

No, I do not want to talk more.

**Can you accept if they [we] share the information with other information department? For example, I will share your information with other people who want to know. Can I, I don't know, send the information here and there?**

Go for it. I cannot go anymore.

**Thanks.**

Thanks.

#### Source #77

<b>Log #</b>	13-117-12
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Incident Report: Bu Tho Township, August 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b><u>Part 1 – Incident Details</u></b>	
<b>Type of Incident</b>	Sexual harassment
<b>Date of Incident</b>	August 21 <sup>st</sup> 2013

<sup>252</sup> 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 Burmese 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.

<b>Incident Location</b>	A--- village, Meh P'Lee village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District				A--- village, Ta Township, Hpapun District
<b>Victim Information</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Ma B---				
<b>Age</b>	28				
<b>Sex</b>	Female				
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen				
<b>Family</b>	No				
<b>Occupation</b>	Flat field farmer				
<b>Religion</b>	Buddhist				
<b>Position</b>	Villager				
<b>Village</b>	A--- village				
<b>Perpetrator Information</b>					
<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander's Name</b>	
Saw Dah Tu	Sergeant	BGF #1014	K'Taing Tee BGF army camp	Commander Saw Maung Chit	
<b>Part 2 – Information Quality</b>					
<b>1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.</b>					
As soon as I heard about this sexual harassment case I went to C--- village and gathered Ma B---, her mother and her other neighbours. I gathered them and asked them the questions about the incident that had happened. I also took some photos of them. I did not go inside A--- village because the BGF soldiers are active there and because Ma B--- is hospitalised in Myaing Gyi Ngu.					
<b>2. Explain how the source verified this information.</b>					
The people who provided information about this incident are the people who know the facts of this incident very well. They are Ma B---'s mother and the former village administrator.					
<b>Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident</b>					
<b>Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail. For each incident, be sure to include 1) <u>when</u> the incident happened, 2) <u>where</u> it happened, 3) <u>what</u> happened, 4) <u>how</u> it happened, 5) <u>who</u> was involved, and 6) <u>why</u> 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 an attachment if needed.</b>					
A couple of days before the incident happened, fighting broke out between the Border Guard Force [BGF] <sup>253</sup> and the Karen National Liberation Army [KNLA] in a place called					

<sup>253</sup> 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 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.

Weh Kyi, K'Ma Maung town. During the fighting, many of the BGF soldiers got injured, so they were not satisfied. As a consequence, they [the BGF soldiers] went to A--- village with the intent to attack the KNLA. They arrived in the village on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2013.

The soldiers that came into the village were BGF #1014<sup>254</sup> Sergeant Saw Dah Tu and his soldiers who are led by Battalion Commander Saw Maung Chit.<sup>255</sup> The Battalion stayed at Ma C---'s house. While they were staying at Ma B---'s house at nighttime, at around 9:00 pm, Saw Dah Tu went into Ma B---'s bedroom and sexually harassed her [forcibly kissed her].

The incident happened on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2013. Ma B--- is the victim while BGF #1014 Sergeant Daw Dah Tu is the perpetrator. The incident took place in A--- village, Meh P'Lee village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District.

Incident Report written by a KHRG researcher,  
Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District  
(Received in November 2013)

#### Source #78

<b>Log #</b>	13-117-S1
<b>Title</b>	Situation Update   Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District (August to October 2013)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in February 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/02/13-117-s1/hpapun-situation-update-bu-tho-township-august-october-2013">http://khrq.org/2014/02/13-117-s1/hpapun-situation-update-bu-tho-township-august-october-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	Since the Karen National Liberation [Army] and Thein Sein's government or Nay Pyi Daw government signed the ceasefire agreement, <sup>256</sup> we have to admit that human rights abuse, forced labour, [including] sentry and messenger [duty], are decreasing.

<sup>254</sup> KHRG continues to receive reports discussing abuses involving BGF Battalion #1013 and #1014, including: "[BGF Battalion #1014 forced labour and forced recruitment, April to May 2012](#)," KHRG, June 2013; "[Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, November 2011 to July 2012](#)," KHRG, April 2013; "[Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, August to September 2012](#)," KHRG, April 2013 and "[Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, July to October 2012](#)," KHRG, April 2013. Further reports detailing abuses involving these battalions are also available on the KHRG website.

<sup>255</sup> Commander Maung Chit, also referred to as Maw Hsee, is the commander for Tatmadaw Border Guard Force (BGF) battalion #1014 in Hpapun District. Maung Chit is not to be confused with Maung Chit Thu (typically referred to as Chit Thu), who is a senior level BGF commander overseeing battalions #1017, #1018, #1019 and #1020 in Ko Ko, Hpa-an District.

<sup>256</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma government in Hpa-an, Kayin State. Negotiators from the two parties met for a 2<sup>nd</sup> round of talks on April 4<sup>th</sup>, where they signed a more detailed preliminary ceasefire plan, and held a 3<sup>rd</sup> round of negotiations on September 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> 2012; see "[Preliminary Ceasefire Talks](#)," *Karen National Union*, April 4<sup>th</sup> 2012; "[KNU Delegations Departs for the Third Round Negotiation of Ceasefire with the Burmese Government](#)," *Karen National Union*, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2012. In 2013, the ceasefire process became a nationwide effort. On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 17 ethnic armed groups signed a joint proposal for a nationwide ceasefire in Laiza, Kachin State; see "[Burma's armed ethnic groups sign nation-wide ceasefire pledge in Laiza](#)," *Kachin News*, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. Two days later in Myitkyina, Kachin State, the EAGs presented their proposal to a Burma government delegation, which then presented its own plan. The Government rejected the EAG's proposal for a multi-ethnic federal army, the EAGs requested more time to review, and both sides agreed to meet again; see "[Myanmar Peace Talks Fail to Nail Down Cease-Fire Agreement](#)," *Radio Free Asia*, November 5<sup>th</sup> 2013. On January 25<sup>th</sup> 2014, in Law Khee Lar,



However, we cannot say that it [human rights abuses] have decreased in every part of Karen State. Especially in the places where both the Nay Pyi Daw government [Tatmadaw] and KNU [Karen National Union/ Karen National Liberation Army] control the area, or the places where media groups cannot reach, such as Meh P'Lee village tract, Meh K'Law village tract, the Tatmadaw are still committing human rights abuses. So, I have included it in the situation update [reporting on issues occurring] between August 30<sup>th</sup> and October 31<sup>st</sup> 2013.

For the people who live in places where media groups cannot access, even when they are forced to do labour or tortured, they do not know where and who to report the abuse that they have suffered to, and they also do not know that they can talk to the parliament about the abuse. The local people also do not understand human rights. Because of that, the local villagers are always being ordered to do forced labour, sentry, messenger, porter, [as well as face] sexual harassment or abuse towards women. These kinds of abuses are still happening in the areas that I mentioned above.

Before the ceasefire talk, the Tatmadaw, in particular, was committing the human rights abuse and, after the ceasefire talk, we can say that the Tatmadaw reduced [the frequency with which they were] abusing human rights. Even though we can say that they reduce it, the BGF [Border Guard Force],<sup>257</sup> which is led by the Tatmadaw, is still sexually abusing the women and abusing human rights. Moreover, they also ordered the villagers to serve as messengers and sentries in their camp everyday, to use them when they need anything to be done. We can still see that the villagers are still being ordered by the BGF to serve as sentries. Likewise, the BGF [soldiers] also use drugs, such as beer and hard liquor, which are sold illegally, and go around the village and sexually abuse the women. They would not have sexually abuse the woman if they were not intoxicated, but they did it after using a lot of drugs.<sup>258</sup>

If I have to talk about the incident precisely, on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2013, Ma P--- was sexually harassed when the BGF from Weh Gyi area came into the village on that day. The person who committed the abuse is the sergeant, Saw Dah Tu; he committed it when he drank a lot of alcohol and got drunk while staying at Ma P---'s house.

At 9:00 pm that night, BGF #1014's Sergeant Saw Dah Tu went into Ma P---'s room while he was drunk and sexually harassed her. That was on August 21<sup>st</sup> 2013 and the location is S--- village, Meh P'Lee village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District, in Ma P---'s house. Ma P---'s mother, Ma Hs--- or [also referred to as] Naw W---, went to see Saw Dah Tu's BGF #1014 *Bo*<sup>259</sup> Saw Tin Win and told him about the incident. Because of that *Bo* Tin Win gave

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Karen State, 17 ethnic armed groups agreed to an updated proposal to be presented to the Burma government in Hpa-an in February 2014; see ["Ethnic armed groups sign 11-point nationwide ceasefire draft," Myanmar Freedom Daily](#), January 26<sup>th</sup> 2014. For more information on the ceasefire and how it has affected local villagers, see ["Safeguarding human rights in a post-ceasefire eastern Burma," KHRG](#), January 2012 and ["Steps towards peace: Local participation in the Karen ceasefire process," KHRG](#), November 2012.

<sup>257</sup> 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 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.

<sup>258</sup> The community member uses the word 'drug' referring to alcohol in the case.

<sup>259</sup> *Bo* is a Burmese title meaning 'officer.'

her 200,000 kyat (US \$203.05)<sup>260</sup> as compensation for what his comrade sergeant had done.

And the other human rights abuse is forced labour, such as forced labour or ordering the villagers to serve as sentries without paying them. The armed groups that came and based their camp in S--- village, Meh P'Lee village tract, Bu Tho Township are BGF #1013 and BGF #1014.<sup>261</sup> Since they started building their army camps and, until now, October 30<sup>th</sup> 2013, they order the villagers to serve as *set tha* [messengers]<sup>262</sup> and sentries. The villagers also will have to guide them and porter their stuffs and weapons for them. Until now, while the KHRG community member is interviewing the villagers, the BGF is still ordering the villagers to serve as messengers and sentries. The community member interviewed Saw T-- , who is 37 years old.

Moreover, the Hpapun Agriculture Department staff, Saw Ah Ei, or [also named] Ja Ei, raped the Ei--- villager, Ma D---, who is only 25 years old. The rape case happened on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013 in Hpapun Town, [section # censored for security], Meh K'Law village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District. The perpetrator is U Ah Ei or U Ja Ei (31 years old, father's name U Htun Hla Shwe), and he is a staff from Hpapun Agriculture Department. The abuse happen when Ma D--- went to the water pump, which is located close to U Ja Ei's house. Because of the sexual abuse that the son had done, U Htun Hla Shwe, who is U Ja Ei's father, compensated 300,000 kyat (US \$304.57) to Ma D---. However, U Ja Ei or U Ah Ei is still kept in the jail in Hpapun Town and has not been released yet.

Furthermore, I also want to report about the development projects [happening] since the ceasefire talk. The vehicle road from Hpapun Town to K'Ma Maung, called Aung Theint Dee town, is being repaired and developed with cement. The repairing and developing started on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2013. The bridges along the Aung Theint Dee vehicle road, which are still in the process of being developed, are the T'Kone Taing village's bridge, Hway Hsan village's bridge and Nyi Naung [village's] bridge, which is located close to Ma Htaung village.

The T'Kone Taing Bridge is 60 feet long and it was built with the concrete, so the cost is 173 billion kyat (US \$175,634,517.77). It was built by the engineer, Ko Min Thant, who is from the branch of the Burma [government] construction ministry special group #13. The Hway Hsan Bridge is also built by the Burma construction ministry special group #13, but it was led by Engineer Daw Yin Nwe. The bridge is 50 feet long and it is also built by cement so, the cost is 167.80 billion [kyat] (US \$170,558,375.63).

The Nyi Naung Bridge, which is located close to Ma Htaung village, is still in the process of being constructed and repaired by the Burma construction ministry special group (13), which is led by Engineer Daw Yin Nwe. The bridge is 60 feet long and it costs 164.30 billion. The bridges that are mentioned were all started to be constructed and repaired on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2013, and some of them are still in the process of constructing.

Everything that mentioned above happened between August 30<sup>th</sup> 2013 and October 31<sup>st</sup>

<sup>260</sup> As of February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014, all conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the official market rate of 985 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>261</sup> KHRG continues to receive reports discussing abuses involving BGF Battalions #1013 and #1014, including: "[BGF Battalion #1014 forced labour and forced recruitment, April to May 2012](#)," KHRG, June 2013; "[Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, November 2011 to July 2012](#)," KHRG, April 2013; "[Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, August to September 2012](#)," KHRG, April 2013 and "[Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, July to October 2012](#)," KHRG, April 2013.

<sup>262</sup> *Set tha* is a Burmese term for forced labour duty, such as with messengers stationed at army camps or bases, serving as an intermediary to deliver orders from army officers to village heads, but also involving other menial tasks when no messages are in need of delivery.

2013. Just as the human rights abuse has change positively, like vehicle construction, there are also some negative changes.

**Source #79**

<b>Log #</b>	13-119-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Mu Ghar A---, October 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Section ---, Hpapun Town, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Research Area: Hpapun District****Name:** Mu Ghar A---**Location:** Section ---, Hpapun Town**Position:** Village Head**Date:** October 7<sup>th</sup> 2013**Gender:** Female**Age:** 64**Ethnicity:** Karen**Religion:** Christian**What is your name?**

Mu Ghar A---.

**How old are you?**

I'm 64 years old.

**Where is your village?**

I live in Section ---, Hpapun Town.

**What is your ethnicity?**

I'm Karen ethnicity.

**What is your religion?**

I'm Christian.

**What is the village tract of Hpapun Town?**

I do not know the village tract of Hpapun Town.

**What about the township and district?**

[No answer].

**Do you have family?**

I do not have family. My husband passed away.

**How many children do you have?**

I have eight children in total. Four of them passed away and four of them are alive.

**How old is your oldest child?**

My oldest child is 44 years old.

**How old is your youngest child?**

My oldest child is 27 years old.

**What is your role in your village?**

I am village head.

**How many years have you served as village head?**

Before, I served for --- [censored for security reasons] years as a village head and I have been retired for --- years [censored for security reasons]. And currently I have resumed as a village head for --- years already [censored for security reasons].

**What are your roles as you are village head?**

Now, they [the Myanmar government] pay me 70,000 kyats per month.

**What are your responsibilities?**

Because I'm working they provide me with a salary. I have to manage the villagers and to make everything go smoothly in the village. If the [Myanmar] government administrator asked us to do anything related to the village, then we have to work for them.

**How many households are there in your village?**

There are --- households [censored for security reasons].

**How many villagers?**

There are around --- villagers in total including both men and women [censored for security reasons].

**Can you tell me about the situation in your village?**

There are only poor people in my village. We work in the morning and eat in the afternoon [subsistence farming]. Some people don't even have enough food. We go and ask for food from the [Myanmar] government [local administration office] and sometimes they do give us some food. Sometimes we can't get food from the [Myanmar] government but most of the time we can get food because there are only poor people, widows and orphans in the village.

They work on rubber plantations, cashew plantations, swidden farming [rotational farming] and paddy farming. There are no rich people.

**Do they have enough food for each day by doing that?**

For some of them, if they have work they are fine for each day. For others, because they do not have work they have to borrow money from other people and they are in debt. If some of our villagers are in a really difficult situation then we go and ask for food for them from the village leaders and they do give us food.

**Is the time and situation of their work okay?**

Yes. It is okay. In the past, when they [Tatmadaw] sent rations [to their army camps] and had work to do, they ordered us [to do forced labour]. They do not order us to do forced labour anymore. For cleaning our houses' gardens and village, we have to do it ourselves because they belong to us.

**Are there demands for forced labour? If not, how did they [Tatmadaw] do it?**

Now, there are no demands for forced labour. They do not order us. Even if they order us, we will not do it. They only ask us to clean our houses' gardens and village.

**How do they do that?**

We do not know how they do that. The order came that they must not order forced labour anymore so they do not dare to order us.

**So, when they order forced labour, do they have to make a request?**

Yes. They make a request [for workers]; like who is ordering who. But there is no forced labour anymore. The Burmese [Tatmadaw] soldiers cannot and dare not order us to do forced labour now.

**Are there any threats from the armed groups?**

No, they dare not threaten us. If they [Tatmadaw] ask people to carry baggage for them they hire [pay] them. They do not hire people in our village and they dare not order us. I heard from people in section #4 [Hpapun Town] that they ask for and hire people usually for when people from the mountain come to the town and they carry things back with them and they pay them [for this work].

**What things did they ask people to carry?**

Food.

**Is that the Myanmar government [Tatmadaw] soldiers?**

They are Myanmar government [Tatmadaw] soldiers. They asked people to carry food, cigarettes, salt, fish paste, dry frogs and dry fish to their frontline camp which is based in Hkaw Poo area.

**You said they gave them money when they asked them to carry things, right?**

Yes. They paid them money.

**Do you think they paid a fair price?**

Yes. They paid a fair price. If they do not pay a fair price then the villagers would not do it. They [villagers] have clearly said that.

**So, the villager carried it for them?**

Yes. The villagers carried it for them.

**Do you think the KNU knows that they [the Tatmadaw] asked villagers to carry food for them?**

I think they know because villagers carry them openly. The KNU do not disturb them.

**What about in the past? What if the KNU knew [that villagers had been asked to carry goods for the Tatmadaw]?**

If the KNU knew, they confiscated everything.

**When the KNU took their food like that, how did that affect their [the Tatmadaw's] relationship with the villagers?**

Nothing happened because the KNU had already taken it all. They [the Tatmadaw] could not do anything because the villagers did not want to give it away.

**Did they ask villagers to pay for the price [of the confiscated goods]?**

No, they did not ask villagers to pay. I had not heard that.

**Does it happen like that now?**

No. It does not happen.

**Can you work and travel freely in your village?**

We can work and travel freely in our village. There is no disturbance now. Villagers can travel and work freely. In the past, if villagers went to sleep in their hut in their swidden farms [rotational farms], they had to inform them [the Tatmadaw]. If villagers did not inform them and if they [the Tatmadaw] saw villagers they suspected them as outsiders and they would shoot and kill them. Villagers had to inform the sections' leaders and get a recommendation letter from the Tatmadaw if they wanted to sleep in their hut.

**What about now? Do you have to go and inform them [the Tatmadaw] if you have to go somewhere?**

No. Now, villagers only have to inform the section leaders. If they do not have an identification card, the section leaders provide a recommendation letter [travel document] for them. Villagers do not need a recommendation letter if they have an identification card. The important thing is [to have] an identification card.

**What do you think about the situation before the ceasefire and after the ceasefire?**

Things are different.

**How is that different?**

There is no more fighting and no more forced labour. While we are traveling we have not heard a sound of gun fire. In the past, when we heard a gun fire while we were collecting vegetables, we ran back to our village. That does not happen anymore.

**Do you have a school in your village?**

Yes. We do have a school.

**Do the students have to pay school fees?**

For school, the [Myanmar] government provides notebooks to the students. The students have to pay some money for the drinking water containers and for brooms.

**So, students do not have to pay for the school fees and notebooks fees?**

They [students] do not need to pay this year. They had to pay in previous years.

**Are there any organisations which give support to the school?**

I have not heard about that. The female school teachers do not tell me anything.

**Does the KNU come and give support to the school like providing notebooks?**

I have not heard about that either. A few months ago, I heard the [Myanmar] government sent notebooks and pencils to the school to be given to the students.

**Are they allowed to teach Karen language in your school?**

They do not teach Karen language here. They teach Myanmar and English.

**Is that because the [Myanmar] government does not allow them to [teach Karen language]?**

I do not know if the [Myanmar] government does not allow it or whether the school does not have teachers to teach the Karen language. In the past, Major Khin Htoo and his Tatmadaw officers who used to be based here [in Section ---], they wanted to learn Karen language so they asked the Section #4 village head to come and teach them here.

**Do they still ask people to teach them Karen language now?**

No, they do not ask people anymore and Major Khin Htu is not based here anymore. He moved to another place. He asked people to teach him [Karen language] because he wanted to learn it while he stayed here.

**Can the school in your village teach students freely?**

Yes, they can teach freely.

**Do any armed groups come and disturb the school?**

No. There is no disturbance from the Tatmadaw or Karen armed groups.

**How many students are there in the school?**

Before, I heard from the female school teacher that there are 80 students in total. But I do



not know how many students there are now.

**Up to what standard are do they at the school?**

They teach up to Standard 4.

**How many school teachers do you have?**

There are four female school teachers.

**How much does a school teacher get paid per month?**

The female school principals get 180,000 kyats per month. The other three school teachers get 170,000 kyats, 160,000 kyats and 150,000 kyats respectively per month.

**Is there a monastery or a church in your village?**

There is a church but no monastery. It is a Roman Catholic church.

**Can the Roman Catholic church [conduct] worship freely?**

Yes, they can worship freely. A few months ago, I heard the Hpapun district administrator [of the Myanmar government] went and donated 40 sacks of rice to the church.

**Is there healthcare available in your village?**

In the past, we went to the hospital when we were sick. Now, a female health worker at the village level gives treatment to the villagers. We have to pay her for the medicine fees because she buys it by herself. We can call her anytime, even at night time and we pay her.

**So she is not a [Myanmar] government health worker?**

No, she is not a [Myanmar] government health worker. She received medical training from the [Myanmar] government. Before she used to work [as medic] in the hospital. She can treat diseases that are not serious but if villagers suffer a serious disease then they have to go to the hospital for treatment.

**Do you have to pay when you go to the hospital?**

Yes, we have to pay but we have to pay less now. Now, the [Myanmar] government health department directed the hospital staff to support the poor patients with rice, salt, fish paste, shrimp paste, and cooking oil when they come to the hospital. It does not cost like before. They do not ask for money if the patients are really poor and do not have any money. If the patients have money, they ask them and the patients give [pay] them. If they are really poor then they go to meet with the health department leaders and they solve it for them.

**When the patients go to the hospital and are then discharged, if they do not have money to pay, do they have the option to pay at a later time? Or do they have to pay immediately?**

No, they can choose the time [to pay]. If they are really poor then they can go and talk to the health department leaders and they solve it for them.

**What are the most common diseases affecting people in your village?**

It is malaria. People get fever and are sick. That is all I know. I do not know about any other

diseases.

**How much does one viss<sup>263</sup> of pork cost in your village?**

[It costs] 4,000 kyats per viss of pork.

**How much does one viss of chicken cost in your village?**

[It costs] 6,000 kyats per viss of chicken.

**How much does one big tin of rice cost in your village?**

There are different types of rice. Some of them cost 800 kyats, 1,000 kyats, 1,200 kyats or 1,500 kyats per bowl of rice.

**Do your villagers have enough food each year?**

If they do not have [produce] enough food then they have to buy it in the village or at a shop. If they do not have [produce] enough food from swidden farming [rotational farming], they have to buy it [food]. There are many villagers who do not have enough food from swidden farming because their paddies are not very productive. They always have to buy rice.

**What do you think are the percentages of villagers who have enough food and villagers who do not have enough food? How are they different?**

I think they each have the same percentage. But in general, there is a higher percentage of villagers who do not have enough food because most of them work in the swidden farms [rotational farms]. They have to buy rice at the shop. Sometimes, if they still do not have rice then we go to meet with the district administrator and he gives them some rice. A few months ago he gave some rice to the villagers.

**They do not have to pay when they go to ask the district administrator [for rice]?**

No, they do not have to pay for it [rice]. It is free.

**Did he give rice per person or per household?**

He gave the rice per person. A few months ago, he donated 20 sacks of rice to the villagers in Section --- so we shared the rice and divided it into --- [proportion of] a sack of rice per person. We gave that to everyone in the Section.

**If villagers do not have food, they can go and ask from the district administrator?**

Yes, they can.

**What about villagers from the mountain areas? Can they go and ask for rice from the district administrator?**

Yes, if they go and ask for rice, he is willing to help but people do not accept them. Last time when I went to meet him, he told me that he would like to provide solar panels and rice to the mountainous villagers but because the villagers there do not agree with him he could not donate it to them. Now, they would like to construct roads, schools and libraries but they do not have permission from the senior leaders [of the KNU] yet so he could not achieve those

<sup>263</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

plans yet.

**Who did not agree?**

The Karen people from the mountainous villages.

**What kind of people opposed this plan?**

They are the Karen armed group [KNLA].

**Why did not they allow them?**

Because I think if they allowed these plans, they would be worried that they would lose their dignity and [their] reputation will be affected. Some of the villagers who do not have enough food come and take them secretly because they are worried that the KNU will find out and if the KNU finds out they would not allow villagers [to take donations from the Myanmar government].

**When the KNU do not allow villagers to get free donations like this, do you think the KNU can help villagers who do not have enough food?**

Because they [the KNU] could not support villagers, that's why villagers come and ask for food. If they could support villagers, the villagers would not come and ask for food.

**What do you think about that?**

We can't say anything. They do not allow their villagers to come and ask for food but they could not support them either. But when their villagers come and ask for food like this and if people support their villagers and people see that they cannot support their villagers then they will worry that they will lose their reputation.

**Do villagers from the mountain areas come and ask for food every month or just occasionally? And when the villagers come and ask for food, does he [district administrator] give it to them?**

They come and ask for food only occasionally. They only come when they really do not have enough food. A few weeks ago, the villagers came and asked for food and he provided them 20 sacks of rice.

**What do people in your Section that do not have enough food do?**

Sometimes if they go and ask for help from the district administrator, he provides them with food.

**What if they do not go and ask for help, what else would they do?**

They find a job and when they get money, they just go and buy them [rice] at the shop. There are lots of jobs available in the area. If they are willing to work, they can buy rice. If they are lazy, they won't find food.

**How do people in your village earn their income?**

There is no other way to earn income. There is no funding.

**How much do people who offer to hire [workers] pay per day?**

They are different. They might pay 3,000 kyats, 4,000 kyats, 4,500 kyats or 5,000 kyats per day. Some jobs are carpenter, cleaning the plantations and other things... Women get 3,500 kyats and men get 4,000 kyats to 5,000 kyats.

**What types of jobs are there?**

Mostly, the work is cleaning the plantations because many people plant rubber trees. So they hire people to clean the rubber plantations for them. There are also people who do logging. There is work planting paddy, harvesting paddy in the farms and carrying paddy.

**Do you have enough water and electricity in your village?**

Water and electricity are fine now.

**Do you have electricity for day and night?**

We do not have [electricity] at day time but we have it at night. Because we get electricity from hydroelectric power now, when it is summer there is less water and so it doesn't produce enough electricity.

**Do you have to pay water bills and electricity bills?**

We do not have to pay water bills but for the electricity bill we have to pay by a metre. Sometimes it costs between 1,000 kyats and 2,000 kyats per month. But sometimes it costs 700 kyats and 800 kyats. If you use more electricity you have to pay more like that. Some people use electricity for ironing, cooking, and watching television so it costs them more.

**When the [Myanmar] government official comes and asks for [payment of] the electricity bill, do people have to pay them immediately regardless of whether they have money or not? Or do they give them an extra day to pay the bill?**

Some people pay the bill after three or four months if they do not have money. If people tell them [the government officials] that they do not have the money yet then they go back. They pay it when they have money.

**Is there gambling in your village? If you have seen it can you tell me a little bit about it please?**

There is no gambling. But there are people who sell two digit lottery and three digit lottery tickets. They do not sell them often, but they do sell them sometimes. There is no gambling like playing cards or *ani taung* [Burmese gambling game with dice].

**What about in other sections?**

I think there is [gambling] in other sections.

**Does the [Myanmar] government allow this?**

The [Myanmar] government does not allow them but they do it secretly.

**Does the [Myanmar] government not know about this because they do it secretly in the town?**

They might know but because people don't have enough food they might understand them.

**Do they have to bribe them?**

I think some people might bribe them in some way but some might not.

**Have you heard of any problems happening because of gambling, like putting people in debt or causing family problems like that?**

I have not heard about that.

**Do the KNU soldiers and Tatmadaw soldiers come to your village since the ceasefire?**

I have not seen the KNU soldiers. In the past, they did sometimes come like patrolling for a short time and then they would leave but I did not see that. I heard about it from other people.

**Did villagers meet them when they came?**

I did not see them. I do not know. I heard they met with the village head when they came.

**Did they meet peacefully?**

It was okay. There were no problems. They cooked and ate together. They had a conversation.

**Did they demand things when they came?**

No. They did not demand anything.

**What about the Tatmadaw soldiers, have they ever been here?**

The Tatmadaw soldiers have been here a lot. They come but they do not dare to demand things like in the past. They do not say anything. If they want something they buy it with their own money. If people do not sell them things they cannot force them to now.

**What about the KNU soldiers, do they come and ask for anything?**

No, they do not. Sometimes we have to pay them swidden farm fees and provide them with some help.

**Does the Myanmar government come and carry out any development projects for your village?**

They came and repaired a school for us. They are going to build a library for us this year. They are also going to extend a school building for us. We have already submitted the proposal.

**Regarding the library, do the villagers have to build it themselves or will they come and build it for the villagers?**

They do not come and build it for us. We will have to build it ourselves when we receive the money from them.

**Will they pay the costs?**

Yes, they will pay all of the costs.

**Have they come and done this kind of project in the past?**

No, they have never done that. In the past, they were going to build a library for us but we did not accept because we thought that it would be a waste because there is no one who would read. We thought it would be enough [better] if they built a school for us.

**When they came and built a school, did everything go smoothly?**

Yes, it went smoothly because they paid all of the costs. Last year, the school building that they had built was a little bit small because we only requested a small amount of money in our proposal. Because the school building is small we need to build a bigger school building. They said we will receive more money this year.

**What is your view of the KNU soldiers and the Tatmadaw soldiers?**

I think they are both good. They have their own knowledge and their own government. We cannot be against them.

**Can you explain?**

For the KNU, we think their work and knowledge are right for their government. For the Myanmar government, we also think they are doing the right thing. We do not know much about their work. It is fine if they do not bully or violently abuse the villagers. Now, neither of them do anything to us so we think they are both good.

**Do you want to say anything else which I haven't asked you?**

I think you have asked me about all the issues already. I cannot say anything else.

**If you do not have anything else to say then thank you very much.**

**Source #80**

<b>Log #</b>	13-119-A5-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw H---, October 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	J--- village, Day Wah village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Research Area: Hpapun District</b>	
<b>Date Received: November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013</b>	
<b>Interview Place: J--- village</b>	
<b>Name: Naw H---</b>	
<b>Gender: Female</b>	
<b>Age: 41</b>	
<b>Religion: Buddhist</b>	

**Ethnicity: Karen**

**Family Status: Married**

**Occupation: Vendor**

**Position: Village head**

**What is your name?**

My name is Naw H---

**How old are you?**

41 years old.

**What is your ethnicity?**

Pwo Karen.

**What do you do for work?**

Vendoring [selling goods].

**Where do you live?**

J--- village, Day Wah village tract, Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District.

**Are you married?**

Yes.

**How many children do you have?**

Four children.

**How old is the oldest one?**

16 years old.

**What about the youngest one?**

Five years old.

**What do you do in the village?**

I am given responsibility to be village head together with my husband.

**How long have you been working as a village head?**

I have been working for three years.

**Can you tell me about the situation of the village?**



There is nothing special in the village.

**How many households are there in the village?**

There are about [censored for security] in the list.

**What about the population?**

I am not sure. There will be about [censored for security] villagers.

**Regarding being village head, did you yourself want to be village head or did villagers select you to be village head?**

It was not the villagers [who] selected me to be village head. When there was a conflict between the BGF [and KNLA soldiers], no one in the village wanted to be village head. The previous village head served as village head only for one year. At that time, portering was requested very often [by the BGF soldiers]. Once, around 30 villagers were requested to do portering. The previous village head could collect only 19 villagers. So, these villagers had to go carrying [for BGF soldiers]. They were told that it would last around three days but it actually took over ten days. Therefore, their wives came to the village head and they complained, swore, scolded and cried in front of the village head. We also heard that soldiers stepped on landmines very often at that time. The wives came to complain to the village head so the village head could not stand it anymore. The village head then made the lucky draw and asked villagers to draw lots. My husband won the draw.

**When did villagers go to porter?**

It has been one or two years [since they went].

**Did anyone get injured when they went to porter?**

No one got injured but one of the A--- villagers was hit by a landmine and died when they came back. My husband was also included [when villagers went to porter].

**Was the villager who was hit by landmine paid with compensation?**

I do not know about it as I did not ask them.

**What do villagers work on for their livelihoods?**

They are working on sugarcane plantations and tobacco plantations, hill farming and farming.

**How is it going?**

It is going good.

**Can they work freely?**

It is getting better this year since forced labour has been reduced. It [forced labour] was happening last year.

**What kind of labour happened last year?**

It was mainly requested by BGF.

**What kind of labour did they request?**

Whatever they requested, we had to go [and do]. They usually requested thatch shingles and bamboo yearly [annually], portering, and guiding. Villagers were also afraid of being shot by other soldiers [KNLA] when portering with them. That is why no one in the village wanted or dared to be village head [at that time].

**Did they later pay for bamboo or portering?**

No, they did not pay. They [BGF] asked labour every year in the past.

**So, there is no forced labour that happened this year?**

Yes, there is not.

**Why do they not request labour this year anymore?**

I am not sure. I heard that they get a salary. I heard that they get a salary as much as the Tatmadaw soldiers.

**How much did they [BGF] get per month?**

I do not know.

**Are there any armed groups that threaten the villagers by words [verbally] in the village?**

No, there is not this year. There were in the past. [BGF] came and threatened us by words in the past. In the past if the villagers said something wrong, they would come at night time and called the villagers and said that he [the soldier] would kill them.

**Did they kill them?**

No, they did not actually kill them.

**So, they just threatened the villagers?**

Yes.

**When did it happen?**

I think two years ago.

**How did they threaten the villagers?**

The came into the village presenting themselves as KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] and said to the villagers, "These BGF are the soldiers of Tatmadaw, they came and stayed in the village." They said like that and villagers also repeated what he said, "of course not!" They came back into the village at night time and threatened the villagers. Villagers were very afraid of them. Actually, they are those [BGF soldiers who came and pretended to be KNLA soldiers].

**Did they [BGF] beat them?**

No.

**What is your opinion on the situation before the ceasefire and after the ceasefire?**

The situation is getting better. We do not have any worries. They [BGF] also do not come into the village. If they come, there will be a bad situation in the village.

**When they came, did they request anything to eat?**

Of course, they did.

**What did they request?**

If they came, we had to provide them with a goat or chicken.

**Did they buy them?**

No, they did not.

**Is it fine if you do not provide them with that?**

No, it was not fine. As they asked us to provide for them, we had to provide for them in the past. However, this year I have not seen them come into the village.

**Do you think they will request [animals] to eat, if they come to the village this year?**

Of course.

**Is there a school in the village?**

Yes, there is.

**How many standards are there in the school?**

There are three standards in the school.

**How many teachers are there in the school?**

Two teachers.

**How much do they get paid?**

In the past, the villagers hired the teachers. We collected 5,000 [kyats] per house. Before they got support [by KNU], we paid them 150,000 kyats per person [per month]. Now, we support them with 100,000 kyats as they get support [by KNU].

**How many students are there in the village?**

There may be about [censored for security] students; I do not know.

**Is the school a [Myanmar] government school or a public school?**

It is a public school.

**Can the students study freely?**

Yes.

**Is Karen language taught at the school?**

Yes, Karen language is taught at the school.

**Is there a monastery in the village?**

There is a pagoda in the village and we celebrate the religious festivals and reading mantra festivals.

**As there is not a monastery in the village, where do you go to attend the monastery?**

We go to B--- village; it is also in Day Wah village tract.

**Can you go and give donations freely?**

Yes.

**Is there a clinic in the village?**

No, there is not.

**If not, if the villagers get sick, where do they go to treat their disease?**

We have to go to hospital.

**Where is the hospital?**

It is in the town. We have to go to the hospital in Ka Ma Maung [Town] or Hpapun [Town] if we cannot treat the disease [in the village].

**What about the diseases that can be treated?**

If we have a minor disease like malaria, we go to a health worker [in the village].

**Do you have to pay for the cost?**

Yes, we have to pay for the cost of the medicine.

**Is it very long to get to Ka Ma Maung [Town] or Hpapun [Town] from here?**

Yes, it is very far.

**Do you also have to pay the costs for disease [treatment] there?**

Of course, we have to pay.

**Is it a [Myanmar] government or public hospital?**

It is a [Myanmar] government hospital. If the villagers have a serious disease, they are sent there as the health workers here [in the village] only treat malaria.

**What are the most common diseases in the village?**

I see that the most common diseases are malaria, cough and asthma which happens to the

children.

**If you want to travel, do you have to get travel documents [from village head]?**

No, we do not have to.

**So, you can travel freely?**

Yes.

**How much is a viss<sup>264</sup> of pork?**

2,500 [kyat] for a viss of pork.

**How much is a viss of chicken?**

5,000 [kyat] for a viss of chicken.

**How much for a big tin<sup>265</sup> of rice?**

6,000 [kyat] for a big tin of rice.

**Do all of the villagers get enough food [from their work]?**

No, they do not. They have to buy more food.

**What do they do when they do not get enough food?**

They have to find work and work as day labourers. Then they have to buy rice after they get money. For those whose paddies grow well in their paddy fields, they have enough food.

**How much do they get paid each day?**

They are paid 2,000 or 2,500 kyat per day.

**Are there more people who get enough food or people who do not get enough food?**

There are more people who do not get enough food.

**Is there any way to earn money in the village?**

There is no special way to earn money; there are some small ways that people work on sugarcane plantations [and sell some brown slab-sugar to cover the cost of salt and fish paste.

**Are there any buildings in the village built by the [Myanmar] government or KNU?**

No, there is not.

**After the ceasefire, have the Tatmadaw or KNLA ever been to the village?**

<sup>264</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

<sup>265</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg or 23.04 lb of paddy, and 16 kg or 35.2 lb of milled rice.

The Tatmadaw does not come to the village; only the KNLA come to the village.

**Do they request anything to eat [from the villagers] when they come into the village?**

No, they do not request anything.

**Do the villagers dare [feel confident] to encounter them [KNLA]?**

Yes, they do.

**How long has it been that the Tatmadaw has not come into the village?**

I think it has been two years.

**What is your opinion on the Tatmadaw and KNLA?**

KNLA are our ethnicity and it is better. Tatmadaw [Burmese authority] are not our ethnicity and it is not good.

**Do you want to add anything?**

No, there is nothing else.

**If so, thank you so much Naw.**

#### Source #81

<b>Log #</b>	13-119-A14-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw A---, October 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Ka Ma Maung Town, Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Research Area: Hpapun District</b>	
<b>Date Received: November 12<sup>th</sup> 2013</b>	
<b>Interview Date: October 31<sup>st</sup> 2013</b>	
<b>Interview Place: A--- village</b>	
<b>Name: Naw A---</b>	
<b>Gender: Female</b>	
<b>Age: 38</b>	
<b>Village: Ka Ma Maung Town, Dwe Lo Township</b>	
<b>Religion: Christian</b>	
<b>Ethnicity: Bamar and Shan</b>	
<b>Family Status: Married</b>	

**Occupation: Teacher**

**Position: Villager**

**What is your name?**

Naw A---.

**How old are you?**

38 years old.

**What is your village?**

I am from Ka Ma Maung Town, Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District.

**What is your ethnicity?**

A mix of Bamar and Shan.

**What is your religion?**

Christian.

**What is your occupation?**

Teaching.

**Are you married?**

Yes, I am and I have four children.

**How old is the eldest one?**

13 years old.

**What about the youngest one?**

Two years old.

**What responsibility are you given in the village?**

I was given responsibility to look after the school in the village.

**How long have you been a teacher for?**

It has been ten years.

**Where do you teach now?**

I teach in B--- village.

**How many students are there in the school?**

37 students.



**How many households are there in the village that you teach in?**

There are [censored for security] households.

**What about the population in the village?**

I do not know about the population.

**Can you tell me a little bit about the situation of the school in B--- village?**

I want the school to be developed. I also want the school [children's] parents to encourage their children to study because the school parents do not encourage their children very much to study. They ask their children to work a lot when the school is closed [weekends]. Therefore, their children are not interested in studying. I celebrate an event like giving awards to the students to encourage them to study more. When I celebrate the event, I do not ask for money from their parents; I just take from my money. I am not sure whether I am able to celebrate [give awards to students] this year.

**Is the school a [Myanmar] government school?**

Yes, it is.

**How many years has it been [in the village]?**

In the past, it was built with bamboo. In 2013, it was rebuilt with bricks.

**In which month did they start the building work?**

In March [of 2013].

**Which company came to build the school?**

People from Lucky Diploma Company came and built it. It was handed over from Shin Thant Thitsa Company.

**Has it been finished yet?**

Yes, it has been finished; we have already opened it for schooling.

**How is the school?**

[The education officer:] As it is the school in the rural area, it will look like a rural school [not well built]. In the past, it was built with bamboo so you have to rebuild it every year. Now it has been built with brick and concrete and so don't have to rebuild it.

**Is it being built well in terms of quality?**

It is fairly well built. It is not bad and not good.

**How long it will last?**

I once asked Shin Thant Thitsa Company that, how long it will last. Then he was angry with me and told me to report it to the education officer about it. The education officer, U Hti Hsaing, told me in the office [in village], "they [Shin Thant Thitsa Company] have signed the

agreement with the Parliament member [to build this school] so you guys do not need to ask how long it will last. It is not your business and it is their responsibility to come and build it.”

**Do you like how the school was built?**

Yes, I like it. At first, education officer U Htee Hsaing told me that the school must be built with teak wood; if the school is not built with teak wood, we should not accept it and I would have to pay compensation for it. When the [Shin Thant Thitsa] company came and built the school, I helped them with finding the thit pote [tap tree wood], sand and small stones, and I bought some wood for them. After the school was built, I went to request money [for the wood that I bought for them]. They [people from the company] acted aggressively to me. They hated me. They [people who constructed the school for the company] moved to live with [education officer] Thara Htee Hsaing. I do not know how they do [plan to build the school]. Finally, they built the school with *thit pok* wood.

**Did the education officer not know that they [the people from company] built the school with *thit pok*?**

Yes, he knew.

**He knew and did not say anything about it?**

I firstly went to talk to the education officer. I told him that the people who came to build the school cannot find teak wood. I told him, “I know some people who have teak wood in other villages. I asked them to go and take that wood but they did not want to go to take it. What should I do?” He replied to me, “I do not know. They may be going to use the school with wood.” My husband went to meet with the village head and asked the village head, “Do you accept that the school is going to use *thit pok* wood? At first, they were told to use teak wood in building the school so that it will be strong. Since now they use *thit pok* wood, it will be eaten by white ants one day.” He then replied, “If so, we are going to ask them to use only teak wood.” Later, the people from the company met with the village head and education officer to discuss about building the school. The people from the company said to me [after the meeting], “The school can be built even though we do not use teak wood.” The village head as well as the education officer agreed with that. I told them, “If they agree with that, you can build it. I will not help you anymore.” They then built [the school] with *thit pok* wood.

**They [the education officer] told you not to use *thit pok*; if you use *thit pok*, you have to pay compensation for that. Now, he [the education officer] agreed that they would use *thit pok* in building the school. Do you think they [people from the company] gave some money to him [the education officer]?**

I do not know anything about that.

**How much money does Aung Myint Soe give to him [people from the company]?**

There is 21,600,000 [kyat] in the agreement.

**How big is the school in feet?**

It is 30 feet [width] by 60 feet [length].

**Are the students going to school now as you said the school has been built?**

Yes, they are.

**Do you have any concerns regarding the school in the future after many years?**

It might be destroyed after six or seven years. There are a lot of white ants in our area. If the white ants eat the wood, the wood can easily be decayed.

**Can you teach freely?**

Yes.

**Do you teach Karen language at school?**

No, I do not teach Karen at school because there are many subjects and there are not enough teachers. There is only one teacher, myself.

**Don't they [the Myanmar government] hire teachers for the school?**

They said that they are going to hire teachers but it has been many years already and they have not hired any teachers yet. This year, there is only one teacher, myself at the school. Last year, there were two teachers at the school.

**Can the villagers travel freely in the village that you go to teach in?**

Yes, they can.

**As you mentioned that you do not teach Karen at school, is it because you do not know how to teach it or does the [Myanmar] government not allow you to teach it?**

When we went to attend the training in February [of 2013], the [Myanmar] government said, "If there any teachers who can teach Karen, come and give us a list of their names. We want them to teach Karen too." I can [only] speak a little bit [of Karen] so I cannot teach Karen. There are some outsiders who can teach Karen but we have to pay a salary for them if we ask them to teach Karen; I do not have enough money to pay them.

**Don't they [the Myanmar government] pay a salary for outsiders who can teach Karen?**

No, they don't.

**Can outsiders who can teach Karen be hired if the villagers can pay them?**

Yes, they can hire them if they can pay them. However, as the villagers are poor they cannot [afford to] hire outsiders to teach Karen.

**Is there a monastery or a church in the village that you go to teach in?**

There is not a monastery. There is a chapel for the hermit.

**Is it free for the villagers to give religious donations?**

Yes, it is.

**Do the villagers have enough food from working for their livelihoods?**

Not all villagers have enough food.

**For those who do not have enough food, what do they do?**

They are working on hill farming and flat farming, and planting ground nuts.

**How much do people get paid for each day of working as day labourers?**

2,500 kyats per day.

**Is there any income that villagers get?**

They get income when dog fruit trees and durian trees have fruit on them or when they sell the ground nut. They do not have many opportunities for work.

**How much does a viss<sup>266</sup> of pork cost in the village that you go to teach in?**

3,000 kyat.

**How much does a viss of chicken cost?**

5,000 kyat.

**How much does a big tin of rice cost?**

6,000 kyat.

**Is there a clinic in the village?**

No, there is not.

**If not, where do they [villagers] go for treatment if they get sick?**

They come to me. I give injections [for the patients] as well as teaching.

**Do you inject the patients after school time?**

Yes, after the school time. Sometimes, the patients who have serious diseases are carried to the school and I inject them at the school.

**What are the most common diseases in the village?**

The most common diseases are diarrhoea, malaria, and dengue.

**If you cannot treat them, where do you send them to?**

I send them to Hpapun [Town hospital].

**Do they have to pay for the treatment?**

I think they have to pay for the cost of the medicine.

**What do the villagers do who do not have money do [pay for the cost of the medicine]?**

<sup>266</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

If they do not have money, they have to borrow [money] from other people.

**Do all of the villagers get enough food from working for their livelihoods?**

Not all of them get enough food. They borrow from others [if they need more food].

**Which one is more common, those who do not get enough food or those who have enough food?**

There are more of those who do not have enough food.

**What is your opinion on the situation before the ceasefire and after the ceasefire?**

Before the ceasefire, it was not easy to travel freely. After the ceasefire, we can now travel freely. The outsiders [armed groups] can come to the place near the road and those who live near the road can go to the outsiders' [armed groups'] area. Before the ceasefire was made, if the villagers who live near the road go to the outsiders' [armed groups'] area, they face Article 17/1 which means they are having a connection with armed groups.

**Do they still do that?**

I do not know now [whether they still do that or not]. People are now doing the ceasefire. I also do not know [whether they still do that or not] when they [armed groups] are given territory to control by themselves. I do not know whether it will be good or bad in the future. In my opinion, it [the situation] will be less good.

**Do you have to get permission to travel [to other areas]?**

They [the teachers] have to get permission from the education officer when they want to visit their village or to go town.

**What is your opinion on KNU [KNLA] and Tatmadaw?**

KNLA is good and Tatmadaw is also good. KNLA is not like before now. They are good minded and it is easier for us to work [for livelihoods].

**Has the Tatmadaw or KNLA ever been to the village that you go to teach in?**

The Tatmadaw have been once or twice; KNLA mostly go to the village. They came to have a look at the school when the school started to be built.

**What about the Tatmadaw?**

They have never been to the village [to have a look at the school] when the school started to be built. Only KNU staff came and took pictures of the school.

**Do the villagers or people who built the school dare to meet with them [KNLA]?**

Yes, they do. As it is now the ceasefire period, it is fine to meet with them.

**What is your hope [for the villagers] as a teacher?**

As a teacher, if I have any problem with the education officer and I cannot stand it anymore, I will leave the school. If I leave the school, it will not be easy for them [education officer to find a teacher in the village]. If they criticise me, I will leave the school without letting them

know. If they do not criticise me, I will do the best for the students. Don't need to worry for myself. I also have other ways for doing business.

**Is there anything else?**

No, there is not.

**Thank you.**

**Source #82**

<b>Log #</b>	13-124-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw S---, September 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in May 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/07/13-124-a1-i1/hpapun-interview-naw-s-september-2013">http://khrq.org/2014/07/13-124-a1-i1/hpapun-interview-naw-s-september-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Christian</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Farming a hill field</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Village head</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>Naw S---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>29.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>T---village.</p> <p><b>What is the name of your township?</b></p> <p>Bu Tho Township.</p> <p><b>What about district?</b></p> <p>Mu Traw [Hpapun] District.</p> <p><b>In which village tract do you live?</b></p> <p>Hkaw Bu village tract.</p> <p><b>What is your responsibility and work?</b></p> <p>My work and responsibility is to live between and communicate with both the Burmese</p>	

[Tatmadaw] and Karen soldiers.

**Are you a village head?**

Yes, I am a village head.

**Are you married?**

Yes, I am.

**How many children do you have?**

One child.

**Boy or girl?**

Boy.

**Have you seen any human right abuses in Hkaw Bu village tract and in your village, in the past or present?**

There were so many human rights abuses in the past, but we cannot remember everything. We can say that the enemy, the Burmese [Tatmadaw], does not visit our village very often currently. Mostly they come [to the villages] when they are transporting rations and in the summer time. The number coming [to the villages] is reduced in the monsoon season. Sometimes, they come and cook in our house. Once, I was not in the house and they came to my house and cooked there. They caught an iguana on the way when they were coming, and they cooked it and left what they didn't eat in the pot. I found that my pot was very dirty. They also ate my coconuts. Sometimes, they asked permission from me and sometimes they did not ask permission and they climbed up the coconut tree by themselves.

**How do they transport their rations?**

They depart from Hpapun [and travel to] to Hkaw Bu, and then [from] Hkaw Bu to Ka Hee Kyoh camp, and then onward.

**Onward to where?**

They send it [rations] to Kyaw Yan camp and Ta Law Thaw camp, but I am not sure. There are two or three camps beyond Ka Hee Kyoh camp.

**What do they call this place?**

They called it Ta Heh camp. There are three more camps if we continue going, but I do not know what they call them.

**Where are they [Tatmadaw] from?**

The Tatmadaw who came and bought things [at her house] are from Hpapun. The Burmese [Tatmadaw] who sent the rations were the LID [Light Infantry Division].<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>267</sup> Light Infantry Division (Tatmadaw); commanded by a brigadier general, each with ten light infantry battalions specially trained in counter-insurgency, jungle warfare, "search and destroy" operations against ethnic insurgents and narcotics-based armies. LIDs are organised under three Tactical Operations Commands,



**From which Light Infantry Division?**

They came with different soldiers. LID #44 came and LID #11 came too.

**What about the soldiers who came from Hpapun city?**

The soldiers from Hpapun rotate every six months. Sometimes, LIB [Light Infantry Battalion]<sup>268</sup> #341 come, sometimes LIB #348 and sometimes IB [Infantry Battalion]<sup>269</sup> #19.

**You said that they came and cooked food at your house sometimes, right?**

Yes, they cooked.

**Did they use their rice for cooking?**

No. They used my rice for cooking.

**Did they pay you the price of the rice?**

No, they did not. They also used our chili and everything.

**Did they pay the price for that [chili and the other things] as well?**

No, they did not pay. They said that I have to treat them because I am the village head. They [the Tatmadaw] go and buy dry fish or cans of fish, then come back and cook if we have no curry.

**Have you seen the rotation of the Tatmadaw this summer?**

Yes, they do. They rotated once in the summer and once in the monsoon season.

**When did they rotate?**

They rotated in the last two months.

**Are they [the Tatmadaw] from Hpapun city?**

Yes, they are the Burmese [Tatmadaw] from Hpapun.

**Where have they rotated?**

They went to their camp.

**To Hkaw Bu camp?**

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commanded by a colonel, (three battalions each and one reserve), one field artillery battalion, one armoured squadron and other support units. As of 2000, each LID has its own organic field artillery units.

<sup>268</sup> Light Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprised of 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Primarily for offensive operations but sometimes used for garrison duties.

<sup>269</sup> Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprised of 500 soldiers. However, most Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Primarily for garrison duty but sometimes used in offensive operations.

Yes. The soldiers who have to go to Hkaw Bu camp go there, and those who have to go to Ka Hee Kyoh camp go there.

**Did they ask the villagers to work for them?**

They have always asked the villagers to guide them to the camps, including during the last two or three years. I think it is reducing this year.

**Do they pay them money?**

Sometimes they give 10,000 kyat or 20,000 kyat (US \$10.27 or \$20.53)<sup>270</sup> to the people who guide them. They do not give them a lot of money.

**Do they ask the villagers to build the camp for them?**

No, they do not. They asked the villagers to do it for them in the past, in 1994 and 1995.

**Do you have a clinic in your village?**

No, we do not have a clinic. We have people who are selling medicines, and we go and buy from them.

**What do people do if their illness is very serious?**

Some people try to get treatment here [from medics], and people send them to the clinic if the medic cannot heal the patients.

**To which clinic do they send the patients?**

Some people go to Toh They Der village and some people go to Oo Thoo Kloh village. Mostly I go to Oo Thoo Kloh village and I do not go to Toh They Der village because it is very far away.

**Do you have to pay money if you go to the clinic?**

We do not need to pay money [the clinic is supported by the Karen National Union (KNU)].

**Is there a school in your village?**

Yes, we have a school.

**Until which standard [grade] does the school teach?**

Until seventh standard.

**How many teachers are there?**

I think we have ten or eight teachers.

**Do you know their names?**

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<sup>270</sup> All conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the July 25<sup>th</sup> 2014 official market rate of 974 kyat to the US \$1.

I think I know. Let me count. We have *Thara* [male teacher] Bo Ka Su, *Thara* Saw Wah and the other *Thara* who is very tall. I forgot his name. There are three male teachers. The female teachers are *Tharamu* [female teacher] Mu Ble, *Tharamu* Eh Moo Dah, *Tharamu* Mee Mee, *Tharamu* Naw Kweh Ne and a nursery teacher. There are nine teachers.

**Where do the students continue their studies after seventh standard?**

Some students go to the Salween River [continue their studies at the school located alongside the Salween River or in refugee camps in Thailand]. The students whose parents have money go to [a school in] Hpapun city.

**Does the Burmese government support education?**

Actually the Burmese government wants to support our education, but we do not allow them.

**What about healthcare?**

They want to support healthcare too.

**Who does not allow them?**

Our leaders [KNU] do not allow them and the villagers do not accept it either. I think their support would not be sufficient even if we allowed them. They [Burma government] will not do it properly, and only do it to make themselves look good.

**What about the livelihoods of the villagers?**

The current situation is not like the past. The villagers are working very hard but there are so many insects which destroy paddy.<sup>271</sup> Rats also destroy our paddy.

**How did the villagers work for their livelihoods in the past? Do the villagers have enough food?**

Everyone does not have enough food. The villagers who are working on farms have more rice than the villagers who are working on hill fields. For example, I am working on a hill field and I always need [for consumption] 20 or 30 big tins (209 kg. or 460.8 lb., or 313.5 kg. or 691.2 lb. respectively)<sup>272</sup> of paddy every year.

**What about the other villages?**

The other villages are not different from our village.

**How do villagers handle the situation when they do not have enough paddy?**

The villagers who do not have enough paddy borrow paddy from the villagers who have enough. Some villagers go and buy rice. They go to Hpapun and buy rice if there is no more available in the village.

**Does the Burmese government support the villagers who do not have enough paddy?**

<sup>271</sup> Paddy is rice grain that is still in the husk.

<sup>272</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg. or 23.04 lb. of paddy, and 16 kg. or 35.2 lb. of milled rice.

They would like to come and support us, but we do not accept it because we think it is not enough.

**What about Kyoh Hko Der village [do they accept it]?**

The Burmese government would like to support Kyoh Hko Der, He Hko Der, Chaw Weh Der and Hto Hker Der [villages]. I think they will not accept it even though they do not have enough food.

**I heard that the Tatmadaw sent rice sacks to Kyoh Hko Der. Is that right?**

The Tatmadaw will send rice sacks if the villagers accept it. It depends on the villagers. For example, our villagers did not accept it and they did not send them. I am not sure if they sent it or not [to Kyoh Hko Der].

**I heard that the Tatmadaw also sent one hydro generator<sup>273</sup> to Kyoh Hko Der village. Is that right?**

I do not know.

**Are villagers allowed to build their houses with wood?**

Yes, we are allowed to build our houses with wood if we can afford it, but we are not allowed in the other areas [conflict zones].

**Have you seen any activities of the Tatmadaw in 2013?**

We have not seen any special activities in this area. For example, [we have not witnessed any] fighting.

**What about forced labour?**

Forced labour is decreasing too.

**What do you think about the activity of the Tatmadaw in the future?**

I do not know, but I dare not think of peace yet.

**Why?**

I do not know. Are the Tatmadaw cheating? I do not think there will be peace. We have been living like this for a long time. We never have peace.

**How long have you been working as a village head?**

I have been working as a village head for a long time. I am a villager and I am working as a village head because there is a need. I am working as a village head again and again because it is needed. I think I have been working for six, seven or more than seven years.

**What is the difference between the past and the present?**

Forced labour and work asked for by the enemy [Tatmadaw] are decreasing nowadays. We

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<sup>273</sup> A hydro generator is a small generator which uses the natural flow of water to generate electricity.

had to find people to guide them when they [Tatmadaw] came to the village in the past, mostly in the past two or three years. There were only one or two people in the village who know the way and we went to them and requested them to go, but they did not accept it [because they had already helped the Tatmadaw many times]. We asked them anyway, even though they did not accept it. The Tatmadaw also urged us and requested that we help them and to have pity on them, and they [also informed us that they] will pay the people. It was a problem for us to go and look at the people's [the people who know the way] faces. It is like forced labour. We do not want to go to the people's house again but the Tatmadaw asked us to go. It is compulsory. Then, the wife of the person argued with him when he went [to guide Tatmadaw soldiers]. This is a problem. We showed them [the Tatmadaw] the way in 2013, and it is not our concern anymore, because they know the way themselves. Also, one person died while guiding the Tatmadaw.

**When?**

It was one and half years ago.

**Where is he or she from?**

He is from He Poe Der village.

**Female or male?**

Male.

**What is his name?**

Po Wa Law.

**Which camp was he supposed to guide the Tatmadaw to?**

He was supposed to guide the Tatmadaw to Ka Hee Kyoh camp, but he stepped on a landmine before he reached the camp.

**Where were the Tatmadaw from?**

From Hpapun city.

**Whose landmine did he step on?**

He stepped on a KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] landmine. After that, the Tatmadaw carried him to their camp, and he died after they reached the camp. Then the Burmese took him back [to the village]. My brother went to the camp with them. They [the Tatmadaw] asked my brother what they should do and my brother told them to take him back to his home, which the Tatmadaw did.

**Did he carry materials for the Tatmadaw or just guide them?**

He just guided them.

**Did the family of the person who died get support from the Tatmadaw?**

I heard that they would give two rice sacks and 100,000 kyat (US \$102.67) to the family. I thought they might do it, but they gave less than the amount that they promised.

**Thank you very much and do you have anything else to say that I did not ask you?**

I always have a bad feeling in the pit of my stomach.

**Can you tell us more about that feeling?**

If we look back to our family, we have suffered. We also have suffered regarding the enemy [Tatmadaw] and our livelihood as well.

**What are your sufferings?**

Regarding the enemy, we are worried whether there will be peace or fighting. In terms of our family, we worry that our children will be hungry. We have a child. We take him with us when we go to the field. Sometimes our child feels sick and then we face many difficulties. The things that we encounter are very miserable. I want to die but I cannot die [laughing]. There is always trouble.

**Thank you very much.**

Naw S---, (Female, 29), T--- village, Hkaw Bu village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District (Interviewed in September 2013)

#### Source #83

<b>Log #</b>	13-125-I1
<b>Title</b>	Incident Report   Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District (May 2013)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in December 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/12/13-125-i1/hpapun-incident-report-landmine-incident-lu-thaw-township-may-2013">http://khrq.org/2014/12/13-125-i1/hpapun-incident-report-landmine-incident-lu-thaw-township-may-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Part 1 – Incident Details</b>	
<b>Type of Incident</b>	Death by Tatmadaw landmine
<b>Date of Incident</b>	May 31 <sup>st</sup> 2013
<b>Incident Location</b>	A--- village, Hkay Poo village tract, Lu Thaw Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District
<b>Victim Information</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Saw Pgheh Nay Thay
<b>Age</b>	40
<b>Sex</b>	Male
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen
<b>Family</b>	Yes [married]
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer
<b>Religion</b>	White elephant [Animist] <sup>274</sup>
<b>Position</b>	Villager
<b>Village</b>	A--- village
<b>Perpetrator Information</b>	

<sup>274</sup> White Elephant Animism is a form of animism practiced in Kayin state which revolves around the worship of white elephants.

Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Unknown	Unknown	(MOC) Military Operations Command <sup>275</sup> (9)	Khaw Daw Hkoh army camp, Hkay Poo village tract	Unknown

## **Part 2 – Information Quality**

### **1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.**

I got this information directly from the village tract secretary, other villagers and from a B--- clinic health worker, all of who witnessed the incident. Saw Pgheh Nay Thay stepped on a Tatmadaw landmine which lay in K'Hpoh Hta area nearby Khaw Daw Hkoh army base on May 31st 2013 when he and his friend went fishing.

### **2. Explain how the source verified this information.**

The incident is true because the person who gave me the information is the village tract secretary Saw C---. There are many people who are telling the truth about this incident too. The landmine that was stepped on by Saw Pgheh Nay Thay was truly laid by the Tatmadaw who is based in Khaw Daw Hkoh army camp.

## **Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident**

**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 an attachment if needed.**

Saw Pgheh Nay Thay, a 40-year-old man, lives in A--- village, Hkay Poo village tract, Lu Thaw Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. On May 31<sup>st</sup> 2013, Saw Pgheh Nay Thay and his friend were trying to cross a vehicle road in order to go fishing when he [Saw Pgheh Nay Thay] was hit by a landmine which had been laid by the Tatmadaw. He was brought to B--- clinic for treatment, but as he was seriously injured he passed away in the afternoon on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2013. He died shortly [after he was injured] and left behind his wife and children. [His death] has left his wife and children in a miserable situation; they do not know what to do next for their livelihood and they have only their neighbor and [the wife's] sibling to rely on.

## **Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details**

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

We asked them to tell us the information about what they are suffering. They explained what they suffered and they allowed us to use the information when asked permission.

Further background reading on the situation in Hpapun District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

<sup>275</sup> Military Operations Command. Comprised of ten battalions for offensive operations. Most MOCs have three Tactical Operations Commands (TOCs), made up of three battalions each.



- “Hpapun Interview: Naw A---, January 2013,” (December 2014)
- “Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, January to June 2014,” (December 2014)
- “Hpapun Situation Update: Lu Thaw Township, March to May 2014,” (November 2014)
- “Hpapun Incident Report: Violent abuse in Bu Tho Township, April 2014,” (November 2014)
- “Hpapun Situation Update: Dwe Lo Township, February and March 2014,” (November 2014)

**Source #84**

<b>Log #</b>	13-135-LGF8
<b>Title</b>	Land Grabbing Form, Daw M---, May 2012
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	K' Ter Ti Village Tract, Dweh Loh Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	

Please insert information regarding land confiscation reported by villagers into this form. The objective is to report evidence of land confiscation to the Karen National Union, Myanmar government, organisations active on the issue of land rights in Myanmar, and the international community. According to the guidelines, KHRG field researchers should collect as much evidence as possible.

**1. First step- land owner and land user (using land)**

Name of land owner	Through what means do they own the land? (Inherited, bought, borrowed, etc.)	How much land has been confiscated?	What is planted on the land?	Does the owner have a land grant? (If yes, Please take a photograph)
Daw M--	Buying from neighbours	5 Acres	Rubber Plantation (not yet mature)	Didn't get back after they confiscate the land

**2. Second step- Confiscating land**

- The exact date of land confiscation: May 20<sup>th</sup> 2012
- The location of the confiscated land (village, village tract, township, district): K--- village, K' Ter Ti Village Tract, Dweh Loh Township, Hpapun District.
- Land confiscators (e.g. armed groups, Myanmar government, wealthy individuals, etc.): Myanmar government

**3. Project type**

- Type of business or development project (e.g. gold mining, dam construction, rubber plantation, etc.): For BGF Battalion # 1013 Camp construction
- Project organiser/company: Ka Ring Hein Company
- Project implementer/company: Ka Ring Hein Company
- Start date: May 10th 2012
- End date: Nearly finished but not completed yet

**4. Consultation**

- When did the villager hear about land confiscation exact date, and how did they know about that?

The Villagers just found out about the land confiscation on 20th May, 2012.

- Did any groups come to give information to the villagers? If yes, who went to that meeting?

Papun District governor U Shwee is the one who came to inform the villagers and the villagers who went to the meeting are Saw Nah Nah, Saw Seh Gyi, Saw Aung Gyi, and Saw Ba Hsoh Gay.

- Did the villagers have to sign on any agreement? If yes, please take a photo of the agreement form.

N/A

## **5. Compensation**

- Did villagers receive compensation for the land that was confiscated? If yes, what compensation did they receive? Were the villagers informed that they were to be given compensation?
- Saw Nah Nah was only compensated 2,250,000 kyats for 5 acres, one acre for 450,000 kyats.
- Did the land confiscators provide the amount of compensation they had promised? If not, what did villagers do when they did not receive the compensation they had been promised? Were the villagers satisfied with the compensation?
- They give only what they promised and the villagers have to be satisfied with the compensation. We can't do anything as we have signed the agreement.

## **6. Village agency/ collective actions**

- Did they agree or disagree with the development project? Please, explain how did they support this project and why did they support the project? The villagers disagree and didn't support with this project.
- Did villagers resist the project? If so, please explain how villagers resisted the project, and why? We can't [resist] against anything as we have already sign [the] agreement.
- What type of strategies, either individual or collective, did villagers employ to resist the project? (E.g. submitting complaint letters, forming committees, conducting demonstrations, etc.) Please explain clearly in detail (including the time and place).

The villagers tried to report this- that they are against this project.

- How did villagers try to protect their land? What kinds of strategies did they use?

We can only protect by reporting about this project.

- Did the villagers get back their lands because of villager action or media reports? If yes, please explain the events in detail.

The villagers report to the researcher and report to the leaders but [they] didn't get back the land yet.

### **Source #85**

<b>Log #</b>	14-5-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Doolaya Interview, Saw D---, August 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Doolaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen	

**Religion:**

**Marital Status:** Married

**Occupation:**

**Position:** Villager

**I would like to question you about the plantation that had been ploughed out and destroyed [by the Tatmadaw]. How do you feel about that?**

We ask them [the perpetrators] and our village head also said that the lands that they surveyed is only this land<sup>276</sup> [referring to a particular area of land in the village that will be used in the project]. They were counting the betel nut trees and mango trees [before they ploughed the land]. They had noted down how many trees will be destroyed as a result of the road construction. [After they recorded the trees] they went back to the town and sent us the paper record. I am the one who complained about the loss of the plantations but they didn't pay attention to me. If we mentioned [the plantations that had been destroyed] some village leaders said, *"If you want to complain go and complain in Naypyidaw."* My wife said, *"I have never been in Naypyidaw. If you make me go I want to go there too."* However, we have our own leaders [KNU] we don't know what their orders are to the perpetrators. They came directly to us. We don't know if the KNU is informed about the project already or not. I always think [about whether or not] this road construction project can be implemented peacefully without any disturbance.

**Did they tell you that they will give you compensation for plantations? Did they tell you about the compensation for plantations? Did they tell you how much they will give you [compensation] for each tree?**

No, they not told us how much the damaged plantations were worth. They made us count the number of the trees that were damaged. The village head calculated the amount of trees which had been destroyed and said that it was 150 trees including my betel nut trees, and 88 mango trees, but it is more than 88 mango trees. When they came to construct the road they had destroyed 200 or 300 betel nut trees, including small trees that we were going to be planted very soon.

Can I talk [the interviewee's wife interrupts]?

**Yes!**

Wife: After they confiscated the lands they called a meeting in a monastery. During the meeting the village head made us take pieces of paper and note down our plantations that had been destroyed. The head villager said the trees [betel nut and mango] that could not produce fruits would not be compensated for. This is what they said in the meeting. I am the one who went to the meeting. The head villager said, *"I thought you could have compensation but they didn't count the trees without fruit."* Head leader [village head] said we would get compensation but we have to wait. We couldn't say anything because it was respected elders from the village who told us this.

**I want to know more about the situation. Are all the villagers satisfied with losing their plantations and land?**

Husband: No, they [villagers] are not satisfied. A person [a passerby during the interview]

<sup>276</sup> During the interview, the interviewee would have been pointing at a specific plot of land.

who we made stop when he passed by also lost a lot of betel nut trees. He was very angry. My land on the river bank that was purchased by me I planned to plant beans on but it was destroyed [before I could]. My land was not included when they came to survey the lands, but when they started to plough it included my land.

Wife: We were not willing to look around the house if we saw the plantations that had been destroyed we get the blood rise [our blood pressure would rise] because we are not happy about losing our plantations.

Husband: Yesterday we tried to negotiate with the ploughmen but they didn't pay attention to us and continued to plough. Some of the villagers lost four or five acres of lands which they inherited. They constructed the road on central farms and plantations

**Can you have your betel nut fruit?**

Yes, we can have the fruit. The land that you can see when you cross over the river was Naung Laing Min's land. He is the owner. If you want to interview the land owner I can talk to them and you can come and interview later. I have lived here a very long time. The people call me Saw D--- you can question Saw S--- and Saw C---. They all know my biography.

**There is a law regarding the construction of roads, like if they destroy land they should give compensation to the land owners. So, we want to know if they told you that you will get compensation for the land that has been destroyed?**

No, they didn't tell us anything. When they ploughed the land I used to ask them if they would give us compensation for the land that has been destroyed. They told me that the land does not belong to me and that they plough the land ordered by the leaders.

**Do you know the name of company?**

No, I don't know the name of company but Myit Lwin is the one who leads the company. I'm not sure because each part has different company leaders. The first time he was involved in the land survey. He also is the one who would go around getting food or other tools.

**Before they came to survey the land did they discuss with the land owner? Example: They have to call the village head and then the village head has to call the land owner. They should let you know they are going to use those lands. Did they let you know?**

Husband: They did not. I never heard.

Wife: I will tell you before they came to plough the land they came two or three times to survey the land. After they surveyed the land, the village head held a meeting in a monastery. The company held consultations with the village head, but they did not say anything to the villagers. When they ploughed the land across to Naw L---'s farm in front of her house she started to complain. But the village head wrote a letter to her [to not complain]. By looking at what she is facing, we have no confidence to say anything or complain. She is the first person to complain about losing land. She was drunk when she complained and she was also brave to complain because her water well was also destroyed.

**That letter was given by the village head?**

Husband: Yes, I heard the head leader wrote to her. His name is Saw M---. I asked Naw L--- and she told me the same thing that I heard [confirmed what I had heard].

Wife: He came to my house when I was complaining. He told me if you want to complain go

and complain to Naypyidaw. I said to him I have never been to Naypyidaw if I need to go I will go. I told him that I just want my children to live in peace in the future. If I go there maybe my children will have peace. I could not see the plantation destroyed. A lot of our plantations have been destroyed.

**Uncle,<sup>277</sup> Can you imagine how many betel nut trees were destroyed?**

Where I live around 100,000 betel nut trees were destroyed. In the down part [downstream] of the river, a lot of plantations have been destroyed, but some of trees do not have fruit yet.

**Were there also any other kinds of plantations that were destroyed?**

Yes, betel nut trees, mango trees, durian trees and palm trees [the leaves of] which are used for house roofing.

**How many durian trees have been destroyed? Can you guess?**

There were lots of durian trees that were destroyed.

**Could it be around 50 trees?**

Husband: Yes, it is more than 50 durian trees.

Wife: A couple durian trees from each person were destroyed and if we combine every villager there were a lot.

**How about the mango plantations? Were there a lot destroyed?**

Wife: A lot of plantations have been destroyed. Some people plant them row by row beside their land to make it into a fence.

**It is a sad thing right?**

Husband: Yes, we feel sad. If I had known the situation I would not have planted anything.

Wife: I cannot go and see that the trees have been destroyed. If I see it, it makes me unhappy.

**What is the name of this company based here?**

Husband: We do not know. We only know Myit Lwin [is the leader]. He is also ordered by the company to lead the project.

Wife: Is he the leader of this company or where? We are not sure. You should go and ask Thra Myit Thet. He should know it. There is no reason for why he wouldn't know.

**Uncle, are all the villagers happy with those [lands that has been] destroyed?**

Husband: No, many people are not happy with this. That is what I see by myself. The name of the one who asked my wife to go to Naypyidaw is Nay Myit. He said, "*if you want to complain go to complain in Naypyidaw.*" I asked him, "*Does she have the opportunity to go. Can you agree that she can go?*"

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<sup>277</sup> The researcher is calling the interviewee 'uncle.' In Karen culture this is a sign of respect and not familial relations.

Wife: If you ask me to go I will go no matter whether I can speak Burmese or not. I will try to speak with them in Burmese. I said I will go to the Naypyidaw; many people are laughing at me.

**Your plantations have already been destroyed. If they give you some compensation this will be a little better?**

Husband: One [member] of the DKBA told me that they will give [compensation] for plants that have been destroyed.

Wife: We cannot say anything. If we try to say something they tell us to go to Naypyidaw.

Husband: I think they are not sure if we can really go to Naypyidaw.

**Did they inform or meet with you before they ploughed the land? Or did they tell you that when they ploughed it will include your land?**

Husband: No, they did not tell us anything. I tried to ask but they just said they would plough till they got to the fence. We destroyed our fence because we were afraid that our fence would be included in the project. I said you should pay us for destroying the fence. He just shook his head. Myit Lwin said it will also impact that land plantation. I replied to him that if it is going to impact it just let it impact it. After that they make signs on the trees. I ask him will it reach here. He said, "*No it will not reach there.*"

Wife: You told one person [the confiscator] not to do [the project] but another different person [company] came and implemented it.

Husband: When the driver ploughed the land I tried to stop him but he said he cannot do anything as he is just doing what they ordered. He said the sign [the marked land] is here so we have to plough to there. The person who surveyed these lands is known as Myit Lwin.

**I want to know the situation. If we have anything [we want] to know we will interview you later. What is this place called?**

It call P--- village.

Saw D---, (male, 63), P--- village,  
Kawkareik Township, Doolaya District, (Interviewed in August 2013)

#### Source #86

<b>Log #</b>	14-5-A4-I1
<b>Title</b>	Doolaya Interview: Pah K---, February 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Doolaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Pah K---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p>	

78.

**Do you have any destruction [around you] because of this road construction?**

Yes of course, there was destruction [of land] from the river bank side.

**What kind of plants that were destroyed? Did that harm your betel nut trees?**

There were betel-nut trees, banana trees, palm toddy trees and so on.

**For example, if you sell the plants that were destroyed from the road construction how much will you get, do you think?**

I have no idea about that.

**Like a usual price of land: if we sell the land with that amount of plants how much would it be?**

May be around 1,000,000 Kyats.

**Let's say that the cost of your [property] plants that were destroyed is 1,000,000 kyats. The people who came and construct the road that harms your land, do they consult you [in order] to pay you for the compensation?**

Sure, they said that they would pay me.

**Did they tell you how will they pay you?**

They say nothing about that.

**For example, how much for one betel-nut tree, how much for one durian tree? And did they tell you that how much they going to pay you for the length [size] of the land that was destroyed?**

No.

**So they just said that they going to pay you?**

Yes, but not the people who destroyed the land, just the village head told us about this.

[Woman 1: I totally remember when I attended the meeting, [the] village head said that.]

**So the companies that came and constructed the road they did not meet with villagers and have any consultation [about] if there is [to be] any construction on the local lands?**

No, nothing.

**For example, if the village head told you that they would pay you only 10,000 Kyats for the destruction [to your land], can you accept it?**

We have to, if [we say] no, what is the deal then?

**I just asked you for example, if they paid you like that will you be satisfied?**



No way.

**That is why I would like ask how villagers would feel about this as I found out there was a lot of destruction [of land from the road construction]?**

We are not happy with that and even [if] they do not pay anything, what can we do? They just keep expanding the construction [area]. If we look at the river bank side the land was barren. Along the road construction my land was mainly harmed. Large spaces of my land were harmed.

**Do you know that name of company that constructs the road?**

The name was written on the truck. It is Myat Kan Thar Company. There is a name on the car but we don't know whether it is a name of the company or what.

[Woman 1: We didn't care about the name, even [if] it was a name of a company or what. On their boat also there is a name on it as well.]

**How many land owners' [lands] has the construction harmed?**

Many land owners' [lands] were harmed along the road construction. Some villagers' betel-nut trees were harmed, some villager fields were harmed and one of the villagers his field is only two plots and one has been damaged so only one small space is left and he is very unhappy. If they did not construct the road in a straight line it might not have harmed [damaged] the lands that much. If we look starting at the small creek that I mentioned there are about twenty land owners' [lands] that were harmed by the construction.

**So there were many lands that was harmed?**

That's right. At the lower part of the small creek they crossed down to the lands so it harmed many lands through [across the fields].

**Then a lot of properties [land and plants] were harmed?**

Yes, so many. [Women 1: As you said, the plantation that we planted, we cannot serve [eat or sell] it yet, like cashew we can serve [use it] but the betel-nut trees were gone. I just only mention betel-nut trees there were destroyed but there were many other plantations as well. Like yam plantation. All of that was destroyed. ]

[Man 2 - If you [go] back to the opposite side of the creek that rubber plantation is mine and they put down [buil] the building in it as the center department, he [one of the road construction's team] is from the military and he asked me about putting [building] the building and I asked him back, how long the project will last and he said three years. So how could I accept it because if I want to do plantation [farming] I cannot do so? Therefore he said let's make a deal; I'll pay you as for compensation. But if we do like that, what I can't accept is that they can claim that they already paid the money for the land [as purchase not as compensation] so now they can own the land.]

#### Source #87

<b>Log #</b>	14-7-P1
<b>Title</b>	Doolaya Photo Notes: Kyonedoe Township, Received February 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Kyonedoe Township, Doolaya District

## Full Text

*[These photo notes are drawn from a longer document providing details for photographs taken in Doooplaya District in February 2013. The other notes were not relevant to land confiscation in Myanmar since December 2012 and have been omitted for brevity.]*

### **Photo #: 0236**

This photo was taken on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Kaw Khaw village, Lay T'Ler village tract, Kyonedoe Township and shows the trucks from the city carrying stone. They mine the stone and crush it into pieces and then put it in the truck and bring it with them. The person who is shown in the photo with the white shirt is U Tin Moe Aung.

### **Photo #: 0232**

This photo was taken on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Kaw Khaw village, Kyonedoe Township. The photo shows U Tin Moe Aung crushing the stone. The people shown in the picture are not the workers, but KNU soldiers who travelled together with us. They brought the stone to the city. The roads and fences of the villagers are damaged but the villagers did not receive any support. They have to buy materials by themselves to repair the road.

### **Photo #: 0233**

This photo was taken on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Kaw Khaw village, Kyonedoe Township. This is a video and the machines that are shown are the machines that crush the stones. They said in the past, in our parents' generation, we worked on flat fields and relied on it. We also paid the taxes for the flat fields. But now our flat fields are damaged and the paddy grains have also died; we don't know what to do. They showed us the flat fields that were damaged.

### **Photo #: 0243**

This photo was taken on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Kaw Khaw village Lay T'Ler base and Kyonedoe Township. This is the photo of the villagers' flat fields that are damaged because of U Tin Moe Aung mining stone. The villagers' drains are exactly where the truck travels but the drains are covered with stone so the water that we can see here is from the villagers attempting to build a new drain in order to protect the paddy. The stone miners mined in this place again covering up the drain again. The woman in the picture is the owner of the flat field.

### **Photo #: 0246**

This photo was taken on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2013 at the bottom of Lay Ta Ler cliff in Kaw Khaw village, Kruh Tuh [Kyonedoe] Township. This photo shows the paddy fields and the stones. As people are causing explosions on the cliffs, many of the stones are falling into the paddy fields; all of the paddy plants have been destroyed. The smaller of the stones are collected on the border of the paddy field. The owner of the paddy field cannot collect and move the big stones. As for the channel that is seen in the picture, they try to make a new one. Only half of the paddy field is good and undamaged; the rest is all destroyed.

### **Photo #: 0248**

This photo was taken on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2013 at the bottom of Lay Ta Ler cliff in Kaw Khaw village, Kruh Tuh [Kyonedoe] Township. This photo shows that the people who are cracking the piles of stone are all workers of U Tein Moe Aung. The photo also shows the paddy that has turned yellow in colour [destroyed by insects and bugs] and died.

### **Photo #: 0659**

This photo was taken on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 in Seikgyi City, Kyainseikgyi Township. This photo is of the Tatmadaw confiscating the people's land. However, I have not got the exact news and the information yet.

Photo Notes written by a KHRG Researcher,  
Kyonedoe Township, Dooطلا District, (Received in February 2014)

### Source #88

<b>Log #</b>	14-10-S1
<b>Title</b>	Dooطلا Situation Update: Kyonedoe Township, September to December 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in September 2014
<b>Location</b>	Kyonedoe Township, Dooطلا District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>This report describes the situation of civilians from villages in Kyonedoe Township, including the political situation, [political and social] organizing [by the Karen National Union], healthcare, education and human rights. This is an area where all armed actors including the Tatmadaw, BGF [Border Guard Force],<sup>278</sup> DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army],<sup>279</sup> KPF [Karen Peace Force]<sup>280</sup> and the KNU [Karen National Union] are active.</p> <p><b><u>The situation of civilians</u></b></p> <p>Karen people are mostly farming, working on plantations and [engaging in] cultivation for their livelihoods. Summer paddy [paddy grown in summer time rather than in the rainy season] is grown in Kyonedoe Township. There was very little rain at the end of the last rainy season, and the water dried up because of climate change and some farms could not be worked on.</p> <p>Some NGOs came to some of the villages in the area. CWS [Church World Service] provided one basket of paddy seed [of a value of] 5,000 kyat (US \$5.13)<sup>281</sup> to the farmers whose fields were affected by the flooding. The UNDP [United Nations Development Programme] supported agriculture and [animal] husbandry for poor people in order to eliminate poverty. The UNHCR [The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for</p>	

<sup>278</sup> 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 Burmese 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.

<sup>279</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "[Inside the DKBA](#)," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.

<sup>280</sup> The Karen Peace Force was formed in February 1997 after splitting from the KNU/KNLA and surrendering to and signing a ceasefire with the Burmese military government. The KPF controls some administrative areas in Three Pagodas Pass and operates a number of road and river checkpoints in the area of Three Pagodas Pass. Following repeated rejections of Burmese government proposals to reform KPF into the Tatmadaw Border Guard, substantial elements have since reformed in the Tatmadaw Border Guard in 2010 while others remain independent.

<sup>281</sup> All conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the 28 July 2014 official market rate of 974 kyat to the US \$1.

Refugees] helped the villagers with healthcare and education.

We can say that poor people who do not have land and do hill field farming have almost no land to cultivate. This is because there are many [different] authorities [armed actors] in the area, and the soldiers and some villagers worked together and sold the land to rich people from other areas, and the rich people are growing rubber trees. Therefore, it is hard for the local people to do cultivation and hard for them to find wood, bamboo, leaves for roofing and posts for fencing when they build houses. Now they have to pay 500 kyat (US \$0.51) for one bamboo [pole] and 500 kyat for one fence post.

There are 75,320.09 acres of forest in Kyonedoe Township and the civilians could not protect it after the emergence of the DKBA, BGF and KPC [KNU/KNLA Peace Council].<sup>282</sup> These armed actors demarcated the forest into plots and sold it to rich people from other places. The civilians dare not say anything because [those responsible] are armed actors. According to the local forestry leader of the KNU [administrative official in the KNU Forestry Department], only one-third of the forest is left [has not been logged].

It was easy to protect the forest when there were only the KNU and the Burmese government [in the area]. Because there are so many armed actors [now], some people said that we would have to call the forest a rubber plantation [because armed actors, villagers and business people from other areas grow so many rubber trees there].

Because the KNU has signed the preliminary ceasefire with the Burmese government, for the development of the region the KNU allowed the government to construct and repair bridges and three concrete vehicle roads in Brigade #6, Dooplaya District, between Than Phyu Za Yap and Hpa Ya Thone Su, Kyainseikgyi and Kyeh Don, and Kawkareik via A' Zinn to Paing K' Ler and Taung Ka Lay. When the companies came and worked on the three roads, they widened the narrow parts of the roads and straightened the curved roads [constructed new sections of road to cut across particularly curved sections of the existing road in order to shorten it]. As a result, the farms and plantations of some villagers were destroyed. Some of the owners of the land that was destroyed said that they would be very happy if they received proper compensation.

Civilians can travel more quickly, transport things and trade more easily because of the construction of the three new roads. However, some of the travellers and traders are disappointed because there are many check points [and they have to pay to pass the check points]. Some villagers made up a humorous poem to describe their experience of check points:

12 inches = 1 foot

Every three feet = one check point

Between here and Kawkareik = 12 check points<sup>283</sup>

Some villagers and the village administrators said that they do not dare to report human right abuses and the problems in the villages as they do not have extra heads [a darkly sarcastic expression meaning they don't want to risk speaking out for fear that their heads may be cut

<sup>282</sup> The KNU/KNLA Peace Council (also called the Karen Peace Council or KPC), is an armed group based in Htoh Gkaw Ko, Hpa-an District, which split from the Karen National Union (KNU) in 2007 and subsequently refused to comply with orders from the then-SPDC government to transform its forces into the Tatmadaw Border Guard. See: "[KPC to be outlawed if it rejects BGF](#)," *Burma News International*, August 30<sup>th</sup> 2010.

<sup>283</sup> The mathematical logic is not coherent, but the poem expresses a humorous frustration that there are such a large number of checkpoints in the area.

off]. Armed conflict is the only [kind of problem] that has decreased during the ceasefire, and the villagers still have to pay tax and do *Loh ah pay*.<sup>284</sup>

Some villagers reported that the number of young people who are using drugs is increasing because there are many organizations [armed actors involved in the drug trade].

There is a lot of mining happening in Noh T'Kaw [Kyainseikgyi] Township in Dooplaya District and many [mining] companies are coming in. In particular, mining that produces antimony in Ta Mo Theh village pollutes Win Lon stream because polluted water from the mine flows into the stream. Moreover, a kiln that was built by a Chinese company emits smoke into the air when it is running and people get dizzy and have headaches when they breath it, and people get diarrhoea when they touch the ashes produced by the kiln.

Nine villages from that area [Kyainseikgyi Township] rely on the Win Lon stream [for drinking water]. Villagers who do not have wells use the water from the Win Lon stream. Moreover buffalos, cattle, pigs and other animals from the villages along the stream drink water from the Win Lon stream in the summer time. The village administrator of Win Lon reported on November 11<sup>th</sup> 2013 that the villagers worry that the [animals] will get diseases if they drink water from the stream often.

### **Education**

The villagers built schools by themselves and hired teachers by giving them 40 to 60 baskets of paddy for one year because they realize that education is vital. [Community founded] schools in some villages have to join with government schools, otherwise they [the students] cannot attend middle school because the government does not recognize them [the local schools established by villagers]. The government does not recognize the people who pass tenth standard in KNU schools or people who pass tenth standard in refugee camps on the border. The teachers that are appointed by the government get a salary but the villagers have to provide them with rice, cooking oil, salt, coal, curry, travel [expenses when they attend training or meetings], sickness [expenses to pay for medicine] and everything. Both teachers hired [by the villagers] and those appointed by the government [and sent to teaching posts in different areas of the country] have to attend training or sit exams once every three or four months. [The training sessions or exams] take between two days and one month [to complete], and because there are no teachers to replace them [while they are in training or sitting exams] it disrupts the education of the students. The students have to pay school fees and fees for other things in some government primary schools even though the students get free books and pens provided by UNICEF [the United Nations Children's Fund].

The schools built by the villagers by themselves and the teachers hired by the villagers receive stationary, sports equipment and money for the teachers from the KED [Karen Education Department].

### **Healthcare**

Healthcare is very important for the civilians. The government appointed [local village heads] as village administrators and assigned medics to some villages. Sometimes patients from the villages receive medicine for free and sometime they have to pay money, because the government does not provide all medicines for free.

WHA<sup>285</sup> from the side of military government led by Doctor Saw Moe Myint Win distributed

<sup>284</sup> *Loh ah pay* is a Burmese term now commonly used in reference to forced labour, although traditionally referring to voluntary service for temples or the local community, not military or state projects.



elephantiasis medicine to 1,144 villagers from 254 households from 25 villages in Kyeh Don Sub-Township, Kawkareik Township on September 9<sup>th</sup> 2013. The last day of the vaccination was September 19<sup>th</sup> 2013. Doctor Saw Moe Myint Win and his superior medics together with teachers from the villages distributed elephantiasis medicine to the villagers in that area. They informed the villagers via the village tract leaders [who then informed] the ten households leaders<sup>286</sup> [and then the ten households leaders informed the households they represent]. They said that people who have heart disease, patients with gastric illnesses, pregnant women and people with chronic illnesses should not take the medicine.<sup>287</sup> There was no equipment for [diagnostic] examinations. There was only one pot [of water] and one cup [which the villagers had to share] to take the medicine, [which had to be swallowed in pill form].

The ten households leaders had to distribute the medicine to those who could not come [to receive the medicine initially]. Some people who took the medicine felt dizzy, vomited and felt itchy, [the side effects also reportedly included one case of] miscarriage and [some] some men's testicles became swollen as a consequence. People from Kyonedoe Township suffered the same things after they took the medicine. A malaria elimination team of the government came and distributed mosquito nets for free but they asked for 500 kyat (US \$0.51) from the villagers as a transportation fee for each mosquito net.

A Back Pack Health Worker Team, the FBR [Free Burma Rangers] and a malaria elimination group from the KNU come [to the village] twice per year. Also, CIDKP [the Committee for Internally Displace Karen People] and KORD [the Karen Office of Relief and Development] help the villagers when it is necessary. They distribute medicines and mosquito nets for free.

### **KNU**

The KNU could not establish a township level administration in this area. So they are operating as an organizing committee. They have nine members in the organizing committee and they are each given responsibility for one department. As for the military, there are three platoons of the KNDO [the Karen National Defence Organization]<sup>288</sup> and they are given responsibility in three different places. They are working together with the [KNU] administration group and they report what they need to the district office and brigade office.

### **The military and the BGF**

The movement of government soldiers [from the Tatmadaw] in Kyonedoe Township is decreasing. BGF Battalion #1012 set up their base camp in Noh Lone village and they also built a small camp in Htee Hu Than village. There are 20 government soldiers [the Tatmadaw] who always stay with the BGF soldiers in the Noh Lone camp. People do not see them doing anything to benefit civilians. Mostly they run gambling games during *Ar Wer* days<sup>289</sup> and collect money from that.

<sup>285</sup> It is unclear what this acronym refers to.

<sup>286</sup> 'Ten households leader' is a common term used to refer to villagers who are chosen by their communities to help manage the civil affairs of 10 or so households in a village. They work closely with the village head.

<sup>287</sup> However, some villagers claim that they were not informed about the possible side effects of taking the medicine before it was distributed.

<sup>288</sup> The Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO) was formed in 1947 by the Karen National Union and is the precursor to the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Today the KNDO refers to a militia force of local volunteers trained and equipped by the KNLA and incorporated into its battalion and command structure; its members wear uniforms and typically commit to two-year terms of service.

<sup>289</sup> '*Ar Wer*' is a term used to describe special days, hence the expression 'Ar Wer day.' Ar Wer day events typically involve celebrations to mark a special occasion such as the building of a new pagoda. Sometimes, people also engage in illicit activities such as gambling and drug use on Ar Wer days.

**DKBA**

The DKBA is traveling and operating in this area. We do not see them doing anything to benefit civilians. They are collecting tax from saw mills, cars [which pass checkpoints], 50,000 kyat (US \$51.33) for one phone, 100,000 kyat (US \$102.67) [to be allowed to own] one elephant [for one year], 100,000 kyat for one wild yam stove, rubber plantations, and they collect money from [travellers at] check points.

**KPF**

The KPF are not very active and they do not do anything that benefits civilians. They set up checkpoints and collect tax [from travellers who pass the checkpoints].

**KPC**

There is no KPC battalion [based in this area]. There are [individual] members of the KPC [who live in the area] and they are doing nothing that benefits civilians. They are just like the superior soldiers of the KPF and the DKBA, and have relationships with rich people and sell land.

**Conclusion**

Social problems, land problems, judicial [problems], and killing cases are occurring in the Kyonedoe Township [KNU organizing committee] area as there are many armed actors. Therefore, the rule of law and security for the civilians is weak. The problems that are happening now are very difficult for the responsible people to solve.

Short Update written by a community member, Kyone Doe Township, Doooplaya District, (Received in February 2014)

**Source #89**

Source #	14-12-12								
Log #	14-12-12								
Title	Incident Report: Hpapun District, November 2013								
Publishing Information	Previously unpublished								
Location	K--- Village, Meh Kyoh village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw District								
Full Text									
<div>1. K--- Village, Meh Kyoh village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw District.</div> <div>2. Type of Incident: Attack on villager</div> <div>3. Date of Incident(s): 28/11/2013</div> <div>4. Incident(s) Location (village, township, district): Kwee Ta Ma, Meh Kyoh village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw District.</div> <div>5. Victims Details</div>									
Name	Age	Sex	Ethnicity	Religion	Family	Occupation	Member of Organizations	Responsible	Village



C---	20	fema le	Burme se	Buddh ist	No	Teacher	Governme nt teacher	Teacher	Ka Ma Mau ng
Mi K---	21	fema le	Burme se	Buddh ist	No	Teacher	Governme nt teacher	Teacher	Thar Hlel

## 6. Details of Perpetrator(s):

Name	Rank	Company/Battalion./Division	Based at	Commander's Name
Hpah P'Nah	Home guard	Ma Lay Ler village tract home guard	Kwee Ta Ma and Ma Lay Ler check point	Saw Maw Noo

**Part 3 - Information quality**

On November 29<sup>th</sup> 2013 at night time, around 10 pm, Ma Lay Ler home guard Hpah P'Nah, who is based at the check point between Kwee Ta Ma and Ma Lay Ler, called his three other home guards and came to the two female teachers of K--- village, who stay in Ma I---'s house. They went into Ma I---'s house without taking off their boots and they also brought guns with them. They threatened the two teachers and also checked their bags. They took out the teachers' sarongs and clothes from their bags. The two teachers were very afraid and in the morning they dared not go and teach at school anymore.

2. Note down how individual sources know the information is true?

The information is true because the two female teachers stay at Ma I---s house and Ma I--- takes care of them. So, Ma I--- witnessed it when Hpah P'Na questioned the two teachers and after that she reported the incident to KHRG. Saw --- received the information from Ma I-- and she told me everything about the incident that happened and this is why the information is true and correct.

**Part 4 – Detail information about the incidents**

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail. For each incident be sure to include When, Where, What Happened, How it happened in detail, Who were the victims and perpetrators, and Why it happened. Also describe how the villagers responded to the incident, the after effects of the incidents and the current living situation of the victims. Please, use the space prepared below and create attach if needed.

On November 29<sup>th</sup> 2013, at 10pm, Saw Hpah P'Na who used to be Ma Lay Ler home guard, and now was appointed to base at the check point between Kwee Ta Ma and Ma Lay Ler villages. At that time, Hpah P'Na with three other home guards came to K--- to see the two teachers who are staying at Ma I---'s house. They went into the house with their guns and didn't take off their boots. They went to the two teachers and questioned them and also threatened them. They checked the teachers' bags and messed up their belongings such as sarongs and clothes. Therefore, the two teachers were very afraid.

Hpah P'Na questioned the two teachers if they came to teach because the Burma government asked them to spy. The two teachers were afraid and replied to him that "We

*are school teachers and we came here to teach because we were ordered from the above to come here. Even though we don't want to come, we have to come. We came here to teach because we love the villagers and children. The fact that we are teaching is not against the law. We are teachers because our parents sent us to school and we learned the good things from school. If we are spies, we would not live our lives like this. We can't get enough food from doing this and we also would not live very long. We know the good and bad things clearly."*

The name of the two teachers who came to teach are C--- and Mi K---. Ma I--- knows everything about what the two teachers have faced and she reported this incident to me and all of the information above are all true.

Part 5 - Asking for permission for using the detail incidents

Does the victim give us permission to use the information? How does the victim gives us permission to us the info?

Ma I--- represented the two teachers and she told us to use the information as we need and to let the Karen leaders know. She also told us to let everyone know, to prevent this kind of incident from happening again.

#### Source #90

<b>Log #</b>	14-21-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Interview with Naw A---, 28, C--- village, Hpa-pun District, March 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-pun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 28 years old.</p> <p><b>What is your village?</b></p> <p>C--- [village].</p> <p><b>A--- [village] or B--- [village]?</b></p> <p>C--- [village].</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p> <p>Islam.</p> <p><b>How about your religion?</b></p> <p>Islam.</p> <p><b>What is your job?</b></p>	

Odd jobs.

**What is your village tract and district and township?**

**C--- village tract right?**

[no answer]

**Are you married?**

Currently I am not married.

**That means you were married in the past, but now you do not have a husband, right?**

Yes, in the past I was married.

**How many children do you have?**

Two.

**How old is the eldest one?**

Five years old.

**How about the youngest one?**

Three years old.

**What responsibilities do you have in the village?**

Nothing, I am just an ordinary villager

**How many households are there in the village?**

[Person 2:] She cannot answer this because she has just arrived here in this village.

**So before you were not a native villager here?**

I was born here and then I moved to D--- and grew up there.

**How many years have there been since you came back to stay in this village?**

About over 2 years.

**So you don't know about the population?**

Yes, of course.

**Now, what do you do for a living?**

Just odd jobs, I do whatever work there is.

**Usually what kind of job do you do?**

Usually, I grow paddy, groundnut and harvest the paddy, just these kind of jobs.

**How much do you earn for a daily wage?**

3,500 kyat per day.

**Are you fine with your livelihood?**

[There is] Not much convenience [ease] because we have many siblings and although we are not really fine with our livelihood we just have to struggle like this.

**Do you have freedom of movement?**

I can say yes.

**Is there a church in the village?**

Yes.

**Can villagers celebrate festivals freely?**

Yes.

**Is there a school?**

Yes.

**Up to what standard?<sup>290</sup>**

It is a primary school

**How many teachers are there?**

There are four teachers.

**Is it a [Myanmar] government school or is it self-reliant [independent]?**

It is a [Myanmar] government school.

**Can students study freely?**

Yes

**Do people make a good living for their livelihoods?**

Some people do and some do not.

**There are people who have a good living and people who do not have a good living, which one is there more of?**

I think more people do not have a good living.

**How do people who struggle with a hard livelihood find a way to solve their hardship?**

<sup>290</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Burma/Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

Just like us, doing odd jobs.

**Is there any treatment centre in the village?**

Yes.

**Is that provided by the [Myanmar] government?**

Not by the [Myanmar] government.

**So when people get sick they just go there?**

Yes.

**Do you have to pay when you go to the hospital?**

Yes.

**Is it a public hospital?**

[no answer]

**Do villagers have freedom of movement?**

Yes.

**What are the common diseases affecting the village?**

Common cold, running nose, stomach ache and diarrhoea diseases.

**How much does a viss<sup>291</sup> of chicken cost in the village?**

I have no idea about that but I think maybe around 5000 kyat.

**How about a basket of rice?**

500 kyat.

**Do people in the village have income every day?**

No, we only earn money on the days that we have a job.

**Can you please tell me a little bit about the situation of the village?**

How do you want me to explain about the situation of the village?

**The situation of the village means, the daily work in the village, the villagers' livelihoods and so on. Do people have a good living and is there freedom of movement?**

We can go around freely and, as I mentioned before, we do work when there is a job and when there is no job then we just take a rest.

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<sup>291</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

**You said that you do not have a husband so when did your husband die?**

Three years ago.

**Did he die from sickness?**

From a heart attack.

**Can you live freely after your husband [died]?**

Yes.

**Now, do you live with your two children or do you live with your sibling?**

I live with my sister.

**Can you please tell me a little bit about your background story?**

[Woman 2, the interviewee's sister:] That depends on your question and what you want to ask – then she will be able to answer you.

**Just tell me about what happened to you step by step.**

The incident happened at night time around 11pm. When we fell asleep, he [the perpetrator, Ko Myo] came up and closed my mouth and I cannot even restrain [him].

**So the incident happened at night time around 11pm? But what happened?**

Rape – he tried to take off my shirt and lift up my longyi.

**Who tried to rape you?**

Ko Myo.

**Where does that Ko Myo come from?**

Not so far from the house.

**So is he in the same village?**

---

**So you don't know when he came [approached] to you?**

I was asleep.

**How did you know that then?**

When he and I reached in front of the house.<sup>292</sup>

**At 11pm right?**

Yes.

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<sup>292</sup> KHRG is in the process of following up to clarify the meaning of this point.

**After that [rape] happened, didn't you try to report it to the village head?**

No [unclear talk].

**Did the village head take any action?**

I don't know.

**The village head didn't say anything about whether he would take action or not?**

I don't know whether the village head took action or not.

**Now does that man [the perpetrator] still live here?**

No.

**Is that because he is afraid of what he has done or did he [Ko Myo] escape from the abuse [punishment]?**

Maybe he is afraid [ashamed] of what he has done and that is why he escaped. He fled in the morning at 9am.

**So the village head did not say anything regarding that case?**

Yes.

**You did not report anything to the village head either?**

Yes.

**How many people do you sleep with at the night?**

My sister and I sleep in the room and two people [my sister and her child] sleep in the front room of the house.

**So your sister did not know when he came up into the house?**

[Woman 2:] Usually we go to sleep at 9pm after watching a movie and I am a heavy sleeper as well so I fell asleep as usual. On that night my husband suffered diarrhoea a little bit and he did not fall asleep very well. In the meantime the disturbance happened. Then he heard a voice but he did not know what was happening because children usually sleep in the room and when they move when they're sleeping it makes a noise. So my husband thought that it was just the sound of children moving during sleep but when he continued to listen it did not sound like children moving. He doubted the noise and then he went to check the room but he did not go directly to the room where my sister was sleeping, instead he went to the kitchen first without turning on the light. Then when my husband came out from the kitchen and shone the torch towards his sister-in-law, he saw that his sister-in-law had run out. Then he asked his sister-in-law, 'what is going on,' and his sister-in-law replied, 'I don't know who that was' someone tried to wrestle me,' and then he said to his sister, 'why didn't you scream.' Then he shone the torch light into the dark room and he saw Ko Myo. Then his sister-in-law said, 'he [Ko Myo] closed my mouth so I could not scream.' Then my husband came to me and told me about that and at that time Ko Myo pretended to be asleep in the room. Then my sister came to me straightaway and then I woke up and asked her, 'what is going on,' and she said, 'I don't know, someone tried to wrestle me and close my mouth.' Then I asked her, 'why did that person close your mouth and what [did] that person try to do



to you,' and she replied, 'I don't know either thing.' Then I emotionally ran to his [Ko Myo's] wife and said to her, 'your husband insulted my sister like this and so on and what does that mean.' So I asked his [Ko Myo's] wife to take her husband back from my home. Then she [Ko Myo's wife] came to my house to take back her husband but her husband did not go with her. Instead her husband shouted at her.

**Didn't you submit a complaint to the village head?**

[Woman 2:] Yes we did.

**Did you complain to the village head in your village or to the village tract leader?**

[Woman 2:] The village head of our village.

**Didn't you complain to the village tract leader?**

[Woman 2:] Village tract leader, village secretary and our village head were included.

**Who is the village tract leader?**

[Woman 2:] U B---.

**How many years has he served as a village tract leader?**

[Woman 2:] I don't know about that.

**Doesn't he handle the cases that happen in his area?**

I would say he is a little bit calm but if he deals with the cases when we make a complaint to him, I think he may able to catch [take action] that guy [Ko Myo]. However he is not serious about this case and then that guy [Ko Myo] escaped.

**What did he say when you complained about this case? Did he say he would handle it for you?**

He just said to keep calm, that he would handle it for me. Then we did not take it serious [any more] and we kept calm.

**For how many days did that guy [Ko Myo] escape [stay away from the village] after the incident happened?**

He stayed in the village for three days after the incident happened.

**He fled three days after the incident happened, so is it possible that he negotiated something with the village head?**

[Woman 2:] I have no idea about that. After the incident happened, he [Ko Myo] did not go out of the house and he just slept in the room in the house. And he did not get along with his wife after that happened. Then they had arguments very often and he got injuries on his face. We have heard rumours that he had caused some problems before the incident happened to us.

**What kind of injury on his face?**

Maybe he got punched, we don't know much about him.

**Have you heard anything else after he [Ko Myo] fled from U B---, who is village tract leader, such as what he would do for you?**

His wife called his parents two or three days after he fled. But his wife told [us] that her parents-in-law [Ko Myo's parents] about Ko Myo [i.e. what he did] and they replied that they did not know about him [his actions] either. But I can't believe that they [Ko Myo's parents] did not know about that as they live in the same house. However, I did not complain to the village head and I just let it be [did not think about it] as they did not know anything about Ko Myo. Then his [Ko Myo's] wife, who was our relative from my husband's side, asked us, 'What would you like to be done?' and then I replied, 'I am not [the] victim and I [want to reach a] settlement [with] you only about the case that your husband came into my house. For the rape case, I am not [the] victim, so I could not say how the case should be done.' So I only [want to] settle [for] the case that her husband came into my house [trespassed] and not including the rest of the case. As I am not [the] victim, I don't even need to make a decision for the case.

**Didn't she say anything about her case?**

[Woman 2:] You didn't even ask about her case, how could she talk about it.

**Was she [Woman 1] included in the village head's inquiry for the case?**

Yes, I was included as well.

**So who else was included in the inquiry?**

Woman 2:] Some witnesses were included.

**Is that including the village head and village tract leader?**

Yes.

**They [village leaders] [started the] inquiry for the case to discuss how to solve it properly, so why didn't they ask the most concerned person [the victim]?**

[Woman 2:] Right, they did not ask the victim. Instead they just asked me. But I am not a victim. However if I wanted to sue him [Ko Myo] for trespassing in my house, I could have done that. On the other hand, they [Ko Myo's family] are related to us [from the sister's husband's side] so I would not do that. So I placated only [dropped] the case of him [Ko Myo] coming into my house and not about the rape case.

**So didn't she [Woman 1] say anything about her case?**

They [village leaders] did not ask her anything so she didn't say anything.

**So how do the village leaders placate [resolve] the case?**

They cannot do anything right now as the perpetrator [Ko Myo] is absent. Then they will handle it when the perpetrator comes back. But now the perpetrator has escaped and does not come back to the village. Anyhow they have made an appointment to meet at the end of this month and if he [Ko Myo] does not come back then they have to make a decision.

**So they hold the appointment?**

Yes, until end of this month.

**I have heard that SU B--- [the village tract leader] asked the victim to be placated [sign to drop the case] while the perpetrator is absent. Is that right?**

[Woman 2:] That is not true. They [the village leaders] just asked my husband to sign to drop the case for the trespassing of our house as we are relatives [with the perpetrator].

**So you guys are relatives of Ko Myo?**

[Woman 2:] Not really from my side, just my husband and his [Ko Myos'] wife are siblings. I am a person who has feelings of compassion for everyone because we are poor people and I have no parents and I am the eldest among my siblings. I have sympathy for everyone who is poor like me. Especially people like my younger brother or sister, I love them more. But he [Ko Myo] is rich and he should not commit this kind of case [abuse]. On that night, Ko Myo's wife told me that her husband was wrong and asked me to forgive her. Then I replied to her [Ko Myo's wife] that 'there is no reason to forgive.'

**What did she reply to you then?**

[Woman 2:] She replied nothing. I told her that there is no way to forgive for this kind of case. If he really wants to have sex this much why doesn't he have it with his wife and why does he try to insult another woman? I just angrily told her like that. He did not get out of my house although I was shouting at him and his wife came to take him back. When he did not get out of my house, I got down from my house but I didn't have any idea [intention] to go and complain about it to the village head's house in my mind. Maybe he thought that I would go to the village head's house so then he got down from my house and asked me where I was going. Then I went back into my house after he left. But he did not go straight back to his home. He just went around the village and insulted the villagers.

**Has he done this before?**

[Woman 2:] I don't know this much about him. But what I have heard from gossip is that he does have this behaviour [before].

**Has he ever done anything like this in the village in the past?**

No.

**Where is he originally from?**

Maybe he is originally from Yay [town].

**Is he of Bamar ethnicity?**

Yes.

**Is he a son of a Burmese military [Tatmadaw] soldier? Is his father a retired soldier?**

I think so. Of course, he is a son of a Tatmadaw soldier.

**Do his parent lives here?**

His mother lives here and runs the alcohol shop.

**His mother has not said anything?**

We have no connection with his mother.

**So now the village leaders have asked to wait for one month, if he does not come back then will they do something?**

Sure, they should make a decision because this kind of issue is not an easy case. There is much suffering on the woman's side.

**That is right. It harmed the woman's dignity a lot.**

[Woman 2:] I just want to say that my sister is not prostitute and not a person who has a bad moral behaviour. She is just a person who is uneducated and has a mental disability. So when something happens and people ask her [about it] then I have to answer for her. The incident happened at home and she recited to me what happened to her. Then I have to explain the case for her.

**However when she [Woman 1] is not able to discuss her case you [Woman 2] can tell people about it for her as you are her family member. For her it would be hard to talk about it and it may not feel comfortable to talk about it, so you have to tell people it for her.**

**Does he [Ko Myo] get along with his friends?**

Never.

**Does he ever participate in any kind of work in the village?**

Ko Myo's job is to play card games, *A Ni Daung Wine*<sup>293</sup> is his job. He comes home not at the right time [late at night] and he goes and comes without time limitations [at any time he wants].

**Does the village head set up the rule [curfew] to go home by a certain time?**

The village head does set up the rule [about] what time you cannot go out, for example you cannot go out after 6pm and strangers are not allowed to enter the village at that time, but he [Ko Myo] just does not follow the rule. He [Ko Myo] does not attend the meetings either.

**Does he do anything for the village development?**

He only attends meetings one out of ten times.

**So he just attends the meetings whenever he wants to?**

That's right. When he wants to he goes and when he does not want to he stays [does not go]. It seems like he doesn't care about the village.

My younger sister [Woman 1] just got married but we did know when she got married. At that time we had already arrived in C--- village and she got married in D--- village. She got married with a Buddhist person. She doesn't know anything; how she got married and got two children. Now, she doesn't know how to love her children and how to feed her children, so I have to do everything for her. She doesn't know anything and I have to do everything for her family because she is mentally disabled. When she was young she has been seriously sick for a long time and was put on drip many times which caused her to become mentally disabled. She is just passive [and] resistant and never listens to me, so I always have to

<sup>293</sup> *A Ni Daung Wine* is a Burmese gambling game

forgive her. As an older sister I have to make sacrifices for her.

**Is there any forced labour or taxation demands in the village?**

No.

**Do villagers have to get permission from the village head or inform the village head when they travel?**

Yes, we have to register with the village head when we travel.

**Do you have to pay for the registration?**

Yes.

**How much?**

500 kyat each time.

**Are there any armed groups that come into the village and threaten the villagers or do something else?**

No.

**How can you compare before and after the ceasefire?**

Now, I would say there is a little bit more peace compared to the past.

**What is your opinion on the KNU and Tatmadaw after the ceasefire?**

I have no idea about that.

**Is there any oppression in the village like in the past?**

No.

**Is the village located close to the army camp?**

The army camps that are close to our village are Tactical Battalion #341 and #340.

**Do they come into the village?**

As they are medical soldiers, they do come to the village one out of ten times. And the people who drive a motorboat also come as well.

**Is there any risk when they come to the village?**

No.

**So do the villagers dare to get in touch with them?**

---

**Do they steal when they come to the village?**

No.

**Do they demand forced workers?**

No.

**Can villagers go freely around their battalion camp?**

Yes, people do go around.

**Did anything happen?**

Yes, but I don't go, just the market sellers. For me, I am not free to go around near the battalion camp. Sometimes I have to go and harvest paddy or I have to go to repair the road and sometimes my sister follows with me, otherwise I leave her at home.

**Is there anything that I haven't asked you? If so you can tell me.**

No.

**Well then thank you so much.**

**Source #91**

<b>Log #</b>	14-21-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview, Naw A---, 16, February 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Research Area: Hpapun (Mutraw) District</b>	
<b>Date Received: March 4<sup>th</sup> 2014</b>	
<b>Interview Date: February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014</b>	
<b>Interview Place: Hpapun (Mutraw) District, A--- village</b>	
<b>Name: Naw A---</b>	
<b>Gender: Female</b>	
<b>Age: 16</b>	
<b>Village: A--- village</b>	
<b>Ethnicity and Religion: Karen and Buddhist</b>	
<b>Family Status: Single</b>	
<b>Occupation: Student</b>	
<b>Position: None</b>	
<b>What is your name?</b>	

My name is A---.

**How old are you?**

I am 16 years old.

**What is your village?**

A--- Village.

**What is your occupation?**

I study.

**So you are a student?**

Yes.

**In which Grade are you in?**

I am in Grade 9.

**What is your village tract?**

Meh K'law village tract

**What about your Township?**

Bu Tho Township.

**And District?**

Mutraw (Hpapun) District.

**How many households in your village?**

Maybe around [number censored for security].

**Do you also know the population number [of the village]?**

No.

**As a student, where do you attend school at the moment?**

I attend school at Hpapun School.

**Is Hpapun School a [Myanmar] government funded school?**

Yes.

**How many teachers do you have at your school?**

I don't know how many teachers are left because I do not go to school anymore.

**How about students?**

There are over a hundred students in each class.

**Do you mean only in your class?**

No, the whole school. I don't know for the whole school.<sup>294</sup>

**So is Hpapun School a primary school or middle school or high school?**

High school.

**What is the name of the [Myanmar government] Minister of Education?**

Daw Aye Myint Than.

<sup>294</sup> A KHRG researcher is following up to clarify whether this number refers to the class or the school.



**Can you study freely?**

Yes.

**How long has it been since you left school?**

Since I got injured.

**Why did you leave school?**

Because I got injured.

**How did you get injured?**

In a car accident.

**How did the car hit you?**

It hit my shoulder and then grazed my bicycle grip.

**Do you remember the date when you had a car accident? It happened on what day?**

On Thursday.

**What was the date?**

January 16<sup>th</sup> [2014].

**Was the car that hit you a military vehicle or a civilian vehicle?**

Military vehicle.

**From what battalion is that?**

Sorry?

**From which battalion does that military vehicle belong to?**

It is [from] a tactical battalion.

**Was it when you were going to school or when you were on your way back from school when you were hit by a car?**

On my way back from school.

**What time was that?**

It was around 4pm.

**You fell down after the car hit you and then it grazed your hand. Did it happen like that?**

It did not graze my hand. I fell down because of the uneven ground as there were stones on the road and I put out my arms to break the fall.

**Were your arms broken?**

Yes.

**Did he [the car driver] look after you after the car accident?**

Just two or three days after the accident.

**So he did not look after you straightaway after the accident happened?**

No.

**So who helped you get up?**

I couldn't get up by myself. Somebody just helped me to get up.

**And then you were taken to the hospital? [First Naw A--- was taken to Hpapun**

**Hospital and then she was taken to Hpa-an Hospital]**

Yes.

**Did he [the car driver] take care [of the medical fees] when you went to hospital?**

He just came [to the hospital] after the police called him. He did not come to the hospital before the police phoned him.

**So he came to you when the police went and called him?**

Yes but not the driver.

**So the person who came to you was just his commander?**

Yes.

**Is that the tactical commander?**

He is a military commander.

**Is he in a three stars [company commander] position?**

I don't know about that.

**So you don't know his name?**

No, I just know the name of driver.

**Is he the commander of that driver?**

No, that guy cannot drive a car, his name is Kyaw Htay.

**Don't you know his age?**

No, he only came [to hospital] once.

**Did the car driver come to see you after the car accident happened and when you were in hospital?**

No and his commander only came for two days.

**What did he tell to you when he [the driver's commander] came to see you?**

He said that he would take care [of the medical fees] until I am well recovered.

**When the police called them, did the commander or the driver come?**

The driver did not come.

**So only his commander came?**

Yes.

**Did he actually take care of [your hospital fees] as he had promised?**

No, when I was referred to Hpa-an [hospital] he only gave me 95,000 kyats.

**He gave you 95,000 kyats when you were referred to Hpa-an hospital?**

Yes.

**What about when you were in hospital in Hpapun? [First Naw A--- was taken to Hpapun Hospital and then she was taken to Hpa-an Hospital]**

I don't know about that. Maybe the medic asked him for the fees directly.

**How long were you at Hpa-an hospital?**

Eight days.

**Did you have to pay the medical fees for the eight days?**

Yes.

**How much did it cost you?**

For the operation fee, it cost over 40,000 kyats.

**For one operation is cost over 40,000 kyats?**

Yes, it cost 45,000 kyats and 65,000 kyats for the X-ray.

**How much for the X-ray?**

65,000 kyats.

**Were there any other medical fees that you had to pay?**

The X-ray fee for two days cost 30,000 kyats.<sup>295</sup>

**How about for food? Did you have to buy food?**

Yes, my father bought food and sometimes people brought food for me.

**The hospital is a [Myanmar] government hospital, right?**

We were in hospital in Hpa-an so I think it is a [Myanmar] government hospital.

**How many days were you in Hpa-an [hospital]?**

Eight days.

**How much did the fees cost in total, do you think?**

The transportation fee was 7,000 kyats for one person. It was just from Hpapun to K--- village. According to the agreement we were only allowed two people to go to hospital.

**Was that agreement between you and the medic at [Hpapun] hospital or between you and the Tatmadaw commander?**

That agreement was with the Tatmadaw commander.

**He said that only two people could go [to Hpa-an hospital]?**

Yes.

**And he paid 95,000 kyats for two people [for the hospital fees]?**

Yes, but the actual cost in total was more than 95,000 kyats.

**Was that 95,000 kyats enough for you while you were in hospital for eight days at Hpa-an hospital?**

No.

**So you had to pay it by yourself?**

Yes.

**Were you discharged from the hospital before you had recovered well or because you had recovered?**

I had not recovered well.

**Was that because you didn't like to be in hospital?**

No.

**You just asked to be discharged from the hospital?**

Yes.

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<sup>295</sup> KHRG is in the process of following up to clarify this cost.

**Did you come back to Hpapun hospital for [more] treatment?**

Yes, but it [the injury] did not recover [heal] easily so I went to section 4 [of the Town] and got treatment over there.

**So when you went back to Hpapun hospital for treatment, what did they tell you?**

They just told me to come and take medicine everyday but, even though I did that, it [the injury] did not recover [heal] easily.

**Did he [the Tatmadaw commander] come and see you when you went back to Hpapun hospital?**

No.

**How much did it cost you when you were in hospital in Hpapun hospital?**

The medics handled it.

**I mean the medication fee?**

The medics at hospital did not tell me about that.

**Do you mean they didn't even tell you that you need to pay or did they say you do not need to pay?**

They did not tell me anything when I was discharged from the hospital.

**You didn't go and ask them about that either?**

No, I did not. When I went to Hpa-an hospital, people asked them [medics] about that [medication fees] but they did not say anything about it apart from saying that they will talk about it when I come back from Hpa-an hospital. But they [the Hpapun medics] did not tell me anything when I came back from Hpa-an hospital.<sup>296</sup>

**So who will talk about the medication fee when you come back from Hpa-an hospital? Is that the person in charge of Hpapun hospital?**

I do not know.

**So just the medics from the Hpapun hospital?**

Yes, they [Hpapun medics] said, "we will deal with the medication fee later".

**That means that they [the Hpapun medics] will offer you free service?**

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**What do most villagers do for their livelihood in the village?**

Farming.

**Most Karen people do farming for the livelihood, don't they?**

Right.

**Are villagers able to survive [support themselves] sufficiently for the whole year by what they have earned?**

Not everyone.

**So are there more people who can survive sufficiently or people are insufficient?**

More people can survive sufficiently.

**How do people who cannot survive sufficiently solve their problems?**

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<sup>296</sup> KHRG is in the process of following up to clarify the meaning of this point.

They just have to depend on their relatives' support.

**Does that mean that people who cannot earn sufficiently for the livelihood can deal with their hardship?**

Yes.

**Have you ever seen Tatmadaw enter your village?**

I haven't see Tatmadaw come to our village last year and they have not been to our village for three years.

**Do they [Tatmadaw] still come [to the village] after the ceasefire?**

No.

**What about the KNU [Karen National Union]?**

No.

**Can villagers work freely for the livelihood?**

I think so.

**How about freedom of movement?**

Yes.

**What is your view on Tatmadaw?**

I have no opinion.

**Do you think they are good or bad?**

They are bad.

**How?**

I don't know.

**You said that they are not good. So do you mean that [because] when the car accident happened with you because of them and you got injured and had to go to hospital, and they did not take complete responsibility for that?**

[Person #2:] They did not support me [her] sufficiently. It was because of the Karen people why they did not care [about her injuries] but if it involved other ethnic people [groups] they would be seriously sued.

**Do you mean that they do not value the Karen people?**

Yes.

**Is that because they do not regard Karen people as capable people who are not good at communication for solving problems and they think they can do whatever they want to?**

I think so.

**How about their leaders? Did they come and see you when you were in hospital?**

They came twice.

**In those two days did their [Myanmar] government offer you any support?**

No, they only came once on the day when we went to Hpa-an hospital.

**The people of the Myanmar government military [Tatmadaw] had already hit Karen people by a car [accident]; did they try to handle the case in order to solve the problem?**

No.

**Did they come and see you?**

No, only the driver came and he only saw me once when I was in Hpapun [hospital].

**You said that police went and called him and when he came, what did the police say to him?**

The police just told him that this [the person he hit with his car] is a student so he had to take responsibility to take care of her until she had recovered well.

**Did he [the car driver] say yes?**

Yes.

**Does that mean that if you had not been a student, they would not have taken responsibility to take care of you?**

Yes.

**Do you think they want to discriminate against Karen people? What is your opinion?**

I think so. They might want to discriminate against Karen people.

**How can you compare [the situation] before the ceasefire with after ceasefire? Do you see it is getting better or worse?**

Maybe it is getting worse.

**How?**

Maybe it is getting better; however, in my opinion, Burmese [Tatmadaw] soldiers are always bad.

**What do you think about KNU and Tatmadaw? Do you think that they are good or bad? Which one is good and which one is bad?**

What is KNU?

[Person #2:] KNU is a Karen soldier [army].

**How much does a viss<sup>297</sup> of chicken cost in the village?**

5,000 kyats per viss.

**How about pork?**

3,000 kyats per viss if we buy from other people but if we buy from a relative [it costs] 2,500 kyats per viss.

**What about the price of rice?**

It is 5,000 kyats for a bag of rice.

**Is there a school in the village?**

Yes.

**How many teachers are there?**

One male teacher and four female teachers.

**How many students are there?**

I have no idea.

<sup>297</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

**Can students study freely?**

I think so.

**Is there a clinic in the village?**

Yes.

**Is that a clinic or just a medic that offers [medical] services?**

The medic that gives an injection service.

**What is the common disease affecting [people] in the village?**

Just fever.

**And do the medics who offer the service give treatment for that disease?**

Yes.

**Where do they refer the patients to when the disease is not treatable [in the village]?**

They refer them to the Hpapun.

**To Hpapun hospital?**

Yes.

**Do they [patients] have to pay [for the fee]?**

Yes.

**Is that a public [Myanmar government] hospital or a private hospital?**

Public [Myanmar government] hospital.

**Do you still have to pay in the public [Myanmar government] hospital?**

Yes.

**Have you ever heard of the hospital providing a free service?**

No.

**What is your opinion on what you have suffered from the car accident with Tatmadaw [soldiers]?**

I think it is not good.

**Is there anything else that you would like to say that I have not asked?**

No.

**Well then, thank you.**

#### Source #92

<b>Log #</b>	14-22-I3
<b>Title</b>	Incident Report   Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in May 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2014/05/14-22-i3/toungoo-incident-report-sexual-assault-thandaunggyi-township-december-2013">http://khrq.org/2014/05/14-22-i3/toungoo-incident-report-sexual-assault-thandaunggyi-township-december-2013</a>
<b>Location</b>	Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b><u>Part 1 – Incident Details</u></b>	



<b>Type of Incident</b>	-			
<b>Date of Incident</b>	December 10 <sup>th</sup> 2013			
<b>Incident Location</b>	Between Thandaunggyi Town and N--- village			

  

<b>Victim Information</b>	
<b>Name</b>	Naw Z---
<b>Age</b>	22
<b>Sex</b>	Female
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen
<b>Family</b>	-
<b>Occupation</b>	Cultivator
<b>Religion</b>	-
<b>Position</b>	-
<b>Village</b>	N---village, Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District

  

<b>Perpetrator Information</b>				
<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander's Name</b>
Tun Thein	Private Service number- Ta/392332	Military Operation Command #1, Light Infantry Battalion #506		

  

**Part 2 – Information Quality**

<b>1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.</b>
I took the photos and got the information by myself.

  

<b>2. Explain how the source verified this information.</b>
I took the photos at Naw Z---'s house in N--- village on December 19 <sup>th</sup> 2013 and she gave me the information.

  

**Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident**

<p><b>Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail. For each incident, be sure to include 1) <u>when</u> the incident happened, 2) <u>where</u> it happened, 3) <u>what</u> happened, 4) <u>how</u> it happened, 5) <u>who</u> was involved, and 6) <u>why</u> 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 an attachment if needed.</b></p> <p>Naw Z--- is 22 years old and she travels every day from her village, N---, to Thandaunggyi [town] to buy food for her family. Naw Z--- saw a person sitting beside the road when she was coming back to her village on December 10<sup>th</sup> 2013 at 2:00 pm, and she passed him and continued walking. The man chased her when she reached 100 yards away from him and pushed her down. When she tried to escape, the man told her that he would kill her if she shouted. At that time, another man from the village came and the man ran away. Then, when she arrived at the village, Naw Z--- told the elders from the village about the incident and the villagers found [the perpetrator] three or four days later, and detained him. Then, they took him to the nearest [Tatmadaw] camp and they found out that he was a soldier as a result of interrogation [by the responsible people from the camp]. His [the perpetrator's] name is Tun Thein, his service number is Ta/392332 and he is from Light</p>
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Infantry Battalion #506 under the control of Military Operation Command #1. Military Operation Command #1 is based in Shan State.<sup>298</sup>

#### **Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details**

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

The victim allowed us to use the information.

#### **Source #93**

<b>Log #</b>	14-25-CL1
<b>Title</b>	Complaint Letter, Hpapun District – April 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>Date – April 12, 2014</p> <p>To K.H.R.G. Headquarters,</p> <p><i>Subject: I received this requested letter on March 30, 2014. The place where I primarily got this letter is described here: I basically went to visit my teacher named Daw S---'s home. She was a teacher of mine, who taught me when I was in Hpapun School in the past. When I visited her, we had a conversation, step by step, and she talked to me about her younger brother Maung H---. She talked to me about her concerns, and she is not satisfied. And I asked her why she has concerns for him and she told me about an incident which happened last year on November 16, 2013. She says her younger brother, Maung H---, went to the city and came back to Hpapun. As his car's steering wheel had broken, he collided with a tree stump which is beside the road. There were 3 passengers in the car, who are U H---, his daughter Ma H---, and his wife Daw K---. These relatives, parents and child, got some injuries since the car collided with the tree stump. She had to help them for the medical treatment at Hpa-an hospital. When they were getting better, they discharged from the hospital and they thanked them. They did not say any bad things about Maung H---. In addition, they also signed an agreement in front of the people who saw the incident and they said Maung H--- had no fault.</i></p> <p>On November 25, 2013, the three relatives, together with Maung H---, came back to Hpapun Township. As for Maung H---'s car, it was kept at the police station in Ka Ma Maung. On November 25, 2013, the second police officer, who is Thet Soe Win, from Ka Ma Maung, came to Daw S---'s house in the evening at 4:30PM. When he arrived, he asked the documentation, like the recommendation letter from the former military service, if it is a car that helped with military service, the recommendation from the state prime minister and the card of travel license and appeasement letter. Although he had given the necessary documentation which they asked, I saw that they do not take action for the case.</p> <p>[Daw S--- said] "On November 25, 2013, in the evening, at 7:30 PM, the traffic policeman in charge and the second police administrator Kyaw Kyaw Htun, and the police administrator Hla Min Thaung, from Hpapun's police station, came to my house and demanded compensation of 2,000,000 kyats. They told me that if I did not give them the compensation of 2,000,000 kyats, they would take action according to the article (8) and they would also</p>	

<sup>298</sup> Tatmadaw soldiers are often assigned to operations outside of the areas in which their headquarters are based.

put him [my brother] into jail. They would also keep the car with them. The person who talked to me is the police administrator Hla Min Thaung. When he was talking to me, my elder brother (U W---) and all of my siblings were there. After the police administrator had said the above, I replied to him, *'I do not have this amount of compensation (2,000,000 kyats), and I cannot afford to pay this amount and I am also not a rich person. I am a normal person [villager] and I also do not have parents [died]. As I am a [government] staff, I cannot afford to pay you the compensation. I do apologise to you all [that I cannot afford this amount].'*

"And then, on November 26, 2013, in the evening at 3:00 PM, the police administrator Hla Min Thaung came back to me again and said, *'You actually have to pay 7,000,000 kyats for your car. But I ask you to pay only 2,000,000 kyats [originally]. Can't you give it? If you cannot give it, the owner will be put in the jail and the car also will be kept.'*

[Daw S--- said] "On November 28, 2013, at 12:30 PM, the second police administrator came to my house again and talked about the compensation of 2,000,000 kyats, [which I have to pay]. He said that he talked to me with benevolence. He asked me to give the second police administrator Thet Soe Win, who lives in Ka Ma Maw and the case interrogative officer, 500,000 kyats of the compensation; U Thu Rein Win, who is the Township Law officer, 500,000 kyats [of the compensation]; The total amount of compensation you need to pay is 3,000,000 kyats which includes [paying] both Thet Soe Win and U Thu Rein Win. As for me, pay me 2,000,000 kyats. [If you do so], I will finish the case." Hla Min Thaung said this to me. To pay for the compensation of 2,000,000 kyats, he would give me 5 days of time period. After 5 days, if I could not pay him the compensation, he would send us [me] to the court." She then replied to him, "I cannot pay you the compensation right now. You can report this case to the court."

[Daw S--- said] "I continued to tell him [Hla Min Thaung] about how I have been helping the police; I always helped them. Whenever they came to ask me to do [help] them [with] something, there was no time that I did not help them. We always helped them every time they came to ask me for help. [However], when I am facing with the case, none of them are willing to help me to solve the problem. They even want to ask compensation from us. And in front of their office, they write on the sign board [motto] "May I help you" but it does not match with their work. Where [why] do they [not] keep [follow] the word [motto] of "May I help you"?

"On November 1, 2013, at night time at 12:15, there was an incident at the Hpapun's police station that the criminal who was in the jail because of the crime of rape, tried to break down the cell and tried to escape to the outside. At that time, her brother Maung H--- and Th---, went to carry the stones near the A Y--- which is close to the police office. At that time, they saw that the police were following after the criminal who was running away and they helped follow with them [the police] [to arrest the criminal]. When they tried to follow the criminal, it also included with the police officer U Than Naing. It also included three other people. When they followed him, the criminal jumped down into the Pweh Loh Kloh River and the three also jumped down after that criminal. They tried to arrest him and they finally could arrest him. Related to the incident of the criminal running away, Hla Maing Thaung came to talk to me about this thing that because of my brother Maung H--- and his friend, they could arrest the criminal who was running away. If it was only us, we could not arrest him [he said]. However, please you do not tell anyone around about this information so that it will not be spread out to the above. And I said to him [Hla Maing Thaung] that I will not tell this information to anyone.

"My younger brother [Maung H---] is also a person who assists police. As well as [this], he is also a person who always helps the police when they transfer their duty monthly from Hpapun Township to Ku Seik police station. He always helps them related to the government

side whenever they demand. He always helps them whenever there are compassionate or [have] social issues. The Hpapun Strategic Operations Command Group and the police know the most about his assistance to them.

“On December 15, 2013, there was Maung H---’s case at the court. The second police administrator in Chief Thet Soe Win, who is the case interrogative officer in the court, informed to remove the article # (8) to Hla Min Thaung and I [Daw S---] know this from him. Even though the judge of the second police administrator in-chief Thet Soe Win removed the article # (8), I see that he did not follow up to take the action of the dossier. Therefore, as they do not put the article # (8), if we allow the Ka Ma Maung’s police administrator Win Myint San himself to take out the car [from the police station] with guarantors he will keep the car at his relative’s house. Ka Ma Maung police administrator U Win Myint San said that as the people [in the accident] did not get any serious injury, it [the car] is taken out with guarantee [promise from the car owner]. And after we have decided the case, you can get back your car.

“On February 25, 2014 the departmental elder people were holding a meeting at the Hpapun District office. In the meeting, the District administrator Myint Naing from Hpapun District Police said that the case of the car had happened a long time ago, at 11:15 AM. I also told the departmental elder people that I had to approach the Tatmadaw as well as the monks. Daw San San Thint and Daw Kyu Kyu Aye attended the meeting on behalf of me. In the meeting, the Township law officer U Thu Rein Win asked the police administrator to put the article # (8) in front of all of the departments. Then the District police administrator allowed putting the article # (8). It took so long because I cannot afford to give the money. I think the District administrator did not know about that issue so they went to discuss all of the issues at the house of the District administrator on March 3, 2014 from 11 AM to 12:00 AM.

“Nevertheless, the District administrator did not know anything about asking the compensation and he called the Township second administrator in Chief Han Sein and asked him which article number did he charge for the crime? Then the Township administrator in Chief Han Sein replied that he charged that case with article # (337) in front of me.

“On March 12, 2014, the judge of the second police administrator in chief came to my house and told my younger brother Maung H--- that the two guarantees [bringing]together with the copy of the family registration need to go to the court in the morning at 10:00AM. Therefore, my brother and I went to wait for them at the court on March 12, 2014 from 10:00 AM to 12:00 AM. The judge said that it took us a bit long as we had to do the copy and they started to decide the crime at 1:00PM. When I asked the Township judge whether Maung H--- is guilty and he said Maung H--- is not guilty. The steering wheel of Maung H---’s car was broken [and this caused the accident] and it hit the tree stump. He said that it was an accident and there was no one who got an injury. Therefore, I said in front of the judges that I am not guilty. After I have said this, the judge asks Maung H--- whether he wants to say something. And Maung H--- said that if you impound my [Maung H---’s] car according to the article #8, cars which are not licensed, then you have to impound all of the cars which are in Hpapun Township. As the article # (8) is included in the police order letter and he has to be detained, the police came to detain Maung H--- from the court, to the cell of the police station at 3pm on March 12, 2014. All of the people in Hpapun have already known that the police are unjust. As I am a staff member and I cannot give 2,000,000 kyat, the car was impounded by the import and export article #8. I deferentially and pleadingly report to the person who can help so that the truth will be evoked from the Secretary as they are doing an injustice.”

[KHRG researcher] I would like to explain more about the issue that I have heard from the teacher Daw S---. When she told me about the incident that happened, step by step, that I have taken note of, I would like to report a little bit more to the above. She told me that the

police in Hpapun Township want to do this for corruption and they get more awards. The incident related to the car accident, it is not like the passengers were not satisfied with Maung H--- and complained to the police office. She said this to me. And then she said to me that the person who reported the issue is the leader of the police administrator Hla Min Thaung and he made the case happen. She said since Hla Min Thaung wants to get the compensation from her, he created the case that happened in the past. Therefore, teacher Daw S--- said that as for Hla Min Thaung, she will continue until he loses all of his positions [at work] and becomes an ordinary working person. As he wants her compensation money, she does not feel satisfied about him. She also tells me that if I report this letter, do not report this information about her and do not report my name as well as erase the three topics that she writes "To, Minister of Home Affair, Home Affair Ministry, Naypyidaw" and do not write them.<sup>299</sup> She has already sent them to them. And she also has sent such information that she wrote in this report to Naypyidaw. However, she has not received back any information from them yet. She also said to me that if I give this information to someone, tell them that she wants to hear it through the radio. She will continue until the police administrator hears the information about this case through the radio. As she speaks to me like this and I also report it.

To

Minister of Home Affair

Home Affair Ministry

Naypyidaw

Date- March 2014

Subject: Pleadingly reporting

1. I am Daw S---, who is a middle school assistant teacher in Hpapun's B--- School. I am reporting regarding my younger brothers' case. I am the daughter of a farmer and I am working on a sugar cane plantation. Combining the income from the sugar cane plantation and my salary together with the money that I got from my siblings who are working in other countries, I bought a Pajero car. And I also called back my siblings who are in the other countries and we are living together and working on law-abiding jobs.
2. The car of Maung H---, also called Soe H---, which was running from former military barracks in Hpapun [Town] to Ka Ma Maung [Town] hit a tree stump which was beside the road as his car steering wheel had broken, in the place between # 9 milestone to # 48/8 milestone near to Wah Doo village on Hpapun Road, the way back from Ka Ma Maung to Hpapun at 3:30 PM on November 16, 2014. The passengers who were in the car were U H---, Daw K---, and their daughter Ma H---. They got a little bit wounded as the car was crashing. Related to that, Maung H---, called Soe H---, and his siblings helped them to have medical treatment at Hpa-an hospital.
3. The passengers are our next of kin. As he had helped them to have medical treatment, they do not want to charge Maung H--- and they all signed an agreement in front of the witnesses.

<sup>299</sup> KHRG followed up with this request for non-publication. Daw S--- has since given permission for this information to be shared.



4. On November 25, 2013, U H---'s family and Maung H--- were coming back to Hpapun Township well [without problems]. However, the car was kept in the police station of Ka Ma Maung as a case.
5. On November 25, 2013, U Soe Win, the second police administrator in charge, and the case interrogative officer from Ka Ma Maung, came to my house and asked the recommendation letter of the former military if it is the car which helps the former military, the recommendation of the state prime minister, the travelling license card, and the contract of appeasement of the case from Maung H---. He asked these documentation letters from Maung H---. Although those documentation letters were provided to them unnecessarily, they did not help us taking action on the case.
6. On November 25, 2013, at 7:30 PM, the police administrator Hla Min Thaung who is the regional officer in charge came to Daw S---'s house and asked for 2,000,000 kyats. He said if you did not give 2,000,000 kyats, we would put article # (8) and the people also would be kept in the jail. He said to me that the car also would be kept. When he was talking to us, my elder brother U N--- was also there together with me. I also requested him that I could not give 2,000,000 kyats and also since I am the daughter of a farmer and also do not presently have parents; I could not afford to give this to you. I said this to him and requested this.
7. On November 26, 2013, at 3PM, the police administrator Hla Min Thaung arrived at my home alone and said to me again that if the car costs 7,000,000 kyats, why could you not afford to give 2,000,000 kyats? If you could not give the money, the owner of the car would be put into the jail as well as the car also would be kept. On November 27, 2013, at 11AM, the police administrator Hla Min Thaung also told my younger sister the same words he had said to me. On November 28, 2013, at 12:30 PM, he came to my house again and talked to me again and said that he was talking to me with benevolence. He asked me to give Thet Soe Win, the second police administrator in charge and the case interrogative officer in Ka Ma Maung, 500,000 kyats, the Township judge U Thu Rein Win 500,000 kyats and him 2,000,000 kyats and the case would be finished. And he would give me 5 days. If I did not go to give to them, they would submit the case to the court. The police administrator Hla Min Thaung told me this.
8. I said to him that I did not have money as you currently demand from me and just submit the case to the court. Even though we had always helped the police, the police never helped us back any time. On November 1, 2013 at 12:15 AM, the criminal who was in the jail because of a rape case in Hpapun city was trying to break out of the jail and ran away. When the criminal was running away to escape, the three people who were my brother Maung H---, his accompanied friend Maung T-- and the Special Military Security U T---, together with the police were jumping down into the river and tried to arrest the criminal. The police administrator was silent about that case so that it would not be heard to the above leaders. My younger brother Maung H--- was a person who continually helped the -police when they exchanged their duties monthly from Hpapun Township to Ku Seik police station. Strategic Operations Command (TOC) groups and all of the members of the police know that Maung H---'s car is the car which contributes in the events of the Tatmadaw plus the police and all of the compassionate and social issues.
9. On December 15, 2013, the dossier of Maung H---'s case arrived at the court. They withdrew the article # (8) and Thet Soe Win, the second police administrator in charge and the case interrogative officer said to submit the dossier. The police administrator Hla Min Thaung told me about it and I know [understand] it. They withdrew the article # (8). Although Thet Soe Win, the second police administrator in

charge and the case interrogative officer withdrew the article # (8), he did not continue to take the action on the dossier. Therefore, as the article # (8) does not include, the police officer and the police administrator Win Myint San himself, they are allowed to take out the car with the guarantee [promise that they are the owners]. And the car was kept at the relative's house. Ka Ma Maung's police station officer U Win Myint San said that as the passengers did not get serious injury, it was taken out by the guarantee and after the case has decided, it can be taken back.

10. On February 25, 2013, the departmental elder people were having the meeting at the District office. In the meeting, the second police administrator and the District's police officer from Hpapun, District police Myint Niang said to the departmental elder people that the issue of the car had been a long time ago at 11:15 AM and in the meeting sometimes they had to approach the military camp and sometimes they had to approach the monks.
11. Daw Kyu Kyu Aye and I, Daw San San Aye attended the meeting on behalf of the school headmistress of Hpapun's Basic High School in that meeting. When they were talking, the Township judge U Thu Rein Win requested to put the article # (8) to the District police administrator in front of all of the people. Then the District administrator allowed putting the article # (8). It took them a very long time because I could not afford to give them the money. I think as the District's administrator had not known about these issues, we went to discuss all of the issues at the meeting at the District's police administrator's house again at 12 AM on March 3, 2014. As the District administrator did not know about asking the compensation, he called Han Sein, the Township officer and the second police officer. And he asked him which article number he charged for the case. Then the Township administrator in Chief Han Sein replied that he charged the case with article # (337) in front of me. The District second police officer in charge told me that as I also had helped the family of the police, they would help me as much as they can.
12. On March 12, 2014, the case interrogative officer and second police administrator in Chief Thet Soe Win came to my home and told Maung H--- to come to the court and bring together the copy of the two guardian's family registration [documents] at 10:00 AM. Therefore, Maung H--- and his siblings went to wait for them in the court from 10 AM to 12 [noon] on March 12, 2014 but the case interrogative officer started to do the trial at 1PM and he said he had to copy the documentation. When I asked the Township judge whether Maung H--- was guilty, he said Maung H--- was not guilty. The tie lock of the steering wheel of Maung H---'s car had broken and it [the car] hit with the tree stump. He said that it was the accident and there was no one who got an injury. Therefore, I said in front of the judges that I was not guilty. After I have said this the judge asked Maung H--- whether he wanted to say something. And Maung H--- said that if you impounded my car according to the article # (8) as it did not have travelling license, then you have to impound all of the cars which are in Hpapun Township. As the article # (8) is included in the police order letter and it has to be detained, the police came to give [the order] and detain Maung H--- from the court to the cell of the police station at 3 PM on March 12, 2014. All of the people in Hpapun have already known that the police are unjust. I know that the staff should not be corrupt. As I am a staff member and I cannot give 2,000,000 kyat, the car was impounded by the import and export article # (8).
13. I deferentially and pleadingly report this so that the Home Secretary will take the action and the truth will be evoked as what they are doing is such an injustice.

Deferentially



Daw S---  
Middle school assistant teacher,  
(B--- school, Hpapun Township)

**Source #94**

<b>Log #</b>	14-28-D2
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Short Update: Don Yin Township, March 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in July 2014 <a href="http://khrhg.org/2014/07/14-28-d2/hpa-an-short-update-don-yin-township-march-2014">http://khrhg.org/2014/07/14-28-d2/hpa-an-short-update-don-yin-township-march-2014</a>
<b>Location</b>	Don Yin Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Situation Update: March 18<sup>th</sup> 2014</b></p> <p>I would like to report a situation update in the Northern part of A--- village, Tha Ya Kon village tract, Doo Yaw [Don Yin] Township (Township #4), Hpa-an District. It is about the confiscation of villagers' land and the land of their ancestors. The people who confiscated the land are: (1) San Mya Aung; (2) an [unnamed Karen National Liberation Army] brigade administration official; (3) an [unnamed] officer of the KNLA/KNU-PC [KNU/KNLA Peace Council];<sup>300</sup> (4) KNU/KNLA-PC Headquarters Commander Saw Joe Set and his soldiers; (5) and a Mon [man],<sup>301</sup> U Aung Mya, who is rich. The first person whose land was confiscated is B---; three acres of her paddy fields and seven acres of her plantations were confiscated. There were two bamboo huts in the plantation and they [individuals connected with the above mentioned five actors] destroyed both of them. They also threatened her with their guns. The second person is C---; three acres of his paddy fields and over five acres of his plantations were confiscated. The third one is D---; seven acres of her paddy fields and six acres of her plantations were confiscated. The fourth one is E---; four acres of his paddy fields and eight acres of his plantations [were confiscated]. The fifth one is F---; four acres of his paddy fields and six acres of his plantations [were confiscated]. The sixth one is G---; three acres of his paddy fields and six acres of his plantations were confiscated. They threatened the villagers with their guns many times. They also used aggressive words with the villagers. This village is located in the region of Tha Ma Nya [town]. There are H--- houses and this village is [inhabited by] Pwo Karen [people].</p> <p>Short Update written by a community member, Don Yin Township, Hpa-an District, (Received in April 2014)</p>	

**Source #95**

<b>Log #</b>	14-28-S6
<b>Title</b>	Situation Update: Hpa-an District, April 2014.
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	

<sup>300</sup> The KNU/KNLA Peace Council (also called the Karen Peace Council or KPC), is an armed group based in Htoh Gkaw Ko, Hpa-an District, which split from the Karen National Union (KNU) in 2007 and subsequently refused to comply with orders from the then-SPDC government to transform its forces into the Tatmadaw Border Guard. See: "[KPC to be outlawed if it rejects BGF](#)," *Burma News International*, August 30<sup>th</sup> 2010.

<sup>301</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.

April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014.

I want to report about the K--- village, Kyeh Paw village tract, Ta Nay Hsah Township, Hpa-an District. The BGF [Border Guard Force] went to Ka Lah Koh and drove out the Kaw La Thu<sup>302</sup> from the village and set up their camp in K--- village. That is BGF Battalion #1016 and the Battalion Commanders name is Saw Myah Khaing. They drove out the Kaw La Thu from the whole village and took over all [their] yards, fields and cultivation fields. The names of the people whose lands were taken over by the BGF are:

1. Ph---
2. Ma L---
3. Be S---
4. She K---
5. S---
6. Ma---
7. Ah N---
8. Noh R---
9. Ah D---
10. Dor L---
11. Maw P---
12. Na T---
13. Hka S---
14. Lay P---
15. Mu S---
16. Ah D---
17. Zaw L---
18. Oh P----
19. Meh T--- and a Mosque.

These *Kaw La Thu* were displaced after their lands were confiscated and some of them went to live in Ka---, some of them moved to Ba---, some of them moved to Ht--- and some of them fled to refugee camps. I requested for them to go and take photos and they were afraid and no one dared to go. So I have not got any photos about this. I got this information when I went to K--- village and met with them on March 5<sup>th</sup> 2014 and they told me about this. This information is true even though there is no evidence [photo].

### Situation update

March 18<sup>th</sup> 2014

I want to report that in P--- village, Paw Yay Bu village tract, Ta Kreh Township, Hpa-an District Monk, Meh Ta Mer and the BGF confiscated the land of *Kaw La Thu*. The government troops used to [have a] base in this village and the government soldiers did not stay anymore after the emergence of the DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army] and the DKBA lived in the Government soldiers' camp. The camp commander of DKBA is De Hter Ler and [is] also called Commander Kyaw Hein. Now Commander Kyaw Hein has become a member of the Supervisory Group of the BGF. Commander Kyaw Hein, Senior monk Meh Ta Mer and the administrator gathered together and confiscated the land of *Kaw La Thu* in

<sup>302</sup> *Kaw La Thu*, "thu" meaning black, is a S'gaw Karen term which is sometimes used to refer to individuals in Burma/Myanmar who are perceived to have a darker skin colour. In Kayin state, it is often associated specifically with followers of Islam (Muslims), although this association is sometimes erroneous, and Muslim individuals do not typically self-identify with this term.

the village and also confiscated some houses of *Kaw La Thu*. There are two ethnicities in P-- village and they are *Taw Thoo* [Pa Oh] and *Kaw La Thu*. The name of *Kaw La Thu* whose land were confiscated are:

1. A---
2. O---
3. Ya---
4. Hk---
5. A S---
6. Maw N---
7. Pa S---
8. Se D---
9. Ka---
10. Soe M---
11. A B---
12. Ao---
13. A B---
14. A D---
15. A D---
16. Se D---
17. Maw S---
18. Hay K---
19. Way M---; and the rubber plantation of Naw S---, and the rubber plantation of E---

The lands that they confiscated are home yards and rubber plantations. If we look at photos #4137 to #4172 we can see in the photos that I met with them and the places [lands] that were confiscated. I took these photos in P--- village, Paw Yay Bu village tract, Ta Kreh Township, Hpa-an District on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014.

### Situation update

March 18<sup>th</sup> 2014

I want to report about the land confiscation that happened in K--- village that [is] down from M---, Ywa Thit village tract, Lu Pleh Township. The person who confiscated the land was a former DKBA and BGF commander and he sold it to Major Kyaw Than. Major Kyaw Than divided [the land into] plots and sold it to the other people. The villagers whose land was confiscated are:

	Names	Amount of land Acres
1	Naw H---	50
2	Saw P---	20
3	U M---	20
4	Saw M---	20
5	Tee H---	30
6	Kyah H---	20
7	Ki H---	30
8	Saw T---	20
9	Saw T---	20
10	Tee H---	30
11	Pee K---	10
12	Pee M---	
13	Kyaw M---	
14	Paw L---	

If we look at the photos #4124 to #4141 you can see that DKBA Commander Kyaw Than

planted rubber trees and divided plots. I took these photos in K--- village down from M---, Ywa Thit village tract, Ta Kreh Township, Hpa-an District. The GPS code of K--- village down from M--- is [censored for security].

**Source #96**

<b>Log #</b>	14-34-A7-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Interview: Saw A---, April 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in July 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/08/14-34-a7-i1/dooplaya-interview-saw-april-2014">http://khrq.org/2015/08/14-34-a7-i1/dooplaya-interview-saw-april-2014</a>
<b>Location</b>	Win Yay Township, Dooplay District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Buddhist</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Working on a rubber plantation</p> <p><b>Position:</b> [censored for security]</p> <p><b>Before I start the interview, do you have anything to ask me?</b></p> <p>No, I do not.</p> <p><b>Can I take a photo of you after I have interviewed you?</b></p> <p>Yes, you can.</p> <p><b>After I have taken a photo of you, how do you want your photo to be? Do you want us to censor it?</b></p> <p>Do not include the photo [in the report].</p> <p><b>So, we are going to start now. What is your name?</b></p> <p>Saw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 40 years old.</p> <p><b>What is the name of your village?</b></p> <p>B--- village.</p> <p><b>What township and district [is it in]?</b></p> <p>It is [in] Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District.</p> <p><b>How long have you lived in B--- village?</b></p> <p>It has been over ten years.</p>	

**Are you married?**

Yes, I am.

**How many children do you have?**

I have three children.

**How old is the youngest one?**

Only two years old.

**What about the oldest one?**

Nine years old.

**What ethnicity are you?**

I am Karen.

**What is your religion?**

I am a Buddhist.

**What is your responsibility [that you have in the village]?**

[I serve as] a *[censored for security]*.

**What is your occupation?**

I work on [a] rubber plantation.

**How long have you been a *[censored for security]*?**

It has been four years.

**Can you tell me about your experience of being a *[censored for security]*?**

The situation is much better compared to in the past. There is not particularly much development [in the village] yet. There is only a road which is being constructed. It brings benefits for the villagers. On the other hand, it damages the villagers' houses. Some villagers are confronted with a challenge as they have to move their houses. I have no idea whether or not the villagers will get compensation. There are challenges for the villagers on one side, but there is development on the other side in terms of the road construction.

**Can you tell me [about] your responsibilities as a *[censored for security]*?**

I have the responsibility to look after the village and the villagers.

**What about other [responsibilities]?**

There are no more, particularly.

**In terms of being a *[censored for security]*, do you really want to be a *[censored for***

**security] or [did] the villagers request that you be a [censored for security]?**

The villagers [in this village] as well as the elders who came from the other villages selected me to be a [censored for security]. It is not because I myself want to be a [censored for security]. All of the villagers including the monks had discussed and decided that I should be a [censored for security].

**How much money do you get from your rubber plantation per year?**

We have just got [back] the cost [initially paid] for the establishment of the rubber plantation [so far breaking even].

**What did you do before working on a rubber plantation?**

I was working on a hill farm.

**How much rice did you get per year?**

We got just enough rice to cover my family.

**What about the other villagers in the village, what kind of occupation do they have for their livelihoods?**

They are also working on hill farms. They cannot find other job opportunities to work on.

**For those who do not get enough food, what do they do?**

They just work in the village. Some work charging passengers money for boat journeys. They also work selling fruit in the rainy season.

**What if they still do not have enough food?**

If not, they ask for help from their friends.

**Do they also work in some other jobs for their income?**

They work doing odd jobs.

**How long has this village been situated here?**

It is about a hundred years old. The village has been destroyed three times due to the fighting.

**Do you remember the date of each time [the village was destroyed]?**

I do not remember in terms of the date. I just remember the times that we had to flee.

**How many times did you have to flee? Can you tell me as much as you know?**

It [the first time] was when the Tatmadaw attacked Three Pagoda [Pass, this village [B--- village] was destroyed once. There were only a few houses left in the village at that time. The second time was when Tatmadaw Light Infantry Division (LID)<sup>303</sup> #44<sup>304</sup> attacked the

<sup>303</sup> Light Infantry Division (Tatmadaw); commanded by a brigadier general, each with ten light infantry battalions specially trained in counter-insurgency, jungle warfare, "search and destroy" operations against ethnic

village, it was destroyed once again. After LID #44, Tatmadaw LID #22<sup>305</sup> attacked and the village was destroyed again and there were only two houses left in the village.

**Have the Tatmadaw come into the village after the ceasefire?**<sup>306</sup>

Yes, they have.

**Did they stay in the village when they came?**

They travelled straight to the place that they planned to go. They did not go around [disturb the villagers on their way] like they did in the past.

**Did they come because they wanted to find out anything?**

No, they did not come to find out anything. They came with their own business. If it was getting dark, they would stop and take a rest in the village monastery and they would order the village head [to meet with them]. They did not come and cause trouble in the village.

**After they ordered the village head [to meet with them], did they request anything to eat?**

No, they did not request anything.

**Did they request [villagers] for *loh ah pay* [forced labour],<sup>307</sup> to carry their material?**

Yes, they did during the last rainy season.

**Do you remember the date?**

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insurgents and narcotics-based armies. LIDs are organised under three Tactical Operations Commands, commanded by a colonel, (three battalions each and one reserve), one field artillery battalion, one armoured squadron and other support units.

<sup>304</sup> Despite having not received any further information from the field on this particular village attack committed by LID #44 in Doooplaya District, KHRG has received several reports in recent years, following the 2012 ceasefire, on human rights violations in which soldiers from LID #44 have been implicated. In 2012 the division was stationed along the Bilin riverbank for road security purposes; during this time KHRG received reports of demands made by LID #44 on villagers in Thaton District, including forced labour and extortion, see more at: [“Forced labour in Bilin Township,”](#) KHRG, May 2012 and [“Sustained Tatmadaw resupply operations in Thaton, Nyaunglebin and Hpapun during ceasefire,”](#) KHRG, May 2012. From 2012 to 2013 KHRG received reports of LID #44 activities in Hpapun District, including restrictions on villagers’ freedom of movement and sexual abuse committed by Company Second in Command Moe Win, as well as one incident of torture, see more at: [“Hpapun Situation Update: Dwe Lo Township, August to October 2013,”](#) KHRG, August 2014 and [“Hpapun Situation Update: Dwe Lo Township, July to October 2012,”](#) KHRG, February 2013 and [“Incident Report: Villager tortured by Tatmadaw commanders in Papun District, December 2012,”](#) KHRG, June 2013. LID #44 is based at the Tatmadaw camp in Bilin Township, Thaton District.

<sup>305</sup> The headquarters of LID #22 is based in Taung Ka Lay village, Hlaingbwe Township, Hpa-an District; KHRG has received recent reports of land confiscation committed by LID #22 in the industrial zone surrounding the area, see more at: [“Hpa-an Situation Update: Hlaingbwe, Don Yin and Hti Lon townships, April 2014,”](#) KHRG, July 2014.

<sup>306</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace process, see the KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG’s analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

<sup>307</sup> *Loh ah pay* is a Burmese term now commonly used in reference to forced labour, although traditionally referring to voluntary service for temples or the local community, not military or state projects.



No, I cannot remember.

**Which month was it?**

It was in September 2013.

**Do you remember the day?**

No, I don't.

**How many villagers did he [the Tatmadaw commander] order?**

He ordered eight villagers from the village. They [Tatmadaw] did not forcibly get the villagers by themselves.

**What did the villagers have to do?**

They just had to help them carry their packs.

**What kind of packs?**

I guess they could be bullet packs [containing ammunition]. I did not see inside of the packs.

**Can you tell me the name of the villagers who had to go?**

[Their names are] Saw C---, Saw D---, Saw E---, Saw F---, Saw G---, Saw H---, Saw I--- and Saw J---.

**Can you tell me how did [the village head] get them [to go for forced labour]?**

[The village head] went to get them simply telling them that you have to help the Tatmadaw by carrying things [packs] for them.

**Did they [the villagers] complain about anything?**

They were not willing to go, but they went since the village head ordered them.

**Has [the village head] ever replied to the Tatmadaw, "No, [we cannot send the villagers to carry the packs for you]"?**

It is not good without sending any villagers. Whenever they order, we have to manage to send at least one or two villagers.

**Do they pay the expenses for the villagers?**

They sometimes pay 1,000 kyat (US\$ 0.89)<sup>308</sup> [per person].

**How long does it take to travel on foot between K--- [village] and B--- village?**

It takes only one hour.

**The villagers had to carry their [Tatmadaw] packs for one hour and what is the**

<sup>308</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the July 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 official market rate of 1,122 kyat to the US\$ 1.

**purpose of paying 1,000 kyat (US\$ 0.89) per person? What did they pay it for?**

They [Tatmadaw] said it was for their expenses. The villagers dared not ask for it. If they [villagers] were paid, they would take it and if they were not paid, they would not take it.

**What was the number of the [Tatmadaw] battalion or column?**

I don't know.

**Do you know the name of the commander?**

He introduced himself to me but I forgot it.

**What about the name of the operations commander (G3)?<sup>309</sup>**

I do not know either.

**How many soldiers were there when they came?**

There were 90 soldiers.

**Was it a battalion?**

It was a battalion.

**Did they ever order chicken, pork or money [from the villagers] when they came into the village?**

No, they do not after the ceasefire. They asked to buy chicken if they wanted to eat and they paid the same amount as the villagers pay for it in the village.

**Do they ever harm any villagers when they come into the village?**

No, they have not after the ceasefire.

**In terms of ordering porters [for forced labour], has any villager reported it to the KNU [Karen National Union]?**

Yes, they [KNU] know about it.

**What did they say?**

They did not say anything.

**Have any [other] Tatmadaw groups ever come into the village after them?**

Yes, they came. They usually travel with their trucks as it is during the summer, but they do not stop in the village. However, they usually travel on foot during the rainy season and then they stop in the village.

**Have they ever demanded that the villagers [go with them] when they travel to K--- village?**

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<sup>309</sup> An Operations Commander (G3) is responsible for planning, strategy and training officers. Also known as a strategic/tactical commander.

Yes, they have.

**How many villagers [did they demand]?**

[They demanded] eight villagers. The villagers only had to exchange their packs with the villagers in the next village. The villagers from this village had to carry their packs to K--- village. And then villagers from K--- village have to carry their packs to Meh Thwee Hta village.

**Did you try to ask the villagers when they were back what they had to carry or how much weight they had to carry?**

I asked them. They said that they had to carry bullets. They are heavy, very heavy. The villagers were asked how much they can carry. They [Tatmadaw] did not force them to carry as [much as] they did in the past. In the past, they were forced to carry their heavy packs.

**How old were the villagers when they were ordered to porter in [September 2013]?**

Some villagers were old, 40 or 50 years old.

**How old was Saw C---?**

He was 35 years old.

**What about Saw D---?**

He was about 40 years old.

**What about Saw E---?**

He was 28 years old.

**What about Saw F---?**

He was 45 years old.

**What about Saw H---?**

He was about 56 years old.

**What about Saw G---?**

He was 48 years old.

**What about Saw I---?**

He was 39 years old.

**What about Saw J---?**

He was about 40 years old.

**Are they all married?**

Yes, they are.

**How much could they get for one hour of work [as a labourer for others]?**

They could get like 100 baht (US \$2.93)<sup>310</sup> per hour if they work like this [carrying heavy things for others].

**Did you ask the villagers how much money they were paid when they came back?**

I asked and they said they got 1,000 kyat (US \$0.89) per person.

**So, they got 8,000 kyat (US \$7.12) as there were eight people?**

Yes.

**How is the healthcare situation in the village?**

If the villagers are sick, they can get medication from the health worker here in the village.

**Where is the health worker from?**

The health worker is from B--- village.

**Is he a government health worker, KNU health worker or independent health worker?**

[He is an] independent health worker. He is a villager.

**How does he ask [the villagers] to pay for medicine as he is a private health worker?**

It depends on the disease. If the disease is serious and needs to be cured with expensive medicine, the cost will be expensive. If the disease is not serious, the medicine will be cheap.

**Are there any clinics established by the KNU or the government?**

No, there are not.

**Is there a school in the village?**

Yes, there is.

**How many standards are there at the school?**

[The school] is up to fourth standard.<sup>311</sup>

**What about the teachers? Are they government teachers, KNU teachers or did the villagers hire [the teachers] by themselves?**

They are the villagers. The villagers hired them.

<sup>310</sup> All conversion rates for the baht in this report are based on the July 9<sup>th</sup> 2015 market rate of 33.95 baht to the US \$1.

<sup>311</sup> A Standard refers to a grade in the Burmese education system. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 4, middle school is Standards 5-8 and high school is Standards 9-10.

**How many teachers are there at the school?**

There are two teachers and they are both male.

**Where are they from?**

They are from Bi Lu Kyon [village].

**Do the teachers get support from anyone from year to year?**

The Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO)<sup>312</sup> supports them.

**How much do they get per year?**

They both get 5,000 [baht]<sup>313</sup> (US \$147.21) per year.

**Do any villagers support them?**

Each student has to give them two baskets (41.8 kg or 92.16 lb)<sup>314</sup> of paddy [per year].

**How many students are there at the school?**

There are 62 children at the school.

**Do they have to pay school administration fees?**

No, they do not have to pay. But we collect only 10 baht (US\$ 0.29) [per year] from each student.

**Do the students have the chance to learn peacefully?**

Yes, they have the chance to learn peacefully.

**Do the students have the chance to learn Pwo Karen [and/or] S'gaw Karen at school?**

The students are learning Burmese and English at school. But in the summer [holiday], people teach Pwo or S'gaw Karen language in the village.

**Is there anyone who distributes school materials such as books, pens or pencils freely to the students?**

Yes, there is. The KNU distributes [the school materials].

**Do all the students get them when they are distributed?**

<sup>312</sup> The Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO) was formed in 1947 by the Karen National Union and is the precursor to the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Today the KNDO refers to a militia force of local volunteers trained and equipped by the KNLA and incorporated into its battalion and command structure; its members wear uniforms and typically commit to two-year terms of service.

<sup>313</sup> In some areas of Dooplaya District the Thai baht is used as currency along with the kyat. In this case, it is apparent that the researcher is speaking in terms of baht, as 5,000 kyat (US \$3.88) would not suffice as a yearly wage.

<sup>314</sup> A basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg or 46.08 lb of paddy, and 32 kg or 70.4 lb of milled rice.

Yes, they all got them [school materials].

**Where do the villagers who are seriously ill go to get treatment?**

If the health worker cannot cure the patients in the village, the patients are sent to Three Pagoda [Pass] as there is a big hospital there. Sometimes, the patients are sent to Thailand.

**What about those patients who do not have money, where do they go for treatment?**

Some villagers give their names to the KNU and the KNU help some of the villagers [to get medication]. The KNU provides them [with] a letter and they go to get medication at the hospital in Thailand.

**What are the common serious diseases that occur in the village?**

The villagers mostly suffer from high blood pressure in the village. There are no diseases like malaria or other [serious] diseases.

**What about the villagers, can they work peacefully or not peacefully?**

Currently, they are able to work peacefully.

**Do people buy rice here?**

Some people who do not have enough food have to buy rice.

**How much money is it for a big tin of rice?**

They buy the rice in bags.<sup>315</sup>

**So, how much money is a bag of rice?**

It is 28,000 kyat (US \$24.92) for a bag of rice.

**And how much does it cost for a viss<sup>316</sup> of pork or chicken in the village?**

It is 5,000 kyat (US \$4.45) for a viss of chicken and 3,000 kyat (US \$2.67) for a viss of pork.

**Are there any development projects conducted by the government in the village?**

No, there is not.

**Have they ever come to the village?**

They came but they just passed through the village.

**Have any companies come and implemented any development projects in the village?**

There is only the road [that they are constructing].<sup>317</sup>

<sup>315</sup> A bag is a unit of volume used to measure rice. One bag is equivalent to 50 kg of rice.

<sup>316</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg, or 3.52 lb.

<sup>317</sup> Due to the location of Saw A---'s village and details of the road being constructed provided in the interview, KHRG was able to determine that the road in question is the Asian Highway. The Asian Highway Network is a United Nations Economic and Social Council for Asia and the Pacific-supported project that aims to link 32

**What is your opinion on KNU/Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) soldiers as a [censored for security]?**

The KNU leaders [soldiers] in our area are good. We do not see anything that [suggests] they act [in an] oppressive [manner] toward us.

**As a company is constructing the road, do you know how many bridges they are going to construct?**

There is one road being constructed in our village and another road [being constructed] near our village. There will be two bridges in total that I know [about] but they have not constructed them yet.

**When this road was constructed was there any destruction of the villagers' plantations or rubber plantations?**

The rubber plantations that were near the road [construction area] were destroyed. Some villagers had one or two hundred of their rubber plants destroyed.

**Were the rubber plants that have been destroyed matured and ready to be tapped or [were they] newly planted rubber plants?**

They were not matured yet, but they were already three or four years old.

**Were there any poor widows' rubber plantations included [in the destruction] when the rubber plantations were destroyed?<sup>318</sup>**

Yes, many widows' rubber plantations were destroyed as well.

**How many rubber plants [belonging to widows] were destroyed?**

There were about 320 rubber plants [belonging to widows destroyed].

**Did the company note down all of the rubber plantations destroyed?**

Yes, they did. The KNU leaders also have noted it down.

**Have you been told the date that they are going to pay compensation?**

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countries in Asia across 141,000 kilometres of roadway. In Burma/Myanmar the project has involved land confiscation and forced labour. For more information about the Asian Highway Network, see "[The Asia Highway: Planned Eindu to Kawkaik Town road construction threatens villagers' livelihoods](#)," KHRG, March 2015; "[With only our voices, what can we do?: Land confiscation and local response in southeast Myanmar](#)," KHRG, June 2015; "[Tollgates upon tollgates: En route with extortion along the Asian Highway](#)," KHRG, October 2009; and "[Development by Decree: The politics of poverty and control in Karen State](#)," KHRG, April 2007. In addition, fighting continues erupting between the Tatmadaw and the DKBA along the highway, with the latest clash erupting in early July 2015, resulting in the highway between Myawaddy and Kawkaik shutting down for several days, see more at: "[Recent fighting between Tatmadaw and DKBA soldiers leads to killing and displacement of villagers in Hpa-an District, July 2015](#)," KHRG, August 2015. See more on land confiscation and environmental destruction as result of the Asian Highway road construction in Win Yay Township at: "[Dooplaya Photo Set: Road construction in Kyainseikgyi and Win Yay townships, November 2014 to January 2015](#)," KHRG, August 2015.

<sup>318</sup> It is likely that the researcher asked this, as widows whose means of making a living are destroyed are left particularly vulnerable to poverty without support from male family members, and in terms of social capital have comparatively less capacity than married couples or men to claim compensation.



We do not know yet. We just reported to them what we needed.

**At the time of the road construction, were there any houses that had to be moved?**

Yes, there were. Since the houses were destroyed [disassembled to make way for the road construction], they had to be moved [the materials transported and the house rebuilt elsewhere].

**Have they [owners of the destroyed/disassembled houses] moved [rebuilt] their houses [elsewhere]?**

Some houses have been moved [rebuilt elsewhere]. But some houses have not been moved [rebuilt elsewhere] yet as it is difficult to move [rebuild] the big houses.

**Currently, it is rainy season. Have those [villagers] whose houses were destroyed, rebuilt [their houses]?**

As some of them are in the process of moving their houses, they have not completely rebuilt their houses yet.

**Will they rebuild their houses with a roof of zinc or thatched shingles?**

They will roof their houses with thatched shingles. The houses which have been destroyed were roofed with zinc.

**How much money for a hundred thatched shingles?**

It is 10,000 kyat (US \$8.90) for a hundred thatched shingles.

**Where do you buy it [thatched shingles]?**

We order and buy it from other people and they come and bring it to us.

**What about the people who do not have money, how do they roof their houses?**

They go to cut [their own] thatches for roofing their houses.

**What do they [poor villagers] do for their livelihoods?**

They have to try and work hard for their livelihoods. Some of them are in debt to other people.

**So, how do they solve their debts?**

They have to go and work for the people who they borrowed money from.

**What about those [villagers] whose houses have not moved yet, have they been informed of the date that their houses need to be completely moved?**

[The village head] was even asked to tell them to move their houses. [The village head] felt afraid to tell them so, as it is not easy to move their houses.

**Have you asked those who have to rebuild their houses what kind of challenges they will have to face when rebuilding their houses?**

To move their houses is easy as it just needs to be demolished [and the material moved]. However, to rebuild their house is not easy as it costs a lot of money and they do not have money.

**So, what is your opinion on repairing the current road?**

There is development for the villagers.

**What about the way [opportunity] to do business?**

They do not have another more [accessible] way to do business.

**How is the social living standard in the village?**

Since the road is getting better, some houses have been improved [as the villagers have easier access to buy and transport better housing materials]. There will be ways opened to do business in the future.

**As you mentioned before, did all of the eight villagers [who had to go as porters] come back on the same day or [did they] come back the next day after sleeping a night?**

They came back on the same day. After they arrived there, they came back directly.

**Are they all villagers?**

Yes, they are.

**Were they provided with rice when they were working as porters?**

It took only one hour [so they were not provided with rice]. But I am not sure [whether or not they would have been provided with rice] if it had taken longer.

**What about water, were they offered [water] to drink? What about food?**

Yes, they were offered water to drink. But they were not provided with food.

**How heavy was the pack that they had to carry?**

Some said it was about 10 [viss] (16 kg or 35.2 lb). Some said it did not weigh that much. Some said they had to carry only a small bag. Those who had to carry the bullets [said] it was heavy.

**Do you have anything to add which I have not asked you about?**

No, I do not have [anything else to add].

**If there is nothing else, thank you.**

Saw A---, (male, 40), B--- village, Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District, (Interviewed in April 2014)

**Source #97**

<b>Log #</b>	14-34-P2
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Photo Notes: Win Yay Township, Received in June 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p><i>[These photo notes are drawn from a longer document providing details for photographs taken in Dooplaya April 2014. The other notes were not relevant to land confiscation in Myanmar since December 2012 and have been omitted for brevity.]</i></p> <p><b>Photo #: 0072</b> The photo shows the [land] area that the [Myanmar] company has measured. The land [plot] ends at the coconut tree. There are six people in U A---'s family. Currently, he [U A---] lives at the granary.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0074 - 0076</b> This photo shows a villager's temporary home in the Ma Yan Gon area of B--- village, Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District. He stays there as he does not have money to rebuild his house. He is not sure if they are going to compensate [him] or not [for his lost property] so he does not want to provide information about it.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0079</b> This photo shows a widow, Ma C---. She is 52 years old and she lives in D--- village, Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District. She has four children. The [KHRG] field researcher went to [her] to greet and talk [to her], and offered to help [her] as much as he can. She said the road construction cuts across her rubber plantation. She also said it crosses over 200 trees. Her husband could not enjoy [the benefits] of planting these trees because he passed away. She [also] said that a forest fire consumed [some of] her remaining [rubber trees].</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0085</b> This photo shows the rubber trees that belong to Ma C--- from D---village. D--- village chairperson said she [Naw C---] repaired the fence with her children as much as she could.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0083</b> This photo shows a house in D--- village. This house has been cut in half [due to road construction]. The D--- village chairperson said they [road constructors] said it is not enough and they have a plan to destroy more [of the houses if necessary].</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0084</b> This photo shows a house in the A'Pa Lon village relocation area [for people displaced by the] Than Phyu Za Ya Town to Ba Ya Thon Hsu Town road construction.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0086</b> This photo shows Thit K'Tet village. The villagers are moving back, far from the road. This is a new village and there is no information [about abuses]. The local people said that they [government] provided new land area [for the villagers in compensation for the land that was taken].</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0088</b> This photo shows the road constructors moving soil for road repairing to the front side of Thit K'Tet village. The village head said the village is new and the villagers do not say anything and understand nothing [about the abuses they are facing]. They just live according [to their conditions]</p>

**Photo #: 0094**

This photo shows Saw E---. He said he used to live in Kyainseikgyi Township but moved to Win Yay [Township] four years ago. He said he bought new land [in Win Yay Township]. For this road construction [project], the regional leaders have already taken photos [of the places that the road will cross]. [When regional leaders came to Saw E---'s house to discuss the project], they [Saw E--- and his wife] were out. There was only their 19 year old daughter at home. The village chairperson and some other leaders came to the house and said that the house needs to move and asked her to sign [a contract]. They said to his daughter, Naw F---, that they would send it [the contract] to Naypyidaw.

**Photo #: 0095**

This photo shows the road that they [the company] constructed in Than Phyu Za Ya, Ba Ya Thon Hsu and Me Th'Li towns.

**Photo #: 0099, 0100**

The first photo shows the relocated house area. The other photo shows the rebuilt houses [after moving]. The views in these pictures are from Thit K'te [village], Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District, between Than Phyu Za Yet [Town] and Bu Ya Thon Hsu [Town].

**Photo #: 0141, 0105**

These two photos show the list of rubber plantations that suffered [damage] from the [construction of the road] in G--- village. The villagers collected the [damaged rubber plantation information] from [road construction] and the local people reported it to their superiors [village leaders]. The villagers said that there has been no reply or decision [on the issue]. The villagers from G--- village said that they also have not heard anything from the regional KNU group.

**Photo #: 0106**

This photo shows Saw H---'s house that is located in G--- village beside the road from Bu Ya Thon Hsu [Town] to Than Phyu Za Ya [Town], Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District. This photo shows the house that had to be relocated due to the road construction development [project]. They [the company] said not to request anything regarding thatch shingles or sand [for rebuilding houses]. [The villagers said] the problems have, "*Accumulated like a mountain*" [compounded upon each other]. He [Saw H---] told the researcher not to mention his name [in the report].

**Photo #: 0107**

This photo shows a villager's rubber plantation in G--- village. He fenced in the [rubber plantation] with barbed wire. He [villager] said the [road constructors] told him to remove the barbed wire. [Other villagers stated that] they could [remove the barbed wire but the road constructor had not specifically asked them to do so]. [The villager] told them [road constructors] not to flatten the land in his plantation. [In the end] the [project] leader from Man Pyi T'Khun [village] flattened the land [of this particular land owner]. [Since then], the [land owner] omitted as much of the barbed wire as he could and re-fenced the area [in a more resilient way]. They [road constructors] then moved the soil onto [his] rubber plantation.

**Photo #: 0108**

This photo shows [the] Man Pyi Tan Khun [company's] sign board that is situated beside I--villager's rubber plantation. The school committee [member named] Maung J--- said that the road will pass through where the marks [sign boards] are. They also asked [villagers] to sign [an agreement for the road project]. The [Myanmar] company said they will send them [the contracts] to Naypyidaw. K--- villager wants to know [who] the donors from four countries [are] that support the [Asia] highway road construction from Bu Ya Thon Hsu [town] to Than Phyu Za Yet [town]. [The villager is from] Win Yay Township, Dooplaya

District.

**Photo #: 0115, 0116**

These two photos show N--- villager Saw O---'s [land] grant document and his picture. He received the [land] grant document from his parents as inheritance. Now, it has changed to a new [document]. The Dagon company [workers] then [began to] excavate the soil on his land. When he went [to the company] to ask for compensation they stopped [excavating the soil]. [He is] 65 years old. The area is his land by birth. He lives with [his] five children.

**Photo #: 0120, 0121**

This photo shows P--- village/village tract in Win Yay Township, Dooplaya [District]. It shows the place where the SPDC used to live. Now, they did not say that they have returned the land to the owner but the owner has taken it back [anyway].

Photo Notes written by a KHRG Researcher,  
Win Yay Township, Dooplaya District, (Received in June 2014)

**Source #98**

<b>Log #</b>	14-36-CL27
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya District, Complaint Letter, Daw A---, October 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Kyonedoe Town, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Date Received: July 1<sup>st</sup> 2014**

Informant's Name: Daw A---

Registration Number: [Censored for security]

Father's Name: U D---

Land Title of Original Owner's Name: U D---

Relationship: Older Sister

Original Owner Number: [Censored for security]

Initiate Area: 8.21 Acres

Address: Section [censored for security], B--- Village, Kyonedoe Town

I, Daw A---, am an older sister of the above land title of original owner called U D---.  
(Community recommendation is attached)

There has been information that lands that were confiscated by the battalion groups will be returned to the original owners; therefore I pleadingly submit this complaint letter in order to be able to get back the land which is the land title of original owner name U D---.

Witness

1. Daw B---

2. U E---

Proposer

Daw A---

Date: October 14<sup>th</sup> 2013

**Recommendation**

Registration number [censored for security] holder Daw A---, daughter of U F---, lives in Section [censored for security], B--- village. She has confirmed that she is an older sister of land title original owner name U D--- (passed away) land number [censored for security] South Kyonedoe [censored for security], land area 8.21 acres.

U F---

Administration officer

Section [censored for security] administration office

Kyonedoe [Town], Kawkareik Township

Date October 14<sup>th</sup> 2013

**The proof from Naw G--- [Daw A---'s niece] for holder of registration number [censored for security].**

Resident of Kyonedoe from Section [censored for security] southern Karen group, Daw A--- (who is sick) is my, Naw G---'s, aunt. Daw A--- is a daughter of U D---. She also is an older sister of my mother Daw C---. U D--- (passed away) is younger brother of Daw A---.

Land title of original owner name U TD---, extended area 8.21 acres original owner number [censored for security] south Kyonedoe is a land that has been worked on for many years by my relatives: my mother, my sister and my uncle, it is family owned land. Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) #546 confiscated [the land] without any compensation in 1996. Our land is far from the battalion location by one mile and between the land and military camp it [the landscape] varies with B--- Village, A--- Monastery and C--- [area]. A field monitoring [group] of senators, [a] commission group and regional organisations recorded the photo notes [detailing the confiscated land].

There was information coming from the order of the President and Ministry of Defence to take [keep] the area of the land which is only actually needed [for government purpose] and to return the rest of the land to the original owners.

Right now I know that there will be implementation of a new housing land project by the battalion groups which is against government officers' land policy; therefore I, most concerned person Naw G---, am objecting it and [requesting] to return those lands to the original owners accordingly by the procedure.

Land tax voucher in 1995-1996 is reported.

October 20<sup>th</sup> 2013  
Informant

Naw G---

**Source #99**

<b>Log #</b>	14-36-CL29
<b>Title</b>	Doolaya District, Complaint Letter, Daw S---, July 1 <sup>st</sup> 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Doolaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Date Received: July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014</b>	
<b>The proof of U S---'s wife, holder of registration number [censored for security]/Kawkareik</b>	
I, resident of Kyonedoe [Township] from Section [censored for security] am the wife of U S---'s (passed away), Daw S---.	
Land title of original owner's name U Maung J---, original owner number [censored for security], land number [censored for security], south Kyonedoe is the land of my husband and it was confiscated in 1996 by [Tatmadaw] Battalion #546. According to the land record the acreage of land area was 8.04 acres when the battalion confiscated it but when the	

proposer submitted the complaint letter it was wrongly submitted to be 7.9 acres. There was no compensation received since the battalion confiscated [the land]. The land which was detailed in the complaint letter is very [far] from the infrastructure [roads or towns] and there is no plantation by the battalion [on the land]; therefore I requested [for the authorities] to return the land to the original owner in order to be able to work on it.

Question: Can you report the evidence of the land title?

Answer: I reported the land tax voucher in 1995-1996.

Question: Do you think that you owned the land after you submitted the land tax?

Answer: I think the land tax voucher is support [evidence] for the allowance of the right to work on the land.

November 29<sup>th</sup> 2013  
Informant

Daw S---

#### Source #100

<b>Log #</b>	14-36-CL30
<b>Title</b>	Dooطلا District, Complaint Letter, Daw B---, November 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Kyonedoe Township, Dooطلا District
<b>Full Text</b>	

Informant's Name: Daw B---  
Registration Number: [Censored for security]  
Father's Name: U C---  
Land Title of Original Owner's Name: U C---  
Relationship: Daughter  
Original Owner's Number: [Censored for security]  
Initial Area: 10.5 Acres  
Address: A--- village

I, Daw B---, am a daughter of the above described land title [holder] U C---.

(Community recommendation is attached)

There has been information at the moment that the land confiscated from [by] the battalion military unit will be returned to the land owner therefore I pleadingly submit this complaint letter in order to be able to get the land back.

Witness	Proposer
1. U A---	Daw B---
2. U E---	

Date: October 14<sup>th</sup> 2013

#### Recommendation

U C---, resident of Kawkareik Township, Yaypu Gyi village tract, A--- village, owned land number [censored for security], South Kyonedoe whose original owner number is [censored for security] with the extended area of 10.5 acres. He lives in A--- village and Daw B--- is his



daughter that was confirmed by the A--- [village] administrator.

F---

Representative of administrator

Yaypu Gyi village tract, administration office, Kawkareik Township

The proof of Daw B---'s registration number [censored for security] holder who is the daughter of U C--- (passed away).

I am a resident of A--- village, Yaypu Gyi village tract, Kawkareik Township. Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)<sup>319</sup> #546 confiscated the land of my father, U C--- (deceased) – land number [censored for security] South Kyonedoe, with the original owner's number [censored for security], as a land of camp ownership. No compensation has been received. According to the land record, the acres of the aforementioned land is 10.5 acres, but she [I] mistakenly reported it as 10 acres while submitting the complaint. The land which we have been working on since our ancestors started, by the land title of my father U C---, is not available to get back and work on. Therefore I respectfully request that you offer me a substitute piece of land, or compensation of the current value [of the land].

Question: Can you provide any evidence of the land that has been worked on since your ancestors' time by the land title of U B---?

Answer: Failed to describe [provide evidence] as the ground-rent voucher is lost.

November 29<sup>th</sup> 2013

Signature: B---

Daw B---

Informant

#### Source #101

<b>Log #</b>	14-40-A4-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Naw T---, March 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw T---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 60 years old.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>I live in T---.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p>	

<sup>319</sup> A Tatmadaw Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

I am Karen.

**What is your religion?**

I am Christian.

**What do you do for living?**

I am doing land (farming or cultivation).

**Are there any schools in your village?**

Yes.

**Up to what grade?**

Up to Fourth standard.

**Is there a hospital in your village?**

No.

**You said that school is up to Fourth standard right?**

Yes.

**Then does the village head or responsible people [in the village] arrange anything for them to be able to [attend] school?**

I have no idea about this. But as much as possible we do support them as part of [our] religion.

**How about government partnerships to provide support?**

Right now I think UNICEF is providing the support.

**Have they [UNICEF] supported for a long time?**

No.

**Are there any organizations that provide aid such as school materials like text books?**

Yes.

**What do people in your village mostly do for their living?**

Just cultivation.

**What do people plant for cultivation?**

Usually people plant cardamom, coffee, betel-leaf, and betel-nut and then dog fruit and so on.

**Are those plants fruitful?**

Yes, they do fruit properly but not well produced.

**How much can you sell the cardamom for one viss?**

This year we can sell 15,000 kyat per one viss but like every year we could not sell this much. And like dog fruit also we can sell it six to seven thousand kyat but when it produces more the price goes down.

**Do people face problems like insufficient food supply each year? And how much is one bag of rice?**

At the moment if you buy one bag of rice from 13 miles [village] it is 20,500 kyat but when it arrived to the village it becomes 23,500 kyat.

**Can you buy the rice easily?**

Of course.

**Are there any barriers for transportation to buy things?**

Right now there are no more barriers because the vehicle road is accessible.

**Do villagers get enough rice for a year?**

For those who do hill side cultivation and farming they do not get enough rice but they go and buy it at 13 miles town.

**But how about for those who do not have enough rice and they do not have money to buy it?**

They just go to 13 Miles town and then later on they just pay back using their products such as fruits.

**So like poor villagers are buying the rice using a loan and then paying them back in the future?**

Yes, we can say like that.

**Do the shop owners let them buy the rice in that way?**

Yes, as most villagers do not have money while their plantation is not producing fruits they just go and get the rice by loan then pay back when their plantation produces the fruits.

**Where do thieves come from?**

They do not go often to the village but they do come here more [than before].

**Thieves are stealing because they have nothing, or what?**

I have no idea about that. They are stealing because they have nothing or they are just stealing things. I think maybe some of them are lazy that is why they are stealing like that.

**Does the Myanmar government open [provide] work opportunities for those people in order to let them stop stealing?**

I haven't heard about that. I would say that those kinds of people do not care about other [people]. Although we told them to not steal they do not listen to us and keep stealing.

**Are there any land problems in your village?**

I would say our region is peaceful as there is no conflict or problem regarding land issue. Just only those lazy people [who] are stealing.

**How about land confiscation?**

Yes.

**Please tell me how?**

I think maybe in 2004 the Tatmadaw marked our land for target practice and since then we do not get the land vouchers as we used to get in in the past.

**Is that your land?**

Yes.

**Where is it located?**

It is located nearby Ler Doh [Kyaukkyi] river and it is connected to Pa Thi River.

**What is the extent [capacity] of your land?**

I think it may capable [of] 15 baskets of rice when we cultivate it to grow the paddy.

**Was it your inherited land or did you buy it?**

I bought it.

**Did people tell you how big your land was when you bought it?**

When I bought the land we were three people and the land owner gave us only one land grant.

**So in the past you used to get the land grant?**

Right but when the land was marked for target practice we did not get the land grant anymore.

**Who used [the land for] the target practice?**

They said that the target practice is for military training.

**Who said that? Was it the KNU or Myanmar government?**

Myanmar government.

**Do you know the name of Commander? Whether Light Infantry Division [LID] Commander or Battalion commander.**

No.

**How did you know that your land was marked as target practice land?**

They [Tatmadaw] just came and told us that they do not give us the land grant as they marked it as a target practice.

**Did the soldier tell you by themselves or did village leader [tell you]?**

No, they [Tatmadaw] just told me that I will not get the land grant anymore.

**So when you do not get the land grant anymore, was your land confiscated?**

Currently we are working on it and we do not get the land grant and they just marked our land for target practice.

**You know that your land became target practice so who told you that? Is it the land management department or administration department or Tatmadaw?**

We just heard from the announcement that our land was marked as target practice.

**Was that announced by land management department?**

Yes, because they have responsibility for that and when we ask why they don't give us the land grant and they told us that your land was marked as target practice land.

**Since from what year that they do not give you the land grant?**

I don't really remember in which year, maybe in 2007 or 2008.

**So it was around in 2007 or 2008?**

That's right.

**Do you know the [person] in charge of the land management department in 2007 and 2008?**

I think it is U Di Htoo but now he became [a member of a] peace group.

**What was his position before?**

Officer in charge of the land management department.

**So no one came and informed you that your land was confiscated.**

Right, we just know that our land was marked as target practice land.

**So they did not announce that in a meeting about your land [that it] was marked as target practice? They just walked around on the street and announced it?**

Not like that, the information was spread out by rumour when we asked each other why we do not get the land grant this year, and then we found out about it.

**What is the land being used for now?**

They are not using it for anything yet and we still working on it.

**So since your land was being confiscated from 2007-2008 till now, from the day it became target practice, how many times have you ever seen them doing the target practice?**

I have never seen [them].

**Were there any consultations to you before your land was confiscated?**

Never and I also do not understand anything about that.

**Did they inform you [of] anything in advance that they are going to buy your land for the military to use?**

No.

**So did they ask villagers to sign any documents when they confiscated the land?**

No.

**How about compensation? Did they pay you?**

Never.

**So only your land was confiscated or the whole village of the lands were confiscated?**

The whole village, those who have their land surrounding there were confiscated.

**Can you imagine how many acres would it be?**

No, and those who lands are located along Ler Doh [Kyaukkyi] river, none of them got the land grant. But I don't know from the other side of the river whether they got the land grant or not, anyhow no one got the land grant from our side.

**From which part of Ler Doh River was that?**

From northern part

**From northern part to where?**

To this side of W--- [place]

**Where is W--- located?**

Close to P--- village.

**How many [acres] of villagers' land over there were confiscated?**

I have no idea.

**Can you imagine at least how many acres of land were confiscated?**

I don't know.

**Did villagers respond [do] anything collectively in order to get back their land? Did they cooperate to protect their land?**

We don't want to give up as we do want to work on our own land.

**Did one or two villagers go and complaint to the land registration department to get back the land or to get compensation? Have you and villagers ever done that?**

I don't think so.

**Are there any other villagers who go and complain about it?**

I am afraid no because we just stay at home and we do not hear anything about that.

**Is that villagers that do not dare to complain or they do not know how to complain?**

We do not understand the process how to complain then we have to give up.

**So why do they plan to project with the land?**

We don't know why and we just only know that they marked it as a target practice land and since they first start establish Bayint Naung Tat [army camp] those lands are immediately marked as target practice ground and they do not pay the land grant anymore.

**So as soon as they put Bayint Naung Tat [army camp] they marked the land as target practice ground?**

Yes.

**Do you know the name of that camp commander?**

No, I just noticed that after they put up their army camp they will practice the mortar shelling.

**Have they ever shelled it?**

Never.

**Did they plant anything on the land? Do they go and have a look of the land?**

No, they do not go and have a look and [they] planted nothing. Maybe they are just threatening us.

**You said that they do not give the land grant right?**

Yes, the only thing is they do not give us the land grant.

**So when they do not give the land grant are you still able to work on the land?**

Yes, we still are working on our land. We are able to go and clean the bush on our land. We only do not get the land grant.

**So how do you feel when you do receive the land grant?**

I do not feel well for that.



### **Why?**

Because one day when we do not belong to our land that we grow the plants on, then how can we satisfied?

**The reason why you are not feeling good for that is because of there is no guarantee of the land?**

That's right.

**So we should arrange something in order to get the guarantee of the land?**

Right, if you can help us we do want you to help us for that because we do not understand about the land and we do not know what to do but we cannot lose our land like this. Some villagers want to know and understand about land issues but they do not know how to get access for the land awareness.

**So the lands were just orally confiscated by the military order as they have power, however you can still work on the land. So why are you still able to work on the land? Is that because they do not come and have a look of the land or [because] they will return the land to the villagers?**

I have no idea about that. We just simply know that this area was marked a target practice ground and the higher authorities do not give us the land grant anymore. It is only about that that we know. However we heard from the surrounding that although we do not get the land grant we can still work on our land that is why we keep working on our land.

**So it means that before they enter and use the land you can still work on it but when they come you cannot work on it?**

Maybe like that. But we do not know when they will enter [come] to the land or [if] they are just cheating the local villagers. If they are just cheating on us then we will not give up [accept] losing our land. So we just want to know the truth about [whether] they will actually confiscated our land and give us back something. We want to know about how they will manage that.

**So you want compensation?**

Sure, we want to get compensation.

**After you know through rumours that your land was confiscated did you contact any media groups?**

I haven't heard about it. At first they threaten us not to go and work on the land; if you go you will get injured when the do the target practice. However we never heard they are doing target practice.

**Did they threaten the villagers by themselves or did they ask the village head to hold a consultation with villagers?**

We just only know that they do not give us land grant and we ask why and then they replied us that the lands were marked as a target practice ground. So it means that we do not belong to the land.

**So do they shell the mortar?**

No.

**Did they say that you cannot work on the land? Did they say like that?**

No, they did not even say like that. What we understand the way they say [it] is this [will] become a target practice ground. But we do not hear [that] they conduct the military training over there.

**So you said that maybe they just threaten you?**

Yes, I think so.

**So they said do not go and work on the land as there will be shelling as a target practice?**

Yes and what we do not feel good [about] is we have our land and [so] why do they not give us the land grant?

**So you want them to give back the land grant?**

Right, if not we do not feel safe for our land.

**Do you plan to submit the complaint to the relevant office about your land in order to get it back?**

We are not able to that is why we just rely on the superiors.

**How about Member of Parliament? Did villagers report about the land issue to them?**

No but lately we had the NLD (National League for Democracy) ask local villagers about if there is any land destruction and the villagers replied that some people's lands were destroyed by the flood.

**Do they [NLD do something] for that?**

They helped [with] nothing. Recently they just investigated the location where the land destruction is.

**If you have something to that you want me to ask but I didn't then you can tell me now. You can tell how you feel in your mind and what your opinion is.**

What we do not feel good about is that we have worked hard on our land and they [government of Myanmar] do not give us the land grant and does that mean we are not going to belong [stay] on our land? If they [the local Tatmadaw] confiscated our land will they give us any compensation or how will they handle this for us? If we have to lose our land they should help us for something

**Okay then, thanks so much for your answers.**

**Source #102**

**Log #**

14-40-S1

<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Situation Update: Thandaunggyi Township, April to June 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in December 2014 <a href="http://khrgh.org/2014/12/14-40-s1/toungoo-situation-update-thandaunggyi-township-april-june-2014">http://khrgh.org/2014/12/14-40-s1/toungoo-situation-update-thandaunggyi-township-april-june-2014</a>
<b>Location</b>	Thaundaunggyi Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>In Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District, there are ongoing issues with farmland confiscation for military use. There are also [livelihood] problems with the civilians. The [information in this] report was collected between April and June [2014] and concerns the situation civilians face in regard to education, healthcare, social and livelihoods issues.</p> <p><b>Education</b></p> <p>In A--- village, Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District, there is a government sub-middle school<sup>320</sup> and there are 140 students and 11 teachers. There are some [school age] children who are not able to go to school. [Often] it is too far to travel in order to continue with high school after completing middle school. They have to go to the nearest town to continue their schooling. Some children stop going to school and some children cannot go to school and have to quit school as their parents cannot afford to send them to school. In the 2014-2015 academic year, the Burma government said they provided 1,000 kyat (US \$0.97)<sup>321</sup> to [each] student, but the female school teacher [in A--- village], Naw Mel George, cut it out [did not pay] by saying that she paid out [that money] for the [school] books' transportation cost. The [Burma/Myanmar] government said it is free to learn [at school]. They [Burma/Myanmar government] send school teachers [to the school] and moreover this year they distributed the text books freely, but they did not build the house for the teachers [to live in]. The villagers had to collect money, 3,000 kyat (US \$2.90) from each house [in the village], to support [building] the housing for the teachers [to stay in]. There are 128 houses in the village and they had to build the house for the teachers by themselves.</p> <p>In Shwe Nyaung Bin village, Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District, there are 140 houses. There is a school in the village and it operates as a sub-middle school. There are 200 students in the school and over ten school teachers. The students from the 2012 to 2014 academic year had the opportunity to study freely [with no school fees], but the kindergarten students parent's had to buy them a chair [to use at school]. Within this year [2014] one set of parents had many weaknesses [setbacks] in earning their livelihood. Their three children are studying in primary school and the school's female head-mistress asked them <i>"Do you want to take the [3,000 kyat] support money [from the Burma/Myanmar government] for your three children?"</i> They [students' parents] replied <i>"Yes"</i>. The teacher said that <i>"After you take the [support] money, 3,000 [kyat], you have to pay 5,000 [kyat] (US \$4.84) for the school fundraising fee and school repairing fee."</i> The student's parents did not take the money and as they do not have 2,000 [kyat] (US \$1.93) more to pay for the school [fundraising and repair fee], they are having problems with that.</p> <p>In Thandaunggyi Township, Leik Tho sub-township,<sup>322</sup> Lay Law Way village, there are over 50 students and four teachers in the primary school. Some teachers are from other territories</p>

<sup>320</sup> Sub-middle schools operate as smaller satellite units of a central middle school, usually located in a township's administrative centre. In this instance, Shwe Nyaung Bin village's sub-middle school is likely the satellite of Thandaunggyi town's middle school.

<sup>321</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the December 3, 2014 official market rate of 1033 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>322</sup> A sub-township is an administrative unit comprised of several village tracts, which in turn are comprised of 5 to 20 villages in a local area.

[village tracts or towns] so we have to provide housing for them. The teachers from other territories go home once a month and stay for one week every time they go home. Sometimes they have to go to teacher meetings [held by the Burma/Myanmar government], so the students have less time to learn [from the teachers]. Because of these issues, the students are not happy at school and spend more time with outsiders [older, non-student friends] and they are not happy in school as they have strong relationships with outsiders and they have lost the will to study or they quit school.

In Thandaunggyi Township, A--- village, three NRC [Norwegian Refugee Council] staff gather the children who cannot afford to go to school and they teach them two days a week. They try in this way, but [the students] are still unqualified [behind their peers].

### Healthcare

In Toungoo District, Thandaunggyi Township area, there is the civilian Number Two hospital and the Bu Yin Naung military hospital. There are no clinics in [most] village tracts in that township [Thandaunggyi, however] for village tracts that are situated close to the road, they [Burma/Myanmar government] built a clinic for them. There are some mid-wives who come to the local areas [remote villages], but they do not come into Maung Nwe Gyi village tract, Kon Taing village tract, Leik Pya Gyi village tract and Leik Pya Ka Lay village tract areas. They [mid-wives] do not vaccinate [the children] in a timely fashion.

In some villages, there is a clinic, but there is no medicine and it is a difficult and problematic to treat the patients [when they come to the clinic]. Because of this, the duty medics [from the government] buy the medicines personally and treat the patients. There are also some medics who cannot afford to buy medicine to treat the patients. In some villages, they treat the patients [despite the fact that they have no formal training] and it causes unexpected additional problems.

On June 4<sup>th</sup> 2014, in Toungoo District, Thandaunggyi Township, a pregnant woman in Meh Thin Hka Gyi village [became sick]. She did not take any pre-natal medicine and she had never taken [pre-natal] vitamins [during her pregnancy] or when she was sick. There is no clinic, hospital or medics [mid-wives] to treat her so they [a local villager] treated her [in Meh Thin Hka Gyi village] to the best of their abilities and there was a shocking [adverse reaction] with the injection. There was no medicine to stop that [reaction]. The woman was pregnant and because of the [wrong] injection, sores began appearing in her mouth and she was taken on a two day trip to the hospital. When she arrived at the hospital [the staff] asked the medics about the woman's situation and they [medics] knew the woman situation [and told them]. They [hospital staff] said she [the medic] can take [legal] action against the person who treated her [the pregnant woman]. After, they [medics] said that they [the hospital staff] did not treat the patient, even though the patient was in the hospital for a week. The patient had to comeback without having medical treatment from the hospital [as she could not afford to pay for treatment].

On May 29<sup>th</sup> 2014, in Toungoo District, Thandaunggyi Township, a villager from A--- village delivered her baby. There were mid-wives appointed by the [Burma/Myanmar] government, but they were never in the village. She had to deliver the baby with a hired [non-formally trained] midwife. Because she delivered the baby with a hired mid-wife, it took so long that her placenta did not come out and the hired mid-wife [had to] cut her placenta out with scissors. The blood ran without stopping and she died. If there were mid-wives [from the Burma/Myanmar government] and medicine, we could have saved the pregnant woman.

Some patients who are doing well [in business] and who have dignity [wealth] go to Bu Yin Naung military hospital for their medical treatment. The Bu Yin Naung military hospital has expertise in surgery and they have plenty of different medicines. For Thandaunggyi town

hospital and Thandaung Myo Thit hospital, there are medics there for healthcare, but there are no medicines [in the hospital]. Some medics in the hospital buy medicines and do medical treatment for the patients, but it has become a business [for the medics] at the expenses of the patients, so that it is difficult for the people who are not in good health to go to the hospital [for medical treatment]. The civilians from the local side [Karen villages] requested that the [Burma/Myanmar] government set up a clinic in the villages for healthcare, but the government did nothing with the request and they [villagers] are facing problems.

They [Burma/Myanmar government] should do work that benefits the local people instead of supporting unnecessary work [that does not benefit villagers]. If they do it that way, it will lift up the social standards of the local people.

### **Social problems in Toungoo District**

In Thandaunggyi town, Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District, the [Tatmadaw] Bu Yin Naung military camp came and opened [a base in] the town. In the town there is the military for the security [of the army base] and there are other troops from different military departments. Some of the military officers from different areas [around Burma/Myanmar] are familiar with the local people and there are some unnecessary problems that happen between military officers and the villagers. Recently, in A--- village near Thandaunggyi town, an unknown deserter<sup>323</sup> from Tatmadaw Military Operations Command (MOC)<sup>324</sup> #1, Light Infantry Division (LID)<sup>325</sup> #506, Taunggyi troop, attempted to rape a woman from A--- village who was coming back alone to the village from buying things from Thandaunggyi town. But when she tried to push away the deserter her clothes were torn off and she had to face him with shyness [shame]. She did not want to face this situation, but as long as the government troops [Tatmadaw] are in the area [village], there will always be something to worry about.

### **Livelihoods**

In Toungoo District, Thandaunggyi Township area, most people do plantation [work for their livelihoods]. In Toungoo District, Thandaunggyi Township, A--- village, in the plantation between Nan Khyein Khwin village and Shwe Nyaung Bin village, [Tatmadaw] Bu Yin Naung troop from [Thandaunggyi] town did a heavy weapons target exercise for military training and it was very difficult for [the villagers] to conduct livelihood activity on the plantation. On that land [the villagers] had been working since their ancestors' time. Since 2000, it was confiscated as military land.

In Toungoo District, in ten villages in Thandaunggyi Township there is a Mya Sein Yaung company project called Reducing Poverty. For that project they will provide 30,000,000 [kyat] (US \$29,041.62) for each village. They gathered ten villages and explained about the money that will be provided to the villages [for this project]. The village representatives attended the meeting and when they explained it to the villagers they were happy and they expected for it [to happen]. The reason why they accepted [this support] was because this year [2014] the plantations produced fewer products. During this year, because of the natural disaster

<sup>323</sup> In a previously published report the perpetrator is identified as Tun Thein from Light Infantry Battalion #506. For more information on this incident see "[Toungoo Incident Report: Sexual assault in Thandaunggyi Township, December 2013](#)," KHRG, May 2014.

<sup>324</sup> Military Operations Command. Comprised of ten battalions for offensive operations. Most MOCs have three Tactical Operations Commands (TOCs), made up of three battalions each.

<sup>325</sup> Light Infantry Division (Tatmadaw); commanded by a brigadier general, each with ten light infantry battalions specially trained in counter-insurgency, jungle warfare, "search and destroy" operations against ethnic insurgents and narcotics-based armies. LIDs are organised under three Tactical Operations Commands, commanded by a colonel, (three battalions each and one reserve), one field artillery battalion, one armoured squadron and other support units.



[strong] winds, the plants that the local people mostly rely on [for their livelihoods], such as cardamom trees, fell down on the ground and were damaged.

Mya Sein Young Company project provided support [money] to the local villages. For the villages that accept the support, some village representatives prioritize [the money] to their relatives and friends and they threaten the local people in many kind of ways [if they complain]. The amount of money that will be sent is 30,000,000 kyat and there are over 160 houses in the village. Most people in Shwe Nyaung Bin village do odd-jobs and the committees said if they [villagers] want to request money from the committees that provide money, they [villagers] have to pawn something for it. They prioritize [the money] to those who have a good income. For the interest, they charge 50 pya (US \$0.0004) for 1 kyat (US \$0.0009). It is difficult for the people who do not have money. It is difficult for them to go on with their livelihoods if they do not borrow money and they are facing many kinds of difficulties. The government proclaimed it “Reducing Poverty”, but nothing has changed for the poor.

In this year [2014], the [amount of] crops produced is less [than normal] and the crop [output] is low. For dog fruit,<sup>326</sup> the villagers sell 2,500 (US \$2.42) or 3,000 kyat (US \$2.90) for one big tin<sup>327</sup> of dog fruit. And if a person spends time picking and cracking the dog fruit all day they can make only one or two big tins of dog fruit. The price of goods is high and the livelihoods for the families are not going well.

The price of the goods is high and this year [2014] for the workers their daily income is 2,500 to 3,000 kyat. The current goods' price is based on the income of local government officers. For the plantation workers and rubber tapping workers they have problems. One pound of rubber is [worth] 500 kyat (US \$0.48) and is never sufficient for the family livelihoods. Because day labour work is unavailable [difficult to find], it is unavoidable to work on rubber plantations for a family's [livelihood].

### **Perspective and opinion**

In Thandaunggyi Township, some development projects that the government does benefit the people, and some projects do not benefit the people. If the government effectively handles the hospitals, clinics and education that benefit the people, there will be benefits for the civilians.

### **Land Confiscation**

There has been land confiscation from local people for the purpose of unnecessary things like government buildings and land for the military. They also use [the land] for military target practice and they confiscated over 5,000 acres of land from the local people in Thandaunggyi Township area. It includes the local people's plantations and it is difficult to solve their livelihoods problems. My statement [opinion] is if they returned the confiscated land [from the civilians] to the civilians, it can be helpful for the [civilians to be able to work for their livelihoods].

Situation Update written by a community member, Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District, (Received in July 2014)

### **Source #103**

<sup>326</sup> Dog fruit, also known as jengkol, is a bean containing sulphur and a mildly toxic amino acid. It is native to Southeast Asia and is commonly eaten with rice and fish paste.

<sup>327</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice, seeds and dog fruit.

<b>Log #</b>	14-41-P1
<b>Title</b>	Photo Notes, Nyaunglebin District, March 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	H--- village, Shaw Htee Township, Nyaunglebin District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>These pictures are [from] Kler Lwee Htoo District/ Shaw Htee Township/ H--- village. They show road reconstruction; it was led by (Kay Ayg Htun), who is neither involved with Government and Karen National Union agreements. The KNU leader tries to stop the reconstruction but they are continuing to work on this. Other cause [for concern is that] mostly children and women are involved in the reconstruction with a few old men.</p> <p>Date: March 8<sup>th</sup> 2014 Location: Kler Lwee Htoo District/ Shaw Htee Township/ beside H--- village.</p> <p>These pictures show Kaw Gay Htoo (Kay Ayg Htun) and his development workers. They are coming and establishing (13) buildings. They also have purpose [intention] to build more buildings and build the road.</p>	

**Source #104**

<b>Log #</b>	14-45-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Hpah A---, August 2013
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Maw Lay village tract, Thaton Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Research Area: Thaton (Doo Tha Htoo) District</b></p> <p><b>Interview Date: August 9<sup>th</sup> 2013</b></p> <p><b>Name: Hpah A---</b></p> <p><b>Gender: Male</b></p> <p><b>Age: 48</b></p> <p><b>Village: A--- village</b></p> <p><b>Religion: Christian</b></p> <p><b>Ethnicity: Karen</b></p> <p><b>Family Status: married</b></p> <p><b>Position: Villager</b></p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Hpah A---.</p>	



**How old are you?**

I'm 48 years old.

**Where do you live?**

I live in A--- village.

**Do you have family?**

Yes, I do have family.

**How many children do you have?**

I have five children.

**What is the age of your oldest child?**

25 years old.

**What is the age of your youngest child?**

15 years old.

**Are the children going to school by now?**

No, they are not going to school now because they don't want to study. They only went to school for five days and then went back home.

**What are the main livelihoods [occupations] that you do?**

We are not doing anything. Sometimes we work in part time jobs for other people. When it is the time for work on the farms we work on the farm. No one has a critical [permanent] job.

**What do the other people do?**

They work on the farm and plantations and just do what work there is here.

**For example, those who work on farms and plantations, do they have enough to eat each year?**

Each year some of them have enough but some of them do not have enough. If they don't have enough they have to work with a lot of difficulty.

**Those who have enough and not enough: which one is more [common]?**

They almost all have enough but those who do not enough don't have enough spare.

**Do they run any businesses here?**

No, they just work on farms and plantations. They don't run any other businesses [because] we don't have money. If we have [money] we could do [some business] as well as we could.

**Do they sell fruit and work on rubber plantations?**

Yes, they do sell [fruit] and work on rubber plantations. Some people work on rubber

plantations but some do not.

**Do they stop tapping the rubber for sale?**

Yes, some people have stopped doing it because the [sale] price of it is not good so some of them do not drain [tap] it anymore.

**This year what is the price of rubber?**

I heard it is 650 kyats per kilo. I don't ask about this. I don't have a rubber plantation.

**You do not make any part of it?**

Now I have started to plant one part but I have not been back since I planted it because I heard it was burnt.

**Here, do the villagers have to buy rice?**

Some people do not have [produce] enough [rice] so they have to buy it but most people who work on farms have to buy it because there is no spare [rice]. Now for me I have stopped working on the farm.

**How much does it cost for a big tin of rice if you buy it?**

One packet of rice will cost 10,000 kyats for hard rice but for soft rice it will cost 20,000 kyats. There is lots of rice in the village.

**Do they all have to buy it?**

No, if the people have enough they don't need to buy it.

**Is there a school here?**

Yes, in B--- [village]. In the past the school was here [in A--- village] but now they are moving it to B--- and we call it A--- School.

**How many houses are there in A--- village?**

There are [censored for security] houses in A--- village. This [censored for security] includes all of the orphanages and single houses. Some single people just stay alone in their house.

**Does the school get any support from the [Myanmar] government?**

Yes.

**Is this the Burmese [Myanmar] government or someone else?**

Yes, they are Burmese [Myanmar] but I forget their name. It is a kind of company but it is not the Burmese [Myanmar] government. It runs the Taw Lay Shyit School. The school has a very high level of teaching which is recognised by other people. You don't see other schools like that one.

**Do Burmese [Myanmar] government come and build any clinics here?**

No, they do not.

**Are there any medics in the village?**

Yes, one medic.

**Did she learn by herself or did the [Myanmar] government train her?**

Her background is quite good so she was able to learn by herself and the [Myanmar] government also helped her. Now she works with her mother and looks after the villagers in our village.

**If she cannot treat it [a person's illness], where does she send the person?**

She sends them to the Thaton [hospital] if they have a serious disease, or Mawlamyine and Kyaikto but most of them are send to Thaton [hospital]. Kyaikto does not always take patients; maybe because they don't have enough equipment.

**If we go from here to Thaton, how long does it take if we go by car?**

It will take more than one or two hours if you drive quite quickly.

**Do you know any villagers from here who went there?**

I haven't seen anyone with a serious sickness.

**No, I mean if they have to go?**

If they get a sickness like an injury or they fall down from a tree they go to the clinic.

**So, if they go to Thaton how much do they have to spend?**

I heard that if you go and stay just two or three days it already costs 100,000 or 200,000 kyats.

**For the people who don't have enough money; can they go?**

If they cannot go [to hospital] they have to suffer with their pain and they die.

**For example, do the villagers support them if they don't have enough money?**

No, they don't support them. We have pay it on our own.

**Now we have heard that the company will come to do stone mining; is that real [true] for you?**

I think that it is not real because none of the villagers who live near that place agree with the stone mining. If they do [the stone mining] then we would have to relocate and we don't have anywhere else to live so we cannot relocate so the villagers don't like it.

**Do you know the name of the company that will come to [conduct] stone mining?**

No, I don't know the name of it.

**Where are they?**

I don't know. Maybe the administrator will know it because they communicate with each

other.

**Who is the administrator? Burmese [Bamar]?**

Yes, Burmese [Bamar].

**Now, you have lived here for a very long time so do you know more about the village's situation?**

Yes.

**So can you tell me what [areas of land] belongs to the villagers and which villages are close to the stone mining area?**

Most of the villagers have plots of lands at the bottom of the stone [mining area]. They have rubber plantations and most people work on the rubber plantations at the moment. On the other side of the stone [area] they have farms and rubber plantations. The villagers' lands are around the stone [area].

**The plots of land are all around the stone [mining area]?**

Yes.

**How many villages cover these plots of land?**

It includes A--- village, C--- village, D--- village and E--- village.

**Now they have had a public meeting, so you told me that lots people agreed with it. Can you tell me your thoughts about that?**

I will say that the reason why the villagers who voted for it [the mining] is because they are quite away from the place. These villages have lots of houses and people. [Even though] the villages close to the place do not vote for the mining, they do not have many people so they do not win the vote.

I will tell you why the villagers are going to like it [the stone mining] because they have the vote and the village [that they come from] is quite far from this [stone mining] place also has many houses in the village. If they have to sign [vote] for this [mining] they can sign [vote] for us. We stay very close and the number of our villagers is very small so they won that vote.

**The people who voted [for the mining], do they have land here?**

No, they do not; [and that is why] they can vote for it without hesitating.

**What is the purpose of them signing [voting for] it? Do you know?**

They said it is to give them electricity and water, and that it [the mining company] will build a clinic. The company will pay 10 million [kyats] for the land in P--- [village] but for us they came and secretly told us that if we speak out in the meeting then they will pay us 20 million [kyats] for it [the land]. I told them even though you will pay us 20 million [kyats], if we have to relocate and we lose our land we will suffer a lot so we don't need 20 million [kyats]. The people who live far away will be very happy with 10 million [kyats] but for us 20 million [kyats] will bring us tears because none of our villagers agree with this project.

**If you look at the people who agree with [the mining], do they not have any impact?**

Yes, they don't have any impact. Not talking about other people, if I myself lived far away from the stone [area], I would vote for the it [the mining]. But now I live here so I don't agree with it [the mining]. The people who live far have lots of people but we have fewer people so they have more votes.

**If they really work on this [the mining] what difficulties would the villagers have to face?**

They would become displaced people because the land and farms will be destroyed, because if we work on the farm we will not know where to get water [because of the mining].

**Do you think that the villagers have to relocate?**

They [the company] said that if there is stone mining they will keep it 1,000 feet away from the village. The Township administrator said if they take the land they will divide it into plots side by side, like with battalion and battalion land.

**Did they say they will set up the battalion?**

I have not heard from their own tongue [directly] but if they buy the land [near the stone place] then they can do what they want to do with it. We cannot tell them what to do with it [because it is their land] and we cannot do anything if they tell us to move [away]. If they ask us to stay we have to stay but if they really work on this [start mining] then we are not going to want to live here.

**How many hours does it take to go from A--- village to the stone [area] if you go by foot?**

It is not far; you can go with a catapult. It is very near. Just in front of those people. They are just there at the bottom of that cliff.

**Do any of the villagers here agree with the stone mining?**

No, no one can agree with the stone mining. I heard F--- [villagers] do not agree either with that because all of their lands are close to the cliff [stone mining area].

**How many villages will they invite if they going to hold a vote?**

They will invite the villages from very far [away] from that place, such as Q---, R---, S--- and T--- [villages]. Those places are very far away from A--- village. T--- is a big village and they have a lot more members of the village than in our village. In our village it only has [censored for security] houses.

The villages that have land here [where the stone mining takes place] and have lots of land are G---, A---, H---, D---, and I---.

**When they called a meeting did they invite D--- and I---?**

No, they didn't call them. They are inviting the villagers from U--- and Q--- [villages].

**Do they have any land apart from this?**

No, they don't have any land but other villages were represented by head leaders. The T--- [villagers] are not included in this part either because they stay very far away. But they called those villages and have many members. I also think that if I lived very far then I would vote

for it [the stone mining] because if the company does something then there is nothing [nearby] that belongs to us but now we cannot do anything.

**When they held a vote, they won so have they now told you anything about planning for the future?**

No, I haven't heard anything. They said that they won the vote so they will start stone mining. The Township administrator said not to feel bad that you didn't win the vote. We have to look at the situation because the villages [who voted for the stone mining] do not have any land here and also they have a lot more members as in the big villages. But your village is located very close to it [the stone mining] so they have to look at your situation. If you look at it in numbers of votes they will win because the villages from remote places have more members.

**I want to ask you the last question about the situation of stone mining; what do you think about stone mining?**

I cannot say anything. If they really work on stone mining then we cannot do anything. We are just villagers. If they ask us to move then we have to move.

**Do you want to say or express anything to inform the leaders and let the world know?**

I want to express, in here the people are going to claim it is not like this in other countries. It is just among the Karen people and Burmese people.

**Do you want to express something that you would like to let the world know?**

I want to say but I cannot express it.

**Yes, express what is in your mind?**

I don't want my villagers to have to go and live in other places. We only want to stay here by the A--- [village] cliffs, like it is natural. In the past our grandparents made their livelihoods by themselves here and also now you start to mine stone in A--- [village] and get electricity. One of the girls said that you told us to have stone mining in A--- [village] to provide us with [electricity]. Can you help us [get electricity] without having stone mining in A--- [village]? Otherwise they cannot say anything.

**Is it an important thing that A--- [village] stays traditional?**

Yes, it needs to stay traditional. In the past we just work and eat in A--- [village] and this is the thing that we respect it as our grandparents did it. If they come and do mining it will be like they break the legs or arms of our grandparents. We don't want the people to come and hurt our grandparents. Sometimes if we go somewhere we take small stones and soil with us. Each year we have a devotional offering once a year. Most of the people who come and do bad things on it [the stone cliff], they will suffer and they will leave with injuries [according their beliefs].

**Source #105**

<b>Log #</b>	14-45-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Naw A---, April 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Maw Lay village tract, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Research Area: Thaton District**

**Interview Date: April 18<sup>th</sup> 2014**

**Name: Naw A---**

**Gender: Female**

**Age: 30**

**Village: A--- village**

**Religion: Unknown**

**Ethnicity: Unknown**

**Family Status: married**

**Position: Health worker**

**What is your name?**

My name is Naw A---.

**How old are you?**

30 years old.

**Where do you live?**

I live in A--- village.

**Do you have family?**

Yes I have my mum's house.

**I meant have you got married already?**

Yes. I have got two children.

**What is the age of your oldest child?**

Five years.

**What is the age of your youngest child?**

Over one year.

**What do your family do for a living when you live in A--- [village]?**

We tap rubber trees and harvest palm leaves. I look after the patients in the village and if they get a serious sickness I send them to the lower part.



**Does anyone in your [family] earn a living from the farm?**

No one.

**How many households are there in A--- [village]?**

If we count each house it will be around [censored for security reasons] households.

**A--- [village] is divided into two parts?**

Yes. Some people stay alone.

**I meant the household?**

Ahh, there are over [censored for security reasons] households.

**What about the upper part?**

There are over [censored for security reasons] households in the upper part. Not more than that.

**In A--- village what do most villagers do for their livelihoods?**

Most people earn their living from farm [work], labour works, plantations and some people make alcohol.

**Is earning a living from the farms more [common] than earning a living from the plantations?**

Yes.

**Do they have enough food from earning their living on the farms and plantations each year?**

Yes the villagers who earn their living from the farms have enough food.

**For example, is the number of people with insufficient food higher than the number of people who have do not insufficient food each year?**

The number of people who do not have insufficient [food] is greater than the number with insufficient [food].

**Do you have a school in your village?**

We go to school at Maw Lay School. After the villagers left to other places there are fewer [students] so it was built at That Naung Ko.

**So you go to school in Maw Lay School?**

Yes.

**And you have to go to Tha Ta Na Ko?**

Yes.

**How many hours does it take to go there?**

I have never been there.

**No?**

**How many hours would it take if we go from here to there?**

It only takes 20 minutes for me when I go there because I walk quickly.

**Do the students face any problems going there in the rain season, such as flooding?**

Yes they face problems in the rainy season but if there is too much rain which causes flooding they are not allowed to go to school.

**Have they built a bridge [to travel] there when it is rainy season?**

No.

**Does anyone support Maw Lay School?**

Yes Maw Lay School is supported by Switzerland. They gave a fund to build the school. They did not collect money from us. We just went to help to build the school. Currently we are repairing the school.

**So the support came from Switzerland?**

Yes.

**Is it not from the [Myanmar] government?**

No. The other country. They come to check the schools and toilets. The students' leaders did not go.

**Were there any clinics built by the [Myanmar] government?**

There is nothing in A--- village [built by the Myanmar government]. Only IOM [International Organisation for Migration], malaria group, and World Concern. Currently they are building a well for us.

**They just came to provide support?**

Yes. The malaria group came to the village and if someone gets malaria they provide free [medicine]. For the children who face malnutrition problems they gave them food.

**There is no clinic in your village so if the villagers get sick or a serious disease where are they sent to?**

To P'Nweh Klah but the healthcare manager [there] did not care anything [provide them with treatment].

**Where?**

P'Nweh Klah.

**There is a clinic in P'Nweh Klah [village]?**

Yes there is a hospital.

**Are there always medics in the hospital?**

Yes but on the other hand when we called them to come to A--- village they do not want to come because it is very far from there to here. If we want to bring them to the village we have to worship [beg] them [to come]. If they [villagers] do not have a serious sickness I look after them in the village but if it is serious then I send them to the hospital.

**There is only you in the village [as a health worker]. So are you hired by the [Myanmar] government or do you it on your own?**

The [Myanmar] government did not hire me and I do not work for the [Myanmar] government.

**So you go to receive training then?**

I received training after the malaria group came [started operating in the village] and I help with healthcare.

**Have you ever sent patients to the hospital?**

Yes.

**Where do you go?**

To Thaton [town].

**How many hours does it take to get there by motorbike and by car?**

We usually go by car and it takes two hours.

**Two hours?**

Yes.

**If they get a serious sickness and need to go to the hospital how much do they have to pay for the treatment each time?**

If they go and have to stay for a long time it will cost a lot but if you go for two or three days it costs less. If we just go for a check-up on the sickness it costs 20,000 kyats.

**So just for a check-up?**

The cost [of treatment] depends on the sicknesses. My oldest child has a heart disease and my youngest child has a lung disease, an enlarged heart, and asthma. Currently, their father went to work in Thailand. I went to Mawlamyine [hospital] for [their] treatment and spent eight months in there. All of my property has been sold and [I had to] borrow 30 million kyat (US \$30,801.00) from others and I almost became a beggar.

**Your child was having treatment for eight months so it must cost a lot?**

It costs a lot so I sold all of my property. I borrowed 10 million [kyats] from people but now it

is up to 20 to 30 million [kyats].

**What do most people [villagers] work [on] to earn an income here?**

They mostly tap rubber trees but now the market price is very low so the people [villagers] do not do it. They collect leaves [for thatch shingles] and tap rubber trees to earn income.

**What kind of leaves?**

*Ta La Aw* leaves; but for palm leaves if you have your own you can harvest.

**The villagers tap rubber trees so most of them own rubber plantations?**

In A--- village the people who own rubber plantations are B---, C---'s family, D---'s family and I. So in total there are four families.

**The rubber trees can produce the liquid?**

Yes, but we cannot collect a lot.

**How much is the market price of rubber this year?**

The people buy it for 6,000 kyats. For me I do not hire people to tap the rubber for me because some of my rubber [trees] are not old enough to produce the liquid.

**What is six viss?<sup>328</sup>**

The people buy six pounds [viss] for 600 kyats. I thought it is better to keep it and even if I hire workers and if they tap the rubber [trees] for six pounds, I have to provide meals for them and it does not make enough profit for me; therefore I do not hire any workers.

**Tapping the rubber trees and collecting the leaves for the thatch shingles to earn an income – so what is the price for 100 thatch shingles?**

100 thatch shingles cost 4,000 kyats.

**For the villagers who collect the leaves to make thatch shingle, how many bundles can they produce to sell each day?**

I do not know about that because I do not do that myself but I have seen them collect it a lot.

**Is there any other way for villagers to earn an income?**

Yes in the rainy season they go to collect the *Wa U* [elephant foot yam tuber]. For me I never go there to climb the mountain.

**Where do they go to collect that?**

At the top of the cliff.

**Maw Lay cliff?**

Yes.

<sup>328</sup> A *viss* is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

**Is Wa U elephant foot yam tuber?**

I do not know what to call it in Karen because I have never seen the plant of Wa U and people always call it Wa U.

**So there is some business?**

No, there is some business here. Some people collect firewood from Maw Lay and bring it to the village and then make it into bundles for sale. In the rainy season they dig Wa U and other wild yam and we buy it from them. But if people ask me what Wa U is, I do not know how to explain because I do not know the name of the plant. We like to eat the wild yam.

**So some people earn their living from that cliff?**

Yes some people go to set traps and cut bamboo there. We are very thankful of that cliff because if the cliff was not there it would be very hard for the villagers. The people said they had fewer votes [for the decision to start mining there] than the villagers who are not concerned about the mining. They [the villagers near the cliff] said that you would have to kill all of them before you could start mining at the cliff, as the administrator told me.

**We also heard that they will come to do stone mining so what will they do with the stone?**

They will produce cement or *Htoo* [gold].

**Will they produce cement?**

Yes.

**What is the name of the company? Do you know?**

Pyu Min Tun Company. What is the manger's name? On another day the manager's wife and his son also came to the village and he [his son] gave a speech.

**They came through [received authorisation from] the Burma [Myanmar] government or Kaw Thu Lei [KNU] in order to conduct the stone mining?**

The Burma [Myanmar] government and they came here with the Burma [Myanmar] government but the villagers did not like them. When they asked for our signatures the villagers here did not sign it. They invited the villagers from P'Nweh Klah, Lah Koh, some Muslim villagers and other villagers to get more people to get signatures.

**You said they come here to ask for the cliff [to start mining there], so do they promise to do something for the villagers?**

Yes they said they are going to build a clinic and provide electricity. I told them that if they have a lot of money and are very rich, why did they not provide funds for us when we built Maw Lay School? I said this in front of them. They [a organisation from Switzerland] built it [the school] and it did not cost any money from the villagers and did not relate to the cliff either [i.e. was not in exchange for permission to start mining]. If you have the money to build the clinic and [it is not related to permission to start mining]. Because I was young and at the time I did not realise that we had enough equipment [for the clinic and hospital]. When my child got a serious sickness I had to go to Mawlamyine and some people have to go to Yangon. I told them what I wanted to and I did not know [care] if you [they] liked it or not.

**As I have heard they will also provide you with some money, so did they provide it?**

Yes they said they will provide 10 [million kyats] but we do not need 10 [million kyats]. Even if they give me it, I could not anything with it.

**10 is 10 million kyats?**

Yes. They said it is not going to affect the villagers. How can it not affect us when we live beside the road and the people were constructing the road for one month but we suffered from that even though it only took one month. They cannot finish the stone mining within a month and it will take them more than a year. On the other hand many people from many different [areas] will be included and Burmese [Bamar] people will come to work here. In the future we won't even dare to go to the jungle when there are lots of different people here. If they conduct the mining then other businessmen might also follow them and more workers will come here but the poor people cannot do anything.

**Which villages are close to the cliff?**

Nearby there are A--- village, the lower part of A--- village, K--, L---, and N--- [villages].

**Is it also close to H--- village?**

Yes.

**Are there any farms surrounding the cliff?**

Around the cliff?

**Yes around the cliff, are there any farms?**

Yes some people's farms are located at the bottom of the cliff.

**So who are these people?**

The people are from P'Nweh Klah and A--- [villages]. P'Nweh Klah's villagers have fewer farms than villagers in A---'s village. Their farms are located in A--- [village] because their parents live there but they have moved to live there. If they had not moved then they would all still be in A--- [village].

**So the villages are [including] R--- then?**

P'Nweh Klah.

**Do they also have farms there?**

Yes one or two people. They have land here because their parents are A---'s villagers. After they got married they went to stay in P'Nweh Klah and also in the past we had to flee but for us we did not flee [there], instead we fled to other places. My uncle is a soldier but he has passed away. After he passed away we felt a bit more comfortable [here]. If he had not died then we would always have to run.

**So the company will come to conduct stone mining because they have already got the result that they won the vote?**

Even though they won the vote [with the villagers] they have not been to the KNU yet [for their approval]. They have only brought it to the Township level. I asked my sister and she

said that they have not submitted it to the KNU yet because before they made us vote, the administrator told them that if they got [approval] there and if the P'Nweh Klah administrator told them something then they have to listen to them. If they do it based on the result of the vote [with the villagers] then we have a smaller proportion of the vote because we have fewer households [than other villagers] even if we count both of the villages in A--- village. In order to conduct the stone mining they made us vote so even though they won the vote we [villagers] did not care. If they want to conduct the stone mining they can do it but the district administrator told them to meet with villagers before they start it and also told them that A--- villagers did not agree. We said if they make us vote then A---'s villagers will have fewer votes and the district administrator also told us that they will make the decision based on one fourth [of the vote]. If they make the decision based on one fourth then we will win the vote.<sup>329</sup>

**What do you think was the aim of the villagers who live in A--- village tract when they voted?**

In A--- village none of the villagers agreed [with the stone mining].

**I meant for the villagers who agreed [to the mining]?**

K---r's villagers voted [for the mining] because they were afraid. For us we were not afraid about anything so we did not agree to vote for it [the mining].

**Who were they afraid of?**

They were afraid of the old person who is the administrator and he also invited the villagers from J--- [village] to vote for it [the mining]. Actually they are not from the A--- cliff [area] and the administrator invited many other people.

**Is it administrator from Burma [Myanmar] government or the KNU?**

From Burma [Myanmar government] and his name is Saw Poh Nyoh.

**So he is in charge of P'Nweh Klah and Maw Lay village tracts?**

Yes he is in charge of P'Nweh Klah and Maw Lay village tracts and he lives in Kaw Ra Nee village.

**So regarding the cliff, how do you think about it and what are the benefits that the villagers get from the cliff?**

The villagers get many benefits from the cliff. The villagers collect firewood, cut bamboo and logs to sell. In the rainy season the villagers find yams and the people who like porridge [gay hka duh] sometimes meet with each other asking for cane vegetables [the part of cane trees used to make curry]. For me I don't know about the cane plant. If we have a special worship service we always use it [the cliff]. If there was no cliff you could not easily find the yams in the town if you want to eat them. We therefore have concerns about it for the villagers.

**Are there any wild animals around the cliff?**

Yes there are a lot of wild animals in the cliff. If you enter the cliff where there is water you

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<sup>329</sup> KHRG is in the process of following up to clarify the meaning of this point.



will see a lot of fish there.

**In the cliff?**

Yes because nobody goes to disturb [goes fishing] there since the grandparents' generation. If there is too much rain and a lot water flooding there then they [fish in the stream] also come out [down] from the cliff and if the water dries up then they stay on the [stream on the] cliff.

**So are they [fish] there in every season?**

Yes. [When] There is enough water [for the fish] and the water also falls like softly. I have been there once.

**I am going to ask you the last question; so what do you think about the cliff and that they will conduct [the mining] and what do you want to let other people know?**

I do not want them to conduct the mining.

**Yes, you do [not] want them to conduct, so do you want to report any other things in your area which are related to the cliff in order for them not to conduct it? You do not want them to conduct it, right?**

Yes, I do not want it.

**You do not want it, so do you want to say anything in order for them not to conduct it?**

Yes, the villagers are earning their living from that cliff and they [the company] also said it was not going to impact the village; how can it not? If they conduct it, there will be a lot of cars and a lot of workers will come from many other areas and we won't even dare to go out from the village in the future. As you know, the Bamar people are not [behaving] like us [Karen people]. We would also have to smell the smoke [pollution] from the stone [mining] even if they do not build the factory here. If we cannot breathe anymore then some people will move [to other places] but for the people who do not have the money it will be very difficult for them to move and if they do not have a house to live in then they might have to become a beggar [homeless].

**Do you have any other things to say?**

Yes I have a lot to say.

**If you have can, please can you tell me?**

Yes, do not conduct the mining. They said they would give electricity and 10 million kyats so how can we use that? If we get light [from electricity] then we might have to spend more than we had to spend before. We are better living like that and we have bought solar panels and our houses are very bright with light. They do not need to give it [electricity]. If they have money, they should just offer it simply [not in exchange for permission to conduct mining]. They want to offer them and conduct the mining so it does not seem like they really want to offer it [the electricity and money]. They need something from the other people and that is why they do it so it is not a good sign. If they really do not want to offer it then they should not give it. If they do it like this then it will cause problems for the local villagers and if they swear [make promises to] you frequently it also can happen like they swear [promise].

**Thank you very much for the information that you gave us and you provided the information that I wanted to know.**

**Source #106**

<b>Log #</b>	14-45-A2-I3
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Daw A---, April 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Maw Lay village tract, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Research Area: Thaton District**

**Interview Date: April 18<sup>th</sup> 2014**

**Name: Daw A---**

**Gender: Female**

**Age: 42**

**Village: A--- village**

**Religion: Unknown**

**Ethnicity: Unknown**

**Family Status: Married**

**Position: Villager**

**What is your name?**

My name is Daw A---.

**How old are you?**

I am 42 years old.

**Where do you live?**

I live in A--- village.

**Is it your place of birth?**

Yes.

**Do you have family?**

Yes I have a house.

**I meant have you got married?**

Yes.

**How many children do you have?**

Six children.

**What is the age of your oldest child?**

18 years old.

**What is the age of your youngest child?**

Two years old.

**What do you do for a living?**

I collect thatch shingles and firewood to sell because I do not have a garden.

**Do you have a farm?**

I have a small piece of garden.

**No I meant do you have farm land?**

I do not have any land.

**What do most villagers do for a living?**

The villagers mostly earn a living from cutting firewood and collecting the leaves [to make thatch shingles]. There are no special ways [opportunities] for the villagers to do business.

**Does anyone work on the farm?**

Yes. Some villagers who have land work on the land to earn their living. For the villagers who do not have any land like me we collect leaves [to make thatch shingles], cut bamboo, and cut firewood to then sell it.

**Do you have a plantation?**

No.

**Does anyone have a plantation, such as a rubber plantation?**

Yes. Sometime we do labour work if they need workers.

**How many households are there in A--- village?**

[Censored for security] households, including orphans and old people.

**Do they have enough food in each household?**

No. As for me, sometimes if I have salt I do not have ajinomoto [MSG] and if I have salt and I do not have chilli. Therefore we [villagers] do not have enough food.

**How many villagers have enough food?**

Most of the villagers are like I said [in the] above [sentence]. I do not see many villagers who have enough food.

**So do you have to buy rice?**

Yes.

**What is the price of rice?**

One bowl is 600 kyats.

**How do the villagers earn income? Is there any way to earn income?**

We collect firewood and then buy rice from the people who bought the firewood.

**Do any of the villagers work on rubber plantations or collect leaves to make thatch shingles to earn income?**

Yes.

**Do you also collect the leaves to make thatch shingles to sell?**

Yes, I collect the leaves to make thatch shingles and collect firewood to sell.

**How much [money] do you sell 100 thatch shingles for?**

We go to sell it in the lower parts [areas] for 5,500 kyats.

**What about if the people buy it in the village?**

They buy it for 4,000 kyats.

**For a person who is new at collecting the leaves, how much can they collect in one season?**

In one season we can collect 1,000 thatch shingles. Currently there are fewer trees and people cut down some trees as well so we cannot do as much.

**Do they burn the leaves among the trees as well?**

I do not go to collect the leaves in the mountain side so I do not know. I just go to collect it in very near [places].

**Regarding the healthcare, are there any clinics in your village?**

No.

**If they [villagers] get sick where do they go?**

We go to the person [healthcare worker] who came to talk with you at moment.

**She looks after the people who do not have serious sickness. So if they get a serious sickness where do they go?**

We go to B--- [village]. Then if they do not take responsibility, we go again to the hospital in

the town.

**So there is a clinic in B--- [village]?**

Yes.

**How many hours does it take to go by foot from A--- [village] to B--- [village]?**

If we go by foot it takes one hour.

**Where is the hospital?**

The hospital is located in Thaton Town.

**If we go by car how many hours will it take?**

It only takes one hour by car.

**Does anyone from here go to the hospital there?**

Yes, some people.

**When they go there, how much do they spend each time?**

If they go there, it costs three, four or five million kyats. If they get very seriously sick it costs a lot but if it is not very serious then it costs much less.

**If we look at the situation of the villagers, they do not have enough food so if they face health problems what do they do?**

We do not have [enough money] and no one supports us either. If we are in that situation we borrow money for the treatment and go to the hospital because we still want to survive. After we get better we pay back our debt.

**So after you have recovered you have to pay back the debt?**

Yes.

**Do the villagers help each other?**

Yes they lend money to us and we have to pay them back with interest.

**So regarding healthcare there are no big issues [problems]. It just needs money?**

Yes.

**We really want to know about the cliff situation<sup>330</sup> and we also heard that the people will come to do [the stone mining project] – so how do you think about this?**

We did not allow them to start the mining project. If they really want to do it [start mining] then they have to kill all of the villagers before they can do it peacefully. We do not want to move away from A--- [village]. We did not bring it [their village and their houses] and put it

<sup>330</sup> A stone mining company has previously attempted to start mining operations at this stone cliff near village A---.

there. It based it there by itself. We are not happy to vote to sell our A--- [village].

**What are the benefits that villagers get from the cliff [stone area]?**

It protects us when the wind is blowing extremely strongly and also when there is flooding.

**What about other [things]?**

If we need bamboo and trees we go to cut it on the top of the cliff. For me I do not have any [bamboo plantations] in the jungle. If we want to cut something [bamboo and trees] somewhere it all belongs to other people. If we cut something in their plantation they submit a case [complaint] to the old people [village leaders] so we cannot do anything; therefore we have to get everything from the A--- cliff.

**Can you find food over there?**

How can we find food?

**For example, vegetables?**

Yes we can find vegetables.

**What about wild animals?**

I never go hunting.

**What about other people?**

Yes some people make traps to catch wild pigs and monkeys. After they catch them they sell the meat to buy corn oil.

**What about firewood?**

We collect firewood beside the cliff and on top of the cliff.

**So the villagers get many benefits from that cliff?**

Yes, therefore we will give our life instead of letting them conduct [the mining].

**We heard that in order for them to conduct the mining they came here to ask for the approval of the villagers – so how did they win the approval?**

A--- and C--- villages have much fewer households [people]; therefore even though we did not approve we could not win [the vote]. For the other villages [which are further away from the proposed mining], they have more households [people] and get more votes; therefore they won the vote [approving the mining]. They also want to gain something [from the mining company]. If they compare the villages close to and far away from the cliff, they have to [should] support the villages closer [to the cliff]. If not they would have to kill us before they conduct the mining.

**How many villages are located near the cliff?**

The villages are C---, A---, Lower A---, D--- and E--- [village].

**They also have land there which is located at the bottom of the cliff?**

Yes they do.

**So most of the people who voted to approve [the mining] live in which village?**

Most of them live in F--- and B--- villages.

**Do they have land which is located at the bottom of the cliff?**

Yes some people bought pieces of land from the A--- villagers. If they voted in favour [of the mining] it meant that they do not need the money that they spent to buy the land.

**Do you know the name of the [mining] company?**

Pyu Min Tun.

**Is it based in Burma [Myanmar]?**

Yes it is based in Burma [Myanmar].

**So it cooperates [with other organisations]?**

I heard it cooperates with English people but I have never been there.

**Did they give any promise to do something for the villagers?**

The [Thaton Town] administrator told us that they will give us 10 million kyats but we do not need it.

**They will only provide 10 million kyats. Is there anything else that they have promised to do for the villagers?**

They also said that they will install water pipes and provide electricity for the villagers. We do not need it. We prefer to use candles and lamps that our parents' used in their generation. We do not need water and electricity. We will carry the water as we did in the past. We do not want to get it even if they provide it. Even though we have to carry the water by ourselves we have more than enough.

**You said the villages located close to the cliff – what are they?**

C---, A---, Lower part A---, D--- and E--- villages.

**The people who gave the approval vote included D--- and E--- villages?**

They were not included.

**How did they leave them out of the vote for approval [of the mining]?**

I do not know.

**So the villagers did not agree?**

Yes.

**So you said if you need to exchange [sacrifice] your life then you will do it [to prevent the mining]?**



Yes.

**Do you want to say anything in order to prevent them from conducting the mining? If you want to say something you can tell me.**

We do not want them to conduct the mining. Therefore we go to every meeting that they hold. We did not sign our signature to permit them – we signed our signature to not permit them. We never signed our signature to sell the cliff in return for 10 million kyats. Breathing with other peoples' noses [relying on other people] is not good enough. We breathe with our own noses [rely on ourselves]; therefore we want to breathe with our own noses and breathe slowly.

**Do you want to say anything to the above leaders?**

I cannot say more than that.

**So if you cannot say anymore, thank you very much. We came here to find out about the real suffering that is faced by the villagers; therefore we came to conduct an interview with you and also you provided as much information as you could.**

**Source #107**

<b>Log #</b>	14-45-A2-I4
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Naw A---, April 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- village, Maw Lay village tract, Thaton Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Research Area: Thaton Township</b></p> <p><b>Interview Date: April 18<sup>th</sup> 2014</b></p> <p><b>Name: Naw A---</b></p> <p><b>Gender: Female</b></p> <p><b>Age: 40</b></p> <p><b>Village: A--- village</b></p> <p><b>Religion: Christian</b></p> <p><b>Ethnicity: Karen</b></p> <p><b>Family Status: Married</b></p> <p><b>Position: Villager</b></p> <p> <b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw A---.</p>	

**How old are you?**

I am 40 years old.

**Where do you live?**

I live in A--- village.

**Is that your place of birth?**

Yes. I was born here.

**Do you have family?**

Yes I have a house.

**Have you already got married?**

Yes.

**How many children do you have?**

Five children.

**What is the age of your oldest child?**

21 years old.

**What is the age of your youngest child?**

Four years old.

**How many households are there in A--- village?**

[Censored for security] households.

**Including orphans?**

Yes.

**In A--- village what do villagers mostly do for their living?**

They mostly work on the farms and plantations which are located near the Baw Nee riverbank. The people who have rubber plantations tap the rubber trees.

**What do you do for a living?**

I earn a living from farming.

**Do they [villagers] have enough food each year from what they earn from the farm?**

As we are farmers and work on the farms we have enough food but we are not able to share it with our neighbours. In some years we do not have enough food because of flooding.

**How many villagers earn a living from farming?**

A--- [village] villagers?

**Yes?**

Five households.

**Five households are the people who do not have a farm?**

Yes

**So do they have enough food each year?**

Yes, if the paddy is growing well we can share one or two baskets of paddy with our neighbours. In some years the paddies are affected by the flooding so we do not have enough rice and some years we have to buy rice.

**Does anyone work on plantations or rubber plantations?**

Yes, some villagers have small farms and rubber plantations; therefore they all have enough paddies and they also work on their own rubber plantations and farms.

**So many people are working on the rubber plantations?**

Yes, a few villagers can tap the rubber trees and some rubber plantations are only two to three years old so they are not old enough to produce the liquid.

**What do the villagers do to earn income? Are there any ways to earn income?**

No, we only collect the leaves to make thatch shingles and we collect firewood in our house compounds to sell them.

**What about the people who do not have a house compound?**

They work as labour workers and tap the rubber trees for the people. Some people go to work in Bangkok.

**So everything is going well on a day to day basis?**

Yes, for the people who do not go to work in Bangkok they have to buy rice.

**Is there a clinic in your village?**

No, only a midwife and if we get sick we go to the health manager in B--- village. Thaton Township sends a health manager [to look after the patients]. If we get sick we go to call the health manager and bring them to the village.

**You said there is a midwife so does she live in your village?**

Yes.

**Is she hired by the [Myanmar] government?**

Yes.

**So does she get paid?**

No she do not get paid.

**If the midwife cannot treat the patients where do they go for treatment?**

They go to Thaton Town.

**Thaton hospital?**

Yes.

**How many hours does it take to get to Thaton?**

Three hours.

**Really, have you ever been there?**

Yes, I have been there many times.

**Did you check your watch on your way?**

No, when we go to Kyeh Kaw hospital they say they cannot treat the patients so we have to continue onto Thaton hospital and we hired B---'s car to get there. It takes three hours; even if we go with our own car it takes that long because we used to send C---'s wife when she delivered her baby.

**How much does it cost when they go for treatment there?**

It will cost 20,000 kyat.

**Is that only for traveling costs?**

Yes.

**What about treatment costs?**

It depends on the injection [treatment]. If you get a serious sickness it will cost one million kyat for a day or 50,000 kyat but it depends on the sickness. If you do not have money you cannot go for the treatment there. But if you have money you can get treatment there.

**So for the people who get treatment for less than three or four days, do they face any problems?**

Yes, if their parents or relatives are rich, they borrow money from them and if we have gold we lend it to them and we just help each other in this way.

**So regarding healthcare there are no challenges, right?**

No, if you do not have money, you cannot get treatment and only have to suffer [until you] are dead.

**Do they [villagers] help each other regarding treatment?**

Yes, if they [villagers] have money we can borrow money from them and we have to pay them back with interest. However for alcoholic people, they have difficulty repaying the money back so for them it is a bit difficult. They built their houses on other people's house compounds and they drink every day. If villagers face difficulties the women organisation

helps those people [by lending money] for the treatment and after two to three weeks they pay it back but we do not ask them to pay interest. We have to help each other and we do it. At present, D---'s wife got TB. She is now receiving treatment and she has to always take medicine because she is coughing up blood. She did not have the money to travel to get the treatment so we supported her with money.

**So the organisations help her?**

Yes, after she recovered they [her family] went to the river source to catch fish with a throwing net. If they cannot catch fish then they come back to the village and borrow money for 3,000 to 4,000 kyat. Some people lent them 10,000 up to 20,000 kyat. They do not have farm land. They only have two pots and also built their house on the other house compound.

**The women's organisation is from the KNU or the [Myanmar] government?**

The women's organisation is from the KNU and the women's organisation from the [Myanmar] government also help them. The women's organisation from the [Myanmar] government provide medicine for the people as needed. Naw E---also looks after the patients in the village but she was not hired by the [Myanmar] government. For some people, instead of giving them money for the treatment, they catch fish and give them to her.

**Regarding the education, are there any schools in your village?**

What kind of education?

**Regarding education?**

Some children pass Standards 8 and 10 but they are not working with education [department]. Naw F---'s sibling passed Standard 10 and then continued to study at university and they are now first year and second year classes. It is only that sibling [who has continued onto further study]; the other children just passed Standards 3, 7 and 10, and then stopped studying.

**Is there a school in your village?**

No, there is a school in C--- [village].

**C--- [village]?**

Yes, C--- [village] and it is also called Maw Lay School. They wrote on the noticeboard that it is Maw Lay primary school.

**Which organisation came to build that school?**

Who built it?

**Are they from the Burma [Myanmar] government?**

No, they are from another country but they also cooperated with them [the Myanmar government].

**So is it an NGO?**

The people said the name but I do not remember. When they built the school, I was living in the farm so I never went there. The people did not select us as a committee so I am did not normally go to the meetings. Only my father went to the meetings regularly but he has

passed away. My children do not study there either so I didn't go to the meetings when they were held. They [her children] go to school in D--- school so we only go to meetings there.

**How many standards are there in that school?**

Four standards and they also plan to increase it to eight standards.

**So when they pass four standards where do they go to continue their studies?**

In B---.

**How many far is it from here to B---?**

Half an hour.

**On foot?**

Yes.

**So it is not very far?**

Yes, it is not far because it is only three miles from here to B---.

**We interviewed you about the village's situation and the most important thing that we want to know about is the stone mining. We have heard that stone mining will be conducted, so can you tell us about that?**

The villagers did not allow them to conduct the mining. They came here many times and held meetings with villagers. For me, I went to stay in my farm and then came back to the village in January on the day of the full moon.

They came to hold the meeting on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2014 in E--- [village]'s monastery at 7:00am. When I went there I asked the administrator, "where will you set up the company's working place?" He said they will set it up between A--- small village and big village at F---. I told him, "if you set up the place there, we would not be able to farm our farmland as our farms are located there. We will be starved of food. Our parents live here close to the cliff and they have passed down a plot of land to each of us. The place where you will set up the working place is the place where we plant the primary paddy and one farm for one primary paddy place, so do you not think that we will be starved?" He told me that he will find a new place to replace it. Many lands will be impacted so they must prioritise me to replace my lands.

At the end of March 30<sup>th</sup> they held a meeting again at D--- school at 10:00pm. On that night A--- villagers asked them, "why have you held the meeting at night time? Did you come to fight with us?" They replied, "we did not come to fight with you. We just came to gather as many of your villagers." Then we started the meeting.

Thara G---, also known as Thara G--- and who gets a pension, said to A---, who is working with a women's organisation and lives in A--- village, "when you say it will impact our religion and our village, if it [stone mining] happens, I will exchange my land for A---'s [the interviewee's] land."

I told him, "you are rich men, you have cars, house compounds, and land, but for me, my parent's do not plant betel nut or coconut trees in my land therefore I do not have everything like you do." If he wants to exchange [my land], I will talk with him in the meeting but he did

not question me when we were in the meeting.

A--- village is located close to the A--- cliff therefore many villagers have betel nut and coconut trees which have been passed down from our grandparents over 100 years ago and nothing can destroy them. If they are going to conduct the mining it can affect them. As you know, even though Burmese people said it will only impact small areas of land, later [they said] it can be impact more areas of land than they had expected. None of the villagers agreed to this project.

We told them that if you are really going to start [the project] and it is not possible for us to stay in our village, then all of the villagers can move out but we do not need ten million kyat for [compensation for] losing lands which have been passed down from our grandparents. They said it will not impact our village but the land and village have already been affected by the cement machine that was set up by them [the mining company].

The people said in the past the land was full of trees and that it was not very far to go to draw water. It was only far away for seven to eight cubits to draw water from the well but now in order to draw water it takes 10 to 20 cubits to draw it. Also the lands which are at the bottom of the cliff have been impacted. If they are going to start the mining in A---, it also will affect all of the lands. At the bottom of the cliff, the land is full of rubber plantations and farm lands close to villages which are G--- in the eastern part and H--- in the western part of the cliff. We did not permit them to do mining there but we did not win the vote against it as B--- village have more households than us. If we combine D--- and A--- villages there are only [censored for security] households therefore we did not win the vote against them because we have fewer villagers. If you take 10 million kyat and give signatures they already count you on the vote for approval but we do not know whether they will give us compensation for the lands they have destroyed [or taken].

If Burmese people said they will give us [compensation or replacement land] later but we do not know when they will give us [that] as they said they would give us 10 million kyat. We have heard from other people who said that the administrator has said that even if they give 10 million kyat he is not going to give it to any of the villagers and instead he will keep it as [the village] fund. We already knew that the 10 million kyat will not be received by villagers because, as for me, I am already 40 years old, and if they do actually start the mining then we will have to move from our village.

On March 30<sup>th</sup> [2014] G--- told me that my words had affected the religion and village. He also said that if Buddhist people want to break a bundle of firewood we have to break it together. We told him, "we do not want to break a bundle of firewood together with you. You live in B--- village in the same village tract with us but your lands, which have been passed down from your grandparents, will not be affected but for us it [the mining project] will affect everything therefore we do not want to give it to you. If you want to move out from the village tract you can move out but for us we will stay in A--- village."

For the last 70 years B--- and I--- villagers came to study in A--- village. I used to study with them together when I was 12 years old but when I was 15 and 20 years old I--- villagers built their own school in their village. In B--- village there is a high school so if the students pass primary school they continue their studies there and the school was only built there 21 years ago. In my parent's generation all of B--- and I--- villagers came to study here because in the past one of Tatmadaw army camp's was based in C--- and they built a school there.

At the present time there is a good road built to promote business and many people are becoming rich therefore they want to build [a road] down to A--- and D--- villages as they are located very far from the roads and there are fewer households as well. There will be around [censored for security] households in B--- and I--- villages but A--- and D--- villages will only



have [censored for security] households.

Before Pyu Main Tun Company held a vote for approval [of the mining project] they said that they went to Karen State to assess J--- cliff for conducting stone mining. On their way back they met with one of our villagers who was a graduate and who told them that in A--- village there are two or three cliffs so if they wanted to do it [stone mining] and if they are not allowed to do it with all of the cliffs they would at least be allowed to do it with one of them.

Before I met with the company, the administrator and B--- village head came to persuade us that even if they implement the project it will not affect any of our land or village; and they will provide us with compensation for any damage caused. We told them that regardless of whether it does affect us or not, we are not going to sell A--- because our grandparents and all of our generations have lived here. Regardless of whether we are poor or rich, we will not sell it. We make sacrifices and offer rice to A--- cliff every year and many people who live in remote areas or close areas come to worship [at the cliff] before they go on a long journey. It is a natural creature and we want each of our generations to see it and to keep it as it has always been.

They asked us why we believe in spirits and that we cannot believe in it if they are going to implement [the mining project]. We told them that we conjure the spirits every year and that if they are not going to listen to the villagers who live here and start [the mining project] then something bad will happen to you [them].

There is a snake [a form of spirit] between G--- and A--- [villages] and it goes into H--- [village] therefore it challenges the people that if you dare to [do] it then you can do it. A backhoe [agricultural machinery] was hit by a bicycle on H--- Bridge and the bridge broke down. After that the people believed that the snake said that it was shot by a slingshot one time. This happened before the company came here at 9:00pm. They did not believe it but we believed it. B--- and I--- villagers often have car and motorbike accidents and we have heard it happens [more] frequently since they have planned to conduct the mining. A--- villagers do not face this kind of thing [traffic accidents] when they travel around but they still believe in it.

#### **How many villages are located close to A--- cliff?**

B---, I---, K---, C---, E---, L--- are located three miles away from A--- cliff.

#### **No I meant the villages which are located close to A--- cliff?**

The villages which are located close to A--- cliff are M---, lower village of A---, D---, N--- and H---.

#### **Did they invite N--- and G--- villagers to participate in meeting?**

No, they [only] invited the people from F---, O--- villages.

#### **Did they threaten you in any way?**

They told us that we have fewer households than them and so how could we win a vote against them. We told them that whether we win or not does not matter. At present we are able to stay in our village but in the coming days if we are not able to stay and if they ask us to move then we will move. After we told them that, they said it would affect their village and monks. If it affects us then they should not ask us to sell A--- and we do not need 10 million kyat either. The company themselves told us that they will not only provide 10 million [kyat], but they could even provide 10 to 20 million kyat and find a [replacement] place for us to stay

but we did not agree. When they held the meeting three people from other villages came to the meeting but for A--- village there were 47 members of the village who came to the meeting.

**Who threatened you?**

The administrator, B--- [village] leaders who are H---, I---, J---, G---, K---, L--- and M---. Those are the people who are a little bit rich. The ordinary people like us who live in B--- did not agree for the mining project either. They themselves persuaded each other.

**A--- is your birth place so what are the benefits that the villagers get from A--- cliff?**

If we need bamboo poles or firewood we go there to get it. Even when we build a house we go to cut bamboo at the top of cliff. We do not have to go to get it from other villages or mountains. The wild animals also use it as their pasture.

**We came to know whether most of the people who voted against [the mining project] are the people who live close to the cliff; but for the people who voted for [the mining project], do they live very far away from it?**

Yes, five years ago they used come here to cut bamboo, trees and rattan plants when they needed them but now the business situation is getting better and many people plough land with tractors so they do not need rattan anymore. But in the past they used buffalo to plough the farm so they needed it. They will be very happy with 10 million kyat but for us we are not.

If they start the [mining] project we would not be able to live here because of the noise so regardless of whether they ask us to move or not, we would have to move and how could we find a new place [to live] with 10 million kyat? In the town it is very expensive to buy land because one acre of land costs between seven and eight million [kyat] so how could we purchase it? Here we have between 10 and 20 acres of land and they will only give us 10 million [kyat]. So how could we be satisfied with that much money? They said they wold only do stone mining but there is lots of land located around the cliff.

**Is that a promise by the company to provide it?**

The company said they would provide between 10 and 20 million kyat and the administrator also said they will provide 10 million kyat but he will keep it as a village fund.

**What is the name of the administrator?**

N--- who is the [Myanmar] government administrator.

**So D---, A--- and C--- [lower part of A--- village] and other villagers did not agree with the project?**

Yes, they did not agree with the project because their lands will be affected by the project.

**Do you want to say anything to let the senior leaders know about the case and to make them [the company] not conduct the mining project?**

I just want to say that none of the villagers from A---, lower part of A---, D--- and in the eastern part of A--- cliff, which are G---, N--- villages, agree [with the project]. We have held consultations with these villagers and none of us agreed [with project]. In the consultation we came out with one question: if they do not agree with our proposal, what can we do? Some villagers said we will join the army and some of them will sacrifice their lives for the cliff.

Many people [villagers] said many different things. When the company and the administrator came the villagers told them that they would have to kill all of the villagers before they could conduct the mining; after we told them that they might know how we feel. They also said that they will submit the letter [for permission] step by step to the leaders but we do not know when the result will be given.

**We came here to find out about the real suffering that the villagers face therefore we came to conduct an interview with you and you have provided us with as much information as you could so we will let the leaders know about the case. Good afternoon.**

Good afternoon.

#### Source #108

<b>Log #</b>	14-46-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Doolaya Interview: Saw E---, July 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Doolaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Saw E---</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> Male</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 43</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Religion: Christian</p> <p><b>Family Statue:</b> Single</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Farming</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Saw E---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 43 years old.</p> <p><b>What is your religion and ethnicity?</b></p> <p>I am Christian.</p> <p><b>What is your occupation?</b></p> <p>I do farming.</p> <p><b>What is your address?</b></p> <p>B---.</p> <p><b>Do you have family?</b></p>	

No, I don't, I am single.

**Why did Light Infantry (IB) #60 and the Peace group arrest you?**

When I was assigned by my superiors, who are Township Chairman Ko Thet Tal and Company Commander Ko Japan, and I was posted in the area in Pegu Division and Mandalay Division that our mother organization, the Karen National Union (KNU) is not able to access, in the special region. Maybe they just don't like me and they want to catch me alive, on the date of 14<sup>th</sup> when [I had] all the materials that I brought with me but I ran and they were not able to [run] so they fired three shots at me.

**What kind of materials were you bringing?**

The materials that I brought with me are not provided by the organisation, and they are sort of my own materials that I brought along, just to assist myself for any difficulties while I am travelling. The materials that they confiscated from me include one walkie talkie (Icon brand), one CDMA phone, one pistol, one uniforms and one (mountain) backpack and for the money, it was 30,000 kyat and one ID card, one radio and my mother's brand new clothes.

**So the people who arrested you, are they allies of the government military and the peace group?**

That's right.

**When they arrested you how many members of them were included?**

Over 30.

**From both groups?**

Yes, there were 35 people from both groups.

**What was their position (the rank)?**

From the government military group one is in the rank of Company Commander and from the Peace group one is in the rank of Lieutenant (one small star) and the chief is U Hla Thein.

**Is he (Hla Thein) from the Peace group?**

Yes, he is.

**When they came and arrested you and you fled, what kind of trouble have you heard that they made to your family that was left behind after you fled?**

I was in the paddy field at the time when they came to arrest me and our paddy field is located between Shan Lapyi and Ba Han at Mae La Pan Chaung (River), and my mother also was in the field so they threatened my mother; *"Is your son at home or not and we are going to arrest your son"* they acted inhumanely to my mother, such as pushing her and threatening and asking: *"Where is your son, where are the materials and where is your son currently"*. And when they were about to reach the village and there was one group that controlled my mother, while another group raided my house as they suspected that I was at home, but my house was close and I put the materials in the box and locked it, so they unlocked the box when looking for the materials then they got all of the materials. At the time I was threshing the paddy in the paddy field so my youngest brother named Min H--- came

and informed me so I went back to home to check why they were doing this but they were waiting for me on my way back, to arrest me, and I didn't let them arrest me. The guys that I mentioned from IB #60 and U Hla Thein the chief of Peace group, commanded them to arrest me however I wouldn't let them get me so I ran and they fired at me, for three shots. And then they went to my sister-in-law's (Nay K---) house at Y--- and they said to my sister-in-law that your brother-in-law used to rest at your house several times, so we have questions and suspect that his materials will be here, then they started searching the house but they didn't find anything. Although my sister-in-law told them the truth that she did not have any of my belongings, they still did not believe her, and checked the house, moreover they slapped my sister in law's face and U Hla Thein threaten her that *"You and your family, including your house, we will burn down it all"*.

**Who slapped the sister in law of Ko P---?**

Na Aa Pa, Government military, and as I mentioned, the Peace group also was included in the incident and even though they did not commit this by themselves they sort of encouraged it, just the way they let the government military do this.

**As they do this to you and you cannot live in the village peacefully, where do you live currently and what kind of work do you have to do?**

Currently I just live where I am posted by the township chairman, U That Tal, and now I am posted at Shwe N--- on the way to the Thandaunggyi road and sometimes I have to go to other places, so sometimes traveling and sometimes just staying, but I am not able to go back home.

**So do you have any contact with your family?**

Yes, just by letter.

**So as for you are there any barriers or threats by them to get back to your home?**

As for me, I always want to go back to my hometown but they do not admit the mistakes that they did, so if I go back to my home only if I go back with my organisation then I will be able to, however if I go back alone they will disturb me again. That is why I do not dare to go back home alone. So I just have to stay where my superiors post me and if I go back home with my superiors then I will dare to go back. However even if I want to go back to my village at the moment I do not dare to go and even I want to meet with my mother I don't have a chance.

**Thank you so much for telling about the organisation that did inhumane things to you.**

**Source #109**

<b>Log #</b>	14-51-S1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Situation Update: Bilin Township, July 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Date Received: July 10<sup>th</sup> 2014</b>	
<b>Livelihood of the local people</b>	

The villagers from A--- village in B--- area, Ta Paw village tract, Bilin Township told us about their livelihood when we visited them and we asked them about it. They said that they did not dare to live [stay] in the village in the past because there was fighting in the past. Therefore they sold their properties to those who did dare to live [stay] [in the village]. They came back and lived [there] after the fighting decreased and were working on the hill fields and cutting bamboo and selling it. There are no trees or bamboo [left], so they are now working as day labourers and it is not enough for their families. Some people have gone to work in Bangkok and some people borrowed money from other people and pay it back bit by bit because their families do not have enough food. In other areas, we heard that they are working on hill fields and farming. Some people do not want to work on hill fields because the paddy is not good and they do not get as much paddy as they expected. They collect dog fruit and betel nut leaf for their livelihood when the time [harvest season] comes. [However] The dog fruit trees do not produce fruit [anymore] because the climate is not normal and [therefore] they face hardship.

### **Education**

The villagers are also facing problems with education similar to the problems they face with their livelihood. B--- Village in Ta Paw village tract has a school which runs until grade four but there is no [official] teacher. Therefore, the villagers chose people [adults] who have been to school and have some knowledge to teach at the school. There are two teachers and we have seen that they do not want to teach because they do not get paid. The parents of the students who can afford to send their children to school continue to support their children to go to Ta Paw [middle school] after they finished grade four in their village. The children whose parents cannot support them to go to school have to help their parents with their work. The students who go to school also have to look after their parents' cattle and buffalo. They study at night because they have to help their parents. They cannot study very well in the evening because their parents cannot provide them with good [enough] light [to study]. Therefore, the children are not clever [have not received a good education]. So their parents do not want to send them to school. Some parents cannot support their children after they finished middle school and so they have to leave school. They go to work because they said that they do not go to school anymore. Some people got married at a very young age.

### **Healthcare**

The villagers are also facing problems regarding healthcare similar to their livelihood problems and education problems. We have seen that B--- village is not close to the KNU [Karen National Union] hospital or [Myanmar] government clinics. They [villagers] tried to cure their diseases with the elders who use herbal medicines for healing. They go to Ta Paw hospital if the disease is serious. There is a hospital in Ta Paw which was built by the [Myanmar] government but there are not enough medics. More than that, the medics that are assigned by the government do not enjoy living there. Sometimes, the people who are sending patients to the hospital are facing difficulties because there are no medics at the hospital. It is difficult for the pregnant women to give birth [at the hospital]. They try to give birth with the help of the midwives from the village. Women who are having difficulty in giving birth are sent to the lower part [to the city]. The women who are having difficulty in giving birth but have no money have to borrow money from other people and repay it after the delivery and when they are able to work. They could not repay it [the debt] because they do not have their own jobs and this problem continues to the era [generation] of their children. Some people left their wives and children and went to Bangkok for work because they have many debts and they do not know what to do.

### **Relationships**



If we look back to the past, the people in the area had good relationships [within the community] and things looked satisfied [peaceful]. People in the area told us that the relationships among the villagers in the area are decreasing [deteriorating]. The Christian people only meet each other during religious meetings and during communal services. The Buddhist people only have relationships [meetings] during religious festivals and during the initiation of their children. We do not usually see them having relationships [meetings] at other times.

### **The situation of the Burma/Myanmar army [Tatmadaw] and their activities**

According to the villagers in the area, they [the Tatmadaw] asked for thatch from the villagers in C--- village, Noh Ber Baw village tract and they also asked for wood from the saw mill. They did not pay any money for the thatch or the wood. They asked for thatch and wood to modify [rebuild] their camp. A BGF [Border Guard Force] soldier from A--- village, Ta Paw village tract said that he saw the Burmese army [Tatmadaw] living behind A--- village ask the villagers [from A--- village] to make [prepare] wood for them when he went and made [collected] wood for his house [to build his house]. K---, the [position censored for security] of Ta Paw village tract said that he met with two Burmese [Tatmadaw] soldiers after the soldiers came and drank alcohol in the village and went back to their camp. K--- was riding a motorbike. He said that he pressed the horn but the soldiers did not give him [space on] the road. Therefore he stopped the motorbike and went to the soldiers and asked them why they did not move out of the way. Then one of the soldiers took out a hand grenade. Therefore he [K---] took out his submachine gun when the soldier was going to pull out the [grenade] pin and pointed at them and told them that he would shoot them if they did not sit down. Then they sat down. The two soldiers [then] went back to the camp and complained to their commander that a man pointed a submachine gun at them and was going to shoot them. Therefore they went running back to the [military] camp. K--- said that he had to go the Burmese army camp and solve the problem. People in the area say that they [the Tatmadaw] are not causing problems anymore when they come to the village.

### **Source #110**

<b>Log #</b>	14-53-A5-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Naw C---, Received July 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Htantabin Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen	
<b>Family Statue:</b> Married	
<b>Occupation:</b> Farmer	
<b>Position:</b> Villager	
<b>What is your name?</b>	
Naw A---.	
<b>Are you married?</b>	
Yes, I am married.	



**How many children do you have?**

I have three children.

**What is the name of your eldest child?**

Saw B---.

**Where do you live?**

C--- [village].

**Is there any school in C--- village?**

Yes, there is a school.

**Until what grade?**

Until grade eight.

**When did people confiscate your land?**

In 1988.

**How many acres of land do you have?**

I have 19.75 acres of land.

**What crop do you plant on this land?**

I grow paddy.

**What kind of paddy do you grow?**

I grow *Thu Kah Neh* and *Kyaw Hseh* [paddy species].

**Where did people confiscate the land?**

In C--- village, Htaw Ta Htoo [Htantabin] Township, Taw Oo [Toungoo] District.

**Who confiscated the land? The military or business people?**

The military.

**Which military [unit]?**

[Tatmadaw] IB #39.

**Where is IB #39 based?**

They are based in 4 Mile [Town].

**What is their reason for confiscating the land?**

They grow paddy. They [also] lease it to people and they take the leasing fees.

**Who do they lease the land to?**

They lease the land to us and we have to pay them the fees.

**How much do you have to pay them?**

15 baskets (313.5 kg or 702 lb) [of paddy per year].

**Does the land have a title?**

We do not own the land officially. Therefore our land title [over the land] has disappeared.

**Do [the Tatmadaw] not provide land titles to villagers?**

No they do not. They will provide us with military land titles if we are working on the land. They give us a military contract and we have to give them [Tatmadaw] 15 baskets of paddy when the time comes. Then they give us the receipt after we give them the paddy.

**Are there any developments taking place in the village now?**

There are many developments.

**I mean, is there any organisation [that has] come and built a school to support the villagers?**

The villagers do some of them [development projects] on their own and some [development activities] are support by other people [the Myanmar government].

**What do the other people [Myanmar government] support [fund]?**

I do not know. For religious affairs, the villagers built a church on their own. But I do not [know] about the school.

**You mean the government built the school?**

We got some support from the government and the villagers funded some of it on their own. Do you think we could build the school with only the support of the government?

**How many households are there in C--- village?**

I do not know because I do not go around [the village]. Maybe there are [censored for security] households.

**Are there any cases [of abuse that have] happened after the ceasefire?**

No cases [have] occurred.

**What do you think about the ceasefire between the KNU and the [Myanmar] government?**

I do not know.

**Is it good or bad?**

It is good.

**How is it good?**

It is good because we can travel more freely and work more freely. If not it is very difficult to travel.

**Is there any organisation [that has] come into the village?**

I do not [know] anything about that. I just do my work. Now the Tatmadaw confiscated my land and I want it back. I was alone at the farm whenever they came and disturbed our farming. I was alone at the farm the first time they came and disturbed me and I did not know what to say. I let them meet with the old man. Then the old man told me to call the village head.

**Which old man?**

The old man that lives in D--- village [KNLA battalion commander].

**What is his name?**

Bo<sup>331</sup> E---.

**What happened after you called the village head?**

He [Tatmadaw] met with the village head and the old man. Then the old man told him [Tatmadaw] not to come and disturb us again but he still comes to our farm and disturbs us.

**Until now?**

For my farm, I met him [Tatmadaw] with the old man so I talked bravely; therefore he told me that he would not disturb me anymore. He came to me after the harvest and I thought that he was coming to ask me for the rental fees, but I complained to him before he asked me and he told me that he would not ask me [for rental fees]. But he asked my other friends, including people from F--- village.

**Has he threatened you when you are working on your farm?**

He does not come alone. Whenever he comes, he comes with his friends from Ta Pyay village because the people [from that village] want these farms.

**Do you know the name of the soldier?**

I do not know his name but his rank is three stars [Lieutenant General]. People said that these farms were confiscated by *Thara*<sup>332</sup> Tin Oo and *Thara* Myint Oo [of the Tatmadaw].

**Are they soldiers?**

Yes they are. *Thara* Myint Oo still comes. I know him because I went and gave leasing fees to him.

**How many times have you given him [leasing fees]?**

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<sup>331</sup> *Bo* is a Burmese title meaning 'officer'.

<sup>332</sup> *Thara* (male) or *theramu* (female) is a Karen term used for any teacher, pastor, or any person to whom one wishes to show respect.

Every year.

**How many times per year?**

Once per year. In the beginning they asked for 17 baskets (355.3 kg or 783.36 lb) of paddy per acre of land. Later, I went to the battalion to sign the contract and negotiated with them and it became 15 baskets. At first, my younger brothers and sisters were working on the farm and they had to pay 17 baskets. But I negotiated with them [Tatmadaw] when I worked on the farm and it was reduced to 15 baskets.

**Has *Thara Myint Oo* summoned the villagers?**

He does not summon the villagers. He only summoned the villagers who will work in the farms. Then we went to him and he asked who would work on the farm. We told him we would work on it because we do not have any other place to work. He does not summon the other villagers. He just summons the farmers who work on his farm [that he confiscated from the villagers].

**How many villagers work on the land?**

Three farm owners work on the land and there is a villager [who also] works on the land. It is not his land but he works on it and pays the fees to the military. For us, we are working on it because this is our land and we do not want to give it to other people. These lands were passed down to us from our grandparents.

**Where did you go to sign the contract?**

At 4 Mile [Town]. [We sign it] once per year before we start working on the farm.

**Do the villagers agree with the contract?**

They all agree if I say 15 baskets. If I say 13 baskets (271.7 kg or 599.04 lb) everyone would agree with it. If the military [Tatmadaw] says 17 baskets and we do not say anything then the leasing fees would be 17 baskets. We speak [so that we can] give less. There are two kinds of leasing fees. They ask for 15 baskets of paddy for the farms that we are working on and they take eight baskets (167.2 kg 368.64 lb) for the land located by the lake. Actually, they [originally wanted to] take ten baskets (209 kg 460.8 lb) but I argued with them and they reduced it to eight baskets.

**How many people do you go with when you go to sign the contract?**

Many people go there, including Burmese people. At the time they did not come by themselves. They [Burmese people] asked a man to organise [the event]. That man summoned us and we went together.

**What is the name of that person?**

He is Burmese and lives in Ta Pyay village.

**How long have they [the Tatmadaw] been asking for leasing fees?**

They have been asking us for a long time.

**Until now?**

They came and asked me last year but I refused to give them [the tax] because the old man

told me not to be afraid regardless of how [much] they threaten you because the land is yours. Therefore, the villagers from Ta Pyay [village] said that I am a person who is eager to argue. I replied to them that I want [to keep] it because it is my farm. They [Tatmadaw] also want the farm even if it is not theirs. The villagers of Ta Pyay came with the soldier to me and I did not say anything. They asked me to go and sign the contract but I did not go because the land is mine. I told them that I signed the contract in the past but I will not sign it anymore. Then they asked me where my evidence was to speak like this. I told them that I do not have evidence, and [that they could] go to the old man if they wanted to know the situation and solve the problem.

**Have they met with the old man?**

Yes, they met.

**What did they talk about?**

They talked about farms. The old man asked them [about the farms]. They [farmers] came with Ta Pyay villagers when they came to the farm, including one Karen. But they did not bring those people [Ta Pyay's villagers] when they came home. I asked them why they only came with three people. Why did they not bring the Ta Pyay villagers? Then they replied that those people are just working on a few acres of land [therefore they did not bring them]. They do not farm. The farms are ours. They told the old man that they came for their farm case [information]. The old man told them where their land is and when they bought it. People went there [the Tatmadaw camp] already and asked for the farm back. People even held a [land returning ceremony]. *"Do not disturb the farmers after you give back the land,"* The old man [said to the Tatmadaw].

**Do you want to say anything else?**

No.

**Thank you very much.**

Yes, thank you.

**Naw C---, (female), Htantabin Township,  
Toungoo District, (Received in July 2014)**

**Source #111**

<b>Log #</b>	14-54-LGF2
<b>Title</b>	Land Grabbing Form, Hpapun District, July 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>Date received: July 10, 2014</p> <p>Fill out all the information that the villagers report about their land confiscation information in this form. The objective is that we want to report about confiscating the villagers' lands with full evident to Karen National Union, Burma/Myanmar Government, Organizations which active about the lands in Burma/Myanmar, and through the international communities. According to the guidelines, we want our field researchers will have to take any evident as much as they can.</p> <p><b>1. <u>First step- land owner and land user (using land)</u></b></p>	

Land owner	Own the land because of (inheriting, buying, borrowing)	Land been confiscated (acre/other land measurement ways)	What are planted in the land?	Land grant (receipt) or no grant (receipt) (if yes, Pls take a photo of land grant or receipt)
Naw M---	Buying	2 acres	Betel nut tree, Dog fruit tree, tea tree Banana tree, Pineapple Jack fruit tree, Lemon tree, <i>Ta Kweh</i> tree and bushes.	No

## **2. Second step- Confiscating land**

- The exact date of confiscating land -February 1, 2014
- The place of confiscating land (Village, village tract, township, district)  
M--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District
- Land confiscators (armed group, Burma/Myanmar government, business people)  
-Business People

## **3. Third step- development projects.**

- Type of development projects (Eg. Gold mining, constructing dam) –Gold Mining
- Project organizer/ company\_\_Saw Bleh Say +Ko Saing Kyi (Shwegyin)
- Project implementer/ company \_ Saw Bleh Say +Ko Saing Kyi (Shwegyin)
- Starting date \_\_1\_\_/\_2\_\_/\_2014\_\_
- Ending date \_\_31\_\_/\_2\_\_/\_2014\_\_<sup>333</sup>

## **4. Consultation**

- When did the villager hear about land confiscation [exact date], and how did they know about that?

The villagers do not know [were not consulted about] when the gold mining is [being] conducted. After they have entered and conducted [the gold mining], they informed the villagers that they [the villagers] are being asked to relocated. When they came, they also brought their machines. They came and measured [the place on my land] and said to me that it will be about 2 acres of the land [that they are going to take]. Then they asked me to move and build my hut at the upper part of the land a little bit. I do not know [why they asked

<sup>333</sup> KHRG is currently waiting on further information to confirm the accuracy of this end date.

me to move my hut]. I did as they asked me.

- Did any groups come to give information to the villagers? If yes, who went to that meeting?
  - They did not give any information [to the villagers]. They conducted it [the confiscation] as soon as they arrived. I ask the village head but he does not know anything about it. If we want to meet with them, we have to go and meet with them.
- Did the villagers have to sign on any agreement? If yes, please take a photo of the agreement form.

No. We do have the land title yet. We ask the people [to make the land title for us] and the people said that they are going to make it for us. [However], people have already [taken] ours [our land] and it is far [to go] for the signification [to sign the land grant].

### **5. Compensation**

1. Did they get compensation for the lands were confiscated? If yes, how did they compensate? Were the villagers informed to be given compensation?

There is no compensation for the land that was confiscated. There is also no compensation. And they told me 'If you are talkative [complaining], you will not receive any money.' So I dare not talk [complain].

2. Did they give the same amount they promised? How did they villagers do [act] when they didn't get the same amount of compensation? Were the villagers satisfied with the compensation?

The compensation which is given for the land is not equal to amount of money that the land owner expected. The land owner did not do anything. Since the land owner was not given the full amount of money as [when] she sets up [agreed] the price, the land owner is not satisfied. At first I was told that I will be given four million kyat (US \$4,132.23) but I was given only three million, four hundred thousand kyats (US \$3,512.39).

### **6. Village agency/ collective actions**

1. Did they agree or disagree with the development project? Please, explain how did they support this project and why did they support the project?

They do not agree and [do not] support the gold mining project.

2. Are the villager against the project? Please, explain how the villagers are against the project, and why are they against the project?

The villager do not [act] against the project with any way.

3. Did the villagers [act] against the project individually or collectively. (e.g. complaint letters, found committee, demonstration, held the meeting with the project developers, or did the villagers do any other activities?) If yes, please explain clearly in detail. (please report time and place in detail)

-No.

4. How did the villagers try to protect their land? What kinds of ways did they use, please explain about this to us?

The villagers do not know the ways [about] how to protect their own lands.

5. Did the villagers get back their lands because of the villagers' actions or the medias' reports? If yes, please explain the event in detail.

No. [They did not get back their land.]

**Source #112**

**Log #**

14-54-P1



<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Photo Notes: Dwe Lo Township, Received in July 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published
<b>Location</b>	Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p><i>[These photo notes are drawn from a longer document providing details for photographs taken in Hpapun District in March and April of 2014. The other notes were not relevant to land confiscation in Myanmar since December 2012 and have been omitted for brevity.]</i></p> <p><b>Photo #: 0006, 0044</b>  These photos were taken in A--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. It [the land] was destroyed without any compensation. At first, it was promised that it [gold mine] would be [constructed] 45 cubits (~20 m, or 67.5 ft.) [away from the village] but when the gold mine was constructed it reached all the way to the village. Not only the river but also all of the wells [in the village] were destroyed. I took these photos on March 16<sup>th</sup> 2014.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0051, 0056</b>  [These photos are of] Naw B---'s land that was confiscated in A--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. She was given compensation which was not equal to the amount of money that she expected. I took these photos on March 16<sup>th</sup> 2014.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 0057, 0061</b>  [These photos were taken] of the primary school in A--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. Saw Bleh Say, who came to dig for gold, promised that he would repair the school after he had mined the gold. However, he did not keep his promise. He donated a small amount of money [for repairing the school] and the villagers themselves have had to try and rebuild the school. As they do not have enough timber, they have had to cover it with zinc [sheet metal]. I took these photos on March 16<sup>th</sup> 2014.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 3374, 3382</b>  [These photos were taken] in C--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. C--- villager Saw D---'s land was confiscated due to gold mining and he did not get any compensation. I took these photos on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2014.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 3383, 3391</b>  [These photos were taken] in C--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. C--- villager Saw D---'s land was confiscated. I took these photos on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2014.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 3413, 3419</b>  [These photos were taken] in C--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. C--- villager Saw D---'s land was confiscated because of gold mining. I took these photos on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2014.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 3422, 3435</b>  The land of Saw E--- was confiscated in C--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. He was given compensation which was not equal to the amount of money that he expected. I took these photos on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2014.</p> <p><b>Photo #: 3437, 3438</b>  [These photos were taken] in C--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. I met and interviewed the C--- villager Saw D--- about how his land</p>

was confiscated. I took these photos on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2014.

**Photo # 3439, 3441**

[These photos were taken] in C--- village, Ma Lay Ler village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. I met and interviewed Saw E--- about his land that was confiscated. I took these photos on March 18<sup>th</sup> 2014.

**Photo # 0084, 0086**

[These photos were taken] in F--- village, Way Muh village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. [Since] the [Chinese] company came to dig for gold with the ship in the river there has been erosion which has destroyed the land of Saw G---. I met with him and interviewed him. I took these photos on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2014.

**Photo # 0087, 0106-0113, 0118**

[These photos were taken] in F--- village Waw Muh village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District. The Chinese company owner Poe Cho came and dug for gold in Bu Lo River. There has been erosion which destroyed Naw G---'s land. I met and interviewed [her]. I took these photos on April 5<sup>th</sup> 2014

Photo Notes written by a KHRG Researcher,  
Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District, (Received in July 2014)

**Source #113**

Source: HRC

Log #	14-55-LGF1			
Title	Land Grabbing Form, Thaton District, July 2014			
Publishing Information	Previously unpublished			
Location	Bilin Township, Thaton District			
Full Text				
1. <u>First step: land owner and land user (using land)</u>				
Land owner	Own the land because of (inheriting, buying, borrowing)	Land been confiscated (acre/other land measurement ways)	What are planted in the land?	Land gram (receipt) or no gram (receipt) (if yes, Please take a photo of land gram or receipt)
Naw B---	Inheritance	10 acres	Flat field	Had KNU land gram but lost it.
2. <u>Second step: confiscating land</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The exact date of confiscating land: January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014</li><li>• The place of confiscating land (Village, village tract, township, district): L--- village, Ta Paw village tract, Bilin Township, Thaton District.</li><li>• Land confiscators (armed group, Burma/Myanmar government, business people): Business people.</li></ul>				
3. <u>Third step: development projects</u>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Type of development projects (Eg. Gold mining, constructing dam): Infrastructure [Road repairing]</li></ul>				

- Project organizer/ company\_\_ Zwe Nyi Naung Company
- Project implementer/ company: In the process
- Starting date \_\_2\_\_/\_1\_\_/\_2014\_\_
- Ending date: Not complete yet.

#### **4. Consultation**

- When did the villagers hear about land confiscation (exact date), and how did they know about that?
- The villagers are not consulted in advance about the land confiscation. They only knew when the project started and reached their flat field.
- Did any groups come to give information to the villagers? If yes, who went to that meeting?
- No
- Did the villagers have to sign any agreement? If yes, please take a photo of the agreement form.
- No

#### **5. Compensation**

- Did they get compensation for the lands were confiscated? If yes, how did they get compensation? Were the villagers informed about being given compensation?
- No
- Did they give the same amount they promised? How did they villagers do when they didn't get the same amount compensation? Were the villagers satisfied with the compensation?
- \_\_\_\_

#### **6. Villagers' agency/collective actions**

- Did they agree or disagree with the development project? Please, explain how did they support this project and why did they support the project?
- The villagers viewed the road repairing project as a good project. But once the project started, it damaged their lands so, they want to get the compensation that is the worth of the lands that they have lost.
- Did the villager against the project? Please, explain us how the villagers against the project, and why did they against the project?
- No. The villagers did not against. [Did not hold a demonstration].
- Did the villagers act against the project individually or collectively? (e.g. complaint letters, founded a committee, demonstration, held the meeting with the project developers, or the villagers did any other activities?) If yes, please explain clearly in detail. (Please report the time and place in detail)
- No.
- How did the villagers try to protect their land? What kinds of ways did they use, please explain about this to us?
- When we arrived in L--- village, Ta Paw village tract, Bilin Township, Thaton District, we found out that the villagers are having problem to protect their lands as they don't have either KNU land grant or Burma Government land grant. When they are facing the problem, they report it to the village head, village tract leader and the village secretary.
- Did the villagers get back their lands because of the villagers' actions or the media reports? If yes, please explain the event in detail.
- No.

**Source #114**

<b>Log #</b>	14-55-LGF4
<b>Title</b>	Land Grabbing Form, Thaton District, July 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Bilin Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**1. First step: land owner and land user (using land)**

Land owner	Own the land because of (inheriting, buying, borrowing)	Land been confiscated (acre/other land measurement ways)	What are planted in the land?	Land gram (receipt) or no gram (receipt) (if yes, Please take a photo of land gram or receipt)
Naw H---	Inheritance	1 Acre	Flat field	No

**2. Second step: confiscating land**

- The exact date of confiscating land: January 4<sup>th</sup> 2014
- The place of confiscating land (Village, village tract, township, district): L--- village, Ta Paw village tract, Bilin Township, Thaton District.
- Land confiscators (armed group, Burma/Myanmar government, business people): Business people.

**3. Third step: development projects**

- Type of development projects (Eg. Gold mining, constructing dam): Infrastructure [Road repairing]
- Project organiser/company: Zwe Nyi Naung Company
- Project implementer/ company: In the process
- Starting date \_\_\_\_4\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_1\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_2014\_\_\_\_
- Ending date: Not complete yet.

**4. Consultation**

- When did the villager hear about land confiscation (exact date), and how did they know about that?
- The villagers are not consulted in advance about the confiscation. They only realised when the project started as their lands were taken.
- Did any groups come to give information to the villagers? If yes, who went to that meeting?
- No
- Did the villagers have to sign any agreement? If yes, please take a photo of the agreement form.
- No

**5. Compensation**

- Did they get compensation for the lands that were confiscated? If yes, how did they compensate? Were the villagers informed about being given compensation?

- No compensation is given.
- Did they give the same amount they promised? What do the villagers do when they don't get the same amount of compensation? Were the villagers satisfied with the compensation?

- ———

#### 6. Villagers' agency/collective actions

- Did they agree or disagree with the development project? Please, explain how did they support this project and why did they support the project?
- The villagers thought if it is just the road repairing, it is good for them. The villagers did not know that the project would include their lands. Once they found out that their lands were also used for the project, they want to get the compensation for what they have lost.
- Are the villagers against the project? Please, explain how the villagers are against the project, and why are they against the project?
- No. The villagers are not against the project.[Did not hold a demonstration].
- Did the villagers act against the project individually or collectively? (e.g. complaint letters, found committee, demonstration, held the meeting with the project developers, or the villagers did any other activities?) If yes, please explain clearly in detail. (please report us time and place in detail)
- No.
- How did the villagers try to protect their land? What kinds of ways did they use? Please explain about this to us.
- The villagers are having problems to protect their lands as they have neither the KNU land grant nor the Burma government land grant. However, they are trying to report it to the village head, village tract leader and the village secretary.
- Did the villagers get back their lands because of the villagers' actions or the media reports? If yes, please explain the event in detail.
- The villager did not get back her land.

#### Source #115

<b>Log #</b>	14-56-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Naw A---, M--- village, April 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Maw Lay village tract, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I'm 50 years old.</p> <p><b>What is your position in the village?</b></p> <p>I am a secretary of the Women association.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p>	

I am Karen.

**What do you do for a living?**

I do farming.

**Do you have family?**

Yes.

**How many children do you have?**

I have five children.

**How old is the oldest one?**

Twenty two years old.

**What about the youngest one?**

Seven years old.

**In which village do you live?**

I live in T---Village, Htee Thadoh Htah tract.

**Is there any Burmese name of T--- village?**

It called I---.

**Have you ever lived anywhere else before?**

No, I haven't.

**Which tract does T--- village is belong to?**

I don't know.

**Okay, if you don't know but please keep in mind that it is in Htee Thadot Htah tract, Bu Tho Township, Mu T'Raw District. Alright then you live in Htee Thadot Htah tract, T--- village. So how many houses do you have in your village?**

There are around *[censored]* houses.

**Villagers are mostly associating with what religion?**

Most people believe in Buddhism.

**Are there any Christians?**

Yes there is Christianity as well.

**Oh well then, are there many?**

Yes there are.

**What is the major profession that people in the village do?**

Just hill side cultivation and paddy farming.

**Well then, are there any monasteries since there is more Buddhism in the village?**

Yes.

**How many monasteries are there?**

There are around three to four monasteries in the area.

**And how many monks are there?**

There are more monks at Noh Htah Monastery.

**Are there any churches for Christians as well?**

Yes, a small church.

**Is that Catholic or Baptist?**

Baptist.

**There is a Christian church right?**

Yes, just a very small church, before it was very big but when they were asked to flee from the upper part (of the village) then the church collapsed. In the past there were many Christians that lived together with us.

**[Flee] To where from the upper part?**

To Mae Rahmu refugee camp.

**Oh okay, then they rebuilt a very small church now?**

Yes.

**How about now?**

Now not much, just a few they live together with us in the area.

**You've mentioned that there might be around [censored] houses right?**

Yes, there are around over [censored] houses at T---.

**So then are there schools for children to study education?**

Yes, school is very big.

**Is that primary school or middle school or high school?**

The school is only till to four standards.

**How many teachers are there?**



There are three teachers.

**Are they the teachers hired by student's parents or by the provision of the Government of Their Sein?**

By government provision.

**So student's parents do not need to hire?**

No, they don't need to.

**How about teacher's salary?**

No need to pay.

**Are there any other organisations that come and support those students?**

No.

**Just the parents have to put their own effort.**

Of course.

**How much would it cost for each year of a student who attends the school till fourth standard?**

I am not sure about that just the pocket money it always costs, for the teachers we don't need to pay but from K'Mamoh region it would cost just school fees, for name registration, as there are five and six standards.

**How much is that for one student?**

I don't know, even kindergarten it cost three thousand and five hundred kyats.

**Alright, there are monasteries and schools so when people are not feeling well in the village are there any hospitals or clinics for the medication?**

Yes, we have hospital but it costs [money].

**Are there nurses or clinicians at the hospital and are the medicines sufficient?**

No.

**So when you go to get the injection you have to pay?**

Sure.

**How much per one injection?**

One shot on the arm is one thousand kyats and one shot on hip is five hundred kyats and a pair of oral pills is five hundred kyats.

**Oh so each injection and oral medication has a particular fee? Depending on the treatment it will cost more?**

Yes, even oral medication costs much more than an injection.

**So the service is not free of charge?**

Right, never.

**You said that people in the village are doing hillside cultivation and paddy farming, then as a farmer at least how many baskets of rice does she/he carry per year?**

There would be over a hundred baskets of rice per year and some could have carried seventy or eighty or thirty to forty baskets of rice. The insufficient [not enough rice] is more [common] than sufficient [enough] rice production.

**What about the farmer who got a maximum amount of baskets of rice? How much could they carry?**

I suppose there were only a few farmers who got over four hundred baskets of rice.

**Are there anyone who didn't have to carry [harvest and transport their rice] at all?**

Yes there was.

**Then for those who did not get sufficient rice how do they deal with it? What do they do to refill and address the insufficiency problem?**

Just cutting wood and bamboo and sometimes they go and work at Hkoh Hkee and they buy the rice when they come back.

**Are there any other businesses for a career?**

Just women selling vegetables.

**Is there anyone who goes to the forest and does baking charcoal by kiln?**

Yes.

**So in the area, is there anyone who climbs the trees to get the honey?**

No.

**Are there any other cultivation activities like sugarcane?**

Yes there are many sugarcane plantations.

**How much can the sugarcane plantation workers sell the sugarcane for?**

Some can make over a thousand sugarcanes and some can produce seven to eight hundred sugarcanes.

**How much is 1 viss of brow slab-sugar?**

They sell one thousand kyats per 1 viss of brow slab-sugar to us but they sell only four hundred kyats to Burmese.

**Why do they sell four hundred kyats to Burmese?**

I don't know actually they should sell the same price to us.

**Do you mean Burmese military?**

The Burmese from K'Mah Moh area.

**How do they sell it?**

They sell it per hundred viss of brow slab-sugar for wholesale price.

**Yeah that could be. Are there any armed groups who used to arrive in the village?**

From which side?

**From any side. Just any armed groups.**

Sometimes, here there is a group of BGF (Border Guard Force), they stay permanently.

**Okay there is BGF (Border Guard Force), what about other armed groups?**

Just KNU (Karen National Union).

**So KNU also arrived as well?**

Yes.

**What about Thein Sein military, Burmese soldiers, have they arrived?**

No.

**How about DKBA (Democratic Karen Benevolent Army)?**

No.

**Okay as for KNU (Karen National Union) how do they treat or reach to the villagers?  
How is their attitude on the villagers and do they get along with villagers?**

They are fine, just the group of those BGF, they are not good.

**So in T--- village there is a group of BGF?**

Yes, there is.

**Do they stay in the village or they build their own particular army camp?**

Nope, they just stay in those areas and move around.

**In the village?**

No, just nearby the village.

**How many numbers of them do they have?**

I suppose not too much just around ten to twenty.

**Do you know who their leader is?**

Tah Thoo, he is the one who is oppressing.

**Does Tah Thoo have any other name?**

Thar Beh.

**Is he a commander?**

Maybe but not the top one. The top leader will be in the lower part.

**Then this Bo Thar Beh also was called Tah Thoo as well right?**

Yes.

**So how are their attitudes and their social relations with the local people?**

He never has any good point.

**What kind of problem does he make, if you used to experience [any problems] you can tell us?**

He comes and stays in the village and oppresses the villagers and villagers do not dare to go to him but even [if] they afraid they have to go. He always threatens to beat people with a stick.

**Has he came and stayed here for so long?**

This whole season since the raining season and until the summer season he started beating people.

**Who is beating?**

Tah Thoo.

**Whom does he beat?**

He beats his son-in-law, Myat Htun and Kyaw Hla.

**Why does he beat like that?**

I have no idea. People said that he sends a word and when people arrived he didn't ask anything then he started beating them.

**Where is the location that he beats people?**

In Noh T'Kaw.

**Is that distance so far from T---?**

No.

**Is it from the eastern part or western part?**

From eastern part.

**How many miles will it be [in] distance?**

I don't know how many miles.

**Can you describe?**

Yes sure, it is in the plain field, if you look you can see because the house is near.

**Was there any issues? Can you tell me how that started happening?**

I don't know how that started happening, he sent a word to the man and as soon as the house owner arrived and stopped the motorbike then he started beating him and that man's tooth was broken.

**How did he beat him, by stick or by gun?**

By stick. He had prepared three or four sticks. And when he said he was going to hold the meeting he asked each of his subordinates to hold a stick just to beat people.

**So whenever he held the meeting he was always carrying the stick with him?**

Yes, always.

**Is Bo Thar Beh still living in T--- village?**

Yes.

**So two men which are Myat Htun and Kyaw Hlah that he beat, did they have any mistakes?**

I don't think so. He ordered the men because one man is doing logging so he ordered him and the man came then he tried to seize the car or maybe something and for another one he ordered to offer the boat and the man came as well and sometimes that man takes his children to the school so he may have missed the man.

**When did he beat those two men? It was for so long, how many months would it be?**

May be around over a month ago.

**Would it be one month and fifteen days?**

Maybe.

**So if one month and fifteen days ago, it would be two months now?**

It was in February.

**If so it is not a full two months yet.**

No, it was in January.

**So it was in this January of 2014 right?**

Yes in this year after New Year.

**So this year in January 2014 Bo Thar Beh beat two men which are Myat Htun and Kyaw Hlah right?**

Three men. Kyaw Hlah's son-in-law also.

**What is Kyaw Hlah's son-in-law's name?**

I don't know. Yar Zar.

**So Saw Yar Zar, and there were three men that he beat?**

Yes, three men. Because that man goes [around] with his son-in-law, then both of them were beaten.

**And Myat Htun is boat owner?**

Yes, boat owner.

**And then what was the consequence after he beat people?**

I don't know exactly, he just scolding people and said to me that if I'm not included and village head is not included and he is not included then it is not possible to hold the meeting, and he said to the villagers that if you guys cannot find three people are you guys going to die for them? He brought five sticks to beat people and those three people are missing as well, if so for sure villagers including me are going to be beaten by him.

**Is that after he beat those men and he came again and found [brought] the people together with five sticks?**

Yes, five sticks.

**Where was it that?**

It was in T---.

**Had he beaten [you]?**

Nope, because none of us were not present.

**What is the villagers' condition now?**

Just as usual, every day they have to go to work without fail for him.

**What do you mean they have to go to work?**

They have to go and do logging and transporting wood for him.

**Is he doing a lumber mill business?**

Yes.

**So how many people have to go and do his logging business per day?**

In T--- two bullock carts, in P'Nweh K'Lah one to two bullock carts, in T'Hkhit Koh all bullock

carts, in Lay Kit and Thawaw Thaw village also have to transport the wood by bullock carts.

**Please repeat the village name as much as you remember that Bo Thar Beh asks to transport the wood by cart-track. Lets count of that.**

T---, T'Hkit Koh, P'Nweh K'lar, Hkoh Wyne Pu, Weh Gyi, that's all.

**So he asked all those villages which have bullock carts?**

Yes, he asked people without paying compensation. He doesn't even pay any money to portable sawmill workers that he asked to work for him for a whole week.

**Does he ask a lot of portable sawmill workers?**

He asked two portable sawmill workers from T--- Village.

**What about other villages?**

There is no portable sawmill in other villages. There are only three portable sawmills.

**So he asked all three saw mills?**

Yes.

**Does he pay for the fees?**

Nope.

**How long have people been working for him?**

Since after people harvest paddy until now.

**So people have to go and work for him every day?**

Yes, every day.

**Then how many people have to go and work for him in a day?**

Every day one bullock cart and one person have to go and work for him. Every village has to do this.

**So all the villages that you mentioned have to go?**

Yes.

**And they didn't get any wages?**

Yes, they didn't.

**Does he provide food sufficiently for the workers who go and work for him?**

He feeds [them] rice and curry.

**Does he orally and physically torture them?**

Yes he verbally does but not physically torture, nagging so much and his face is always



serious so everybody is afraid of him.

**Do you know Bo Thar Beh's battalion number? For example like #1013 or #1014.**

No.

**Well then who is his commander?**

Bo Maung Chit.

**Then he is a subordinate of Bo Maung Chit?**

Right.

**So he vainly abuses people for his logging business?**

Yes.

**And when he is disapproving he nags or tortures people?**

Yes, when something doesn't make him impressed he yells at people.

**So Bo Maung Chit's subordinate Bo Thar Beh asks a lot of villages?**

Yes.

**How about you? Have you ever gone and worked for him?**

I've never.

**Does he have any conflict with you?**

Yes, he doesn't like the way people appointed a secretary of the Women association. He asks villagers that do you guys know who is in charge of the Women association and villagers replied no then he said that as for me it doesn't make me impressed.

**Are there any other problems?**

No more.

**Is that all that he mentioned?**

He just was observing us like that.

**As for you can you stay securely at your home?**

Yes, he just was watching us like that.

**Is he coming down into your community?**

He didn't come into T--- community. He just comes when he holds the meeting and villagers are waiting for him but he arrived when it was getting dark and each of his men bring the stick and talk to his men that if you guys don't beat villagers I will beat you guys. So as long as he commands to beat people his men have to beat them.

**Is he always beating people like that whenever he holds a meeting?**

Even not a meeting if he found a little mistake he beats.

**Which village does Bo Thar Beh belong to?**

He is [a] Weh Gyi villager, he live in Weh Gyi.

**Are there any other issue that you are suffering?**

No more.

**Well then, I've asked you so many kinds of question anyhow you can still speak out if there is anything you want to add but I didn't ask?**

Nothing more, just he was asking villagers to work for the monastery and actually it was for him. And like transporting bricks also he said that he is doing for the monastery in fact that [was] what villagers did. And also he said that the reason that he seized villagers' wood is for the monastery and school but he sold it out for his own profit. He doesn't allow villagers to do logging.

**The wood that he seized belongs to whom?**

K'Paw Htoo from T--- village.

**When was that?**

Just in this month.

**From which village is he from?**

T--- Village. Pah --- also said that he asked to use my portable sawmill for the logging but I didn't get anything.

**How much wood does he seize?**

I didn't ask that.

**Would it cost too much? How much would cost by money?**

It would cost a lot.

**Would it cost around ten hundred thousand kyats to twenty hundred thousand kyats?**

More than that because he is doing that on the hill side.

**What about K'Paw Htoo's wood? How much it would cost in money?**

May be around ten hundred thousand kyats to twenty hundred thousand kyats.

**What about wood in T---?**

May be the same amount.

**How about Pah T'Hkit?**

He is the one in T--- village.

**How many months ago was it seized?**

It was just in this month in this year.

**What kind of wood was it?**

*Hkaw.*

**After they lumber and saw the wood where do they sell it?**

They sell it by the river bank, people from the other side come and buy it.

**After Bo Thar Beh seized peoples wood what else does he do?**

He just keeps doing logging including other people properties but no one is daring to complain to him.

**So people wood around the farmland, does he cut there wood as well?**

He cuts of all of it.

**And no one dares to complain?**

Right.

**If people complain then what?**

Then he'll beat them again.

**Okay we have talked already a lot so I want to take permission from you that all information that you've told to me, if any other news departments come to me and request to use this information will you be able to allow that? For example [if] we will refer your information to the center of news department or KBBC or any other place will you accept this?**

Yes.

**Well then thank you so much.**

#### Source #116

<b>Log #</b>	14-56-A6-I1
<b>Title</b>	Interview   Ma A---, (female, 36), Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District (January 2014)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Is he your younger brother or elder brother?</b>	
Younger brother.	

### **What is his name?**

C---, people also call him N---. Mostly people know him as C---.

### **I heard that an accident happened to him; could you tell me about it?**

He phoned me on the 16<sup>th</sup> [November, 2013, saying] that he would come to Hpapun [in the family car] and I replied that he could come if he wanted because we would also have *Ka Htain* then [a Buddhist religious festival]. And he said he would come, and that Q---'s [a friend of C---] family would fill [the car with] fuel for him [because they wanted to hitch a ride], so I said come. I got a phone call after a while at 3:00 pm saying that C---'s car was down [had been involved in an accident]. I was shocked and said "*What happened?*" That person told me to come [to the hospital in Hpa-an]. Then I asked, "*Are you sure?*" and that person replied "Yes." Then we went directly with my three siblings including P---. We left for [Hpa-an via] Ka Ma Maw from Hpapun at 3:30pm by motorbike as soon as we heard about the accident. We arrived at Ka Ma Maw at 11:00pm. The motorbike had a flat tyre but we tried to continue because he is our brother. The checkpoint was closed but we told them about the case and continued to go [to the hospital]. We arrived at Hpa-an city at midnight. I asked about our car when we arrived at Ka Ma Maw and people [told] me that the police had taken it. I asked what had happened and they said they did not know. And I asked what had happened with the car and they said the steering wheel was broken and that it had hit the base of a tree. And I asked them whether the car had turned over or not and they said it had not turned over. Q--- was hurt because he had been sitting in the front and his wife's cheek was wounded and her calf was swollen a little bit, and her chest was hurt. Q---'s arm and chest were injured. And I asked him [Q---] how he was and he said nothing had happened [there was no problem]. Then we came back. They had to stay at the hospital for two days.

### **Which hospital?**

Hpa-an General Hospital. I do not know the doctor. I met with the doctor before I came back [to Hpapun] and he said that nothing had happened [everything was ok] and I could go back happily. I said that we wanted to satisfy the victims and wanted to help them, but he told us to go back. Then we came back to Ka Ma Maw and the police at Ka Ma Maw police station called the car owner [me] and Q--- and his wife and told us to buy a stamp [official document] to sign [to show that] that the case was settled. I did not understand what settling and removing [the case] was. We thought it would be finished after we signed it. Then we went and bought the stamp and copied it. Then C--- signed it and our two sisters acted as guarantors for him, then the family of Q--- signed it. Then we thought that everything was finished and we forgot about it. Later, they [the police in Hpapun town] asked us why we had not submitted the case [to court, and we said that] we had already settled the case. Police officer Hlah Min Thaung came and told us that it was good news for me because the court official had said that they had removed article eight<sup>334</sup> [from the list of charges against C---]. Then I replied that we were happy. They [said that they had] removed article eight because it was not a case [involving a death] and it was just a case of carelessness, so the court would just fine him and then the case would be finished. Then I went back [to Hpapun town] in December. Then they told me that they needed a doctor's report on [the accident involving] C---, so I went to Hpa-an city and got the doctor's report by myself. A person I know [went with me and] got it for me from the hospital and then gave it to the police camp commander. He said that [the doctor's report only mentioned three injured] people [but he thought that four people had been injured]. Actually, [although four people had been travelling in the car], only three people [were injured in the accident and] attended the hospital, C---, Q--- and K--- [Q---'s wife]. [The daughter of K---] did not have to attend the hospital because [she was not

<sup>334</sup> This may refer to article eight of the Burma Motor Vehicles Act, [India Act VIII, 1914], which reads: "The driver of a motor vehicle shall produce his license upon demand by any police officer."

injured, and the three people who were injured] only sustained small injuries. At that time they [the police] said they had removed article eight. Hlah Min Thaung and deputy police officer Kyaw Kyaw Tun asked for money on the 25<sup>th</sup>, when they took C--- home, the day C--- left the hospital and came back to Ka Ma Maw and arrived back home [in Hpapun].

**On the 25<sup>th</sup> of which month and year?**

In November 2013.

**So they arrived back home on the 25<sup>th</sup>?**

Yes, they arrived back home at night while I was preparing to take a bath. He [Hlah Min Thaung] told me to give 500,000 Kyat (US \$50.45)<sup>335</sup> to the investigator of the Ka Ma Maw [police], 500,000 kyat to the sub-law officer [a local court official], and 500,000 kyat to the camp commander of Ka Ma Maw police station [and 500,000 kyat to him] and then the case would be finished if I gave 2,000,000 (US \$2,018.16) [in total]. He said that he could foresee that [C---] would be put in prison if I did not give it.

**Hlah Min Thaung said that?**

Yes, Hlah Min Thaung said that and deputy police officer Kyaw Kyaw Tun was sitting beside him.

**One is one star and the other one is two stars [referring to different ranks]?**

Yes, one is one star and the other one is two stars. They came up to the house. Then I told them that we had already spent our money on medicine but we would have liked to do it [pay them] if we had had money. This was one time. He came and asked again the next day and said that he foresaw an omen that our car would be confiscated and people would be put in prison because we did not pay the 2,000,000 kyat, but we replied that we could not afford it and we did not have 2,000,000 kyat.

**Who said that the car would be confiscated and people would be put in prison?**

The police officer Hla Min Thaung said that.

**He said it in this house?**

Yes, he came and said it in this house and at the shop. He said it here the first time and the second time was at the shop. My elder sister was also there.

**Have you given them the 2,000,000 kyat?**

I haven't because I don't have the money.

**What happened then?**

We just live like this. They said that they did not include [a charge under] article eight. Therefore I went to Ka Ma Maw police station by myself and asked the camp commander Win Myint San to give my car back because they said that they would not include [a charge under] article eight anymore. He told me to ask permission from a judge. Then I replied to him that the judge had told me to come and get my car back. Then he told me to go back and bring two people to act as guarantors for me and [to bring] my household residence

<sup>335</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 2014 official market rate of 991 kyat to the US \$1.

registration certificate with me to get the car back. I do not remember the date. Then I took my car back in December and kept it at the house of U O---, a person that I know in Ka Ma Maung. I got the car back with [the help of] the two guarantors. The [police said that] the people who [had acted as] guarantors for me would have to pay [the [police] 3,000,000 kyat (US \$3,027.25) if the car was stolen or damaged, and that I would have to pay 3,500,000 kyat (US \$3,531.79) [if the car was stolen or damaged] as the car is worth 7,500,000 kyat (US \$7,063.57). Then we took my car back. Then we forgot about it, but he [Hlah Min Thaug] came to our house very often and told C--- that he could foresee an omen that he would be put in prison. He said it very often. It's because we didn't give them 2,000,000 kyat right? We can read his mind. He comes to us very often and says this and C--- doesn't feel good. Therefore we told C--- to go and live in the plantation. Q--- was fine and he did not complain [about] anything. Someone could bring the case to court if Q--- wanted to, but it is not like that. [After I got the car back, the police started to borrow it without asking]. We did not know [were not told] when they [the police] took [borrowed] my car. I am the car owner and I am the one who took the car back. They need my permission to take the car. They can only take it if I sign for it, right? They need to ask permission from the owner. The first thing is they did not ask permission from the owner. The second thing is they [the two people who acted as guarantors for the car] were not told about it [either]. It is not a car from their camp [police camp], this is a car from outside their camp. They need the signature of the car owner and the two guarantors to take this car. They did not inform the owner and took the car. Can you imagine it? I am really discontented about this case.

**What articles did they charge C--- with?**

At first they said articles 337 and 338.<sup>336</sup> It is possible to act as a guarantor for [somebody who has violated] those articles, but we cannot act as a guarantor for [somebody who has violated] article eight. It is having a car without license. They [asked] whether C--- had a driver's license and what [kind of] certificate he had [for the car]. We said that it was a car [used to travel to] social and religious [functions] because the roads and communications are not good, and this car is allowed to travel from Hpapun via Ka Ma Maung to Hpa-an. We have a certificate from a minister.

**Do you know the name of the minister?**

I do not know. But we have it on the certificate.

**No problem. Is it a permission letter from a minister?**

Yes. C--- is a veteran. Therefore he also has a certificate from the chairman of the veterans' association. And also he has a recommendation letter from a [Tatmadaw] strategy [operations] commander. He has everything. And they [the police] took those certificates but they did not show anything [to their superiors]. At first, they summoned C--- to come to the court with the two people who had acted as guarantors for him with his household registration certificate to pay a fine, and [said that] then the case would be finished. It did not happen. Then they summoned him again. I and the two people who acted as guarantors for him in the case also went with him. Then they arrested C--- and put handcuffs on him at 3:00 pm and then took him to their camp. They said that C--- had made a mistake and accused him of violating article eight.

**When did they accuse him of [violating] article eight?**

<sup>336</sup> This may refer to articles 337 and 338 of the Penal Code, which cover injuries caused by rash or negligent acts that endanger human life or the personal safety of others.

It was on April 14<sup>th</sup> 2014. They came and arrested C--- on that day.

**Until now? [Is C--- still in prison now]?**

Yes.

**Has the court [delivered] a sentence in this case?**

The court [will deliver] a sentence in this case on Friday, but we do not know what will happen.

**Do you have anything else to say?**

How do I say this? What they are doing is not right. It is not [being done] according to the rules. They can do it if is permitted by the rules. [They always take] the car from our house whenever they need, like for their [police] camp and social uses. They can accuse [us] if the car hits a person and he dies or if the car crashes into a motorbike. This accident only happened because the car [steering wheel] was damaged. And they can fine us. We pay it. The first time they can warn us. We have a first warning, second warning and third warning. Even the teacher gives a warning. They summon the student's parents and warn them if the student has made a mistake. They will let the student sing [say that they will not do it again] the first time. Then they will summon the student's parents and warn them about their children the second time. Then they will kick the student out the third time. But they [the police] are educated; what they are doing? I am not very educated. They are oppressing the local people a lot, so we cannot endure it. Now all our siblings are upset and our business is also ruined. We have to send food [to our brother]. We do not know how our younger brother is. He did not know anything. In another case, U Thaw Ko's car crashed into some other people's motorbike, then the car owner gave them [the police] money and they are not saying [anything] about the case.

**How much money did they give them?**

We do not how much they gave them [the police]. But we heard that they gave money. That really was a [serious] accident [involving the collision of two vehicles].

**Where did C---'s car accident happen?**

At Wa Du.

**Is Wa Du located between Hpapun and Ka Ma Maung?**

Yes.

**How far is it from Hpapun?**

They said that it happened at pole 48 [a road distance marker 48 miles from Hpapun].

**Who was in the car when the accident happened?**

A family [Q--- and his wife].

**Do you have anything else to say?**

How to say, the U Thaw Ko case was a real [serious] car accident, but they did not take any action. However they arrested C---. Therefore we want them to take action against other people like [they did with] C---. Actually, C---'s case was not a [serious] car accident, but they



say that hitting the base of a tree is a car accident or hitting a light post is a car accident. Isn't it an accident when a car crashes into a motorbike? What are they doing? That accident happened between Hpapun and Ma Htaw and people were seriously injured. The people who were injured are still suffering the pain. Therefore it is not fair. We do not have a lot of money. They did not take action against the people who bribed them. They also put a man in prison; his car turned over when he was driving to Hpapun. No one was injured. He drove the car himself. It happened a long time ago, but they just put him in prison this month. I want to say that what they are doing is not right.

**Thank you very much for the information. I have asked you many questions and you have given me a lot of information. The other thing is I want to ask you is, what is your name?**

Ma A---.

**How old are you?**

36 years old.

**What is your ethnicity?**

Pa'O.

**What is your religion?**

Buddhist.

**Are you married?**

No.

**What is your occupation?**

I am doing trading like selling textiles and I have a restaurant.

**Are you a member of KWO [Karen Women Organization] or KYO [Karen Youth Organization] or something like that?**

No.

**Are you a member of a political party?**

No.

**Where do you live?**

I live in T--, Hpapun Town.

**The last question I want to ask you is, can we use the information that you have given me in the media?**

Yes, you can.

**Source #117**

**Log #**

14-62-S1

<b>Title</b>	Dooطلا Situation Update: March to May 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Dooطلا District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Date Receive: September 1<sup>st</sup> 2014</b></p> <p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>This Situation update is from March 16<sup>th</sup> to May 5<sup>th</sup> 2014. The main topics are the location of the Tatmadaw, the villagers' situation, education, health, and livelihoods. This information is about the situation from my areas.</p> <p><b>1. The location of the Tatmadaw [Military Operations Command] #19</b></p> <p>Tatmadaw IB [Infantry Battalion] #299, which is under Battalion [Military Operations Command] #19, is located in A--- [village] and B--- [village]. IB #61 is located on the top of Ka Lee Hkee Mountain, C--- [village] and D--- [village]. IB #283 is located in Seikgyi Town and IB #32 is located in Three Pagoda Town, which is on the borderline [Thai/Myanmar border]. These are the locations of the Tatmadaw in our areas.</p> <p><b>2. Villagers' situation</b></p> <p>The Tatmadaw are located near the villages so the villagers do not feel free [safe]. They also cannot live freely because some of the villagers have [female] children and they do not feel safe [able] to ask their children to go to work. They also cannot leave their children at home since their houses are close to the military bases. The villagers feel that they cannot live freely; [they do not feel free] to leave their children at home and go to work in the farms.</p> <p><b>3. Education</b></p> <p>Even though the children and youths are staying in the jungle, they have continued their education because the teachers are trying their best as they have the ability to share their education with the children. Regarding the education part, it is very good.</p> <p><b>4. Health</b></p> <p>Some villagers live in the jungle. [There are some health clinics in the village]. As some villages do not have a clinic, some of the villagers get malaria and diarrhoea. Some of them have difficulty giving birth to their babies but they look after each other. They use traditional [herbal] medicines from the forest as they understand [have knowledge of this]. They try to cure each other in the way that they know and it does not cause any problems for them and they do not face too many health problems.</p> <p><b>5. Livelihood</b></p> <p>The villagers who live in these areas have different types of vocations. Some of the villagers work on the hill farms and paddy fields. Some of them work on [cutting down] the trees and bamboo and some of them work on the plantations as they normally work [for their traditional livelihoods], for agriculture, hill field farming and logging. These [vocations] are often working for them [earning enough money for their livelihoods]. However regarding the [Myanmar] government's military activity, we [I] do not yet know how it will happen.</p> <p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	

As I'm a [KHRG community member] researcher, I think that it will be better if there is no Tatmadaw in our areas. If we look at our Karen people, they are living in many different places. In my opinion, they can look after each other. [If there is no Tatmadaw in our areas] The villagers in our community would be able to travel freely for their livelihoods. If there is no torture and suffering, it [the situation for villagers] would gradually get better. The leaders and civilians can make healthcare and education improve, and the livelihoods of villagers would also improve.

**Source #118**

<b>Log #</b>	14-63-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Interview: Saw A---, May 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in December 2014 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/05/14-63-a3-i1/hpa-an-interview-saw-may-2014">http://khrq.org/2015/05/14-63-a3-i1/hpa-an-interview-saw-may-2014</a>
<b>Location</b>	Nabu Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen  <b>Religion:</b> Buddhist  <b>Marital Status:</b> Single  <b>Occupation:</b> Medic  <b>Position:</b> Villager</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b>  Saw A---.</p> <p><b>Do you have any other names?</b>  No.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b>  36.</p> <p><b>Are you married?</b>  I am single.</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b>  Buddhist.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b>  I live in C--- village, Nabu Township.</p> <p><b>What is your job?</b>  I am working with BPHWT [Back Pack Health Worker Team] as a health worker.</p> <p><b>How long have you been working with BPHWT?</b>  Four years.</p> <p><b>Are there any problems that the villagers in C--- village, Nabu Township face?</b>  I think there are many difficulties and it [the list of difficulties] would never end if we counted them [all]. But regarding healthcare, how to say, our place [village] is not very far from a town, but the Burmese government cannot provide healthcare to the rural people. We have to stand on our own [support ourselves]. Some people come to us [BPHWT] when they are sick and some go to other places. The biggest problem is that it is very expensive to go to a</p>	

hospital. But the cost for women and children is not as expensive like before, because [now] there are some donations for them [from non-governmental organisations (NGOs)]. Sometimes we send the patients to Mae Tao clinic [in Mae Sot, Thailand] and we [BPHWT] treat the patients who are not [too] serious by ourselves. The other problem is that we have seen that many young people in our area are using drugs. Therefore, the parents are upset because of it. People in this area are doing farming, selling dog fruit<sup>337</sup> and mining coal [for their livelihoods]. But the situation today is not like before. The paddy is not [growing as much] like before and some people go to Bangkok [now to find work]. The other thing is education. C--- village, Z--- village, Y--- village, X--- village and G--- village are located in H-- - village tract and there are three schools. C--- school and X--- school are [Burma/Myanmar] government schools. G--- school is a Karen school [supported by] KED [Karen Education Department]. It was established even before I was born and it has been using the Karen curriculum and it does not take [financial] support from the Burma government. Therefore, the [Burma/Myanmar] government said that the school is a thief [secretive] school and an illegal school. They [G--- school] were pressured by the [Burma/Myanmar] government [to become a Burma/Myanmar government school by saying] where would the students continue their studies after they finished grade four if they do not join the government school. Regarding healthcare we can say that malaria is decreasing. But as you [the interviewer] know, motorbike accidents are happening a lot.

**Is there a hospital in C--- village?**

[There is] no hospital, but we have one clinic supported by the BPHWT.

**Is there a Burma government clinic [in C--- village]?**

The Burma government has one midwife clinic. They call it a rural healthcare centre, but mostly we see that the door is locked [the clinic is closed]. We can also see that many NGOs are coming in.

**How do they [NGOs] come in? With the help of the [Burma/Myanmar] government or the Karen government?**

They got permission from the Burma government. But the [Burma/Myanmar] healthcare minister [of Kayin State] does not have a mandate. The superior [chief healthcare minister] from Naypyidaw<sup>338</sup> gives them instruction. For example, in May and June 2013, people [villagers] had to take elephantiasis medicine and big problems happened.<sup>339</sup> They [Burma/Myanmar government medical team] informed us and told us to participate with them when they gave out the medicine. They said that they did tests in Mandalay Division and Sagaing Division and they found the results positive [for elephantiasis], therefore people had to take the medicine. And we agreed with this. Our BPHWT also tested people in Brigade #3 [Nyaunglebin District], Brigade #1 [Thaton District] and Brigade #5 [Hpapun District] and we found positive results and we treated the villagers with medicines for the last five years. Some people did not take it, but that is their right. The [elephantiasis] medicine has side effects. Therefore, we asked them why did they not do the test [in Kayin state] before they distributed the medicine. They [Burma/Myanmar government] said it cost a lot of money to do the test. I told them that there are over [censored for security] villagers in C--- village and

<sup>337</sup> Dog fruit, also known as jengkol, is a bean containing sulphur and a mildly toxic amino acid. It is native to Southeast Asia and is commonly eaten with rice and fish paste.

<sup>338</sup> Naypyidaw is the capital city of Burma/Myanmar. In 2005 the military regime moved the capital from Yangon to a greenfield at its present location, 320 kilometers (200 miles) north of the city. See “[Nay Pyi Taw now less of a ghost town](#),” *Bangkok Post*, December 11<sup>th</sup> 2013.

<sup>339</sup> KHRG has received numerous reports concerning the distribution of elephantiasis medicine to villagers throughout Kayin state without informing villagers of potential side effects. See “[Hpa-an Interview: Saw U---, December 2013](#),” KHRG, October 2014; “[Dooplaya Situation Update: Kyonedoe Township, September to December 2013](#),” KHRG, September 2014 and “[Field Report: Thaton District, September 2012 to December 2013](#),” KHRG, December 2014. See also “[Burma Govt’s Vaccination Campaigns Face Criticism](#),” *The Irrawaddy*, September 2013.

if you found one positive [result for elephantiasis] then we will take the medicine. The first thing is that they did not do the test [in Kayin state]. The second thing is that they did not provide health education about this disease and the medicine. We [BPHWT] would help them if they wanted to do health education but they did not do it. The most important thing is the third thing. They did not negotiate with the relevant organisations like BPHWT. More than that, they did not inform the KDHW [Karen Department of Health and Welfare] about their activity. Therefore, we did not participate in this activity because the activity did not follow the three rules. I went and met with the secretary and chairman of Nabu Township, as well as the chief of the health department of Nabu Township and explained to them about the activity after I heard about it. Then they wrote a letter to the villagers and met with villagers. They also sent a letter to the health department of Hpa-an [District]. People told me that that letter reached Naypyidaw. So the activity was suspended. It would be like forcing the villagers to take the medicine and we said we are not cows and it did not happen.

**So, treating elephantiasis medicine did not happen in [some villages] in Nabu Township?**

Yes, not every village in Nabu Township.

**How many villages took the medicine?**

We do not know the exact number. They treated five villages in our village tract, but no villagers from C--- took the medicine. Some villagers from the other four villages took it.

**What happened to the villagers who took the medicine?**

They did not suffer anything like dying, but they suffered from dizziness and some people vomited.

**What is the name of the group that provided the medicine?**

It was conducted by the health department of Karen [Kayin] State from the [Burma/Myanmar] government side. They work with the village heads and provided the medicine. We heard they got the medicine from the French<sup>340</sup> and we accepted that the medicine was good, but we did not accept it [treatment] because they did not follow our health policy.

**When did they stop treating [villagers with] the medicine?**

In June [2014], we heard about this case on the VOA [Voice of America] and RFA [Radio Free Asia]. People also said that the chief of the [Burma/Myanmar government] health department of Karen [Kayin] State, Doctor Win Naing, admitted that they were wrong because they did not follow the [proper] procedure.<sup>341</sup> Actually they underestimated us. They thought that they can make our Karen to be whatever they want, but their plan was not successful. We do not know if it was a success in the city or not, but it was not successful in the rural [areas].

**Are there any more problems regarding healthcare?**

The other problem is the amount of medicine that we receive is decreasing because our donors are reducing the support [they provide], but we are trying our best with what we have.

**What about drugs?**

Karen armed groups had a meeting about drugs at Htoh Gkaw Ko [Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army-Peace Council (KNU-KNLA-PC)<sup>342</sup> headquarters] in

<sup>340</sup> KHRG was unable to verify what was meant by ‘the French’, whether this was an organisation working in Burma/Myanmar, or aid delivered through the French government.

<sup>341</sup> KHRG was unable to confirm whether a Doctor Win Naing was either employed as the chief of the Burma/Myanmar government health department of Kayin State, or that he admitted to improper procedures.

<sup>342</sup> The KNU/KNLA Peace Council (also called the Karen Peace Council or KPC), is an armed group based in Htoh Gkaw Ko, Hpa-an District, which split from the Karen National Union (KNU) in 2007 and subsequently

the last two or three months.<sup>343</sup> I could not go to the meeting because I was away. After that we have seen that people [armed groups] are starting to take action. I have seen that they arrested over ten people in Brigade #7 [Hpa-an District] and it included women. Because of that news, drugs are not traded openly in our village like [they were] before. There are people [in Hpa-an District] who sell drugs, and there are people who distribute drugs, and there are the drug users. In the past, people [would just] drink beer during the festivals or ceremonies, but [now] people ask for one horse [one methamphetamine pill] when there is a ceremony. Particularly, most of the people who use drugs are young people. I asked them why they use drugs and they do not have an answer. They are using it for fun. I think an eighth to a tenth of the young people use drugs. Some of them might be addicted to drugs and some of them might not. You know, a tractor is very heavy and it is very tiresome to plough [fields] using it, but some people can plough the whole day by taking *yaba*.<sup>344</sup>

**When did people start to use *yaba*?**

We do not know exactly when it started. People used it a lot in 2008, 2009 and 2010, but the situation is becoming better in 2014. If I am not wrong, almost all the shops between Aw Poh Dam and Kawkareik [Town] sell *yaba*. But we do not know where the drug comes from. Some people said even the [Burma/Myanmar government] police from Kawkareik [Town] come and buy drugs. The Burma government knows about it but they ignore it. The villagers do not know how to solve this problem because they do not have any authority. The villagers dare not say anything because it [the drug problem] is related to the armed groups which split from the KNU [Karen National Union]. The villagers say that they have weapons. People released posters in the villages in the past two or three months. So there are some groups [of villagers] in the village who have to monitor who uses the drug and have to report about it and those who use and sell drugs will be punished.

**You said that the people who produce the drugs are the armed groups that split from the KNU? Which groups?**

I don't know exactly which group it is, but many people say that it comes from those armed groups that split from KNU, for example DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army]<sup>345</sup> and BGF [Border Guard Force].<sup>346</sup>

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refused to comply with orders from the then-SPDC government to transform its forces into the Tatmadaw Border Guard. See: "[KPC to be outlawed if it rejects BGF](#)," *Burma News International*, August 30<sup>th</sup> 2010.

<sup>343</sup> KHRG has received reports regarding drug awareness workshops by armed groups in Hpa-an District. See "[Hpa-an Situation Update: Hlaingbwe, Nabu, Paingkyon and Hti Lon townships, May to July 2014](#)," KHRG, November 2014.

<sup>344</sup> *Yaba*, which means "crazy medicine" in Thai, is a tablet form of methamphetamine. First developed in East Asia during World War II to enhance soldiers' performance, methamphetamine has become increasingly popular in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia Vietnam, and in Burma/Myanmar where it is typically manufactured. See, "[Yaba, the 'crazy medicine of East Asia'](#)," UNODC, May 2008 and "[Chapter: Drug production, use and the social impacts in southeast Myanmar since the January 2012 ceasefire](#)," KHRG, June 2014.

<sup>345</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma/Myanmar government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma/Myanmar at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "[Inside the DKBA](#)," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.

<sup>346</sup> 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 Burmese 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](#)"



**You mean those who are selling [drugs] have a relationship with the armed groups?**

Even though we do not see it with our own eyes, we are a 100 percent sure that they produce it because the drugs which come into our village are from that side [BGF and DKBA controlled areas]. Some people say that an argument happened between the drug producers because of the different price of drugs. One group said to the other group that they sell the drugs for 2,500 kyat (US \$1.94)<sup>347</sup> [per methamphetamine pill] and the other group sells it for 3,000 kyat (US \$2.91). This is really true. So the situation is becoming better after people started to take action. I heard from one of the top [KNU] leaders that they will take action in this area too. I think it is not easy to take action because we do not have a prison. Who will feed them? Can they do rehabilitation? You must have enough in the budget to do it. How long will we keep the user in prison and how will we punish them? I think we do not have this kind of plan. Therefore, this problem solving is just a temporary [solution]. The thing that we do from the healthcare side is providing health education and telling the villagers what consequences they will have if they use drugs. That is all we can do. We [BPHWT] do not have the authority to take action.

**Are there any consequences because of using drugs in Nabu Township?**

There are two or three cases in my village that people [villagers] get into other people's houses and sleep with other people<sup>348</sup> and villagers were saying that those who got into people's houses at night are the people who use drugs. The village head had to solve the problem. The other thing is that it affects their health. For example, hypertension and psychological problems can happen to them. The third thing is women are grumbling and saying they cannot control their children anymore. The other thing is having debt. Some people have 1,000,000 kyat (US \$970.78) of debt. The consequences of using drugs are social, economic and healthcare problems.

**Do you want to say anything else regarding drug cases?**

I do not have anything else to say. We cannot solve the problem. Only the leaders of the armed groups can set up the rules and prohibit people from using drugs. Some people still use them even though people set up the rules. If anything happens, we can help them from our healthcare side [BPHWT]. But it is not good in the long term. It really affects our development. The young people do not have interest in the other things [education, etc.] anymore. We have very few men in our healthcare services. Most of the people we have are women. It is like people stole and destroyed our future.

**What about villagers' livelihoods?**

Some villagers are doing farming, mining coal and [working on] rubber [plantations]. Some people are doing both farming and mining coal. Some people are doing plantation [work] and some people are doing fishing. But the main job is farming.

**Do the villagers work as day labour in other places?**

Most of the villagers go to Bangkok in Thailand. I do not know whether people go and work in Burma or not. You will not see many young men and women in the village. In some houses you will only see children and grandparents when you go and visit them. They say their parents go to Bangkok when you ask them where their parents are. Some people who are educated work as teachers and some people work for the government. Some people work with NGOs like Save the Children.

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*Democratic Voice of Burma*, August 2010, and, "[Exploitation and recruitment under the DKBA in Pa'an District](#)," KHRG, June 2009.

<sup>347</sup> All conversion estimates for the Kyat in this report are based on the January 15, 2015 official market rate of 1029.87 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>348</sup> In this instance, the interviewee is referring to rape. Culturally, this can be a difficult topic to discuss, and is often referred to through euphemisms.



**When did the villagers start to go and work in Bangkok?**

A long time ago, I cannot remember when. People went to Bangkok illegally in the past. Today people apply for passports and go to Bangkok.

**Have you seen any land confiscation in Nabu Township?**

Tatmadaw Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)<sup>349</sup> #548 and LIB #549 are based in Nabu Township. I cannot remember the name of the battalion commander. Now he is retired. There is a *t'la aw*<sup>350</sup> forest in Nabu Township and villagers keep it for firewood. It belongs to no one. The other thing is they collect the leaves for roofing. But almost the whole forest has become rubber plantations today. A major [from LIB #548 or #549] sold that land. There are over 300 acres of land. I cannot remember how many acres of land. Over 30 people bought the land from him. Some people bought two or three acres of the land from him and some people bought 40 acres to 50 acres. It was 50,000 kyat (US \$48.61) for one acre. The major got a lot of money. The major divided the forest into plots and sold it. He said that he will make a land title for those who buy the land, but he disappeared when he went back [home]. It [land confiscation] happened in 2007 or 2008.

**Who bought the land?**

Karen villagers [bought the land]. The other thing is that Tatmadaw LIB #548 and LIB #549 confiscated villagers' land around T'Nay Hsah village, but I do not know how many acres. We were walking across the fields and we saw that the paddy fields there were very good and people told me that the fields belong to the Tatmadaw. They said that those fields were the fields of Karen villagers, but the Tatmadaw confiscated it from the villagers. They have not returned the fields to the villagers. I think the villagers submitted this case to the government. They [the Tatmadaw] also extended their camp and grew rubber trees.

**When did they [Tatmadaw] come to that area?**

[They came a] long time ago, even before we were born. In the past many *Kaw La Thu*<sup>351</sup> lived in T'Nay Hsah village. But after the fall of Manerplaw,<sup>352</sup> the DKBA and Tatmadaw came in and drove them out.

**Where have they gone?**

They went to Mae La refugee camp and some of them have resettled in western countries now. There were Muslim mosques, but people demolished them.

**Who demolished them?**

The Tatmadaw.

**Do the villagers face restrictions of movement and do they have to pay tax?**

I do not understand all [about the taxation process]. But the BGF recruited more soldiers in 2011. Two people from each village had to go and people drew lots. People had to serve three years and I do not know how much money they had to pay if they do not serve. Some

<sup>349</sup> Light Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprised of 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Primarily for offensive operations but sometimes used for garrison duties.

<sup>350</sup> *T'la aw* trees are teak-like trees with large leaves, which are traditionally collected by villagers and used to make thatched shingles for the roofs of houses.

<sup>351</sup> *Kaw La Thu*, "thu" meaning black, is a S'gaw Karen term which is sometimes used to refer to individuals in Burma/Myanmar who are perceived to have a darker skin colour. In Kayin state, it is often associated specifically with followers of Islam (Muslims), although this association is sometimes erroneous, and Muslim individuals do not typically self-identify with this term.

<sup>352</sup> Manerplaw was the former headquarters of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), which fell to the Burmese State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in 1995, allowing the SPDC to strike a serious blow to KNU operations in Kayin State.

people run away after three years and some people continue. They [the BGF] recruited soldiers again in 2012. Sometimes some of the [BGF] soldiers came back to the village and asked for money from the village head. They asked for 10,000 kyat (US \$9.72) or 20,000 kyat (US \$19.44) from the village head and the village head asked why are they asking for money, because they already get a salary. One monk complained about it to the leaders of KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] Battalion #101 and to the KNU headquarters. Then the people [KNU] came and solved the problem. At the same time they [the BGF and KNLA] agreed to do the demining. Therefore people dare to travel; people dared not travel for two years.

**When did it [demining] happen?**

It happened in 2011 and 2012.

**Who planted the land mines?**

The BGF planted them.<sup>353</sup> The *day poe* [little brother]<sup>354</sup> who came with me, stepped on the BGF landmine in 2011 or 2012. He came back from Bangkok because flooding happened in Bangkok.<sup>355</sup> He has three siblings. His mother is a widow. People who went ahead of him did not step on it, but he stepped on the landmine when he went to the field to harvest.

**People [BGF soldiers] planted the landmines in the paddy field?**

No, on the way to the field. The person [BGF soldier] who planted the landmines also stepped on a landmine.

**Were there any landmine incidents in 2013 and 2014?**

We have incidents where people's cows stepped on landmines in 2013. Many of my cousin's cows stepped on landmines.

**How many cows?**

I did not ask her how many cows. As far as I know, five people lost their legs because of landmine [incidents] and there are two or three people who did not lose their legs, but lost their eyes [or eyesight] because of landmines.

**When did these incidents happen?**

[They happened] in 2011 and 2012. Even Burmese villagers stepped on landmines. They used the road near our village when they imported cars [illegally from Thailand] because they said they have to pay more tax if they used the other road. One Burmese [man] stepped on the landmine and died in 2011. People said that the Burmese [man] is from Thin Gan Nyi Nyaung [Town]. He was only 17 or 18 years old.

**Did the BGF inform the villagers when they planted the landmines?**

No, they did not. They do it by themselves.

**Why did they plant landmines?**

They planted the landmines to stop the KNU from coming to the [BGF] base.

**How many schools are there in H--- village tract?**

<sup>353</sup> KHRG is unable to confirm whether the BGF planted the landmines.

<sup>354</sup> *Day poe* is a Karen term of respect for a younger man that translates to "little brother," however it does not necessarily signify any actual familial relationship.

<sup>355</sup> From July 2012 until January 2012, Bangkok was subject to severe flooding during the monsoon season. With large swathes of Bangkok under water, thousands were forced to flee, killing more than 500 people and leaving an estimated US \$45 billion recovery. See "[Thailand floods: Bangkok 'impossible to protect'](#)" BBC, October 2011; "[In the flooded Thai capital, residents are now refugee](#)," The New York Times, November 2011; "[The World Bank supports Thailand's post-floods recover effort](#)," World Bank, December 2011.

There are three primary schools. X--- school, C--- school and Y--- school. We did not have enough teachers in the past, but the [Burma/Myanmar] government assigned teachers and gives them a salary. But the villagers still have to provide coal or rice to the teachers, just like in the past.

### **Do they teach Karen language?**

Only C--- school teaches the Karen language. C--- school is not a government school, it is a Karen school. They [the villagers] established the school on their own and they connected to the KED later. In the past they tore [off] the letters and the logos of the donor organisations in the books that they received from KED. But they can use it openly today.

### **Why did they do this?**

They were afraid that the [Burma/Myanmar] government would give them trouble if they saw it.

### **Where do the students continue to study after they have finished primary school?**

Some people continue their study at [Burma/Myanmar] government schools. I have not seen many people who went to high school. As far as I know, there is one or two people from our village tract who attended Hpa-an University. More people go to school today. People stopped their study after primary school in the past. C--- school is teaching Karen language and the other two schools do not. The teachers from the government side said that the C--- school is a thief school and an illegal school. They said “*Where will you go after you finish grade four?*” But some people go to refugee [camps] to continue their studies. The Burma government is stricter today. You will not get transcripts if you do not join the government school. And you will not be able to continue your studies. Therefore, C--- [school] teaches how to read and write Karen and the other two schools do not.

### **Which refugee camp?**

Some people go to Umpiem refugee camp and some people go to Mae La refugee camp.

### **What do you think about the ceasefire<sup>356</sup> process between the KNU and the Burma government?**

How to say, if the governments really want peace they should not come from the back door, they should come from the front door.<sup>357</sup> What they said and what they did were not matching. Fighting does not happen here, but fighting happens elsewhere. They said this thing when they came to KNU, then they said different things when they went to DKBA and Shan. Fighting still happens. No Tatmadaw camps were withdrawn from Karen [Kayin] state. The nationwide ceasefire was planned to be signed in August [2014] but [now] postponed to September [2014]<sup>358</sup> then the year is almost gone. Will it happen in 2015? The other thing is there are many refugees in refugee camps. None of them were sent back yet. Another thing

<sup>356</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace process, see the KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

<sup>357</sup> Here the interviewee is trying to express that in order for the ceasefire to work, the Burma/Myanmar government and the KNU must be transparent, coming through the ‘front door’, so villagers may see what they are doing.

<sup>358</sup> The 6<sup>th</sup> round of ceasefire talks between the National Ceasefire Coordination Team, a coalition of armed groups in Burma/Myanmar, and the Burma/Myanmar government were held in September 2014. However, they failed to reach an agreement on a national ceasefire agreement. In March 2015, the Burma/Myanmar government and 16 ethnic armed groups agreed to a draft of the ceasefire agreement, although it received criticism from experts in the region. See “[Myanmar government, rebel groups fail to finalize a cease-fire pact](#),” Radio Free Asia, September 2014; “[Govt, ethnic reps agree to talks in mid-March](#),” The Irrawaddy, March 2015; and “[Myanmar government and rebels agree on ceasefire draft](#),” Al Jazeera, April 2015.

is the government said that they have freedom of media and you can say what you want and you can write what you want. But they arrested many people.<sup>359</sup> They will not arrest people if people do not harm their policy. And there are many demonstrations. But in reality we do not feel the peace yet. They received a lot of support from the EU [European Union] and Japan, but we have not received anything. Nothing changes in our village. But one thing is we can travel more freely [now]. But still people ask for money [from us] when we are traveling. It is good if the peace talk is going well and we hope for the best. The government will just do what they want. Maybe we will have a new government in 2015, but it will not be the government that the civilians want. They cannot solve the land problems, mining problems and Rakhine<sup>360</sup> and Muslim case easily. We do not need to be happy very early. For me I do not [feel] happy [optimistic] very early. I will not clap my hands yet.

### **Have you seen any military movement after the ceasefire?**

Oh! You do not need to ask about it. You can go and see it by yourself if you do not believe it.<sup>361</sup> In the past their camps from Thaw Leh Htah forward [along the river] were bad, but they modified it today. There were many checkpoints if we go down from Myawaddy and they reduce it. That is right. They do not check [stop] people anymore, but they are still living there. The Burmese are Burmese.<sup>362</sup> We have not seen any sign that they [the Tatmadaw] will withdraw their troops. According to the information that we heard from our friends from Brigade #2 [Toungoo District], Brigade #3 [Nyaunglebin District] and from all the brigades, they have the same situation like us. For example, we heard that they [the Burma/Myanmar government] came and built hospitals in Klaw Ga Di village and Shan Ywa Thit village. But they do not allow Karen to build a 50 bed or 100 bed hospital in Paingkyon Town. I was fined by the [local police] check point two times. I heard about it from the other people, but now I faced it myself. The first time was when I sent a patient from Noh Boh Kloh village to the hospital [Mae Tao clinic in Thailand]. I forgot my identification card. They [the police] thought that I came back from Bangkok. I told them I came back from Mae Tao clinic. I went there on Friday and I came back on Tuesday. I told them I cannot remember my ID number but I have the phone number of the village head. But they said that I was lying and told me to pay 1,000 kyat (US \$0.97) to the immigration [officers] and 1,000 kyat to the police. Altogether, 2,000 kyat (US \$1.94). Then I came back again after two or three weeks and I forgot my ID again and I had to give 4,000 kyat (US \$3.88). The people who have to suffer are those who come back from Thailand. They have to pay at least 1,000 kyat or 2,000 kyat.

### **Who asked for the money?**

<sup>359</sup> In early 2014, several journalists were arrested in Burma/Myanmar. In January and February 2014, four journalists, as well as the CEO of the Unity journal were arrested by the Burma/Myanmar government for reporting on an alleged chemical weapons factory in Burma/Myanmar. In April 2014, a freelance Mizzima journalist was arrested after helping organise a protest calling for the release of the six individuals previously arrested. See "[Journalists detained for reporting alleged chemical weapons factory](#)," The Irrawaddy, February 2014.

<sup>360</sup> The community member is referring to ongoing tension and violence erupting as of June 2012 primarily between Rakhine Buddhist and Rohingya Muslim communities in Rakhine state. See "[All You Can Do is Pray](#)," Human Rights Watch, April 22nd 2013. Later in 2012 and in 2013, further waves of unrest and violent clashes between Buddhists and Muslims have occurred across other areas in Burma/Myanmar, including notably in Meiktila, see "[State of emergency imposed in Meiktila](#)" BBC News, March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2013 and in Okkan, see "[Anti-Muslim Violence Tears Apart Communities Near Rangoon](#)," The Irrawaddy Magazine, May 2<sup>nd</sup> 2013. In 2012 and 2013, KHRG received several reports of discrimination against Muslims occurring in Karen State Districts, see "[Incident Report: Religious discrimination and restrictions in Papun District, September 2012](#)," KHRG, March 2013, "[Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho and Dwe Lo townships, September to December 2012](#)," KHRG, March 2013.

<sup>361</sup> For more information on militarisation in Kayin State after the 2012 preliminary ceasefire see, "[Ongoing militarisation of Burma/Myanmar, since the January 2012 ceasefire agreement between the Karen National Union \(KNU\) and the Burma/Myanmar government](#)," KHRG, February 2015; and "[Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response in Southeast Myanmar since the 2012 ceasefire](#)," KHRG, May 2014.

<sup>362</sup> The interviewee is stating his opinion that all Burmese are the same, that they will not change.

The immigration and police officers. Some people complained about it to the [immigration and police] offices. Some people tear their ID cards. It happened last year. One woman had an ID card but people [the police at the check point] asked her for money [anyways], therefore she tore her ID [card] and threw it away and problems happened.

**Do you have anything else to say?**

I forgot to tell you that we were disturbed at the [Tatmadaw] Aw Bo Deh check point once when we sent one serious patient [in their car], who was suffered from throat cancer to the hospital. One of the women had to argue a lot and then they let us go.

**When did it happen?**

[It happened] in June 2014, but the patient died later.

**Who stopped you?**

The Tatmadaw.

**Do you know their battalion number?**

I do not know.

**Do you still have anything else to say?**

No.

**Thank you very much.**

Yes, thank you.

**Saw A---, (male, 36), C--- village, Nabu Township,  
Hpa-an District, (Interviewed in May 2014)**

**Source #119**

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<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>This situation update is from Doo Tha Htoo [Thaton] District, [covering events] in Bilin Township and Hpa-an Township areas. [This] situation update covers political, economic and community developments [and the] situation of civilians' livelihoods. The [period of this situation update] is from June 2014 until November 2014.</p> <p><b>Political situation in Hpa-an Township</b></p> <p>This [section covers the] transition in Hpa-an Township, Doo Tha Htoo [Thaton] District since the KNU [Karen National Union] and [Burma/Myanmar] government signed [the 2012 preliminary] ceasefire<sup>363</sup> agreement. In Hpa-an Township, the militia, <i>Tha Ka Hsa Hpa</i>, is</p>	

<sup>363</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace process, see the KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.



based in Noh Ma Kwee [village] and is led by Moe Nyo.<sup>364</sup> He established basic military training on June 4<sup>th</sup> 2014, beside Noh Ma Kwee village, in Wo Kyain village tract, Hpa-an Township. He trains 70 soldiers a month. I am not certain why he does his planning [recruiting soldiers]. He recruits the soldiers from villages as they [*Tha Ka Hsa Hpa*] have done in the past.<sup>365</sup> In a village, if households are fewer than 50, five people are required for military recruitment and if there are more than 50 households [in a village], six to ten people are required for recruitment. Villagers do not want to be in the *Tha Ka Hsa Hpa* military, but the order is that if you cannot follow their requirements [if you do not serve] the one who is elected to be a soldier must pay 50,000 kyat (US \$48.50)<sup>366</sup> per month. He [Moe Nyo] recruited soldiers in Wo Kyain village tract, Boo Pyer village tract, Aee Heh village tract and Kyoh Moh Thweh village tract.

### **Government military activity in Hpa-an Township**

Regarding government military activity in Hpa-an Township, there is no other activity. The government military [Tatmadaw] have no army camps in this township, they just have Battalion #1014 which is a BGF [Border Guard Force]<sup>367</sup> company. They [BGF] have three army camps, which are Law Poo army camp, Meh Poo army camp and Pah Paw army camp. The BGF established those army camps, which do not seem like army camps. [Instead], they seem like gates to demand tax from cow and buffalo [traders]. Four or five members [BGF soldiers] are there at each gate and have no other activity [than collecting tax]. The government military [Tatmadaw] also have no other activities, except sometimes, if [Burma/Myanmar] administrators are coming to work [in Thaton District] regarding education or healthcare, they [Tatmadaw] provide security [for the administrators]. They [Tatmadaw] ask permission before they come. [They] ask permission from the KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] and if they give them permission they come.

### **Economic situation in Hpa-an Township**

The Mi Cho Taung company was founded in 2014 and is led by Saw P'Lay and it is based in Hpa-an Township. In early 2014, this company has been operating at Meh See mountain mining for copper. They have not yet received results [indicating there is copper]. A KNLA leader who does not want to reveal his name said it [exploratory mining] is still in progress. This company is known as a KNU [owned] company. It was established in Thaton District in 2014. Officer Saw P'Lay is in charge of the company and his secretary is P'Doh Ko Lay. The objective of establishing that company is to increase trading and find funding for [Thaton] District and Brigade [One].

### **Situation in Bilin Township**

<sup>364</sup> *Tha Ka Hsa Hpa* is an abbreviation of *Thaung Kyan Thu Hsa Kyin Yay A Pwe*, which means 'anti-insurgency group' in Burmese. This militia was formed in 2010 by Moe Nyo, a former Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) leader, who split from the DKBA after it transitioned into a Border Guard Force (BGF). Moe Nyo eventually joined the Burma/Myanmar government controlled BGF in Battalion #1014, while still continuing to operate *Tha Ka Hsa Hpa*. See "[Incident Report: Forced recruitment in Thaton District #1, May 2012](#)," KHRG, May 2013.

<sup>365</sup> See "[Thaton Situation Update: Hpa-an and Bilin townships, July to September 2013](#)," KHRG, November 2014 and "[Incident Report: Forced recruitment in Thaton District #1, May 2012](#)," KHRG, May 2013.

<sup>366</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the January 19<sup>th</sup> 2015 official market rate of 1,031 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>367</sup> 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 Burmese 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.

[In Thaton District], KNU and KNLA army camps are based in Bilin Township, therefore the Brigade [One] and [Thaton] District headquarters is located in this township. The KNLA established another battalion in August 2014; it is called Battalion #3. In Doo Tha Htoo [Thaton] District, the KNLA previously had [only] two battalions, which are Battalion #1 and Battalion #2. KNLA Battalion #1 is based in Hpa-an Township. [KNLA] Battalion #2 is based in Thaton Township. Battalion #3 is a new battalion and it is based in Bilin Township. [They] have no other different activities; we just report about them. The KNDO [Karen National Defense Organisation]<sup>368</sup> Battalion #2 is based in Kyaikto Township.

### **NGO activity in Bilin Township**

Since the ceasefire period, NGOs [non-governmental organisations] are coming to Bilin Township for local development projects. The NGOs are (1) SDC [Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation]; (2) BAJ [Bridge Asia Japan]; (3) ADRAM [Adventist Development and Relief Agency Myanmar]; (4) Save the Children; and (5) Nippon Foundation.

#### **1. SDC**

SDC came to do local development projects in Bilin Township in 12 villages. The 12 villages are (1) Yoh Klah village; (2) Htee Pa Doh Hta village; (3) Noh K'Neh village; (4) Kyoh Weh village; (5) Baw Naw Nee village; (6) Ta Auh Hkee village; (7) Thoo K'Bee village; (8) P'Ya Raw village; (9) Lay Kay [village]; (10) Ler Hklaw [village]; (11) Ta Paw village; [and] (12) Ta Paw Hkee village. The purpose of these projects are to build schools and clinics, construct roads, and [build] houses for teachers, as well as to install pipes for water supply. This organisation started [their projects] in 2013, but we cannot see any results [yet]. On November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2014, I went to collect information in Noh K'Neh village, Kyoh Weh village tract, Bilin Township. I met with a SDC field director. His name is Saw Min Naung.<sup>369</sup> He came to have a meeting in Noh K'Neh village. The purpose of the meeting was to implement an objective of the organisation and establish the community work implementation committee among villagers. When I met with him and I asked about his job he told me that in the villages which had been selected [for SDC projects, those projects] would be finished in 2014. They plan to establish a committee in each village in order to achieve this purpose. He elected one person from each village to help him with [financial] accounting.

#### **2. BAJ organisation project situation**

The BAJ organisation came to do a development project in Bilin Township. The purpose of the project is to supply water for local villages which are very far from a river. In Bilin Township, the village tracts that they had established a water supply for are Kyoh Weh village tract and P'Ya Raw village tract. Some of these villages are Kyoh Weh village, Baw Naw Nee village, P'Ya Raw village and Lay Kay village. Kyoh Weh village and Baw Naw Nee village requested a school, but the people gave them a water supply [pump] [instead]. I went to meet the Kyoh Weh village head, Tee Zaw Wah, [and] he said to me [the BJA] project started on May 5<sup>th</sup> 2014 and the villagers have [seen] no benefit as they have not finished their work yet [and have left the village]. So, whether they will come back [and finish the project] or not we cannot say.

#### **3. ADRAM**

ADRAM also built clinics and schools for villagers. I am not certain [about this] information, I just heard from the people [villagers].

<sup>368</sup> The Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO) was formed in 1947 by the Karen National Union and is the precursor to the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Today the KNDO refers to a militia force of local volunteers trained and equipped by the KNLA and incorporated into its battalion and command structure; its members wear uniforms and typically commit to two-year terms of service.

<sup>369</sup> For more information on SDC projects in Thaton District in 2014, see "[Thaton Short Update: Bilin Township, October 2014](#)," KHRG, February 2015.



#### 4. Save the Children

Save the Children came and built nursery schools for the villagers. The villages in Bilin Township which are based in large areas of flat ground and are beside the roads and towns almost all have a nursery school [established by Save the Children]. In some villages we know that the KWO [Karen Women Organisation] already built a nursery school, but this organisation [Save the Children] came and asked the people [villagers] to build another new school. Because of that, one KWO chairperson from Doo Tha Htoo [Thaton] Township felt that they [Save the Children] might [unintentionally] create conflict between them [KWO who want children to go their schools] and villagers. [We] see that in Htee Pa Doh Hta village, Bilin Township, KWO had established a nursery school in west Htee Pa Doh Hta village [and] east [Htee Pa Doh Hta village]. In June 2014, that organisation [Save the Children] came [and] asked villagers to build another new nursery school. The [Htee Pa Doh Hta] villagers complained that one village would have three [nursery] schools, so what can we do [with these three nursery schools]?

#### 5. Nippon Foundation

We know that they [Nippon Foundation] had come to support the villagers by providing food, such as rice, and solar panels. In 2013, they came one time to provide [rice and solar panels] in Thaton Township. In August 2014, [they] again came to provide it in four townships. [They] gave each person a big tin<sup>370</sup> of rice and [each household] a solar panel. They focus on supporting small villages which are rural mountain [sites].

#### Development Projects

Development works include roads and agriculture plantations in Bilin Township. They [people] came to construct a main road from P'Nweh Klah village to Lay Kay village. This main road was given by contract to Htu Company, U Ye Tun, U Win Luin and Sit Engineering Company. [We] also know that the budget for road construction was provided by the [Burma/Myanmar] government. Road construction started in early 2014 and it became just a red [dirt] road. In the summer of this year they plan to cover it with concrete, [but] now because the dry season has not come yet and the road is not done, they have yet to start it.

#### Long-term agricultural plantations

During this year, from June 2014 until now [November 2014] in Bilin Township, some rich people and some villagers who have money are planting teak in almost every village. Because of this, some villagers do not have land [to earn their livelihoods] and hill field farmers have problems when working in the hill fields and grazing their buffalos and cows. In past years, people had been planting rubber plantations and now [they] started to do teak plantations. Because of that, for the villagers who [earn their livelihoods] in daily labour, it will cause big problems for them.

#### Civilians' livelihood

In Bilin and Hpa-an townships, the civilians are earning [their livelihoods] in the same way. Mostly [they are earning] their livelihoods from working on farms and some are [working] on hill fields. Some [villagers earn their livelihoods] from working on plantations and some [are earning their livelihoods] from daily [labour] work. [They are earning their] livelihoods like that [because] there is no more forest, there is a water shortage, unfavourable weather [conditions] and the quality of the soil is decreasing. [Therefore], year by year, the rice production becomes lesser and lesser. In paddy farms, the soil is not good [to grow rice], therefore most farms became teak plantations and rubber plantations. The consequence [of that] is the youth become migrant workers and [go] to find jobs in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. They are going to find jobs and send money for their families which their families

<sup>370</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg. or 23.04 lb. of paddy, and 16 kg. or 35.2 lb. of milled rice.

use to buy rice from the towns. Some people went to find jobs and send money for their families, [but] some people who use drugs cannot send money to their families. Some people are ruining their lives in other countries [with drugs]; some have new marriages and become other people's problems. Some leave their kids with old moms [grandmas] and old dads [grandpas], and the children became orphans.

### Conclusion

The information that was written in this report is all truthfully occurring in Bilin and Hpa-an townships. Also, we saw [this] by ourselves and [some information] the local villagers told us [and] we report about it.

Further background reading on the situation in Thaton District can be found in the following KHRG reports.

### Source #120

<b>Log #</b>	14-92-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Naw V---, Interview Received in November 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b> My name is Naw V---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b> I am 38 years old.</p> <p><b>Are you married?</b> Yes I am.</p> <p><b>Do you have children?</b> I have three children; one girl and two boys.</p> <p><b>How old is the oldest one?</b> Ten years old.</p> <p><b>What about the youngest one?</b> The youngest one is five years old and the middle one is seven years old.</p> <p><b>Do your children go to school?</b> Yes, they all go to school.</p> <p><b>As they are all going to school, do they have any difficulties or do you have any difficulties?</b> The problem is only for my daughter as she attends the school at S--- village and stays with her aunty. There is no problem for the two younger siblings as they just go to school in the village and there are no costs for them yet.</p> <p><b>What do you do for a living in this village?</b> Just doing farming.</p> <p><b>Do you have enough food to eat by doing farming, and if not, what do you do?</b></p>	

We are fine when doing farming.

**Is there a school in the village and if so when was it established?**

The school has been established since we were young so how could we remember when it was established.

**So as you have a school, up to what grade do you have?**

Since I was young, the school has just been up to Standard<sup>371</sup> 4.

**As far as you know, how many students are there in this year?**

There are 30 students in this year.

**And how many teachers are there?**

There are two teachers in nursery class and two teachers in primary class.

**Where are the teachers from? Are they from the Myanmar government or a Karen organisation or just on a self-help basis?**

Two are from the [Myanmar] government and the other two are on a self-help basis.

**Which side of government was that?**

From S--- village.

**Well then, we know that there are four teachers, so how much do those teachers get paid per year?**

They have no salary, just volunteer.

**As much as know can you tell me, do they get any other support?**

Sometimes the government supports them with a hundred thousand kyat per year.

**Which government do you meant? Is that from the Myanmar government or the Karen government?**

Karen government.

**Are the teachers able to eat sufficiently with that support? What is their condition?**

Not sufficiently, but villagers do support them as much as they can, but then they also have to struggle hard.

**As the school is up to Standard 4, where do the students who pass Standard 4 continue their schooling?**

They go to school at Tha Waw Hpya village.

**Do all students go to there or are there some who go to another place?**

Some students are sent to Hmaw Bi Town, and those whose parents cannot support them, they are supported by other people.

**So the other people who support the students whose parents cannot support them, are they from an organisation or is that their relatives or siblings?**

The head of Hmaw Bi orphanage school supports the students.

**So how many children in the village go to Hmaw Bi orphanage school?**

Five children in the village go there.

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<sup>371</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

**What is the transportation cost from here in the village to that Hmaw Bi orphanage school for a year?**

I don't know how much it would cost for a year, but [one villager named] Moe Kyi Plaw Paw Moh supported people and paid the travel cost from here in the village to that school, and the rest of the costs was supported by the head of Hmaw Bi orphanage school.

**Is there a hospital in this village?**

There is no hospital in the village.

**You said that there is no hospital here, so when people get ill what do they do?**

If people get ill we just go to Tah Meh Hta Hospital. But if there is no medicine at that hospital then we go to Moe Kyi Plaw Paw Moh in Meh Poe Wah Hta [village].

**How far is it between the village and Tah Meh Hta?**

About an hour.

**How many medics are there at Tah Meh Hta Hospital?**

Sometimes there are five medics and sometimes there are only two medics.

**From which organisation do they come from? Are they from the Myanmar government or any other organisations?**

It is a KNU [Karen National Union] hospital.

**Do you know how much the medics get per month?**

I do not know how much they might get per month, but as it is a KNU organisation I think they just help each other like that.

**What do people here in the village commonly do for a living?**

What was that?

**What do you see people doing for their livelihoods?**

Here, villagers are doing farming and cultivation and they do not do other things.

**Do they earn enough for the whole year?**

Not enough, so we have to collect betel leaves and dog fruits and then sell them and buy bags of rice.

**Do villagers buy bags of rice that are imported into the village or do they buy it from other places?**

We go and buy the rice in Tha Waw Hpya village or from Meh Choh village.

**How far is it from here to Tha Waw Hpya village?**

About two hours if you are carrying heavy things.

**How do villagers travel there? Can they go by car or motorbike or cart?**

By foot and we carry things ourselves.

**How about from here to Meh Choh village?**

It is about three hours.

**How do villagers travel there?**

Just travel on foot.

**Do they travel on foot in both rainy season and summer season?**

Always travel on foot as the road is not accessible. We cannot go by car or cart so we have to go on foot.

**Are there any villagers who do not have enough to eat and who live in poverty?**

Villagers in V--- village mostly do not have enough to eat and they have to go and buy food from Kwee Lay village, Klaw Htah village, Htee Pah Doh Htah village and Yah Klah village.

**What about the people who do not have enough to eat and who are also not able to afford to buy food? How do they solve their livelihood [problems]?**

Sometimes they go and collect betel leaves and sometimes they do odd jobs such as clearing gardens.

**How many household are there in the village?**

There are [censored for security] households.

**How many ethnicities are there in the village?**

There are no other ethnicities, just Karen people.

**Okay then, how about religion? How many religions are there?**

Only Buddhism and Christianity.

**Do Buddhists and Christians get along with each other and do they have an understanding of each other?**

There is no conflict between the two religions and sometime when we worship the Buddhists come and join us and we also participate in their religious ceremonies as well.

**I want to know about the situation of the Tatmadaw in the village following the 2012 [preliminary] ceasefire? Do they come and operate in the village or demand something?**

The Tatmadaw never come to our village after 2012 ceasefire.

**Do they demand anything from the villagers?**

No more demands either.

**Are there any human rights violations committed by the Myanmar government or the KNU?**

After the [2012 preliminary] ceasefire, there are no human rights violations committed by any groups of the government.

**I have no more questions for you now. So you have something to say about human rights violations you can tell me now.**

After the [2012 preliminary] ceasefire there are no human rights violations anymore. But before, when 36<sup>372</sup> came they oppressed people a lot, they beat and hurt villagers physically in many ways.

**Is there anything else you would like to say?**

No, I am just able to answer what you ask me

**Alright then, if you have nothing to say thank you so much for your time and for answering my questions.**

**Source #121**

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<sup>372</sup> It is not clear what the interviewee is referring to here. 36 may refer to a battalion number.

<b>Log #</b>	14-95-P1
<b>Title</b>	Photo Notes, Hpapun District, November 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	A--- Village, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Date Received: November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014.</b></p> <p>Photo numbers 102-0019, 0020. On November 13<sup>th</sup> 2014 I reached A--- village and took the pictures of these children. They described [about] when their parents were harvesting and doing jobs at home. This girl has to look after her little brother and sister. She is not able to go to school because her parents cannot support her [school fees]. The parents have to do [work] to earn a living and they do not have enough to eat so they cannot send their children to school. And the schools are also very remote [far] from their village. There is a problem for children to go to school.</p>	

**Source #122**

<b>Log #</b>	14-99-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-pun Interview: Naw A---, November 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>--- [Age censored for security reasons].</p> <p><b>Which village do you live in?</b></p> <p>A--- village.</p> <p><b>What is your occupation?</b></p> <p>I attend school.</p> <p><b>Which standard<sup>373</sup> are you currently in?</b></p> <p>4.</p> <p><b>What is your father's and mother's name?</b></p> <p>My mother's name is Naw B--- and my father's name is Saw C---.</p> <p><b>Can you tell me about what happened to you?</b></p>	

<sup>373</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Burma/Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

Yes.

**What happened to you?**

I went to school. When I went to school, I said to my sister to go first and I was left behind. Phar Pa Har asked me, 'Sister, allow me to touch your vagina.' I scratched his hand and I left him. He carried me from the back and took me to the cow fence. My purse fell down and I picked it up. I twisted his finger. He asked to touch my vagina. I answered no. I ran. I ran to the school. The teacher asked me, 'why are you late?' I said nothing and the teacher hit me.

**What did the teacher do to you?**

The teacher hit me.

**When did it happen?**

September 27<sup>th</sup> [2014], after 7:00am.

**Where did it happen?**

In the field.

**Where did he take you?**

By the cow fence.

**What is his name?**

Phar Pa Har.

**Where does he live?**

Poh Khay.

**Before he physically restrained you, what did he say to you?**

He came in front of me, and said that my sister allowed him to touch my vagina. I said no, and I left.

**Is Phar Pa Har a student or something else?**

Teacher. He goes to teach in Hti They Oo.

**When he physically restrained you, did he do anything to you?**

He tried to touch my vagina.

**Did he manage to do [this] sexual harassment to you?**

No.

**After he physically restrained you, when you got back to your house, did you tell someone about it?**

I told them about what he did to me.



**How did you tell them?**

I said, 'Mom, come here,' and when my mom came, I said, when I went to school Phar Pa Har asked me to let him touch my vagina. I scratched his hand and left him. He caught me from behind and brought me to the cow fence. He said, 'let me touch your vagina' I said no and I left. When I arrived at school, my teacher asked and I said nothing and my teacher hit me.'

**After you told your mother about it, how did your mom reply to you?**

She did not say anything to me.

**So she did not reply. Did she do anything?**

She told my father and my grandmother heard. She went to tell Phar Pa Har's grandmother and Phar Pa Har's grandmother went to tell.

**Who did she go and tell?**

She went to tell Phar Pa Har.

**When the one who physically restrained you heard [that you had reported the abuse], how did he come and tell you?**

He came to tell me [off] and before I replied, he slapped my face and squeezed my throat. When my mom tried to stop it, he hit my mom's face and went down from the house.

**After he hit your mom and you said he went from the house, after he had left [and was] outside of the house, what did he do?**

He shouted at my mom.

**So he shouted at your mom?**

Yes.

**After then where did he go?**

He went under the bamboo trees.

**After that, did people arrange something for you for the case?**

Yes, they have arranged [something]. After that I asked for 500,000 kyat and he replied that if he has to give me money, then I have to give him my life. The village head arranged to give me 50,000 kyat. But he said he can only give 10,000 kyat. He said that if he has to give 50,000 kyat, he has to take my life.

**After he said that, what did the people who arranged [the case] say to the other people?**

They said we arranged for 10,000 kyat and that if you do not accept it, we cannot help you with anything.

**After that, later, did the people arrange something for you?**

His father and brother came and many other people come. I asked for 2,000,000 kyat. They

told me to only ask for 50,000 kyat and they would give me their cow. I answered that I do not want [the cow]. I have my own goat. They answered that if you do not agree, we cannot do anything. I answered that I do not want [anything].

**How do people call his father?**

Po Mo Klaw.

**When people arranged [the discussion], why did the person who physically restrained you not come?**

Maybe he ran away.

**Where did he run away?**

I do not know.

**Did the father of the one who harassed you give you something?**

He gave me 250,000 kyat.

**Did he say something to you?**

I told him that the one who has harassed me was Phar Pa Har but the one who came to apologise to me is Phar Pa Har's father. The one who had to come [to apologise] would have had to have been Phar Pa Har. I asked for 3,000,000 kyats. People told me to only ask for 500,000 kyats and that would be enough. Phar Pa Har's father said 100,000 is enough. My grandfather said that 250,000 kyat is enough. I accept.

**They give you 250,000 kyat and are you satisfied with that amount of money?**

Yes.

**Regarding this case, would you like to add more information?**

Yes.

**Tell me what you would like to tell.**

I want to tell you that [the person] who harassed me, later on he did not do it again. Do not do it more later on.

**Ok. Thanks.**

**Source #123**

<b>Log #</b>	14-99-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw A---, November 2014
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>How do people call your name?</b>	

Naw A---.

**Which village do you live in?**

In A--- [village].

**How old are you?**

24 years old.

**What is your occupation?**

I am a farmer.

**What is your religion?**

Buddhist.

**What is your ethnicity?**

Karen.

**Are you S'gaw Karen or Pwo Karen?**

S'gaw Karen.

**Can you tell me about what happened to your daughter?**

Yes.

**When the case happened to your daughter, how did your daughter come back and tell you?**

When my daughter [aged 11] came back from the school, she said that in the morning she was going to school, and Phar Pa Har [her teacher] hit her in the head and touched her vagina. I asked her: "Did he touch your vagina?" She said he did, and she scratched his hand and she left. When she left him, he grabbed her from behind and brought her to the cow fence. After that, he touched her vagina and buttocks, everything. My child came back and told me this, and I feel sad. And I felt sad and I went to tell her grandmother and Phar Pa Har's grandmother heard. And she went to tell her grandson. And her grandson came. He came on Friday evening at 4pm. He did not ask kindly. He asked: "Naw B---, Naw B---. You said that I touched your vagina. Is that true?" And Naw B--- answered: "yes, you touched my vagina." Before she had even finished talking, he grabbed her throat and slapped her in the face. I stood up and tried to stop him and he beat me. He shouted loudly. I told him: "you are a teacher and you should have understanding and respect." In front of the people, he did not listen to what I said and he shouted. He shouted and went back to his grandmother. After that I said some words to him. When he went back, he pulled his pants down and slapped his buttocks and shouted.

**Where did he beat you?**

He beat me at my mum's house.

**How do people call her name?**

C---.

**Which part of your body did he beat you? Your shoulder, face, hand or leg?**

My chest, calf, and face were beaten. He beat me all over.

**How many times did he beat you?**

About five or six times. One time on my thigh. My thigh is swollen now. I showed him when they came to meet.

**About this case, what did you do?**

Regarding this case, I said I would solve it. Solve it well. Solve it until I am satisfied. When they came to solve it, Phar Pa Har followed me one time. But not his father. I asked him where was his father. He answered that this does not concern his father. Naw B--- asked for 500,000 kyat as compensation for touching her vagina, slapping her face and grabbing her throat. He answered that he absolutely would not compensate her. He said: "if I have to give [money], you have to give me your life." He asked for her life. And the village leader said: "you ask for the child's life; what are you going to do?" He did not tell anymore. The leader decided to pay 50,000 kyat. He said: "I will not give. If I have to give, you have to give me your child."

**And then, when people came, how many people came and who were they?**

When they came, the people were the village leader D---, E---, F---, Phar Pa Har, my village leader, me [A---], her [Naw B---], grandmother [C---], and her father.

**How do people call your village leader?**

G---.

**Village?**

A---.

**When he dealt with your case, how did he decide for you?**

A--- village leader decided to give 50,000 kyat to satisfy the child. And Naw B--- said that if it is 50,000 [kyat] then she will not take it. He [Phar Pa Har] said he will not give it if it is 50,000 kyat. And the village leader asked him [Phar Pa Har]: "how much do you want to give?" [And he said:] "If I have to give 10,000 kyat, I have that amount of money." But the child was not satisfied. She did not want 10,000 kyat.

**Later, did you arrange something again?**

Yes, because he did not agree with what the child asked for. He did not agree with the 50,000 [kyat] that the village leader had decided.

**So when you arranged the next time, who came and which authorities came? Tell me how many people there were?**

When they arranged the next time, people included were one authority and his son-in-law and the village leader.

**When they arranged it, how do they decide for your daughter?**

They asked [her]. The child asked for 500,000 kyat and [she asked them:] “how will you?” He answered: “I do not have money to give. I will only give 100,000 kyat.” And the child did not want 100,000 kyat and she said: “if you give 100,000 [kyat] you do not need to give me it.”

**How much did your daughter ask for? How much did she ask for to be satisfied?**

She said: “if you arrange with the village tract leader, I will ask for more money. Each time you arrange I will increase the amount of money I ask for time.” When we met with his father and my village leader, she said: “give me 2,000,000 kyat. If he gives 2,000,000 kyat, I will be satisfied.” And when she went to the village tract she asked for 3,000,000 kyat.

**And how did the people decide for her later?**

Later, they decided on 250,000 kyat.

**For 250,000 kyat, how did your daughter say?**

My daughter was not satisfied. And the village tract persuaded her and gave her the money and she had to be satisfy, she explained. And people asked her whether she was satisfied and she said she was not satisfied.

**Can you remember the name of the people who told her that she has to be satisfied?**

Two women’s organisation leaders, her grandfather, and the village tract vice-secretary.

**How do people call the vice-secretary’s name?**

H---.

**Are you satisfied that people have given your daughter 250,000 kyat?**

I am not satisfied.

**If you are not satisfied, what do you want the authorities to arrange for you?**

I want the authorities to take action.

**When people meet, the one who did the harassment was not included; so where did he go?**

He ran away.

**He ran away; has he come back now?**

Not yet.

**Does anybody know where he is?**

Maybe his parents know.

**Regarding your daughter’s case that I am asking you about, do you want to add any more information that I have not asked you about? Regarding the case, do you want to tell me any more about the woman’s rights violation?**

I want our leaders to arrange that there will not any more children's rights violations in the future.

Thank you.

#### Source #124

<b>Log #</b>	15-8-NB1
<b>Title</b>	Rape and violent threats in Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District, April 2014 to May 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in July 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/07/15-8-nb1/rape-and-violent-threats-kawkareik-township-doooplaya-district-april-2014-may-2015">http://khrq.org/2015/07/15-8-nb1/rape-and-violent-threats-kawkareik-township-doooplaya-district-april-2014-may-2015</a>
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>On April 12<sup>th</sup> 2014, 16-year-old Naw A--- from B--- village, Kyaw Hkee village tract, Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District reported she was raped by Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh and as a result, fell pregnant. Naw A---, now 17 years old, subsequently gave birth to a child. Even though Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh did not take responsibility for the crime, Naw A--- reported the case to the village leaders after she found out that she was pregnant. As the village leaders and other villagers believe that Naw A--- is feeble-minded, they did not take serious action and the case was not resolved. The case was later reopened by the Karen Women Organisation (KWO) and is still ongoing.</p> <p>The rape took place in Naw A---'s house and according to the victim, it was perpetrated by Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh, who already has two children. Naw A--- claimed that when he tried to rape her she was applying <i>thanaka</i><sup>374</sup> to her face in her room. She told him that she would tell her mother if he tried to rape her and according to Naw A--- Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh said, "<i>If you shout I will stab you.</i>" She tried to stop him by saying, "<i>I will get pregnant if you rape me.</i>" He replied, "<i>It is okay, you are not going to get pregnant.</i>" After the reported rape, he was lying in the living room when her adoptive mother and adopted brother, Saw Z---, came home. They saw him lying in the living room, but they did not know that he had just raped her. Naw A--- stated that when he raped her he was not drunk. She said that she had been raped three times previously by Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh before this particular event. There had been other times that he came to her house to try and rape her when her mother and brother were out working, but she managed to get away before he could find her. When she was first raped she kept silent and did not tell anybody as she was embarrassed, but as the incidents became more frequent and she fell pregnant she decided to report the abuse to her mother. When her mother and other people in the village found out and asked Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh, he refused to admit any guilt and stated to the villagers and Naw A--- that he would hit Naw A---'s head against the stilts of a house for damaging his reputation. He also said that Naw A--- was raped by her brother, Saw Z---, whom she lives with. When the KHRG researcher found out about this case he reported it to the village tract leaders as the village leaders had not taken action. They subsequently asked the local KWO to conduct an investigation into the case. According to the researcher, Naw A--- is currently receiving medical treatment to treat her rape injuries as well as postnatal care in Nu Poe (Noh Poe) refugee camp and the rape case has been transferred to the Karen National Police Force (KNPF)<sup>375</sup> by the KWO to conduct further investigations.</p>	

<sup>374</sup> *Thanaka* is a white paste with a yellow hue applied to the face and sometimes arms by women (and less commonly men) of many different ethnicities across Burma/Myanmar. It comes from grinding the bark, wood or roots of a *thanaka* tree with a little water. The paste is believed to protect and cool the skin in the sun, as well as to improve one's complexion. See "[Beauty That's More Than Skin Deep](#)," *The Irrawaddy*, August 2011.

<sup>375</sup> The Karen National Police Force was established by the Karen National Union in 1991.

According to Naw A---'s adoptive mother, *"I adopted Naw A--- when she was two years old. Her real mother passed away and her real father is in Thailand. She was 16 years old when she was first raped. Her upbringing was not good. She was bullied, hung up<sup>376</sup> and thrown into water when she was young before I adopted her. She smelled when I took her. She had a [bloated] stomach.<sup>377</sup> Her real mother told me that evil spirits had taken over her body. She [Naw A---] would go out looking for food during night time. When I took her home and fed her a big meal she just slept, I did not see any evil spiritual action. I [have] raised her since she was young [and] in [a] difficult situation and now when she has grown up she has been raped. I [do not] feel good about it."* She also said that there is nobody supporting her daughter following the rape, except the KWO office in Nu Poe refugee camp who give her assistance when Naw A--- and her daughter go to the camp.<sup>378</sup>

Her adoptive mother met with Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh's sister to talk about what happened to her daughter. Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh's sister stated, *"I will talk about it with my brother when he comes back and if he says no [he did not do it], I will go and yell at Naw A---."* Naw A---'s mother then stated, *"On another day she [Saw Hpah Kyaw Eh's sister] told me that she will go to Saw C--- [a traditional doctor] and bring back the medicine with the tiger logo. She told me that grandma [me] should feed her this and I replied, no, I dare not feed her this medicine. His sister said that it is for the abortion [and will not harm Naw A---]. I said the baby is moving in the womb already, I dare not to feed her."<sup>379</sup>*

The KHRG researcher mentioned that the local villagers have said that Naw A--- is locally known as a feeble-minded girl. The researcher believes that Naw A--- is not a feeble-minded girl as she is able to accurately tell the story of what happened to her and buy things well, as she is educated to a level where she can accurately manage money.

News bulletin written by KHRG member (publish in July 28, 2015)

#### Source #125

<b>Log #</b>	15-11-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Daw C---, Interview Received in March 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>How much [money from an] agricultural loan did you take?</b>	
400,000 kyats.	
<b>How much is the interest on the loan? How many per cent?</b>	
0.60 kyat. <sup>380</sup>	

<sup>376</sup> In Burma/Myanmar hanging a child on hooks and beating them is an uncommon form of punishment. This is what happened to Naw A---, however in this case Naw A--- was abused as her mother thought that she was possessed by an evil spirit.

<sup>377</sup> Her stomach was likely bloated due to severe malnutrition.

<sup>378</sup> This information was included in an interview received by KHRG in May 2015 from a KHRG community member from Dooplaya District. This interview is currently unpublished.

<sup>379</sup> This information was included in an interview received by KHRG in May 2015 from a KHRG community member from Dooplaya District. This interview is currently unpublished.

<sup>380</sup> It is not clear what Daw C--- means with this answer.



**How much do you have to give if you repay? 400,000 plus how much?**

24,000 kyats.

**Do they give [the loan] for farm or plantation land?**

Farm.

**Do you know how much paddy [rice] the land yields?**

I Don't need to submit [give] it [paddy rice]. I cannot submit [give] that much.

**So you do not know how much paddy [rice] your land yields this year?**

Even if I get a yield, I do not need to submit [give it].

**So, it means, you can give back the loan?**

Some do not farm but take the loan as [if it is] for farming. [They] take the loan with an understanding [agreement] with each other.

**How much is the maximum loan they take?**

Some take a loan at the [maximum] amount that they can give back. 1,000,000 kyats or 500,000 kyats.

**So you took 400,000 kyats?**

The money that I can afford [to pay back].

**How do you think that will you repay the loan? By selling paddy [rice] or peanuts?**

I Have to give back [the loan] in middle of January.

**Have you repaid?**

No. [The repayment date is] coming this January 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Do you think you will repay by selling peanuts?**

Yes.

**How many baskets of peanuts has the land yielded this year?**

Only over two baskets.<sup>381</sup> [We] will only get 200,000 kyats.

**So, by selling the peanuts, the loan will not be fully repaid?**

Not fully repaid.

**So you have to repay with the paddy [rice] as the additional [payment] for the**

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<sup>381</sup> A basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg or 46.08 lb of paddy, and 32 kg or 70.4 lb of milled rice. A basket is twice the volume of a big tin.

**peanuts? Do you think it will be OK?**

We have to find a way [solution] like this.

**So you will sell some paddy [rice]?**

If I sell the paddy [rice] I can fully repay the loan. But [if I sell the paddy rice] we do not have rice to eat. We do not farm enough acres. They said that they will give the loan with the [calculation per] acre. But I do not accept [their conditions]. If they give [the loan] by pricing how much [paddy we produce per] acre, what can we do with that money?

**So, you said, the peanuts is two baskets. Do you guess how much it will yield?**

I guess 20 tins.

**What is the current price for a tin of paddy?**

Now they give [pay] 11,000 or 11,500 kyats.

**For one tin? So, ten tins is 100,000 kyats. Not so bad.**

This year, the price for peanut is good.

**Are they buying now? Do they give the money in advance?**

The villagers cannot [buy] now. They have many loans.

**So they just want to give back the loans?**

Before, there were no loans and when they [villagers] do not have money, they sell the peanuts. During the working period [before the harvest], there is no income [the villagers would] sell the peanuts, sell the paddy [rice]. Some cannot find money and just sell the peanuts and paddy [rice]. [They would] sell ten or 20 tins. Not a lot.

**How about taking loans from Oo Aung Zaw Oo from the Ministry of Forestry? Which year was better for you? The year that you did not take the loan or the year that you took the loan?**

If possible, it is better if I do not take the loan.

**Why?**

If I take the loan, I have to give [pay it] back. Nobody forces me to take the loan. Only we take the loan by ourselves. They [the creditors] are not sad if we do not take their loan. The interest of the loan is good. Just only 0.60 kyat. I had to give [pay back] 1.50 kyats last year. The price of the interest has decreased this year.

**Did you take the loan last year?**

Yes. I took only 300,000 kyats last year. This year [my loan amount] has increased.

**How did you repay? With peanuts or paddy [rice]?**

I do not know how I paid it back. I did not give [pay it] back with paddy [rice] last year. I gave only more than 1 basket. I fed the cows because I felt lazy to harvest [the peanuts and

paddy].

**How about other people [who] took the loan? Can they fully repay?**

Yes.

**So, they repay fully. There is no problem?**

Yes. No problem. They like [are satisfied with the loan]. Because in the city, people cannot give [pay] back fully. Because people there [in the village] only farm. [Work on the] farm and [then] repay and sometimes they are not satisfied. Now, they are giving loans in the rural area and they are satisfied.

**So rural people fully repay the loan?**

These [loans] are money taken [borrowed] from other people. So if we take [the loan], we have to give [it] back. After we take, we cannot stay like this [not giving it back]. When the time comes [to repay], the interest is increasing. It is okay if you do not give back [the loan]. But the interest is increasing regularly.

**If do not give back, they do not harm anything right?**

No, they do not do anything. They [the creditors] will be looking at the situation. If they have to take something [as a form of repayment] they will take it.

**Do they take plantation fields?**

No, they do not. Like, they ask whether we have an ID card, land grant, or anything else. Aung Zaw Oo asked us like this. He asked whether we have cultivated land or farm land. If we do not have [land], how much money will be given? 300,000 kyats is not equal with the price of 2 pigs. Do you understand? If you do not give [the loan], I will not take [the loan]. I said like this. And he said not like this [disagreed with me]. You are not easy, Aung Zaw Oo said me. The price of the pig is good. If I sell 2 pigs, I can fully pay back the loans.

**When they ask the house and land grants, do they take them?**

We already have the house and land grants. They have already come and made the land and farm grant for us.

**Form #7?**

I do not know #7 or #8 anymore. After I got [the grant], I kept it like this.

**There are no serious problems?**

No.

**Are there other people [who] cannot repay?**

No, there is not. Everybody pays. [They] pay every year. Now, at the end of this month, on the first day, we have to put money in Tha Ma.

**Do you also take the Tha Ma microfinance?**

Yes. There are lots of Tha Ma members here.

**For you, do you take [the microfinance]?**

For me, two people join [to take]. So, 200,000 kyats.

**Who comes and gives it [the microfinance]?**

Tha Ma. They give it to every village.

**So, the township Tha Ma department gives it?**

Tha Ma state commander.

**Do you know him?**

I just recorded [the information] in the book. I do not know [the information] by heart.

**Who organises to give the money through Papun to the Ta Kon Tai, Ku Sate, Ma Htaw [areas]?**

Tha Ma state commander came and gave [the microfinance] by himself. District [leaders] come to give the money and township [leaders] divide the money for the villagers.

**So the Tha Ma township commander. Do you know his name?**

I do not know. I just recorded it in the book.

**How about a [microfinance] loan of 200,000 kyats?**

For 100,000 kyats they set [an interest rate of] 1.50 kyats.

**How long is the [repayment] period? Six months or three months?**

Six months. The same, [as the] agricultural [loan], also six months. Now we have to put [give] money to Tha Ma. And after [Tha Ma is] paid, they will give back the withdrawal [money] within seven days, immediately.

**How much do they give?**

100,000 kyats. 100,000 kyats for one person.

**So, after [you have] repaid, you can take the withdrawal [money] again?**

Yes.

**[Do you] always save money and take withdrawals like this?**

Yes. There is also the money that we save. Since we became members of Tha Ma microfinance, they have taken 5,000 kyats as our saved money. The more we join [use] the microfinance, we have to save more money. If we can put the money [into savings], we also get the profit. We get 0.33 kyat.

**0.33 kyat? Is it the percentage of the profit? So this is the percentage of the profit when it is divided and given to members. So you mean 33 per cent or 0.33 kyat?**

0.33 kyat. I do not know how much percentage they get. They also have to give back [the profit] to other people. They are brokers. Tha Ma [microfinance] has collapsed [in the past]. Then it was established again after it collapsed

**When you joined the Tha Ma microfinance, how much did you have to pay?**

5,000 kyats. After 3 years, if I do not want to carry on, I can quit and I will get those 5,000 kyats [back].

**After three years?**

Yes, after three years.

**So, you will be saving and withdrawing the money like this?**

Yes. Will be saving and withdrawing. [We] will [have the] routine like this regularly.

**After three years, if you want to quit, can you quit?**

Yes.

**So, you can get back your investment?**

Yes. I get back the money I have saved.

**You joined Tha Ma Microfinance and the agricultural loan also. Totally, you took 500,000 kyats. How is the situation? Can you manage your livelihood with that money?**

If we can do [to manage our livelihood] the situation is good. But we do not use that money for the economy. We use it for building our house. I took the money to build the house.

**So there are no difficulties? Are there consequences? Like if you cannot give back the loan, do they say that they will confiscate the house, land, or something else?**

There will be [consequences]. But there has been no problem up until now. No one in the village faces the problem. They wait and do not make a problem immediately. If one person cannot give the money, there is a system. In Tha Ma, there is Wai Gyi Gyoke system: a group of 5 people. If one of person does not give money and runs away, another person have to give money for that person. But another person will not lose their money that they have paid for that person. Tha Ma will give back money for those people [who] gave [money] for their [group] member. But Tha Ma will take action if they see that the person who does not give money runs away.

**Are you a member of Tha Ma?**

I am a chairperson.

**So you are T--- village Tha Ma chair person?**

Yes.

**What is your full name?**

Daw C---.

**How old are you?**

40.

**What you would like to say more?**

**Source #126**

<b>Log #</b>	15-14-A4-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Naw A---, January 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in October 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/10/15-14-a4-i1/toungoo-interview-naw-january-2015">http://khrq.org/2015/10/15-14-a4-i1/toungoo-interview-naw-january-2015</a>
<b>Location</b>	Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Religion:</b> Baptist</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Farming</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Villager</p> <p><b>What is your name aunty?</b><sup>382</sup></p> <p>My name is Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 46 years old.</p> <p><b>What do you do [for work]?</b></p> <p>I do farming.</p> <p><b>Is there anything else that you do?</b></p> <p>No, nothing.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>I live in B--- village.</p> <p><b>The village is situated in which township?</b></p> <p>In Taw Oo [Toungoo].<sup>383</sup></p>	

<sup>382</sup> Aunty is a Karen term of respect attributed to an elder female, and does not necessarily signify any actual familial relationship.

<sup>383</sup> Naw A--- is referring to Toungoo Town area, which is in Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District.

**Do you have a family?**

Yes.

**How many people [are there] in your family?**

[There are] nine people in my family.

**How old is your eldest [child]?**

Twenty-four years old.

**How about the youngest one?**

The youngest is four years old.

**How long have you been living here?**

I came here to this village when I was over ten years old.

**When exactly?**

I can't remember but we have been living here for about 30 or 40 years already.

**Where did you live before?**

N---, in Ler Doh [Kyaukkyi] Township area, [Nyaunglebin District].

**When you first came [to this village] how many houses were there?**

There were only two or three houses.

**Did you have any problems when you moved here?**

My father did logging and farming when I first came here to this village. We did farming and I got married and we settled down here.

**Currently, how many houses are there [in the village]?**

There are now *[censored for security]* houses.

**How about religion? What do most people believe in?**

[Most people are] Baptist.

**Are there any armed groups that have harassed [people in] your village or burnt down your village?**

No.

**How about after the ceasefire?<sup>384</sup> Are there any cases such as rich people coming in and confiscating the land?**

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<sup>384</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace



No, but now [land confiscation] is going to happen.

**How will it happen?**

We heard [that] a company will come to [the village area] and confiscate our lands. We heard that they will pay us compensation. However, if we sell our lands to them we will not have any land to work on. That is why we have to stop them.

**Which company? Do you know the name of the company?**

Kay Too Ma Tee Development [Company].

**Where is the company from?**

[They are] from Taw Oo [Toungoo] [Town].

**[Where is the] company from? Just Taw Oo [Toungoo] or other places?**

[They are just] from Taw Oo [Toungoo] [Town].

**Do you know the company leaders' or managers' names?**

I do not know [their names].

**When did you hear about it? A long time ago, or a short period of time ago? Just months?**

Yes. Not even a year ago.

**[Do] the farms that you work on have land grants?**

I have land grants but not for all [of my] lands. In the past they [Burma/Myanmar government land surveyors] [conducted land surveys]; some people might have four or five acres [of land] but they applied [saying they] only have two acres of lands. In the past they [villagers] have to pay either rice or money [as tax per acre of land]. That is why they [villagers] applied saying they have less land [so they do not have to pay as much tax]. Another thing [the government land surveyors] said, "*You [villagers] have to apply [for permission to work on your land] and pay 7,000 kyat (US \$6.43)<sup>385</sup> for each [acre of land you intend to work on].*"

**They said this recently [or a] long time ago?**

Not very long ago. It was last year [2014].

**[You heard this] from [the government] land surveyor?**

Land surveyors award land grants in the monasteries. They [the villagers] have to apply for land grants [for their lands] which have no [documents]. They [land surveyors] will confiscate

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process, see the KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [\*Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire\*](#), KHRG, May 2014.

<sup>385</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the May 21<sup>st</sup> 2015 official market rate of 1,088 kyat to the US \$1.

the land if they [villagers] do not apply [for land grants].

**How many acres of land do you currently have?**

Fifteen acres in total [but only] five [acres] have land grants, the rest do not.

**How many of your lands have land grants?**

Three acres of my lands have one land grant and [a further] two acres have [another] land grant.

**Five acres of your land already have land grants?**

Yes. And we forbade [the company from confiscating] the rest of the lands.

**You heard that a company will come and confiscate land?**

Like my farm, if people [land surveyors] measure truthfully it would be seven or eight acres [of land]. We have to pay 7,000 kyat (US \$6.43) for each acre and apply [for permission to work on them]. This is why we applied for only a few acres [of our land].

**How many villages are going to have land confiscated?**

Five: Bay Tha Nee Teh Kon [village], Wet Khauk Sein [village], Mya [village], Thet Kel Kyay [village] and Pauk Hseik village.

**Five villages? How about the other villages?**

Sin Hswel Myaw village?

**Yes, will that village be included [in the land confiscation]?**

No.

**Are these villages Karen or Burmese villages?**

Only Bay Tha Nee Teh Kon village is Karen. The rest of the villages are Burmese.

**Lands from most villages that you mentioned do not have [land grants] right?**

No, like my village, B---, no one has [land grants].<sup>386</sup>

**I mean for the farmlands.**

For the farmlands some people have [land grants].

**On which day did they [villagers] submit the objection letter?<sup>387</sup>**

I did not ask them [villagers who submitted the objection letter].

**Did [villagers from] all five villages submit the objection letter?**

<sup>386</sup> Here, Naw A--- is referring to village areas where houses are situated, as opposed to lands used for farming.

<sup>387</sup> Although Naw A--- has yet not mentioned the objection letter during the interview, the KHRG researcher may have been previously aware that the villagers had submitted one.

Yes, they [villagers from the other villages] also submitted [the objection letter], but they do not know when they [township leaders] will get back to them.

**How many acres are there that they [villagers] prohibited [the company] from confiscating?**

From only our B--- village?

**Yes. Do you know [how many acres] the land owners objected to?**

I am not sure if they said 400 or 4,000 acres of land. I am not sure if it was 4,000 or 1,002 acres of land or 20 acres. I did not ask them [the villagers]. Their names are in the objection letter. It might be in the hundreds [of acres of land].

**Over four hundred [acres]?**

[Naw A--- did not answer].

**Was there any reply after [the villagers] sent the objection letter?**

No, not yet.

**For the other villages [not previously mentioned], the company is not going to confiscate their lands?**

They have not come in [to those villages] yet. They [currently] are in Hpaw Say Hpeh [village]. They have started buying [lands], but I am not sure if it is the company [Kay Too Ma Tee Development] or whatever [other wealthy individuals]. We heard that they have started buying [lands].

**You have to pay 7,000 kyat (US \$6.43) to apply [to work on] each acre of land. Are the villagers okay with this?**

Not all the villagers applied [for permission to work on the land]. They applied for only a few [acres] of their lands, because the more land that they apply to work on, the more money they have to pay. It is like that.

**You [villagers] sent the objection letter?**

Yes, like they [land surveyors] said, the company will come in and they are going to confiscate the farmlands that do not have documents. That is why the villagers sent the objection letter.

**Did they [land surveyors] say when they [the company] are coming?**

No they did not. Firstly, we have seen that they [have begun] to clear the land and we heard that they will clear [the rest of the land] and then sell it. I heard that the villagers [whose lands have already been cleared] are from Wet Khauk Sein village; after [the land was cleared] I heard from people who knew about it. I did not know about it before. Later on, we heard that the company is coming to look for land to buy. I do not know how much more land they need. They [land surveyors] are saying that they are going to take more land, so [this is why] the villagers submitted the objection letter.

**Regarding education, is there a school in your village?**

Yes, there is.

**Up to what standard [is the school]?**

Up to fourth standard.<sup>388</sup>

**[It is a] primary school?**

Yes, it is.

**Is the school free [for students to attend]?**

No, the teachers who come to teach go home often. They come and teach for only 20 days each month. They go back to their [villages] and sometimes it takes 10, 14 or 15 days [for each visit] and the students are not learning.<sup>389</sup>

**How many male teachers and female teachers are there?**

[There is] one male teacher and three female teachers.

**Where are the teachers from?**

I do not know where they are from. They are Burmese. They come to the village and do not socialise [with] the villagers.

**[Did] they [villagers] build houses for them?**

Yes, [villagers built] the house and the school. They are self-reliant. The teachers currently are not trying to socialise with the villagers; they just stay on their own. The teachers in the past visited the villagers. Some [current] teachers said to some of the students that they teach: *"I am teaching not because of having good-will, [not because I want to] but because I have a duty to teach."*

**[Do] the teachers change yearly?**

Some teachers moved [to other places] because they had problems with villagers as they were corrupt and they dared not stay a long time.<sup>390</sup> Some teachers did not teach full-time. They taught as [and when] they wanted. The villagers talked to them about it and they did not like this and they requested to move [to another village]. Now, young teachers are coming [to teach]. Anywhere that you live you have to deal with the students' parents and the students. They should be mutually visiting with one another. Currently, it is not like that. They let the students play and they will sleep [or be] on their phone. This is why the students are not doing well in their education.

**How much [salary] do they get monthly?**

They said 100,000 kyat (US \$91.85) or over 100,000 kyat. Moreover, the villagers [also]

<sup>388</sup> A Standard refers to a grade in the Burmese education system. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 4, middle school is Standards 5-8 and high school is Standards 9-10.

<sup>389</sup> Although the researcher asked if education was free, Naw A--- responded with an answer about the weaknesses of the school, more specifically the teachers.

<sup>390</sup> The community member did not provide further information as to the details of what Naw A--- meant by the previous teachers having been corrupt.

have to support them [the teachers]. Each of the students' parents has to provide two milk tins (0.50 kg. or 1.10 lb.)<sup>391</sup> of rice to the teachers. For firewood, each house has to provide one bundle of firewood each month.

**They just come and stay without working?**

That is what [I am saying]. We are ok with providing [rice and firewood] but we want our students taught well. We will support whatever they [the students] need. There is a big weakness with the teachers.

**How long have they been gone [back to their home villages]?**

They left around the 10<sup>th</sup> [December 2014]. They just got back yesterday [January 6<sup>th</sup> 2015]. They come and teach in the jungle [remote areas] and the education minister does not come [to check] so they [teachers] are just working out of duty [not for the improvement of the students' education].

**How many students are there?**

There are over 100 students according to the students that I saw.

**How much are the school fees? Is the school free [for students to attend]?**

Yes [it is free], it has been [free for] two years and the [Burma/Myanmar] government [provides] support but not really fully: one dozen books, one bag, two pencils, and 1,000 kyat [to each student]. For the one backpack that the teacher brings, it might be from Karen Education Department's [KED] side. They provide one rice box, one umbrella and one backpack. That might be from the [Karen] Education Department.

**They are the group that support the students?**

Yes, they are. They are KNU [Karen National Union] employees. They are not related to the [Burma/Myanmar] government.

**Is there a clinic in the village?**

Here?

**Yes.**

No, if your children get sick you have to carry them to the hospital.

**Where?**

In Taw Oo [Toungoo] [Town].

**[Are there] any closer clinics?**

No, it [would be] good if we had a medic [in the village]. Currently we have to carry each other [to the hospital] if we feel sick.

**Is there a mid-wife [in the village]?**

<sup>391</sup> A milk tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One milk tin is equivalent to 0.16 kg. or 0.36 lb. of paddy, and 0.25 kg. or 0.55 lb. of milled rice. It is also equal to 1/64 of a big tin.

There is [a mid-wife] in Wet Khauk Sein village. Here in this village, we just treat [mothers] in a traditional way.

**Both education and healthcare [improvement] are priority needs?**

Yes, they are. Our children here who are in third or fourth standard, they cannot read or write correctly. They [teachers] stay on their own. The children have to play if they [the teachers] ask the children to play. It has been many years that we have been dealing with the young teachers.

**Do the villagers have collective activities [village agency strategies] like organising each other and requesting the government [to build a clinic in the village]? Have NGOs [non-governmental organisations] come and visited here?**

Yes, they [have] come.

**Did you request the NGOs [to build a clinic in the village]?**

We did but we do not know what they [NGO] thought.

**Which NGO group? Are they [NGO workers] Karen?**

They are Karen. Thra R---'s daughter is one of them. She works [in B--- village] and in Ler Doh [Town] as well.

**You [villagers] can go only to Taw Oo [Toungoo] [Town] [for treatment]?**

Yes, it is a problem during rainy season.

**[There are] no other places [clinics or hospitals] to go to near this village?**

No, there are not. Baw Gyi village does not have a clinic or hospital either.

**Really?**

Yes, so if you are seriously ill you have to go quickly. It is not easy [to survive] if you do not go quickly.

**Is it [the situation] getting better regarding transportation?**

Yes, a little. It is better in hot season. If it is rainy season you have to carry the sick, as you can only go on foot.

**A car cannot go?**

No, they cannot [because of the mud]. Even a motorbike cannot go on the road. That is why like you said education and healthcare [improvement] is a big need here.

**Is there any company [which] does gold mining here?**

No, not yet.

**They [have] not confiscated [land] yet?**

Yes, they have started land confiscation in Hpaw Say [Hpaw Say Hpeh village] already.

**Is that a Burmese village?**

Yes. It is a Burmese village. They have confiscated a lot of [land] already.

**Thanks, do you have anything to say finally? [Is there] anything that you want to express regarding your problems or experiences?**

Regarding problems, for us living here in this place we can survive only when we have land, with no land we cannot survive. If these things [land confiscation] keep happening to our children in the future, there will be no improvement.

**Thank you.**

Yes, thanks.

**Naw A---, (female, 46), B--- village, Thandaunggyi Township,  
Toungoo District, (Interviewed in January 2015)**

#### Source #127

<b>Log #</b>	15-14-A6-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Naw A---, January 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in August 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-14-a6-i1/toungoo-interview-naw-january-2015">http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-14-a6-i1/toungoo-interview-naw-january-2015</a>
<b>Location</b>	Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Ethnicity:</b>	
<b>Religion:</b> Christian	
<b>Marital Status:</b> Married	
<b>Occupation:</b> Farming	
<b>Position:</b> Villager	
<b>What is your name?</b>	
I am Naw A---.	
<b>How old are you?</b>	
I am 39 years old.	
<b>Where do you live?</b>	
I live in B--- [village].	
<b>Township?</b>	
Thandaunggyi Township.	



**Occupation?**

Farming.

**[Do you do] anything else?**

No.

**Married?**

Yes.

**How many people in your family?**

Five people.

**How old is your eldest child?**

14 years old.

**How about the youngest?**

Five years old.

**How many houses are there in B--- village?**

Over *[censored for security]*.

**What ethnic groups are in the village?**

Karen and Burmese people.

**How about religion?**

Buddhist and Christian.

**Are you Buddhist or Christian?**

I am Christian.

**Baptist or Anglican?**

Baptist.

**What do most people do here?**

We do farming.

**What is the situation [in terms of] land confiscation by companies after the ceasefire?<sup>392</sup>**

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<sup>392</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace process, see the KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG's analysis of

Not in the past.<sup>393</sup>

**How about now?**

Yes.

**What are the problems and how did they happen?**

Currently, we do farming and they said they will confiscate our farmland. We depend on these farmlands and we do not want them to be confiscated. That is why we are now protecting [our] land from confiscation.

**Who said that [the land is] going to be confiscated?**

They [other villagers] said the company will confiscate the farmland.

**Which company?**

They said [the Burma/Myanmar government is cooperating with the company to set up an] industrial zone. I don't know the name of the company.

**Do you know the name of their manager?**

No, I don't.

**You don't know any of them?**

No, I don't.

**Where is the company from?**

I don't know where they are from but the place that they are going to confiscate [land] from is in [the newly built] Kay Tu Ma Ti Myo Thit [Town] next to Toungoo [Town] area on the western outskirts of the town.

**All the farms on the western outskirts of Kay Tu Ma Ti Myo Thit?**

No, not all. They said they are going to confiscate [from] Mok Hso Taung Kwin and Myeh Maw Kwin [village areas].

**[From] two [village areas]?**

Yes, that [is] what we heard.

**You heard this last year?**

This year.

**In 2015?**

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changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

<sup>393</sup> By 'not in the past' the interviewee means that currently the company is confiscating land.

No, December 2014.

**How did you find out about it?**

We heard from the superiors [township leaders] and they notified our administrator and our administrator told all villagers in our village and our neighboring villages like C--- and D---.

**What are they planning for the local people?**

They said they are going to confiscate [land] and we can't stand this and we do not understand how to respond to them. We consulted with the township officers [about the land confiscation] and [the township officers helped them to send the complaint letter].

**You sent a complaint letter?**

Yes.

**Do people [farmers] here have land grant documents?**

Yes.

**How many acres of farmland do you have?**

Ten acres, altogether.

**They [farmers] all have land grants?**

Yes, they do.

**Can the [company] legally confiscate the farmland that [the farmers] have land grants [for]?**

Many of our lands have land grants. Since we do farming we have land grants for all farmland. Now they are going to confiscate [our land] and now [we] cannot let them confiscate our farmland as we have farmland land grants. They cannot confiscate our land.

**Do you have land Form #7?<sup>394</sup>**

We did not apply for land Form #7 so we do not have that. We did not know [about land Form #7] at that time.

**Currently, are there people who have applied for the land Form #7?**

Yes.

**How much [money] do they [Burma/Myanmar government land department officers] ask for [when] applying [for] one acre of land?**

They asked [for] 7,000 kyat (US \$6.26)<sup>395</sup> for each acre of land.

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<sup>394</sup> Form #7 is the application form needed to apply for a land grant to farm land under the Burma/Myanmar government 2012 Farmland Law. The law stipulates that land use laws in place prior to 2012 have been revoked. The land grants that the villager refers to earlier in the interview are likely to be no longer recognised by the Burma/Myanmar government. Land in Burma/Myanmar is ultimately owned by the Burma/Myanmar government. For details see: Burma/Myanmar 2012 [Farmland Law](#).

**Are the villagers satisfied with this?**

Some can afford to pay and some cannot but this is what they demand [for permission to work on the land] so we have to pay. That is the way it is.

**People here in this area can get Form #7 with 7,000 kyat?**

Some people have got it, but some people have not got it yet.

**So there are people who do not have [Form] #7?**

Yes, for us we missed [the] Form #7 [process when they conducted land registration] as our village is remote [from the towns]. It takes three hours for us to get to our farm [on foot from our village]. We usually live in the jungle village and it is far [from town] so we did not know when they initiated [the] land Form #7 [process]. Another thing is I was unhealthy [when they conducted land registration] and I was in the hospital. My daughter and my aunt were at home in the village and they did not know [that the government was conducting land registration]. We could not apply which is why we did not get it. Some people applied for two acres of land paying 14,000 kyat (US \$12.78) but they did not get it.

**The 7,000 kyat cost for [applying] for each acre of land is set by the superior leaders [Burma/Myanmar government land department], is there corruption within the [local] land department? What I heard is we<sup>396</sup> do not need to pay this much [7,000 kyat].**

I do not know [how the] superiors [Burma/Myanmar government land department, makes decisions on how much to charge] but what they [local land department] asked [for] was 7,000 kyat, 14,000 kyat for two acres of land.

**Approximately, how many acres of land are there that [the] company is going to confiscate in Mok Hso Taung Kwin and Myeh Maw Kwin [village area]?**

Over 100 acres of land.

**When did you submit the complaint letter?**

I cannot remember when they submitted it.

**Who submitted [it and] where did they submit [it]?**

Our *Saya* [respected person]<sup>397</sup> went to the town and submitted it [the complaint letter]. They went on Monday. What date was Monday?

**It was [January] 5<sup>th</sup> [2015] if it was Monday.**

Yes, it was [the] 5<sup>th</sup> then.

**So you have not heard anything yet?**

<sup>395</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015 official market rate of 1,095 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>396</sup> The researcher is also a villager and this tax imposed occurs in his village and on his land as well.

<sup>397</sup> A *Saya* in Burmese is a male teacher, but the term is often used to refer to an elder or respected person, as in this context.

No, not yet.

**Where did he submit [the complaint letter]?**

In Toungoo Town. According to our *Saya Z---*, they [government officials] said they will send the letter from Toungoo to Naypyidaw.

**From how many villages [do they plan to confiscate land]?**

E--- village, F--- village, G--- village, D--- village, B--- village and H--- village.

**Six villages altogether?**

Yes.

**[From six villages] altogether they plan to confiscate only 100 acres of land?**

Yes, I mean 100 acres of land confiscated is from Mok Hso Taung Kwin and Myeh Maw Kwin [village area] only. I guess there will be over 200 acres of lands which will be confiscated altogether [including in the other villages mentioned above].

**You do not know the name of the company and company manager?**

No, I do not. The [village leaders] might know but I do not know.

**In your village, do children have freedom and [are they] ok with their school regarding their education?**

They are not doing well [with their education]. We have many different problems. We have more problems this year, because last year our head mistress was *Sayama Daw S---*. She moved to another place as she had problems with the other teachers.

One of her subordinate teachers also moved to another place. [There is] only [one] male teacher and two new teachers left. The teachers teach in their own different way [as they are unqualified] and the children [learn] nothing [as they do not fully understand the lessons]. This is why our children went [somewhere] to take [an] exam twice, in October and December, but the children did not pass the exam. They [the children] know nothing. Like my daughter, she is 12 years old and she is in fourth standard and she knows nothing.

**Up to what standard does the school have?**

It is up to fourth standard.

**So it is primary school?**

Yes, it is.

**Where did they go for the examination?**

In E--- village.

**No one passed the examination?**

None of them passed the exam. They took the exam three times in a year and my daughter was one of them. No one passed.

**How many teachers are there [in the school]?**

[There were] five teachers in the past, two teachers moved away and now three teachers [are] left. There is one male teacher and two female teachers.

**The teachers are from here or from where?**

They are from Toungoo Town. One of [the] female teachers is from Aok Twin [village], [the] male teacher is from Toungoo [Town] and the other teacher is from Toungoo [Town] as well.

**How many students are there?**

Over 70 students.

**It is free for primary school?**

Yes, it is.

**How long has [the school] been [free]?**

It has been [free for] two years already.

**Where [do] the students go after they complete primary school?**

They go to D--- village. This school goes up to eighth standard.

**[It is a] middle school?**

Yes, it is.

**How about after [middle school] at D--- village?**

After [staying at middle school] at D--- village, they [students] can also go to I--- [village]. In I---, they have up to tenth standard.<sup>398</sup> From I---, they go to J--- and then they go to Toungoo [Town for further education] or other places.

**How much [salary do] the teachers earn?**

I do not know that.

**Is there a clinic or hospital in your village?**

No.

**Where do you go if you villagers are ill?**

If we are sick [we call the medics] from D--- village and they come and give medical treatment [to villagers].

**How many medics are there [in D--- village]?**

Only two medics.

<sup>398</sup> In tenth standard you are 17/18 which is equivalent to US grade 12.

**Is there any development by other NGOs [non-governmental organisations] in this village? [Do they] supply water or distribute things, etc?**

Yes, there is. They come once or twice a month. They come more often in [the] summer.

**Do you know the name of the NGOs?**

The group that provides medicines is from I--- [village]. A Christian group from Toungoo [headed by] doctor Sheh Roh Paw distributes [medicines].

**Is that free?**

Yes. They heal [illnesses] in a short time.

**And for the water supply are there things like [NGOs] digging artesian wells?**

They tried last year. It was at the entrance of the village under the rain tree.<sup>399</sup> *Ka La* (or *Kaw La Thu*)<sup>400</sup> people came and did it. For that one I can only use a machine [to get water]. They [*Kaw La Thu*] never use the well.

**Is it ok [using it]?**

[It is] not ok. [It is] not useful.

**What other problems are there in this village? [Access to] water?**

No. And another thing is [there is no] clinic. We have no clinic to get medicines [for sickness] in the village and for the children who are patients [and] in critical [condition] we have to run to the [Toungoo] Town hospital. We cannot afford to pay for expensive clinics like Taw Win clinic or Kay Tu clinic [meaning they go to clinics in neighboring villages except these two clinics]. We just went [to the] old hospital [for medical treatment].

**Are there things like NGOs coming in and cooperating with the village leaders [for village development]?**

No. We do not have anything like that.

**In my village there used to be water scarcity, but people [NGOs] came and helped with this. If you get a chance to submit the proposal for your village needs, do it then.**

I have not had such things. This year, an uncle<sup>401</sup> talked about water [issues to a NGO]. He did not talk about it before. In the past there were no groups [of people] who are coming in like you Saya.

**Are there any armed groups coming into this area?**

<sup>399</sup> A rain tree is a species of flowering tree in the pea family.

<sup>400</sup> *Kaw La Thu*, “thu” meaning black, is a S’gaw Karen term which is sometimes used to refer to individuals in Burma/Myanmar who are perceived to have a darker skin colour. In Kayin state, it is often associated specifically with followers of Islam (Muslims), although this association is sometimes erroneous, and Muslim individuals do not typically self-identify with this term.

<sup>401</sup> *Pa Dtee* or *Dtee* is a familiar S’gaw Karen term of respect attributed to an older man that translates to “uncle,” but it does not necessarily signify any actual familial relationship.



No.

**Are there people who do not have enough food for each year in this village?**

Yes, there are.

**How do they [villagers] help out one another?**

There is no support from the [Burma/Myanmar] government, but like me I have farmland and I asked people to work on my farmland [for a share of the profit or for some rice]. This year [2014], people go and do chainsaw logging and have migrated to China and Bangkok. We do not have men to work on our land which is why we cannot find workers [to work on our land and share the rice or have a share of the profit]. There are five acres of my lands that are available for work. We cannot work on all these five acres of farmland. We can work only on two acres of our farmlands because my husband is over 60 years old already. We do not have a son and me and my daughter work on it [the farm] and do what we can [for our livelihoods]. This year, I worked on two [acres] of my land and I used seven baskets (224 kg. / 492.8 lb.)<sup>402</sup> of paddy seeds to sow crops and during the harvesting we got 180 [baskets of paddy] (3,762 kg. / 8,294.4 lb.). It helps us with our livelihoods. Sometimes [we are] unlucky [have nothing to eat], but we just have to work by ourselves. There is no support from the government. Sometimes, people [in other villages] just give [us food for free] to eat.

After farming we make thatch shingles and we sell them [for money]. We use it for our expenses in the kitchen [use the money to buy food] and other social occasions [e.g. full moon ceremony, water festival]. That is why we cannot lose [the] thatch shingles area [forest].

**How far is your village from Toungoo Town?**

Nowadays we go with a car. In the past there was no vehicle road. If we left from here [B--- village] at five am, arrive at I--- village at nine am, and took a car there [we would] get to Toungoo Town when it was dark. In 2012, the road went through to E--- village so we [would] walk to E--- and then take [a] car from E--- village [to Toungoo Town]. [It was] not much different; we [would still] get to Toungoo Town when it [was] getting dark. It is ok this year [travelling in summer]. There are three cars in G--- [village]. Two trucks travel back and forth. [In the rainy season], we leave [from G--- village] at six am and arrive back at three or four pm. It is better than in the past.

**Was there a car road in the past?**

Yes, there was. In the past we constructed it with people [villagers] only. The car and oxcarts [would] travel on it and the road was damaged. Now, we have a vehicle road which only cars use, no oxcarts.

**The government constructed that road?**

I don't think it was done by the government.

**[It was done] by villagers or a company?**

<sup>402</sup> A basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg. or 46.08 lb. of paddy, and 32 kg. or 70.4 lb. of milled rice. A basket is twice the volume of a big tin.

I guess it was done by a company.

**Was it done [a] long time ago?**

Not [a] long time [ago]. It was [done] in the rainy season. It was not done by a company either.<sup>403</sup> In the beginning we formed the road by hoeing [the soil ourselves]. Now, they [Dat Taing Group]<sup>404</sup> came and built [electrical] pylons in our village, they flattened the road in our village but we cannot use it [the road] in rainy season. It is fine in summer.

**Cars cannot travel in rainy season?**

No, they cannot because they did not [layer] it [the road] with [small] rocks.

**You have to walk in rainy season?**

Yes, as I was saying we have to go to G--- village on foot [to go to Toungoo Town]. We first formed the road and the Dat Taing Group [the group that came and built pylons] flattened the road with [a] bulldozer. I think [villagers] had to pay [Dat Taing Group] for the road to be flattened.

**What is the [official] name of Dat Taing Group?**

I do not know. I know them as Dat Taing Group.

**Was it in 2012?**

In 2014, in rainy season.

**So the [situation] is better in terms of travelling?**

Yes.

**Do you have anything to mention that I missed from my questions?**

You have asked quite perfectly.

**It is time for you to mention finally [is there anything more you would like to say?]**

What I wish [for] my village is we need more water sources. In my area we have only one water source so we want more. Another thing is it will be good if we have [a] clinic in our village so that we do not need to go to other places to seek medical treatment in a clinic or hospital.

**Thank you.**

Thanks.

Naw A---, (female, 39), B--- village, Thandaunggyi Township,  
Toungoo District (Interviewed in January 2015)

<sup>403</sup> Here, Naw A---'s answer contradicts her previous statement that it was probably done by a company. Naw A--- remembers more details about who built the road as she talks to the KHRG researcher..

<sup>404</sup> According to the interview, the villager did not know the official name of the Dat Taing Group, but usually this is a group sent by the government department tasked with installing electrical pylons.

**Source #128**

<b>Log #</b>	15-14-NB1
<b>Title</b>	Forced relocation and destruction of villagers' shelters by Burma/Myanmar government officials and police in Hpa-an Township, Thaton District, June 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in August 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-14-nb1/forced-relocation-and-destruction-villagers%E2%80%99-shelters-burmamyanmar-government">http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-14-nb1/forced-relocation-and-destruction-villagers%E2%80%99-shelters-burmamyanmar-government</a>
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-an Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	<p>On July 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2015, members of Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), Karen Environmental and Social Action Network (KESAN) and Karen Women Organisation (KWO) met with the villagers from B--- village, Hpa-an Township, Thaton District whose houses were destroyed and burnt down by the Burma/Myanmar government police force from Myaing Ka Lay Town between June 22<sup>nd</sup> and June 25<sup>th</sup> 2015. The villagers recounted in detail how the incident unfolded and the strategies they used.</p> <p><b>Background of D--- village</b></p> <p>D--- village is located on both sides of the main vehicle road from Hpa-an Town to Yangon, in Kaw Yin A Htet village tract, Hpa-an Township, Thaton District. The village is a Karen village in which villagers mostly earn their livelihoods from subsistence farming. D--- village is divided into two parts, B--- and C---. B--- is the upper, or eastern part of D--- village, while C--- is the lower, or western part of the same village. The two parts are separated by the vehicle road. B--- is a disputed territory, as it has been designated as a forest reserve by the Burma/Myanmar government despite villagers proclaiming it as their inherited land and place of residence.</p> <p>The history of the dispute can be traced back to October 1983, when Commander Myint Thein from Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) Brigade #1 (Thaton District) passed through B--- area and kidnapped a French couple.<sup>405</sup> The husband was an engineer who came to build a cement factory in Myaing Ka Lay Town. Commander Myint Thein took them to Manerplaw, Hpa-an District, where the headquarters of the Karen National Union (KNU) was located. The villagers did not dare stay in their houses along this road for fear of a Tatmadaw retaliation to the kidnapping and decided to move far from the vehicle road to C--- village. Since then, the Burma/Myanmar government confiscated the land on which B--- village stood, demarcating it as Myaing Ka Lay Forest Reserve.</p> <p>Even though the government demarcated the village area as a forest reserve, there are in fact no teak or ironwood trees in the area. Moreover, wealthy individuals from Hpa-an Town colluded with people of authority from the Burma/Myanmar Department of Forest Management and planted rubber trees for commercial purposes in the area. The elite businessmen have a vested interest in this land as it is close to the main road. In addition, the Tatmadaw has also been using the area as a firing range for target practice. As a result of these actions by the Burma/Myanmar government and wealthy individuals, the area</p>

<sup>405</sup> On October 15<sup>th</sup> 1983, the KNU kidnapped a French engineer, Jacques Bossu and his wife, who were working in Myaing Ka Lay Town. The couple were taken by the KNU through Kaw Yin A Htet village tract on their way to Manerplaw, Hpa-an District. The KNU then demanded that the French government cease all aid to Burma/Myanmar if they wish to guarantee their release. Despite their demands not being met, the KNU freed the couple on humanitarian grounds on November 25<sup>th</sup> 1983. For more details see "[Burma: Anti-Government Rebels Free Kidnapped French Couple](#)," *Reuters*, November 1983.

available for villagers' livelihoods became much smaller.

Following the 2012 ceasefire,<sup>406</sup> the B--- villagers submitted application forms to the Burma/Myanmar government of Kayin State in order to obtain land titles to be able to stay and work on their lands in B--- village, but received no reply. They also submitted an application specifically addressed to the chief minister of Kayin State, U Zaw Min, and to the KNU. The price of the land in the area began rising after 2010, as the military government was replaced by a semi-civilian government, which opened up the area for business and development. The villagers submitted their applications as soon as the political situation enabled them, since they knew wealthy individuals would continue to buy the land from under them.

The Burma/Myanmar government officials told the villagers that they would work on their behalf to get their land back, but no progress was made in addressing the B--- villagers' specific request. Meanwhile, the Burma/Myanmar government did provide an opportunity for any landless people in Kaw Yin A Htet village tract to obtain land grants. The Burma/Myanmar government set aside 20.8 acres of land in Shwe Ni area in Kaw Yin A Htet village tract, Hpa-an Township and allowed any landless people in the village tract, including B--- villagers, to enter a draw to obtain plots of land there. However, the area offered by the government in Shwe Ni was far away from the B--- villagers' place of residence and was not the land that the B--- villagers were asking for, so none of the B--- villagers took the offer. When they realised the Burma/Myanmar government was unwilling to grant the B--- land to them, the village head and the farm owners requested the KNU to come and demarcate the land, instead. Therefore, the Agriculture Department of the KNU measured the land and provided the land titles to the villagers on October 18<sup>th</sup> 2014.

### The incident

Following the demarcation of the land by the KNU, the villagers from B--- village went to the area and with the leadership of the senior monk of E--- monastery, Monk G---, cut down the rubber trees that had been planted by the wealthy individuals on their lands. Consequently, they were accused of violating Article #40 (a) of the 1992 Forest Law<sup>407</sup> and each villager had to pay 10,000 kyat (US \$8.59)<sup>408</sup> as a fine to the police.

In January 2015, villagers went back to the area and started to build houses and live in the area. On February 1<sup>st</sup> 2015, U Zaw Min, the chief minister of Kayin State, summoned 15 of these villagers to his office and ordered them to sign an agreement stating that the villagers will dismantle the houses by June 21<sup>st</sup> 2015 and will not live on that land anymore. According

<sup>406</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace process, see the [KNU Stakeholder webpage](#) on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014. In March 2015, the seventh round of the negotiations for a national ceasefire between the Burma/Myanmar government and various ethnic armed actors have begun in Yangon, see ["Seventh Round of Nationwide Ceasefire Negotiations," Karen National Union Headquarters](#), March 18<sup>th</sup> 2015. Following the negotiations, the KNU held a central standing committee emergency, see ["KNU: Emergency Meeting Called To Discuss Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement And Ethnic Leaders' Summit," Karen News](#), April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015.

<sup>407</sup> Article 40 of the [1992 Forest Law](#), which governs forest reserves states, "Whoever commits any of the following acts shall, on conviction be punished with a fine which may extend to 5,000 kyat (US \$4.30) or with imprisonment for a term which may extend to 6 months or with both." Article 40 (a) lists the act of "trespassing and encroaching in a reserved forest." Although this law states that they may be fined up to 5,000 kyat (US \$4.30), villagers were charged twice the amount, presumably because their only source of information on the law comes from a sign that was put up in the forest reserve, which omits the lawfully permitted punishment.

<sup>408</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015 official market rate of 1,167.00 kyat to the US \$1.

to the villagers who were summoned by U Zaw Min, *“He looked very aggressive and he punched the table repeatedly when he was speaking.”* The villagers told a KHRG member that they did not want to sign the agreement, but U Zaw Min threatened to put the villagers in jail, therefore they had no choice but to sign the document.

After the incident, Monk G--- requested the help Saw P---. A KHRG member met with Saw P--- who related the course of events. *“On February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015, Monk G---, senior monk of E--- monastery, phoned me and told me that there is a land problem in B--- village and requested my help. I heard that U Zaw Min, the chief minister of Kayin State, summoned the villagers, threatened them, and also scolded them. Therefore, I replied to him that I will help them. Then, I went to the village with my colleagues and met with the villagers. I also visited the place [the land the villagers had reclaimed] and I saw old farms, the rice paddy bunds and a monastery that burnt down. I was very sad when I saw the monastery that burnt down. I also got more energy [to pursue the villagers’ plight] when I saw the old farms and bunds [which testified to the truth that the villagers used to work and live there]. After visiting the area, I tried to work with the villagers and submitted an application to the relevant Burma/Myanmar government department. But after the water festival in April 2015, the KNU/KNLA-PC [KNU/Karen National Liberation Army - Peace Council]<sup>409</sup> came in and said that they do not want me to participate in this case. Therefore, I signed out [stopped acting on behalf of villagers] and waited to see [how] the situation [would turn out]. I was worried about what would happen in the future. But on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015, a villager phoned me and told me that the police came into the village and arrested 23 villagers and one monk [therefore I became involved again]. On June 12<sup>th</sup> 2015, U Zaw Min summoned me and told me that he would demarcate a place and provide the document [land title] for the villagers to live on it [outside the contested B--- village]. He also said that he would help the villagers with moving their possessions [arrange trucks for them]. But I told him to make sure to provide documents and demarcate specific plots for each household, otherwise problems will occur among villagers and he agreed. But he did not do anything yet, as of June 21<sup>st</sup> 2015. Therefore the villagers could not move [out of B--- village]. I went to Naypyidaw on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015 and a villager phoned me and told me that the police came and destroyed the houses. I arrived back to the village at 8:00 pm that night and I saw the houses that had been destroyed by the police. I saw some villagers in the monastery and they told me that they dare not live in the village anymore because they are afraid that the police will come and arrest them. Therefore, I took them to Myawaddy and then I submitted this case to the KNU.”* When the KHRG member met with the villagers, villagers reported that the police came and arrested 24 villagers on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015 and detained them in jails in Taung Ka Lay and Hpa-an towns. The police accused the villagers of encroachment.

On June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015, a large number of police officers and authorities from the Department of Forest Management of the Burma/Myanmar government came into the village and dismantled the houses. They destroyed the houses with chainsaws and burnt down the houses of villagers, including a school that the villagers had built on their own. The police also arrested three villagers on that day, totalling 27 people in the course of the raids on B--- village. Among those arrested was Saw Michael, the Deputy Commander of KNU/KNLA-PC Battalion #776, and a monk. There are some villagers who are still wanted by the police but they have so far successfully evaded arrest. The police and Department of Forest Management representatives came again on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> 2015, destroying and burning down houses. Some of them planted teak trees while the others continued destroying and burning the remaining houses.

<sup>409</sup> The KNU/KNLA Peace Council (also called the Karen Peace Council or KPC), is an armed group based in Htoh Gkaw Ko, Hpa-an District, which split from the Karen National Union (KNU) in 2007 and subsequently refused to comply with orders from the then-SPDC government to transform its forces into the Tatmadaw Border Guard. See: [“KPC to be outlawed if it rejects BGF,”](#) *Burma News International*, August 30<sup>th</sup> 2010.



According to the villagers, 97 houses were destroyed by the police in addition to another 78 houses that were dismantled by villagers themselves prior to the June 21<sup>st</sup> deadline given to them. As a result of these events over 500 people were displaced. Some villagers ran into the jungle and some villagers went back to C--- village. The police also took two motorbikes, one solar panel, two batteries, two TVs and two grass cutters that belonged to the B--- villagers, in addition to taking 900,000 kyat (US \$771.21) from B--- villager U H---'s house for themselves.

Within four days, the police had dismantled and burnt down all the houses in B---. They had previously ordered the villagers to dismantle their own houses prior to June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015, before they came and destroyed them themselves. Only a few villagers obeyed the order and dismantled their houses prior to the arrival of the police in the village, but most villagers did not. Over 30 households, amounting to approximately 100 villagers, fled to Myawaddy with the help of Saw P---, since they do not dare to live in the village anymore, and they are afraid that the police could come and arrest them at any moment.

On July 6<sup>th</sup> 2015, a group of KNU delegates from Hpa-an Township, Thaton District and some delegates from the KNU headquarters visited the place where the houses were burnt down by the police. They also had a meeting with the villagers and village administrator in C--- monastery, in C--- village. Only a few villagers came to the meeting and they said that the other villagers did not dare to come to the meeting as the village administrator did not invite them to the meeting. Some of them said they were afraid that the village administrator would inform the police about their participation after the KNU delegates left. The delegates from the KNU attempted to mediate between the villagers and the village administrator by pushing them to speak with each other and address the problem at hand.

During the meeting, a villager said that Yay Khe, a wealthy man from Hpa-an Township came to her house and told her that he gave a two million kyat (US \$1,713.80) bribe to the village administrator and one million kyat (US \$856.90) in bribe money to a village leader named Saw K---, who has a close relationship with the village administrator to help him to get access to 30 acres of land for planting rubber trees. Yay Khe also said that Saw K--- has returned the one million kyat (US \$856.90) to him but the village administrator has not given him any of the money back as of yet. Moreover, when one of the villagers asked the village administrator whether he took the money or not, the village administrator did not give him a straight answer. All he said was that Yay Khe asked him to sign a paper declaring the land to be wilderness instead of farmland, thus belonging to no one. This paper, which the village administrator signed, was necessary for Yay Khe to get permission from the government to work on that land.

Prior to the incident with the police and Department of Forest Management, it was the generally accepted opinion among the villagers that if wealthy individuals and companies from different places were allowed to grow rubber trees in the "forest reserve," then the villagers should be allowed to stay there, as well, and live on their own land. Therefore the villagers gathered together and built houses on the land, but the Burma/Myanmar government did not care about the villagers' plight and destroyed all the houses that they had built.

News Bulletin written by KHRG member (published in August 2015)

#### Source #129

<b>Log #</b>	15-15-A5-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw A---, May 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District

**Full Text**

**On February 5<sup>th</sup> 2015, I met and interviewed P--- villager at people hut in P--- village.**

**What is your name?**

My name is Naw M---.

**How old are you?**

I'm 43 years old.

**What is the name of the village you live?**

[I live in] P--- village.

**What is your ethnicity?**

I am Karen [ethnicity].

**What is your religion?**

I'm animist.

**What is your occupation?**

I'm doing farming. I work on a paddy farm. The paddy farm is not mine; it is someone else's farm.

**What village tract do you live in?**

[I live in] Meh Klaw village tract.

**Which township?**

Bu Tho Township.

**Which district?**

Mutraw [Hpapun] District.

**What brigade?**

Brigade #5.

**Are you married?**

Yes, I'm married.

**How many children do you have?**

I have seven children. Some of them are very small.

**How old is your oldest child?**



My oldest child is 20 years old.

**What about your youngest child?**

My youngest child is one year and six months old.

**How many households are there in your village?**

There are [censored for security] households.

**How many people are there?**

I don't know how many people. I think there are around [censored for security] people and more, including the children.

**Can you please tell me a little bit about your situation and your experience? For example, what experience have you had between the past and now?**

People told me that he [my husband] had a witchcraft skill and I told them back that he did not have a witchcraft skill.

**Is it correct that you heard that someone told you that people killed him?**

Yes. It is true that people murdered him and I knew it. It is not that he committed suicide.

**Who killed him?**

I think it was the KNDO [Karen National Defence Organisation] deputy commander.

**Which village tract is the KNDO's deputy commander and that the KNDO group is based in?**

I think they are based in Meh Klaw village tract. [It was] the KNDO's deputy commander of Meh Klaw village tract.

**What is his name?**

Saw Kler Say.

**Do you know how old is he?**

I think he is around 30 years old.

**What village does he live?**

He lives in A--- village.

**Is A--- in Meh Klaw village tract?**

Yes, it is in Meh Klaw village tract.

**Do you know the date when he killed him [your husband]?**

He [Saw Kler Say] murdered him [my husband] in the evening but I did not know what time he killed him because he [my husband] went to A--- village and I did not know what time he left there [A--- village] because I was sick. I told him [my husband] to go for a while. He went

there and he disappeared the whole night and till the next day evening. People found him at 5pm in the evening.

**How did people find him?**

Saw A--- said he went to the jungle to hunt yellow squirrel. He said that, *"I saw him and I thought it was my mom finding the firewood. I shouted at her, 'hey, hey' and I thought she is deaf so I went closer and shouted again 'hey' and I realised that it was not my mom. I looked at the body and I came to know that it was my Tee Doh [uncle]."*<sup>410</sup> He called him Tee Doh. *"So, I ran back to the village."* He ran back directly to my house.

**When he saw him, what shape did his body look like? How did people kill him?**

I didn't know because I did not go there and see it by myself. Saw A--- said, his [my husband] face was turned towards my house.

**What shape did his body look like? Did he [KNDO deputy commander] beat and kill him or did he hang him? What did he saw?**

He [Saw A---] told me that, he [my husband] was hanged. They [the perpetrators] hanged him with his longyi. They cut his longyi into two pieces. They hanged him with one piece of his longyi and left one piece. He only wore that longyi twice. His longyi was new.

**Did you remember which month he was killed?**

No. It was during the time when people harvesting paddy. It was in *lah naw* [Karen month in Karen calendar, November] because people harvest in *lah naw*.

**How did you know who exactly killed your husband?**

Before [right after the incident], I did not know who killed him. I knew it later.

**How did you know?**

I heard people said he [KNDO deputy commander] fled to Kaw Taw [Myaing Gyi Ngu Town].

**Who fled to Kaw Taw Town?**

Saw Kler Say fled to Kaw Taw Town. People [BGF] arrested him and brought him back because he killed people. And I came to know that he is the one who killed my husband.

**Did you know it after he was arrested?**

Yes, [I knew it] after people arrested him. When I heard people arrested him, I prejudged that it was him who killed my husband.

**Did you know the truth later?**

Yes, I knew the truth later.

**How did you know the truth? Who told you or did you find out by your own?**

I heard B--- was arrested and was ordered to go to the [KNU's Bu Tho] Township office,

<sup>410</sup> In Karen language the title *Tee Doh* [uncle] is used to convey respect to an elder and does not necessarily imply that the person is a relative.

regarding the issue that he [B---] ordered him [my husband] to go to his [B---'s] house and then disappeared. At that time Saw Kler Say came back to the village and before I thought it was him [who killed my husband] and after people arrested him my suspicioun was stronger.

**Did Saw Kler Say flee to Kaw Taw Town?**

Yes.

**Did Saw Kler Say flee to Kaw Taw Town because he killed your husband and he was afraid that people would arrest him?**

I think so. He might think that the case would be investigated so he fled to hide.

**Who went to arrest him?**

I do not know. I did not ask about who arrested him.

**Why did Saw Kler Say kill your husband? What mistake did your husband make?**

I did not know. I heard that he [Saw Kler Say] said that my husband tried to kill his younger brother with witchcraft skill and his younger brother kept getting sick continuously.

**Was his younger brother really ill?**

Yes, he was sick.

**Was he being sick before [the accusations]?**

I think he might have been sick in the past because all people can be sick.

**How did he know that your husband tried to kill his younger brother with witchcraft skill?**

I don't know about that. I heard he said my husband tried to kill his younger brother with witchcraft skill. I had never known or heard that he [my husband] tried to kill anyone with witchcraft skill. There are many diseases in the areas now [which people can get sick from].

**In the past, have you heard that your husband tried to kill someone with witchcraft skill?**

I had never heard about it. I got angry and scolded him once when I heard from people that he told them [he had witchcraft skill], *'you could not stick vagina with witchcraft skill'*. Sometimes, when he got drunk he might have told people that he had a witchcraft skill but I did not know about that. Sometimes, he healed people with a skill he had so he might over-tell [exaggerate] to people about it and people would take it seriously. I don't think he can do that.

**When he said your husband tried to kill his younger brother with witchcraft skill, did he have any conflict with your husband before that?**

I do not know.

**Did you hear from other people that your husband and he had conflict?**

He said that when his younger brother came and planted paddy for me, my husband shouted at him [his younger brother] and he got sick when he returned home so he said that

my husband did that [made him sick]. I did not [get involved] about that.

**How and why did your husband shout at him [Saw Kler Say's younger brother]?**

Because he [Saw Kler Say's younger brother] planted paddy too close and my husband did not have enough nursery paddy plants. So my husband told him to plant the paddy a little further. They were young and they could not plant paddy very well so they planted some too close and some a little further apart. He [my husband] saw that so he shouted at him [and his other friends]. When he came back home, I told him, *'don't talk to people like that. They are young and they will get angry at you.'* He replied to me that, *'because they did not plant paddy for us in the right way. If they plant paddy in the right way, I would not say that.'*

**It wasn't like he got [very] angry and shouted, right?**

Yes, he saw that [they were planting paddy too close] he told them. It was all done.

**So, Saw Kler Say's younger brother got sick after he went back?**

I do not know about [the details of] that.

**Was he only got sick right after he got back from planting paddy for you or was he sick in the past?**

I do not know whether he was sick or not because I did not go to his house. I only go sometimes when I need something.

**Was Saw Kler Say's younger brother sick seriously?**

I heard he went somewhere for treatment because he had a head-ache and felt dizzy. He said he felt dizzy for one or two months.

**How did he [Saw Kler Say] know that your husband tried to kill him [his younger brother] with witchcraft skill?**

I did not know and I did not ask about that. I also did not ask my husband. He [my husband] did not tell me that people suspected that he could commit killing with witchcraft skill.

**On the day when he was killed, did he stay at home or did he go to the forest?**

He went to check the water on that day. When I [went to the monastery and] sent a monk robe, he looked after his [our] children. When I went back home, he said he would eat rice so I told him, *'if you eat rice, I would eat too.'* I told him, *'I felt dizzy since I woke up this morning so I do not want to cook anything for you. I felt sick since yesterday.'* I asked him to send a monk robe but he did not so I sent it by myself. When I returned home he told me, *'your child is not feeling well.'* I told him, *'My child has not been feeling [well] since yesterday.'* My child did not like that I put [him/her] on the floor, so I had to carry [him/her] on my back all the time. He said he was waiting for me to come back [after sending monk robe]. When I reached home, he put a child beside me and said, *'here is your child, he is crying a lot.'* Then I told him, *'make some chilli paste if there is no curry left.'* He said, *'I don't want to make chilli paste.'* I told him, *'just go and collect some chilli from the tree [chili plant] and pound it and eat it with some boiled bamboo shoots that are left over.'* He prepared rice and he ate it. He asked me, *'you said you will eat rice too, why don't you eat now.'* I replied him, *'I do not want to eat because I feel dizzy and my breasts are pain too.'* He told me, *'you talk about your breasts pain again, when your breasts are in pain, you always talk in your sleep.'* I drank two to three pots of boiled hot water. I could not drink tepid water. I told him, *'I don't know, this*

*disease sometimes makes me feel pain.* When it affects me, I sustain pain for two to three nights continuously. When it affects me seriously, I sustain shock. I could not feed my child with my breasts. I hugged a hot water pot and drank all the boiled hot water. I had to boil another hot water and then drank it all. I had to do that till dawn. I felt better when the sunrise came. I fell asleep at noon because I could not sleep the whole night.

**So, he was with you at home at that time?**

Yes.

**You said he disappeared in the evening. Did you know when he went?**

He talked to me and burned a stone for me because I felt sick. He went there after he prepared a hot stone for me.

**Where did he go?**

He went to A--- village. He told me that, *'people asked me to go so I would go there.'* I told him, *'just go for a while.'* He replied me, *'yes, I will go only for a while.'* I told him, *'your child is not feeling well so you have to come back and look after [him/her] during night time. I'm not feeling well too. When your child is sick, [he/she] always cries.'* I told him to come back and he replied to me, *'yes'.* I told him, *'whenever you go out, you always disappear and get drunk.'* I told him, *'don't drink too much alcohol.'*

**Did he go?**

Yes.

**Did people ask him to go or he went by his own [accord]?**

People asked him to go.

**Who asked him to go?**

B--- asked him to. He told me, *'B--- asked me to go to meet him.'*

**Did you feel sick when he went?**

Yes, I felt sick and my child was sick for three days ahead of me. He went there after I sustained sick for three days.

**He did not come back after he went?**

No, he did not come back. He disappeared.

**When he disappeared, how did you find out?**

In the morning, I waited him till the sun rose and I thought he came here [in P--- village]. I did not know where he went. I thought he travelled around the village and when it got dark he slept at another person's house. It was not like that. In the past he came back home in the morning. Even though he slept at another person's house, he came back home when the sun rose. He usually reached home at around 7 and 8am. This time, it was already 12pm but he had not come back yet. He disappeared.

**Did you know it when Saw A--- came to tell you?**

Yes. I knew it when he came to tell me.

**How many days ago did he [Saw A---] found your husband's dead body [after he disappeared]?**

He [my husband] disappeared on Monday evening and his body was found on Tuesday at 5pm. He [Saw A---] told me that, '*I was hunting yellow squirrels.*' He always goes to hunt yellow squirrels at the tree known *t'htoo htoo* because yellow squirrels come to eat that tree's fruits. He founded the dead body there. He ran directly to my house and shouted, '*hey Ya Doh, hey Ya Doh* [aunty]<sup>411</sup>' and I shouted back to him, '*hey*'. He asked me, *go and untie Tee Doh* [uncle] *now*. And I asked him, '*why? who tied him?*' I thought people tied him. He replied me, *people do not tie him. He is hanging himself*. And I shouted, '*why did he do such a thing like that? In the past he told me that he dared not hang himself. Why did he hang himself? I did not tell him anything. I did not get angry at him and I only told him that I'm not feeling well and come back. Why did he do such a thing like that?*' He told me, '*I don't know*'. Then I asked my children to go and look at it [their father's dead body]. I asked him, '*where was it?*' He pointed me at the place and said, '*it is over there. You can see it if the place is cleared.*' I repeated again, '*why did he do such a thing like that?*' I felt like my illness was accelerating. I felt like my heart was not inside my body. I was full of anxiety.

**When you mentioned that the KNDO's deputy commander killed him, was it he, himself want to kill your husband or was it because other villagers are peer pressure?**

I did not know that. I think other villagers might encourage him. If no one encouraged him, he dared not do that. He just killed him [my husband] like that.

**So, there are some villagers who encourage him?**

Yes, there should be some villagers who encourage him.

**When he suspected your husband that he can kill people with witchcraft skill, had he informed his leaders to discipline and change him?**

No, I had never heard about that. If they suspected that he could kill people with his witchcraft skills, why didn't they arrest him and tie him, and then discipline him according to their rules? One person has to be disciplined three times right? After they discipline him/her for three times and if they still doing mistake, and if they kill them, there will be no case to file and submit to the court. Right now, they killed him before they disciplined him so there should be a case to file and submit to the court.

**Did people charge him now? Or did the people who killed your husband [still] staying at their house [not in prison]?**

No, people already arrested and tied them [the perpetrators up]. People put them in jail.

**How many people were charged for this case?**

There were three people.

**Who were they?**

They were one village head, Naw C--- and D---.

<sup>411</sup> In Karen language the title *Ya Doh* [aunty] is used to convey respect to an elder and does not necessarily imply that the person is a relative.

**Are these three people villagers?**

Yes, all three of them are villagers. One of them is village head.

**Why were they charged?**

I did not know. I heard people said, Naw C--- told him [Saw Kler Say] that, *'if you dare to kill him, we will give you money for cigarette'*.

**So, that means he [Naw C---] asked him [Saw Kler Say] to kill him [your husband]? Did he have any conflict with your husband, [which went on] until he wanted your husband dead?**

I did not know anything about that. He [C---] said he treated his [Saw Kler Say's younger brother] disease and found that there were many kinds of diseases he [Saw Kler Say's younger brother] was affected by so he thought that my husband tried to kill him [Saw Kler Say's younger brother] with witchcraft skill. There are many diseases in the area now. People usually say that, *'diseases are coming like termites and doctors are coming like maggots'*.

**In his [C---] village, did he only give treatment to him [Saw Kler Say's younger brother]? Has he also given treatment to other villagers too?**

I think he also treated other villagers too because other villagers have disease too. He also has [affected] many diseases.

**Then, how did he [C---] know that your husband tried to kill him [Saw Kler Say's younger brother] with witchcraft skill?**

I did not know where did he knew it and heard it from. He suspected that my husband tried to kill him [Saw Kler Say's younger brother] with witchcraft skill. I did not know about that. I don't think he [my husband] has witchcraft skill. He could not stick vagina with witchcraft skill.

**What about the village head? He is a village head; did not he tell them that it is not the right way?**

I did not know that.

**Was there anyone else affiliated with the case?**

I did not know about other people.

**Did Saw Kler Say kill your husband on his own? Were there any other of his friends involved?**

He and his two other friends involved.

**Are these two his subordinates or villagers?**

They were his subordinates. His [Saw Kler Say] rank was KNDO deputy commander so he should have some soldiers. His two soldiers were involved in the incident. I did not know who his two soldiers are. I do not know about the teenagers who grow up in the village now.

**As my understanding, the role of a KNDO deputy commander is to take security for the civilians, right?**



Yes, it is.

**Regarding what he had done now, do you think he did that by his own decision or he did that because of peer pressure?**

I think [he did that] because of peer pressure. I don't think he did that by his own decision.

**You said before that you did not know about how your husband was killed?**

No, people said that he hanged himself. I came to know it when people arrested and charged them [perpetrators]. People did not tell me earlier.

**These perpetrators have been brought to KNU's township office now?**

Yes, they all were sent [to KNU's township office].

**What about you? Have the leaders [KNU's] invited you to meet them?**

Yes. I reached E--- village. I slept at E--- village for four days. When I came back, I visited and slept at my parent-in-law's for one night so four [five] days in total. When I arrived home, one of my second youngest child got sick so I was very angry.

**Since your husband was killed, have you experienced any difficulty?**

I was sick and my children were sick. When I arrived home [coming back from KNU's township office], I told my children that I had to travel very far and had to carry my baby with me and I saw you [children] are sick when I arrived home, I don't feel good anymore. It is better if I die now. I told them [my children] like that.

**Is there any other difficulty that you face after your husband died?**

No.

**So that means, even though your husband is not alive, you can work and earn a living by your self?**

No way, I can't work and earn a living on my own. I don't even have money to buy MSG484 now. There is not enough shrimp paste now to make even a batch of pounded chili paste. A while ago, I went and asked my friend to give me some shrimp paste to make a batch of chili paste. I told her that I would buy it and pay her back when I had money. If my husband were still alive, I would tell him: 'there is no more MSG and salt now. Can you please find some money and I will buy MSG?' Then, he would make a winnowing tray or a basket, and then we could sell them and buy the MSG. I used to ask him to make a winnowing tray or a basket and I sold them and bought things to eat for the family. Because he is dead now, we don't have anything to eat. All the salt, MSG and shrimp paste were gone.

**Do you want to say anything regarding the case about your husband was killed?**

I would like to say [to the perpetrator] that, since you killed him, you must have to compensate. You must compensate me. They must buy some food for us. If you do not compensate us, we do not have any money to buy food. If my husband is alive, even though we could not buy a lot of food, we could still buy some food to eat. Since he is not alive anymore, we could not buy anything to eat. I do not have any money to by salt and MSG now. If he was alive, I could ask him to find money by doing some works. He would do that when he could still do it. When he could not do it anymore, I can't do anything too. It is better

if we both are alive. Only me [alive] is very difficult.

**After your husband was killed, do you feel happy?**

I don't feel any good. I would say it honestly. People say that husband and wife have only one heart. I felt pity on him [my husband] but I could not help. I can't resurrect him. So, I have to work and live poorly. I have to take care of my young children but I only have to take care of my youngest child. My older children do not know how to check the sickness for their youngest sibling. I have to take care of them by myself.

**As your point of view, do you think people who killed your husband and what they did, was right or wrong?**

I don't think it is the right way. If my husband was bad, what didn't they discipline him according to the rules? Now, they did not discipline him. Why didn't they discipline him, nor arrest him, tie him, interrogate him and put him in prison. Why didn't they question him continuously like, *'did you do it? Do you have witchcraft skill?* I did not know if they questioned him like this or not. If he admits that he tries to kill with witchcraft skill, then I can't help. He has to be punished with [for] the mistake that he made.

**When Saw Kler Say said your husband tried to kill his younger brother with witchcraft skill, how did he know it? Did he go to check with the fortune teller?**

I did not know that whether he checked it or not.

**What did you hear?**

I only heard he said my husband tried to kill his younger brother with witchcraft skill. I did not ask if he checked it with the fortune teller or not. I don't like to ask [this] thing.

**Can villagers in your village travel and work freely now?**

They can [travel and work freely]. Other villagers have both husband and wife in the family so they do better. But for my family we do not have that anymore. We have to work and earn a living poorly.

**Have Tatmadaw soldiers arrived in your village?**

I don't know. I don't think they arrive in my village. They used to come to my village in the past but not anymore.

**For how many years have they not come to your village?**

I think, it had been three or four years already. They have not been to my village quite long time ago.

**What about KNU's soldiers?**

Yes, they always go and buy food.

**Is your village located nearby any Tatmadaw army camp?**

No. It is not near. They [Tatmadaw army camp] are based in Hpapun Town. There are many Tatmadaw soldiers in Hpapun Town.

**Have the Burma/Myanmar government or Tatmadaw soldiers ordered forced labour or**

**demanded tax?**

I don't know about that.

**Do they still demand logs, bamboo or thatched shingles like the past?**

I have not seen them do that and I had seen they come to my village.

**How long has it been that they do have not done that?**

It has been more than two years already. In the past, they ordered us to do forced labour and harvested paddy for them.

**Are there any [cases of] sexual harassment to women by armed groups that happened between 2014 and 2015?**

I haven't heard about that.

**Do you want to say something else that I haven't asked you?**

I don't know what to say. My husband is dead now so they have to compensate me for sure.

**When you went to the court, what did the leaders [of KNU] tell you?**

They [KNU] township leaders told me that it is up to how much I will demand. I can't do anything else.

**Do you think they can pay you if you demand them?**

I don't think they can pay me. If they can only pay me half of my demand, it is fine for me. So they can suffer less.

**How much did you demand them now?**

All people who were involved have to compensate me.

**Have you told the leader about how much will you demand?**

I have not told the [KNU] township leaders yet. They told me that I would have to go and say it at the district office.

**So, the case now has to be submitted to the district level?**

Yes, they told me like that. I told them I dare not go there, I do not have money. I can't speak well and dare not speak at the court. They told me, it is okay. They are all Karen people. So I think I dare to talk a little bit. They told me, you can say what you want to say it. You do not need to feel bad. You can tell [the situation] directly to the head judge. I don't know who the head judge means. I told them I don't have anything else to say. I told them, even [when a] person's buffalo is killed they get compensation. Now, it is human so they must compensate me. If they compensate me half [the amount] of my demand, they will have to face less sentence [punishment]. They will even face more or less sentence [punishment] if they can compensate in full, like one per year. If they don't pay me, they will have to stay in prison for five or six years. For example, if they pay me in full and if they are sentenced for three years in prison, they will have to face the sentence for only one year. If they do not compensate me at all, they will have to face the full sentence.

**Do you have anything else to say?**

No.

**If you do not have anything else to say, thank you so much.**

**Source #130**

<b>Log #</b>	15-37-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Toungoo Interview: Naw A---, March 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Toungoo District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b> My name is Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b> I am 43 years old.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b> I am mixed-race of Kayin and Kayah.</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b> Christian</p> <p><b>Are you married?</b> No.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b> K--- village.</p> <p><b>Where is it?</b> It is in Kyauk Taing village tract, Toungoo Township [Thandaunggyi Township], Toungoo District.</p> <p><b>Is there school in the village?</b> No, there is not.</p> <p><b>Why is there no school?</b> Since we have moved from our village, there is no school.</p> <p><b>When did you move from your village?</b> In 1996.</p> <p><b>Where did you relocate from?</b> B--- villagers relocated from C--- [village]. The other villagers [from C--- village] relocated to the nearby villages.</p> <p><b>Who asked to move the village?</b> The Tatmadaw asked to move the village.</p>	

**How many households were there in [C---] village?**

There were *[censored for security]* houses.

**Were the villagers told where to relocate [to]? Was the place arranged for the villagers to relocate [to]?**

When we were forced to relocate from the village in 1996, the villagers were arranged [organised] to relocate to a nearby village which is D--- village.

**Did the [Myanmar] government arrange plots for the villagers [to live]?**

No, I do not know whether or not they arranged plots for the villagers because I relocated right away in C--- village where we have relatives. Some villagers live in Daw B---'s rubber plantation [in D--- village].

**Did the [Myanmar] government confiscate Daw B---'s rubber plantation?**

No, they did not confiscate her land; the villagers were allowed to shelter in her rubber plantation temporarily.

**How many days did they give you to move from the village?**

I do not know about it.

**Was there a school in the village at that time?**

Yes, there was.

**Was the school also moved?**

Yes, the school was moved to D--- [village].

**Is the school still in D--- [village] now?**

No, the school has been moved to E--- [village].

**Why was the school moved to E--- [village]?**

In 1997, the school and the villagers were asked to move to E--- [village from D--- village].

**So the villagers have moved twice?**

Yes, they have moved twice. One time to D--- [village] and another time to E--- [village].

**Were the villagers given expense for moving?**

No.

**Were the villagers supported with money?**

No, they did not get anything.

**So, you have to move by your own arrangement [using your own money]?**

Yes.

**How is the schooling for the children in this village now?**

The children in this village have to travel to school, facing difficulties. They have to go to school whether it is cold, windy or rainy.

**Where do they go to school?**

They have to go to school in F--- village.

**How far is it between K--- village and F--- village?**

It is three miles [in] distance.

**Do the students go to school on foot?**

Yes, they do.

**What about the kindergarten students?**

The kindergarten students also have to go [to school in F--- village].

**Do their parents arrange houses for them to stay [in F--- village] to go to school?**

No, they do not. The students go to school in the morning and come back to village in the afternoon on foot.

**Is there anyone who sends them to school and pick up them from the school?**

No, there is not.

**Are there any children who cannot afford to go to school although they want to go to school?**

No, there is not, but there are some children who started going to school late as it is difficult for them to travel. Their standards<sup>412</sup> are not matched with their ages as there was no school in the village.

**Do you have any plans to build a school in the village?**

I have applied [to the Myanmar government] to build a sub-primary school, which is from kindergarten to Standard 4 in the village, but I am not sure whether it will happen or not.

**Do the students, who go to school to F--- village, have [to] pay for the school administration fees?**

No, they do not have to pay.

**How long has it been that they do not have to pay for the school administration fees?**

It has been about two years.

**Until which standards do the students not have to pay for the school administration fees? Is it until Standard 9?**

I am not sure if it is until Standard 9 or not.

**Are there any school materials such as notebooks or textbooks that are distributed for free to the students?**

Yes, there are.

**Where are they distributed from?**

They are distributed from UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund].

**Is there a clinic in the village?**

No, there is not.

**Is there a nurse [in the village]?**

There is no nurse either.

**So how do the villagers treat their disease if they are sick?**

If the villagers are ill, they go to buy medicine at the shop in F--- village. If the villagers are seriously ill, they will be sent to Toungoo Town Hospital or Hset Tho Maing [village].

**How are the patients sent to Toungoo Town?**

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<sup>412</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Burma/Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

They are sent by truck. They are carried by people from K--- village to D--- village. Then, they are sent by truck taxi to Toungoo Town.

**Are there any health workers [who] come to the village and provide vaccines [via] injection?**

Regarding providing vaccines [via] injection, the child-mothers [mothers with young children] in this village were told to go to D--- village to have vaccine injections.

**What about the pregnant women, do the health workers come into the village and provide vaccines [via] injection if they cannot go to D--- village?**

The health workers do not come into the village. There is not one [pregnant women] who cannot go. They can go [to D--- village].

**What are the occupations of the villagers for their livelihoods?**

Most villagers are working on flat land farming and hill farming.

**Do they have enough food each year?**

They just get enough food. They do not have extra food.

**Does everyone have enough food?**

Some have enough food and some do not have enough food.

**Regarding those who do not have enough food, does the government support them in any way like providing a loan to them for the land?**

We do not receive any loans in terms of our land.

**What difficulty do you have working with farming?**

Regarding working on the farm, we have difficulties with financing. Another thing is that the weather is abnormal. If there are no trees near the farm, there will be climate change and it will affect the farmers.

**Were there any trees or bamboos [near the farms] in the past?**

Yes, there were.

**Why have the trees gone?**

The trees or bamboos [lands] near my farm were sold by the Peace Group. The people who bought them [the land] cut down the trees and they set up rubber plantations. Since there are no trees left, there is abnormal rain. There is also no stream [flowing]. As a result, the fertilisers [soil quality] has become not good enough [to grow on] so it affects the farmers.

**How does the Peace Group sell the land?**

They [the Peace Group] said that it is the land owned by the Tatmadaw. The Tatmadaw gave the land to them so they sold the land. The Tatmadaw gave them the land for working on the farm, not for selling. [However] they sold the lands.

**Whose lands did the Tatmadaw confiscate?**

The lands are the civilians' land. The lands are owned by their ancestors. There are some trees like dog fruit trees. They cut down all of the trees.

**Is there any K--- villagers' land [that was] confiscated?**

Yes, there is.

**Were the villagers paid compensation?**

No, they were not.

**What do they do on the land? Do they do gold mining, plant long-term trees, or lease**



**the land to villagers?**

They sell the land. They do not plant any trees on the land. They sell the land to the rich people. For me, as I do not have money, I cannot afford to buy [the land]. Thus, the villagers do not have land to work on.

**Did they have any consultations with the villagers [regarding the land confiscation]?**

No, they did not have consultations.

**Did they [the Peace Group] also confiscate the farm [land]?**

In relation to the farm, we have to pay [tax of] one rice sack per acre [of our farm].

**Whom do you have to pay it to?**

We have to pay to the Peace Group, the militia.

**What if you do not pay to them, how are they going to respond [act] to you?**

In the past [1997], we had to pay them when they arrived in the village. This year, 2015 we do not pay them.

**Why do you not pay them [this year]?**

I do not pay them because my farm produced less paddy and we do not have enough food.

**How long have you paid one rice pack per acre?**

We started paying them when they arrived here.

**Which year did they arrive in the village?**

They arrived in 1997-1998. This year, in 2015, we started not paying them.

**Did they support you [with] any equipment or finance for farming?**

No, they do not support us [with] anything.

**Is the farm that you are working on your own land or do you borrow [rent land] to work on the farm?**

The farm that I am working on is my ancestor's land. They [the Peace Group] said that it is the Peace Group's land. They asked us to pay tax. It is like they confiscated my land.

**Was there anyone who did not pay tax to them in the past?**

Everyone paid them.

**If anyone could not pay them the tax, what did they do? Did they threaten or beat [the villager]?**

I did not hear anything like threatening or beating. The villagers paid them the tax regularly. The villagers sent one rice sack per acre to them.

**Were there any problems related to the farm?**

I did not permit the plantations which are near my farm to be cut down, to plant the rubber trees because it will be hotter than before and the fertiliser will be worse than usual. When we did not permit them, a hired person [hired by the land owner] of the Seventh-day Adventist teacher wielded a knife towards me. I told him: "*Cut me!*" However, when I asked him to cut me, he did not cut me. Now, they have cut down all of the trees and they have planted rubber trees.

**Where is the Seventh-day Adventist [school]?**

It is in D--- village. It is said that the name of the teacher is Bi Ja Min. I am not sure [if the information is correct] with his name.

**How did he aim a knife toward you?**

I told him not to cut down the trees near my farm because I am going to work on my farm. He was about to cut me with his knife. Then I told him: “*cut!*” He was thinking [then he did not cut me]. The place is near my farm and I also have the land title.

**How did the land become the Bible school, the Seventh-day Adventist’s land?**

They bought it from the Peace Group, the militia, so it became their land.

**Do you know the time [date] that they bought the land?**

I do not know the time [date] that they bought my land. I do not know how much they [the Peace group] sold the land [for] either.

**What other problems do you have [regarding the land]?**

There was only one time that I had to face problems regarding the land.

**Did you go to solve the problem [with the Seventh-day Adventist Bible teacher]?**

When my brother went to solve problem [with the Seventh-day Adventist Bible teacher], the one who aimed the knife towards me did not dare to come [in the discussion]. Then [after this incident], I did not hear them [the Seventh-day Adventist Bible teacher and workers] saying anything [about the land]. Now, they have cut down all of the trees and they have planted rubber trees. I tried to stop them but I could not make them stop.

**Was there any gold mining conducted in that place?**

People are allowed to mine [for] gold at the water channel in my farm, so there is abnormal weather [changing environment]. The water channel has also been destroyed, so I do not get the water that we want for farming. Therefore, it affects my farm and my farm produced less paddy [this year].

**Who conducts gold mining? Were they from the Peace Group?**

No, the Peace Group does not conduct gold mining; they allow [other] people to conduct mining.

**Who conducts gold mining?**

I heard that the people from O--- [village] come and conduct gold mining. But I do not know exactly where they are from.

**Was [compensation] money provided for the land that had been destroyed?**

No, it was not.

**Is there any farm [land] that has been destroyed [due to gold mining]?**

At the corner of my farm, the soil was flowing down to my farm and it covered the paddies so the paddy field [ridges] fell down [collapsed].

**Do they conduct gold mining [during] the whole year?**

They conduct gold mining only in the rainy and cold seasons; they do not conduct [gold mining] in hot season as there is no water.

**Didn’t you report [to the Peace Group] that the paddy plants in your farm were been destroyed?**

Yes, I did. They [the Peace Group] replied that they did not know anything [regarding this issue]. They are the ones who gave permission to conduct gold mining and they said that they did not know [regarding this issue]. They are just lying.

**Who said that he does not know anything?**

Maung Ket.

**Who is Maung Ket?**

He is the from the Peace Group. He is the land coordinator.

**Did they give any compensation for the destroyed paddy?**

No, they did not give anything.

**Were other farms also destroyed?**

They conducted gold mining in the water channel near my farm so it affected my farm as well as nine or ten other farms. We get the water [for the farm] from this water channel [for farming]. Since the water channel has been destroyed, where are we going to get the water from? [Now] we do not get water even if it is in rainy season. As a result, the paddies are not growing well.

**Have you all gathered together and reported to them [about the problems on your land]?**

I have already reported to them but they said that they do not know anything.

**Was the gold mining conducted only in this area?**

I just know of one place where [gold mining] was conducted in addition to my farm.

**How many years have they conducted gold mining?**

They have conducted gold mining for three years.

**Has the production [harvest] of the paddy reduced a lot during these three years?**

Yes, the paddy has reduced a lot this year, in 2015.

**How are you going to respond to them so that they are not going to conduct gold mining near the farm in the future?**

There is no place to work on [farm] near the gold mining site as it has been destroyed by the gold mining machines.

**Is it dangerous as there are holes from gold mining left in the ground?**

Yes, it is dangerous for the buffalo and cow. People also could fall down into the holes if the holes were covered with small plants and if they do not notice that there are holes. Mostly, it is dangerous for the animals.

**So it is better to cover the holes after they have conducted the gold mining.**

Yes, it is. What I want to mean to say is that if they cover the holes after mining and then make [clear] room for the water channel, it will help us, the farmers, for farming. If they do not do so, we will face difficulties farming in the rainy season. In the coming years, there will be challenges for us for [our] livelihood issues.

**Regarding mining, do they [the gold miners] have to pay a monthly cost [to the Peace Group]?**

Yes, they have to pay but I do not know how much they have to pay.

**Do you have any feelings that you would like to express?**

I feel that it is not good that they destroyed the water channel for me and for the farmers. As they confiscated the hill land, we currently do not have any land to work on. We do not get anything with regard to compensation. We also do not have money to buy the land [that the Peace Group confiscated from them] so it will be difficult for us in the future. It is likely [to be] more difficult in our children's generation.

**Did you do anything to regain your land?**

Regarding the land, we have submitted [the land case] to parliament but we do not know [the process for] how they going to do [solve the problem] for us.

**How did you submit [the case]?**

In the submission, we included [all of the information], specifically: the number of farmers, acres of the farm [that were confiscated], the type of land, like hill land, and our identification [ID].

**Did it cost anything when you submitted [the information]?**

If the elder people [authorities who work on land cases] come into our village, we will have to serve [provide] them food.

**Which year did you submit [the case]?**

I submitted [the case] on August 20, 2014.

**Now it is 2015. How has [the case] been going?**

There is nothing going on with the hill land [case]. Regarding the farm land, we have filled out the form #1.

**Did you have to pay money when you filled out the form (#1)?**

We had to pay 500 kyats.

**If you have to fill out the form #7 [for the next step], how much will you have to pay for it?**

I do not know yet.

**Do you have anything more to add?**

No, I do not have anything else to add.

**Thank you so much for answering the interview questions.**

Thank you.

**Another thing, are you going to give me permission to use the information that you have provided to me?**

Yes, I give you permission to use the information.

Thank you.

**Source #131**

<b>Log #</b>	15-38-A4-I1
<b>Title</b>	Doolaya Interview: Saw B---, March 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Doolaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Saw B---</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Christian</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 37</p>	

**Marital Status:** Married

**Occupation:** Farming

**Position:** Village tract leader

**How many armed groups operate in your region?**

There are three armed groups, which are the KNU, DKBA and BGF.

**Are they based in your village tract or are they just temporary, patrolling in and out?**

All armed groups are based close to our village tract. However, they do not base [themselves] in our village, they just come in and out. Do I also have to report about the Tatmadaw too? There are police stations and a Tatmadaw army camp located in Than Mya village which is in my village tract.

**How is the situation of armed group activities and their movements?**

They do not make any trouble to the villagers for the moment; they even help villagers when necessary. There are no such activities that make trouble to villagers.

**How was the movement of KNU, BGF and DKBA and their activities during the transition period?**

Before the ceasefire, mostly the livelihood of villagers was hard but sometimes the situation was good while living under the control of the armed groups. However, after the ceasefire we do not see their strange activities in our region. Therefore, we can say that the situation is much better compared to the past. We are now closely building relationships with all armed groups. However, before the ceasefire some of the armed groups, we dare not talk to them, we have to stay away from them.

**How is the livelihood situation in your village?**

The villager's livelihood is fine but villagers do not have any other work to do except farming. For some villagers, they do small logging for a living.

**Do they get along with their livelihood?**

For logging, they do not gain much profit for their income, because they just do small logging projects with a small number of trees. Sometime if people from the city are building a house, if they want to buy a log they just go and sell it like that. There is no huge project carrying logs with a big truck, the villagers transport the logs only with a cart and tractors.

**Who did logging? Are they only villagers or involving the armed group?**

Yes some are villagers. I do not see an armed group doing a huge logging project in my area but I do not know for the other areas.

**Do you have any issue regarding the military movement and their activities?**

There is no big issue coming up during the period between 2014 and 2015 regarding the military activities in the village. If we compare to the past, the situation has been improving a lot already. If there are any problems in the village tract regarding the armed group activities,

the village head will inform me. But now we have one incident about the killing case which happened in K--- village. However, if we look at the victim who died, we assume that the shooter used a weapon which belonged to an armed group. However, we cannot identify exactly which armed group he belonged to. But surely the weapon is AK-47 which belongs to the armed group. However, there is no armed group looking for trouble to the villagers yet. We are now hoping for the higher level leader to take action and investigate the cases.

### **How did it happen?**

He was shot and died in his own house. But when he was shot, he did not die immediately, he could still run very far, until 75 cubits.<sup>413</sup>

### **When did the incident happen?**

47 year old man with four children who lived in K---, called Saw Hpa Hsweh [in Karen language] and in Burmese [language] called U Thaung Nyein, was shot and killed on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 9:23 PM.

### **Why did people have to kill him?**

People suspected him of witchcraft, with which he can kill people with magic. Personally, even though [if] he is doing witchcraft or not, as I am a village tract leader, I want the eye witness or people who can prove to me, and report it to me first, then I will handle and analyse the case, if the cases cannot be solved in the village tract level we will move forward to the next step to the higher level leader, this is what I want. But this case, it seems like I have to get the case back from the higher level leader and I feel like I am a worthless leader, as I am a leader, they do not value me. Since the beginning I do not want the position, but because the villagers and village heads selected me as a village tract leader as they trust us and believe us so they select us. After selection, if the case happens and they did not let us know, this is a question coming out to me that; can they not rely on us to investigate the case, for the villagers do they have a place to value us? And secondly, can the armed group rely on us regarding this?

### **You had mentioned that the gun that killed the victim is an AK-47 which belongs to the armed group, so how can you definitely tell that it was an AK-47?**

I know it because when I arrived at 9:23 PM I asked one of the formal village leaders who knows and is an expert in knowing the gun structures, I asked him is the gun sound like a homemade gun or machine gun? Based on the answer, this is not a homemade gun, it was machine gun. For this reason, I and the local security guard went out to where the incident took place, and at the same time I asked them to bring a torch light and find out the evidence in the place where the incident took place. If it is surely a machine gun the bullet shell will be remaining somewhere on the ground. After they searched for a while they found it. I asked them to mark a location and not to touch it, then I asked security who have more power to take it out and bring it. As I am not sure about what kind of bullet shell it was, I asked them and they said this is an AK bullet shell, which does not belong to the civilians. At the same time I contacted T---, who is also known as S---. And I gave the bullet to him as he is in charge of investigating the case. However, as the incident happened and the victim did not die by a civilian gun, we handed it over to the armed group to investigate the case.

<sup>413</sup> A cubit is a standard measurement for the length of bamboo poles, commonly referred to in Karen as the length from one's fingertips to one's elbow, about 45.7 cm or 18 in.

**Have you investigated a person who killed Saw Hpa Hsweh [the victim]<sup>414</sup>?**

I have received the killers' information already; here is the summary of the incident information. On March 16<sup>th</sup> 2015 Monday around 7:13 PM, U Tin Myit and U Maung Kya both were accused of links to the [separate] killing case. [They] were questioned and detained and they both admitted it. In 2013, the family member of U Maung Ba Htun accused U Thaung Nyein [Saw Hpa Hsweh] that [he] was the person who killed U Maung Ba Htun. For this reason, on March 14<sup>th</sup> 2015 Saw Heh Thaw who lived in Plaw Hpa Htaw brought a gun, an AK-47, to kill U Thaung Nyein [Saw Hpa Hsweh] and on March 15<sup>th</sup> 2015 Sunday night at 9:23 PM, U Thaung Nyein [Saw Hpa Hsweh] was shot dead, which was reported by two detainees U Tin Myit and U Maung Kya.

**Did you know Saw Heh Thaw [the man accused of the killing] well?**

Yes we knew him, he was originally born in K--- village, his parents and sibling are living in K--- but two of them, which are his older brother, called M---, and he [Saw Heh Thaw] got married in P--- village.

**When did they get married in P---?**

About 10 years ago already. Once he was a soldier too. Firstly he joined KNU but after that we do not know for sure whether he is still with the armed group or left already.

**Did you know his commanders name while he was serving in the KNU?**

I do not know. When he was serving in the KNU he was still single, he did not get married yet.

**How old was Saw Heh Thaw?**

I think his age is not very different with me. Probably the age is between 37 to 38 years, I just estimate, I cannot tell exactly.

**Did he usually come back and visit his village in the past?**

Yes, he usually came back and visited his village and when he came back sometimes he acted as a leader. We also saw him when he was drunk and went around in the village too. But he did not look for a problem with other people. But now as his name is spread out by these two fellows who were detained, so I believe that the information is true, that is his arrangement.

**Which part of the body did the bullet go through?**

He was hit in the left side of his neck.

**How many people lived in the house when he was shot?**

There was only he and his youngest seven year old son in the house while he was shot. After he was shot he was not dead immediately, he grabbed his child and ran away and headed to Saw M---'s house, which is close to U B---'s house. But we have not measured the distance between Saw M---'s house and his house, we just measured the distance between U B---'s house and his house which is about 55 cubits. The distance between U A--

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<sup>414</sup> Here, the names Saw Hpa Hsweh and U Than Nyein are used interchangeably in reference to the same person [the deceased man].



-‘s house and the victim’s house is about 37 cubits.

**Did he leave his child at home?**

No he rushed to grab his son’s leg and carried him away until the shop. After he was lying on the ice box, he cannot move any longer, then he was carried back to his house and he was still alive when people brought him to his house, he could not talk anymore, and about 10 to 15 minutes later he died.

**How many children does he have?**

Four in total, three sons and one daughter.

**Do you know the name of his children?**

Yes. The eldest son name is Saw T--- who is 26 years, Saw Ta--- who is 19 years old, his youngest son name Saw M--- who is 7 years old, and his daughter’s name is Naw M--- and she is 17 years old.

**Where had his wife gone during the incident as you mentioned only his youngest son was at home?**

That night his wife and daughter went out hunting frogs in the paddy fields and they got about 25 *kyat tha* [a measurement of weight] of frog that night. Then they came back, and when they arrived at U Kyaw Kay’s house she was asked to come and join to chew betelnut. After they heard a gunshot, she and her daughter hurried to go home. I also went and asked her about this and she said she and her daughter went out to hunt frogs and his youngest son and himself went out for a movie in another house, and they came back to his house and his youngest son lay down in his bed and then the gunshots started, and his father shouted out loud and he went to his father, and his father grabbed him and brought him away.

**How many armed groups are based in P---, as the victim was shot by an AK-47 rifle, which belongs to the armed group?**

I do not normally arrive at P--- village, and I heard that DKBA, KNU, KNLA-PC and BGF are there.

**Did he work with any of the armed groups while he lived in P---?**

I do not know for this one, because I have not been to P--- for about four to five years. I know that when he came back he visited and built relationships with us, but for me I have not been for a long time so I do not know what he is doing.

**What did you hear of U Thaung Nyein’s behaviour and did you see any of the evidence or proof that he is practicing witchcraft?**

Nothing, I did not see this guy having problems with others. Personally, I think he is a quiet person, and did not do drugs and just worked quietly for his livelihood. He is doing any kind of hardship jobs, even if he was asked to dig a channel for his livelihood. He is working for the livelihood and any of the benefits that he gets is from his hard work. We did not see him doing such bad things to other people. However, as I mentioned, people who saw him as a bad guy also cannot give me the evidence too. If they can show me the evidence I am eager to know and see too. Firstly, I will solve and handle the case. If the case is too difficult in the local level to solve, I will hand it to the higher level authority. However, before they are doing

something they should have informed about the problem to me, but they did not let me know in advance. For this reason, I do not believe that he can do black magic, because nobody can provide me the evidence, and people who killed the victim cannot answer what I am asking for.

**Do you have anyone who can give you the evidence that he can do black magic?**

No.

**Based on this case how do you guys handle it?**

In the village level we did not arrange anything for the victim. As the victim died by the armed group weapon so we do not handle anything, everything has been handed over to the armed group.

**Which armed group did you hand it to?**

We handed it over to the Noh Ta Kaw Township local KNU responsible person.

**Did the investigation team arrive here?**

Yes, the investigator arrived in the morning and we took a photo of the homicide wound and the evidence of the wound. He even saw the homicide [victim] by [with] his own eyes.

**Have the perpetrators that you mentioned a moment ago been detained?**

They have not taken any action yet. As they have not taken any action, as we are the leaders we have to analyse and investigate the case, and we also want the investigator team and those responsible who took over the case to take the action as quickly as possible. As the person who did this knows their mistake and what they have done, and as we submit the case so we also worry for our security, their tracks will come back to us. We cannot find out more information as we explained what we have. For them, are they waiting for more information or are they watching our leaders' back, we do not know, I just want to know that.

**Are there any consequences regarding this killing case?**

I want to say one thing, this family are poor, they do not even have money for the funeral. This person [Saw T---], he was an innocent [man] but he had to die violently, and the family are also poor, so for this reason someone has to take responsibility for the death in this family. As a single mother, the livelihood situation is getting harder for her. If her husband were [still] alive, the situation would be much better. For this reason, we want the responsible person to assist the victim's family.

**Do you have any other problems in your village tract that I have not asked?**

Nothing special, regarding this killing incident case, it put the family who were left behind in a bad situation. I also want to know one thing regarding the leadership. I believe as the people decided and elected a village leader, each elected village leader has the ability to lead and they can decide what is worst to do. If other village tract leaders jump in, should they inform us? Does it need to be informed to me for example if a problem happens in my village tract, and the other village tract leader comes and jumps in and solves the problem in my village tract?

**For this case, I do not think you can take over the case in another village tract, and it**

**is also not good to not inform the host.**

For example there is one problem happening in another village tract, so I go to that village tract and I solve the problem as much I can but I did not inform that village tract leader. Do I have authority to do that? I asked it because in the past we have experienced that kind of situation. For example, if a village tract leader sees a person who might need help, the village tract leader and associate leaders discuss together to help and support the person. Before giving support, the team of a leader will carefully consider making decisions on whether a person's personality and their livelihood conditions are good or not. If it is worth it to provide the support or not. If it is worth it to support that person, the leader will guarantee them and will be giving the evidence of the document. However, after that when other village tract leader does not like this, they come and do as they want without informing the host village tract leader, I want to say it if the host village tract leader, which has guaranteed the cases already, the other village tract leader should not find the problems for the villager. If they are not happy with the decision they should come to the host leader who guarantee's to a person, not directly to that victim. If a host leader guarantee's, they can work, if there is no permission a person cannot work.

**Regarding jumping over or taking over the responsibilities of other village tracts, did you inform the township responsible person?**

In the quarterly meeting I had already reported and talked about it but they did not take actual action for this case yet. I just wanted to know that if a case happens in our village tract, which we cannot handle alone, so two village tract leaders cooperating together will be great. If we work together with many people [it] will be more effective and it will go smoothly. If you work alone it will not work all the time. For this kind of case we can support each other. But for jumping over and taking over the case without informing the host it will become the weak point for the other village tract leader and it can make them feel depressed regarding the work that he responsible for.

**Do you want to say anything else?**

Can I talk about the education and healthcare? In our village basically we would like to build up the education and then come along with the healthcare. We have the education, however if we are not healthy we cannot not do anything. We want to use the education sufficiently; also based on our current village situation, if we need the support from the higher leaders such as KED [Karen Education Department] or township responsible person, they should care about us, if they value our education. Moreover we are thinking of increasing our education standard. Secondly, as our village has grown bigger and bigger, the healthcare also should be increase. Currently as there are insufficient numbers of local health workers. For example, if two or three patients are sick at the same time and the health workers are also busy and struggling with the personal livelihood issues they do not have much time to look after the patients, so it becomes a problem for the patient. In this kind of situation some of the patients have died because of lack of health workers. For this reason, how the people responsible will handle this and how can they address this kind of case?

**How many standards of education do you have in your village?**

There are seven standards. Firstly the school was built by the villagers as a self-reliant school. However all of the school buildings and materials such as wood and other building materials are provided and constructed by the villagers, which have not received any support from the government; after the school was built it became a government school and right now the school in our village, the level of the standard started from first standard until seven standard.

**How many government teachers teach in this school?**

For the teachers, they always substitute and I think it is enough for the teachers. Some of the teachers still have to study even though they teach, but this is their teacher problem so as we still have the school principle, the principle will handle the issues. Even though we talk about it, it does not mean that we are gossiping about the teachers, however our villagers still contribute a lot of things for the education.

**The standards, starting from first grade to seventh grade, was it directly set up by the Myanmar government?**

Yes.

**What about now regarding increasing the level of standards, did you meet with the government responsible person?**

Yes, we have been talking about it and discussed about it with them for many years already. Now if we look at our neighbouring village, you may see some of the village's school were built behind our school, many years, but is now better than our school. For us we always submit the letters and also try to report to the government for renovating the school but we never receive any of the responses from them.

**Did the government allocate and send out any health workers for healthcare services?**

For the healthcare, the government setup a clinic in the Tha Mya area and the clinic is in the Noh Ta Hsu village and if we want to go to the clinic in Noh Ta Hsu village it will take a half hour of walking. In the past if we want to take prevention injections, for pregnant mothers, children, prevention of polio, the health worker themselves came to the K--- village but now since this year if we feel sick or something is happening, we all have to go to Noh Ta Hsu Clinic; the health worker will not come to K--- village anymore. Because they built the clinic for us there. If we look at what the government said in our village tract, if we want to build the clinic in our village is that ok?

**Do health workers, for emergency cases, set up in the village as you said there was a clinic built in Noh Ta Hsue which takes 30 minutes' walk?**

Only the assistant midwife, but for the injections we have to go to the clinic in the Noh Ta Hsu village.

**What about the health worker from the KNU side such as [Free Burma] Rangers or other health working groups, have they ever been available in your village?**

Yes last year they came once but we have never seen again since then.

**They will probably come and when they come you can also mention about it to them; the things that you have mentioned to me. I will report it to the higher level leaders too but I do not know what decision they are going to make regarding education and healthcare.**

For us, we want to increase the quality of healthcare and education in our village independently. If we look at our village situation everything is done by ourselves [villagers] for the income, and support from the outside is very weak. Currently as we were told any organisation that wanted to enter and support, they have to meet the requirements according to the policy which is very difficult to enter. As we are lower level we sometimes could not do many things as we are weak [not enough manpower]. For this reason we live behind the

other villages if we compare to their development growth.

**How many households in this village?**

The documents that I gave you yesterday; that information has been included.

**For this one we just have to report it to another higher level leader. I cannot give any decision on this and I cannot give you the answer what we discussed too.**

For me I do not want the answer. I just want to know how can we report it and what level can I report it to, just this.

**You can report everything to me regarding the health care, education and other challenges in the village and we want the village leader to report to us as many problems that they face in the area. If the armed group abuses villagers' rights we want village leaders and villagers to report it. If you do not report to the higher level leaders, they do not know what things are happening on the ground.**

Yes. There is one more problem but this is happening in our village tract so it is our responsibility to handle it. We also brought this issue and reported it when we attended quarterly meeting already, about the guests or Burmese people who come from the upper part of Burma, called *A-Nya Tha*<sup>415</sup> they are not our ethnicity, but as they live in our community we try to guide them as possible as we can. When they came they informed us but after they left, some of them did not inform us. Regarding the other ethnicities, they come and work in our area, how can we deal with this issue?

**Do *A-Nya Tha* workers who come and work here live in the village?**

No. They come and look after the plantations as plantation caretakers. And we also asked and recorded their identify cards and their names. To be able to work here, they come and show, but some of them after they leave, they substitute another person but they did not inform us, for this kind of case how do we want to handle it? As [teacher] you are higher educated you might know about the policy more than me.

**Had you ever discussed and talked about it with the local authority?**

We had already talked about it with the armed groups who operate in our area and the responsible person. If we look at the incident mostly the problems that arise are from ethnicities who are working on the plantation. There are fewer problems happening among Karen people but there are greater problems coming from workers who look after the plantation. For the Karen people we can talk and solve and understand the problems easily, but it's very difficult for the outsiders.

**Did the local responsible leader handle this?**

Yes, we even have a written policy and the rules on the document to show, but even we have this, if the problem comes up from those people, they do not seriously care about it and still, the problem keeps happening. For this reason, to be able to handle them we have to seriously take action on creating the policy and the rules for them.

**For this case I think you have to discuss with the responsible person. Have you talked to them?**

<sup>415</sup> In the Burmese language, people originating from upper Burma/Myanmar are typically called *A-Nya Tha*.

Yes, but the problem still occurs, in our village tract and our village we do not have it, if something occurred it will be big but we do not know for the small issues, if they are happening in our region or not.

**How many of them come and work here?**

There are too many people, when they are coming some of them include the whole family, some are only couple, which left the family at their home.

**When they settle here what are the common problems they normally have?**

Mostly they are arguing and fighting each other, between the workers and the workers and owner. Some of the workers work very hard for the owner but when the owner has to pay according to the agreement between them, the owner did not do as promised, but on the other hand some of the owners give the workers as promised but the workers did not complete the work as they promised. Mostly the problems arise among them as they live closely and are complaining to each other so they started fighting each other.

**Does the problem arise just among the workers and the owners? Are there any conflicts between the villager and workers?**

Not including us. However, the villagers which have three to four households who live close to them, they have to be afraid and also when local people travel close to their area they have to be afraid of the outsiders [other ethnicities]. Actually we are residents who have to be afraid of the guests; it should not be like this.

**What did the local authority suggest during the discussion?**

We were suggested to strictly control the owners as they are in charge of it. If they cannot guarantee or be responsible for the workers they should not hire them. As the regional leader directed, we had a meeting with the land owners and we let them know about the issue. We also have informed the workers, we do not want to see the problems among you. We warned them not to do that, as your economic hardship is happening in your area so you come and work here, as you come and find work here we let you work and stay here so as local residents practice, you have to practice and follow as a resident. For our villagers we will handle and take actions seriously if the issues arise.

**Where do the land or plantation owners live?**

Mostly the land owners live in other areas, they just come and give the place for their workers.

**Who are the land owners and where are they from?**

They are mostly Burmese, Poe Karen, and Mon ethnicity. Very few Poe Karen are land owners, mostly Burmese and the Mon.

**Which ethnic owners land are close to the village that led to the locals being afraid while travelling?**

Burmese people who are from Upper Burma [Myanmar]. But the owner is from Kyainsenikgyi town, like wealthy land owner like Kin Zaw. Mostly for him he went and gets workers by himself. If the issues arise among his worker he handles it by himself. Leaders informed and reminded him too. But sometimes we might not know and miss some of them. In the past local people who live here travel and find vegetables freely. After the lands have been



belonging to someone else it is getting harder for us, but in reality we have not experienced torture or threats yet but we are just worried that it is going to happen in the future.

**Is Kin Zaw the one who constructed the road and the construction?**

Yes, it was him.

**Did he buy the land or confiscate it from the villagers?**

Mostly he bought it but his workers are mostly non-Karen and people from the Upper part of Burma [Myanmar] [*A-Nya Tha*].

**Are the rubber plantations already planted or were they planted and ploughed after he bought them?**

He just bought the land and the rubber is grown after that.

**Did you know how much he paid for the road construction workers?**

To get the information you have to ask the road's committee group because this is not a part of me so I do not know much.

**What about the plantation caretakers who live close to the village?**

We handle it if they live close to our village.

**How did they get paid? Do they get paid monthly or daily?**

This is depending on the type of work. If the owner wants the whole plantation cleaned up the owner will pay after the whole plantation is finished. If the owner wants to pay by acre they will get paid as the owners and the worker agree. Mostly the owner pays them tree by tree, some owners give them one tree for 100 kyat and some owners give them 150 kyat.

**Based on the information that you tell me I cannot make any decision and give answers to you. I will need to report it to the above leaders and they will analyse and decide based on the information that you explained.**

There is not only one rich person, Kin Zaw, here. I want to say it is not only for the rich people or the owner, the workers who live and work in our region sometimes they create a problem for us and among themselves too. So like this case we want to handle it seriously.

**Do you have anything else to say?**

If you do not ask me I cannot tell you as I cannot think of any in my head but if you ask me the question I can answer you.

**Do you have any other issue that you want to report?**

Yes. But immediately I cannot think of anything. There is one thing that I wanted to say which is too many armed groups and organisations are in our area. While they came they ordered and asked us information that they want and we have to do it for them. Mostly when they come they will ask us the data statistics and we have to provide the information to every group as they requested. If women's organisations asked us village information we give it to them and if other organisations ask us household numbers we also have to provide it to them. For this kind of situation, it happens every year to us, is that [part of] the activities that organisation has to do every year? Or because of the information is not insufficient? I am



raising it, because we always have to prepare the document for them and review it to them whenever they asked, which is hard for us to give them every single time they asked for. In my village tract, there is only one Karen village which is K--- village and mostly the other villages are Mon and Burmese villages so every time when we go to the field to collect the information we have to say and act properly and carefully. This is sometimes very difficult for me. However, we feel much better and much more secure after the ceasefire agreement took hold. As I've mentioned in the past if we saw any armed group we had to be afraid of them but now we can build close relationships with them and feel less fear of them. Currently we did not see them committing human rights violation yet, but we cannot be sure in the future, but for now the situation is stable.

**Thank you very much for your valuable information.**

Thank you.

#### Source #132

<b>Log #</b>	15-38-A6-I1
<b>Title</b>	Doooplaya Interview: Naw Y---, March 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Doooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b> Naw Y---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b> 47 years old.</p> <p><b>What about your village?</b> K--- village.</p> <p><b>What about your nationality?</b> Karen.</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b> Buddhist.</p> <p><b>Do you have family?</b> What is family?</p> <p><b>Oh, do you have husband and children?</b> Yes.</p> <p><b>How many children do you have?</b> I have five children.</p> <p><b>How many female and male?</b> Two females and three males.</p> <p><b>What do they do for a living?</b> One of them is a farmer, the two youngest are students, one resettled to a third country and one has gone to study at a Thai university.</p>	

**What is your responsibility in the village?**

The village head.

**How many years have you been working as village head?**

I have been working many years but I do not know for certain the number of years because I do not note it down. I think it will be around nine years.

**How many armed groups are there in your area?**

In my village?

**The armed groups which are located near your area, so how many groups of them?**

There are four armed groups as I know.

**What are they?**

They are the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army [DKBA], Border Guard Force [BGF], the Tatmadaw and the Karen National Union [Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)].

**How do they operate in [the local area]?**

I do not have any problem with them.

**What about the KNU?**

I do not have problem with the KNU, instead they help me.

**What about the DKBA?**

The DKBA also do not make any problems with me.

**What about the BGF?**

The BGF also stay by themselves in their own way.

**What about the Tatmadaw?**

The Tatmadaw also stay on their own so do I need to mention the road that they constructed? They also conducted [led] the road construction.

**So every armed group is well run in terms of their operations [not committing abuses]?**

Yes.

**What do you do for living?**

I do plain and hill farming.

**And everything is going well with your living?**

Everything is not going well, but I just do like that and live like that [accepting the situation].

**Why is everything not going well?**

This year, the paddy cannot provide much [rice] harvest but we still have enough rice in our village.

**You said that there is a problem with the road construction so can you tell me what the problem is?**

The problem is that before they constructed the road they [the company] met me and said: 'We will construct a road and it will include your land and other people lands, so do you want to get compensation?' I told them that if you are going to construct the road it will be very helpful and useful for many people so I do not need compensation but I will be taking compensation if you conduct stone mining.

**You said you will be taking compensation for stone mining so is it [the stone mining] close to your village?**

The rock that they will be mining [to use for road construction] is located beside my village.

**You will sell the stone to them so do you have any purpose to do development with the compensation that you will get [from selling the stone] in your village?**

I will develop my village [with the money] and provide electricity to my villagers.

**You will provide electricity to them?**

Yes. In my village we do not get any support and my school is also a self-reliant [self-funded] school. If I do not run [out] of money I also plan to supply water for the villagers in order to make their lives easier. The support that the people<sup>416</sup> provide does not reach my village therefore if they [the construction company] help [give me compensation for the stone] I will be so happy and I myself also will attempt [to do] my best. They said that they will provide aid to us but later on we did not receive anything.

**You will sell the stone to them so who did you make the contract [to sell stone] with?**

I signed the contract with Bo Yan Naing and the lower rank [employee] under him, Ye Yain Aung.

**Do you remember the date or [did you] note down the date?**

Yes, I noted down the list of the stone [mining]. In the list they started mining on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2014. After they signed the contract there was heavy rain so they did not confirm with us [about the contract] but later his officer came and signed the contract.

**So you signed it with Ye Yain Aung?**

Yes, Ye Yain Aung himself told me that he will give me the money.

**So was it on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2014, when he signed the contract with you?**

Yes, Ye Yain Aung signed contract with me on that day.

**Did he give you anything after he signed?**

No, he did not give me anything.

**When did Bo Yan Naing come to meet you?**

I did not note down the date when he met me.

**So did he meet you before Ye Yain Aung or after?**

He met me after. Ye Yain Aung told me that he would ask Bo Yan Naing to give us [compensation].

**How did he plan to give you compensation, can you please explain [to] us a bit?**

He came to meet me at night and I told him that regarding the road construction I would not ask for compensation even if it included my lands or the [dividing] line down beside my villagers' lands. I would give him [the land for] free. I will only ask for stone compensation. For the stone, I will sell [one] pile of gravel for 5,000 kyats. I told him that if he collects [enough] for one vehicle I will count it [charge] as two piles of gravel. I asked him if that is fair for him? We do not want to oppress [mistreat] each other. He said it was fair. I asked him if it was fair and when he would give me the money. He told me that if Ye Yain Aung and the boss do not [come to] give me [the money], he himself will come and to give me [the money].

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<sup>416</sup> It is unclear whether the interviewee is discussing the government, local authority, development or other actors here.

**Did Ye Yain Aung tell you [that]?**

No, Bo Yan Naing [told me]. Ye Yain Aung himself also told me that [there is] no problem, Ye Yain Aung will come to give me [the money]. Bo Yan Naing told me that if he was not around here [in the village] he will ask Ye Yain Aung to fill up the entire hole that they dug [where they took stone from]. I reported to him [Bo Yan Naing] that they also took the stone from the water drainage [area] and it caused a hole. He told me that when he is not around here [in the village he will] ask Ye Yain Aung to fill it up. If he [Ye Yain Aung] does not do it after Bo Yan Naing has come here he will ask him to do it [again]. Bo Yan Naing told me that he will provide the money fairly [at a fair price] and asked me that is it okay. He said [he would] provide a fair price therefore when he asked me was it okay, I replied him that [it was] okay. But after we met with them it is not okay anymore.

**So when did Ye Yain Aung meet with you?**

He met me in the second month [February].

**Second month of 2014?**

Yes. No, he met with me in second month of 2015.

**So last month?**

Yes, but now the second month has already gone and we are coming to the third month already because they came on February 10<sup>th</sup>.

**So how much will they give you for the stone?**

They asked me to count the piles of gravel that they have collected. If they can collect 1,000 piles of gravel they will give me the [fair] price for 1,000 kyats [per pile] and if they can collect 1,500 piles of gravel they will give me [the fair price of] 1,500 kyat.

**So that was only a few month ago?**

Yes.

**So how many times have you met with Ye Yain Aung during those months?**

I personally have gone once to clear the accounting list [get paid for the amount of gravel piles counted] and he told Bo Yan Naing that he had to give me only 8 million kyats. I told him that [the amount is] not 8 million kyats, he had to give me more than that and he [Ye Yain Aung] said that he did not record it [the amount of stone that they collected] over the last year. That time [previously] he had noted down it [the amount] in detail and Ye Yain Aung told me not to worry as he would do it [note down the amount] for me. After I met with them I was not feeling well and [I felt] sick so I ordered the people [villagers] to meet with them and they [Bo Yan Naing and Ye Yain Aung] said that even if they do not give me anything I am not able to sue them.

**Did they give you some money?**

They did not give me any kyats. They started mining the stone on April 18<sup>th</sup> 2014 and continued the process through rainy season to December 2<sup>nd</sup> 2014. They did not give me any money until now, 2015.

**Did Ye Yain Aung come along with Bo Ya Naing when he came to meet you?**

Yes, he came along with Ye Yain Aung. He seriously agreed to [give] me [the money] when Bo Yan Naing told him. He said do not worry "I will give it to you," but later on he seemed to avoid me. He did he would not come to visit me; instead I have to visit him like I owe him. I also do not want to go now. We did not take anything from them instead we loved and supported them but [now] it is their time to support us. They did not support us and currently I am pretty fed up to [try to] meet them [again].

**You said that they constructed the road and impacted your lands but you did not ask**

**for compensation. Instead [you asked for compensation] only for the stone, so are there any of your villagers' lands that were also impacted?**

They [the villagers] also do not want compensation [for their] land [next to the road]. They want compensation for the stone because they will get [buy] electricity. Their lands [are] not affected that much because if you go to build houses on the affected lands it will only fit four to five houses [because the affected lands are not that large]. They said that we [they] are thankful for getting the stone [compensation] price and instead we [they] will get [buy] electricity. But currently, if the villagers ask me [to do this], I cannot do anything. I will just keep quiet because they [the company] lied to me.

**Did you go to tell them to reconstruct the water drainage [area] that they ploughed out?**

I told them the night when Bo Yan Naing came here. I told them that they ploughed out the water drainage [area] and they have to reconstruct it for the owner to [be able to] store the water. Ye Yain Aung himself agreed to do it and reconstruct it. Later, I never went to tell them [again] regarding this but when I went to meet them for cleaning up the list account [confirming the number of gravel piles] they told me that they will do everything and that I should not worry.

**How much money should you have received when you went to clean up the list account [confirm the number of gravel piles]?**

When I went to clean up the list account they had carried it [the piles of gravel] 1,550<sup>417</sup> times already.

**1,450 times?**

Yes 1450 times and if we count it by piles [of gravel] it will be 2,900 piles.

**2,900 piles?**

Yes. Later on they carried more gravel and I noted it down, the date that they carried the gravel. So the total is 1,754 times [carrying the gravel piles].

**So you combined it already [with the piles of gravel] in total?**

Yes.

**So they carried it 1754 times and how much will that cost in money?**

1,754,000 kyats.

**They did not give you any kyats?**

Yes [correct], they did not give me any kyats.

**Regarding this information after we got it from you, we will report it to the above level because we cannot do anything [at the village level]. Will we [you] wait and see how the above leaders<sup>418</sup> will arrange it?**

Yes.

**So did they [Bo Yan Naing and Ye Yain Aung] sign any agreement?**

They did not sign any agreement on paper but Bo Yan Naing personally came once and said it with his own mouth. He said that if Ye Yain Aung and the boss did not give you [the compensation] I myself personally will come to give it you and [therefore] do not worry. Whether you worry or not we [are using] M--- road. It was very far to use that road. If his soldiers all went back [relocated from their base] they will not return here again.

<sup>417</sup> Naw Y--- confirms a different number in the following question which KHRG understands to be the correct amount.

<sup>418</sup> KHRG is in the process of clarifying the position of these leaders.

**Have they almost finished the road construction in this part?**

I do not know because I have not been there to have a look but they already have finished it in some parts.

**In your opinion if they finished the road construction do you think it can bring any benefit or [will it] cause the problems for the villagers?**

I think that it can bring benefit for the villagers to travel on the road to go to market, but on the other hand it affected the villagers' lands.

**Do they give compensation for the destruction [of villagers' lands]?**

In my village I did not see it [compensation] but it was given in another village.

**Have you heard that they gave it to other villages whose lands were destroyed?**

I heard that they gave it to their village head.

**They gave it to the village head?**

Yes.

**It impacted [affected] the villagers' land and they gave [compensation] to the village head?**

Yes, I heard the people say that they gave it to their village head.

**How much did they give?**

I do not know because I never asked and it is not related to me. I only deal with the issues which are related to me. I think each village has their own village head and they can manage to negotiate it. For me I manage [take responsibility] to negotiate it for my own village.

**You said that armed groups are well run [not committing abuses] in their activities and the only problem [with them] is related to the road construction. So is there anything that you want to add which I have not asked you about?**

I think I cannot add more because every armed group has a good relationship with me and they never get angry with me. They all have a good relationship with me. The KNDO [Karen National Defence Organisation] also has a good relationship with me. I told them that I welcome every group and if you want to eat rice you can and I love them all. They also love me. After the ceasefire has taken place even the Tatmadaw have not come to disturb me. If they need motor [transport provided by villagers] they let us know ahead and do not force us to give them [provide transport]. As we are Karen if the people treat us very good we also treat them in a good way. If the people love us we also have to love them. I do not have any problem with armed groups including the KNU, DKBA, and BGF, [they] stay in their way [area]. The BGF do not even come to demand anything from us. We have to tell the truth. In the future if the conflict happens and comes to disturb us we can tell them [the truth]. At the current time there is nothing happening but on the other hand the road construction that they constructed was given [by the villagers for] free. We gave them [the land] free and we need only compensation for the stone. We will be satisfied if they give us [this compensation]. They did not give me compensation but they have said me that they will give it to me. You can say that you will give it a hundred times, but it is only words and in reality they did not give us [the compensation].

**So regarding to the stone case if we report it to the top leaders will you be satisfied?**

Yes, I will be satisfied. You first report it, then they will get to know [the case for] themselves. The people [villagers] did not report anything to anyone related to the road that they were constructing. They [the constructors] might look down on the people [villagers]. They also said that even if we do not support them they can survive by themselves and how can we sue them? They look down [on] us therefore I want to report [the case]. As you are a person



[a human being] you should know that patience can win everything but they are impatient. When the young people went to meet them they said different things.

**Did you note the date when they told you?**

I did not note the date but K--- noted it. As I was not feeling well to [go to] meet them I required him [K---] to meet them and take down the notes so after [the meeting] he told me [what happened when he met them] and then he left.

**So how long [ago] did he tell you?**

K--- wrote it [the information] in the note book but left it in the hut because I was not aware of it. He [Ye Yain Aung] told me in February [2015]. K--- noted it down but I did not make a note. I did not like what he said so I wanted to report it.

**So Ye Yain Aung did not get any payment for his work?**

I think he might get because if you do not get [payment] you also do not want to work but I have never asked him if he gets it or not.

**Is Ye Yain Aung a staff of the construction company or [is he] Bo Yan Naing's servant [under his military command]?**

I think Ye Yain Aung is not company staff. I think he is under the rank of Bo Yan Naing because every single point that was made by Bo Yan Naing he agreed to do. After Bo Yan Naing left [the area] he did not agree and did things in a different way.

**So when you went to get [the money] Bo Yan Naing never came back here [to the village] after he left?**

No, he never came after he left. When Bo Yan Naing was around here he agreed that he will do everything and arrange for money payment and told us not to worry about the money [compensation]. After Bo Yan Naing left he did not agree to do anything and if we had not submitted the stone list [number of gravel piles] he would not have made any contact with us. I myself submitted the case.

**You submitted it to him?**

Yes, I submitted it to Ye Yain Aung because Bo Yan Naing told me that [I should] clear [check] the list [of gravel piles] with Ye Yain Aung. [He said] after it [the list had been cleared] if Ye Yain Aung did not pay you I [Bo Yan Naing] myself will come to pay you and I [Bo Yan Naing] guarantee for it; therefore, I went to clear [check] the list with Ye Yain Aung.

**Currently, where does Bo Yan Naing live?**

The people said this morning he will come to meet the battalion commander. Bo Yan Naing agreed that he would give money [compensation].

**He might come to meet you too?**

Maybe.

**If he meets with you [will] you have to tell him [your case] clearly?**

If he meets me I will tell him clearly in a lot of detail. I will tell him that his servant [Ye Yan Aung] is insubordinate to us [not working for the villagers as promised]. I will tell him everything.

**You should tell him in detail about the water channel and farms which are affected by the road construction?**

I will let him know but when he came it was at night time. I was looking for him and he also was looking for me so everything was inconsistent [not organised]. He left to M--- [village] and came back to look for me but it was very late at night and he also had not finished his dinner, therefore we [only] had a short conversation. If he comes in next time I will tell him



everything including how his servants [staff of a lower rank] stole things.

**His servants [staff of a lower rank] were stealing things when they were working on the road construction?**

Yes.

**What did they steal?**

They stole coconuts. They stole every coconut and currently there are no young coconuts on the trees because they took all the fruit from the trees.

**So you did not see them personally when they climbed the trees?**

No, because the coconut owners did not look after the plantation. The owners left the plantation and went to work as usual in the past, but after they came here the owners left their things [possessions] in their huts for two to three days [and] everything was gone. In the past, [because] we are Karen people we did not steal the belongings from the people or get [harvest] all of the coconuts as we knew there would be no young coconuts on the trees. They stole everything including betel nut leaves. In rainy season, they dug up the wild yam from peoples' plantations. You always have to report it [their actions] to their leaders.

**Who dug up the wild yam?**

The people who dug up wild yam are Kyaw So's servants.

**Who are they, Kyaw So's servants?**

They are the group of road constructors.

**They are the road constructors?**

Yes, the road constructors are also Ye Yain Aung's servants and Kyaw So is Bo Yain Naing's manager for road construction regarding filling in the gravel. In rainy season, he came to me to ask permission to stay with me [in the village]. He said that the road was not finished yet and he did not want to go back [to his village]. I told him that I did not discriminate [between] people even if you are Bamar or Karen because everyone is a human being but you have to stay peacefully, love one another and have pity on [compassion for] one another. You can stay around here if you have those kinds of qualities in you and you have to live under the rule of our village. He said yes, but there are many servants of his and the people saw that in rainy season they dug up the wild yam. They hid the wild yams after they dug them up and told the people in H--- [village] that they could buy it.

**So there were a lot of wild yams?**

Not many of them [the workers] stole the wild yams, only one to two of them.

**No, I meant the wild yams that they dug up?**

They dug up a lot of wild yams and it will be around 100 to 200 [viss]<sup>419</sup> of wild yams.

**How much is one viss of wild yam?**

We sell one viss for 500 kyats.

**So one viss of wild yam for 500 kyats and [if you sell] 100 viss of wild yam you will get 5000 kyats right?<sup>420</sup>**

Yes. The people who stole the wild yam will get 100 to 200 [viss] weight of it because they did not dig it from the jungle instead they dug it from the peoples' plantations.

**So you did not report it to Kyaw So and Ye Yain Aung regarding the theft which was**

<sup>419</sup> A viss is a unit of weight equivalent to 1.6 kg or 3.52 lb.

<sup>420</sup> This is a directly translated calculation.

**conducted by their servants [workers]?**

They are not Ye Yaing Aung's servants. Ye Yaing Aung's servants [workers] are working on stone mining, [they] transfer [move] the gravel. They [the construction workers] are Kyaw So's servants.

**So you did not let Kyaw So know?**

I told him and some of his servants who conducted the theft were retired and he sent them back to their homes. And in summer I did not see his servant with red hair and small eyes.<sup>421</sup>

**After you told him, did they [the workers] still conduct thefts?**

I told him in summer so the plants of wild yam were already putrid and you could not find it. Now he has sent them [the workers] home so it is much better.

**Kyaw So is Karen or Bamar?**

Bamar.

**Bamar?**

Yes.

**What about Ye Yain Aung, is he Karen or Bamar?**

He is [from] Rakhine [state]. Kyaw So and his wife agreed to instruct their servants [workers]. They asked us to tell them openly and direct them [to the place] where they stole [the wild yam]. They said that we [they] stay here and we [they] also do not want to lose our [their] name [have bad reputation]. They asked us to tell them but in my village the teenagers were the witnesses [to the theft] therefore they did not dare [were afraid] to let us know. For me, I did not see [the theft] and I told him that he had to instruct them [the workers] and they also agreed to do it. This summer if Bo Yan Naing comes [here] I will tell him to ask his servants [workers] to come and work here [in the village] only when they are able to work [in the suitable season only] and if they can work you have to send them back to work here.

**Did they steal other special things from your villagers?**

No, other special things, they only stole the coconut and betel nut leaves and in rainy season they stole the wild yams. They did not steal the chickens. They also stole [the stuff] in the people's huts.

**What did they steal?**

They stole the people's longyis.

**The men also stole the longyis?**

No they did not. But the women stole the longyis.

**So did they [the workers] also include women?**

Yes, there are many male and female [workers] who do the road construction for filling the gravel on the road.

**How many longyis did they steal?**

Three longyis.

**They stole three longyis, what about other [things]?**

They stole pillows. I did not remember everything. They stole it in my village [and] as I did not like them [stealing] I want to say everything. If they did what they had said I could be patient but they did not do what they said therefore I cannot be patient anymore. In the other villages they have their own village head and I do not know how they make arrangements for

<sup>421</sup> KHRG is in the process of clarifying the meaning of this information.

their villagers. I do not know their situation and if I say [the wrong information] they might say that those [village] cases do not belong to you and you reported it therefore they might say that they will cut off your lips. In the past Tatmadaw battalion #17 came to check [on] me when I reported like that.

**What about other things that you want to say?**

I do not want to say any other special things, only that.

**If you do not have other to say, thank you very much for your information.**

**Source #133**

<b>Log #</b>	15-41-P1
<b>Title</b>	Photo Notes, Dooplaya District,
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Date Taken: January 15<sup>th</sup> 2015</b>  <b>Date Received: June 1<sup>st</sup> 2015</b></p> <p>Daw A---, assistant health officer from A--- Village Health Centre, sent the village authority a letter to say that she will come and give vaccinations to children under the age of two and to pregnant woman in Dooplaya District, Kawkareik Township, A' Kyeik Group, B--- village. Villagers asked the village authority what the vaccination is and the [village] authority answered [based on what was] described in the [health assistant's] letter. Villagers are concerned that there will be [harmful] consequences [from this vaccination], like [the harmful effects of] the elephantiasis vaccination which was last given in 2014. Villagers wants the [Myanmar] government health groups to discuss and cooperate with the KNU Township village assistants if they come to give vaccinations. (These are the photos of the letter that the government's assistant health officer sent.)</p>	

**Source #134**

Source #151

Log #	15-43-I2
Title	Hpa-an Incident Report: Explicit and violent threats in Myaing Gyi Ngu Town, Hlaingbwe Township, April 2015
Publishing Information	Previously published in August 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-43-i2/hpa-an-incident-report-explicit-and-violent-threats-myaing-gyi-ngu-town-hlaingbwe">http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-43-i2/hpa-an-incident-report-explicit-and-violent-threats-myaing-gyi-ngu-town-hlaingbwe</a>
Location	Hlaingbwe Township, Hpa-an District
Full Text	

**Part 1 – Incident Details**

Type of Incident	Violent threats
Date of Incident(s)	April 25 <sup>th</sup> 2015
Incident Location	B--- Section, Son Nan Tha Myaing Shwe Myo Taw Zone, Myaing Gyi Ngu Town, Hpa-an District

**Victim Information**

Name	Maung M---	Ma N---	U O---
Age	45	39	52
Sex	Male	Female	Male

<b>Nationality</b>	Karen	Karen	Karen
<b>Family</b>	Married	Married	Married
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer	Vendor	Farmer
<b>Religion</b>	Buddhist	Buddhist	Buddhist
<b>Position</b>	Villager	Villager	Villager
<b>Village</b>	C---	C---	C---

<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Area</b>	<b>Superior's Name</b>
U Nyan Ni Ka	<i>Sa Cha</i> <sup>422</sup> [senior] monk	Myaing Gyi Ngu Town	U Thuzana [head monk] <sup>423</sup>

## **Part 2 Information Quality**

### **1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.**

While I was collecting information about the killing of Maung A---, which took place on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015,<sup>424</sup> I unexpectedly realised that it [the case] also included [an incident of] violent threats in the information that I was given. Therefore, I continued to collect more information about it.

### **2. Explain how the source verified this information.**

The people who provided the information to me did not focus on the violent threat case. While providing information on the [Maung A---] killing case, they also included [information about the] violent threat case.

U G--- [C--- villager], reported that U Nyan Ni Ka said in front of Maung M--- and his siblings, *"Don't you know that [people] must not be drunk in this place [because of the many vehicles in and around the bus station and taxi stand]. Bring me a knife and I am going to cut all of you people [the three siblings]."* You can listen to U G---'s interview about how he [U Nyan Ni Ka] threatened the victim's siblings.<sup>425</sup>

## **Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident**

**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**

<sup>422</sup> *Sa Cha* refers to a senior monk who is responsible for the religious mentoring of less experienced monks at the monastery.

<sup>423</sup> U Thuzana is an influential Buddhist monk based in Myaing Gyi Ngu who was instrumental in the formation of the DKBA in 1994; see "[Inside the DKBA](#)," KHRG, March 1996. In 1995, KHRG reported that U Thuzana had collaborated with the Tatmadaw, and met with then-Southeastern Commander Major General Maung Hla to obtain weapons and supplies for 4,000 soldiers in his monastery. As a result of the agreement, U Thuzana's monastery in Myaing Gyi Ngu, in northern Hpa-an District, reportedly developed a reputation as a mystical safe haven for villagers avoiding Tatmadaw abuses. See "[Karen Human Rights Group commentary](#)," KHRG, February 1995.

<sup>424</sup> Maung A--- was taken to the BGF camp and beaten on the evening of April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015, however as he finally succumbed to his injuries and died at 12:15 am, the actual date of Maung A---'s death is April 24<sup>th</sup> 2015. See more at "[Hpa-an Incident Report: Violent abuse and killing committed by BGF soldiers in Myaing Gyi Ngu Town, April 2015](#)," KHRG, August 2015.

<sup>425</sup> KHRG receives information from field researchers in both audio and written format. In this case, the unpublished interview with U G--- the researcher is referring to was recorded and sent to KHRG in audio format.

**victims. Please use the space prepared below, and create an attachment if needed.**

The violent threat case that I am going to discuss is a consequence of the killing of Maung A---, which happened on April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015. The violent threat case happened on April 25<sup>th</sup> 2015 in B--- section, Son Nan Tha Myaing Shwe Myo Taw Zone, Myaing Gyi Ngu Town. [The threat was made] by the second senior monk, who is also the *Sa Cha* senior monk, U Nyan Ni Ka, who is 50 years old and is the assistant of [head monk] U Thuzana. The incident took place at his monastery.

The type of case is violent threats causing the villagers to be afraid. The person who made the violent threat is the second senior monk and *Sa Cha* senior monk U Nyan Ni Ka. I tried to find out more information about the reason why he threatened [Maung A---'s siblings] and I now know that he committed the violent threat because he did not want to pay full compensation for [the death of Maung A---], which is 3,000,000 kyat (US \$2,637.24).<sup>426</sup>

On April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2015, [Maung] A---, at 37 years old, was killed by a soldier from Border Guard Force (BGF)<sup>427</sup> Battalion #1011. When Maung M---, 45 years old, Ma N---, 39 years old, and U O---, 52 years old [Maung A---'s siblings], went to *Sa Cha* monk U Nyan Ni Ka to request compensation [as ordered by the BGF] of 3,000,000 kyat (US \$2,637.24), U Nyan Ni Ka did not want to pay [them] full compensation. Instead, he ordered [to another monk], "Give me a knife and I will cut to kill them all [Maung A---'s siblings]!" He threatened them. Since Maung M--- and his siblings dared not to continue to request the compensation, they prepared to go back to C--- village. Meanwhile, U Nyan Ni Ka paid them 500,000 kyat (US \$439.70) as compensation for Maung A---'s death. They also went back to the village frightened. They also dared not do anything like open the case at the court or prosecute [U Nyan Ni Ka or the BGF soldiers who killed Maung A---].

**Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details****Did the victim(s) provide permission to use this information? Explain how that permission was provided.**

I knew [gathered information about] this threatening case from U D---, 45 years old and U G---, 45 years old, who are C--- villagers. They also gave me permission to use the information of threatening case [in addition to information regarding the killing of Maung A---].

Incident Report written by a community member, B--- Section, Son Nan Tha Myaing Shwe Myo Taw Zone, Myaing Gyi Ngu Town, Hpa-an District (Received in June 2015)

**Source #135**

<b>Log #</b>	15-57-A4-I1
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<sup>426</sup> All estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the July 14<sup>th</sup> 2015 market rate of 1,137 kyat to the US \$1.

<sup>427</sup> 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.

<b>Title</b>	Interview   Naw A---, (female, 51), Section C-- of D--- Town, Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District (April 2015)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name, Aunty?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw A---</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>51 years old.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>[I am the] E--- village head [also known as] section C--- [of D--- Town] village head.</p> <p><b>What about village tract?</b></p> <p>Baw Thay [Hta] village tract, Lu Thaw Township.</p> <p><b>What about Township?</b></p> <p>Lu Thaw Township.</p> <p><b>Is it Lu Thaw Township?</b></p> <p>Yes. Mu Traw [Hpapun] District.</p> <p><b>What is your nationality?</b></p> <p>Karen.</p> <p><b>What about religion?</b></p> <p>Christian.</p> <p><b>What about your responsibility [in the village]?</b></p> <p>Village head, section leader.</p> <p><b>How many years have you been working as village head?</b></p> <p>Nine years.</p> <p><b>Did the villagers elect you or were you selected by people outside [the village]?</b></p> <p>The villagers elected me. The leaders [Karen National Union (KNU) and Burma/Myanmar government official] also accepted me as village head. I want to quit [now], but they [the villagers] do not allow me [ask me to stay in the role].</p>	



**What about the Tatmadaw, did they select you?**

The former village head never went to the meetings which were conducted by the Kawthoolei<sup>428</sup> [KNU]. For me, I go everywhere. [The interviewee does not answer the researcher's question.]

**What are the changes that you have seen these days?**

In the past the situation was really bad, but if we compare it to nowadays it is getting much better. In the past, as I was a village head, I even went to porter. If we bring up our memories [and talk about how the situation was in the past] it can put us at risk because there was DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army]<sup>429</sup> and also the Tatmadaw [and they still function today]. In the past there was only one battalion which is battalion #19 but nowadays there are many battalions. Now there is no DKBA [in our region]. Now there are many battalions which are [Light Infantry Battalions (LIB)] #340, #341, #434, #642. Now they do not ask for porters. One time, the [Burma/Myanmar] government [staff] asked us to clean up the district hospital [after it was constructed] but they did not allow us to call it labour work. They asked us to call it "helping". They will open the district hospital soon.

**When will they open it?**

They said they have not decided yet.

**Are there any development projects conducted in Lu Thaw Township or in your section that you saw [know about]?**

Since 2012, [people] from a Karen [organisation] have been helping the pregnant women with [new born] babies, for two years: in 2012 and 2013. They have not provided any support in 2014 and 2015, yet.

**What is the name of the organisation which provided aid in 2013?**

Karen Women Organization [KWO]. After Karen Women Organization [became active in the area], they [KWO] started collecting the human [individual] tax and house tax [donations]. After they collected it, they provided the support [services] for the women. When we went to the [KNU] annual meeting they [KWO] said that if they [villagers] could not afford to pay the tax that's okay.

**Are there any problems with the household tax?**

[There is] no problem because all villagers can pay the tax. There are 16 kinds of taxes which have been collected by the KNU.

<sup>428</sup> The term *Kawthoolei* (or *Kaw Thoo Lei*) refers to Karen State as demarcated by the Karen National Union (KNU), but the exact meaning and etymology is disputed; see: Jonathan Falla. *True Love and Bartholomew: Rebels on the Burmese Border*, Cambridge University Press: 1991.

<sup>429</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma/Myanmar government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma/Myanmar at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "[Inside the DKBA](#)," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.



**Can you tell me the 16 kinds of taxes?**

Yes, I can tell you.

**So please state [them] for me?**

They are farming tax, gardening tax, cultivating [hill farming] tax, shop [owner] tax, elephant tax, gun tax, chainsaw tax, motorboat tax, motorbike tax, car tax, people [individual] tax, and household tax. [The interviewee does not mention all 16 taxes, only these 12.]

**As you are village head, do you know if every villager can pay these taxes?**

Since I started working [as village head] all villagers have paid their taxes. They can all pay it.

**Have they been collecting [all of] these taxes since you started working?**

No. In 2006 they [only] collected the elephant tax, farming tax, cultivating tax, and gardening tax. The taxes were increased in 2009 and 2010. Currently, the taxes [also] include the rubber plantation tax. The taxes are increasing.

**[Since] the taxes have been collected by the KNU, do any of the villagers complain about that?**

The reason the villagers complain [is] because they collected the tax for the chainsaws at 30,000 kyat (US \$23.10).<sup>430</sup> They collected this tax from the [loggers for] logging. As I am a village head, I did not permit the [villagers] to pay the tax because there has been no logging work [for the loggers]. We could not pay [those taxes], therefore the elephant and chainsaw taxes were not paid by the villagers [who live in my section], except for the monks [the villagers who live nearby the monastery]; they did pay the tax, [and they are also] in the same section.

**Where are the monks living?**

The monks live in the upper part [of section C---].

**Everyone there pays the [chainsaw] taxes?**

A few of them [villagers in upper section C--- do], but in the area here [lower part of section C---] no one pays that tax.

**You said they would collect the [chainsaw] tax, has it been collected in early 2015?**

They started collecting the [chainsaw] tax in 2012 and [continued until] 2014.

**Did the [villagers] pay the tax in 2012?**

Yes, they paid, but in 2014 we did not pay the chainsaw tax.

**They [the KNU] already collected the tax here?**

They didn't come for tax collection. They gave us [village heads] receipts and asked us to

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<sup>430</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the January 19<sup>th</sup> 2016 official market rate of 1,298.80 kyat to the US \$1.

collect the tax for them.

**Have they even come to meet you [to discuss] the tax collection?**

[KNU] village tract [leaders] and the secretary of [village tract leaders] met with me.

**Did you tell them why you [villagers] could not pay the tax?**

They did not allow the [the loggers to do] logging. If they allow logging, we will pay the tax. If they don't - we are not going to pay the tax. [That is] the reason we paid in the past but did not pay in 2014.

**So villagers did not complain about the other taxes that they had to pay?**

They did not complain, but in the annual meeting one *Thara Mu*<sup>431</sup> who participated in the annual meeting with me, said: "[For] *the rubber plantations which are two or three acres in size you demanded 4,000 kyat (US \$3.08), but for my rubber plantation there is only one acre [of land] and three or four rubber trees in there, so the tax is a bit high for me. Could you diminish it for me?*" But they did not reply anything.

**You said when *Thara Mu* raised the tax issue they did not reply to her?**

She said, "*In the past you collected the taxes, but we did not get a receipt from you.*" They [the KNU] replied that [this year] they will provide the receipts for [both] the last year [2014] and this year [2015]. [She said], "*If we get a receipt we would pay the tax [since we will have a guarantee that we will not be asked to pay again]. But [either way] the taxes that you demand are too much for us. If we compare with the taxes demanded by the Burma [government], they demanded only a few kyat.*" She said it openly.

**What about the Burma government, did they collect the taxes?**

The Burma government collected the tax; [it was] 3,000 baht [kyat] (US \$2.31) per motorboat and motorbike.

**Is it for the whole year?**

Yes. The Kawthoolei [KNU also] collected 15,000 kyats (US \$11.55), and [in addition] they collected 50,000 kyat (US \$38.49) for each car. [The] 15,000 kyats (US \$11.55) [was] for each motorbike, and each motorboat [was taxed at] 15,000 kyat (US \$11.55) [as well]. Based on these [numbers], it is too much for the villagers. As we are village heads, we did not say anything [to the KNU]. We collected the tax for them as we could, but for the villagers who work as missionaries it is very hard for them to afford on that [salary]. Therefore she [one of the missionaries] reported it [to the KNU], but if they don't diminish it [the tax], we will give it as other people give.

**What kind of problem [did she have] that made her not be able to afford it [the tax] as a missionary?**

She could not pay the tax because she gets only 250,000 [kyat] (US \$192.43) a year.

**If she can't afford it, did she pay the tax in the past?**

Yes, she always did, but it is too much for her, as she said. She works as a missionary only

<sup>431</sup> *Thara* (male) or *Thara Mu* (female) is a Karen term used for any teacher, pastor, or any person to whom one wishes to show respect.

as a volunteer and has no salary [only a 250,000 kyat (US \$192.43) stipend].

**What is her name?**

*Thara Mu F---*. She is a volunteer.

**What kind of missionary work does she do?**

She is teaching in bible school.

**How many kinds of taxes have been collected by the Burma government? Is it only the motorboats and motorbikes that they collect the tax on? Are there any other things that they collected tax on?**

They collected tax on motorboats, motorbikes, gardens [house compounds] and shops.

**Are they collecting the same amount [of tax on all types of property]?**

Yes, they collected [tax on] everything at 3,000 kyats (US \$2.31) a year, including motorbikes and motorboats. The KNU collected 15,000 kyat (US \$11.55) for a motorbike.

**What about an individual tax?**

They [Burma/Myanmar government] didn't collect an individual tax.

**What about the household tax?**

No household tax.

**What about the KNU?**

The taxes the KNU collected included an individual, household and garden [house compound] tax.

**How much did the KNU collect in tax from each household?**

1000 kyat (US \$0.77) from each household.

**What about an individual tax?**

200 kyat (US \$0.15).

**What kinds of development [projects] have taken place here, and which of them were conducted by the [Burma/Myanmar] government?**

In here, the [Burma/Myanmar government] parliament conducted the development [projects].

**What did the parliament do?**

They conducted development [projects] such as the road construction, schools and solar panels, which are supported by the [Burma/Myanmar] parliament.

**You said the parliament provided solar panels, so did they come to distribute it by themselves, or passed it step by step [through other people they have delegated the task to?]?**

Their leaders [Members of Parliament] distributed it by themselves to the villagers and took the picture of the villagers.

**When did they provide the support [in the form of development projects]?**

They have provided it in 2013 to 2014 and [they're also supposed to provide it] in the upcoming years of 2015 and 2016.

**Aunty, you said they provided the support, so are there any villages [located close to D--- town] that have received the support, such as solar panels?**

The villages that received the support are Klaw Hta Toh Thay Poo and Htoo Lwee. They [the villagers] transferred it with cars. Based on this situation, I don't even understand [why] some of them took it, but some of them did not take [the solar panels]. The village head from G--- village went to meet [Hpapun District KNU administrator] Hpuh Kaw and he [Hpuh Kaw] questioned him about where the support came from. "*It is from the parliament,*" [the village head said,] and he [Hpuh Kaw] said, "*If it is from parliament it would not impact any political action* [on the part of the KNU or villagers]." The [village--- head told me [about this] and said, "*If they* [any villages] *return it* [solar panels], *please let me know and I will distribute it to my villagers.*"

**Do you know the name of the G--- village head?**

Naw H--- [and] the people [also] call her Naw I---.

**Before they [villagers] took the stuff [solar panels] did anyone from the KNU come to hold a meeting with villagers?**

They held the meeting in the other side of [Pyeh Loh] river bank. They held a meeting about the land survey. They surveyed the lands. They asked village heads to inform the Burma government in order to survey the lands. We informed them [Burma/Myanmar government]. I also provided the lunch for them [KNU] when they surveyed the land for me.<sup>432</sup>

**They surveyed all the lands including the farms?**

Yes.

**Does it include the house compounds?**

No, only the farms and plantations, such as rubber plantations. A monk also asked me once to go meet him and also conducted an interview as you did. He recorded my voice on a cassette but it did not work well. I told him, "*Why didn't you tell me it didn't work? If you told me, I would have brought a new one for you. It doesn't make me feel good [to have been interviewed] with broken cassette* [as it was disturbing my interview]." He questioned me starting from my childhood. He asked me when I start going to school; how many standards<sup>433</sup> I have finished; how many years it has been since I dropped out of school; what kind of job I did when I was single; when I got married; how many children I have; how many boys and girls; what the age of my oldest and youngest children is; how long I have been working as village head; what kind of problems I faced. He questioned me about everything.

<sup>432</sup> It appears the interviewee misunderstood the question or chose not to directly answer the question but rather change the subject from the solar panels to the land survey.

<sup>433</sup> A Standard refers to a grade in the Burmese education system. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 4, middle school is Standards 5-8 and high school is Standards 9-10.

**Did he tell you the name of the organisation [he was from]?**

No. He just said the KNU.

**How many people [from KNU] came to conduct the interview?**

Three of them, and after they conducted the interview with me, two of them stayed in the monastery and one of them, the monk, asked me to drive him to the Roman Catholic school. The monks dressed him up with a machete sheath and took off his watch and put it in his bag [disguising him so he does not look like a KNU member]. I organised the motorbike for going to the school. I told him, *"If people detain you, please ask someone to come to pick me up and I will go to meet you."*

**Did they come in this year?**

No. They came in 2013. They questioned me about the kind of problems I faced; the number of villagers [in my village]; which households are poor. We told them everything but we have not gotten any reply from them.

**Did they tell you where they are from?**

They are from [the KNU] headquarters.

**Is the headquarters in Mae Sot [Thailand]?**

They are from the Mae Sot headquarters.

**You said they [other KNU members] came to survey the lands, so which township are they from?**

They are from Lu Thaw Township, Brigade 5 [Hpapun District], and include Kyaw Pya [from Karen Nation Defence Organisation [KNDO]].<sup>434</sup>

**Who is Kyaw Pya?**

His [real] name is Thay Wee Heh.

**When they surveyed the farms did they also go to survey the lands in J--- [section of D--- Town]?**

Yes, it included everything. It is [only] a small area here [in section C--- of D--- Town] but in J--- they [village head] did not go to the meeting and they also did not collect the tax from them [villagers in J---, even though they are a larger area]. As I'm a village head, I am not satisfied with this. In 2013 and 2014 we have not seen that they paid the tax, therefore I raised this issue in the meeting.

**J--- [section] is based in Lu Thaw Township?**

Yes it is based in Lu Thaw Township. In the past they did pay the tax, but since 2013, [in] 2014 and 2015 they did not pay.

**They did not pay the tax?**

Yes. I submitted it to the [KNU] leaders during the meeting and I said, *"You did not invite the*

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<sup>434</sup> Kyaw Pya used to be a KNDO commander, but has retired.

*other side of river bank [J---] village head,” but they told me that the village head was invited by them, but he did not come. [I told the KNU,] “If he did not come you have to improve it [your approach to leading] in the future. If you don’t improve it, I would diminish the support for you,” but they did not agree with me. As village heads we have to work together. Each year in our area, which is called E--- [section C--- of D--- Town], we are supporting them [KNU] with over 10 million kyat (US \$7,697.20). In 2014, we supported them with 14 million kyat (US \$10,776.08). In this year we gave them over 11 million kyat (US \$8,466.92).*

**How many households are there in section C---?**

*[censored for security].*

**Are all of the orphans and widows included [in that count]?**

Yes. All orphans, widows, *Thara*,<sup>435</sup> Buddhists, and Christians are included.

**You said J--- [section] village head did not go to participate in the meeting, so have you met with him to discuss about that?**

I asked him, but he said that he was not invited by them [KNU]. The KNU said they invited him. In there [J---], households are larger than the households in here.

**Aunty, you also mentioned the solar panels, so there are three townships in here [Hpapun District], so did any other township get solar panels, for example Lu Thaw, Bu Tho and Dwe Lo townships?**

Bu Tho [Township] did not get any.

**What about in the lower part of D--- Town?**

They all got the solar panels.

**What about in the upper part, which is in K--- [village]?**

It didn’t reach there. It reached Meh Wah, Dweh Loh, Pa Tun, Tha Thwee Hta and Klaw Hta [villages].

**Did they [villagers] take it [solar panels]?**

Yes, they did. For me, I think it didn’t cause an impact [in terms of affecting villagers’ political views]. In the last year, I know that motorbikes had been sent by the [Burma/Myanmar] government to Kawthoolei [KNU].

**You know that?**

Yes. In the meeting, some of the villagers said that the motorbikes have not been received by the KNU leaders. They were intercepted by the alcoholics and they broke all the bikes. I did not agree with this point [I don’t believe this story]. I told them openly.

**Which group had supported the KNU, was it the Burma government?**

Yes, the Burma government. Here, none of the villagers could [financially] support it [motorbikes]. It [the motorbikes] were received by Maung Ku [from KNU]. They [the KNU]

<sup>435</sup> *Thara* (male) or *theramu* (female) is a Karen term used for any teacher, pastor, or any person to whom one wishes to show respect.

went to B--- [village] to take the bikes [that were sent there by the Burma/Myanmar government], but I did not note down the date so I could not argue with them [KNU about the motorbikes].

**How many motorbikes did they [Burma/Myanmar government] provide?**

From what I know, in 2014 they provided eight motorbikes.

**What about in 2015?**

I have not heard [that] they provided them, yet. I heard about it [the motorbike donation in 2014] from other people and I investigated it by myself. I tell you openly, I am not lying to you.

**You said it [the motorbikes] were received by Maung Ku, so where did he [Maung Ku] go to take it [motorbikes]?**

He brought three motorbikes from B--- [village], but I don't know where they got the rest of the motorbikes from.

**Where is B--- [village], Is it located nearby?**

It is based near Meh Way Toh [valley].

**Those eight motorbikes were received by the KNU leaders?**

They [Burma/Myanmar government] sent them out step by step [from one location to another] so I am not certain if they got them or not. In the meeting I heard some villager say that the bikes only reached alcoholics [who were villagers] and they broke them already. If they [the KNU] did not [want to] accept them, why didn't they return them back [to the Burma/Myanmar government instead of coming up with this story]?

**The villagers got the solar panels, so do any leaders protest it?**

What kind of leaders?

**The KNU leaders?**

The [KNU] governor Kler Say said, "*You [villagers] have already taken it [the solar panels], so you can have it.*" Since he said take it, all people [villagers] wanted to get it. Now if you go to Klaw Hta [village], the village is bright with light. Their leader went to meet [Hpapun District KNU administrator] Hpuh Kaw [in order to get permission to accept the solar panels].

**If KNU do not allow the villagers to accept it [the solar panels] will they come to hold a meeting with villagers?**

I don't know.

**Are there any organisations that came to do development in section C--- and other places?**

I have not heard of it.

**Organisations such as NGOs?**

Only Ka La Pa, Kyin Let Village Area Development. They help villagers who are not able to



earn a living and destitute people. They are from the Burma government, not from Kawthoolei [KNU].

**How many years have they been active here?**

They were active in 2013, 2014 [and] even in 2012.

**Is it an NGO?**

No, it is not an NGO.

**What kind of support did they provide?**

They provided pigs, chickens and goats to the villagers who were not able to earn a living. Even nowadays, they ask us to submit the number of people who need it [support]. We submitted the numbers of villagers who are missing a limb [amputees] and we asked them [villagers] what they need. If they need goats - we apply for it [on their behalf]. If they need chickens - we apply for them. They [Ka La Pa] help them. In our area, the development such as schools, roads, and monasteries, we apply for it and they [Ka La Pa] give us money. We arranged it [the construction] by ourselves.

**Do you know the names of any leaders [in that group]?**

[They are] from parliament. U Thein Sein is the leader.

**What about the people who are active in Hpapun area?**

State minister and division minister.

**Do you know their names?**

Yes. The state minister's name is U Htin Aye and the division minister's name is Htin Maung.

**Htin Maung?**

Yes, [and they also have] a minister of parliament U Win Tin.

**You said they provided support to the villagers, so did they provide it in each section?**

Yes, they provided it in each section [of D--- Town] and also in villages [near D--- Town].

**Did they provide the support to each household?**

No. Only for the villagers who could not earn a living.

**So currently some of them already got it?**

Yes.

**So for the villagers who did not get support, what did they say?**

They did not say anything in my area. They are fine. Some villagers got it but some villagers did not get it because they are able to earn a living. If they are not able to earn a living we can help them. What do you want to ask me next?

**Are they [Ka La Pa] helping them with money?**

Yes.

**How much money do they donate to each person and household?**

If they [villagers] want to raise two pigs, they donate 1 million kyat (US \$769.72). If it is for [buying] a goat they donate 50,000 kyat (US \$38.49).

**What about other [organisations]?**

The other organisations are NGOs and they also will support the villagers who are not able to earn a living. The NGOs have been operating and supporting the villagers. They started operating on June 9<sup>th</sup> 2014. They have been working for nearly a year. They conducted a meeting and for the villagers who participated in the meeting they donated 1,500 kyat (US \$1.15) to each participant. They held the meeting in my house and we provided snacks and juice to them [participants]. After the meeting was done they calculated the price [of] what we provided. They provided it every time [we had a meeting at my house]. Now they are [in the middle of] conducting a 10-day workshop.

**What is the title [name] of this organisation?**

Help Age International.

**When did they start to operate in here?**

On June 9<sup>th</sup> 2014.

**Did they do workshops in other villages?**

Yes, they did it in every [many] villages.

**Did you hear of any problems occurring?**

No, we do not have any problem with [the Burma/Myanmar] government but we do have problem with Karen people [KNU].

**Didn't the KNU give permission [to get the aid]?**

They [KNU] said, "*They [Burma/Myanmar government] cleaned your ears with a feather dipped in sesame oil [try to coax you into supporting them]*". They said Karen people have to know they are Karen. I told them that we know we are Karen but we are living inside [mixed-control area]; you should understand us. A village should have a leader. If there is no leader, there is a dead village [the village would cease to exist]. We [villagers, the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government] have our hands joined [by living in a mixed-control area, so we must] work together. The former village heads never participated in outside meetings [held by the KNU]. Even my sister, she had worked as village head for 20 years but she never participated in outside meetings. I'm the one who participates in outside meetings.

**Based on what you shared with the leaders, how did they reply to you?**

They said, "*You are living inside [mixed control area]. If people are black you also should be black and if people are white you also should be white [you should adapt to your environment]*." They just told me that. I said, "*If it affects your organisation, you can let me know.*" It offended them when I spoke to them in the meeting.

**When did you have the meeting [with the KNU], was it in early 2015 or last year?**

They held the meeting on March 9<sup>th</sup> 2015. We were invited by them.

**So all the village heads were present in the meeting?**

No, only [the village head] from Baw Thay [Hta] village tract, and the village head from the other side of river [J---] and I were invited, but only I attended the meeting. In [the past] three or four years the village head of the other side of the river never participated in the meetings.

**What did they say during the meeting?**

It was called an annual meeting. Each household and village [has to] help the [Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)] front line military with food, and they registered the names of villagers [who provided food]. They also changed and recruited the new leaders. It's nothing special that could affect us.

**You said you have offended them during the meeting, so can you tell me what did you tell them?**

I said, "*You held the meeting and invited the village head from Baw Thay [Hta] village tract but only my villagers and I participated in the meeting.*"

**How many of you participated in meeting?**

Almost 20 of us participated in the meeting.

**Did they talk about any other special issues?**

No, but they said, "*You are living among Burman [community] and you have to know you are Karen.*" I told them that we know that we are Karen, and that's why we participated in the meeting, "*If we were Burman we wouldn't dare to come to meet you.*"

**Where did they hold the meeting?**

They held the meeting in their new barracks. It is located in Ta Roo Kwee [place].

**It's not in Day Poo Noh [village]?**

No.

**Who held the meeting?**

They are Governor Kyay Baw, Governor Kyee Baw [from the KNU] and [some] other [people] but I don't remember the other [people's] names. I noted down their names in my book, though.

**Are there any other NGOs active in Hpapun area, [aside from the one] you mentioned, Help Age International?**

Help Age International and then NRC. This group is working on the ID card process.

**Do you know what NRC stands for?**

No.<sup>436</sup>

**When did they [NRC] start processing ID [Burma/Myanmar National Registration] cards?**

It started in 2013, 2014 and 2015.

**Where do they live?**

We could not even count [all the places they live in] because even though [some] people [refugees] live in third country, [they] also came back [to have an ID card issued] and did it secretly [without the NRC finding out they have been resettled].

**No, I want to know where they [NRC staff] are from.**

They are from Hpa-an, Mawlamyine and Yangon towns. Most of them are Karen and they are Christian, Buddhist and Pwo.

**Do you know their director?**

U Than Sein is [the director at the] District [level], Township [level director] is Tin Zaw Myit.

**Do they process it [IDs] every year?**

2016 will be coming soon, therefore they would finish the free ID processing in June 2015. They provided a free ID card for everyone who came to do it. They would be ending this process in June.

**So will they stop processing it next year?**

No. They will only stop processing free ID cards in the coming years [and people who wish to have an ID issued will have to pay a fee in the future].

**They would not continue it?**

No.

**What about other organisations?**

I do not know [about] other organisations.

**Are there any organisations from KNU, as you mentioned KCCSC [Karen Communication Cooperation and Supporting Community, prior to the interview]?**

The KCCSC asked us to collect the donations of rice [from the villagers] and they said if you work on [implementing this project], you will get to know the result from it [you will be able to enjoy the fruit of your labour], but I have not started [collecting rice donations] yet.

**When did they [KCCSC] come here?**

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<sup>436</sup> From previous reports from Hpapun District, KHRG is aware that the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) operates in the area.

They came here twice already on March 16<sup>th</sup> and February 29<sup>th</sup> [2015].

**What about other years?**

They never came [in previous years].

**Who is the leader [of KCCSC]?**

Bo<sup>437</sup> Maung [Aung] Nyain.

**Before they came here did they hold a meeting with the villagers?**

Yes, they held it in the monastery.

**What did they say in the meeting?**

They said, “*Villagers should act maturely about collecting the rice donations for the [social] development. After collecting it, you [village head] should donate it to the destitute people [in your village] and don’t only help them, you can even find young people [to help implement the rice donations].*” They said, “*As you are the [village head], you should organise this process.*” They also gave us a list to register the names of villagers [who donate rice]. Now the registration tables were given to Thara Eh Doh’s wife. I have not organised it [rice donations] for her, therefore she could not do anything yet. After the meeting, they dressed us up in Karen shirts and we took a picture together.

**Are any villagers actively [working] on that [collecting rice donations]?**

If we organized it, they would have to actively [work] on that.

**Now [currently] you have not started yet?**

No, because I am not free.

**This organisation comes here [on a] monthly or annual [basis]?**

They came here in March and June, but they didn’t come in April. If they had come in April, we would have organised the process after that [their visit]. We would be actively [working] on that, but currently we have not done anything, yet. If they come [again] they might scold us, but if they scold us we wouldn’t say anything.

**Did the [rest of the] villagers like [allow] them [villagers who volunteered for the project] to collect donation of rice?**

Yes, they like it. My villagers did not say [complain about] anything; they even support us. The decision is in our hands.

**Did you hear of any groups that are going to come to conduct development [projects]?**

Which group?

**For example, any organisation?**

[If] the people who live [have migrated to] Thailand come back, they will live in here [in this

<sup>437</sup> Burmese prefix meaning ‘officer’

area], therefore, the monk always tells us, “*Your lands, [you] have to be maintain [protect] by yourself. If you don’t maintain them, the people [refugees and IDPs] will come to settle on your lands.*”

**Where did you hear about that?**

The monk always says that.

**So you heard it from the monk?**

Yes. Not only from monk, some people who live in Thailand and Per Na Aeh Per Hkoh [village near an IDP camp] came to me and said, “*Please look for the land for me [us], and we will buy it.*” I said, “*Why don’t you like it in there [where you live now]?*” They said, “*If people force us [to relocate or repatriate], we would [come] to live here.*”

**Have you ever heard that the Tatmadaw, Burma/Myanmar government, or the people who are working in the towns will organize to implement something [any projects]?**

We have not heard anything yet.

**[Did you hear about] the implementation [of any projects] regarding the unity of the [Karen] group of people?**

I forgot the name of that group but they are Karen people. It didn’t impact the political situation. Before they came here, they asked permission from the monk and the Burma government. They were given permission by the Burma government and the monk. But some villagers in D--- [Town] didn’t dare to permit them [to come in to their villages]. In my own point of view, I wasn’t afraid [of] anything. I can accept everything [any scenario].

**Do you know what project they will conduct?**

From what I know, they would provide 200 invitation letters [to a convention] for only [S’gaw] Karen and Pwo [Karen] people. I think they will discuss about the 2008 constitution for the election and they will give some suggestions. It is what I think.

**Do you know the people who monitor [direct] this group?**

Htoo Ber Hkoo, Thara Than Tun, U Shway Maung, Shway Maung Sein from Pwo, and Mah Sein Khaung. They are Pwo and S’gaw Karen.

**Where did they conduct the meeting?**

In Pgya Htoo [golden monastery].

**Did they give any invitations to you?**

No they did not give it to anybody because [Burma/Myanmar] Governor Buh Thaw did not agree [allow] them. Since the governor did not allow [them to come into the village], as we are village heads, we could not allow them, either.

**You said Governor Buh Thaw didn’t dare to allow them [to come in]. Why he did not allow them?**

He is afraid because of our situation in the past. When the DKBA was there, if something

occurred it caused problems for us. Therefore he was worried about that. Hpuh Kaw wrote a letter to [Tatmadaw] Operations Commander G3<sup>438</sup> in December and asked him [Governor Buh Thaw] to give this letter to the [Tatmadaw operations] commander but he [Governor Buh Thaw] dared not.<sup>439</sup> I came back from a meeting [I was attending] and went to give this letter the commander. He [Governor Buh Thaw] is afraid of them because in order to construct the road the commander [Tatmadaw G3] wrote a letter to Hpuh Kaw asking for permission to construct the road from Hpapun [Town] to Hkaw Poo [village tract]. Hpuh Kaw replied to him with permission.<sup>440</sup> Now [the Tatmadaw] Operations Commander already relocated and the new Operations Commander is coming.

**Do you know his name?**

Yes.

**What is his name?**

Kgyi Kaing.

**What about the former one?**

Tinn Htok.

**When did he come?**

At the end of March [2015].

**Aunt, thanks so much.**

Thanks very much, but I want to tell you when the [people] from [the KNU] headquarters conducted the interview with me and asked, "*What problems regarding health did you face as a village head?*" I told them my eyes are sore. I asked for medicine from them but I am still waiting for the result [the outcome of my request]. I did not get any answer from them. Now we [I] feel very disappointed.

**Are the people [who would provide medicine for you the same people] who conducted the interview with you?**

Yes they said they would send it [the medicine] for me soon. They said it in 2012 and have not sent it yet, as of 2015.

**You said you want to resign from the [censored for security] village head [position] and you were not allowed. Why weren't you allowed?**

<sup>438</sup> An Operations Commander (G3) is responsible for planning, strategy and training officers. Also known as strategic / Tactical Commander.

<sup>439</sup> Although the interviewee mentions the trouble that DKBA used to cause them in the area in the past, and then continues to talk of a recent case involving the Tatmadaw and KNU, both statements are meant to illustrate that due to the history of armed-group conflict in the region, Governor Buh That has become a very cautious man and does not wish to trigger more conflict, as he has to work both with the KNU and the Tatmadaw. This cautiousness, according to Naw A---, is the reason he did not permit the Karen convention representatives to come into the village.

<sup>440</sup> According to Naw A---, Governor Buh Thaw was afraid because, as a governor, he tries to maintain neutrality between the Tatmadaw and the KNU, collaborating with both. He did not dare to deliver the letter in question because he was not sure what the contents of the letter were, and he feared that if the receiver does not like it, his relationship with them may become strained.



Because the villagers did not allow me to quit. If they get a new village head they do not know what kind of village head will be elected and they even come to me and cry. The old people [in the village] will be gone and the new people will come so if you are a village head you need to be confident to work with two different groups [Tatmadaw and KNU]. You have to speak very effectively, but you get to know the 'taste of the job'. I know it because I have experience. When in 2007 and 2008 my husband was arrested by the DKBA, I met with them and even though they wanted to hit me I was able to resolve it. The people who wanted to hurt me - all of them are dead already.

**I was questioning you about your area and villagers' situation. If I missed something or have not questioned you [about it], can [you] add more?**

The villagers are working on cultivating [hill fields] and farming [flat fields].

**What about other problems which have been faced by the villagers?**

What kind of problems? If you question me I can tell you.

**Any problems villagers experienced but I have not questioned you about yet. From what you know?**

Some villagers became amputees because of landmines. I submitted the number of [amputee] villagers in 2012 but they have not replied anything.

**You submitted it to the KNU?**

Yes we have been waiting for them [to reply] until now.

**What did they say before they asked for the number of people who are amputees?**

They said they would help them. We have been waiting for them for a long time, even our hair became white and our teeth fell out.

**You did not get any reply from them?**

No. The Burma government provided it [prosthetics] every year. They also provided the travelling fee for the villagers [who went to fetch the prosthetics]. I told you openly.

**Ok. Thanks, Aunt.**

Thanks.

#### Source #136

<b>Log #</b>	15-57-A7-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw B, Interview Received in June 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Mu Ghar,<sup>441</sup> what is your name?</b>	

<sup>441</sup> 'Aunt,' familiar Karen term of respect attributed to an older woman; it does not necessarily signify any actual familial ties between the 'Aunt' and the person using the term/villager who wrote this report/villager who conducted this interview/interviewee.

My name is Naw B---. My husband's name is Saw C---. We are husband and wife.

**How old are you?**

I'm 60 years old.

**Where do you live?**

I live in H--- village and my husband lives in M--- village.

**What about village tract?**

Pa Heh village tract and my husband from Hkaw Poo village tract.

**What about Township?**

Bu Tho Township.

**What about District?**

Mu Traw [Hpapun] District.

**What about your nationality?**

Karen.

**What is your religion?**

Christian

**Do you have any responsibility in your village?**

I have to do farming.

**What kind of farming do you do?**

I'm doing [general] farming.

**Do you also work on [crop] cultivation?**

Yes some years but now I'm getting old so I do not do it anymore.

**How many children do you have?**

Six children

**Had some of your children already got married?**

Yes, four of them already got married and two of them are single.

**Do you have enough rice as you are working on the farm?**

We have enough rice some years but not enough every year because we hardly collect 100 baskets<sup>442</sup> of rice in a year. My land which has been confiscated by the Tatmadaw can provide 300 big tins of rice<sup>443</sup> and it is five acres of land.

**How many households are there in H--- village?**

If we count all households in there it will be around [*censored for security*].

**What do they do for their living?**

Most of them work on cultivation.

**What is the percentage of villagers who work on cultivation?**

<sup>442</sup> A basket is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One basket is equivalent to 20.9 kg or 46.08 lb of paddy, and 32 kg or 70.4 lb of milled rice. A basket is twice the volume of a big tin.

<sup>443</sup> A big tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One big tin is equivalent to 10.45 kg or 23.04 lb of paddy, and 16 kg or 35.2 lb of milled rice.

The villagers who work on cultivation and on the farm are in the same numbers.

**Do they have enough rice in each year?**

Some villagers have enough rice but some cultivators do not have enough rice. If we have enough rice we share some rice with them.

**The villagers who do not have enough rice, what do they do?**

Some villagers who have enough rice share one big tin of rice with them but if they [the villagers without enough rice] still don't have enough rice they have to buy the rice in A--- [village] and other places.

**How many villagers do not have enough rice?**

Many villagers in H--- [village] do not have enough rice.

**So most villagers [who] do not have enough rice are [working as] cultivators?**

Some are cultivators and some are farmers. For the villagers who work on very large farms [they] have enough rice, but for me, some years we do not have enough rice so we have to borrow from the other villagers.

**How many [big tins] of rice can your farm produce?**

130 big tins, but that amount of rice [is] not enough for us.

**So who many members [are there] in your family?**

I have six members of my family and if we include my son-in-law and three grandchildren it will be around ten people.

**Why can the [farm and cultivation workers] not produce much rice?**

Farmers cannot produce much rice because the paddy [rice] dies and is not good. Sometimes rats destroy the paddy therefore we can collect a lot less rice.

**Did the lands that were confiscated in the past include your land?**

Yes, it was including my husband's land which is based in M--- [village].

**Where did your husband live in the past?**

He lives in M--- [village].

**Which village tract?**

Hkaw Poo village tract.

**Did he purchase the land by himself or did he inherit it?**

His aunt sold the land to him.

**So he purchased it by himself?**

Yes.

**What is his name?**

Saw C---

**How many [acres] of your land have been confiscated?**

Five acres of land.

**How much paddy can five acres of land produce?**

The five acres of land can produce 300 big tins. Some years can produce 290 big tins of paddy.

**What do you plant on the land?**

In the past when we worked on our land we only planted paddy but after the Tatmadaw confiscated the land they planted paddy, peanuts and other things. We only worked on our land for four years and then the Tatmadaw confiscated the land when the 'four cuts' policy [was introduced].<sup>444</sup> After that we were not dare go to the farm anymore and we reclaimed the land back [requested that the land was returned but] they [Tatmadaw] did not return the land to us.

**Do you still have the land title?**

Yes, we still have [the land title] with us.

**Do you remember when your land was confiscated?**

It started when [there was] heavy fighting.

**Did you rent the land or [did] you work on it by yourself?**

We worked on it for one year and then rented it to the Shan people who live in M--- [village].

**Where is your land located?**

My land is located in M--- [village] and we took the water from the M--- River.

**What is the village tract of M--- village?**

M--- village tract.

**What about Township?**

Bu Tho Township.

**What about District?**

Mu Traw [Hpapun].

**Who confiscated your land? Were they armed actors or rich men?**

The armed actors confiscated my land.

**What kind of armed actor?**

[Infantry Battalion (IB)]<sup>445</sup> #19 but I am not sure if this battalion still exists or not. I think now it has changed to [Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)]<sup>446</sup> #434.

**After they confiscated your land what did they do with the land?**

They constructed their army camp and houses on the land.

**Do you know their battalion and battalion commander?**

I do not know.

**So the people [Tatmadaw battalion] who are based on your land at the current time are IB #19?**

<sup>444</sup> In Myanmar, the scorched earth policy of '*pya ley pya*', literally 'cut the four cuts', was a counter-insurgency strategy employed by the Tatmadaw as early as the 1950's, and officially adopted in the mid-1960s, aiming to destroy links between insurgents and sources of funding, supplies, intelligence, and recruits from local villages. See Martin Smith. *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity*, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999 pp. 258-262.

<sup>445</sup> An Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. They are primarily used for garrison duty but are sometimes used in offensive operations.

<sup>446</sup> A Tatmadaw Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

I do not think so. I think you can follow up by yourself to get more information. Now there are many battalions so I do not know [which one is on the land].

**Where did you live in the past?**

I lived in H--- [village]. My husband lived in M--- [village]. After he got married with me we went to work on the land for one year.

**As [far as] you know, the people [Tatmadaw] only confiscated your land?**

Not only my land, [the confiscation] included other peoples' land.

**Mu Ghar, after the ceasefire took place have you ever heard that the Tatmadaw has returned land back [to the villagers]?**

I never heard of that. We did not even dare to reclaim our land back. We also asked the people [Karen National Union (KNU) Agriculture Department] to measure the land for us but they [Tatmadaw] did not permit them to measure [the land].

**After the ceasefire took place have you ever submitted the case to [the government-appointed village head] to regain your land?**

Yes, we submitted the case to the [government-appointed] village head but until now we have not heard any result from them.

**What is the name of the [government-appointed] village head?**

I do not remember the name of the [government-appointed] village head. The village head lives in B--- [village].

**You do not know his name?**

No, because I did not note down [his name].

**When did you go to submit the case?**

We went to submit it two years ago, in 2013.

**You went there [to submit the case] in 2013?**

Yes.

**At that time, how many land owners went to submit the case?**

Over 10 and 20 people.

**So the lands of other villagers have also been confiscated by the Tatmadaw?**

Yes, the Tatmadaw confiscated their lands too. They [the Tatmadaw] confiscated their lands like they confiscated our [my] land. We do not dare to reclaim the land.

**Did you go submit the case by yourself or did the [government-appointed] village head ask you to go?**

At that time the people [the government-appointed village head] said that since the ceasefire took place they might give our land back; therefore, we went to submit the case. Most of the land owners who went there were Karen and Shan [ethnicities] who were from H---, J---, K--- and L--- villages, and 20 people were from Karen [villages] and many other Shan people also went to submit the case but until now we have not heard anything from them.

**So after you met with the [government-appointed] village head what did [he/she] say to you?**

The [government-appointed] village head said that if I submit the case maybe they [the Tatmadaw] would give my land back; therefore, we submitted the case. Even if they were not [going to] give our land back we had to submit the case.

**After 2013 did you hear anything from them?**

I did not hear anything.

**Have any other groups come to question you about the land issue?**

No.

**What about now?**

The people [KNU Agriculture Department] here told us that they would measure the land for us but they [the Tatmadaw] did not permit them to measure the land therefore they cannot do anything.

**Which group were they from?**

Saw H--- came to tell me.

**Does he [come] from the KNU [Agriculture] Department?**

Yes. He said that the ceasefire has now taken place and then they asked us to measure our land. They had measured the other villagers [land] which were not included in the land confiscation but for the land which had been confiscated by the Tatmadaw, they [the Tatmadaw] did not allow them [the KNU] to measure.

**Where does he work?**

KNU Agriculture Department.

**Did he ask any of you about your land?**

He asked to measure our land. He went to meet with the Tatmadaw but they did not allow him to measure the land.

**When did he come to question you?**

Yesterday, because they [the KNU Agriculture Department] have started [to] measure the land only this year.

**Did they only measure the lands which have been confiscated?**

No, they measured all the lands.

**They started to measure the land in which year?**

In 2014.

**Was it not in early 2015?**

Oh yes, in early 2015.

**Did they measure the land only in the flat area, and not in the mountain side like V--- [area]?**

No, they said they would measure the land in V--- [area] next year.

**So [during 2015] they would only measure the land which is near the town?**

Yes, they measured the land only for the Karen villagers whose lands are located near the town [the flat area]. They measured the lands for all [those] villagers and created land grants for them. As for my land, we want to measure it but the Tatmadaw did not allow us.

**What did they do with your land? Did they grow paddy [rice] or vegetables?**

They built houses and kept it as their place.

**Do you know their battalion?**

I do not know. The people told me that the Tatmadaw base is on my land. When I went to submit the case the people told me [the battalion numbers] but I do not remember.

**You did not note it down?**

No. If you go to M--- [village] and ask the villagers there [they will tell you] that the Tatmadaw [constructed their army camp and houses] in Saw C---'s farm and many villagers will tell you [this]. You can also ask the villagers in N--- village.

**How many years have you worked on your land?**

We worked on our land for two years then we rented our land to a Shan villager.

**So did you collect money from [the Shan villager] or [did you collect] paddy?**

We rented the land and we asked for paddy and we also had to pay tax.

**You said you went to submit the case in 2013, so did you ever go to meet the [government-appointed] village head in 2014 and 2015?**

No, we never went because we had not heard anything from them.

**Is there any land from other villager's [that is] in Hpapun [Town]?**

The villagers in H--- village do have land in there.

**So only your land is based there?**

Yes, because my husband bought the land and he also lived in M--- [village].

**So your husband purchased it?**

Yes he purchased it from his aunt because his aunt sold the land to him. His aunt said that she did not dare to work on her land because the land is located near the main road and it was the time of the 'four cuts' policy.

**How much did he purchase the land for?**

For 30,000.

**Is that in Myanmar or Thai currency?**

Myanmar currency [kyat]. In the past, Myanmar and Thai were the same currency rate.

**Did the [government-appointed] village head ask you any questions when you went to submit your land case?**

No, [the government-appointed] village head did not ask any questions because [he/she] already knew that we went there to submit the land case.

**After you submitted the case did you hear [that] any of them [villagers] got their land back?**

I have not heard [that] any of them [have got] their land back. Saw H--- asked the land owners to go with him and he would measure the land which had been confiscated by the Tatmadaw but that they [the Tatmadaw] have not yet built buildings on, but none of the land owners dared to go [and measure the confiscated land] and the Tatmadaw also does not allow us to measure the land.

**You said they went to measure the lands, so where did they measure?**

They went to measure the land starting from M--- [village] and in the lower part of M--- village such as O---, P---, Q---, R--- and S--- [villages].

**When they [Saw H--- and the KNU Agriculture Department] measured the land, did the villagers go with them?**

Yes, some villagers went with them.

**You said the villagers did not dare to go with them right?**



The villagers dared [even though they were afraid] to go with them, but the Tatmadaw did not permit them to measure the land. They [KNU Agriculture Department] wanted to create land grants for the land owners because in the past most of the farmlands did not have land grants.

**So they went to measure the land only [at the beginning of] this year?**

Yes, in this year because in the past [before the ceasefire] they [the KNU] did not dare to go there to measuring the land.

**Did you go to submit the case in order to get your land back, or to get any other [form of compensation]?**

We submitted the case in order to regain our land, but they [the Tatmadaw had] already built their houses and army camp [on our land]. Therefore, we are not able to do anything. Even if they are not going to give our land back they should at least give us compensation but they did not give us anything. Even though they built their houses [camps] on the land they did not inform any of the villagers.

**Thank you so much for answering my questions about your farm that has been confiscated as you know.**

I have the land grant with me if you want to have a look.

**Do you have anything [else to say] that I have not asked you [about]?**

Yes, about my farm. Even if they are not going to give our land back they should at least compensate us. Now we are getting old so if they give us compensation we can use it. Now we have lost everything [because of the confiscation]. They [the Tatmadaw] already confiscated our land and we do not dare to go and check our land because we are afraid of them.

**How many groups of people have come to talk with you about the land issues?**

Only Saw H--- and you.

**Thank you very much Mu Ghar.**

**Source #137<sup>447</sup>**

<b>Log #</b>	15-58-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Ma A---, July 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in August 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-58-a8-i1/thaton-interview-ma-july-2015">http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-58-a8-i1/thaton-interview-ma-july-2015</a>
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-an Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen	
<b>Religion:</b> Buddhist	
<b>Marital Status:</b> Married	
<b>Occupation:</b> Vendor	
<b>Position:</b> Villager	

<sup>447</sup> This source document has been logged under both Source #137 and #138 due to a logging error. KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that may result from this.

**What is your name, Naw?**<sup>448</sup>

My name is Ma A---.

**How old are you?**

I am 43 years old.

**Are you married?**

Yes, I am. I was working on farming in [B--- village,]<sup>449</sup> the place that I used to live. Now, they [police and government officials] said that the place that I used to live is the forest [reserve] land. As I know, it is not a forest land. I used to live there and that is my village.

In 1983, Commander Myint Thein from KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] Brigade #1 passed through Kaw Yin A Htet village tract, B--- village and arrested two French engineers who were working in Myaing Ka Lay cement factory.<sup>450</sup> Therefore, villagers dare not live in B--- village [for fear of a Tatmadaw retaliation against the KNLA] and they decided to move to C--- village.

At that time, the villagers worked on the hill fields or paddy fields in that area. After we finished working on a plot of land, we moved to work on a different plot of land, then moved to work on another different plot of land. There used to be many big trees. [The armed wing of the] KNU [Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)] used to patrol there as it used to be their control area. As we were easily frightened, we were scared if we saw the Tatmadaw coming to our village. We didn't even dare to show ourselves near the main road [Hpa-an Town to Yangon highway] during the 1988 students' uprising. I was only a teenage girl at that time. There were a lot of lands owned by my grandparents in that place. Those who were village heads in the past were very good. [However], the one who is the current village head makes us feel disappointed. [I am] not only disappointed, I am also becoming poorer. He gets us into trouble.

The poor villagers who do not have land to stay on [in C--- village (including Ma A---),] submitted their documents to get land grants [from the KNU]. I do not know much about the document submission [process]. What I know is that we had gotten the land grant produced by the KNU and we can live on the [B--- village] land. Then we [some of the villagers] decided to go and live there six months ago [in January 2015]. There were only a few houses there at the time [when we first moved back there]. The [rest of the] villagers dared not go to live there. The villagers were told [by the police] not to go and live there. If they

<sup>448</sup> *Naw* is S'gaw Karen title used for women, before their name. In this context, the interviewer is showing respect for the interviewee by referring to her as *Naw*, 'older sister'.

<sup>449</sup> D--- village is located on both sides of the main vehicle road from Hpa-an Town in Hpa-an District to Yangon. The village is a Karen village in which villagers mostly do subsistence farming. D--- village is divided into two parts, B--- which is the upper or eastern part, and C---, which is the lower, or western part. The two parts are separated by the vehicle road. B--- is a disputed territory, as it has been designated as a forest reserve by the Burma/Myanmar government despite villagers proclaiming it their inherited land and place of residence, and despite the land not actually containing a forest. For further information, see, "[Forced relocation and destruction of villagers' shelters by Burma/Myanmar government officials and police force in Hpa-an Township, Thaton District, June 2015](#)," KHRG, August 2015.

<sup>450</sup> On October 15<sup>th</sup> 1983, the KNU kidnapped a French engineer, Jacques Bossu and his wife, who were working in Myaing Ka Lay Town. The couple were taken by the KNU through Kaw Yin A Htet village tract on their way to Manerplaw, Hpa-an District. The KNU then demanded that the French government cease all aid to Burma/Myanmar if they wish to guarantee their release. Despite their demands not being met, the KNU freed the couple on humanitarian grounds on November 25<sup>th</sup> 1983. For more details see "[Burma: Anti-Government Rebels Free Kidnapped French Couple](#)," *Reuters*, November 1983.

went and lived there, they would be arrested and put in jail. [We went to stay there because we thought] we have the strong point [advantage] that the KNU stands for us and had provided us with the land grants and we thought that if we faced any problems they would address them for us. [However, on February 1<sup>st</sup> 2015], we were ordered to go to the [Burma/Myanmar government Department of Forest Management] office by the village head. He said to us, *"You are ordered to go to the office. You have to go to the office. People will negotiate with you. The land that you took is very large. You will be given a smaller size of land. You will be negotiated with only about that issue."* We asked him [village head], *"Who orders us?"* He told us, *"It is the [Burma/Myanmar] Department of Forest Management."* We were also afraid that we will be arrested but then we went [to the office anyway].

### How many people went there?

There were a total of 15 people who went to the office: the village head, Aung Thwin Aye [an elder], and 13 villagers. When we arrived at the Department of Forest Management office, we told him [village head], *"We already arrived at the office and so let's get out of the car!"* He said, *"We cannot get out of the car here."* We asked, *"Where are we going?"* He said, *"We have to go to the [other] office."* We told him, *"Today is Sunday. Isn't the office closed?"* [No response from him provided in the interview]. When we arrived at the office, we had to wait there and it took us quite long, as the office was closed. Then we told him [village head], *"You said that you are going to negotiate and you have not even started it yet. We don't have much time."* He said, *"[U Zaw Min], the chief minister [of Kayin State], is in a meeting and he hasn't come back yet."* [Ma A--- thought to herself], *"Ay! He said that we are going to meet with the Department of Forest Management. Why we are going to meet with the chief minister?"* I was very scared at that time and I was thinking, *"Are we going to be arrested?"* I was not sure yet at that time.

The chief minister came back to the office at 1:00 pm. Then he called us to go into his office. I have never been to his office. We first went into the guest room in the office. He asked what our names were and which village we live in. We told him, *"We are from E--- [Karen name for D---] village."* He asked, *"Do you all live in E--- [D---] village?"* We replied to him, *"Yes, we all live in E--- [D---] village."* He told us, *"You need to sign."* We did not know anything [about that] so we asked him, *"Ay, what are we going to sign for?"* He said, *"It is for nothing. You have to provide the signature to go into the chief minister's room."* We said, *"Oh. If it is like that, we are going to provide our signatures."* We were not afraid to sign for that. The chief minister watched us [silently] while we were providing the signatures. After we had provided our signature, we went and entered into the chief minister's room. He asked us, *"Where are you all from?"* He asked all of us which village we were from and we said that we were from D--- village. He said, *"You are all from D--- village? I do not want to hear the name of D--- village. D--- villagers made me busy. They created problems regarding the land issue."* He said to us like that. Huh! I thought he must have already [made up his mind to] reprimand us. We realised that since [the land problem happened], he did not like us. He said, *"They [villagers] usually use the phrase 'land owned by our grandparents' [when they are told to move off the land]."* We [villagers] told them that the lands are our grandparents' lands, because they are [in fact] our grandparents' lands. We did not lie to them. I swear to die if I lied to them. We are telling the truth. He [chief minister] said that, *"The country is in peace but you created problems. The land grants produced by the KNU are not official."* I thought in my mind like, *"Ha! [What?!] We are going to be in trouble as the KNU land grants are not official?!"* When my younger brother Saw F--- stepped [forward] to speak, he [chief minister] was banging on the table [making] 'Bang, Bang' [sounds] and no one dared to talk. All of the villagers were already frightened. [He was banging on the table and said], *"I cannot have peace of mind. You, the B--- villagers are creating problems in different ways in terms of the land issue. I do not want to hear it anymore."* I was like, *"Huh, I am in trouble this time."* He asked us, *"Did you sell your land [in C---]?"* We replied, *"We did not sell our land [because we don't own any land in C---]."* He said, *"If you don't sell [own] your land, don't*

*you know that you cannot live on that land?" We replied, "We did not know that we could not live on that land. We thought that the land is near our village, it is our grandparents' lands, we used to live and farm on that land before, so we decided to move to live on that land [again] since we did not have a place of residence in the village [C--- village] and I thought that I could come and live there." He said, "You! You know that you cannot live on that land but you intentionally came and lived there." He shouted at me [and to the police officers in the room], "Take serious action against her! Hear me? Take serious action against her! She is so cunning." I was already scared at that point, although I dared to continue talking [to him]. He was shouting at me when I was talking in the front. I told him like this, "Paung Mon and Yay Khe can not only live there [on the land], but also can plant rubber trees there. Why can't we, the villagers, live there? We thought that we could also live there as they could live there, so we went there and built our huts." He told me, "Since you compare yourself to Paung Mon and Yay Khe, serious action must be taken against you."*

### **Who are Paung Mon and Yay Khe?**

They are rich people. I do not know very much about them. All I know about them is that they are planting rubber trees and that they built their huts, from what I have seen.

### **Are the villagers not allowed to go live there [B--- village]?**

That is the villagers' lands. There are four or five villagers who own the farms there. I do not know all of their names.<sup>451</sup>

### **Do you own any farms there?**

The lands were owned by our grandparents. The land has been passed over from the grandparents to their children or grandchildren step by step [from generation to generation]. Therefore, I do not know which plot of land is owned by which [of the grandchildren]. We also do not try to find out about it as we cannot read and write. He said, "You always say, 'The land is owned by your grandparents,' which I do not want to hear about." Then he said, "You compare yourself to Paung Mon and Yay Khe. Now, we are suing them [as I never gave them permission to use the land], so we must also sue you. Take serious action against her!" He was saying that very aggressively. Then I didn't dare talk about anything. I then told him, "Ba Ba Gyi [Leader], if we are not allowed to live there, we are not going to live there." Then he said, "You have to provide your signatures. And you have to demolish [all of the houses] in seven days." I then decided to demolish [my house] as I do not like [it when things are] complicated. When I arrived home, [I started] demolishing [my house].

### **Did he threaten you when asking you to provide your signature?**

He said, "You all must provide your signatures. You must finish demolishing your houses in seven days."

### **What were they going to do to you if you did not provide your signature?**

If we did not provide our signature, we were going to have serious action taken against us and then put into jail. We were afraid of him and I dared not talk about anything. There was also one of my uncles who was talking in the front adding that he also did not have any place

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<sup>451</sup> The interviewee does not directly answer the question. The villagers whose ancestors lived in B--- are *not* allowed to live there according to the Burma/Myanmar government, however there are four to five wealthy individuals who have bought land there and were allowed by the Burma/Myanmar government to use it. However, Chief Minister of Kayin State, U Zaw Min claims that since these wealthy individuals overstepped his authority, their use of the land is not legitimate, either.



of residence to live in and he has to live in his younger sister's compound.

We were very scared because there were a lot of police [officers] in front of us. If he gave the order, we could have been put in jail. Then he said, "*We are not finished yet.*" He asked us to provide our signatures. We were sent back to the Department of Forest Management office and we provided our signatures. It was about 4:00 pm. When I went back home after I had provided my signature, I immediately [started to] demolish my house. I do not care if I do not have the land. I am not going to live on the land. I had demolished the roof of my house. My brother Saw F--- told me, "*Don't do this! You have built your house. It is not as if you do not have any document. You have the document, land grants produced by KNU. You can live here.*" Then I decided to continue living on the land. While we lived there, people always came and threatened us whenever they came to us.

### **Who came and threatened you?**

The people who came and threatened us are the village head and his colleagues who are the elders, Aung Thwin Aye and Aung Mo.

### **What did they say when they came and threatened you?**

They came and said, "*You cannot live here. You will be arrested and put in jail. This is trespassing [on Burma/Myanmar government] land. You're living on forest [reserve] land. You cannot live here.*" They always came and told us like that once every one or two days. We [kept] living there because we have the [KNU] land grants and we are courageous. We thought that if people ask us [for the documentation], we would show them our land grants. However, we did not have time to show them our land grants when they came into the village. As soon as they turned up, they arrested U G--- and my younger brother Saw F--- and they were put in jail for two months. I do not remember the date.

[One of] the leaders of the [censored for security], Saw P---, went and pleaded with [the police] to release the villagers. They had been in jail for two months. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> [2015], they [police] came and tricked us and noted down our names on a list. They said that they were going to submit the list of our names [to the Burma/Myanmar Department of Forest Management] for us which they were lying to us [about, even though] they talked to us nicely at first. Later, they said that they were going to arrest us and put us in jail if we do not move. If they could not arrest the men, they were going to arrest the women. They said that they were going to arrest all of the villagers in the village. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> [2015], nine police trucks were in the village and came to arrest the villagers. That'll be about 50 police [officers]. Then we ran away; we ran like thieves being chased by people who are trying to catch them. I then called out [to my son], "*Hey, my son Maung H---! The police are coming!*" People also called my father but he didn't hear anything as my father is old and deaf. They caught my father and they took him with them. My father was repairing the bridge for the children to go to the school [that is] beside the road. When the police came, he was taken away by the police. My husband was drunk and sleeping in the house. He did not know anything [about the police coming to arrest villagers]. Then police called him saying, "*Hey man, get up! Get up! Why don't you get up?*" while pointing their gun at him aggressively. Then he woke up and replied, "*Yes, sir.*" He did not have clothes and slippers on him. Therefore, I asked people to send them to him as he was already taken away. They arrested all of the men that they saw on that day. They followed those who tried to run away saying, "*Don't run away! Don't run away!*" They took all of those who they had arrested to the [police] office. The leader [chief] in the [police]<sup>452</sup> office asked the police [officers], "*You were only able to arrest a few people? I asked you to arrest all of the men.*" The leader [chief of police] scolded the police [officers saying], "*I ordered you to arrest the elders [and] the big shit [Saw P---], but*

<sup>452</sup> Myaing Ka Lay Chief of Police U Win Hlaing.

*you brought only the small shit [villagers].”*

**How many villagers did they arrest?**

They arrested 25 villagers.<sup>453</sup>

**Were there any females included?**

At 9:30 am on June 2<sup>nd</sup> [2015], they came and arrested the villagers.<sup>454</sup> They came and arrested the villagers by checking people with the names that they had on their list. They came and questioned us. They asked me, *“What is your name? Where do you live? What is your ID number?”* I replied, *“I live here, in E--- [B---] village. I do not remember my ID number.”* They asked, *“What is your husband’s ID number?”* I replied, *“I do not know. You have already taken him. I cannot read and write.”* The village head was smiling at me standing beside the police at that time. He was following the police at that time. They were arresting villagers till 4:00 pm that day. They said that if they could not arrest the men, they were going to arrest the women. At 4:00 pm, the policewomen came to arrest me. They asked [the people] where my house was. They asked, *“Where is Ma A---’s house?”* People replied, *“She is not at home.”* Then they asked, *“Where did she go?”* People replied, *“We do not know.”* I was looking at them from farther away. I know that they were going to arrest me on that day because they already decided to arrest me, so I ran away before they saw me. Therefore, I was not arrested on that day.

My younger brother is the one who had to suffer the most. Why did they arrest him? What mistake had he made? What I want to say is that they did not have to oppress and do [arrest] villagers like this. They should address exclusively whatever the problem at hand is, right? I told them [the police]<sup>455</sup>, *“How come you suddenly appear and arrest the villagers? Why did you arrest unrelated villagers including those such as day labourers and those who did not build houses in this village [visitors], who have not done [anything] wrong?”* They replied, *“We are arresting them just for a while. We are going to release them as soon as we have questioned them.”* Until now, they have not released any [of the people they had arrested]. I told them, *“They [the arrested villagers] did not make any mistake. We [I] totally do not have any place of residence to live, so I came to live here. You can come and arrest the people nicely. Since you came with guns, we have heart problems and we are going to have a heart attack and we are going to die.”* They said, *“Naw, we use the gun to protect ourselves.”* I said, *“Villagers are scared when you point guns at the villagers. We are just villagers.”* They said, *“If we do not protect ourselves like this, people [villagers] are going to do us [harm] first.”* I replied, *“We are not going to do anything to you.”*

They were trying to follow me [on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015 in the morning]. They said that I was hiding Saw I--- [villager]. They asked me to show them Saw I---’s house. I said, *“I don’t know where he is.”* They said, *“You know.”* Since they doubted me, they came to arrest me again [later that day]. They wanted to arrest Saw I---, Saw J---, Maung K---, Maung L--- and a monk. They asked me to show them where their houses were. I do not know where their houses are, as I sit in my shop and sell [goods] the whole day, [every day]. I was selling at the shop and minding my own business. Because they came and did to me like that [threatened to arrest me and destroyed my house], I have been very miserable and I am not able to be happy since then. I have been miserable because I do not have my own business anymore.

<sup>453</sup> After this interview was conducted, KHRG received further details about the arrests in B--- village. According to subsequent reports, on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015, 23 villagers and one monk were arrested, totalling 24 villagers on that day. In addition, three more villagers were arrested on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015, bringing the total number of B--- villagers arrested to 27.

<sup>454</sup> The police came into B--- village on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015 twice. First, before 9:30 am, to take down villagers’ names. Then, they came back with 50 police officers to arrest the villagers whose names were on the list.

<sup>455</sup> Ma A--- confronted the policemen earlier in the day, before the policewomen came to arrest her at 4 pm.

They took or ate [and drank] all of the things that I sell in my shop, including the bottles of juice, beer, and thermoses, and all of the other goods that I have in my shop.

**Which day did they take [all] that?**

It was on the 22<sup>nd</sup> [of June, 2015].

**Did they inform you that they were going to come on that day?**

They asked the villagers to demolish all of their houses on the 21<sup>st</sup> [of June 2015].<sup>456</sup> Since my husband was in jail, there was no one who could demolish my house. I told them [the police] to arrange a place of residence [plot of land] for me so that I can move my house. They replied, *"We cannot arrange the land for you. You have to find [one] on your own. We do not know about that."* Those who tell us like that are the outsiders [police]. I didn't dare see the village head. I was afraid of him more than a king. Even if I see a tiger, I dare to run in front of it. For him, I don't dare to run in front of him. I was afraid of him that much. He made me feel disappointed.

**Can you tell me how they came on the 22<sup>nd</sup> [of June 2015]?**

Selling [goods] in my own shop does not mean I am rich. I used to borrow the goods [from shops in] Set Yon market [outside the village]. The shop owners might [now] think that I had lied to them [since] I did not come to pay them. I have now lost my reputation. Since I am poor, I borrow the goods from them and sell them. It is not because I was rich [that I was able to be a] vendor. In terms of our house, my husband borrowed about 300,000 kyat (US \$257.07)<sup>457</sup> from his older sister to build our house. We thought that we were going to live here permanently so we were going to build a good house. It cost a lot of money to roof our houses as we had to buy some thatched shingles and some zinc. I also laid a concrete floor in front of my house for vending. All of our belongings had been lost so I am very disappointed. It is like my life has been ruined. In the past, my husband told me, *"Let's go back to Bilin Town and live there since we are not sure whether we can live here permanently. Whenever people come and talk to me [about the land problem], I don't understand, as they speak in Karen and I don't speak Karen."* He did not know anything about what had been going on. I always told him that we can live on this land.

**Who is your husband?**

My husband is of Shan nationality and he speaks Burmese. Now, he is in jail. If he is released, he may blame me for us being in debt, as well as for us have nothing left. He may blame me as I did not listen to him. I also feel disappointed about that. Currently, I dare not go back to live in the village. One thing that I was told [by the police] was that I was stubborn because I had to demolish my house but I didn't do it. That [being called stubborn and being hated by the police], I was afraid of the most. I told them [police] that since my husband was in jail and they had not released him, I did not know how to demolish my house. I cannot climb up the roof of the house and demolish it alone. However, they did not accept what I had told them. They said that I must finish demolishing my house by June 21<sup>st</sup> 2015. The day that my husband was arrested was on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015 and they [had] arrested 25 villagers [in total].

<sup>456</sup> As Ma A--- recalls earlier in the interview, the initial deadline given to the villagers to demolish all the houses in B--- village was February 8<sup>th</sup> 2015 (seven days after the meeting with Chief Minister of Kayin State U Zaw Min), however subsequent visits by the police and Burma/Myanmar government officials indicate that the deadline was revised to June 21<sup>st</sup> 2015.

<sup>457</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the August 4<sup>th</sup> 2015 official market rate of 1,167.00 kyat to the US \$1.



**Can you tell me how they came and destroyed your houses?**

My house was beside the road. When they arrived, they stopped in front of my house.

**How many police [officers] were there?**

There were about 100 police [officers].

**Only the police came?**

It also included some civilians including the forest [Department of Forest Management officials] and other elders [government staff]. There were about a total of 150 people including civilians and police [who] came. There were a lot of people.

**Who was the leading person?**

They were the village head, Aung Mo, and Aung Thwin Aye; these three people.

**What did they do after they came?**

They appeared suddenly in the village.

**Where were you at that time?**

At first, we were hiding beside the bamboo trees on the mountain which is not very far from the village and we were observing them. I was watching them from far away and they came and surrounded my house and ate the food that I had in my house. I was heartbroken when I went back home [and saw that]. I went back to my home at 6:00 pm after they were gone.

**What time did they come in the morning?**

They came at about 9:00 am and it was on Monday [June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015].

**How did they destroy the houses?**

They cut our house with a saw. They demolished our house; some destroyed the walls, some climbed up to the roof and destroyed the roof. I have three knives and an axe in my house and they took all of them. They did not leave anything. They took all of the food and goods that I had in my shop.

**What about your rice? What did they do [with it]?**

I had a big tub of rice and they threw it away. Before destroying the village, they held a meeting with the villagers and they persuaded the villagers [of C---] to destroy the houses [of B--- villagers]. They destroyed all of the houses which were beside the road. Some people were destroying and some people [from the police and the Burma/Myanmar government] were planting the teak plants [trees]. They planted a lot of teak plants at the same time on that day.

**Did they torch the houses after they had destroyed them?**

On June 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> they torched all the houses after they had destroyed them. Some houses were burnt down without cutting them [first], including [along with] the pots, plates and bowls [inside them]. They took all of the possessions from people's houses. People said that they asked the other villagers who live beside the main road [in C---] to take them [the looted goods] and the [C---] villagers also took them. I told Saw P---, "*Teacher! My life has*

*been ruined. If you do not help us, there is no one who is going to help us.*" I owe him gratitude and I do not know how to pay it back. Otherwise, [without his help] we, all villagers, including men and women would have been arrested and put in jail. [At the time when we were hiding in the mountain], Saw P--- said, *"If you want to go hide in Myawaddy, then let's go and hide. I will send you there."* We also told him, *"Where are those who produced land grants for us [KNU]? Are they not going to help us? Ask them to help us!"* I would have died hiding in the mountain. One of my children was very sick. He did not have much energy and could not walk very well. It was also very rainy the whole day when we were hiding.

### **Did you have a raincoat?**

Yes, I had [one]. There were a lot of villagers fleeing. [While we were hiding in the forest], we heard that they are going to come and arrest us in the forest. Then, we continued to flee separately. Some villagers fled up to the mountain, some villagers went to hide in the monastery and some villagers went back to their relatives' houses. Why were they arresting the people like that regarding this land? If they [the police and government officials] had done the right thing, there would not be any problems; since they had not done the right thing, it created problems. We, the villagers, do not lie. We are telling you the truth. [For example], *"If our parents love us, there will be peace [at home]. If our parents do not love us, our siblings will go their separate [ways]."* Now it is like that; even the village head can't look us in the face [for not having resolved the land problem], we had to flee separately and our lives have been ruined. We said, *"Sir! Teacher! Help us, please. We do not know anything [about how to address this problem] and they [the police] have done [treated] us very badly."* Since Saw P--- knows about the law, he said that he is going to help us [at first]. However, the village head said that he did not get along with him. So, it is like the person who works for the right thing and the person who does not work for the right thing cannot work together, right? That is our story.

We had to flee from them [the police] until we arrived in this place [Myawaddy], as our houses were destroyed [and burnt down] and we did not have any place of residence. When we arrived at this village, people helped us with food. We are very happy. When we came to this village, we did not have clothes and people gave us clothes.

### **Who gave you the clothes?**

I do not know. They are from an organisation. They also supported us with rice. If the rice is gone [finished], they come and give [us] more rice. We, I thank them very much. Only if you [KHRG researcher] help us, we will have a chance to get our land back and we will be able to go back and live in our village. If there is no one who is going to help us, we will continue facing problems. We are going to encounter more challenges than now and we do not know where we are going to be sent. My parents are also getting very old and if you [researcher] do not help us, we will not make it to go back to our village. We want to report about our problem that we are facing to you since we heard you went to visit E--- [B---] village. When you went to E--- [B---] village, we thought that you heard the good thing [truth] only if you met with the good people. If you [met with the bad people and] listened to them, our lives were going to be ruined. Now, [we want to know] how they are going to compensate us for our loss.

**How much does it cost, all of the things that they burnt down: your house and shop?**

They also burnt down my small traditional house which was behind my house as well as all of the firewood that I kept under my house. They brought tires and petrol.<sup>458</sup> They poured petrol around my house and burnt down my house. The price [of the destroyed assets] has been noted, it all cost 1,970,000 kyat (US \$1,688.09).

**That is only for the cost of your house?**

Yes.

**Did the police take anything from your house?**

Yes, they took many things from my house.

**What did they take?**

They took the zinc, finished timbers [that formed part of my house] and stilts that were still in good [condition after they had destroyed my house]. They took all of the valuable things. They left only the things which are not valuable and they kept them [the non-valuables] beside the road and the other villagers came and took them [for themselves]. I did not go and take any of it as I did not want it anymore. What I want [from the police] now is to get back our land. Please try [advocating] for us until we get back our lands. We have our land grants [that were] produced by the KNU, but they [the police still] did this to us. Therefore, we ask teacher [Saw P---] to help and he said that there are some people [NGOs] who are going to help us [to get back our lands]. I do not know any other people [organisation]. I have never been here in Myawaddy. This is my first time coming here.

Now I met with you [researcher] and told you all about it. You can analyse whether it is right or wrong after you listen to it. [You can] leave it [be] if it is not right. What we want from them now is to give compensation for our lives which have been ruined by them.

**Who are they?**

I mean those who burnt down our houses. Please help us make them arrange places of residence for us. We want to go back and live on our land. We were asked to go live beside Shwe Wa Htun road [Shwe Ni area, Kaw Yin A Htet village tract] and we were asked to draw lots [for plots of land there]. We do not want to draw lots because we do not want to go live there. I do not own any land [in C--- village]. If you do not believe me, you can check my name in the Hpa-an [Township] office. I am not lying. My husband also had asked me to go and live in his village [in Bilin Township] but I did not want to go live in his village. I have been living in my village [B---] for 44 years. I was born in my village and I am also going to die in my village. Therefore, I do not want to go live in other people's village.

What I want to say to you is that my husband has not done any mistake. Why did they arrest him? It has been one month already. They have not let us know why he was arrested.

**What about your father? Was he released?**

No, he has also not been released yet. All of the 25 villagers are still in jail. When I talked to

<sup>458</sup> It is common in Burma/Myanmar to use pieces of rubber to start fires. The police and/or people from the Department of Forest Management likely lit the tires on fire and threw them into villagers' houses, for a quicker demolition by fire.

my father over the phone, he told me that he was sick and had a headache and he was going to die in the jail. He said that he did not have good health. And he asked me, "*What are you going to do [to get us out of jail]? Are we going to continue being held in jail?*" My father is someone who gets frightened easily and is a quiet person. He does not drink and smoke.

**What were the villagers working on for their livelihoods?**

They were working on hill farms and on paddy fields. Mostly, they are working at hill farming.

**What did you work on?**

I worked on hill farming. Now, people [wealthy individuals] have planted rubber trees [on the hill that we used for farming] and it became a rubber plantation. We do not have any place to work for hill farming. There is also no hill forest. Currently, there is no paddy field left, either. They said that the paddy field land was the forest land. I told them that I do not know when you recognised the paddy field as forest land. You did not let us know about it. The paddy fields which we used to work on in the past now became rubber plantations, rich people's lands and forest lands. Therefore, we, the villagers, do not have any place to work. We depend on the KNU [to solve this problem for us].

**What do you want to add, in terms of the fact that your house has been destroyed?**

What I want to say is that we [villagers and police] need to get along with each other so that we will have a chance to go back and live in our village. They also must guarantee that they will not disturb us and allow us to go back and live in our village and release those who are in jail because they have not done anything wrong, right? That is all I want. Now, we have to stay away, far from our parents [who are in C--- village]. We could not have regular meals in the past [after the village was burnt down and before we arrived in Myawaddy]. We could [only] have regular meals when we arrived here. When we were fleeing, we could not have meals. We had to flee the whole day. We had to ask for rice from other people's houses, to say, "*I am very hungry, can you provide me a meal?*" I also felt shy and didn't dare eat very much, the way we wanted to. We also didn't dare go back home to cook [our own] rice. That is what I have experienced. To be honest, I don't dare to go back [to my village] now. I am so disappointed [in the Burma/Myanmar government and police].

**Did they say that they are going to arrest you if you go back?**

Yes, they said that they are going to arrest me. People also phoned me not to go back to the village. My friend told me [on the phone], "*They are trying to follow you [and asking information about you]. They want to know why we came [fled] to Myawaddy.*" People said that they have also sent some detectives to find out information about us. They know that we are staying in the monastery. People think that the monk will not be able to provide us with rice anymore, [but] yes, the monk can. There are some people who feel pity for us and provide us with food. The medicine is also provided. People provide food, clothes, mats, mosquito nets, and everything that we need. We did have these things when we lived in our village. To be honest, in our village, there was no one who pitied us and who was going to help us. They do not pity each other.

They [police] told me that I am very talkative and whenever I was asked something, I could respond to everything. I told them, "*You said that this land is the forest [reserve] land but there are no trees. Where are the trees? Show me. There is only grass and small plants.*" As I see there are no big trees, I told them that it is not a forest reserve. I argued with them like that. Ye Min Aung [Hpa-an Township administrator] and Thein Aung [Hpa-an Township Forest administrator] came and argued with me about that three or four times. One time,

they came to me at midnight, 12:00 o'clock, when I was sleeping. About 35 police and the village head came into our village and said that we cannot live here and we had to demolish our houses.

**Why did they come at midnight?**

We asked them why they came at midnight and they said that they are not going to do anything to us. Villagers told them, "*If you are not going to do anything to us, don't come at night time. Come at daytime. Coming at night time is insincere.*" Later, they came at daytime. Since they had come to the village many times, the villagers were afraid of them. Now, we have come here [to Myawaddy]. Some villagers were afraid and they didn't dare come here. Since we cannot feel [afraid] and stand it anymore, we decided to come here.

**How many villagers came to stay here [in Myawaddy]?**

There are a total of about 50 villagers who have come to stay here.<sup>459</sup>

**Are there any students [villagers' children] who came here, as well?**

There are six students who came here with us.

**How is their schooling?**

They are missing school for this year. If we can go back to our village, they will be able to continue their schooling. If we cannot go back, they will not. They have been attending their school for only two or three weeks [this year] before the conflict started. Since the conflict started, they were not able to go to school.

**Was there a school in your village?**

A school has already been built in our village. The day that the school just had been built [finished being constructed], the police came and arrested the villagers.

**Did they destroy the school?**

Yes, they burnt down it. They destroyed [everything,] including the teacher's house, school tables, and desks. We had collected 2,000 kyat (US \$1.71) per house to build that school. But they destroyed all of it. You will not see any stilts from the house left in the village because they have dug out all of them and then made the land plain. They said that they did not want to see any piece of wood left. Now, they have planted teak trees all over the land, which [still only] have two leaves [since they are young]. They started planting the teak trees on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015.

**Do you want to add anything else which I have not questioned you about?**

This was all [I wanted to mention] about my feelings. [I would like to know] how they are going to arrange our place of residence, the compensation for what they have burnt down; our houses including the chickens, which the police shot to eat. I had 40 chickens that I raised in my house. When I got into the car [to come to Myawaddy], I saw that my pigs, dogs and chickens were running around and the police shot them to eat them. We thought that police are doing this to us and there will be someone who is going to help us so we decided to come and stay here. We asked help from our teacher. He is our *kyay zu shin*.<sup>460</sup> Now, we

<sup>459</sup> Ma A--- estimated the number of B--- villagers who fled to Myawaddy at 50, however further investigation by KHRG indicates the number of B--- villagers in Myawaddy is closer to 100.

<sup>460</sup> *Kyay zu shin* is an expression in Burmese which would literally translate as 'a person that is owed gratitude.'

meet with you [researcher] and you are also our *kyay zu shin*. We will not forget our gratitude to anyone if we have the chance to go back and live in our village. The people who help us are Karen people, not the Burmese people.

**Thank you so much.**

Yes, thank you.

Ma A---, (female, 43), B--- village, Hpa-an Township, Thaton District  
(Interviewed in July 2015)

#### Source #138<sup>461</sup>

<b>Log #</b>	15-58-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Ma A---, July 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in August 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-58-a8-i1/thaton-interview-ma-july-2015">http://khrq.org/2015/08/15-58-a8-i1/thaton-interview-ma-july-2015</a>
<b>Location</b>	Hpa-an Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Buddhist</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Vendor</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Villager</p> <p><b>What is your name, Naw?</b><sup>462</sup></p> <p>My name is Ma A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 43 years old.</p> <p><b>Are you married?</b></p> <p>Yes, I am. I was working on farming in [B--- village,]<sup>463</sup> the place that I used to live. Now, they [police and government officials] said that the place that I used to live is the forest [reserve] land. As I know, it is not a forest land. I used to live there and that is my village.</p>	

<sup>461</sup> This source document has been logged under both Source #137 and #138 due to a logging error. KHRG regrets any inaccuracy that may result from this.

<sup>462</sup> *Naw* is S'gaw Karen title used for women, before their name. In this context, the interviewer is showing respect for the interviewee by referring to her as *Naw*, 'older sister'.

<sup>463</sup> D--- village is located on both sides of the main vehicle road from Hpa-an Town in Hpa-an District to Yangon. The village is a Karen village in which villagers mostly do subsistence farming. D--- village is divided into two parts, B--- which is the upper or eastern part, and C---, which is the lower, or western part. The two parts are separated by the vehicle road. B--- is a disputed territory, as it has been designated as a forest reserve by the Burma/Myanmar government despite villagers proclaiming it their inherited land and place of residence, and despite the land not actually containing a forest. For further information, see, "[Forced relocation and](#)



In 1983, Commander Myint Thein from KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army] Brigade #1 passed through Kaw Yin A Htet village tract, B--- village and arrested two French engineers who were working in Myaing Ka Lay cement factory.<sup>464</sup> Therefore, villagers dare not live in B--- village [for fear of a Tatmadaw retaliation against the KNLA] and they decided to move to C--- village.

At that time, the villagers worked on the hill fields or paddy fields in that area. After we finished working on a plot of land, we moved to work on a different plot of land, then moved to work on another different plot of land. There used to be many big trees. [The armed wing of the] KNU [Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)] used to patrol there as it used to be their control area. As we were easily frightened, we were scared if we saw the Tatmadaw coming to our village. We didn't even dare to show ourselves near the main road [Hpa-an Town to Yangon highway] during the 1988 students' uprising. I was only a teenage girl at that time. There were a lot of lands owned by my grandparents in that place. Those who were village heads in the past were very good. [However], the one who is the current village head makes us feel disappointed. [I am] not only disappointed, I am also becoming poorer. He gets us into trouble.

The poor villagers who do not have land to stay on [in C--- village (including Ma A---),] submitted their documents to get land grants [from the KNU]. I do not know much about the document submission [process]. What I know is that we had gotten the land grant produced by the KNU and we can live on the [B--- village] land. Then we [some of the villagers] decided to go and live there six months ago [in January 2015]. There were only a few houses there at the time [when we first moved back there]. The [rest of the] villagers dared not go to live there. The villagers were told [by the police] not to go and live there. If they went and lived there, they would be arrested and put in jail. [We went to stay there because we thought] we have the strong point [advantage] that the KNU stands for us and had provided us with the land grants and we thought that if we faced any problems they would address them for us. [However, on February 1<sup>st</sup> 2015], we were ordered to go to the [Burma/Myanmar government Department of Forest Management] office by the village head. He said to us, *"You are ordered to go to the office. You have to go to the office. People will negotiate with you. The land that you took is very large. You will be given a smaller size of land. You will be negotiated with only about that issue."* We asked him [village head], *"Who orders us?"* He told us, *"It is the [Burma/Myanmar] Department of Forest Management."* We were also afraid that we will be arrested but then we went [to the office anyway].

### How many people went there?

There were a total of 15 people who went to the office: the village head, Aung Thwin Aye [an elder], and 13 villagers. When we arrived at the Department of Forest Management office, we told him [village head], *"We already arrived at the office and so let's get out of the car!"* He said, *"We cannot get out of the car here."* We asked, *"Where are we going?"* He said, *"We have to go to the [other] office."* We told him, *"Today is Sunday. Isn't the office closed?"* [No response from him provided in the interview]. When we arrived at the office, we had to wait there and it took us quite long, as the office was closed. Then we told him [village head], *"You said that you are going to negotiate and you have not even started it yet. We don't have much time."* He said, *"[U Zaw Min], the chief minister [of Kayin State], is in a meeting*

[destruction of villagers' shelters by Burma/Myanmar government officials and police force in Hpa-an Township, Thaton District, June 2015](#)," KHRG, August 2015.

<sup>464</sup> On October 15<sup>th</sup> 1983, the KNU kidnapped a French engineer, Jacques Bossu and his wife, who were working in Myaing Ka Lay Town. The couple were taken by the KNU through Kaw Yin A Htet village tract on their way to Manerplaw, Hpa-an District. The KNU then demanded that the French government cease all aid to Burma/Myanmar if they wish to guarantee their release. Despite their demands not being met, the KNU freed the couple on humanitarian grounds on November 25<sup>th</sup> 1983. For more details see ["Burma: Anti-Government Rebels Free Kidnapped French Couple," Reuters](#), November 1983.



*and he hasn't come back yet."* [Ma A--- thought to herself], *"Ay! He said that we are going to meet with the Department of Forest Management. Why we are going to meet with the chief minister?"* I was very scared at that time and I was thinking, *"Are we going to be arrested?"* I was not sure yet at that time.

The chief minister came back to the office at 1:00 pm. Then he called us to go into his office. I have never been to his office. We first went into the guest room in the office. He asked what our names were and which village we live in. We told him, *"We are from E--- [Karen name for D---] village."* He asked, *"Do you all live in E--- [D---] village?"* We replied to him, *"Yes, we all live in E--- [D---] village."* He told us, *"You need to sign."* We did not know anything [about that] so we asked him, *"Ay, what are we going to sign for?"* He said, *"It is for nothing. You have to provide the signature to go into the chief minister's room."* We said, *"Oh. If it is like that, we are going to provide our signatures."* We were not afraid to sign for that. The chief minister watched us [silently] while we were providing the signatures. After we had provided our signature, we went and entered into the chief minister's room. He asked us, *"Where are you all from?"* He asked all of us which village we were from and we said that we were from D--- village. He said, *"You are all from D--- village? I do not want to hear the name of D--- village. D--- villagers made me busy. They created problems regarding the land issue."* He said to us like that. Huh! I thought he must have already [made up his mind to] reprimand us. We realised that since [the land problem happened], he did not like us. He said, *"They [villagers] usually use the phrase 'land owned by our grandparents' [when they are told to move off the land]."* We [villagers] told them that the lands are our grandparents' lands, because they are [in fact] our grandparents' lands. We did not lie to them. I swear to die if I lied to them. We are telling the truth. He [chief minister] said that, *"The country is in peace but you created problems. The land grants produced by the KNU are not official."* I thought in my mind like, *"Ha! [What?!] We are going to be in trouble as the KNU land grants are not official?!"* When my younger brother Saw F--- stepped [forward] to speak, he [chief minister] was banging on the table [making] 'Bang, Bang' [sounds] and no one dared to talk. All of the villagers were already frightened. [He was banging on the table and said], *"I cannot have peace of mind. You, the B--- villagers are creating problems in different ways in terms of the land issue. I do not want to hear it anymore."* I was like, *"Huh, I am in trouble this time."* He asked us, *"Did you sell your land [in C---]?"* We replied, *"We did not sell our land [because we don't own any land in C---]."* He said, *"If you don't sell [own] your land, don't you know that you cannot live on that land?"* We replied, *"We did not know that we could not live on that land. We thought that the land is near our village, it is our grandparents' lands, we used to live and farm on that land before, so we decided to move to live on that land [again] since we did not have a place of residence in the village [C--- village] and I thought that I could come and live there."* He said, *"You! You know that you cannot live on that land but you intentionally came and lived there."* He shouted at me [and to the police officers in the room], *"Take serious action against her! Hear me? Take serious action against her! She is so cunning."* I was already scared at that point, although I dared to continue talking [to him]. He was shouting at me when I was talking in the front. I told him like this, *"Paung Mon and Yay Khe can not only live there [on the land], but also can plant rubber trees there. Why can't we, the villagers, live there? We thought that we could also live there as they could live there, so we went there and built our huts."* He told me, *"Since you compare yourself to Paung Mon and Yay Khe, serious action must be taken against you."*

### **Who are Paung Mon and Yay Khe?**

They are rich people. I do not know very much about them. All I know about them is that they are planting rubber trees and that they built their huts, from what I have seen.

### **Are the villagers not allowed to go live there [B--- village]?**

That is the villagers' lands. There are four or five villagers who own the farms there. I do not

know all of their names.<sup>465</sup>

**Do you own any farms there?**

The lands were owned by our grandparents. The land has been passed over from the grandparents to their children or grandchildren step by step [from generation to generation]. Therefore, I do not know which plot of land is owned by which [of the grandchildren]. We also do not try to find out about it as we cannot read and write. He said, “*You always say, ‘The land is owned by your grandparents,’ which I do not want to hear about.*” Then he said, “*You compare yourself to Paung Mon and Yay Khe. Now, we are suing them [as I never gave them permission to use the land], so we must also sue you. Take serious action against her!*” He was saying that very aggressively. Then I didn’t dare talk about anything. I then told him, “*Ba Ba Gyi [Leader], if we are not allowed to live there, we are not going to live there.*” Then he said, “*You have to provide your signatures. And you have to demolish [all of the houses] in seven days.*” I then decided to demolish [my house] as I do not like [it when things are] complicated. When I arrived home, [I started] demolishing [my house].

**Did he threaten you when asking you to provide your signature?**

He said, “*You all must provide your signatures. You must finish demolishing your houses in seven days.*”

**What were they going to do to you if you did not provide your signature?**

If we did not provide our signature, we were going to have serious action taken against us and then put into jail. We were afraid of him and I dared not talk about anything. There was also one of my uncles who was talking in the front adding that he also did not have any place of residence to live in and he has to live in his younger sister’s compound.

We were very scared because there were a lot of police [officers] in front of us. If he gave the order, we could have been put in jail. Then he said, “*We are not finished yet.*” He asked us to provide our signatures. We were sent back to the Department of Forest Management office and we provided our signatures. It was about 4:00 pm. When I went back home after I had provided my signature, I immediately [started to] demolish my house. I do not care if I do not have the land. I am not going to live on the land. I had demolished the roof of my house. My brother Saw F--- told me, “*Don’t do this! You have built your house. It is not as if you do not have any document. You have the document, land grants produced by KNU. You can live here.*” Then I decided to continue living on the land. While we lived there, people always came and threatened us whenever they came to us.

**Who came and threatened you?**

The people who came and threatened us are the village head and his colleagues who are the elders, Aung Thwin Aye and Aung Mo.

**What did they say when they came and threatened you?**

They came and said, “*You cannot live here. You will be arrested and put in jail. This is trespassing [on Burma/Myanmar government] land. You’re living on forest [reserve] land. You cannot live here.*” They always came and told us like that once every one or two days.

<sup>465</sup> The interviewee does not directly answer the question. The villagers whose ancestors lived in B--- are *not* allowed to live there according to the Burma/Myanmar government, however there are four to five wealthy individuals who have bought land there and were allowed by the Burma/Myanmar government to use it. However, Chief Minister of Kayin State, U Zaw Min claims that since these wealthy individuals overstepped his authority, their use of the land is not legitimate, either.

We [kept] living there because we have the [KNU] land grants and we are courageous. We thought that if people ask us [for the documentation], we would show them our land grants. However, we did not have time to show them our land grants when they came into the village. As soon as they turned up, they arrested U G--- and my younger brother Saw F--- and they were put in jail for two months. I do not remember the date.

[One of] the leaders of the [censored for security], Saw P---, went and pleaded with [the police] to release the villagers. They had been in jail for two months. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> [2015], they [police] came and tricked us and noted down our names on a list. They said that they were going to submit the list of our names [to the Burma/Myanmar Department of Forest Management] for us which they were lying to us [about, even though] they talked to us nicely at first. Later, they said that they were going to arrest us and put us in jail if we do not move. If they could not arrest the men, they were going to arrest the women. They said that they were going to arrest all of the villagers in the village. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> [2015], nine police trucks were in the village and came to arrest the villagers. That'll be about 50 police [officers]. Then we ran away; we ran like thieves being chased by people who are trying to catch them. I then called out [to my son], "*Hey, my son Maung H---! The police are coming!*" People also called my father but he didn't hear anything as my father is old and deaf. They caught my father and they took him with them. My father was repairing the bridge for the children to go to the school [that is] beside the road. When the police came, he was taken away by the police. My husband was drunk and sleeping in the house. He did not know anything [about the police coming to arrest villagers]. Then police called him saying, "*Hey man, get up! Get up! Why don't you get up?*" while pointing their gun at him aggressively. Then he woke up and replied, "*Yes, sir.*" He did not have clothes and slippers on him. Therefore, I asked people to send them to him as he was already taken away. They arrested all of the men that they saw on that day. They followed those who tried to run away saying, "*Don't run away! Don't run away!*" They took all of those who they had arrested to the [police] office. The leader [chief] in the [police]<sup>466</sup> office asked the police [officers], "*You were only able to arrest a few people? I asked you to arrest all of the men.*" The leader [chief of police] scolded the police [officers saying], "*I ordered you to arrest the elders [and] the big shit [Saw P---], but you brought only the small shit [villagers].*"

#### **How many villagers did they arrest?**

They arrested 25 villagers.<sup>467</sup>

#### **Were there any females included?**

At 9:30 am on June 2<sup>nd</sup> [2015], they came and arrested the villagers.<sup>468</sup> They came and arrested the villagers by checking people with the names that they had on their list. They came and questioned us. They asked me, "*What is your name? Where do you live? What is your ID number?*" I replied, "*I live here, in E--- [B---] village. I do not remember my ID number.*" They asked, "*What is your husband's ID number?*" I replied, "*I do not know. You have already taken him. I cannot read and write.*" The village head was smiling at me standing beside the police at that time. He was following the police at that time. They were arresting villagers till 4:00 pm that day. They said that if they could not arrest the men, they were going to arrest the women. At 4:00 pm, the policewomen came to arrest me. They

<sup>466</sup> Myaing Ka Lay Chief of Police U Win Hlaing.

<sup>467</sup> After this interview was conducted, KHRG received further details about the arrests in B--- village. According to subsequent reports, on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015, 23 villagers and one monk were arrested, totalling 24 villagers on that day. In addition, three more villagers were arrested on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015, bringing the total number of B--- villagers arrested to 27.

<sup>468</sup> The police came into B--- village on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015 twice. First, before 9:30 am, to take down villagers' names. Then, they came back with 50 police officers to arrest the villagers whose names were on the list.

asked [the people] where my house was. They asked, “*Where is Ma A---’s house?*” People replied, “*She is not at home.*” Then they asked, “*Where did she go?*” People replied, “*We do not know.*” I was looking at them from farther away. I know that they were going to arrest me on that day because they already decided to arrest me, so I ran away before they saw me. Therefore, I was not arrested on that day.

My younger brother is the one who had to suffer the most. Why did they arrest him? What mistake had he made? What I want to say is that they did not have to oppress and do [arrest] villagers like this. They should address exclusively whatever the problem at hand is, right? I told them [the police]<sup>469</sup>, “*How come you suddenly appear and arrest the villagers? Why did you arrest unrelated villagers including those such as day labourers and those who did not build houses in this village [visitors], who have not done [anything] wrong?*” They replied, “*We are arresting them just for a while. We are going to release them as soon as we have questioned them.*” Until now, they have not released any [of the people they had arrested]. I told them, “*They [the arrested villagers] did not make any mistake. We [I] totally do not have any place of residence to live, so I came to live here. You can come and arrest the people nicely. Since you came with guns, we have heart problems and we are going to have a heart attack and we are going to die.*” They said, “*Naw, we use the gun to protect ourselves.*” I said, “*Villagers are scared when you point guns at the villagers. We are just villagers.*” They said, “*If we do not protect ourselves like this, people [villagers] are going to do us [harm] first.*” I replied, “*We are not going to do anything to you.*”

They were trying to follow me [on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015 in the morning]. They said that I was hiding Saw I--- [villager]. They asked me to show them Saw I---’s house. I said, “*I don’t know where he is.*” They said, “*You know.*” Since they doubted me, they came to arrest me again [later that day]. They wanted to arrest Saw I---, Saw J---, Maung K---, Maung L--- and a monk. They asked me to show them where their houses were. I do not know where their houses are, as I sit in my shop and sell [goods] the whole day, [every day]. I was selling at the shop and minding my own business. Because they came and did to me like that [threatened to arrest me and destroyed my house], I have been very miserable and I am not able to be happy since then. I have been miserable because I do not have my own business anymore. They took or ate [and drank] all of the things that I sell in my shop, including the bottles of juice, beer, and thermoses, and all of the other goods that I have in my shop.

### **Which day did they take [all] that?**

It was on the 22<sup>nd</sup> [of June, 2015].

### **Did they inform you that they were going to come on that day?**

They asked the villagers to demolish all of their houses on the 21<sup>st</sup> [of June 2015].<sup>470</sup> Since my husband was in jail, there was no one who could demolish my house. I told them [the police] to arrange a place of residence [plot of land] for me so that I can move my house. They replied, “*We cannot arrange the land for you. You have to find [one] on your own. We do not know about that.*” Those who tell us like that are the outsiders [police]. I didn’t dare see the village head. I was afraid of him more than a king. Even if I see a tiger, I dare to run in front of it. For him, I don’t dare to run in front of him. I was afraid of him that much. He made me feel disappointed.

<sup>469</sup> Ma A--- confronted the policemen earlier in the day, before the policewomen came to arrest her at 4 pm.

<sup>470</sup> As Ma A--- recalls earlier in the interview, the initial deadline given to the villagers to demolish all the houses in B--- village was February 8<sup>th</sup> 2015 (seven days after the meeting with Chief Minister of Kayin State U Zaw Min), however subsequent visits by the police and Burma/Myanmar government officials indicate that the deadline was revised to June 21<sup>st</sup> 2015.



**Can you tell me how they came on the 22<sup>nd</sup> [of June 2015]?**

Selling [goods] in my own shop does not mean I am rich. I used to borrow the goods [from shops in] Set Yon market [outside the village]. The shop owners might [now] think that I had lied to them [since] I did not come to pay them. I have now lost my reputation. Since I am poor, I borrow the goods from them and sell them. It is not because I was rich [that I was able to be a] vendor. In terms of our house, my husband borrowed about 300,000 kyat (US \$257.07)<sup>471</sup> from his older sister to build our house. We thought that we were going to live here permanently so we were going to build a good house. It cost a lot of money to roof our houses as we had to buy some thatched shingles and some zinc. I also laid a concrete floor in front of my house for vending. All of our belongings had been lost so I am very disappointed. It is like my life has been ruined. In the past, my husband told me, *“Let’s go back to Bilin Town and live there since we are not sure whether we can live here permanently. Whenever people come and talk to me [about the land problem], I don’t understand, as they speak in Karen and I don’t speak Karen.”* He did not know anything about what had been going on. I always told him that we can live on this land.

**Who is your husband?**

My husband is of Shan nationality and he speaks Burmese. Now, he is in jail. If he is released, he may blame me for us being in debt, as well as for us have nothing left. He may blame me as I did not listen to him. I also feel disappointed about that. Currently, I dare not go back to live in the village. One thing that I was told [by the police] was that I was stubborn because I had to demolish my house but I didn’t do it. That [being called stubborn and being hated by the police], I was afraid of the most. I told them [police] that since my husband was in jail and they had not released him, I did not know how to demolish my house. I cannot climb up the roof of the house and demolish it alone. However, they did not accept what I had told them. They said that I must finish demolishing my house by June 21<sup>st</sup> 2015. The day that my husband was arrested was on June 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015 and they [had] arrested 25 villagers [in total].

**Can you tell me how they came and destroyed your houses?**

My house was beside the road. When they arrived, they stopped in front of my house.

**How many police [officers] were there?**

There were about 100 police [officers].

**Only the police came?**

It also included some civilians including the forest [Department of Forest Management officials] and other elders [government staff]. There were about a total of 150 people including civilians and police [who] came. There were a lot of people.

**Who was the leading person?**

They were the village head, Aung Mo, and Aung Thwin Aye; these three people.

**What did they do after they came?**

<sup>471</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the August 4<sup>th</sup> 2015 official market rate of 1,167.00 kyat to the US \$1.

They appeared suddenly in the village.

**Where were you at that time?**

At first, we were hiding beside the bamboo trees on the mountain which is not very far from the village and we were observing them. I was watching them from far away and they came and surrounded my house and ate the food that I had in my house. I was heartbroken when I went back home [and saw that]. I went back to my home at 6:00 pm after they were gone.

**What time did they come in the morning?**

They came at about 9:00 am and it was on Monday [June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015].

**How did they destroy the houses?**

They cut our house with a saw. They demolished our house; some destroyed the walls, some climbed up to the roof and destroyed the roof. I have three knives and an axe in my house and they took all of them. They did not leave anything. They took all of the food and goods that I had in my shop.

**What about your rice? What did they do [with it]?**

I had a big tub of rice and they threw it away. Before destroying the village, they held a meeting with the villagers and they persuaded the villagers [of C---] to destroy the houses [of B--- villagers]. They destroyed all of the houses which were beside the road. Some people were destroying and some people [from the police and the Burma/Myanmar government] were planting the teak plants [trees]. They planted a lot of teak plants at the same time on that day.

**Did they torch the houses after they had destroyed them?**

On June 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> they torched all the houses after they had destroyed them. Some houses were burnt down without cutting them [first], including [along with] the pots, plates and bowls [inside them]. They took all of the possessions from people's houses. People said that they asked the other villagers who live beside the main road [in C---] to take them [the looted goods] and the [C---] villagers also took them. I told Saw P---, "*Teacher! My life has been ruined. If you do not help us, there is no one who is going to help us.*" I owe him gratitude and I do not know how to pay it back. Otherwise, [without his help] we, all villagers, including men and women would have been arrested and put in jail. [At the time when we were hiding in the mountain], Saw P--- said, "*If you want to go hide in Myawaddy, then let's go and hide. I will send you there.*" We also told him, "*Where are those who produced land grants for us [KNU]? Are they not going to help us? Ask them to help us!*" I would have died hiding in the mountain. One of my children was very sick. He did not have much energy and could not walk very well. It was also very rainy the whole day when we were hiding.

**Did you have a raincoat?**

Yes, I had [one]. There were a lot of villagers fleeing. [While we were hiding in the forest], we heard that they are going to come and arrest us in the forest. Then, we continued to flee separately. Some villagers fled up to the mountain, some villagers went to hide in the monastery and some villagers went back to their relatives' houses. Why were they arresting the people like that regarding this land? If they [the police and government officials] had done the right thing, there would not be any problems; since they had not done the right thing, it created problems. We, the villagers, do not lie. We are telling you the truth. [For example], "*If our parents love us, there will be peace [at home]. If our parents do not love us,*

*our siblings will go their separate [ways].*" Now it is like that; even the village head can't look us in the face [for not having resolved the land problem], we had to flee separately and our lives have been ruined. We said, "*Sir! Teacher! Help us, please. We do not know anything* [about how to address this problem] *and they* [the police] *have done* [treated] *us very badly.*" Since Saw P--- knows about the law, he said that he is going to help us [at first]. However, the village head said that he did not get along with him. So, it is like the person who works for the right thing and the person who does not work for the right thing cannot work together, right? That is our story.

We had to flee from them [the police] until we arrived in this place [Myawaddy], as our houses were destroyed [and burnt down] and we did not have any place of residence. When we arrived at this village, people helped us with food. We are very happy. When we came to this village, we did not have clothes and people gave us clothes.

### **Who gave you the clothes?**

I do not know. They are from an organisation. They also supported us with rice. If the rice is gone [finished], they come and give [us] more rice. We, I thank them very much. Only if you [KHRG researcher] help us, we will have a chance to get our land back and we will be able to go back and live in our village. If there is no one who is going to help us, we will continue facing problems. We are going to encounter more challenges than now and we do not know where we are going to be sent. My parents are also getting very old and if you [researcher] do not help us, we will not make it to go back to our village. We want to report about our problem that we are facing to you since we heard you went to visit E--- [B---] village. When you went to E--- [B---] village, we thought that you heard the good thing [truth] only if you met with the good people. If you [met with the bad people and] listened to them, our lives were going to be ruined. Now, [we want to know] how they are going to compensate us for our loss.

### **How much does it cost, all of the things that they burnt down: your house and shop?**

They also burnt down my small traditional house which was behind my house as well as all of the firewood that I kept under my house. They brought tires and petrol.<sup>472</sup> They poured petrol around my house and burnt down my house. The price [of the destroyed assets] has been noted, it all cost 1,970,000 kyat (US \$1,688.09).

### **That is only for the cost of your house?**

Yes.

### **Did the police take anything from your house?**

Yes, they took many things from my house.

### **What did they take?**

They took the zinc, finished timbers [that formed part of my house] and stilts that were still in good [condition after they had destroyed my house]. They took all of the valuable things. They left only the things which are not valuable and they kept them [the non-valuables] beside the road and the other villagers came and took them [for themselves]. I did not go and take any of it as I did not want it anymore. What I want [from the police] now is to get

<sup>472</sup> It is common in Burma/Myanmar to use pieces of rubber to start fires. The police and/or people from the Department of Forest Management likely lit the tires on fire and threw them into villagers' houses, for a quicker demolition by fire.



back our land. Please try [advocating] for us until we get back our lands. We have our land grants [that were] produced by the KNU, but they [the police still] did this to us. Therefore, we ask teacher [Saw P---] to help and he said that there are some people [NGOs] who are going to help us [to get back our lands]. I do not know any other people [organisation]. I have never been here in Myawaddy. This is my first time coming here.

Now I met with you [researcher] and told you all about it. You can analyse whether it is right or wrong after you listen to it. [You can] leave it [be] if it is not right. What we want from them now is to give compensation for our lives which have been ruined by them.

**Who are they?**

I mean those who burnt down our houses. Please help us make them arrange places of residence for us. We want to go back and live on our land. We were asked to go live beside Shwe Wa Htun road [Shwe Ni area, Kaw Yin A Htet village tract] and we were asked to draw lots [for plots of land there]. We do not want to draw lots because we do not want to go live there. I do not own any land [in C--- village]. If you do not believe me, you can check my name in the Hpa-an [Township] office. I am not lying. My husband also had asked me to go and live in his village [in Bilin Township] but I did not want to go live in his village. I have been living in my village [B---] for 44 years. I was born in my village and I am also going to die in my village. Therefore, I do not want to go live in other people's village.

What I want to say to you is that my husband has not done any mistake. Why did they arrest him? It has been one month already. They have not let us know why he was arrested.

**What about your father? Was he released?**

No, he has also not been released yet. All of the 25 villagers are still in jail. When I talked to my father over the phone, he told me that he was sick and had a headache and he was going to die in the jail. He said that he did not have good health. And he asked me, "*What are you going to do [to get us out of jail]? Are we going to continue being held in jail?*" My father is someone who gets frightened easily and is a quiet person. He does not drink and smoke.

**What were the villagers working on for their livelihoods?**

They were working on hill farms and on paddy fields. Mostly, they are working at hill farming.

**What did you work on?**

I worked on hill farming. Now, people [wealthy individuals] have planted rubber trees [on the hill that we used for farming] and it became a rubber plantation. We do not have any place to work for hill farming. There is also no hill forest. Currently, there is no paddy field left, either. They said that the paddy field land was the forest land. I told them that I do not know when you recognised the paddy field as forest land. You did not let us know about it. The paddy fields which we used to work on in the past now became rubber plantations, rich people's lands and forest lands. Therefore, we, the villagers, do not have any place to work. We depend on the KNU [to solve this problem for us].

**What do you want to add, in terms of the fact that your house has been destroyed?**

What I want to say is that we [villagers and police] need to get along with each other so that we will have a chance to go back and live in our village. They also must guarantee that they will not disturb us and allow us to go back and live in our village and release those who are in jail because they have not done anything wrong, right? That is all I want. Now, we have to

stay away, far from our parents [who are in C--- village]. We could not have regular meals in the past [after the village was burnt down and before we arrived in Myawaddy]. We could [only] have regular meals when we arrived here. When we were fleeing, we could not have meals. We had to flee the whole day. We had to ask for rice from other people's houses, to say, "*I am very hungry, can you provide me a meal?*" I also felt shy and didn't dare eat very much, the way we wanted to. We also didn't dare go back home to cook [our own] rice. That is what I have experienced. To be honest, I don't dare to go back [to my village] now. I am so disappointed [in the Burma/Myanmar government and police].

### **Did they say that they are going to arrest you if you go back?**

Yes, they said that they are going to arrest me. People also phoned me not to go back to the village. My friend told me [on the phone], "*They are trying to follow you* [and asking information about you]. *They want to know why we came* [fled] *to Myawaddy.*" People said that they have also sent some detectives to find out information about us. They know that we are staying in the monastery. People think that the monk will not be able to provide us with rice anymore, [but] yes, the monk can. There are some people who feel pity for us and provide us with food. The medicine is also provided. People provide food, clothes, mats, mosquito nets, and everything that we need. We did have these things when we lived in our village. To be honest, in our village, there was no one who pitied us and who was going to help us. They do not pity each other.

They [police] told me that I am very talkative and whenever I was asked something, I could respond to everything. I told them, "*You said that this land is the forest* [reserve] *land but there are no trees. Where are the trees? Show me. There is only grass and small plants.*" As I see there are no big trees, I told them that it is not a forest reserve. I argued with them like that. Ye Min Aung [Hpa-an Township administrator] and Thein Aung [Hpa-an Township Forest administrator] came and argued with me about that three or four times. One time, they came to me at midnight, 12:00 o'clock, when I was sleeping. About 35 police and the village head came into our village and said that we cannot live here and we had to demolish our houses.

### **Why did they come at midnight?**

We asked them why they came at midnight and they said that they are not going to do anything to us. Villagers told them, "*If you are not going to do anything to us, don't come at night time. Come at daytime. Coming at night time is insincere.*" Later, they came at daytime. Since they had come to the village many times, the villagers were afraid of them. Now, we have come here [to Myawaddy]. Some villagers were afraid and they didn't dare come here. Since we cannot feel [afraid] and stand it anymore, we decided to come here.

### **How many villagers came to stay here [in Myawaddy]?**

There are a total of about 50 villagers who have come to stay here.<sup>473</sup>

### **Are there any students [villagers' children] who came here, as well?**

There are six students who came here with us.

### **How is their schooling?**

They are missing school for this year. If we can go back to our village, they will be able to

<sup>473</sup> Ma A--- estimated the number of B--- villagers who fled to Myawaddy at 50, however further investigation by KHRG indicates the number of B--- villagers in Myawaddy is closer to 100.

continue their schooling. If we cannot go back, they will not. They have been attending their school for only two or three weeks [this year] before the conflict started. Since the conflict started, they were not able to go to school.

**Was there a school in your village?**

A school has already been built in our village. The day that the school just had been built [finished being constructed], the police came and arrested the villagers.

**Did they destroy the school?**

Yes, they burnt down it. They destroyed [everything,] including the teacher's house, school tables, and desks. We had collected 2,000 kyat (US \$1.71) per house to build that school. But they destroyed all of it. You will not see any stilts from the house left in the village because they have dug out all of them and then made the land plain. They said that they did not want to see any piece of wood left. Now, they have planted teak trees all over the land, which [still only] have two leaves [since they are young]. They started planting the teak trees on June 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015.

**Do you want to add anything else which I have not questioned you about?**

This was all [I wanted to mention] about my feelings. [I would like to know] how they are going to arrange our place of residence, the compensation for what they have burnt down; our houses including the chickens, which the police shot to eat. I had 40 chickens that I raised in my house. When I got into the car [to come to Myawaddy], I saw that my pigs, dogs and chickens were running around and the police shot them to eat them. We thought that police are doing this to us and there will be someone who is going to help us so we decided to come and stay here. We asked help from our teacher. He is our *kyay zu shin*.<sup>474</sup> Now, we meet with you [researcher] and you are also our *kyay zu shin*. We will not forget our gratitude to anyone if we have the chance to go back and live in our village. The people who help us are Karen people, not the Burmese people.

**Thank you so much.**

Yes, thank you.

Ma A---, (female, 43), B--- village, Hpa-an Township, Thaton District  
(Interviewed in July 2015)

**Source #139**

<b>Log #</b>	15-68-I4
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Incident Report: Villager killed by Border Guard Force (BGF) Battalion #1013 in Bu Tho Township, March 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in September 2015 <a href="http://khrq.org/2015/09/15-68-i4/hpapun-incident-report-villager-killed-border-guard-force-bgf-battalion-1013-bu-tho">http://khrq.org/2015/09/15-68-i4/hpapun-incident-report-villager-killed-border-guard-force-bgf-battalion-1013-bu-tho</a>
<b>Location</b>	Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b><u>Part 1 – Incident Details</u></b>	

<sup>474</sup> *Kyay zu shin* is an expression in Burmese which would literally translate as ‘a person that is owed gratitude.’

<b>Type of Incident</b>	BGF [Border Guard Force] <sup>475</sup> killed a B--- villager				Violent threats
<b>Date of Incident(s)</b>	March 15 <sup>th</sup> 2015				April 25 <sup>th</sup> 2015
<b>Incident Location</b>	B--- [village], Htee Tha Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho [Township], Mu Traw [Hpapun] District				B--- Section, S Myaing Gyi N
<b>Victim Information</b>					
<b>Name</b>	Saw A---				
<b>Age</b>	42				
<b>Sex</b>	Male				
<b>Nationality</b>	Karen				
<b>Family</b>	Has family				
<b>Occupation</b>	Farmer				
<b>Religion</b>	Buddhist				
<b>Position</b>	Villager				
<b>Village</b>	B--- village				
<b>Perpetrator Information</b>					
<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Base</b>	<b>Commander's Name</b>	
Saw Kyaw Ka	Private	BGF Battalion #1013	K'Ter Htee	Hpah Yuh Khay	
Hpah Yuh Khay	Company Second-in-Command	BGF Battalion #1013	K'Ter Htee	Maung Hla Kyaing	
<b>Part 2 Information Quality</b>					
<b>1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.</b>					
I got this information from a radio [walkie-talkie] message. After that I followed up with the victim's family and the other people who were included [present] during the [time] the incident was taking place. I followed up on it [the incident] to get detailed information.					
<b>2. Explain how the source verified this information.</b>					
The people who provided information know the details [of the] incident because they were also included [present] when the incident was happening, therefore they know detailed information. It happened on March 15 <sup>th</sup> 2015 in the evening when [the victim] went spear fishing between 7 and 8 pm. When [he] went on the way to go spear fishing, Company #3 Platoon Commander <sup>476</sup> Hpah Yuh Khay and his private who are [under] BGF Battalion					

<sup>475</sup> 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.

<sup>476</sup> The researcher mistakenly refers to Hpah Yuh Khay as a platoon commander here, however, as indicated above and in other KHRG reports, Hpah Yuh Khay is in fact a company second-in-command.

#1013<sup>477</sup> killed [shot] Saw A---.

### **Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident**

**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 an attachment if needed.**

On March 15<sup>th</sup> 2015 in evening at 7 pm, a B--- villager, Saw A---, [who is] also called Saw C---, decided to go [out] on his own to catch fish for his family. [He lives] in B--- village, Htee Tha Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township. He does not have [eat] meat and he is a vegetarian [but] even though he does not have [eat] meat he did his best to find food for his family and children. In the same evening, before he reached the river at F--- [place], he encountered the BGF. He was directly shot by the BGF unexpectedly.<sup>478</sup> It [the bullet] hit [him] under his breast and he fell over [on the ground]. He told the BGF, *"We are villagers, why do you shoot us?"* The BGF [soldiers] looked at him and shot him again, twice. It [the bullets] hit his shoulders and also his left shoulder was broken and one of his fingers was cut off [by the shrapnel]. After the people [villagers] brought him to his house he was sent directly to Hpa-an Hospital.

The BGF [soldier] who shot Saw A---, [who] is [also] called Saw C---, [his] name is Saw Kyaw Ka. [He] was led by Hpah Yuh Khay. The battalion commander of BGF [Battalion] #1013 is named Maung Hla Kyaing and [his] battalion second-in-command's name is Kyaw Win. The BGF soldier [Saw Kyaw Ka] shot B--- villager [Saw A---] by accident, but they [the BGF] did not do anything with the corpse [injured villager]. They just left the corpse [injured villager] and moved onward [to their destination]. They did not create any rules [that villagers were supposed to follow] before they shot and killed the villager by accident. They did not say [that] starting from [the] evening [and] until morning you are not allowed to go out of the village. Since they killed the villager by accident, they said, *"We created the rule in our area that we are not allowed [to let] any villagers go out of the village after 6 pm and until 6 am."* However, the villagers which we conducted a meeting with reported that they did not hear [about this rule], nor saw any [signs or notices about the rule] with their [own] eyes.

*"We did not know anything [about any rules] therefore we went out of the village to find food, hunting during the night so we can have it with our families. If we [had] heard [about] the order, we really would not have dared to go out. After the incident had occurred, we came to know that BGF Battalions #1014 and #1013, [who] are operating in D--- [village] and E--- [village, which] is also called G--- [area],<sup>479</sup> had created the rule that starting from 6 pm until [6 am] in the morning no one is allowed to go out of the village [because] you*

<sup>477</sup> KHRG continues to receive reports discussing abuses involving BGF Battalion #1013 and #1014, including: ["Human rights violations by Border Guard Force \(BGF\) Battalion #1014 in Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District, May 2012 to March 2014,"](#) KHRG, July 2015; ["BGF Battalion #1014 forced labour and forced recruitment, April to May 2012,"](#) KHRG, June 2013; ["Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, November 2011 to July 2012,"](#) KHRG, April 2013; ["Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, August to September 2012,"](#) KHRG, April 2013; and ["Papun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, July to October 2012,"](#) KHRG, April 2013.

Further reports detailing abuses involving these battalions are also available on the KHRG website.

<sup>478</sup> In a previous KHRG news bulletin discussing this incident, a KHRG researcher indicated that the BGF stated they had shot the villager by accident, as it was dark and they believed he was a KNLA soldier. For the full report, see ["Violent abuse and killing committed by BGF soldiers in Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District, March to May 2015,"](#) KHRG, July 2015.

<sup>479</sup> B--- village, in which the victim resided, is part of this area.



*cannot see anything properly. Therefore we don't dare to go out. Because of the incident, it brought problems for B--- area, D--- village. [Before] 6 pm, before dark, we went to look after our buffalos and cows, but we could not return to the village [by 6 pm]. We need more time to do other things [errands outside the village] before it gets dark. Moreover some people [villagers] could not find their buffalos and cows [to bring them back to the village] and they [the cattle] went into [the plantation and] had [ate] the sugarcane at night, but we didn't dare to move them out of the sugarcane [plantation]."*

Saw A---, [who is] also called Saw C--- and who has been killed by the BGF, his family is facing livelihood problems since [he died]. But the wife of Saw A--- [who is] also called Saw C--- arranged a meeting with the BGF [Battalion] #1013 commander to help her with the [basic] needs of her household. She demanded of the commander, "*How many soldiers [are there] in a battalion? You have to take one month's salary from all of them and give [that money] to me [to support me] during one month.*" The commander agreed with her but as of now he has not given [her] anything yet. The family of Saw C--- [who is] also called Saw A--- [has] six children and most of his children are old enough to go to school, but one or two children are not ready for going to school yet. Therefore, it [their father's death] brought on problems for them [since the older children have] to help their mom and their younger siblings [at the expense of their education].

#### **Part 4 – Permission for Using the Details**

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

The [family of the] victim gave us permission to use this information openly.

Incident Report written by a community member, B--- [village], Htee Tha Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho [Township], Mu Traw [Hpapun] District, (Received in July 2015)

#### **Source #140**

<b>Log #</b>	15-71-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Ma P---, July 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	M--- village, Sa Kan Gyi village tract, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Ma P---</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> Female</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 42 years old</p> <p><b>Village:</b> M--- village</p> <p><b>Family Statue:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Day labour and farming</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Day labour</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p>	

I'm Ma P---.

**How old are you?**

I am 42 years old.

**How about your village?**

It is called M--- village. It is called P--- in Burmese.

**How about village tract?**

What village tract?

**I heard that it is called Sa Kan Gyi village tract.**

It is in Sa Kan Gyi village tract.

**What do you do [for livelihood]?**

I do day labour and farming.

**You work for your own farm or on other people's farms?**

I work on other people's farms.

**Anything else [that you do]?**

I do day labour around here.

**How many family member do you have?**

I have five children.

**How many girls?**

One girl.

**So four boys?**

Yes.

**How old is the eldest?**

The eldest is 19 years old.

**Is he single?**

Yes, he is.

**How about the youngest one [age]?**

Three years old.

**Now I have asked you about your work and family so now I am going to ask you about**



**your husband. What is the name of your husband?**

He is called Z--- W---.

**Does he have any other name?**

No, that is the only name that he has.

**Now I am going to ask you about your husband who is being detained now. How does it [Yar Zar Min robbery case] relate to your husband?**

He was forcibly arrested actually. Firstly, they said he is suspicious [regarding the case] and later on they accused him that he was in the robbery case. Z--- W-- was arrested two times for the case.

**Police arrested him?**

Yes, police. When police arrested him, he was in the field pulling out rice seedlings on the western side. He was taken for two nights and he was released after they questioned him. He came back and stayed [at home] for over a month and they [police officers] came and arrested him again and he has been gone since then.

**Can you remember the date that he was arrested?**

It was on July 22<sup>nd</sup>. The first time was on 11<sup>th</sup> of June. He was arrested and detained for two days and then he was released.

**When he first got arrested, what did they say about the case?**

They said “*You rob and you are related to the case*”. And he replied “*I do not know, I was not in it*”. And then they released him. He got punched two or three times and his watch was cracked. He came and stayed for over a month and he has been gone since he got arrested the second time.

**Were they all police who arrested him?**

They were all police.

**How did they know it and come and arrest him?**

They did not know him firstly. They arrested Aung K--- first and then he [Z--- W---] was arrested later. He was taken for two days at first and he stayed [home] for over a month and he was taken again, he has been gone since then. The second time that he was arrested, he was beaten, punched, hit [against something] and they withheld water and food for three days, they hung up his neck when they questioned him. They made him kneel on a wooden plank full of two inches iron nails. He has injuries on his leg. He ate meat<sup>480</sup> and the scars [wound] came [on his knees].

**When was the second time that he was arrested?**

It was on July 22<sup>nd</sup>.

**Was it the second time? In 2013?**

<sup>480</sup> This refers to a local belief where a open wound or scar will show itself when you consume meat.

Yes, it was on Saturday.

**When they came to arrest him, did they inform the village head?**

They did not inform the village head and the village head did not know about it. They arrested him in the field; I did not know either.

**Did they bring him to the police station immediately after they arrested him?**

Yes, to the police station.

**They did not tell you about it?**

No, they did not. They came and checked my house first before they arrested him. When they checked my house, they asked me *'Did your husband bring you gold?'* And I replied *'No, there is no gold.'* *'How about a gun?'* they asked. I replied *'He does not have a gun.'* *'They asked me: 'Is Z--- your husband?'* *'Yes,'* I replied. They asked me: *'Where is he now?'* I said: *'He is out pulling out the rice seedlings.'* They came at 4:00 am with a torch light and my children cried. They did not allow my children to cry. We slept under the mosquito net and they came and ripped off the mosquito net and pointed at my head with guns. I did not know anything and I was so scared.

**Were they police?**

Yes, they were. The chief police officer also was there.

**They came and questioned you and then arrested your husband?**

[They arrested him] at 1:00 pm.

**They came and arrested him at the farm?**

Yes.

**You said he was detained for two days and do you know what happened to him during these two days?**

They hit him and beat him. They asked him that *'Where did you keep the gun?'* He replied *'I do not have gun.'* Then, they tortured him and made him say that he has the gun somewhere. He [Z--- W---] said it was so painful and they were torturing until he confessed. He [Z--- W---] then finally said *'I hid the gun at the cemetery.'* And they went to find it but they could not find the gun. How could they find it? There was nothing. [He said it because] he could not suffer the pain. He so thirsty that he drank toilet water and they knew it and hit him and all the water came out.

**Did they inform you before they arrested him the second time?**

No, they did not inform me.

**How about the village head?**

No, they did not inform the village head either.

**The date was just like you said before. They did not release him since the second time? Did they allow you to see your husband after the second time they arrested**

**him?**

No, they do not allow to meet him [in the prison]. They allowed me to meet him only when was at the police station.

**So since then you did not meet him anymore?**

Later on they handed the case to the court and they can see him.

**Is there any different information that you heard from others?**

No, nothing special.

**Do you think your husband would do that?**

No.

**So imagine the time when you husband was with you now, is there a difference?**

[We] work hand-to-mouth.

**What is the difference when your husband was here with you? How was your livelihood?**

When he was here he worked and it was not bad and now he is not and I have to face problems with my children. I have to borrow money and my siblings also cannot provide me food every time [as they are also poor]. It is too hot and I have children and I also have to follow the case and have to go for the court appointment as well. Sometimes when I come back my children have to eat the rice that has started to go off. They set an appointment twice or four times a month. I have to go always and it costs money [for travelling].

**Do you know where your husband is now?**

He is in Yangon in Insein prison.

**Regarding to your husband Z--- W---'s case, do you think your husband would have done that kind of behaviour?**

No.

**After your husband was gone, do your children miss their father?**

Yes, they miss him.

**Did they talk about their father?**

Yes, they did. If you can help us, help us.

**Where does your oldest child study? What standard is he in?**

He is in second standard.

**The oldest one? He is 19 years old and only two standard?**

He studied up to two standard and he had to look after the cows and he did not have time to

go to school. He quit school since he was young and looked after the cows.

**Is there anything that you want to say related to the Yar Zar Min rob case that you think important?**

If they [any organisation or lawyer] can help us, help us. We are facing problems [now].

**How about other thing like the police are not doing things fairly or etc?**

If I have to express, I do not feel good about it and I am not happy with it.

**He was arrested by the police and do you think is there anyone who reported to the police that your husband was in the case?**

For him, he does not have that [behavior]. I do not know for other villagers side.

**How about his situation [behavior] with other villagers, friends and his siblings?**

He lives and works well. He works as a day labor with siblings and friends.

**Thanks you very much for answering my question and now finally I would like to hear you words in minutes regarding to your family or your husbands or for yourself. Do you have anything to express so that they go systemically.**

We are in problems with our livelihood, if they can help us, ask them to help us a little.

**I heard that the police will come and build the house for you. Is it true?**

They torture Z--- W--- and said "Say that you rob, I will build your house if you say that you rob". And he replied "I do not want a home and I do not rob. I am good with my current situation; I do not want a nice house". And then they said "Say it. If you say, I will use you as government evidence". And he replied "I do not want to be government's evidence. If you want to kill me, kill me. I do not want any of you to go and build me house".

**After Z--- W--- told them like that, what did the police do after that?**

Police did not tell him anything. Later on, they have to transfer the case to the court. They transfered the case to the court after 15 days of detainment [for questioning].

**Did the police tell you that they will build the house for you?**

They did not tell me anything about it.

**I heard that the government or a group that supports the victims' family gives 100,000 kyat for each. Is it true?**

There is a group that supported us with 100,000 kyat for each [victim] recently. I do not know where are they from. They said it is for us to eat. They said it is for our children and they feel pity for our children.

**Who come and gave the money?**

I do not know that.

**Did they not tell you their organisation or where they work?**

I do not know because I did not ask.

**Who came and gave [the money] to you?**

U Htun Win came and gave.

**Who did he come with?**

He came with the township chief police officer.

**From Burma/Myanmar government's side?**

Yes.

**Did he not tell anything?**

No, he did not.

**He just said he was coming to help you [with money]?**

I told them "*I do not need your money. I need my husband only. Release him for me.*"

**What did they say then?**

They did not say anything. I did not want to take it but they forcibly gave me and I took [the money].

**So you tried to refuse [the money] before you accepted?**

Yes, I tried to refuse.

**You have no choice and took it finally because of the livelihood problems?**

Yes.

**You do not know where the money came from?**

No.

**So we got all the information we wanted and we would like to thank you finally for answering the questions related to your husband being accused [by the police officers] and the whole story about it.**

Yes.

**Thank you very much.**

Yes.

#### Source #141

<b>Log #</b>	15-72-A1-I3
<b>Title</b>	Interview with Daw M---, 42, Thaton District, received July 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**How do people call your name?**

Daw M---.

**How old are you?**

42.

**Village you live?**

N---.

**What is the occupation of your family in N---?**

Work on [for] daily wages and collect the firewood.

**Do you do cultivation?**

No.

**Do you have a family?**

Yes.

**How many children do you have?**

7.

**How old is your eldest child?**

23 years old.

**How about the youngest?**

1 year old.

**How many houses are there in N--- village?**

I do not know. Maybe over [censored for security] houses.

**How do the villagers mostly make live?**

Work for daily wages and collect the firewood. In the dry season, [they] collect the firewood and work for daily wages. When the season comes, people plant corn, work for daily wages in the field. People who have the farm work on the farm.

**Is the [number of] people who own farms a lot or a few?**

A few.

**So, there a lot of people who work for daily wages?**

Yes.

**Is there a school in the village?**

Yes.

**Up to which standard?**

Standard 4.

**If students finished standard 4, where do they go?**

In Pa Lel Kaw.

**In Pa Lel Kaw, up to which standard?**

Standard 10.

**How about the teacher? All of them are the government staff?**

Yes. Government staff. But the one person employed in N--- [village] is not a Myanmar government staff. He has to work as part-time staff because he did not finish Standard 10.

**So, the villagers hired him?**

Yes.

**So after the children finish Standard 4, they go to Pa Lel Kaw?**

Yes.

**Do your children go to attend Standard 5 in Pa Lel Kaw?**

No one [goes]. I have many children so they have to look after their younger brothers and sisters. The oldest one attended [school] only til Grade 2. The second one even did not have the chance to attend school. 2 or 3 younger children attended school til Standard 4.

**So are there children who finished Standard 4 and quit school because their parents could not send them schools [further away]?**

Yes.

**Is there a [medical] dispensary here?**

No.

**Is there any nurse here?**

No one.

**Is there the person who can take care of the [sick] patients?**

No.

**Then, if the villagers are sick, where do they go?**

[They] go to Htaw Prar or Thaton. If the disease is serious, they go to Thaton hospital or



Hpa-An hospital. If the disease is not serious, they go to the clinic in Htaw Prar.

**Is there the clinic in Htaw Prar?**

Yes. There is the doctor [who] gives vaccination at the house [villager's homes] also.

**If you go to the clinic in Htaw Prar, if the disease is not so serious, how much will the cost be?**

Sometimes, if the disease is not serious, it costs 2,000 kyat or 3,000 kyat. Sometimes, if the illness takes 2 or 3 days, it cost 5,000 kyat for the medicine for 3 days. When the patients come back and take the medicine and if [they are] not feeling better, [they] have to go to the clinic again. I do not have money to go to the clinic or hospital. I go to Htaw Prar, and when I get the illness I take the vaccination there. They give the medicine for 2 or 3 days. If [I am] not feeling better, [I] go again.

**Does the government send their nurse to look after the patients in the village?**

No.

**Is the village [located] near to the government army camp?**

Maybe near. I have never been there. Not near for our side [of the area], maybe near the other side. People say there is one artillery [camp] near them. For our side, [the camp is] not near. Their children come and attend school here.

**Government army soldiers' children?**

Yes.

**Because [the village is] near the army camp, are there demands on the village to work for them?**

There were before. But not anymore now.

**How many years has is been that they do not demand [forced labour] anymore?**

About 2 or 3 years. Volunteer work decreased about 2 or 3 years.

**Starting from the [preliminary] ceasefire agreement?**

Yes.

**Because their army camp is near, do their soldiers come into the village, drink alcohol and cause arguments to happen in the village?**

There was [this happening] before. [They] danced between the villagers and [if someone] accidentally stepped on someone's foot they had an argument with the villagers. But now, I do not know whether there are arguments [happening].

**And another thing is, now, there are administrators in the area, in every village tract. Is there the village tract leader here?**

Village tract leader? Government village tract leader?

**Yes government village tract leader.**

No. I do not know, I do not see. I live [stay] at the house as I have many small children. So I do not know.

**Do the KNU soldiers arrive here?**

I do not know. Maybe they come. I have never seen them.

**Is there [who] soldiers come and [give] arbitrary demands here?**

There was before. But now I do not see [that]. In the past, people said that they [soldiers] ask [for] things but I have never seen [that].

**Like they come and ask for the chickens?**

I do not know. I do not see [that] now. Maybe there was before.

**Another thing is, regarding to the agriculture field, do you know how many years it has been [since it was confiscated]?**

I do not know. It has been since we were young they come and make. We went and worked there in the past and they gave 6 kyat and as we were young they gave us 3 kyat and 1 Mat. 6 kyat and later 15 kyat. We were young when they came.

**Do you think how many years it has been?**

It has been over 30 years.

**When they came to make the agriculture field, those places were the villagers' properties, right?**

Those were villager's places [property] and they [Myanmar government] think that those [properties] are theirs. But the government said that those [properties] are the government's place. I do not know. At first, when we were young, our mother and grandmother had plantations there but the government came and said that [it is] their land and we cannot farm anymore.

**Another thing is, I heard one thing. I heard that the company came into the village. In which way [under what type of agreement] did the company come? If you know, tell me about that.**

I do not know.

**When they came into [the village], did they inform the villagers or [did they] come by themselves?**

I do not know. People said that the company came. If the villagers do not like [the company coming], they [the company] said that those are not the villagers' land but the government's land. We do not know if the government signed for it [the land] or not. We are not confident to forbid [stop the company] as those are not our lands. They said that those [lands] are government's land.

**As they came and constructed the buildings, the villagers' land [was] also included, right?**

I do not know. Maybe some villagers' [land] is included. At first we planted the rubber on that land. We had plantations there. Later the company came and made the project; we cannot plant anymore. And they gave the compensation.

**So they said that the villagers had plantations on the government's land.**

Yes.

**In the past, the villagers made a living on that land right?**

Yes, the villagers made a living on that land but after people came and did the agriculture project the villagers cannot make a living on it anymore.

**When the company came for the project, how many of the villagers' properties were included in that area?**

About over 10 people. They [the villagers with the land] divided [the land] between each other and had plantations in that area. They [villagers] did not have work [jobs], so, they had plantations in that area to cover the household costs and money for religious donations.

**People's farms were also included in the confiscation right?**

Yes, included. They bought the land from the owners to make the water channel. I do not know how much [compensation] they give.

**How did they give the compensation? [Did it] depend on land or materials [on the land]?**

Materials. [They] gave money for trees.

**Because the company came into [the village] like this, how [have the] difficulties happened for the villagers?**

I do not know. I think the villagers do not even dare to go to the farm. They dare not to go and come because [outside] people come into the village and the outsiders are from different places. If [you stay] with the villagers, [you] do not need to worry and you can come and go alone. You can be confident to come back to home at night time and go to work. Now, many people come in and villagers do not dare to go alone and do not dare to go [outside] without friends.

**Do the villagers face difficulty when they collect the firewood?**

People have cleared the land and we can find not so much. [We] go find in another place like this.

**So, if we look through [what you told us], there are lots of difficulties for the villagers. We have heard about that but we would like to hear the villagers tell this by themselves. So we asked you. Now, I have asked the questions that I would like to know. Among the information that I asked you, is there any other things you would like to add on about the company coming into the village?**

I do not know what to say.

**Tell me about your feelings in your mind.**

I do not know what to say.

**Ok then. Thank you for answering the questions.**

#### Source #142

<b>Log #</b>	15-72-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Naw C---, June 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	

[*Introduction by the interviewer:*] On June 6<sup>th</sup> 2015, in M--- village, Sa Kan Gyi village tract, Thaton Township, Thaton District, I met with the wife of someone related to the Ya Za Min [robbing] case and interviewed her.

**What is your name?**

Naw C---

**How old are you?**

31 years old.

**Where do you live?**

K--- [village]

**How many children do you have?**

I have one child.

**How old is it [he/she]?**

13 years old.

**Is it [he/she] going to school?**

Yes.

**What did you work on [for livelihood] in the past?**

I worked on farming, selling [goods] and fishing.

**We heard that your husband has been arrested regarding the Ya Za Min [robbing case]. How did it happen?**

One month earlier, before he was arrested, the Tatmadaw came [into my house] and said that [the reason they came is] related to Ya Za Min robbing case. I understood what they had explained to me but I did not know that the robbing had happened. I was busy with my work here; ploughing, collecting paddy and fishing. I was also busy with preparing for fishing as the rainy season was going to start. I also had to start ploughing the farm. They came to sit [visit] here for almost one month. They said [the reason they came here] is related to the robbing case. [They asked] if the robbers came this way. 'Did not you see any strangers?' [they said]. Maung A--- [Nan C---'s husband] said that he did not see any strangers, [he was] ploughing near the house [hut]. They told me the date [that the robbing case had happened]. In that whole month [of August], Maung A--- was working on [catching] fish for the whole month. The day after the Tatmadaw left [from the village], the police came into the village with a boat as there was a lot of water in rainy season. On July 13<sup>th</sup> [2015] in the morning on Saturday, they came to ask me [where] Maung D---- [a man with a similar sounding name to her husband] [was]. I told them that I did not know [where he was]. Then they were looking for the gun [at my house]. They also asked [where] U B--- [was]. U B--- was working on a

rubber plantation as a day labourer in K--- [village]. He built a hut and lived there. At that time [that they came, he was not in the village], I heard that he was going to N--- [village] to work as a day labourer as he is poor. I was [working as a] vendor [selling goods] at my house. They [the police] came to ask questions and they had been looking for things in my house and my house became messy. They said that they were looking for the gun. I also showed them everything, my suit [clothing] boxes and opened [everything] for them. Everything was messy in my house. The time that they came, Maung A--- was not awake. They cut off the string of the mosquito net and they forcibly pulled him. Maung A--- pulled himself back [resisted] because he was going to wear his longyi. As he was pulled suddenly, he was startled. There were about 20 police coming [in our house]. Even the villagers who saw them were scared of them. As Maung A--- was very scared of them [as he was questioned], I was trying to answer [the questions] for him but I was told [not] to interrupt them. He was very scared already as he was told to put his hands behind his back and lie with his face down on the floor and he was pointed [at] with a gun. As he was scared, he could not speak a word. He was asked about Maung D---, but he did not know [about him]. Maung A--- was asked if he is of Mon ethnicity. He is not of Mon ethnicity. He is not Mon [ethnicity]; he is mixed race of Mon and Karen [ethnicity]. He was asked if his longyi was a Mon longyi. It was not a Mon longyi. Then, they took a bag of ours. They also searched for money. They checked my money that I got from [working as a] vendor and the money that I kept for the village's fund raising. I told them that it was the village fund raising money, so they did not touch it. They took Maung A--- down to the ground floor [and] they checked [searched] him. I do not know what they had to check [search for] with him; then he was taken to the boat mooring area. The village head also did not know about this. A while after he was taken, the village head came to my house.

The Tatmadaw went to sit [stay] at I--- [village]. They phoned the village head and said that they took a villager from K--- [village] but they did not know who he was [his name]. When the village head came to visit my house, he knew that it was Maung A--- that they took with them. The village head missed [did not meet] him.

**What was Maung A--- working on in the past?**

He was working on a plantation and fishing.

**What time did they come to arrest him; in the night time or in the day time?**

It was about 5 o'clock in the morning.

**Do you know where Maung A--- is now?**

I know; I have been to [visit] him once.

**Where was he when you visited him?**

He is in Myaung Mya prison.

**Is he still there now?**

Yes.

**Do you have any problems going to see him?**

No, I did not have [any problems]. After I arrived there, people let me see him. I had to wait for the [right] time. As the time that I arrived there was 12 o'clock, the prison was closed. I had to wait until the afternoon to see him.

**How much did it cost [for travelling] when you went to see him?**

I went with one of my friends and in total it cost 110,000 kyats. I bought him food and left 20,000 kyats with him.

**Do you think Maung A--- was involved in robbing case?**

He was not involved at all. He was at home and was busy with work on the date that the robbing case happened. Everyone knows that the robbing case is not related to him. You can ask anyone [about him]. His history and background [behaviour] were always very good.

**Since Maung A--- is not home, what are the difficulties that you have to face?**

I am in trouble as he is not [at] home. It costs money to follow [visit] him. Doing family business [working for our livelihood] requires both of us, husband and wife, in order to run [business] well. Since my husband is not here, how can I do family business [as] only me, the wife? The money that we had saved is gone as I have to follow [visit] him. My siblings also have to support me. Now, my relatives have to send my children to school. It is very difficult for my livelihood [since he is not here].

**I heard that he was sentenced to death, is it true?**

They [the prison authority] said that he would be sentenced to death. However, they later said that they have not given that order [made that decision] yet; they said that they will give an order later in Nay Pyi Taw. I am not sure whether the order will be death [sentence] or release.

**Since you guarantee that Maung A--- was not involved in the robbing case, how do you want this case to be addressed for your husband?**

He was not even involved in the robbing but he has to suffer from it. It is not good for him. I want this case to be addressed correctly and quickly. [His] dignity has also gone. [His] social [life] and economic [situation] have collapsed. So help [us] so that he will be released quickly.

**Now, I was asking you [about] what I wanted to know. You also answered me [about] what you have suffered. Thank you so much.**

**Source #143**

<b>Log #</b>	15-79-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooطلا Interview, Naw A---, November 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Dooطلا District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>29.</p> <p><b>What is your ethnicity?</b></p> <p>Karen.</p> <p><b>What is your religion?</b></p> <p>Buddhist.</p> <p><b>What is your occupation?</b></p>	

Teacher.

**Where do you live?**

Doooplaya District, Kaw T'ree Township, A--- village tract.

**Can you tell me about the information that you have told me about before?**

One of the female teachers who comes and teaches here came along with her husband and the husband does not have a job, so she gave one subject for her husband [to teach]. We do not want her husband to teach with us as he is not a teacher.

**What about other issue?**

There are eight teachers and a teacher's husband. She takes two subjects. If she could not handle both subjects she can ask to share them with the other teachers; she does not have to give it to her husband.

**How many standards do you have in your school?**

This is a primary school so there are only four standards.

**How many students and how many teachers are there in the school?**

There are 95 students and eight teachers.

**Is this school supported by the villagers or the [Myanmar] government?**

There are five teachers that the [Myanmar] government sent and three teachers who are supported and hired by local villagers.

**What about the school principal?**

There are two principals: one was locally hired by villagers and another is from [the Myanmar] government, who is only a temporary assistant. If we have to select a new principal, we only want a principal from local [village] staff. For [teachers coming from the Myanmar] government side, they don't know about the village situation.

**What is the teacher's husband's name?**

His name is B---. I think that if she cannot handle the subjects then she should give them to the other teacher and not to her husband. Do we have the right to say that as you are not a teacher you should not interrupt your wife or is that for the boss [to say]?

**Do you want to talk to him?**

Not personally, but if possible I want the school committee and relevant responsible person to have a meeting and talk about it. Or can we talk about it with him ourselves?

**Can you tell me about your feelings and the challenge in your working area?**

Some people think that he can teach very well as he is educated and we think the same thing. However, as he is not responsible for anything [in the school], he should not been involved in the school.



**What about the village situation?**

Some people see us [think that] like we do not like the teacher's husband, so they think we are complaining too much. I think I am complaining in the right way; it does not mean that we do not like him.

**Any other issues?**

There has been no consultation for the water distribution project. They have not held a meeting or informed villagers in A--- village when submitting proposals to the government. When the government approved [their proposals] they just came and installed the pipes and started their project without consulting with the villagers. Some pipes go under villagers' houses, go through villagers' plantations and villagers' land so many people are not happy about this and it will be a challenge to find water during summer season.

**Are there any armed groups?**

No, only villagers from B--- village. They come and take water from B--- village.

**Did they come and talk to villagers before they took water from A--- village?**

Yes, they did but villagers from A--- [village] did not agree to it. But they did it anyway.

**Is there anything else you want to say?**

Villagers do not have [much] income from doing much good business to earn money for a living, but they have to pay taxes and support the teacher that [the Myanmar] government sent out to the village, too.

**How did they collect money?**

They went to each household and collected two bowls of rice and one basket of charcoal each month. The school committee also had to provide accommodation for them but the government had also given them money to build a house to live in as well as a salary.

**How much salary do they get per month?**

They get more than 200,000 kyat per month. We do not know exactly how much it is.

**What about locally hired teachers?**

Each household gives each of them three bags of rice per year. The Kaw Thoo Lei [Karen State] education department (Karen Education Department) also provide them with a stipend of 7,500 baht per year. They are paid a stipend depending on the number of students. If they have more students, they get more. But now even though there are more students, the number of teachers has also increased so we get much less because we have to share [the total] amongst ourselves.

**Does the KNU education department also provide money to the [Myanmar] government teachers as well?**

No, they only give money to the locally-hired teachers.

**I just want to check, is it only households who send their children to school that have to provide three bags of rice?**

Every household has to provide it and the whole village. For a widow or an orphan we do not ask for the same amount. It depends on their situation and whether they can pay it or not. If they can't pay it that's fine.

**Anything else?**

Our village's school was constructed and supported by villagers, the school teachers and our monks so I think we should only hang our Karen flag. The [Myanmar] government teachers do not like that and they want to hang the Burmese flag in front of the school instead of the Karen flag. Regarding subjects that are taught, the [Myanmar] government only allow us to teach Karen language up to Standard 2. In Standards 3 and 4 they do not allow us to teach [Karen language]. In the past we taught Karen [language] but since two years ago we have not been allowed to teach it at Standard 3 or 4.

**When did the Burmese [Myanmar] government teachers arrive?**

Two years ago. We teach both subjects that are provided by the KNU and the [Myanmar] government. We do not just teach from the [Myanmar] government or the KNU.

**Anything else?**

In the past the KNU came and provided medicine for children, for example preventions, worm prevention and vitamins that keep eyes healthy but I do not know the name of the medicine. [They used to provide this medicine] every six months but now they know that the [Myanmar] government now provide us [with some medicine] so they do not come as regularly as before.

**In this village, do any armed groups come and oppress the villagers?**

No.

**How many armed groups are there in this village?**

Just the DKBA.

**Anything else? What about electricity and water?**

We want solar panels for the villagers.

**Has the village head submitted a proposal for the villagers to get solar panels?**

Yes, but they did not respond to us.

**Anything else?**

If possible, we [teachers] want a computer for our school. Right now we have to write exam questions for the students by hand. If there were fewer students it would be easy for us, but when the number of students increased we had to take longer hours, so if we have a computer it may make it easier for us to work.

**Anything else?**

No.

**Ok thank you very much if you do not have anything else to say.**

**Source #144**

<b>Log #</b>	15-79-P1
<b>Title</b>	Photo Notes, Dooplaya District, June 2016
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Kaw T'Ree Township, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Date Received: June 24<sup>th</sup> 2015</b></p> <p><b>Date of photo: 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016</b></p> <p>The strange thing that I saw. These [four] photos are [taken] in Dooplaya District, Kaw T'Ree Township, in a place [area] that I do not know the name of. The place is between A--- and B---. When I came back from A---, I saw the strange thing and it really made me sad. Because the woman is mentally disabled, she was walking around naked. When I arrived back to B--- village, I asked the villagers and he [one villager] said the woman is a fool. She was made a fool by the magic [witchcraft]. I took this photo to show that our Karen people are suffering and that their rights are being abused in many different ways. I took the photo by myself. The age of the women is 48 years-old.</p>	

**Source #145**

<b>Log #</b>	15-80-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Interview: Naw A---, July 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in February 2016 <a href="http://khrq.org/2016/02/15-80-a2-i1/dooplaya-interview-naw-july-2015">http://khrq.org/2016/02/15-80-a2-i1/dooplaya-interview-naw-july-2015</a>
<b>Location</b>	Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Buddhist</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Has no occupation</p> <p><b>Position:</b> N/A</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>Naw A---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>45 years old.</p> <p><b>[What is the] village that you live [in]?</b></p> <p>B--- [village].</p> <p><b>How about [your] ethnicity?</b></p>	

Karen ethnicity.

**How about [your] religion?**

Buddhist.

**[Do you] have a family [are you married]?**

Yes, I have a family.

**How many children do you have?**

I have one child.

**Male or female?**

Male.

**How old is he?**

He is 22 years old.

**Is your son married?**

Yes, he is.

**Your son's father is still alive?**

Yes.

**Where is he?**

He is in Thailand.

**Is he Thai?**

Yes, he is. I have married twice. My first husband was shot and killed by people.

**Why did people kill him?**

People said he practiced black magic, but he did not practice it. People disliked him so people went [to] shoot [him] and killed him.

**Which group killed him?**

It was my cousin.

**Where does he live?**

He lived in the same village as me, [which is] called F---.

**When did people kill him?**

When he was having rice [meal].

**Were you there when he [your first husband] was eating?**

Yes, I was there. It [the bullet] also hit my head.

**Where?**

Here, look [she shows her scar to the KHRG community member].

**So they shot and killed your husband [and] you were also hit?**

Yes.

**Your [current] husband is in Thailand now?**

Yes, he grew up in Thailand and he has Thai ID.

**So what is your occupation?**

I have no occupation. I am just waiting for my husband and [in the meantime I] help my brother with his work, cutting [unwanted] vegetation.

**Do you have any responsibility in the village?**

No, nothing. I [used to] just do *loh ah pay*<sup>481</sup> and porter [forced labour] when my [current] husband was here.

**Now, do you still have to do *loh ah pay* or porter?**

No, [I] only had to go for sentry [duty] when my husband was [in the village]. Now, there is no more [forced labour demanded] from our family because my husband is not here; there is only me, and my son [is] also a soldier. Since it [our situation] is like that, they do not ask for [labor contribution]. But if my husband comes back they will start assigning [our family forced labour duties] again such as sentry and travelling back and forth.

**In your area, how many military groups are there?**

There is *Nyein Chan Yay A'pweh* [Karen Peace Force (KPF)].<sup>482</sup>

**Only one group?**

Yes, only one group, Kyaw Kler's *Nyein Chan Yay A'pweh* [KPF], in addition to the Tatmadaw group.

**How about B--- [village]?**

<sup>481</sup> *Loh ah pay* is a Burmese term now commonly used in reference to forced labour, although traditionally referring to voluntary service for temples or the local community, not military or state projects.

<sup>482</sup> *Nyein Chan Yay A'pweh*, can be translated as 'Peace Group' and refers to the Karen Peace Army (KPA), aka the Karen Peace Force (KPF). *Nyein Chan Yay A'pweh* should not be confused with *Aye Chan Yay A'pweh*, which also translates as 'Peace Group', and is a government-sponsored militia formed in 1998 and consisting of roughly 30 reserve soldiers and significantly less active members. Nor should the group be confused with *Htanay Pyithu Sitt A'pweh*, another militia also known as the Thaundaung Peace Group that has been in conflict with *Aye Chan Yay A'pweh* in Toungoo District. It is also distinct from the KNU/KNLA-Peace Council, which has, on occasion, been referred to as 'Peace Group'.

No [armed groups inside of the village, only in the surrounding area].

**So there are only two armed groups that you know of [in this area]?**

Yes.

**Have you seen any other groups travelling around?**

No.

**You said there are *Nyein Chan Yay* [KPF soldiers] and Burmese [Tatmadaw soldiers]. Do you [personally] know any of the Tatmadaw [soldiers] there?**

I don't know Burmese [Tatmadaw soldiers] and I can't [re]call their names, either. They live in F--- mountain. I have seen them come down [to my village] sometimes.

**Do they demand things from the villagers when they come down to the village?**

I have not seen them demand things.

**How about [any demands] on the part of *Nyein Chan Yay A'pweh* [KPF]?**

No, I have not seen *Nyein Chan Yay* [KPF] demand things [from villagers], either. They eat their [own] thing [food].

**Do the Burmese [Tatmadaw] there demand tax?**

No.

**They live on their own on the mountain?**

Yes, they live on their own on the mountain.

**Do they come down sometimes?**

Yes, they come down on their own and buy things. They do not live in the village; they live only on the mountain.

**Now, you live in B--- [village], and you came to me. Could you discuss what happened a little? How did it happen, etc.?**

Yes, he came and did [it to] me, and then he left. I also feel bad [upset]. I was thinking to report it but I don't dare to. He will kill me if I do.

**Who do you mean by "he"?**

He is Hpah Ta Roh.

**Is Hpah Ta Roh a villager or a soldier?**

He is a soldier.

**Which [armed group's] soldier is he?**

He is a DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army]<sup>483</sup> soldier.

**Are you sure that he is a DKBA [soldier]?**

Yes, he is. I am sure.

**So where does he live?**

He lives in Ta Poh Kaw [village]. He told me, "*I am from Ta Poh Kaw [village]; do not mess with me*".<sup>484</sup> He told me that. He told me, "[If] *I raped you why did you not say it* [at the time it was happening]? *Are you mute?*" He told [yelled] at me saying, "*Shoot and kill me if you feel that I'm such an inconvenience* [to you]!" He told me that.

**Did he rape you in your house or somewhere else?**

It was in my own house, in my room like this [demonstrates to KHRG community member]. I can show you that.

**How many people were there when he came?**

I was alone.

**Did he call out to you when he came?**

When he came, [he climbed] up the ladder, [which made a] "Klaw Klaw Klaw" sound, while I was sleeping. I woke up and I was thinking, was it a cat or a human? And I just stayed still. I thought if it was my son, he would call out to me. And now [at the time] I was thinking: if it was him, why didn't he call me? And [then] he [Hpah Ta Roh] called [to] me, "*Hey, friend?*" "Yes," I answered. I told him that I thought it was my son and I kept sleeping [lying on my bed]. He asked me, "*Come out and bring betel nut.*" And so I came out with betel nut. And I was also afraid as it was dark, and he told me about himself, saying that he comes to do logging [in the area]. I asked him, "*You haven't visited [me] in the past so why are you visiting me now?*" He replied, "*I came to visit.*" I replied to him, "*You visit me at midnight? You want to go back and sleep? Go back and sleep!*" He just stayed [sitting].

**Did he not reply anything to you?**

No, he did not. I told him, "*Go back and sleep in other people's house,*" but he did not go back and sleep [elsewhere]. He did not say anything and he just stayed [sitting]. When I was about to leave to go back and sleep in my room, he pulled me. I thought of shouting but he said not to shout, and I did not shout because I thought that if I shouted he would kill me. I

<sup>483</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), formerly the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA that signed a ceasefire agreement with the Burma/Myanmar government and directly cooperated at times with Tatmadaw forces. The formation of the DKBA was led by monk U Thuzana with the help and support of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the name of the military government in Burma/Myanmar at that time. For more information on the formation of the DKBA, see "[Inside the DKBA](#)," KHRG, 1996. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces reformed as Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces, also remaining independent of the KNLA. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity.

<sup>484</sup> In colloquial Karen, when one person holds a position of power over the other, the powerful person may use this expression to emphasize their power. The specific village of origin of the speaker is irrelevant to this assertion of power.



thought he would shoot if I shout. In the past, [when I saw him around the village, he] came with no gun, but now there was a gun with him. That is why I was scared and I didn't dare to talk about it [to others in the village].

**Did he ask you any [questions] before he raped you?**

No, he did not. He just raped me and did that to me.

**Did he do everything [all sexual acts to you] at that time?**

I am thin and I couldn't defeat him. He is fat [big and strong] and there was no way that I could've defeated him. Think, he is bigger than me. My husband is thin. He [Hpah Ta Roh] is fat and I am thin - I can't win [against] him.

**Did you shout [at] any [point in] time [during the incident]?**

No, how could I shout? He slapped my mouth.

**Did he slap your mouth or cover your mouth?**

No, he did not cover my mouth. He slapped my mouth when I was trying to shout. He held me tight. I could not shout and I didn't dare to shout because there was a gun beside him. I thought that he would shoot me, so I didn't dare to shout.

**What kind of gun was it?**

[In Karen] it is called *Ka Hkee* gun. [She asks her cousin who is present in the room what the gun is called] I believe it is called AK [47] gun.

**What is his name again?**

His name's Hpah Ta Roh.

**How old is he?**

He should be around 35 years [old]. He is an adult man.

**You said Hpah Ta Roh is a DKBA [soldier]?**

Yes, he is.

**Do you know his position in the military?**

I do not know his position. I have just seen him in other people's houses and [then] he came to my house and raped me. That is all I know about him. I have no idea about his position in the military.

**Has he ever visited you at your house before he raped you?**

No, never. He has never been to my house before. That is the only time that he visited me.

**Has he met with you [at] any time before [the rape]?**

No, he has met me only once, when I was visiting my female cousin's house for a drink of hot tea.

**Did he talk to you when he met you there?**

No.

**Did he ask you anything when he met you in your cousin's house?**

He just asked me how many [people] I live with, and I answered that I live alone. He has never been to my house. That was the first time that he visited me.

**He has never been to your house and [yet] he knows the way to your house?**

When my cousin went down to F--- [village] to buy things, he followed her [when she was] coming back [to my house]. He did not come up to my house, he just went back straight away. And suddenly, he comes to my house at midnight and I didn't know what his plan was, perhaps to assassinate me or only to rape me?

**What time did he come to your house?**

It was midnight. A little while after he visited [showed up at my house], the rooster started to crow. And he held me down and raped me and after that he sat for a while and he left as the light was coming up. He went to someone else's house.

**So he did not leave immediately after he raped you?**

No, he sat for a while and [then] he left.

**Where was he sitting?**

He was lying on the floor. He told me that he is going to sleep. When the light came up he took his gun with him and he left.

**Where did you go after he raped you?**

I was there [at my house]. I was cooking rice in the kitchen. I thought he went back to sleep. I didn't go back to sleep. I started cooking after he raped me. I thought he will go back, but he was lying there and he woke up when the light came up and he took his gun and went to my older sister's house. I thought, what kind of person is he? I have never seen [experienced] a thing [situation] like this in the past. Now, he came and raped me and he did this to me. I thought he was trying to mess with me as [if I were his] enemy. I am just a woman, I know nothing [about fighting back]. If he [tried to] kill me; I would die on the floor. I was scared. My husband was not home and my son was not home, either. I was alone.

**Did you tell anyone about it in the morning?**

No, I didn't tell anyone. Later on, I told him [Hpah Ta Roh], "*You did [raped me] like this and this should go* [be reported to the] *elders* [village leaders]." He did not like it [the idea of me reporting the case], and he left [walked away].

**You told him [that]?**

Yes, I did.

**Did he go to your house again?**

Yes, he did. I [took a] look at him and he didn't look normal [he looked like he was up to no good] and I went and stayed at my younger sister's house. And he asked me to come and

meet him and I came back [from my sister's house to my cousin's house]. I thought that we were going to discuss why he raped me. I have not seen a thing [situation] like this in the past. I thought I was going to tell him this. [When we met again] I hadn't [even] started talking, [when] he violently abused me. He kicked me and shot [at] me [for intimidation].

**Where did he kick you?**

He kicked me in my female cousin's house.

**Where? Which part of your body did he kick?**

He kicked me in the back of the neck, twice.

**Did he kick strongly?**

Yes, it was too strong. I was numb [after].

**Did you fall down since he kicked you [strongly]?**

Yes, I fell down and he kicked me again and I was gone [passed out]. I was gone [had passed out] because I was already numb after [the] first [time] he kicked me. He came up [to the house] again [later that day] and he kicked me there [on the floor] twice in the back of my neck and I started feeling pain in my neck. After he kicked me, he shot [at the floor] beside me. There was a hole in the timber floor.

**Was the distance between the hole and you far?**

No, the distance was just like [the distance between] where you sit and where I am now. I guess he would shoot at me, but he didn't dare to really shoot at me. He just shot somewhere else which was not far from me, like between you and me. I was sitting like this and he shot here like this. [He] shot twice but the gun was jammed. He told me that he would shoot more if the gun wasn't jammed. He also told me it was enough, spending this many bullets.

**How many times did he shoot?**

Twice. When I was going back [from my cousin's house] with my older sister, he followed us and he shot another two times. I don't know what he was doing. I have no idea what he was trying to do, I thought he would kill us [me] if he caught us [that day].

**He kicked you twice?**

Yes.

**After kicking you, he shot [his] gun two times?**

Yes.

**What did he say to you after that?**

He said, "*Kill me if you feel in your heart that I am an inconvenience to you.*" He told me that.

**He told you that?**

Yes, he said "*I am a tiger. I don't just bite people, if I do [bite] - you will be able to hear it*"

[you'd get bit seriously]" . "[I] *bite to death*," he said. He said that. Hpah Ta Roh said that.

**So when you went to meet him [at your cousin's house] he did not say anything [before he violently abused you]?**

No, he did not. He just violently abused [me] and shot the gun, [and] as I was saying before, he asked me to kill him if I do not feel good about him. I did not say that I do not feel good about him. He said, "*If you do not feel good [about me], kill me. Why didn't you shout when I raped you?*" Because if I shouted I was afraid that he would have killed me.

**So when he was shooting [his] gun, how many people were there?**

There were three or four people altogether, including my cousin and daughter-in-law, when he was shooting.

**What about [the] other people? Were they scared?**

I don't know. They might have been scared. Everyone is scared of gun shooting.

**[The interviewer addresses Naw A---'s cousin, who is also in the room:] Aunty, do you know about Hpah Ta Roh raping this aunty?**

**[Naw A---'s cousin:]** Yes, I did.

**She said that he [Hpah Ta Roh] kicked her. Is it true?**

Yes.

**Where did he kick her?**

He kicked her here at her face.

**[Naw A--- cuts in and says:]** Not the face, it was my head.

**[Naw A---'s cousin:]** When I was climbing up I did not look carefully. He came up and he directly kicked her and she was knocked down. She did not fall down on the floor as she placed her hands down [to break her fall]. She was moving like this [the cousin demonstrates the action].

**[Naw A---:]** And I turned back [to face Hpah Ta Roh with my] hands down on the floor and he kicked me again and I was going like this [Naw A--- acts out the motion].

**[Naw A---'s cousin:]** The first time when he abused her I was not there, I only saw the second time that he abused her.

**How many times did he abuse her?**

Twice.

**Twice?**

Yes, the first time when she was in her sibling's hut people fetched her and when she arrived back [to her other cousin, Naw C---'s house], I was not there. Later on they [people] called me [to come see the incident]. I didn't see the first time.

**[Naw A---:]** the first time when he violently abused me I passed out and my head was like,

**"Woah!"** My head was dazed and I could not move.

**How did he abuse you in the first time [instance]?**

**[Naw A---:]** He kicked the back of my neck and I was knocked down and my daughter-in-law was there. The distance was just like where you are and where I am. She was just looking [as the incident took place]. He also said, *"I would beat you more than this if your daughter-in-law was not here. It is because I feel Ah Na<sup>485</sup> of your daughter-in-law."* My sister said he asked her, *"Are you alright? If you are not alright with me beating your younger sister, I will kill you all!"* My older sister didn't dare to say [that] she [doesn't] feel okay. She just replied *"Yes, I am okay."*

**[The researcher asks Naw A---'s cousin:]** Aunt, you said you did not see the first time that he abused her?

**[Naw A---'s cousin:]** No, I did not. I was on my hill farm, cutting vegetation in my farm. At the time, people went to call her [Naw A---] and when she came back to Naw C---'s house, Hpah Ta Roh was there. I do not know where they [Hpah Ta Roh and Naw C---] met [know each other].

**[Naw A--- cousin:]** Was he there when you came back?

**[Naw A---:]** No, he was not there. He was drinking alcohol at Saw G---'s house. Naw C--- and you went there to go and get him, right?

**[Naw A---'s cousin:]** I went there to call him, it was the second time. The time that I saw the incident. The time that Naw C--- went to your son to call you. You mean that time?

**[Naw A---:]** Yes, that time.

**[Naw A---'s cousin:]** I was not there on that time, I only saw the second time. I heard that he [Hpah Ta Roh] came up to the house and beat her and kicked her. Her [Naw A---'s] daughter-in-law told me about that.

**Is there no village head?**

There is no village head. The village head lives in F--- [village]. He [Hpah Ta Roh] did not allow me to go and report about it to the village head. He would kill us [if we reported to village head].

**[Naw A---:]** Did he say that he would kill you if you reported about it to the village head?

**[Naw A---:]** Yes, he said he would kill me if I reported about it to the village head or [other local] leaders. He said he is not afraid of the village head or leaders. He told me that.

**So have you reported [officially complained] to anyone since he has raped you?**

No one.

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<sup>485</sup> In Burmese language, *Ah Na Dei* means 'a desire not to impose on others' or reluctance to impose on others. The idea is to maintain smooth relations by considering others' feelings and refraining from upsetting the other. Combined with a sense of fear, feeling of *Ah Na Dei* can justify inaction. See, "[Empowerment as constructive power for gender](#)," *CTC Bulletin*, 2004.

**Did you inform anyone [at all in the village]?**

No one except a *Hpuh* [grandpa].

**Which *Hpuh* [grandpa]?**

*Hpuh Bo*<sup>486</sup> Kay.

**Who is *Hpuh Bo Kay*?**

I do not know [exactly what his position is]. He [Hpah Ta Roh] went to the village head and told the village head, "*It has nothing to do with you.*" He thought that I reported the case to the village head. He went back [to the village] to find me on that day.

**Who?**

Hpah Ta Roh. He went to the village head as he could not find me. I have not met with the village head as he was in his farm [when I tried to see him]. I heard [from other villagers] that he [Hpah Ta Roh] told the village head, "*It has nothing to do with you,*" and the village head did not care.

**So [Hpah Ta Roh] talked to the village head first?**

Yes, the village head also told me that. He said he was told by Hpah Ta Roh, "*Do not listen to what she said; it has nothing to do with you.*" They [both] said I was just lying, and it was not true that I have been raped.

**Who said [spread the rumor] that you were lying?**

F--- villagers in the village.<sup>487</sup> Maung Oo Tin and Kyaw Kler. They said it is not true. Kyaw Kler was asking [other villagers] if it is true that I have been raped by Hpah Ta Roh. He said that I was just lying. I do not lie. I am old and do not lie. I would not be telling [about the rape] if I hadn't been raped. I tell [about the rape] because I have been raped. I have children [a son], a husband, and a grandchild. If I just keep secret, my older sister is *Nuh Boo*,<sup>488</sup> and if I kept it secret [I was worried] that she would get a disease or face [some sort of] accident. It is not good whether we state [report it] or not. Think: I have to be afraid in two or three [different] ways.

**Do you remember the date that he beat you and threatened to shoot at you?**

No, I can't remember.

**So how long has it been since the incident happened?**

I think it has been about a week. In the morning, after he beat me, he had to go. After three

<sup>486</sup> *Bo* is a Burmese title meaning 'officer.'

<sup>487</sup> F--- village and B--- village are very close to each other, with villagers from both places often coming into each other's villages.

<sup>488</sup> *Nuh Boo* likely refers to the Buddhist practice of Vassa, which is a three-month period between July and October in which one adopts more ascetic practices. Naw A--- said she was worried that if she kept her rape a secret, she would have been lying by omission and such an action may have compromised her sister's spiritual practice, which puts an emphasis on honesty and truth-telling.

or four days he came [back] down here. I think it's only been that long. I can't remember exactly. My blood is not working well<sup>489</sup> and I cannot count the days. In the past I was good at it but now it is clear [that I cannot do that].

**You said he had to go. Where did he have to go?**

To Ghaw Lay Hkee [name of place]. The DKBA had to go back [there on order from their leaders]. He went back with Maung Pein and Nya Khay. The three of them went back together.

**Is Nya Khay also a DKBA soldier?**

Yes, he is.

**Does he live in B--- village, as well?**

No, he does not live in B---. He lives in Htee Hpoh Ghay Hkee [village]. He went back with Hpah Ta Roh.

**How many people did he go with?**

The two of them went back together because the other one [Maung Pein] went back ahead [of them].

**[Naw A---'s cousin:]** It has been a week [since the incident]. He violently abused her.

**[Naw A---:]** And he left in the morning [as per the order from the DKBA leaders]. If he was still there [B--- village] he would not be happy with me; he would shoot me.

**Did he also come to your house [to rape you] later, after he first raped you?**

No, he did not. After he raped me, in the morning, he went back [to my house] but he did not get into the house and he just left.

**[Naw A---:] Were you there [at home when he came]?**

No, I was cutting [clearing] vegetation on the farm.

**You saw that [he came to your house]?**

Yes, [I saw him from the field the first time he came to] check [if I'm there] and he did not find me so he left and he did not come anymore.

**Is the distance between your hut [house] and your farm [long]?**

It is close.

**He did not call [out to] you?**

He saw me when he came. He was saying, "*Aren't you coming up to the house?*" I said no to him, [so] he went up to the hut alone and he was just looking around and [then] he left. He was going to my older sister's house and then he left. He went back to my cousin who was cutting vegetation [in her farm].

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<sup>489</sup> The expression "blood not working well" often implies mental health issues.



**Did he come up to your hut?**

He did not come up to my hut as I was not there [in the hut].

**[But] you just said he came up to your hut for a while?**

He came to me twice.

**He came to you twice in the morning after he raped you [on the same day]?**

Yes, he went up to my house the first time. I saw him and he left. Then he came down again when I was cutting [vegetation in the farm]. He was asking me, "*Are you not coming up to your house?*" and I answered, "No," and then he left.

**Did he not ask you anything [else]?**

He did not ask me anything. He did not tell me anything. He just left.

**You said he has never been to your house until he raped you?**

No, never. Ask my cousin [if you don't believe me].

**Did you know that he would come on the night that he went to your house [and raped you]?**

No, I did not. He shot [his] gun and come to my house.

**On the way coming to your house?**

Yes, he shot one time on his way to my house.

**On that night?**

Yes, after [he] fired [his] gun he came up to my house. He placed his gun down when he climbed up [the ladder to my house]. I thought it was my son and [so] I paid no mind and I kept sleeping on my bed. And he woke me up [by calling out to me] and he asked me to bring betel nut for him and I replied that I do not have betel nut and betel nut leaves.<sup>490</sup> I told him, "*What are you here for? It is nighttime and it is midnight.*" I told him to sleep in other people's house. I asked him, "*Where are you coming from?*" "[I] *am coming from Kyeik Doe [Town],*" [he said.] I asked him, "*You come back from Kyeik Doe, and why don't you sleep in other people's house? It is midnight.*" He replied to me, "*I do not want to sleep* [in other people's house]. *There was nobody in Naw D---'s house - she went to her mom's house to sleep* [there]". I asked him, "*Why didn't you sleep in Naw D---'s house?*" He replied that he does not want to sleep. He did not want to sleep there and he slept here, it is fine, but do not do like that [rape me]. He could have slept on his own.

**Do you know Hpah Ta Roh's commander?**

I do not know his commander. I just know that he does logging and is friends with [fellow DKBA soldier] Nya Khay. I just think that his commander is Nya Khay. He does not have

<sup>490</sup> In Burmese, 'betel nut' and 'betel leaf' are referred to as *konywet* and *konthih*, respectively, as if they are from the same plant. The Burmese names are also commonly used by Karen language speakers. Betel nut is the seed from an areca palm tree, *Areca catechu*; "betel leaf" is the leaf of the piper betel vine, belonging to the *Piperaceae* family.

other commander [that I know of].

**He does logging in your area?**

Yes, he does [logging] near Naw D---'s [house] area in B--- [village]. He has never been to my house [before the incident]. He does logging and usually goes to Nya Khay's [house] and to Koo Koo's house.

**After he visited [raped] you, did you feel like you wanted to marry him or something?<sup>491</sup>**

No, I have never had that kind of thinking [in my mind]. I have children [a son] and a husband.

**Did he proposition you [before the rape]?**

No. He has not propositioned me and I have never met him.

**So now I would like to know how do you want people to help you [regarding the rape case]?**

What kind of help?

**How do you want the leaders to help you?**

If [I] submit the case [to leaders], would he be okay? If I do submit the case to the leaders, he would tell me he will kill me for ruining his dignity. He would tell me that. And I do not damage his dignity [as it is true]. He did [that to] me, and so I said he did [it to] me. I would not say that if he hadn't done it. There are a lot of people in F--- [village] and B--- [village]. None of them has raped me. He is the only one. I want the leaders to arrange [mediate] in a good way. [I want a case] like this to never happen [in the future], like [the case of] him raping me. One time is enough. I had bad luck during this [whole] year. I think it was my fate that this year I've had to face such a thing [rape]. It is obvious.

**So, I would like to know what you want me to do with this information. [Would you like me to] send it to the superior leaders or what do you want to do with the information that you have reported to me?**

It depends on you. You can sent it if you want and [I think] it is good to send [it in].

**It doesn't depend on me, it depends on your feelings [decision]. You were the person that suffered [in this incident] and you know best. Do you want [me] to report to the superior leader or how do you want me to report it? And do you agree to it [reporting the case to leaders]?**

For me, I agree.

**[Speaking to Naw A---'s cousin:] So aunty, what do you want to say based on what you have seen [regarding the case], such as the way he talked and beat [your cousin]? Do you want to mention anything related to what you have seen?**

**[Naw A---'s cousin:]** You have to ask the victim. If you want to report [on the case], that will

<sup>491</sup> In past rape cases in the region, the abused woman was sometimes pressured to marry her rapist, if she was unmarried or widowed. KHRG previously published an incident where a SLORC soldier insisted on marrying the woman he had raped, "[Incidents Reported from Karen Villages](#)," KHRG, November 1993.

be good. I am not the victim and [so how] can I make a statement for her?

**You are not the victim but you are her cousin [so you can speak up and confirm her testimony]. For example [because] she [Naw A---] has disease in her [is not completely healthy] and her blood is not working. So...**

It is good if she mentions [it to the leaders] so that doesn't happen [again] in the future. If we just keep things as is, he might come [back] in the future because he might think that he has done it [rape] and no action has been taken against him so he might keep doing it.

**So Hpah Ta Roh does not have a wife?**

[Naw A---'s cousin:] People said that he has a wife but he told [me] that he does not have a wife. People said that his wife is a mute woman. He is from Ta Poh Kaw [village]. I do not know how many wives he has. Kyaw Kler told me yesterday that he has a wife.

**Who is Kyaw Kler?**

He is a *Nyein Chan Yay* [KPF] officer. He is *Hpuh Bo Myint*'s subordinate, [*Hpuh Bo Myint* is] the one that lives in Per Hkler [village]. People [also] call him [*Hpuh Bo Myint*] *Bo Myint Htun*. Don't you know him?

**No, I don't know him.**

He is Kyaw Kler's commander. Kyaw Kler is also a KPF officer.

**So why did you not mention it to the village leader?**

[Naw A---:] I don't know about it anymore [I give up]. If the village head talks about it, he [Hpah Ta Roh] does not like the village head talking about it. What to do? It is awkward, I told you. I do not know [what to do]. He [Hpah Ta Roh] won't [be] pleased if I report it to the village leaders. So what to do? He did tell me not to report it to the village leader, and if I do, he will not be pleased. My sister heard that as well. He will not be pleased if I report to the leader and he would say that I am just lying. I do not lie. I am not a kid, how can I lie? I am old and I got a grandchild.

**You did not report it to the leaders [government authorities], so did you report it to any of the local [village] leaders?**

Recently people told Kyaw Kler that Hpah Ta Roh raped Saw E---'s mom [Naw A---]. He replied it might not be true. It might be just a rumor. I do not know what Hpah Ta Roh might say to that. He [Hpah Ta Roh] once had an argument with Kyaw Kler and he was going to shoot Kyaw Kler with [his] gun and Kyaw Kler [said he] allows him to shoot him one time and he [Kyaw Kler] will shoot him back one time.<sup>492</sup> They are very brave [aggressive] people, do not stay close to them.

**Do they do aggressive things there [in the village]?**

They do not [usually] do aggressive things in the village. Only with me, and there was one time [when] he [Kyaw Kler was] angry when he [Kyaw Kler] lost his logs or bamboo. He [Hpah Ta Roh] was displeased with me when I talked about the incident [rape].

<sup>492</sup> No shots were fired in this incident, Kyaw Kler and Hpah Ta Roh were merely saying these threats to each other.

**You said you do not know Hpah Ta Roh's leader?**

No, I just know that he is here to do logging and he stays in people's [villagers'] houses. It has not been very long since I first met him. I think [his leader] might be Nya Khay. I thought I will report it to Nya Khay, [but] people do not want me to report it [to him].

**Who does not allow [you to report to Nya Khay]?**

My younger sibling told me not to report. [My younger sibling] said, "*They will kill you if you report about it or they will kill you on the way* [when you walk alone] *or they will strangle you and kill you.* People told me [different things] here and there, and I just live like a deaf person [not sure whose advice to listen to].

**Did he shoot the gun close to you and were you scared?**

Of course I was. How can you not be scared when people shoot a gun beside you?

**In whose house [did] he fire [the gun]?**

It was in Naw C---'s house.

**Is she your relative?**

My cousin.

**Where is your son now?**

He is in B--- [village].

**Your son lives together with you?**

Sometimes he lives with me and sometimes he goes back and lives with his uncle. His uncle was here before he went back [to his village]. [My son] works in farming together with his uncle.<sup>493</sup>

**So did you not tell your son?**

I told him already.

**What did your son say?**

He said, "*I do not know, [you should] do what you want to do*". It happened to me this way and I report it this way. I do not say other things [that didn't happen].

**Is there anything that you want to mention which I neglected to ask you about the incident?**

[You] have to mention it to the leaders and the leaders should reprimand their children [soldiers] as their children are not good [did a bad thing] so that they don't do this in the future. I can say only that much.

**Anything else?**

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<sup>493</sup> It is common for locally recruited soldiers to work in farming when not fulfilling their military duties.

No, that's all

**Naw A---, (female, 45,) B--- village, Kawkareik Township,  
Doooplaya District, (Interviewed in August 2015)**

#### Source #146

<b>Log #</b>	15-80-I1
<b>Title</b>	Incident Report   Noh T'Kaw Township, Doooplaya District (March 2015)
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Doooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p>On August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015 Saw Hpah T'Thay wrote [love] letters to the village head's wife to persuade her and he wrote seven [love] letters to her asking her to meet with him at night in the banana plantation. The village head's wife never went to meet him. After the people [villagers], the village head and his sibling had talked to him, he wrote a letter [again] to two ladies asking them to come to work with him on the farm. After those two ladies went to stay with him, he had planned to make them his wives and to spoil their lives. Many people [villagers] realised that it is inappropriate [to let two ladies stay with him any longer]; therefore many people [villagers] came to report the case. He is a village tract security guard in the village tract and also a religious leader in a village. When the people [villagers] told him [about the case] he said that he would kill the people with his witchcraft; therefore the people [villagers] who live very close to him were very scared of him and therefore they slept in the huts because nobody dared to tell him not to. It caused problems for many people [villagers]. After the village head and other old people in the village spoke to him twice, he acted [even] worsen than he did before. The village head could not do anything [by himself] as [the perpetrator] is a village tract security guard. He [the village head] reported the case to [KNDO]<sup>494</sup> and he asked the above leaders [KNDO] to solve the problem for him. Each [KNDO] leader who was selected as a leader should not misuse their power. If the leaders like [the perpetrator] the villagers cannot cope [solve with the problem].</p>	

#### Source #147

<b>Log #</b>	15-83-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpa-an Interview: Naw A---, June 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously published in June 2016 <a href="http://khrq.org/2016/06/15-83-a2-i1/hpa-an-interview-naw-june-2015">http://khrq.org/2016/06/15-83-a2-i1/hpa-an-interview-naw-june-2015</a>
<b>Location</b>	Hlaingbwe Township, Hpa-an District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Buddhist</p> <p><b>Marital Status:</b> Single</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> No occupation</p>	

<sup>494</sup> The Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO) was formed in 1947 by the Karen National Union and is the precursor to the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Today the KNDO refers to a militia force of local volunteers trained and equipped by the KNLA and incorporated into its battalion and command structure; its members wear uniforms and typically commit to two-year terms of service.

**Position:** Villager

**What is your name sayama?**<sup>495</sup>

My name is Naw A---.

**How old are you sayama?**

44.

**Are you married? No?**

I am single.

**Do you have a family?**

I have a family. My father passed away. My mother is [works] in the farm. I have five siblings.

**What is your occupation?**

I used to be a school teacher but I quit and now I stay at home with my mother.

**Why did you quit?**

Because I did not want to work. I was not interested in it.

**So you submitted a resignation letter and you quit?**

Yes, I submitted a resignation letter and I quit.

**So where do you live?**

Hlaingbwe [Town], [censored for security] section, [censored for security] road.

**Living with your mother, what do you do?**

I just stay with my mother. I do nothing. [I am] dependent [on my mother].

**Have you ever experienced problems, like for example human rights violations or other things?**

I don't know [much about] human rights violations. But when I was young, [there was] an issue regarding farmland. At that time there was war and I saw that my father was suffering.

**How did your father suffer?**

Because the farmland was confiscated, my father got depressed and later he passed away from all the stress.

**Was it your land that was confiscated?**

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<sup>495</sup> Saya (male) or sayama (female) is a Burmese/Myanmar term used for any teacher, pastor, or any person to whom one wishes to show respect.

Yes.

**By whom?**

By the military.

**Which military?**

[Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)] #338.<sup>496</sup>

**When was that?**

In 1991 and 1992.

**How many acres of your land were confiscated?**

Over 11 acres.

**Why did they confiscate it?**

They took it by force during the time of conflict. They said they would use it for military purposes and they confiscated it.

**How did they confiscate it? Did they just come and confiscate it with an order letter or what?**

I don't know about that. At that time I was a school-age child. I will tell you as I was told by the elders.

**Yes.**

What they told me was, the first time the military [LIB] #338 came to set up their base there they gathered the farmers, and they asked them [the farmers] to sign [a contract] to give them [LIB #338] their lands. They [the farmers] did not accept it and they went back [home]. My mother told him [my father] not to sign the document. But the second time [the soldiers from LIB #338 talked to the farmers], it included threats.

**How did they threaten you?**

They threatened [them] like, if they did not sign, they would include them in porter [service]. They also said, "If you do not sign, we will not give you compensation". They would pay an individual amount for each mango tree, marian [plum] tree, and jack fruit tree. They said they would pay compensation based on the amount of trees [on the land] and they asked [them] to sign under threat.

**So after they confiscated it, did they pay compensation?**

Since then, I have not heard of anyone who got compensation.

**So, only your farmland was confiscated? [Or did the confiscation] include other lands**

<sup>496</sup> In addition to LIB #338, KHRG has also received information suggesting that LIB #339 and Infantry Battalion (IB) #28 confiscated villagers land in the area. A Tatmadaw Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.



**as well?**

At that place, it included farmland and housing land. There was a hut and we had planted many kinds of fruit trees.

**Do people stay there now?**

My parents used to stay there from the beginning of farming in rainy season; they stayed in the farm until they were done ploughing [the fields]. We would go and get the fruit at the weekend when school was off. My five siblings lived at home and went to school.

**What problems did you face after your land was confiscated?**

We faced livelihood problems. I only have female siblings. As for males, there was only my father. In the past, if my father could not work on it [the farm] alone, he would hire people to work for him. Now, we have many siblings [relatives];<sup>497</sup> four of my relatives from the village have come to stay [at my house] during [their] schooling. That also makes our livelihood situation more difficult.

**So what did you do after your land was confiscated?**

My father grew crops for two years [on the land, after it was confiscated]. They increased the [tax paid in] crops every year and [in the end] my father could not work with it anymore. Naw B-- went to Bangkok [for work]. At that time, I had not finished school yet. And she [Naw B---] supported [us with] money for [our] livelihood.

**[Naw B--] is your mother?**

My older sister.

**What did you mean by thi sa [tax paid in crops instead of money]?**

It means that they now own our land and they lease it back to us again. They take [crops] based on the [number of] acres that you work on. They call it farmland fee. I do not understand it very well, the elders understand it better. My father worked [on the land] for the first year but [after the harvest] the following year they [the Tatmadaw] said that it was uneconomical [not profitable enough]. We harvested and then we had to send rice to the military camp. There were no cars at that time, and we had to hire oxcarts as we did not have one. We had to send the rice to them ourselves, and we had to put it into their barn ourselves. The following year, they asked for more [rice as tax]. They said it was uneconomical [not profitable enough] for them. We farmers did everything for them and they [the Tatmadaw] still said that it was uneconomical [not profitable enough] for them so after that no farmers worked on it [the land].

**How much [rice] did you have to pay for each acre of land [that farmers worked on]?**

[Inaudible]

**Oh, you do not know. Why did they say it was uneconomical [not profitable enough]?**

They wanted more. If farmers worked more they would get more [rice]. That is why they said it was uneconomical [not profitable enough]. The farmers had to do all the work, and they even had to put it [the rice] into their barn and the villagers had to do all their labour. It was

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<sup>497</sup> 'Siblings' here is used in a broader sense than brothers and sisters; the interviewee calls some of her relatives siblings as well.

still uneconomical [not profitable enough] for them. It was not their farmland. It belonged to the villagers. They confiscated it and they leased the land back to the farmers and the farmers worked on the land and it was still uneconomical [not profitable enough] for them, so the farmers could no longer work on the farms. They leased our [own] land to us. It was like that!

**So your father did not pay thi sa [tax paid in crops instead of money] and stayed home?**

He stayed at home. After that, my father's health situation got worse.

**Why?**

This farm was passed down by his grandparents and it made him depressed [that it was confiscated].

**Do you have a land title document for this land?**

We used to have one, but it has been a long time and we do not keep it with us [anymore]. It has been a very long time and we thought that our land would not be returned. We did keep it with us for a long time, but after two years [my mother] threw it away [lost it]. My mother told me that. That is why...

**So it does not have a land title document anymore?**

No.

**So it used to have a land title document?**

Yes.

**Who issued that land title document?**

It was from the township land [department].

**From the KNU [Karen National Union] government?**

From the [Burma/Myanmar] government.

**So the land title document is from the [Burma/Myanmar] government?**

Yes.

**Did only your land get confiscated? Or other villagers' land as well?**

Other villagers' land as well, from C--- [village], D--- [village], and E--- [village]. From this side [around here], it included F--- village and now it [F--- village] has become a new village. They [the Burma/Myanmar government] divided the land into new plots.

**How did it become a new village?**

They [the Burma/Myanmar government] built a small village. They confiscated the land near [the army camp of LIB] #339. There used to be a village there. In F--- [village], there used to be a village as well. The military [Tatmadaw] confiscated the land in that village to build their military camp. Till now, we do not know how big the area of their military land is. They say that the area is for military use. If [villagers] ask them how much land [they occupy], they

never answer us. It is like they have confiscated more land than they really need. So those villagers from F--- village, they gave them a plot of land.

**Who gave the land?**

The [Burma/Myanmar] government.

**In the new village, who did the land belong to [originally]?**

At that time, there were owners [of that land].

**The land had owners but the government came and gave it [to other villagers]?**

I am not sure from whom the government bought a bit of land for the new village. The land they gave [to the villagers from F--- village] also had owners.

**So the new village is not a farm, it is a village?**

It was a farm before. Now, [the villagers] have no land to stay on [after the Tatmadaw confiscated their land] and gave [them] land that belonged to other villagers.

**So E--- is a village?**

Yes, it is. There is a pagoda near G--- bridge. Around the area near that pagoda, there used to be a big village.

**Is there government military [Tatmadaw] there now?**

No, there is no government military [Tatmadaw]. There are only bushes. They took a small place where they [built their] base and they keep the [rest of the] land as military land.

**Including lands and farmlands, how many acres would it be, all the lands that were confiscated by the military?**

You mean all [the land] that they did not measure?

**Yes. Guess, approximately.**

I guess there might be over 500 acres of land. Now, all the land that has been measured so far is over 300 acres. They still have not measured the land where the military bases for [LIB] #338 and [LIB] #339 are.

**Who measured the land?**

It was the KNU.

**When did they measure it?**

August 2014.

**Did the KNU come and measure the land themselves or did they come at the villagers' request?**

At the villagers' invitation, like a request.

**Were there any problems between the KNU and the Tatmadaw military when they**

**conducted the land survey?**

Nothing happened.

**Was there anything that you reported about the land confiscation by the Tatmadaw to someone superior?**

Yes, we reported it to the authorities, for example the parliament and the president [of Burma/Myanmar].

**When you reported it to the president [of Burma/Myanmar] what did the president say?**

[He] said nothing, but we reported it to the Farmland Investigation Commission<sup>498</sup> and we reported it to that group from Daw Nan Say Awa's village. And they came along with [their representative] from the parliament and checked the field in the area where [LIB] #338 [is based]. At that time, they had not planted anything on our land and farm. But last year, when the KNU came and measured the land, we saw that they were growing plants; we saw the buildings [they had built] and we saw the wells that they had dug.

**In what year did the Farmland Investigation Commission come? When did they inspect your land?**

I did not note the date exactly.

**Only the year [what year]?**

In 2013.

**So when you checked [the land] in 2013, there was nothing?**

No, nothing.

**In 2014, after the KNU had measured the land ...?**

There were plants that they were growing and there were wells.

**So that means there used be no wells?**

No [correct].

**So it means they covered up the truth [did it without informing you]?**

Yes, they did. In front of H--- monastery, on the way to I--- [village], there used to be a place like a landing pad [for helicopters]. When we measured the land, they [the Tatmadaw] had divided the land into plots. It used to be unused land and then they formed the land into plots with lines and planned for paddy fields. That is what happened in addition [to the land confiscation]. In [the camp of LIB] #339, they had planted rubber trees. The rubber trees that they had planted were not small plants; they were as tall as a man.

**Oh, so they did not start planting small trees? They started with trees that were as tall**

<sup>498</sup> The Farmland Investigation Commission is a parliamentary commission set up in 2012 to investigate farmland ownership disputes. It reports to the *Pyidaungsu Hluttaw* (the Assembly of the Union), the bicameral national legislature of Burma/Myanmar.

**as a man.**

Yes.

**What did you hear back from the Farmland Investigation Commission?**

We have not heard anything. What they did is they came and inspected [the land] and reported it back [to the parliament] but they [the Farmland Investigation Commission] did not reply in any way. I often go to Daw Nan Say [Awa]'s village and ask [them] but they have not heard anything back [from parliament]. That group told us that we should organise farmers [whose lands have been confiscated] and go to Nay Pyi Taw and meet with the parliament's chairperson and ask him why he has not returned the land. He has returned lands in other areas. But to ask him about it, we dare not do that, and we couldn't go.

**Who is the person that you called Daw Nan Say Awa?**

She is the national parliament representative for the Plone-Sgaw [Democratic Party (PSDP)]<sup>499</sup> from Hpa-an. She is called Daw Nan Say Awa.<sup>500</sup>

**So you haven't heard anything back yet?**

No, not yet.

**Were there any other ways in which you requested to have [your land] returned?**

No other way. We just reported it to the parliament by submitting letters. We reported it to the relevant departments in Hlaingbwe Township, Hpa-an District, Mawlamyine Division [District] and [they passed it] on to the parliament. We asked the relevant departments but they said they had not heard anything from their superiors, and we asked the land registration [office], and also the farmland administration department but they did not reply [either]. We also asked the general administration [officer] but he did not reply. As for us, we kept submitting [letters] but we heard nothing back. Last year, before the KNU confiscated land, they requested to meet with us [for a consultation].<sup>501</sup> The township general administrator and land administrator [from the Burma/Myanmar government side] requested us to meet with them. And they said that they had received the letter and that they were not going to return the lands that were confiscated by the Tatmadaw. They said that they had been ordered to say this by their [Tatmadaw] superiors. They said that in front of us farmers. It was at the general administrator's office.

**Which general administration office?**

At the Karen Township<sup>502</sup> General Administration Department (GAD) office. There, they told us that they were not going to return the land to us. [They said:] "do not pursue [this case]"

<sup>499</sup> The Plone-Sgaw Democratic Party (PSDP) is a political party based in Kayin State. The party won several seats in the 2010 election but was not successful in the 2015 election. They are now reportedly in talks with four other Karen parties to unite under one banner. See e.g. [Five Karen Political Parties to Unite Into One](#), Karen News (January 29, 2016)

<sup>500</sup> Daw Nan Say Awa is a former member of parliament from Hpa-an for the Plone-Sgaw Democratic Party (PSDP).

<sup>501</sup> It is not clear why the interviewee brings the KNU into the discussion here. One reason might be to give an example from her own experience of how the KNU had consulted with local communities when they confiscated land in the past, as opposed to when the Tatmadaw confiscated land without any form of consultation.

<sup>502</sup> It is not clear what township the interviewee is referring to here. There is no township called Karen Township.

with an agent, you will get tired [if you do]." They said: "only your time and money will be gone [if you pursue this case]." We could not tolerate what they said and we asked for help from T--- Sayadaw<sup>503</sup>, and T--- Sayadaw directed us to reach out to the KNU and T--- Sayadaw was suggesting that we still have the backing of our Karen people. That is why we approached the KNU with the help of T--- Sayadaw.

**So the letter has already been sent [to the General Administration Department]?**

Yes. They have it along with detailed information and dates but they are not going to return the land. It is like that.

**So what is your opinion about this case?**

These farmlands were passed down by our grandparents so we want them back, they [the Tatmadaw] do not use the land [for military purposes], and the farmers want their lands that were passed down by their grandparents back. You can use the land to work for your livelihood and you can also pass on the farmland to the next generation like your niece or nephew. That is why we want our lands back. They do not use the land, they just hold onto it. They confiscated more land than they needed. If they confiscate land for their military camps, [they should] just take the land [they need] for the military camp. Now, they confiscate more than they really need, including the farmlands, so we want them back. Almost all farmers want their lands back as these lands were passed down by their grandparents.

**So all this is about the land issue. Do you have anything else to say that I did not cover in my questions? Have you anything to add? Is there any question that I missed related to this case? Like a question you want to answer but I have not asked you yet. Anything to add?**

No, you have covered it all.

**Are there any other kinds of human [rights] violations here by the military? For example, forced labour, violent abuse etc.?**

We do not have those issues here.

**How about rape cases?**

No, not from the military around here.

**Anything else to add?**

[Inaudible]

**So thanks.**

Thanks for asking.

**Ok.**

<sup>503</sup> Sayadaw is a Burmese/Myanmar term used for the senior monk or abbot of a monastery.

Now, there is grumbling in our area and people are using medicines [yaba<sup>504</sup> and other drugs], but the [armed] groups have said that they are going to organise groups to eliminate those things. But it hasn't happened [yet] and now the drug use is increasing.

**Which group was that?**

They have now organised a group, including Sayadaw [a senior monk] and the KNU [Karen National Union]. They are going to work together to eliminate the use [of drugs]. [The problem] has not gone away, it has increased. It is increasing and most people who do that [sell yaba and other drugs] are people who have money. The problem can be stopped by giving them [the people trying to put an end to drug use] money.

**OK.**

If they [the local authorities] want to, they can stop it and the problem would be gone. Most of the people who suffer are civilians.

**Right.**

What do you want to ask? What you want to know?

**Oh, that is a serious problem.**

Yes, it is. For example in Hlaingbwe, children who are in Standard<sup>505</sup> 6 or 7 know how to smoke and use drugs.

**Teachers do not know about it?**

They know but children nowadays, they [the teachers] cannot tell [stop] them. They do not even listen to their parents.

**So it is easy to find [yaba]? What is the problem for the teachers [when children use yaba]?**

The problem is that children disobey them. Whatever you say, they know where to get them [yaba]. In the past, there used to be a game shop beside my house. The children came there to play, and sometimes two boys would go to the toilet at the same time. I was their neighbour and I suspected them, so I told the shop owner that I suspected those two children who had just gone to the toilet. And she replied: "Don't you know? They are using yaba". I did not know until she told me. Here, it is easy [to buy and use drugs].

**Where do they get it from? From the town?**

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<sup>504</sup> *Yaba*, which means 'crazy medicine' in Thai, is a tablet form of methamphetamine. First developed in East Asia during the Second World War to enhance soldiers' performance, methamphetamine has become increasingly popular in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and in Burma/Myanmar where it is typically manufactured. See, "[Yaba, the 'crazy medicine' of East Asia](#)," UNODC, May 2008 and "[Woman raped and killed in Pa'an District, October 2012](#)," KHRG, December 2012, and "[Chapter: Drug production, use and the social impacts in Southeast Myanmar since the January 2012 ceasefire](#)," KHRG, June 2014.

<sup>505</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Burma/Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.



Could be in town.

**It is so difficult. It has increased a lot in Karen State.**

Yes.

**So mostly, in Hpa-an and Dooplaya districts?**

In the village of Daw Nan Say Awa,<sup>506</sup> who is a Plone-Sgaw [Democratic Party (PSDP)] national parliament member, the chairperson of Plone-Sgaw party, U Saw Thein Aung, submitted a proposal to the parliament to stop the drug problem. Daw Nan Say Awa supported that proposal. They requested a change, and the leaders here have already taken serious actions against it. Had they not, we would have had an [even more] serious problem. [The place where they produce yaba] is near a village close to Zwe Ka Bin [mountain]. If you go back and they are informed that I reported to you about this, they will come and cut my head off. That's what I will have to face. I am just expressing my feelings [about drugs]. These children could be the leaders of the country sometime in the future. Now they know how to use drugs and they smoke a lot.

**What is the opinion of the teachers? Where does it come from?**

There was a time when I went to a training and we were divided into groups. The trainers distributed papers [about drugs] and they asked: "Where does it come from?" And some answered that it comes from the DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army].<sup>507</sup> As they came back, some said it came from other districts, some said it was from China, some said it was from Thailand, some said it was from the border, and some said that it was from the KNU, and an officer from the KNU answered: "It is impossible. If you are sure that it comes from us, check. And if you want to know where it is coming from, check the cars that go to Shan State." They said that the machine [that produces drugs] is small. You can handle it with one or two people. I just heard that. I have never seen it. That is what they said [in the workshop]. They make money from a small machine.

**So sayama where you think it comes from? In your opinion.**

I don't know.

<sup>506</sup> Daw Nan Say Awa is a former member of parliament from Hpa-an for the Plone-Sgaw Democratic Party (PSDP). The party won several seats in the 2010 election but was not successful in the 2015 election. They are now reportedly in talks with four other Karen parties to unite under one banner. See e.g. [Five Karen Political Parties to Unite into One](#), Karen News (January 29, 2016).

<sup>507</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA), sometimes referred to as the Kloo Htoo Baw Battalion or DKBA-5, formerly the Democratic Kayin Buddhist Army, was formed in December 1994 and was originally a breakaway group from the KNU/KNLA. They were known to cooperate with the Tatmadaw on occasion. The DKBA now refers to a splinter group from those DKBA forces that were absorbed into Tatmadaw Border Guard Forces in 2010, also remaining independent of the KNLA. The DKBA leader for many years was Saw Lah Pwe, who led the group after it rejected government plans to integrate it into Border Guard Forces in 2010. The current DKBA signed a preliminary ceasefire with the Burma/Myanmar Government on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011. As of April 2012, the DKBA changed its name from "Buddhist" to "Benevolent" to reflect its secularity. The DKBA signed the Nationwide Ceasefire (NCA) on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015 with the Burma/Myanmar government and its military. The group is based in Son Si Myaing area, Myawaddy Town, Kawkaik Township, Dooplaya District.

**For example, the teachers, nurses or doctors, are they receiving enough salary?**

Now, their [monthly] salary has increased. It is over 100,000 [kyats]<sup>508</sup> (US \$85.79); it is 150,000 (US \$128.70) or 160,000 (US \$137.28) depending on the position.

**In other townships, we have heard that the teachers use their phones when they teach and it affects the learning of the children. Are there things like that here?**

[You mean] Like using a laptop or mobile phone, using Facebook, and that they even use it during teaching, that they do not care about teaching? That might happen in other townships. I have not heard of anything like that in Hlaingbwe Township. In Hlaingbwe Township, there is mostly [private] tutoring.

**Thank you sayama.**

Oh, you have nothing else to ask? There is one thing [I would like to tell you] about palm trees. They [the villagers] stopped paying tax last year because the tax on palm trees was increased.

**Oh, are there palm trees there? Oh, you have to pay tax in order to climb the palm trees [commercially produce wine]?**

The military [Tatmadaw] request that we pay tax on a yearly basis. There is an uncle, ask him.

**Source #148**

<b>Log #</b>	15-85-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Interview, Daw T---, (female, 58), July 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	B--- village, Dooplaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Daw T---</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> Female</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 58</p> <p><b>Village:</b> B--- village</p> <p><b>Religion:</b> Buddhist</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Karen</p> <p><b>Family Statue:</b> Married</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Betel net plantation</p> <p>I am Daw T---. Regarding to our land issue, at the end of 2014 in 2015, [the] New Mon State Party said the country government supports them [with land] and they came and took the land. They said the country government supports them and they did not talk about it with the</p>	

<sup>508</sup> All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the May 10<sup>th</sup> 2016 official market rate of 1,165.68 kyats to the US \$1.

village head. They came in and confiscated it by themselves and they shared [the land]. They did not pay any money and took the land for free. The locals were sad and could not tell them to stop. [We] just have to suffer like this from then until 2015. Whatever we follow or do, it is still not OK.

**You said [the] New Mon State Party took it and could you tell me [who are] the leaders of [the] New Mon State Party?**

[The] New Mon State Party's leaders in the past [when her land got confiscated] were Niang Ya Htun, U Ni, U Khin Khyo and Naing Ha Lel. There are many [leaders] that I do not know but those are the people I know.

**Like you said before, the country government supports them. What you mean by the country government? From which side and who?**

They said the country government supports them with 1,000 acres of free land.

**The country government means, from where and which township?**

New Mon State Party said it is in Mon state.

**Do you know the [country government] person that supports [the New Mon State Party]? I would like to know the name of the person that said [that the New Mon State Party could] take the land. [Are they] from [the] land registration [department] or from the government?**

We did not know what the government said, they just came and said [told us] like this. They [the New Mon State Party] were the group that said that [they could take the land], they were the group that took [the land] and they were the group that shared [the land]. It is my own land that belongs to me so I did not measure the land area. Then, they shared the land depending on their people. Until now, we do not know [exactly why they confiscated the land] but I just know it is my own land and how big the land is.

**How big is your land?**

I don't know exactly in acres because I have never measured that land. Including my farmland and the land around my farmland that belongs to me.

**How big approximately?**

They said they shared [divided the land into] 10 acres [for] each one of them. I don't know exactly but approximately, it might be about 58 or 60 acres.

**The people who took [the land], what kind of people are they?**

Only Mon people in the organisation, they took the land. There is no Karen [that confiscated the land]. They took local Karen villagers' land.

**The people who took the land were ordinary Mon people or a Mon armed group?**

[They were an] armed group [who] took [the land] and distributed the land to the villagers.

**How did you know that your land is included there?**

I know it because [it is] the place I keep [use] for grazing cows, the place near the stream, there is less low land and more high land and I keep trees on those lands. They came and

saw it and they said that it is free and uncultivated land and they confiscated and took the land. I keep those trees near the stream in order to have water for the farm and for the other land which has little [further] distance from the river; I keep the land for [housing or cultivation] land.

**In 2014, 2015, when they confiscated the land, how did you protect your land from getting confiscated?**

I do not have anyone to help me protect my land, only I myself had to follow the case such as going to Mawlamyine court and later on I asked help from my villagers like the village head, they did help me by talking to them but they did not listen. They took [the land] on their own decision. They said the country government gives them [permission].

**Did they have evidence when they say that the land is has given to them by the country government?**

They did not have any evidence. They took [the land] as they said [they were given permission by the government].

**Now, you land was passed down by [from] your grandparents or you bought it?**

Passed down from my grandparents and then to my parents, then to me and it became my own land and it has land grant and Pyay Say [land document] for the farmland, not the land around the farm. Land around the land means, the land that we keep to use for the farm [or housing]. Not including the farmland [when they confiscated] but those lands [which] are close to the stream belong to me so that I want them back. In Nhit Ka Yin [village] when A wel Daing, Nhit Ka Yin have to send rice to A Wel Daing village, have to send them rice always. [this part is a little confusing 7:50].

**How many people like you had land confiscated?**

Around that time, there were many villages such as Bu--- village and L---village but for Au--- and B--- village, there are only two people [whose land got confiscated].

**Two villagers from Au--- and B--- [village]. How about others? Any other people included?**

In B--- and Au---, there are only two people.

**What do you plant on your land?**

Some people plant betel nut trees, at that time there was not rubber plantations and some Karen people grow Nigerian cashew [nuts]. Other people came and cleared the land and the owners grow Nigerian cashew [nuts] on the land and when they grow Nigerian cashew [nuts], they came and took it [the land]. When they come and clear the land they did not have to cut big trees, we cut them. There was no big trees in the big forest. We planned to grow plants on the land so there was no big trees. There are big trees only in headwaters [at river sources].

**When they came and confiscated the land, they went to leaders, could you explain me to what kind of leaders they went to and how?**

Sometimes they [villagers] met with [the] New Mon State Party group members and told them, 'the land is uncultivated but not free land they have their own owners [of the land]'. At that time, Major Aaing Khyan Mon from Mawlamyine came and said that those lands are

included in the map that shows that they were given to them [the New Mon State Party] by the country government. They said if these lands are not included in the lands that are shown on the map, they will return the lands. And then, the Mon people among themselves, for the land that is not included in the map, they made up a fake map and included them [the new lands] in their fake map. And they showed the map [to the villagers] and said that those lands are included in the land that is shown in the map. Since then, we cannot complain [to] them anymore.

**They showed you the fake map or they showed it to whom?**

They showed us.

**So how did you see it and think that it is fake?**

I saw that then they came and conducted the land survey, there was an officer [Lieutenant General] from [LIB#] 106.

**From Tatmadaw government?**

He is an officer from LIB#106 from Burma Tatmadaw. He sees and knows if it [the land] is included or not. When they [the New Mon State Party] said it is included in the land on the map and that officer said '[these lands] are not included' and he also said 'your map is fake'. Only Tatmadaw military has the real map but they [Tatmadaw] did not say it [to the New Mon State Party] and give it [share with villagers].

**Do you know the name of the military officer?**

I know that military officer's name but it has been over ten years and that military officer has transferred to another battalion and now [he quit the position and] became a civilian. That military officer is called military officer Myint Naing.

**At that time, what did he help you with [for the land]?**

He did not help but he knew it [about land survey]. He himself was there when they conducted [the] land survey. He knows what [land] is included and what is not included. That is why they [the military officer] said that [land] is not included.

**When he [military officer] said it [her land] is not included and then what did Aaing Khyan Mon reply?**

For Major Aaing Khyan Mon when [we] met with that officer, he did not say anything. He just said that he will return the [lands] that is not include.

**So how about later on? Did he return the lands?**

He did not return anything up until now. In addition, there are two people called U Khin Khyo and U Ni. They are their [the New Mon State Party's] members. They said in the letter saying that the lands that they took were near the farm and if the owners request to return [the land], return 18 arm span of land backwards. There is the letter that they [U Ni and U Khin Khyo] wrote [officially], it is still there the letter that they wrote. Do not say about 18 arm spans [of land], they do not even want to return one hand span of land.

**U Ni and U Khin Khyo, where do they live?**

They are in Maw Ka Nel village. In La Maing sub-township [Win Yay Township].

**What do they do for their livelihood now? Do you know about it?**

I heard that U Khin Khyo used to be a school teacher. For U Ni, I don't know if he does plantation [farming] or not. I do not know much about them but I see them when I go here and there.

**So these lands were related to them?**

When those lands were taken, there were the people that lead taking the land [process]. And later on they might have their own farm, they said the lands are not related to us [owned by us] so we cannot approach them [U Khin Khyo and U Ni] anymore [to get back land]. We cannot get back our lands even if we go [to meet U Khin Khyo and U Ni]. [I] do not have pasture for cows and buffalos and I had to sell them. And I also had to sell some of my farmlands as they do not have access to water and we cannot work on them anymore.

**When they confiscated, how did you respond [react] about the lands now?**

In the beginning, there are betel nut trees on the land that I cleared and I did not cut the place where betel nut trees are growing. And they came and fenced the land. [I] tried to stop it by pulling out their fencing [wooden] posts but we could not stop that. And then U Khin Khyo and U Ni, U Ni came and said that those are the lands that they got [from the government] and it is no longer related to you [the villagers]. So that they fence [the land] and plant [whatever plants]. And then they came to the land that we grow betel nut trees [on]. They wanted the land not the betel nut trees. They cut those trees and they covered up the betel nut trees and they burned them up and [the betel nut trees] died. Later on it become their land.

**They cut it a long time ago?**

They cut it on the year that they confiscated in 2005. The leaders [New Mon State Party] took the lands and they distributed [lands to their members]. And since the land became theirs they grow the trees that they want, so they planted rubber trees.

**How old were the betel nut trees when they cut them down?**

At that time the betel nut trees are only as tall as our waists. And after that the betel nut trees produce fruits and you can cut [to eat or chew them] the fruit because it has been about ten years since 2005 to now, 2015.

**So now, how did that land issue come up?**

The land owners were not happy with that but they could [do] nothing. We met with our organisation [local organisation] group by group and told them about the story and other detailed information and asked them to help in hope of getting back [our lands]. If we cannot get it then we cannot get it. Now we heard that they are returning the land that [was] confiscated by the country and that is my land and I wish to get it back as our organisation [local organisation] to help to get back our lands. We go step by step, we just go like that.

**Could you tell me when you report the case and when did issue come up?**

In 2014 October, Saw Eh Dah's group came in and asked that land owner and he [that land owner] came to meet for a while and [Saw Eh Dah] called him to discuss for the compensation for crops and compensation for land, not for asking them to return the land.



They set up an appointment but they [the New Mon State Party] did not come. And again they set up an appointment to meet with Governor Soe Win and Governor Saw Eh Dah [from the KNU] at La Maing sub-township, in Maw Ka Nel village, at the military affairs security office. In their mind they thought they did not come to the appointment organized by Karen [KNU] and when they set up the appointment, it was at the front of the [Tatmadaw] military. They thought that if the KNU is not coming, they will win over the case. They thought that Karen [KNU] dare not go for the appointment but Karen arrived early and they [the New Mon State Party] did not come. We organized the appointment, they did not come. They organized the appointment and they did not come. They never come.

**Where is the military affairs security officer?**

It is in Maw Ka Nel village.

**I would like to know what Sa Ya Hpa stands for?**

They said Sa Ya Hpa is [Tatmadaw] military intelligence.

**From the government side or the Mon side?**

For the government side.

**When governor Soe Win and governor Saw Eh Dah went there, did they have time to talk about that issue [land issue]?**

No, they did not talk. They the [New Mon State Party] did not come. After Governor Soe Win left [they came]. Their appointment is at 9:00 AM. We arrived at the office at 8:30 AM. We arrived earlier [than the appointment time]. [We] were waiting until 10:00 AM and they did not show up yet. And after 10:30 AM, Governor Soe Win left and at 11:00 AM three of their members [or representatives] arrived. They arrived, the people had left and they could not meet.

**After that, what was the solution?**

After that [we] requested [for] them to come to meet but we could not. And in June, their Mon Division chairperson named Naing Lu Saing Htaw, they met in the meeting with Governor Saw Eh Dah. The first time they met, they talked about the issue and said that they will discuss about it and figure it out. And they had an appointment again. They met twice. The second time that they were supposed to meet [us] was on June 26<sup>th</sup> but they did not show up. But I did not know if Governor Soe Win and Saw Eh Dah got phone contact with him or not. I have not received anything [information] up until now.

**Related to the compensation, when they tried for the compensation, what did they say about it? Are they going to return [the land] or not? Could you tell me about it?**

They talked to the division chairperson that they are going to discuss it. It was not about returning the land. It was like this: they plant only trees. The lands belonged to the local civilians. They [Governor Soe Win and Saw Eh Dah] wanted to discuss and figure it out but none of them showed up. Up until now, no one comes.

**What did the villagers and village head do when they [the New Mon State Party] first confiscated the land?**

At that time, no one could stop them. Elders could not stop [them]. At that time the KNU soldiers cannot travel freely. They report to the [Burma] government Tatmadaw if they see



Karen soldiers come, saying that the villagers are associated with Karen soldiers and the [Tatmadaw] soldiers make trouble for the land owners. We have to fear them and they did not want to return our land and we could do nothing. Later on we heard that the country government is returning the [confiscated] lands and the land owner has the right to regain their lands and we ask help again. But I am following up on my land always in one way and another way. I have dealt with the [land] office for two years. Since 2007, they said that they will return the land and in 2008, I submitted [the case] and follow up [on my land issue].

**To which office did you submit it to?**

In Mawlamyine big office.

**To the land office or which office?**

In Mawlamyine division big [main office] office. We submitted the case and followed up on it but it did not work.

**Could you tell me the name of the elder [officer] that you submitted the case to? The name of the officer in charge?**

That female judge's name? It is only in the paper [cannot remember her name]. If we hire the lawyer, it costs 1,000,000 kyat (\$873.36)<sup>509</sup> for each time. If the case moves one for the whole year, [I] have to pay 600,000 kyat for that. So altogether 1,600,000 kyat for the whole year. There are a lot of interests [that I have to pay] and I have no money, I have only lands and they took the lands. And I have to sell my remaining lands and pay for the interest [for the lawyer].

**You have to hire that lawyer for 1,600,000 kyat and could you tell me, what did that land lawyer do to help you?**

That lawyer follows up on the case. I have only one land lawyer and Mon are with a group and they support each other and help each other so I could not win over them. I [and individual] land owners had to give up on the case and they, the court of law, gives [judges that] the confiscator won over the case.

**Could you tell me the name of the lawyer that you hired?**

The lawyer name is Daw A--- from Than Phuy Zayat [town].

**What ethnicity?**

I think she is a Burmese but I do not know exactly. She follows up on the case. She is the only one and they [Mon] are with group so she could not win.

**Where does Daw A--- live?**

She lives in Than Phyu Zayat.

**What is the benefit when you follow up on the case like that?**

No benefit. There is only loss.

**At that time, since 2008, what did KNU help [with land issue]? I mean since 2004 and**

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<sup>509</sup> This conversion estimate for the kyat is based on the 2015 average market rate of 1145 kyat to US \$1.

**2005, the time that they first confiscated.**

We asked help but we did not get it [in 2004 and 2005]. We met Tee Dah U Maung Shwe and we told him about the issue and they said the farms' surrounding lands do not have grant and you cannot follow up on it since they have no [land] grant. They just said that. And I said the farms' surrounding lands and the pasture, no one apply for land grant for those lands. They do only the farmland. At that time if everyone applied for the land grant for the pasture land and farms' surrounding land, I would also apply for that. At that time they did not apply for it so I have only the land grant for the farmland. And when I met with U Maung Shwe, I did not know who he planned [to meet with]. On the third time in 2014, Saw Ba U [Gyi] the day I met with him on that day and updated him about the issue and he handed the case to Saw Eh Dah to take care of the case. Saw Eh Dah also did his best but it is going well yet. He has met with the Mon division chairperson twice but both times did not go well [unsuccessful]. Now I heard from the land's neighbors that the rice people they do not allow their workers to come to the land [to work] and they themselves also do not come.

**So like you said before, the government accuses the local civilians of being associated with KNU if they are against them [the government]. So have they ever done anything bad to the local civilians because of that?**

No.

**Or did they come and say anything about it?**

They did not come but Mon [land confiscators] just reported about it to them. But in Than Phyu Zayat township side, in B--- [village area], they took Karen [civilians'] lands and Karen [civilians] just stopped them and they brought the [Burma/Myanmar] government troops and they had an argument with the land owners. They had an argument and fight and later on it caused many different problems and the Mon left, I don't know if they just gave up doing it or why [they left]. They were just gone. But for the land owners from Than Phyu Zayat township side, the land owners got back their lands and now they are growing plants on their lands. Only our area, L--- sub township and Yay Township, people from here did not get back their lands. Only [people from] Aung Tha Pyay and Bay La Maing [village area], their lands have not been returned to them yet. In Than Phyu Zayat side, [villagers] get back their lands. For us, we did not get our lands back.

**So when you submit like this, did you hear anything about how they are going to compensate [for the lands] with the amount?**

No, I have not heard that. They did not say it.

**Did you also hear about them saying that they are not going to compensate [for the land]?**

They did not say that either but their division chairperson said that they mediate the issue and [will] do it in good way. But I have never met with his farm works and they did not come [to meet with us]. They set up an appointment: I went there but they did not come and we set up an appointment they did not come.

**What trees do they grow in the land?**

Rubber trees. They grow only rubber trees. They said they started tapping rubber five years ago but now it is about ten years already so they have been tapping the trees for about four years already. It is like that.

**So now they confiscated your land and what are the consequences that follow after the land confiscation?**

Many problems. My children are school aged. I could not send them to the government school as I do not have money to support them so I just them to philanthropic [charity] school. I sold some of my lands and pay for the interest for following up on the case. I cannot support them so I send them to philanthropic school. I have two sons. At that time they were still young and we have faced problems since that time [that her land was confiscated]. My daughter, she is in her third year [at collage], she came back and asked for money and I did not have money to pay her. I had to borrow from others and had to return the money [to whom she borrowed]. I borrowed the money and returned the money. I send them to school just like that with troubles. If they did not confiscate my land before, I could sell them [the lands] to support my children for the schooling. Now, I have nothing to sell [to support my children]. Have to struggle for children's education like this.

**You have been here since you born or you moved here after married?**

My grandparents are from here, my parents are from, I am also from here. But my husband lived in Karen State in K--- village. He moved here after we got married.

**What does your husband do now for livelihood?**

He works on a piece of betel nut plantation that we have. Clears the land and grow plants, just like that. There is no income.

**Now, the land issue is up again and what is your concern to that? Could you tell me that?**

I do not worry but sometimes I just think that if I could get fair compensation money, that will be helpful for my children for their schooling. Sometimes I feel bad because we have not got anything and we also have to struggle from difficulties.

**You said Daw A--- was the lawyer that you hired?**

Yes.

**So when Daw A--- went to the court, did you also go with her?**

Yes, I did. I went with my sister. She helped us to follow up on the case.

**So how did she follow up on the case? And how did the judge decide?**

The judge set up the appointment and I brought the lawyer with me and when we get there, the female lawyer said we are the taker,<sup>510</sup> we said that it is truly our land but there [in the court] they said the land comes from the country government and it is fair and equal.

**At that time how many years did you have to hire her?**

I hired her in 2008 and then in 2009. It might be in two years.

**So [for] two years?**

Yes.

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<sup>510</sup> KHRG is in the process of following up to clarify the meaning of this point

**At that time did you remember the judge's name?**

I used to know [the judge's] name. And now if I think I will know [judge name] if I find out. Now I do not remember and cannot remember her name.

**Which court and where is it located?**

In Mawlamyine division big office.

**When you went to the court, could you tell me how the judge came up with [the case]?**

What they judged was like I said earlier. They said "[the land] given [to them Mon] by the country government, we did not take it forcibly". And they said from their side it is fair. We are the owner [of the land] and it is unfair for us from what they said.

**When did they finish the process of giving away the lands [to Mon group]? Which year?**

It was done in 2009. The judge verdict [was] that I lose and I could not follow up on the case. But that female judge make an appointment between the Mon [land] takers and me, on that day I was there in the office. And everyone else came to the office. On that day, she did not come to the office and cancelled to come. And her subordinate, I do not [know his/her] name. [He/She] said the Mon group went to her house. And she postponed the appointment to another day and I have to go again [to the appointment].

**The person who judged this case was that judge?**

Yes, that female judge.

**Do you remember the month? In which month, in 2009?**

I have all the documents in my house if I review those papers, I will know. I have many documents [document from the court].

**Do your lands have complete document?**

Yes, [they] do. They have *Pyay Sa* land document as well. They are existing up until now.

**Now, I will ask you some question that I haven't asked you. How old are you?**

I am 58 years old.

**Now?**

Yes.

**What do you do for your livelihood?**

Just so so, I have [food to eat] only if my children give me money. I have a daughter and a son who works in Shan state [Thailand]. I have food to eat only if they send me money. 100,000 [kyat] monthly and I eat with that money only. And I support my schooling daughter with that money. I send her 100,000 [kyat] monthly.

**So now you work?**

I do not have work. I have only a small betel nut plantation. Betel nut trees produce fruits

only once a year. We could sell only when it produce fruits. 200,000 or 300,000 [kyat].

**What is your religion?**

Karen/ Buddhist.

**What responsibility do you take in the village?**

In the village, I am a member of the Woman's Organisation. And for the school, I work on the school committee with five people, as a group. The Woman's Organisation female chairperson moved to Irrawaddy Division to stay with her younger sister as her younger sister had to move according to duty [job]. Currently, in the Woman's Organisation, there is me and another young woman. I take responsibility in the Woman's Organisation.

**Could you explain me about the problems that you have working in the Woman's Organisation?**

No problems. I have to go and check [investigate] the case and mediate the issue or case in the village related to the woman. That is [all].

**Is there anything happened in B--- village related to the women?**

In Bay--- village, there was a case with a person [woman]. There is also other case that happened with people who came here to work in the plantation.

**Has it been long time ago or just recently?**

Last year, It was in 2014. There was a case in B--- [village].

**What case?**

A man and a woman, parents from the boy's [family] side do not agree [for them to be married yet] as they do not want him to get married early but those two are in love and they make a mistake. She got pregnant and they married and stayed together. And after a month, he does not want to stay together and he divorced her saying that he will pay compensation [divorce settlement]. We have to solve that problem between them. It includes the village elders and administrator, not only us [The Woman's Organisation]. But the case is related to the woman and for us [The Woman's Organisation] we have to check [verify] the case like that.

**Where the boy is from?**

From L--- [village].

**What ethnicity is he?**

He is Karen. They both are Karen/ Buddhist. Most people here are Karen/ Buddhist.

**Was the girl happy with the solution that you came up with?**

Yes, they all were. Me, the administrators, village heads and including the Karen organisations [that dealt with case] as well. We jointly solved the case, they are both happy [with the solution]. And now the two are parted [not together].

**So you said you also work on a school committee?**

Yes, I do.

**Could you tell me a little related to the education?**

Work is something that we cannot work [do] alone. It will include school committee members, leaders, villagers and students' parents. If there is anything necessary, the school teachers inform the students' parents and the village heads and tell them about the issue. And the students' parents and the leaders and administrator fulfill the need and do [all the necessary things] like that. The school mistress called me just a while ago to inform me about the need for chairs and tables, how to do this and how we can implement [the plan of getting chairs and table], she called [a meeting] and discussed about that with the school committees. We just told the school mistress to do it as necessary and the village head and students' parents will follow your plan. We just told her like that.

**So now related to the school, the school is set up by the government or from KNU?**

Set up by the government.

**Up to what standard [does the school has]?**

Sub-middle school.

**How about students' population?**

This year there are 377 students.

**How many female students?**

The teachers have the students list. I am not a school teacher so I do not have the list.

**So up to what standard?**

Eighth standard.

**How many teachers are there?**

There 13 school teachers. There is one local [school teacher].

**For the local teacher, the government hires that or the village hire that?**

From the government.

**So can the students get things easily [for what they need]?**

This is support from KNU side, UNICEF side, from the government side as well. But [the school is] rotating well.

**Is there [school age] children [who are not able to go to school]?**

The teachers said that all the school age children have to study but some children do not go to school and some children study and quit half way. And there are also some school age children who went to Shan state [the border area of Thailand for work]. And some just do not go to school.

**Could you explain to me why they do not study? Or because they are not afford to go**

**to school?**

There are some who cannot afford to go to school. [Problems with] money and livelihood. Some children do not have parents and stay with their aunty. But some children stay with their aunty and their aunty sends them to school but they do not want to study. They have different situations. Some [children] have problems and they cannot go to school. But the school teachers call them [to study] but some children do not go to school. Not all children are going to school.

**Is there free school here? Or only have to pay for the school?**

In the previous years, they have to pay for the school registration but this year they do not have to pay for the school registration.

**Up to what grade that they do not have to pay [for school registration]?**

Up to grade Eight. They do not have to pay for this year. For primary classes up to middle classes.

**What is your opinion of the village social and villager' livelihood?**

It is so so. Some are doing well [with their livelihood], some are in the middle and totally [do] not have [money to survive], they have only to eat. Some people eat [have food] only if there is work with day labour. They work in the farm here and there. It is just like that. There are many people so they are different [problems]. Some people who are doing well [in livelihood] they live easy. Just like that.

For those who work in day labour, how much they get for one day. They get 4,000 [kyat] for one day.

**What is the main thing people here do, flat land farming or hill farming or plantation farming?**

Currently, there is farming and rubber plantations. Only those two things. For those who do not have farms and plantations, they send their children who are working age to Thailand for work. They work in Thailand and they send the money back home from the money that they got from work [in Thailand]. And the parents use the money for home. Like me. I also can eat only when my children send me 100,000 [kyat] monthly. Because I do not have a farm, plantation, income and work.

**How many houses are there here?**

In Bay L--- [village], there are [censored] houses in the village.

**What about the population?**

I don't know the exact population number but in A--- [village], there are [censored] houses. I have to tell [the household number] together because they go to the same school, same library, same hospital and same office but two different village names. B--- and A--- village. But there are two monasteries. For the village name, B--- is B--- and A--- is A---..

**What other religions are there in this village?**

There is only Buddhist around here.



**Is there anything that you want to say that I did not cover from my questiona?**

In Karen ethnic [areas], some [Karen] are doing well [in livelihood], not very very well I mean. In order to have better livelihood and to support the children to go to school, we need [a] little help. And I want solar energy panels in the village because in B--- village, there is a plan by the government for the hydro power but the money that was delivered by the government does not reach the elders [leaders] hand [was not received]. They come with their own people did for the hydro power for the electricity but it did not work. The country government knows that our village is included in the [list of village] that they planned to provide the electricity [to] so that we do not get solar energy panels. We neither got electricity from the government side nor KNU side. The government do not support but we want to get [solar energy panels] for our Karen side [provide by KNU]. Because there are some children who study with little candle light when they come back from school.

**How did you know that the money for electricity was supported by the country government?**

If you ask the administrator, they know all about it. We heard that they give money but it did not reach into our hand.

**When did you hear about it?**

In 2014.

**How much money that you heard that they give?**

45,000,000 [kyat].

**Did they do anything [for the electricity]?**

They did but the hydro power could not produce electricity [as water power is low]. And if it works, it work for only ten houses. But not always, especially in dry season. In dry season, there is not water but in rainy season, [the electricity] is only enough only for ten houses.

**So now that hydro power still produce electricity?**

Yes.

**For how many houses?**

For 13 or 14 houses, only for rainy season not in dry season.

**Like you said earlier, you did not get solar energy panel, could you tell me why? For what reason?**

For the government side, they have already planned in providing electricity so they did not give [electricity].for other village they get it [electricity]. I don't know for Karen side why they do not provide [in my village].

**Do you know the group that came and set up the electricity [in the village]?**

Na Ta La [group name].

**Do you know the name of the person that led the group?**

U Win Gyi.

**Where does he lives?**

In Yangon.

**What is his position title?**

Company.

**What company you mean?**

Na Ta La handed over the responsibility to the company and the company came and did it, like that.

**There are many companies and they have their own names. Which company you mean? Do you know the name?**

[she asked someone beside her and he answered no] He said he does not know.

**So thank you. So from my questions do you have any recommendation to our organisation?**

In Karen ok?

**Yes.**

All our people are Karen. Buddhist or Christian, they are still Karen. Work jointly so that we are not parted by religion and work for the improvement. We will work together.

**So now after the interview, I will take photo. Are you OK with it? I will take your picture and put complete information. Can you allow me that?**

Yes.

**What do you want your picture to be? You can tell me. We update the civilian's voice every six month and we distribute it. You just want the information to be published or you want to include your picture as well? [tell me] how, if you do.**

Tell them [the reader] that we are the land victims. But for solar energy panel, please help us because we do not have light for the children to study.

**So thank you.**

Thank you.

**Source #149**

<b>Log #</b>	15-119-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Saw S---, November 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<b>Okay now we are pleased to have a conversation with you to talk about women's</b>	

**issues related to our upcoming thematic report. So, can you tell us about women's roles in the village and in the family as you have seen it in Brigade 1 [Thaton District]? What has changed?**

If we look back at the past, I mean before the 2012 ceasefire, [many] women in the Doo Tha Htoo [Thaton] area took on positions such as village leader and in sentry duty as part of the leadership. And also, if people [the leaders of armed groups] demanded thatch, women would usually take responsibility. But after the 2012 ceasefire, the women's roles seem to have changed. Village leaders and village secretaries [appointed by the government] became men, and similarly, demands [of thatch and so on] and forced labour are decreasing. So we can see that the role of women in that sector [village leadership] is getting diminished. Another thing that we have found is that young women get more opportunities to get involved in the education sector as the number of female school teachers is increasing, and there is a young generation that has finished their education [in schools run by] the KED [Karen Education Department] and who return to their villages and serve their communities as part of their education. And [female presence] is also increasing in the healthcare sector since the barriers are decreasing. We have a midwife in the village, and we can actually say that we have got midwives in most villages. Some women have also attended medical trainings with financial support from their parents, and have received certificates from the Myanmar government, and they have then opened private pharmacies in their villages in order to earn an additional income for the livelihoods.

**What do you think are the biggest challenges facing Karen women at the moment? Are these challenges different from the challenges facing Karen men?**

Regarding the challenges that women are facing nowadays, if we look to the situation in the entire region, some women are facing a new challenge, but it is not displacement. Some women have been left behind with their children as their husbands have gone to other countries to work, so it has caused big problems for them as they have to raise their children and do all the housework. And some women's husbands got new wives while working in other countries. Another thing is that if we look, some areas that are close to towns [or villages that are close to main roads] the companies entered and planted rubber, palm oil trees and iron wood trees then as a consequence those areas became plain fields and it has caused a problem for the women to find vegetables. When I [Saw S---] reached those villages some women told me: "In the past we could find bamboo shoots and sell them to earn our income but now we cannot find them anymore. If you accidentally enter into the area where the companies set up their plantation, the people from the companies shout at us, and if we cut firewood in the plantation compound they [company staff] shout [at] us as well." So as for the change, we can say that women [are] still suffering [when] people are not aware of [the activities] which [are] related to their daily work.

**So, is there any destruction done to land owned by women, because of the companies that came to do development projects?**

There are companies coming to the local region and doing development projects. In Thaton Township and Kyaikto Township there is one company called U Ye Htun Company, which has confiscated many thousand acres of local land. And since those lands are located near D--- village and E--- village, of course the confiscated land included land owned by women.

**What do you think about women's opinions regarding the 2012 [preliminary] ceasefire? Do you think there have been positive changes to the lives of Karen women since the 2012 [preliminary] ceasefire? And what is the impact on women regarding the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement [NCA]?**

We have seen that the fear, concerns, and worries among women about the return of fighting has decreased since the 2012 [preliminary] ceasefire agreement was signed. Mostly, women stayed at home with their children and when the fighting happened there was a big problem for them to flee from the fighting and carry their children. However, since the

ceasefire has been signed and the fighting has decreased, of course we can say that fear among women is decreasing. Another thing is that in the past, some women served as village secretaries, and if a case came up at night, they had to go out, depending on the request. But since the ceasefire agreement was signed, as I mentioned previously, women no longer need to serve in positions of leadership in the village since it has changed to men, so their responsibilities are getting lighter. For example, [previously], if an armed group requested that a woman who served as village secretary should go to the battalion camp at night, among men, then that caused her a big problem, to travel at night among men. However, now, those kinds of situations do not exist anymore, so in that sense the ceasefire has had a positive impact on women. On the other hand, the ceasefire has had a negative impact on those women who used to serve as part of the leadership in the villages. One village secretary, we called her Moe Kyi [great aunty], she opened her heart to me when I visited her village and she said that: 'now the ceasefire has been signed and no one [armed group or authority] comes and cares about us. In the past, when the Tatmadaw came, they called me Ah Moe [mother] and gave me food, such as milk, as they asked me to take responsibility for their demands. And when the KNU came, they too offered me a bag of rice, saying that: 'you spoke for us'. Now however, when people [armed groups or authorities] come to see Ah Moe, they do not care about me anymore, and they just ignore me.

**Well then, you want to mean that because of women's participation in politics and leadership in the village is decreasing after the ceasefire, some women who have participated in those roles do not feel good about that.**

That's right.

**So, can you say that because of their involvement in politics and for the village, is their security getting increased and can they live more peacefully than before?**

We can say that their security is getting improved a bit, but not overall, because there is no change on the part of the Myanmar government military. Their bases and camps, such as in Lay Kay village and so on, still remain and every military camp that is based in a village still exist. Regarding this point, because of husbands having gone to other countries for work, security issues still remain as a concern for women, such as they feel vulnerable to rape by soldiers when they stay at home without their husbands, or if the soldiers run into them when they are going to work, they worry that will they get raped by the soldiers. Those concerns always exist, because the military does not change or move their base camps. That is why we cannot say that women have achieved full security.

**Is there any discrimination if rape and other forms of sexual violence affect women or if they are victims of any abuse? For example, culturally and traditionally, how does the community perceive a woman who gets raped? Are affected women stigmatised by their families or communities?**

I want to say that this issue has improved a lot because in the past, if a young woman got raped, of course the community stigmatised her. But nowadays, although rape cases still happen, if we look from the KNU side, they put local force in every village and they enforce the rule since the ceasefire happened, so they take action, including with village leaders, immediately when a rape case happens. And we do not see that they have ignored solving cases. That is why we can say that this issue has improved a lot.

**So how about from the Myanmar government side, if their soldiers commit such kinds of abuse, what is the response of the leaders from either the government side or the military side?**

In this case my opinion is like this: even if we do not see it with our eyes, we do hear about it. For example, when Tatmadaw (soldiers) commit rape cases, there are people in the villages that already have experience from the role of village secretary, so those people take action following such cases and if they have to complain about the case to the Light Infantry Division Commander they dare to do it. Because of that, Myanmar soldiers also do not dare

to commit abuses easily. On the other hand Myanmar government also do not violently act (slap the face) like before that is why local villagers dare to respond or complain about the case directly to the relevant leaders and as soon as they got the information they want to spread it through the community.

**Ok now let's get back to the peace process as we have already discussed about the ceasefire previously. So can you please tell us how women understand the peace process after the ceasefire agreement?**

Regarding this case we can say that ordinary women in the village do not understand anything about it except women that working in the organisations [NGOs]. Only they heard about the KNU and Tatmadaw signing the ceasefire agreement. They do not have time to find out about the peace process and there is no one who will come and explain it to us.

**So are they uninterested by this political issue which is the peace process because they do not understand it?**

I don't think that they feel uninterested because they have heard that the KNU has already signed a ceasefire agreement with the Myanmar government and they hope the Tatmadaw army camp will be back. But the army camp has still not been removed so sometimes they ask when we will be able to travel freely. Because some army camps are based close to the monastery and when the young ladies go and make offerings to the monks at the monastery in the early morning at around 4 AM, it is a big problem for them that the soldiers stay close to the monastery. So I think there are very few women who feel totally uninterested in the peace process and most women will feel that it relates to them as it involves their security concerns because the army camp is based here [in the village].

**Well then, based on this security issue, as they are afraid of Bamar [Myanmar government] soldiers, what is the difference between the concerns of single women and married women?**

Yes, there are different concerns between them. For example, married women who stay at home with their children are still worried and afraid [that the fighting will happen again] because, although the ceasefire agreement has been signed, the confusion [conflict] still exists between the two groups – the KNU and the Tatmadaw. And for the single women, they still feel vulnerable to being raped by the Tatmadaw although it happens much less now than it used in the past.

**Okay, now let's continue and discuss women's opinions and feelings about the health and education sectors. So regarding the health sector, in your region in Brigade 1 [Thaton District], do women receive a proper healthcare service? For example, do pregnant women get enough healthcare, such as injections and medication for prenatal care?**

Nowadays we have found out that pregnant women who live as refugees in other countries have very good healthcare but we do not have the same level in our community. If we look at the KNU-controlled areas, they do provide support by an organisation called Mother and Childcare for pregnant women as well as the KWO [Karen Women Organisation]. They also provide support when women give birth, such as soup and swaddle, but they cannot provide enough support. They cannot provide enough medicine either. And if we look at the Myanmar government-controlled areas we have not seen any special [new] activity in terms of healthcare for pregnant women. Since the situation is now getting a little bit more stable, pregnant women and their families try to find a way [to find support] by themselves. For example, if a woman is going to give birth, her husband will start to organise things and arrange everything, such as whether they need to go to access healthcare services in Hpa-an or Thaton Town. So they just arrange their healthcare by themselves and there is no organisation that provides service or support for their healthcare.

**So have there been any changes in terms of the healthcare service if we compare the**



**situation before and after the 2012 ceasefire?**

There is a change if we compare [the present] to the past because in the past if the Tatmadaw found any medical materials, such as a syringe they treated it as a gun and if they found any medication they treated it as a bullet so when they found it they took action [against the villagers]. Therefore, even though there were people in the village who knew how to give injections, because of the risk [from the Tatmadaw], they did not dare to offer the service and instead people practiced the traditional treatment methods. And if people gave birth to a child, they just had to deal with it with a midwife in the village. But after the 2012 ceasefire, we have not seen those risks and they are no longer a barrier to using medical devices for treatment. Then, as I mentioned before, villagers tried to find ways by themselves. When their children finished Standards 7 and 8 they send their children to the city and let them attend the medic training for six months to become a midwife. By doing this we can say that the delivery service is improving and we can see that in most of the villages in our region villagers send their children to attend the medic training to become a midwife. So we can say that it is changing.

**What about the treatment? What are the differences between the KNU and the Myanmar government in the way that they offer services as part of the treatments?**

If we look at the different services offered by the KNU and the Myanmar government, in the KNU-controlled areas only Karen people serve as the medics and they effectively offer their services as much as possible in terms of healthcare and most of them are relatives of the KNU [officials]. And the KNU also opens clinics for the community as well. If we look at the Myanmar government-controlled areas, when they come to the local community to provide the vaccine for elephantiasis we can say that they do not do it carefully. Actually before you give the vaccine for elephantiasis you should first check whether it matches with the patient's disease or not but they did not do that. The way they do it is just to gather individual villagers from each household and ask them how many family members they have and then offer them a vaccine. And like with the polio immunisation for babies, even though they should only come to give the baby injections based on the due date so every sixth months or every three months, they still come [at other times] to offer injections. Therefore if we think about the way they do this, we cannot understand whether it is because the villagers are not the same ethnicity as them or whether it is because of problems with the roads and communications. So we can see that although both the KNU and the Myanmar government offer the same healthcare services, the effectiveness of each is different. For the Myanmar government, we can say that the way they offer healthcare services is that they only do it for a salary and not to provide a real service. For example, they [the Myanmar government] set up a big clinic called Ei Hel Clinic in the village and they sent a doctor to that clinic to provide services. And when the villagers go to that clinic, although it said it was a free service on the sign, they have to pay for the service. Villagers have to pay for everything that they get from that clinic, such as medication. And when villagers take their children to get treatment for coughing, the doctor gives them a small bottle of medicine and charges 500 kyat and if they buy it from outside it also costs 500 kyat. Then villagers cannot understand the way that the Myanmar government provides healthcare services in the village.

**Is that Ei Hel Clinic a private clinic or a Myanmar government clinic?**

That Ei Hel Clinic is [supported] through the Myanmar Health Ministry and the people of the Myanmar government said that it is supported by Japan. But we do not know anything about it. We just went to that area and we saw that it had already been built and the medics were already in the clinic. However it was known that the clinic was supported by the Myanmar government as it is the main healthcare centre for the community.

**What does Ei Hel mean in Burmese?**

It was called Ei Hel Clinic in Ei Hel village and it is located in Hpa-an Township.

**So is it because the village is called Ei Hel that people call it Ei Hel clinic?**

There are two Ei Hel villages: Ei Hel small village and Ei Hel big village. The clinic is located between the two Ei Hel villages.

**So now that the situation in the country is getting a little bit better, have you seen any organisations come to your Brigade 1 [Thaton District] and offer the healthcare services?**

Do you mean other organisations?

**Yes, organisations that work for healthcare.**

I have only seen the organisation called ARC [American Refugee Committee] but I don't know what it stands for. And the anti-malaria organisation called IOM [International Organisation for Migration], we have also seen them come to our Brigade 1 [Thaton District]. We do not know the long form of their organisation's name; we just saw it written on their car. The organisation works to prevent malaria and they provide mosquito nets. And I think those organisations come through the Myanmar government.

**Okay then, let's move to education issues. Have there been any changes for young women's access to education since the 2012 ceasefire agreement?**

There have been no obvious changes to young women's access to education since the 2012 ceasefire. But if we look at the number of students we can see that the number of young women who study is increasing and the number of schoolgirls is higher than the number of schoolboys in most schools.

**And are the clever students mostly girl as well, right?**

Yes that is right and one particular thing is that the number of schoolgirls is higher [than the number of schoolboys] in most schools.

**How about the school teachers?**

If we look at the number of school teachers, the number of female teachers is also higher [than the number of male teachers].

**Are there challenges that girls face when accessing education that boys do not face?**

I don't see any special challenges that school girls face that boys do not face because there is equality if we look in terms of education. It just depends on their individual commitment. For example, when schoolgirls attend school they also have to take care of their younger brother or sister as their parents rely on them to take care of their siblings. But nowadays their parents' perspective has changed and we do not see them let [make] their daughters take care of their siblings while they are studying and schoolgirls can [now] attend school freely like boys do.

**So why are there more female teachers than male teachers? And why are men not interested in teaching?**

There is a reason why. In our Brigade, a teacher only gets paid 100,000 kyat for a salary each year whether it is from the KED or locally funded. So a young boy who works as a school teacher cannot accept 100,000 kyat as a salary each year. Then they try to find other ways to earn an income. So I see [think] that the male teachers are not as involved back of insufficient support [salary]. But for women, they are satisfied with the salary because, unlike men, they have the proper ability to teach and they can live with their parents and they can stay in their own village. However men are thinking about going to Bangkok as they can earn more income there. Therefore I think the reason why there is a difference between the number of male and female teachers is just because of the support [salary] from the school.

**Can you tell us about the different education systems [of the Myanmar government and the KNU] and how these [differences] affect the students?**

I think there is a big difference regarding this. And if we look at the Myanmar government



side, we can see that they have tried their best to change the education system, and from the KNU side we can see that they prefer to focus on the students' perspectives and concerns as part of the learning system. However if we look at the Myanmar government side, they barely let the students give their own perspectives or allow critical thinking; instead they just make the students do everything according to the book. That is why in the Myanmar government schools, most students fail at Standard 10. They have to memorise everything in the book and then people may think that the student is clever. That is the difference between the systems of the Myanmar government and the KNU. Then if we look at two students who passed school with the Myanmar government and the KNU systems, we find that their qualifications are different when they start work although they both passed school. Then by looking at these systems we can see that you have to memorise all the lessons to pass the exam in the Myanmar government system, whereas in the KNU system they let the students try to think for themselves and they prefer for the students to study in the way that they like.

**Now we have heard that the Myanmar government has started talk about letting the people who are IDPs and living in refugee camps to return to Myanmar. When these people come back and when their children attend school, do you think that they will be organised by the [Myanmar] government? What problems will they face?**

For those who are living in the refugee camps or who attend the KNU schools even though they have already graduated from school and got a certificate, if they come back and work here they will not be recognised by the Myanmar government. For example, in our Brigade there is only one high school established by the KNU. And students who graduated from this high school are not allowed to continue their education to attend college. And students who finished Standard 7 and 8 do not get a recommendation letter or transcript to continue at high school which is a Myanmar government school. We have also heard that the KNU leaders from the education department have tried to discuss this issue with the Myanmar government but they have not succeeded yet. The Myanmar government does not give them permission to provide that document [the transcript or recommendation letter] so for those people who are refugees and graduated from a KNU school, I think it is harder for them to work as a civil servant.

**Well then, now let's talk about human rights abuses. Do you think that the human rights abuses affect men and women differently in your Brigade 1 [Thaton District] area?**

There are only very small differences in how human rights abuses affect men and women. Regarding women's rights abuses, such as rape and discrimination, it rarely happens. But if we compare the effects of human rights abuses between men and women, I don't see any big differences as most abuses are similar. So I would say that both men and women suffer the same.

**Okay then. For example, if villagers are working as daily labourers like as masons, and both men and women have to do the same tasks, but they get paid differently. Do things like that happen?**

There is a reason why men and women get paid differently when working as daily labourers. For example, when men and women harvest the paddy and the person who offers the work also considers the amount that men and women do the work, then based on that, men and women get paid differently. Likewise, if the paddy field owner hires the workers to work not as daily labourers but for the long term, they will pay them 70 sacks of rice per year for the male worker but for the female worker she will only get 45 to 50 sacks of rice per year. The payment is different because male workers can harvest the paddy and plough and graze the buffalos and help with the housework, such as finding vegetable and so on. But for the female worker, she will not dare to graze the buffalos in the jungle and she will not be able to plough so she is only able to harvest the paddy. Therefore depending on the work that they do they get paid differently.

**So are women satisfied with the payment that they get based on the amount of work that they do?**

Yes, because they can see how men and women work and the way they work differently. But some women may not be satisfied with the payment sometimes.

**How about forced labour? Are men and women targeted differently?**

Forced labour has still happened after the 2012 ceasefire but not as often as before. And we can see that most forced labour is targeted at men because when Tatmadaw request forced labour they ask for people to transport thing by car and only men drive cars. And if they say we need to use a boat then only men can do that. So there is more forced labour targeted at men.

**How about landmines? Who are more likely to be injured, men or women?**

After the 2012 [preliminary] ceasefire, I don't see any landmine injuries in our Brigade 1 [Thaton District] area because we know that from the KNU side they removed landmines that they had planted and opened up for opportunities for villagers to be able to work and travel freely. From the Myanmar government side, the Tatmadaw base camp have also reduced their activities and we do not see that they plant landmines anymore. But if we look in the past, men were more likely to be injured as they travel more and go to work at their hillside cultivations. However, among the injured people, women are included as well.

**How are women affected by landmines, either directly or if their husbands/families are affected? Do they face any consequences such as livelihood problems?**

When the family member's son or especially their husband is injured by a landmine, this definitely causes a problem [for the woman] as a consequence. When the breadwinner, the husband, steps on a landmine he can be killed or at least he will lose his leg. Then the wife and the rest of family members will have to work more when the breadwinner cannot work. So when the breadwinner, the husband, is injured by a landmine, the wife will probably have to go to work in the field to replace her husband. And there will also be more expenses in terms of taking care of the patient [husband]. Therefore it causes problems to the mother and the children when the landmine injures the husband.

**What about land confiscation? Are men and women targeted differently?**

I think land confiscation affects the family and when the land is confiscated it will have effects on both the husband and the wife. So we would say that both men and women have to suffer for that. But I don't think there is any difference in the way that land confiscation is targeted at men and women. However it will affect widows who do not have a husband.

**How do you think rape and other forms of sexual violence affect Karen women? What is the condition of Karen women regarding those abuses after the 2012 ceasefire?**

Do you mean has it increased or decreased?

**Yes.**

We can say that rape and various forms of sexual violence have decreased after the 2012 ceasefire because we can see that women are more active for women's rights issues and the KNU and the KWO are also providing awareness for women.

**So when a woman suffers a sexual abuse, is she able to talk about it? Does she dare to complain or tell her family about it or report it to the township level or to the village head?**

As I mentioned before, the KWO is always monitoring those cases and when they hear that a case has happened they let their staff follow up with the case and encourage the victim to tell people about it and report it. The KWO also give suggestion for the process of how to report it. Because of that, although the KWO cannot handle and get access to all of those

abuses, women who were the victim [of such abuse] dare to tell their family about it or they dare to report it to the village head.

**Culturally and traditionally, are affected women stigmatised by their families or communities? How are women supported by their families or communities?**

We can say that the discrimination of affected women is decreasing. For example, when a woman faces sexual violent abuse, the village head does not ignore it because the KNU has restricted the police regarding sexual violent abuse under their control and so the village head has to take action immediately when the case happens. And also according to the cultural beliefs and the village rules and the villagers' belief in animism, when people make mistakes [do bad things], they have to apologise to God and make a devotional offering. So when men and women do sexual mistakes [sexual abuse], they have a punishment such as making a devotional offering of one pig from both sides [male and female] of them. It means they clear their village.

**Regarding human rights abuses, I want to ask the last two questions. Are there any organisations that act for all women's issues which come from the Myanmar government-controlled areas? The second question about human rights violations is: do you see [think] that it they are decreasing since the 2012 ceasefire?**

To answer the first question, I don't see any Myanmar government organisations that are particularly acting for women's issues that have come to our Brigade 1 [Thaton District] community yet. However as I mentioned previously, from the KNU side we can see that the KWO is acting for women's issues, such as women's protection. There is the same thing like that in the town near our Brigade 1 area; there is a religious organisation which is a Baptist Christian organisation acting to protect women. For example, a young woman from the village went to the town to work as a housemaid and she was sexually abused by the house owner. Then that organisation came and dealt with the issue. Therefore we found out that there are organisations from the KNU and from religious groups who act for women but we have not seen any organisation from the Myanmar government who came to our community yet. And after the 2012 ceasefire we can say that human rights violations, especially women's rights abuses, have decreased a lot because in the past the KWO from the KNU did not even dare to act effectively here either. They did not dare to enter to the community and advocate for women and so women did not even know their own rights and they just suffered whatever abuses people did to them. But after the 2012 ceasefire, the KWO has entered into the community and acted more for women so women now know their own rights and they have established a KWO centre in almost every village and they have formed a committee. Therefore we would say that people do not dare to commit women's rights abuses easily [now]. The situation is improving so that the men say, "hey, be careful of committing abuse of women, you may reported by the KWO". That is why we can say that women's rights abuses are decreasing.

**What legal or formal strategies do Karen women use to prevent or respond to abuses and challenges?**

There is an example that happened in our community. There is a married woman and her husband went to Bangkok in Thailand and he got a new wife and left her behind. As a woman she faced a big problem as she was not able to follow to get her husband back and she also had to take care of the children. Then there was another man who intended to marry her so that man came and slept with her for two or three days and then he left her again. Therefore when women suffer these kinds of things, they cannot disguise their feelings anymore and they do not get along with their family members as well. So she reported the case to the village head.

**So it means that when women face these problems they report them to the village head or to the relevant office?**

That's right. The case was referred to the village head and the village head will handle it.

Then when the problem cannot be solved by the village head, the case will be referred to the village tract level and then to the township level.

**Can you tell us about the different justice systems [of the Myanmar government and the KNU] and how these affect and are used by women differently?**

As I have heard and often seen, I will talk about the KNU system first. When women face abuse and submit their complaint to the court, they just decide to pay them compensation. For example, when a man committed abuse to a woman, the leader will give priority to the woman and ask her how she would like the case to be solved. Then a woman may say that she would like to be compensated with three to five million kyat and the leaders will ask the man whether they agree with it. So from the KNU side, we would say that they solve the problem in this way. I do not know much about the Myanmar government's system as we do not have much connection with them.

**Do you think Karen women have increased their influence and political participation?**

In my community in Brigade 1 [Thaton District], I see that the percentage of women who participate in politics is very small. So in terms of public administration, it is mostly men who are involved and women have much less influence or participation in politics. It is not because they are not allowed to get involved in politics, it is just because they do not have the awareness about politics and no one convinces [encourages] them to get involved in political work and they feel vulnerable themselves as they are not as capable as men. So I see that there is a very small percentage of women who participate in politics.

**What do women want and how do they hope and want it to happen? How do you think Karen women in your Brigade 1 [Thaton District] want their lives to change after the 2012 and 2015 ceasefires?**

What we used to hear from women was, "if the ceasefire is real, then we can live peacefully and we can work freely." So we would say that that was what women hoped for and wanted. Now the Myanmar government is organising the nationwide ceasefire agreement but not all of the ethnic armed groups are included; therefore what women are concerned about is whether this will be real because if the fighting happens again then there will be more problems for all of us and it will cause fear for us again. So this is what they are concerned about and they hope that the ceasefire agreement between the governments will be real [and lasting] and that the Tatmadaw will leave the village so that women can go around freely and safely.

**So what about your personal opinion? What should be done to improve women's lives?**

In my personal point of view, in our Brigade 1 [Thaton District] we need training to let women achieve self-esteem and the training should not form part of education from the school but should be training for the strategies and agencies for women to be able to respond to abuse. So if there is any organisation that is doing that then they should come and give the training to women. And if we can establish a vocational centre for women, whether by the Myanmar government or any other kind of organisation, then the perspective of the women in the village would change and they would have self-esteem and feel more capable of themselves. Therefore the lives of women would gradually improve.

**So finally, is there anything else that you would like to say regarding the improvement of women's lives?**

The most important thing for the improvement of women's lives is education. So we need education to enhance the knowledge and thought and to improve women's lives. I cannot give any other special suggestions. Just the government administration; they are the main people who have the main responsibility to handle this and if they have respect and value the women then the lives of women may improve.

**Well thank you so much. Your information is really valuable for us.**

**Source #150**

<b>Log #</b>	15-120-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Thaton Interview: Naw A---, November 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Kyaikto Township, Thaton District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**What is your name?**

Naw A---.

**Your age?**

20.

**What township are you from?**

Kyaikto.

**What do you think about the woman's thematic topic? Do you think it is a good idea?**

I think it is a good idea because if we did not publish about women's rights, no one would get to know about women's rights so it is a good idea to write about women.

**What do you think women's rights mean?**

I do not know.

**Do you and your friends ever talk about what it is like to be a woman?**

Yes.

**What kind of things do you talk about?**

If we meet up with each other, we talk about the training that the men can receive. For example, each training session that the men can receive we also want to receive. The people said the woman cannot enter some of the training sessions, so my friend and I talked about how the training would be very useful so we also want to attend.

**Do you think women are discriminated against in Karen state?**

Most of the women in Karen state are discriminated against. The women who live in lower parts of Karen state are able to study at university but for the women who live in the rural areas they can only attend [high] school and then they end their studies because they do not have the opportunity to continue onto further study.

**So do you think that education is really important for women in terms of achieving their rights and knowing about what their rights are?**

I think education is very important for women.

**I know we have talked a little bit about it today but can you briefly talk about the**



**traditional role of Karen women in the household, family and village?**

In the past, we have seen that women have to stay at home to help their mothers and, after they get married, if they have a family they have to stay at home to take care of the baby and to clean and cook. For example, if guests come [to their house] they have to welcome the guests.

**What do you think has changed from your parents' generation to your generation? How do you think things are different for women? What can they do now that they could not do before?**

We have seen that the role has changed after the ceasefire [has] taken place. [For] example, in the past they [children] just stayed at home to help their parents and if something happened with them they ran to the jungle. But now after they grew up they gained some education so some of them are working with organizations. At present most women gain more opportunity to gain education and also [to] continue their further study. In the past they had less opportunity.

**So do you think the changing role [of women] is because of [increased access to] education, but can you think of any other reason why women might be able to do more things that they did in the past?**

At present women study economics at university in the towns so they can do business. For the women who live in rural areas they are not able to study economics at university but if they can read and write they can do business as well.

**The community that you live in, do you think they respect or accept the growing independence of women?**

They respect the changes.

**In your opinion what do you think are the biggest challenges facing Karen women or what are the most important things that Karen women need today?**

In my opinion the most important thing that they need is to stop the discrimination of women.

**Can you give an example of the kinds of discrimination that you think should be stopped?**

To stop the discrimination of women – for example in the past if the people do something and if women are involved, they discriminate against the women which shows they think they are very weak. They discriminated against the women like that.

**Do you think men face the same challenges as women? I guess you do not think Karen men face the same challenges as women?**

I think men face more challenges than women but I am not sure – maybe it is the same.

**In your opinion how do you think women's lives have changed since the ceasefire?**

Before the ceasefire women had to worry about how to take care of their children because their husbands did not dare to stay at home [because of security fears].

**So something that we have talked about today and that a lot of people have said is now changing. [In the past] Because the men who stayed [in the villages] were scared**

**and the other men fled [the villages], women became the village heads. Now there is a period of peace; therefore the women village heads are stepping down and the men are now becoming the village heads again. Do you agree with this statement? Do you think there are fewer female village heads now after the ceasefire period then before? Just in your own personal experience.**

In my point of view it depends on the situation.

**What kind of situation?**

The situations in the past and present are not the same because in the past the situation was much worse. For example, if we selected a woman as the village head, when the Tatmadaw came to the villages they were not prepared to torture the women because they were women. For the men they felt more comfortable to beat them.

**So is your village head female or male?**

In the past the village head was a woman but between 2013 and 2014 the village head is a man.

**Why did they change to man?**

In our village the villagers selected the village head. But in the past, if the people called a meeting, most of the villagers who participated in the meeting were female, therefore, they selected a woman as the village head in the conflict period. They selected a village head who could speak Myanmar [language] and had self-confidence to speak with the Tatmadaw. After the peace process, females and males are participating in the meetings, so when they select the village head most of them are male.

**Why did the men not attend the meetings?**

They did not attend the meetings because of the conflict period.

**How many surrounding villages do you know that have female village heads or used to have one but no longer have a female village head after the ceasefire?**

In the past, most of the village heads were female and they were selected to be a village head for one month [at a time] as it was the war period. And they also did not feel safe to be a long-term village head.

**Can you interview your own female village head and send it to us about this issue?**

Yes I can interview her. I see some female village heads in one or two villages. They have been working as village head since the conflict period until the present time as they are very brave [i.e. strong] when speaking and have also been working as village heads for a long term period so some of them still hold their position.

**What do you think about the NCA? Do you think it will affect any [aspects] of your life as women?**

In my opinion if the NCA is respected there might be fewer women's rights abuses but if it is not realistic then the abuse of women's rights could continue in the future.

**Do you think the election is relevant for you?**



As we are villagers the election belongs to us but we did not know whether it is realistic or not.

**Can you vote? Do you have an ID card?**

Yes I do have one but as I live in a rural area I do not vote and I don't know about the election either.

**Are you going to vote?**

No.

**Why not?**

I do not know.

**Do you talk about the election or peace process with your female friends?**

No we never talk about that.

**Why not?**

I don't know. We never talk about the role of politics and even when we meet up with each other we are not interested.

**Do you look up to any women in politics in your village, the women that you respect and look up to? One obvious example is Aung San Suu Kyi. It is just an example so are there any other women that you look up to and have a lot of respect for?**

In my village we really respect one of my female school teachers because she made us tough when we were young.

**In general, what do you think about the peace process and what is your opinion as a woman?**

In my personal opinion I think the peace process is good because, as women, we want to get our full rights and stay peaceful.

**Do you feel safer after the preliminary ceasefire in 2012 as women?**

After the preliminary ceasefire in 2012 we feel a bit safer as women but not completely.

**What way do you feel safer?**

In the past the women did not feel safe to travel alone but after the ceasefire women feel a little bit safer and rules were created for the villagers to follow.

**Listen to our next topic which is militarisation and freedom of movement. You guys have been talking in meetings a lot about how women feel safe when moving around and the consequences of women being able to move around – they can enter into more trainings so there are more female health workers currently working with the health department. So do you agree with this statement and is it true?**

If we look at the situation I do agree with this statement because we have seen the situation is changing a bit.

**So how else do you think increased freedom of movement or women feeling safer**

**when moving around have changed women's lives – like can they go to college more or can they get better education? And what other ways have women benefited from being able to move around more safely?**

The women can travel a bit more safely which benefits them because some women receive medical training among Bamar people [in towns which are covered by the Myanmar medics]. They get the certificate then they come back to look after the patients in their own villages so it also brings benefits for their family.

**Some of the other researchers in other brigades talked about how damage to the environments and land confiscation are making it difficult for women to earn their livelihood? For example, the thing they talked about with plantations was that removal of the forest areas makes it very difficult to find firewood, [it] destroys the environment, pollutes the water and they are not able to find fish. So do you see this happen in your area? And can you give us any examples?**

I saw it happen in my township.

**If you can find any examples of this, could you please write a report on them and send it to us?**

Yes I can. In our township the companies plant rubber plantations on large areas and you could not even travel around to see all of the rubber plantations by motorbike in a day.

**We are really interested about it because we wrote about that in *With Only Our Voices What Can We Do*<sup>511</sup> so we want to specifically see the female perspective and how it affects women. So if you could talk to women and gather some of that information, it would be very helpful for us.**

**Now it is getting dark so we will talk about healthcare. So do you think women have adequate access to healthcare in terms of reproductive healthcare?**

From my point of view, in terms of healthcare in my area, the women who are pregnant get good care. The Karen Women Organisation also gave them swaddling, longyi and soap.

**Do you go to the KNU or Myanmar government hospital?**

I live near the KNU clinic and also my village is controlled by the KNU so I usually go to the KNU clinic.

**Have you finished high school or university?**

Yes I have finished 10 standards<sup>512</sup> at the KNU school named K---High School.

**Do you think you all have adequate access to education?**

Yes we can access education because the teachers who teach us share knowledge with us as much as they can.

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<sup>511</sup> *'With only our voices, what can we do?': Land confiscation and local response in southeast Myanmar*, KHRG, June 2015.

<sup>512</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

**Are there landmine issues in your Brigade?**

There are fewer landmine issues in my Brigade.

**Rape and sexual violence – is it a common thing in your village?**

Before the [2012] ceasefire took place, the women who were raped had to stay silent and the case was forgotten but after the ceasefire took place the women dare to talk about the issue. After the preliminary ceasefire in 2012 we can say that there are no rape cases that happen anymore.

**Do you feel vulnerable as a woman in your village? Do you feel that you are at risk of being affected by sexual violence? Do you receive support from someone if you are affected?**

For example, if it happens there is no support for them but the people will submit the case. The responsible people and village head will arrange something for them.

**Are Karen women in your community able to talk about this sort of thing with each other? [With their] Family? Do they feel comfortable talking about that?**

If a man questioned the women who were raped, they [still may] not dare to talk about that, but if [other] women and family [members ask them about the incident], they can talk [about what happened to them] because they are more familiar [comfortable] with those people.

**Does any form of education for girls in schools talk about this sort of thing and what to do if it happens or how to protect yourself?**

No. We never talk about this issue.

**What sort of ways do Karen women in your community use to protect themselves? One example: in the past women never walked alone at night but today they carry knives. So what kind of strategy do you guys use or do women use?**

In the past women used strategies such as carrying a knife with them but if that happened with them [i.e. they were sexually assaulted], we were not sure whether they could protect themselves or not because women are weaker than men.

**What else?**

I think when the women are raped; if they can grab something around them like a tree branch they might beat them with it.

**The women who are raped, are they discriminated against by their families or communities?**

Yes they are discriminated against by the communities and even by their families.

**In what way are they discriminated against?**

If they are famous in bad way then they lose their dignity and there is no value in their life.

**So if they lose their dignity, does that mean that it is not easy for them to get married or to get a job?**

In our great grandparents' generation, based on our culture, if a women had been raped,

then the men also thought that she was not single anymore so they didn't want to get married with her.

**Are there any ways that women are supported by their family or communities when they are victims of rape or sexual violence?**

If the victim is in my family, we cannot support them with anything. We will just encourage them to make them not feel upset and to [not] end their life. We take care of them like this.

**Can you think of any informal strategy that women use to protect themselves [from gender-based violence] to exercise their own rights?**

I don't know. I think the victims will use the suitable strategies for them. Like if it is suitable for them to kick the men, they might use that.

**I want to know if women are abused because their land was taken [i.e. confiscated] or are raped, who would she go to first?**

First they meet with the village head if their land was taken.

**Who does the village head talk to?**

I think the village head will organise to meet with the perpetrators for negotiations.

**Because you live in the KNU controlled area, what role does the KNU play in responding to the solution? It doesn't have to just be rape cases; it could also be about land confiscation or forced labour that involves women?**

The KNU have their own policy so if a land confiscation case happens, they find a solution based on their policy.

**Does the village head call the KNU in or is the village head [part of] the KNU?**

As we are under the control of the KNU [in our area], if something happens in our village the village head would go to meet with the KNU and submit the case step by step to the KNU leaders.

**A lot of people around the world from different countries will read this so what do you want them to read about Karen women?**

I want them to read about the experience of Karen women who live in local areas and the difficulties that they have to go through.

**Is there anything that you think we should include in our report that we have not touched on today?**

Nothing.

**Thanks you very much for your time. We have learned a lot from you.**

**Source #151**

<b>Log #</b>	15-121-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Mergui-Tavoy Interview: Naw W---, Interview Received in November 2015

<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Mergui-Tavoy District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>Naw W---</p> <p><b>Age?</b></p> <p>21</p> <p><b>Do you think it is a good thing that we are doing our next big report on women?</b></p> <p>Yes, it's good.</p> <p><b>Why?</b></p> <p>If you publish this report, other people will get to know this information.</p> <p><b>What do you think of women's rights? We have human rights, women rights. Do you think most people, most women in Karen State, know about women's rights?</b></p> <p>They do not know what women's rights are in every sector.</p> <p><b>Do you think women in Karen State are discriminated against in any way?</b></p> <p>There is discrimination. Like for leadership roles. When women are elected to lead, their husbands think that they cannot lead and discriminate against them.</p> <p><b>I think it is really good that you give us an example. It really helps us when you give us an example. So you said "yes" and gave us an example. So thank you for doing that. We talked about this a lot today. And I am sorry if we are going to be repeating a lot of the things we talked about today. We really, really want your opinion as a woman in Karen State. We will talk a little bit about the role women usually play in the family, the household, and the village. Can you briefly go over what women are expected to do in your village?</b></p> <p>They usually work at home but now, as the land confiscation took place, and as the men go to the office and discuss the issue, women also go and discuss.</p> <p><b>Did you submit a report on a palm oil plantation and a biofuel plantation in Brigade 4 [Mergui-Tavoy District]?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Was that you?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Do you have the maps from the company showing where the biofuel project is located, the one that we are going to go to? To set up the biofuel project, before the company took the land, they asked for permission from the authorities. Did they send the map to the KNU [Karen National Union]? Did you send it?</b></p>	

No.

**Was it MSPP [Myanmar Stark Prestige Plantation Company]?**

For MSPP, I sent [information] about the biofuel [project].

**When you sent the report, did you include the map?**

The map was not included.

**So you submitted something about palm oil, right? And land confiscation? I think we just published that report. It was an excellent report. Very good. So you are seeing a lot of land confiscation and that is changing the role of women. They have to do other things now, right? Like livelihoods?**

Because of the land confiscation, some women do not have anything to work with and they have to be labour workers for the company.

**Are we seeing more of this type of land confiscation after the ceasefire? After the 2012 [preliminary] ceasefire?<sup>513</sup>**

It has been going on for a long time. Since 2000, before the ceasefire.

**Is there an increase in the number of incidents of that happening now, more than there was before the ceasefire?**

Now, I have seen that more development projects come into the area. MSPP Company come and ask for more lands for their palm oil plantations.

**So more development, more land confiscation. How do you think women's roles have changed, or what can women do now that they could not do before? Think about your parents' generation versus your own generation, how have the women's roles changed?**

In the past, our parents' generation could not study and they had to run [flee], but now, we can study.

**Why do you think that has changed? Why do you think there was a change?**

In the past, at that time war was happening and people could not study, but now, it is more peaceful and people can travel and live freely.

**So what do you think are the biggest challenges or problems facing Karen women such as yourself? For example, somebody said livelihoods and access to land, and other people said education. Something along those lines? As an example of a problem that women face: because of the land confiscation, women cannot make a**

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<sup>513</sup> The KHRG community member is referring to the preliminary ceasefire agreement that was signed on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 between the KNU and Myanmar government in Hpa-an. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the preliminary ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014. On October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, after a negotiation process marred with controversy over the notable non-inclusion of several ethnic armed groups and on-going conflicts in ethnic regions, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed between the Myanmar government and eight of the fifteen ethnic armed groups originally invited to the negotiation table, including the KNU, see "[Myanmar signs ceasefire with eight armed groups](#)," Reuters, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015.

**living. Give us an example like this.**

We do not have money and now we do not have a place to work [because of land confiscation].

**Do you think you can interview some women for us about those issues, in terms of land and livelihoods and how development [projects] affect them?**

Yes.

**That would be great. That would really help us. How do you think the 2012 [preliminary] ceasefire has changed women's lives? There is no wrong answer. This is your opinion. Do not worry.**

Before the ceasefire, women do not feel safe to travel but after that, they feel safe to travel.

**Let's a little bit talk about freedom of movement. How has being able to move around more and feeling safer changed women's lives do you think? For example, women feel safer to go to the trainings. Therefore, more women are becoming health workers. Do you see any other ways in which being able to move more freely has changed women's lives?**

After the women finish school, they can work with organisations, and for example work at an office.

**So, do you see a lot of that happening? Since the ceasefire, women are working at organisations or working as teachers? Things like that?**

Yes, it's happening more.

**During the war period, as men were fleeing, more women became village heads but now that there is peace, or during the ceasefire, women are stepping down and more men are going back to being village heads. Do you see that in your district at all?**

In the past, during the war, when Tatmadaw soldiers came and men ran away from the villages, women were becoming village heads.

**So, is your village head a woman or a man?**

Man.

**Did you use to have the women village head?**

In the past, when we were children, there used to be a woman village head.

**Did she leave after the ceasefire?**

A long time ago.

**How many female village heads do you know in the surrounding villages?**

Now, I see that most of the village heads are male.

**Another thing I thought was really interesting that came up today was about the fact that the ability for women to meet their livelihood needs is decreasing because of environmental destruction like plantations. So you can no longer get firewood. Do you**



**see that happening?**

Yes, it happens. Because of the rich people and companies that come into the village, the villagers cannot work on the land and it becomes a challenge for them.

**So, women collect firewood and are responsible for catching fish or cooking? So if the environment is polluted, is that affecting their ability to help their families or do their daily jobs?**

Rich people came into the area and confiscated villagers' lands, and now they [the villagers] do not have land anymore to work on for their livelihoods. And [this] has become a challenge for them.

**Do you think the upcoming elections are relevant to you? Do you think the 2015 [general] election will be beneficial and relevant for you?**

It is beneficial for me.

**Why do you think it is relevant? Why do you think it will be beneficial or relevant for you?**

I do not know.

**If you cannot answer now, you can think about it, we can talk to you tomorrow. Do you have a government ID?**

Yes.

**Are you going to vote?**

My name is on the list.

**Will you go vote on Sunday?**

I work as a township staff member and it is fine if I do not want to vote.

**Do you have a clinic in your village?**

No.

**What do you do if you are ill? Where do you go?**

Our village is near the town.

**Which town is that?**

Pa Lout Town.

**Is that a KNU or a government clinic?**

Government.

**Do you think you have proper access to health care?**

Some villagers who live near the town can get access the healthcare, but people who live in

remote areas cannot access [healthcare].

**What do you think, how can healthcare be improved in your village?**

It would be good if there were a clinic here, or, if there is no clinic, it would be good to have a dispensary.

**What about access to health for you as a woman? Like women-related issues like getting pregnant? Do you ever hear about women having problems because they cannot access proper healthcare when they are pregnant? Can you tell us a bit about that? Do you have any examples? Can you tell us what kind of problems? What happened? Did a woman die? Did she end up getting better treatment? What are the stories you have heard?**

Yes. Some women, their husbands do not take care of them when they become pregnant and some die.

**Are you taught in school about health for you as a female in terms of like tracking your period?**

No.

**So, how did you learn about that? Your mother?**

Parents.

**Did you finish high school?**

Yes.

**What standard was that?**<sup>514</sup>

10.

**Was that a KNU school, an independent school, or a government school?**

I finished high school in a government school and after Standard 10 I continued my studies in a KNU school.

**Did you face any challenge accessing education because you are woman?**

No.

**How do you think education can improve your village?**

For the women, we have to try very hard to get education, but if we try, we get the education [we want].

**Do you hear about rape or other forms of sexual violence in your village or in your area?**

<sup>514</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

No.

**Do you feel safe as a woman in your community?**

Yes.

**We want to understand a little bit about how the community reacts to gender-based violence such as this? Can you openly talk about rape or sexual violence with your friends, your family, or in your community?**

Yes.

**Do you feel comfortable talking about that with your community?**

Yes.

**How do women protect themselves from violence? For example, one person said that they never walk alone. How do women protect themselves?**

In my area, I do not see violent abuse.

**So you feel quite safe then. What about women who have been abused in this way. Are they discriminated against?**

If the woman is raped, there is discrimination. People gossip about her.

**Do they find it hard to get remarried or find a job?**

Men can still love them, because they pity them.

**What sort of capacity-building or training workshops do you think should be provided by the government or different organisations? What kind of training do you think would benefit women?**

[They should] provide trainings on for example healthcare and protection.

**If a woman has problems in the community, who does she speak with first?**

Family.

**Who does the family go to? Who does the family talk to?**

Village head. And then, the village head arranges everything.

**So the village head will negotiate the compensation or go to the KNU if necessary. What do you think we are missing in this report? Do you think that there are issues that are important to women that we have not talked about at all during the meeting?**

No.

**Over the next couple of months, we would like you guys to collect information for us. And another thing we really want to learn more about are whether female village heads are no longer village heads, and why they are no longer village heads? The second thing is looking at how freedom of movement has increased opportunities for women, like there being more health workers. The third thing is how environmental destruction because of development projects have impacted the way women earn**

**their livelihoods? Can you collect this information for us and send it to us by January. Will that be possible?**

I can send it.

#### Source #152

<b>Log #</b>	15-122-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Mergui-Tavoy Interview: Naw K---, November 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	K'Ser Doh Township, Mergui-Tavoy District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Can you give us your name? What is your name?</b></p> <p>Naw K---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>22 years old.</p> <p><b>Your township?</b></p> <p>K'Ser Doh Township.</p> <p><b>Have you have chance to look at our previous thematic reports, called <i>Losing Ground</i>, and <i>With only our voices</i>?</b></p> <p>Yes, I have had a chance to look at them.</p> <p><b>Do you think it is good idea to write a thematic report on women?</b></p> <p>Yes, it is good.</p> <p><b>Why do you think that it is important that KHRG presents women's voices?</b></p> <p>It is important because people discriminate against women, therefore it is good to present women's voices.</p> <p><b>What roles do women generally play, what are their duties in Karen culture, and what do women do throughout the day?</b></p> <p>Women who get married are usually doing housework, and women who are single work in the plain farms and hill farms.</p> <p><b>What kind of things do they do if they have families?</b></p> <p>They look after their children.</p> <p><b>If they are single they work in the field?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Can you help us understand what women and men can and cannot do in terms of the</b></p>	

**family, the home, and the village?**

Women cannot do hard work like labour work, and men are not familiar with housework so they cannot do housework.

**What about money? Do women manage the money in the household?**

I don't understand what you mean "managing the money."

**For example, the husbands go to work and they come back and give money to their wives. How do the women manage that money?**

Some husbands will give money to their wives to save it, but some of the men do not give any money to their wives. As you know, there are many different kinds of families.

**So is it depends on family structure?**

Yes.

**What about at the village level? Do women take on responsibilities in the villages or in the village tracts? So not only in the families, we also want to know about the roles of women within in the villages?**

At present time, most women are taking responsibility for working with the Karen Women Organisation. They share their knowledge and organise groups of women in the villages.

**Do you ever see women in the role of village head or other administrative functions?**

I have never seen a woman in the role of village head.

**So you never see women in positions of responsibility, such as village head? They are always men?**

Yes.

**So, do you think that women are not allowed to, or do you think that it is due to women feeling uncomfortable with asking to be someone in a position of responsibility?**

I think women are not allowed to take on roles of responsibility. If they were allowed, women would be taking on more responsibilities. Currently, we can see that the KNU [Karen National Union] secretary is a woman, so if people allowed women to take on more responsibilities, such as the role of village head, I think they would take it.

**How is this different between the KNU and the Myanmar government?**

We have seen change taking place in terms of women's roles, but as for the KNU, they are always under the control of the other people [the Myanmar government]. Women from the KNU-controlled areas have no chance to claim their rights.

**So the women in the KNU-controlled areas do not have the same chance to be active?**

They do, but there are less opportunities for them.

**So, the women who live in Myanmar government-controlled areas have more**

**opportunities to be active?**

The women from the Myanmar government-controlled areas always speak [publically] in front of other people from platforms.

**As you are young, you know women who are around 20 years old. How do you think women of your generation are different compared with women of your parents' generation? What has changed do you think?**

What has changed is that in the past, women struggled for their lives and tried very hard and work together in unity, but now, the young people do whatever they want.

**Why do you think that has changed?**

In our township we have less cooperation among the young people. They feel depressed and do not want to cooperate with each other. Young people should have a strong desire to work together, but now, many young people [who used to work at the township level] have returned to their own places.

**Do you think women are more independent from their families now than they were before?**

Yes, women are more independent now.

**So, do you think the community, and especially men, allow this new independence for women, or their changing roles? Does the community and men accept the changing roles women have?**

I'm not sure if they accept it or not.

**What do you think are the biggest challenges are facing Karen women such as yourself?**

The challenges that they face related to militarisation, because if their husbands are soldiers they always have to go to the front line so sometimes their children are not feeling well and they face financial and livelihood problems. I have seen that one woman in my township, her husband always goes to the front line and their children do not feel well after he leaves for the front line and they have no rice to eat. She came to our area asking for rice, so [you can see how] it caused problems for her.

**What are the healthcare problems for women?**

Women face problems regarding healthcare because they do not have money.

**So when you say "money" you mean their livelihoods or ability to buy food, pay rent etc., right?**

Yes.

**Is this because women cannot go out and work and make their own incomes, or where does this problem about a lack of money come from?**

They do not do anything, and they also do not have their own land to work on to [earn] their living. They only have access to the lands that belong to their parents, but they also not stay with their parents [after they get married].

**So access to the land is an issue for women?**

Yes.

**Why do women not have access to land?**

No, [that is not correct]. Women can access land but the problem is that if they for example have two children and their children are very small, they cannot work on the land because they have to take care of their children.

**You mentioned something about women who married soldiers, and who did not have enough food. Is it common for Karen women to marry soldiers, and the soldiers then go to the front line, and when they do so, women may not have enough food?**

I am not sure.

**What do you think is needed in order for Karen women to improve their lives? What do you think needs to happen?**

They need work.

**Do you think anything has improved for women since the 2012 preliminary ceasefire?**<sup>515</sup>

I think there has been some change because currently women are becoming leaders, like secretary or joint secretary. In the past, people did not value women.

**Do you think the new national ceasefire [Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA)]**<sup>516</sup>**will make life better for women?**

I am not sure if it can make women's lives better or not.

**What do you think about rights for Karen women? What rights are they seeking?**

They are seeking independence.

**Can you vote in your township?**

Yes, we can. The township administrator asked us to vote but we do not want to vote.

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<sup>515</sup> The KHRG community member is referring to the preliminary ceasefire agreement that was signed on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 between the KNU and the Myanmar government in Hpa-an. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the preliminary ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

<sup>516</sup> On October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, after a negotiation process marred with controversy over the notable non-inclusion of several ethnic armed groups and on-going conflicts in ethnic regions, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed between the Myanmar government and eight of the fifteen ethnic armed groups originally invited to the negotiation table, including the KNU, see ["Myanmar signs ceasefire with eight armed groups,"](#) Reuters, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015. Despite the signing of the NCA prompting a positive response from the international community, see ["Myanmar: UN chief welcomes 'milestone' signing of ceasefire agreement,"](#) UN News Centre, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, KNU Chairman General Saw Mutu Say Poe's decision to sign has been met with strong opposition from other members of the Karen armed resistance and civil society groups alike, who believe the decision to be undemocratic and the NCA itself to be a superficial agreement that risks undermining a genuine peace process, see ["Without Real Political Roadmap, Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement Leads Nowhere..."](#), Karen News, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. The signing of the NCA followed the January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 preliminary ceasefire agreement between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an.



**Are you on the voter list?**

Maybe we are on the list because we have Myanmar ID cards.

**Is your township administrator from the KNU or Myanmar government?**

It is a KNU township administrator.

**Do you have Myanmar government ID?**

Yes I do.

**Why do you not want to vote?**

I am not sure if I should vote for the KNU or the Myanmar government or which group is good for me, therefore I do not vote.

**Do any of your friends plan to vote?**

Yes, some of them plan to vote.

**Do you and your female friends ever talk about the election or ceasefire? Do you ever discuss these things with each other?**

Yes, we have discussed about the ceasefire which was signed to stop the fighting. It was good to sign it, so that there are less [negative] impacts on the villagers. Some of my friends said they decided to vote, but as for me, I said I do not want to vote because I do not understand everything that is related to the election

**Do you think the election is relevant to you as Karen people and Karen women?**

No.

**Why not?**

Because I feel like the Myanmar government do not usually keep their promise.

**What do you think about Naw Si Po Ra Sein?<sup>517</sup> Do you think she is a strong female person to look up to?**

Yes, she is a strong woman to look up to, but I do not know what [her] role is in detail.

**Are there any Karen women that you look up to? It could be family members, someone in your village, or it could be Aung San Suu Kyi? I do not know what Karen women you see as role models.**

Aung San Suu Kyi is a good person to look up to.

**What do you think about the 2012 preliminary ceasefire and 2015 [Nationwide] Ceasefire [Agreement] as a woman? I know we talked about it already but we just want to hear your perspective on it?**

I cannot say.

<sup>517</sup> Naw Si Po Ra Sein is the vice chairman of the KNU.

**Has anyone explained to you about the peace process and the ceasefire? Do you feel like anyone has given you a chance to understand?**

Yes, I always go to the refugee camps and villages with my township administrator to give peace awareness [trainings].

**Let's talk about militarisation and freedom of movement. Do you think that it affects women and men differently in any way? Do women feel less secure carrying food? Can women travel alone or do they travel with another person because they feel worried about their safety?**

I think there is no safety for women.

**So you do not feel safe travelling alone as a woman?**

Yes [correct], we do not feel safe.

**So you guys travel with another woman or a man if you go from one village to another?**

We go with our friends.

**Would men travel alone from one village to another?**

I think the men do not worry [about travelling alone].

**What is your general view of healthcare? Do you access KNU clinics or a Myanmar government clinics, and what is your opinion on them?**

In my village there is no KNU clinic because it is located in a Myanmar government-controlled area, so if we are not feeling well we usually go to a Myanmar government clinic.

**What do you think about access to healthcare for women? Do they ever provide education about women's health, and do you think you can access the specific healthcare that you need as women?**

When I was in my village many groups came to provide education about healthcare, for example UNICEF [United Nations Children's Fund] and nurses, but since I left my village in 2013 I do not know they still come to provide that education or not.

**What about if a woman is pregnant? Have you heard about complications related to pregnancy or give birth?**

No, I have not heard about such complications.

**So, do you think you have adequate access to healthcare at the Myanmar government clinic?**

I do not know about access to healthcare at the Myanmar government clinic, but if we want to work as nurses or medics we have to apply for jobs and if we pass they accept us.

**So, do you go to the Myanmar government clinic at all?**

Yes, in our area.

**Do you have to pay to use the clinic?**

Yes.

**How much do you have to pay?**

If we stay in a special room we have to pay 100,000 kyats.

**Do you think healthcare should be free? Do you think you should have to pay for it? Do you think women should have to pay for healthcare?**

For the people who do not have money, I think they should not have to pay for healthcare, but as we know the situation of the Myanmar government we have to pay for the healthcare.

**Do you have any suggestions for how to make healthcare better for women? Do you need more access or more medicine?**

There is a hospital in my village, but at the township level we would suggest that there is more medicine, and that more healthcare-related education is carried out.

**Did you go to university?**

No.

**Upper secondary school?**

Yes.

**So which standard<sup>518</sup> did you finish in upper secondary school?**

Standard 10.

**Did you go to a KNU school or Myanmar government school?**

Myanmar government school.

**What do you think about access to education for women? Do you think women have enough opportunities to go to school?**

Which part?

**For example in your township or district, do they have opportunities to go to school?**

Some people who have money, they can go to school, but the people who do not have money cannot. In the KNU-controlled areas, if they pass Standards 8 or 10 the KNU support them to continue their studies. Currently, there is an upper secondary in Ler Mu Lah Township which is a KNU school.

**Do you think there are any challenges for girls to access education that boys do not face?**

Some people face challenges to access education because of financial problems. And they

<sup>518</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

cannot get enough education.

**Do you think families prioritise education for boys or girls if they have little money?**

They prioritise education for both, even if they have little money.

**So there is no discrimination?**

Yes [correct].

**We want to understand how human rights may effect women and men differently.**

What do you mean differently?

**For example, in terms of forced labour, women have to do more portering than men. Men do not have to do porter as much as women.**

[Actually], more men than women have to do porter service.

**How do you think women are affected by forced labour? Is there a difference if it happens to them [directly] or if it happens to their husbands?**

If it happens to their husbands it will cause livelihood problems for them.

**So is that because men usually work in the field and women usually stay home?**

Yes.

**Who do you think is more likely to be injured by landmines? Men or women, and why?**

Mostly men are injured by landmines because they are always active and working [in the fields and forests].

**If a woman is injured by a landmine so that she can no longer work at home, what will happen to her if she can no longer take care of the house and family?**

If women are injured by landmines so that they no longer can take care of the family, it will cause problems for both men and women as they do not work in the same roles. If the men go to work in the field they cannot also do housework.

**So if men step on landmines and cannot work in the fields and they have to stay home, women have to go to work in the fields and farms, right?**

Yes, it is also a problem for women to work in the farms and do housework as they cannot do both things at the same time.

**What about land confiscation? Do you think women are ever targeted to have their land confiscated just because they are women?**

I do not think so.

**So in your township or district do you see cases of rape or other forms of sexual violence against women?**

Yes, sometimes it happens between villagers.

**So you never see the soldiers or other people in positions of authority do it?**

No, I have never seen that.

**Do you think women feel vulnerable or do you think women feel safe in your village?**

I think [women] usually [feel unsafe near] the army camps.

**So women feel vulnerable when there are army camps based near their villages?**

No [correct]. They do not feel safe when army camps are based near their villages.

**What strategies do women use to feel safer?**

In order for women to feel safer they have organised themselves and founded a group [where they discuss] how to protect themselves, and they also give awareness trainings [to the other villagers].

**Can you explain a bit more about that? Do you have any examples?**

In my area, one of the representatives from KWO [Karen Women Organisation] who works with KWO came and gave awareness training about sexual violence and organised the women into groups. They gather each evening for the worship service and they live in unity and protect themselves from sexual violence.

**Are women in your village and your community very interested in KWO? Do they have strong relationship?**

Yes, we have a strong relationship with the KWO.

**Do you and your female friends feel comfortable discussing rape cases with each other or in the community after it has happened?**

No, they do not feel comfortable discussing rape.

**Why not?**

They feel shy talking about it in front of other people, and sometimes they even feel uncomfortable talking to their own friends about it.

**If women are raped, do they face any form of discrimination in the community?**

Yes.

**How?**

After they are raped, they feel like they have already lost their dignity and that their lives are not pure anymore.

**How does the community treat them differently?**

I cannot say.

**Women who are victims of sexual violence, are they supported by their families or their communities?**

Yes, some of them are supported by their families and their communities.

**What kind of support?**

They encourage them.

**What informal strategies do you think Karen women use to prevent or respond to these challenges? For example, you mentioned working together or going to the KWO and using warning systems. Can you think of any other examples?**

I do not know so I cannot say.

**What about legal strategies to protect themselves from land confiscation, for example like registering their land? Can you think of any ways in which women make use of the legal system to protect themselves or their property?**

Most of them ask for advice from the leaders on how to protect their lands, and they also ask them to produce land titles for them.

**Do you feel more comfortable going to the KNU legal system or the government system?**

If we ask for advice from the government side we have to pay money to them, but from the KNU side I mostly see that people do not have to pay money.

**Do you think women are treated differently under the law?**

No.

**What do you think is the biggest way in which women are discriminated against in Karen State?**

In the past, women always had to stay behind the men and that was how they were discriminated against, but now, women can work [the same] as men.

**What do you think is important for us to include in our report on women? What would you like us to report about?**

I cannot say because I do not have much experience.

**Are you proud to be a Karen women?**

Yes.

**Why?**

I am very proud to be a Karen women because we can understand many languages. The Bamar people, they do not understand Karen language.

**What do you think Karen women can or should do to make Karen State a better place for all Karen people?**

Many women should get involved in many different things to make it better place.

**Do you have any questions for us about our upcoming thematic report?**

I cannot think of any.

**If you think of anything you can ask us over the next few days. Ok thank you very much.**

### Source #153

<b>Log #</b>	15-123-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Interview with Naw A---, Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District, September 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	

Interview date: September 30<sup>th</sup> 2015

**We want to do our next big report on women in Karen State and we would like to hear your opinion on this. What you think is good to include and what not to include? So is it ok?**

Yes, I am going to tell you as I can.

**We really want to understand Karen women's perspectives on the role of Karen women, and on things like the election and ceasefire. We think it is important that the opinions of women, like yourself, are heard, especially when there is so much change taking place in Myanmar. So we will ask you some questions. Answer them if you can, but otherwise it might take too much time so hopefully we can have good conversation.**

**What role do Karen women usually play in family households, and in villages?**

In the family, the Karen women usually take care of their children, clean the house, and cook, as housewives.

**As you are a woman, do you see that the roles of women have changed? For example, like you said, the women take care of their children because they are housewives, like our grandparents used to teach them. So today, do they do the same things that they did in the past?**

At present time, the roles of women have changed. The women try to compare their shoulders with men [be equal]; what the men can do, the women can also do. They are working with organisations and participate in different organisations. Not only men are working in organisations.

**So the roles of women have changed?**

Yes, [they] have changed.

**How have the roles of women changed?**

The roles of women have changed because the situation is changing. In the past, people said that women have to stay at home to take care of children, and cook for their families, but at present time, the situation is changing because of development; therefore, women also have to work for their people, and compare their shoulders with men and work for



organisations.

**How has the community accepted the changing roles of women?**

They see it as a good thing to accept. At present time, the young Karen women are working more with [different] organisations, and we have seen that change has taken place in the villages because after the women participate in [different] trainings they spread their knowledge to the villagers, [on issues] such as sanitation.

**What are the biggest challenges that women face at present time, for example education and healthcare?**

In terms of education, [just] as men try very hard to get education, women also try their best.

**So in terms of education, women do not face any challenges?**

I don't know.

**What about healthcare? When they are pregnant, do they [have] access to healthcare, like do they get enough medicine?**

In terms of healthcare, if they live close to the hospital they do not face any problems. If they get ill or deliver babies, they go to the hospital and everything goes well. For the women who live very far from the hospital, they might face difficulties related to healthcare.

**So after they go to the hospital, do they get good care?**

Yes.

**What is the greatest need for women in order for them to improve their lives?**

They should be given opportunities in order to improve their lives.

**What kind of opportunities?**

All that men can do, they also have to give [the same] opportunities to women in order for them to do the things men can do.

**How do you think Karen women's lives have changed since the 2012 preliminary ceasefire? For example, in the past, women did not dare to stay at home because they were afraid that the Tatmadaw would come to rape them and beat them if they were home. Do those things still occur or have things changed?**

Women's lives have changed in terms of that, because in the past, during the conflict period, they always ran to the jungle. They had no opportunity to study and always concealed themselves in the jungle. They also faced challenges related to healthcare when they got ill. At present time, the parents who live near the towns send their children to town to study, and if they live near a refugee camp, they send their children there. So we have seen more educated people.

**So the women's lives have changed?**

Yes, at the present time, we see that many women are educated.

**As the NCA [Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement] was signed, do you think it will have**

**impact women's lives, [for example] in terms of rape cases and forced labour?**

For our Karen people, we have not seen those things occurring in our area, but for other ethnic groups in Myanmar, we heard that after they signed the ceasefire, the military went to attack their area and raped women so it caused problems for the women. Even though abuses have not occurred in the KNU [Karen National Union]-controlled areas, there are many things occurring in other ethnic areas.

**So the people who treated the women like that, were they an armed group?**

Yes.

**Which armed group?**

Tatmadaw.

**What do you think about the election?**

I do not know about the election because I never asked people.

**So do you think the election is good or bad?**

As I am Karen, I think the election does not bring any benefits to the Karen people, but for the Bamar people they might get benefits from the election. But for Karen people like me, I do not think it can bring benefits as we live in jungle.

**Why?**

Because even if they signed the ceasefire agreement, they always provoke other people, and if people fight against them they will also act against them.

**What do you mean by provoke?**

In the township and village tracts in the lower part they built a pagoda in a church compound, and in my opinion that is not a good thing to do. They are just provoking other people.

**Do you know what the lower part township is?**

Yes, Dwe Lo Township.

**Can you vote in your township?**

No, we do not vote here. The people who are going to vote might be those who live near Hpapun Town, but here the people are not allowed to vote.

**If you could vote, would you go vote?**

No, I would not go.

**Why not?**

Even if I am going to vote, I think there is no benefit for my people because everything [the political parties promise] is not realistic.

**Do you think the election will have any positive impact for your villagers and family?**

I do not know.

**So do you think the election will bring peace for the villagers in your township or district?**

People said it will be bring peace, but we are not sure if it is realistic or not.

**What do you think about the peace process?**

I think if the peace process is realistic, then we can live peacefully, even our next generation and our people [can live peacefully].

**What do you, as a woman, think about the 2012 preliminary ceasefire and the 2015 Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement?**

At present time?

**Yes.**

We have concerns that even though they said they signed the ceasefire agreement, they just say it with their mouths, and it does not come from their hearts, therefore, it might cause problems for us. We have concerns that it is not genuine. [If it were genuine] they [the Tatmadaw] would withdraw their army camps as our leaders [KNU] asked them to do, and relocate. The number of troops that they sent to local areas should be reduced. At present, even though they signed the ceasefire agreement they have not reduced the numbers of troops, instead they will send more troops.

***Mu ghar*<sup>519</sup> you said the leaders asked them to withdraw their army camps. What kind of leaders?**

The leaders who went to meet [other ethnic leaders] earlier, before they signed the agreement. They asked them to withdraw five army camps but, they did not withdraw.

**After the ceasefire was signed, do women feel safer?**

I do not know about that.

**Are the women allowed to study?**

Yes, the women are encouraged to study now, just as the men are.

**If they want to study at university or college, are they allowed to study?**

Yes.

**Do you think that the following human rights abuses affect men and women differently? For example: forced labour: are women and men forced to do labour work in the same way?**

Women do less labour work than men. The KNU did not ask women to do labour work but the Tatmadaw asked both women and men.

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<sup>519</sup> *Mu ghar* is a familiar S'gaw Karen term of respect attributed to an older woman that translates to "aunt," but it does not necessarily signify any actual familial relationship.

**After the 2012 preliminary ceasefire, how were the women forced to work?**

I do not know about after the 2012 preliminary ceasefire, but in the past they asked them.

**In Day Poo Noh village and Mu Traw [Hpapun] District, have people [armed groups] planted landmines?**

Yes they have planted [landmines].

**Who are more likely to be injured, men or women?**

More men are being injured by the landmines.

**After they are injured by the landmines, do their families face any consequences?**

I did not hear the parents complain about their children being injured by the landmines.

**Do they face any problem related to their livelihood? For example, after they stepped on a landmine, they face livelihood problems. Does this happen in your area?**

I am not sure about facing livelihood problems, but for the young people who are injured from landmines, if they want to study, the leaders support them. One lady who stepped on a landmine came to stay here, and the leaders arranged for her to be able to study, but she did not want to study, so then she went back to her village.

**Do you know her name?**

I do not know.

**Where does she live?**

In the upper part.

**Do you know township that she lives?**

Yes, Lu Thaw Township.

**Have you heard about land confiscation?**

Yes, I have. Most of the land confiscations occur in the lower part.

**Do they confiscate the lands because the owners are women?**

I do not know. The land confiscations usually happen in the lower part, in Tatmadaw-controlled areas, but it does not happen in KNU-controlled areas. The Tatmadaw confiscated a lot of land located near the towns.

***Mu ghar* you said “lower part township,” can you tell us the name of that township?**

Most of the land confiscation happened in Dwe Loh Township.

**Do you think more women are participating in political roles?**

Yes, at present time many women are participating.

***Mu ghar* do you want to add more information?**

No.

***Mu ghar* can we use the information that you have given us in our thematic report?**

If the information is relevant for your report you can use it, but I am not sure if the information that I have given you is it the right information for you or not.

**Thank you very much *mu ghar* for your information.**

**Source #154**

<b>Log #</b>	15-123-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Hpapun Interview: Naw N---, October 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Hpapun District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**So, we were hoping that you could give us your opinion and perspective on women in Karen State.**

Regarding the situation for women in Karen State, in the past as well as now, women are responsible for work at home. They also work in the villages with, for example, looking after patients, and teaching. At home, they have to work with housework and taking care of their children.

**What is the difference between work that men do and work that women do?**

There is no big difference. But since women are weak compared with men, they cannot work like men.

**What kind of work [that men do] cannot be done by women?**

Work like cutting down trees or building houses. They cannot carry wood and build houses alone. Men can build houses although they are alone.

**Over your lifetime, do you think that women's roles have changed in Karen State?**

I have not seen much change. In the past, I did not see women working in organisations, but now woman can work in organisations. That is the change. They also work in [government] departments or offices.

**Why? Has it been accepted by the community or culture? Is it seen as a good or positive thing?**

People see that women have standard [are qualified to do these kinds of jobs]. They can travel and work more and have more knowledge [now compare with the past].

**As a woman, what is the biggest challenge in your life?**

The biggest challenge in my life is that I do not have a high education. I also do not have much knowledge.

**Do you think it is the same for men?**

Some men might feel the same.

**Why do you feel like you do not have a high education and a lot of knowledge?**

Because when we work in organisations or in the community, we cannot talk fluently and understand other people's language [English]. That is a challenge for us.

**How do you think Karen women's lives have changed after the ceasefire?**

I do not see any change.

**Why?**

Because I do not see that woman are able to travel and talk freely. If they travel, they need to have identification [documents].

**What about the NCA [Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement],<sup>520</sup> do you think it will have an impact on women?**

I do not know.

**What is your perspective on the [2015 general] election? Do you think it is important to you? Can you vote? Will you vote and why?**

I cannot vote. I do not have a chance [to vote]. I do not have education. There is no one who is going to give us education on how to vote.

**Do you have Myanmar identification [documents]?**

I do not.

**Hypothetically, if you were given the chance to vote, would you vote?**

I do not know.

**Is there any political party that provides education [regarding how to vote] in this area?**

I have not seen any political party providing education on how to vote.

<sup>520</sup> On October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, after a negotiation process marred with controversy over the notable non-inclusion of several ethnic armed groups and on-going conflicts in ethnic regions, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed between the Myanmar government and eight of the fifteen ethnic armed groups originally invited to the negotiation table, including the KNU, see "[Myanmar signs ceasefire with eight armed groups](#)," Reuters, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015. Despite the signing of the NCA prompting a positive response from the international community, see "[Myanmar: UN chief welcomes 'milestone' signing of ceasefire agreement](#)," *UN News Centre*, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, KNU Chairman General Saw Mutu Say Poe's decision to sign has been met with strong opposition from other members of the Karen armed resistance and civil society groups alike, who believe the decision to be undemocratic and the NCA itself to be a superficial agreement that risks undermining a genuine peace process, see "[Without Real Political Roadmap, Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement Leads Nowhere...](#)," *Karen News*, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. The signing of the NCA followed the January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 preliminary ceasefire agreement between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the preliminary ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

**Do you think it is important that women are participating in politics?**

It is important. If woman participate in politics, it is good. However, I do not see many women participating in politics. There are few women in politics. There are more men.

**What about the village level, do you know of any women who are village leaders or village tract leaders? And what are your thoughts on that?**

In the past, I saw that there were some women village heads in Brigade 1 [Thaton District].

**Do you know her name?**

Her name is Daw Htar.

**As a woman, do you feel safer after the ceasefire?**

There is more safety and if we want to travel we are less afraid. For example, if it only takes one or two hours to go between two villages, we dare to travel. In the past, we dared not travel [like this].

**What is your thought on the NCA that was signed recently?**

I do not know.

**What about the [2012] preliminary ceasefire?<sup>521</sup>**

Although they said that there the ceasefire agreement started from 2012, there is still fighting happening.

**What do you do when you get ill or when your children get ill? Do you go to a clinic here in the KNU area or do you go to the town?**

If I am ill, I take medicine at home. I never go to the clinic. Even though we go to the clinic, there is not enough medicine there.

**If you go to the clinic, which clinic do you go to?**

We go to the KNU clinic.

**Where is that clinic built?**

It is in D--- village.

**If you get really ill, do you go to town?**

As for me, I never get really ill. I just get a little bit ill.

<sup>521</sup> The KHRG community member is referring to the preliminary ceasefire agreement that was signed on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 between the KNU and Myanmar government in Hpa-an. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the preliminary ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014. On October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, after a negotiation process marred with controversy over the notable non-inclusion of several ethnic armed groups and on-going conflicts in ethnic regions, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed between the Myanmar government and eight of the fifteen ethnic armed groups originally invited to the negotiation table, including the KNU, see ["Myanmar signs ceasefire with eight armed groups,"](#) Reuters, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015.



**What is the quality of healthcare here?**

Regarding the building where the clinic department is here, it looks good. If the patients go to the clinic, they [the health workers] provide treatment for them when they have enough medicine. If they do not have enough medicine, they send the patients to another clinic.

**Where do they then send to?**

To Thailand, for example Chaing Mai or Mae Sariang.

**Are there any plans to improve health care for women and children?**

We need people to provide healthcare awareness regarding [general topics]. I mean we need to know more about how to treat illnesses. If we have more knowledge, we can treat illnesses [better]. The healthcare sector will improve a little bit.

**Do you want people who understand health very well to come and give you trainings on how to treat illnesses?**

Yes, we want the people who work in the healthcare sector to come and give us education regarding health care.

**How were you educated? Did you go to school? How has the education system changed since you were young?**

In the past, it was difficult for us to study. We had to study in the forest. When I was young, we always had to flee since the Tatmadaw always came to our village. If we could study one day, we had to study one day. Some days, we did not have a chance to study. It was very difficult to study in the past. Now, I see that children can learn freely. There is nothing that is going to disturb them. However, there might be some children whose parents cannot send them to school.

**Did parents encourage their sons to go to school more than their daughters in the past? Is that culture still practised now?**

Now, I see that parents are trying to send their children to school regardless of whether they are boys or girls. In the past, mostly boys were sent to school. As for girls, they were asked to stay at home to look after their siblings and help their parents.

**How do human rights abuses affect men and women differently? For example forced labour, do you know people who have been subjected to forced labour? Did it affect men and women differently?**

I did not see anything in terms of forced labour in the past. Since we lived in a KNU-controlled area, if the Tatmadaw came into our village, we had to flee. There was no forced labour.

**What about landmines, are more men or women injured? How are women affected by landmines? What happens to a woman if her husband is injured by a landmine and can no longer work?**

Those who are injured by landmines are mostly men. I have never seen a woman hit by a landmine. Women whose husbands are injured by landmines have to face difficulties with regard to their livelihoods. They also have to look after their children and themselves. They

have to face many difficulties.

**Have you heard about land confiscation? How is that affecting women and men differently?**

With regard to land confiscation, there is no KNU or Tatmadaw land confiscation of villagers land. Only the [Myanmar] government has confiscated villagers land [around here].

**In terms of sexual violence in Karen culture, are women able to talk about this issue with their families or their communities? Do they feel discriminated against by their families or their communities when an incident like that takes place?**

Personally, I see that if a woman has been raped, they dare talk to their parents. However, they dare not talk to their communities. Even though you go and ask them, they dare not talk to you about it.

**Do they dare to report it to the leader?**

No, they dare not. They worry that many people will know about it and people will look down upon them.

**Can you think of any informal strategies that Karen women use, for example if their lands get confiscated? What would they do? How do they react if their lands are confiscated? Do they report it to KWO [Karen Women Organisation] or the village head?**

When the Myanmar government confiscated their land, some of them dared to report it to the KNU government or the village head.

**Do you think access to justice is fair for women?**

If they report it to the village head, they can have justice.

**What do you think we should include if we write our next thematic report on Karen women?**

Women in Karen state want all women to have the same rights as men; they should have the right to travel [freely] like men [are allowed to travel]. And like men are able to be elected, women should also be able to be elected.

**What do you mean by elected?**

To be elected to work for the community.

**Do you mean not enough women have a chance to be elected and work for their communities?**

If we look at the people [leaders] who attend the meetings for the ceasefire, there are only a few women and there are mostly men.

**Do you think enough women have been given a chance to understand and engage in the peace process, including the ceasefire?**

In our area, there is no one who provides ceasefire awareness.

**What about men?**

Both men and women, I have not seen that they provide ceasefire awareness.

**A lot of people from different countries will be reading this [upcoming] report. What do you want them to know about Karen women and Karen culture?**

I do not know what to say.

**Is there anything you would like to add regarding women's issues in Karen State?**

There is nothing else.

**Thank you so much for your time.**

**Source #155**

<b>Log #</b>	15-124-A1-I1
<b>Title</b>	Mergui-Tavoy Interview: Naw M---, November 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	K'Ser Doh Township, Mergui-Tavoy District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Can you give us your name?**

Naw M---.

**Your age?**

18 years old.

**What is your township?**

K'Ser Doh Township.

**What do you think about our upcoming thematic report [focusing on women]? Do you think it is a good idea or not?**

I think it is good idea.

**Why do you think so?**

In order for people to [understand and] improve [the situation].

**What do you think women's rights are? What does it mean to you?**

I cannot say.

**I know we talk a lot about this and there are no right or wrong answers. We are honestly interested in what you are thinking, your personal opinion and the things you see in your district. So do not be shy. We are just having a conversation with you.**

**In your experience, what role do women usually play in their families and villages? What do women usually do in their daily lives?**

They usually do housework, washing, and cooking.

**As a Karen woman, do you think your role has changed [over time]? Do you see any differences between your parents' generation and your generation?**

In the past, women could not travel alone but now they can travel safely.

**For example, in your parents' generation, your parents work with one thing but in your generation you work with something different. Have you seen any changes like that?**

I do not know.

**As a woman in Karen State, what do you think the biggest challenges are facing you as a woman?**

What kind of problem?

**It can be anything. Do you think women need access to healthcare or better to access to education? Or do you think women need more opportunities to earn their livelihoods. In your own personal opinion, what needs to improve in the lives of Karen women?**

They need healthcare and more opportunities.

**Why do women need more opportunities? Do they not have enough opportunities in your village? Can you explain a little bit?**

They need more opportunities in order for them to do what they want, and people need to give them permission [to do what they want] and independence.

**When they finish school, what do women usually do?**

After they finish school, if they want to teach they can teach, and if they want to be medics they also can be medics.

**What other jobs do women do after school? Are there just teachers and medics? Is there anything else that they do?**

They are not only teachers and medics; they can also be headmistresses and government officials.

**Do you think women's lives have changed? I know we have discussed it a little bit earlier in the group, but how do you think women's lives have changed since the 2012 preliminary ceasefire?**

Women's lives have changed in a positive way.

**What kind of positive changes have you seen? Can you give one an example?**

After the ceasefire was signed, women dared go to the jungle to collect firewood.

**Did women feel afraid to collect firewood before the ceasefire?**

Yes.

**Why were they afraid?**

[They felt scared before because] in the past the soldiers would usually lurk in the jungle.

**Are you familiar with the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement<sup>522</sup> that was recently signed?**

Yes.

**Do you think it has had an impact on women's lives, and if so, how?**

I do not know.

**Do you think the [2015 general] election is relevant to you? Do you think it will impact your life at all? Do you think that it can bring any benefits to you?**

The benefit is that after the ceasefire was signed, we can travel freely as we please.

**Can you vote? Do you have a Myanmar ID [identification card]?**

Yes I can, but now I am not staying near the polling places.

**Your name is not on the list?**

My name is on the list.

**Are you going to vote?**

If I will be there [in my home area] I will go and vote.

**So if you won't be there you will not vote?**

No, I will not vote.

**Did anybody tell you that you should vote?**

Yes, in my village people told me [to vote].

**Who told you that you should vote?**

The people who are campaigning.

<sup>522</sup> On October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, after a negotiation process marred with controversy over the notable non-inclusion of several ethnic armed groups and on-going conflicts in ethnic regions, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed between the Myanmar government and eight of the fifteen ethnic armed groups originally invited to the negotiation table, including the KNU, see "[Myanmar signs ceasefire with eight armed groups](#)," Reuters, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015. Despite the signing of the NCA prompting a positive response from the international community, see "[Myanmar: UN chief welcomes 'milestone' signing of ceasefire agreement](#)," *UN News Centre*, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, KNU Chairman General Saw Mutu Say Poe's decision to sign has been met with strong opposition from other members of the Karen armed resistance and civil society groups alike, who believe the decision to be undemocratic and the NCA itself to be a superficial agreement that risks undermining a genuine peace process, see "[Without Real Political Roadmap, Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement Leads Nowhere...](#)," *Karen News*, September 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. The signing of the NCA followed the January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 preliminary ceasefire agreement between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the preliminary ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

**Who are those people?**

They are from the Myanmar government.

**So the Myanmar government came and told you guys to vote?**

Yes, in my village.

**Which township?**

I do not know.

**Is K'Ser Doh [Township] controlled by the KNU [Karen National Union] or the Myanmar government?**

It is a KNU-controlled area.

**So your village is in the KNU-controlled area?**

Yes.

**Do you talk about the election or peace process with your female friends? Is that something you talk about when you hang out?**

No.

**Why not?**

We are not interested in it.

**So it is not something that you are interested in?**

Yes [correct].

**In our [previous] discussion, we had an interesting discussion about the fact that women can travel freely. Do you agree that after the ceasefire women feel safe to walk around by themselves, even outside their villages?**

I do not agree at all.

**Why do you not agree at all?**

Because even if people say that the peace process is taking place, we do not know what will happen in the future.

**So women are still worried about their safety because they are not sure that the ceasefire will last?**

Yes [correct].

**Is the village head of your village a man or a woman?**

Man.

**When did he become village head?**

In 2015.

**Who was the village head before? A man or a woman?**

Man.

**Have you ever had a female village head?**

No.

**Do you know of any villages or village tracts nearby your village that have female village heads?**

No.

**Some people here said they found that more men have taken over women's roles as village heads, since the ceasefire was signed. Has this been the case at all in your area?**

No.

**So you have not seen yet?**

Yes [correct].

**Are there a lot of development [projects] around your village or in your area?**

In my village, no development [projects] have taken place.

**So there is no gold mining, or other types of mining, industrial zones or plantations? Nothing like that?**

No.

**Do you notice any damage of the environment in your area like polluted rivers, logging in the forest so the people cannot get firewood, or other things like that?**

Nothing [like that] has happened in my area.

**Do you have a clinic in your village?**

No.

**So when you get ill where do you go?**

When we get sick we go to Kyalout and Palout.

**Are they towns?**

Yes.

**How far away are those towns?**

Going from my village to Palout [Town] will not take one hour.



**By walking?**

We rent a car and go by car.

**In your village or your area, have you heard about women who have health problems and fall ill, for example when they are pregnant, because there is no clinic in your village?**

No.

**The clinic that is one hour away, is that a government or KNU clinic?**

Government clinic.

**Do you feel like you get adequate treatment when you go there?**

Yes, but we have to pay [for treatment].

**But is it expensive?**

Yes.

**Do these expensive fees sometimes keep you from going to the clinic? Would you rather just recover on your own, or would you go to the clinic even though it expensive?**

If we do not get seriously ill, we just stay here and get better on our own.

**Did you finish high school? What is highest standard<sup>523</sup> that you have finished?**

I finished Standard 8.

**Was it a KNU school or a government school?**

Government school.

**Why did you not finish Standard 10?**

Because of lack of money.

**Do you want to finish Standard 10?**

Yes, I do.

**How much does it cost you to finish Standard 10?**

It costs [the tuition fee for Standard 10 is] 600,000 or 700,000 kyat to finish Standard 10.

**Per year?**

Yes.

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<sup>523</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

**Do you have brothers?**

No.

**Do you have sisters?**

Yes.

**Older or younger?**

Younger.

**They are in school?**

Yes they are.

**Do you think they will study to Standard 10 or do you think will they stop at 8 as well?**

I do not know.

**How do you think education can be improved in your township?**

I cannot say.

**Do you hear about rape or sexual violence in your area, or torture against women?**

No.

**Do you feel vulnerable or at risk as a women?**

I feel a little bit afraid.

**Why or in which situation?**

When we travel we feel afraid.**So when you are traveling?**

Yes.

**What is it about traveling that makes you feel at risk as women?**

When we travelled on the road there were police check points, and they questioned us.

**Were they police or army?**

When I travelled I mostly saw the army.

**Which armed groups are based around your village?**

I do not know the name of armed group.

**Do you have army camps near your village?**

No.

**No? But there are soldiers around your village?**

No.

**So you have just that when you travel from one place to another, there was checkpoint?**

No.

**You said that travelling on the road where there are checkpoints makes women feel unsafe. So, does this not happen in your area?**

Yes [correct].

**Do women feel comfortable talking openly about sexual violence?**

Yes.

**Women who are raped, are they ever discriminated against by their families or communities in any anyway?**

No.

**How are women treated by their families and communities when rape happens?**

People solve the problems for them.

**How do they solve [the problems]?**

They go to [meet] with the village head.

**So it is not only rapes cases. It could also be lands confiscation etc. So the first person they talk to is the village head?**

Yes.

**So the victims talk to their families and then their families talk to the village head?**

Yes.

**Who does the village head talk to afterwards?**

I do not know about that.

**How do the women protect themselves? I mean what strategy do they use?**

I cannot say.

**Do you ever walk alone at night?**

I usually walk alone in my village.

**So you are feeling safe to work alone in your village?**

I feel safe because it is my own village.

**Have you ever travelled from your village to another village alone?**

No.

**Why not?**

I do not want to travel so do not travel.

**Would you bring female friends or male friends if you travel alone from one village to another village?**

If we travel to other villages we usually bring female friends with us.

**Do you think Karen women care about women's rights? Do you think Karen women know their rights as women and do you think they care about having equal rights with men?**

I cannot say.

**What kind of women do you look up to? Any role models?**

I do not look up to any women.

**It could be someone in your family, your teachers, or Aung San Suu Kyi. Do you think Karen women have good role models to look up to?**

No.

**Do you have KWO [Karen Women Organisation] or any other NGOs [non-governmental organisations] that work for women in your area?**

No.

**So, as you do not have KWO in your area, who would you go to if you have problems, say if your land was confiscated or you feel like you are discriminated against because you are a woman. Who would you go and talk to?**

Regarding land confiscation, people in my village talk to the village head.

**I know we talked a little bit over the week about the topics in the report that we are working on. Do you think we are missing anything? Do you think there other topics that we should include in our report?**

No.

**Do you think there are women, like yourself, who want to finish high school or go to university, but who cannot because of money?**

Yes some [women].

**Any of your friends?**

Some of them are my friends and some of them are not my friends.

**Do you think school should be free or do you think you should have to pay to go to school?**

It might be better to get free education.

**Who do you think should take responsibility [for this]? Do you think it should be the KNU or the Myanmar government? Do you have any recommendations for how access to education for women could be improved?**

I cannot say.

**What do you think is the most important thing for women of your age? It could be getting married, getting an education, or it could be just having fun. What is most important to you? What makes you happy?**

To get healthcare.

**Why?**

If we have good health we can travel where we want and we can work happily.

**Thank you. Do you want to add anything?**

No.

#### Source #156

<b>Log #</b>	15-125-A4-I1
<b>Title</b>	Interview: Naw L---, Nyaunglebin District, November 2015
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Nyaunglebin District
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Name:</b> Naw L---</p> <p><b>Gender:</b> Female</p> <p><b>Age:</b> 53 years</p> <p><b>Village:</b> B--- village</p> <p><b>Ethnicity:</b> Religion: Karen/Christian</p> <p><b>Occupation:</b> Church group member</p> <p><b>Position:</b> Church group member</p> <p><b>Please firstly tell me what is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw L---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>53 years old</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>I was born here in Ler Doh [Township], B--- village.</p>	

**What is your job? What do you do for living?**

I just support in the church as a church group member. In the church I play piano for the children. And children who are interested in it they come and join it. We also act for the Karen young generation to let them know about the story of the Karen.

**What is your responsibility?**

I do not have specific duty and now I am doing everything, whatever I found that needs to be done. I was requested to do many things but I did not accept any of them. Karen Women's Organisation Myanmar also called me to join them but I cannot help them effectively because since my father passed away I have to take over his jobs. My father was the director of H--- [Shwegyin] Baptist Christian Association. My father passed away four years ago and no one replaced him so I have to take over his jobs.

**I have found some people reported about the confiscation of H--- [Shwegyin] land through the media. So what do you know about that? Please explain me about it a little bit?**

I was born later but I have lived with my father all of his lifetime and I knew about the story. In the past H--- was called as Shwegyin and Karen mission high school is located in Shwegyin. Since the revolution begun people fled and my came back to Ler Doh after the Insein Bible School closed as he attended that school. He was leading and organising the villagers but at that time most of the villagers had already fled to other places. After my father got the villagers collected [together] then we resettled in Ler Doh and we named the place where we resettle as B--- village. We resettled in that place in 1960. My father started to organise the villagers who fled to the jungle and established mission high school in 1960 but in 1964 it became the government high school in Kyaukyi Town. Because all schools became the government school and our mission higher school also became Kyaukkyi government high school.

**In what year was that?**

In 1960 and we have fled for 10 years.

**In which year did your father set up the school?**

In 1960, not only the school but also the village as well.

**Where did they [your father and villagers] live before?**

Before, as soon as the revolution began, we fled into the jungle. In 1950 we fled into the jungle and in 1951 we formed the first Kaw Thoo Lei government High School in K---village. At that time he [father] was only 28 years old, and when he attended Bible school he was 27 years old. When he found out the situation is getting stable in part of Per Htee then we came back. Before we came back to Ler Doh we came back to M--- village. At that time in 1956 he [father] formed one middle school over there [M--- village] as well. The Myanmar government told us that living at M--- village is not good as it is close to the outsider people [KNU] so come back and stay under our control in Ler Doh. So at the end of 1959 - 1960 we started to establish the school and village in Ler Doh.

**So the K---School was started at 1951 right?**

Yes.

**So in which year do they [father and villagers] move back [to M---]?**

It was in 1956.

**Then in what year do they [father and villagers] moved to Ler Doh?**

It was in 1960.

**Did people live in that place at the time?**

No one lived in it and it was completely forest, full of devils and the fighting happening in the surrounding [area]. And when we were cleaning the place the dogs sometimes brought a human hand or leg. At that time Karen [KNU] was killing Burmese [Tatmadaw] and Burmese [Tatmadaw] killing Karen [KNU]. That was happening very often and people wanted to flee from that place but my father said that we should not flee all the time and let just stay, united. Then we just kept living in it [M---] and finally it became a village. There is no machine when cleaning the place so we were just cutting down the trees and bushes by hands and we had to dig out the root of the trees hard.

**Were you already born at that time?**

I was born in 1962.

**What is your father name?**

Thara Saw H-----.

**Was he married at the time?**

He got married since he established the Kaw Thoo Lei government high school.

**How many households [were there] when people first came and lived in that place [M-- village]?**

Around 14 to 15 households but at first he [Saw H---] asked help for one villager to build a house for the teacher. The villagers organised up themselves and build up the house and there is one building in H---and one in S--- and one in M--- for the teachers. For the students also their parents prepared the house for them as well. So at the beginning there will be around 20 to 30 households and we also built up some huts. And later on when the situation [conflict] is getting stable the village also getting improved.

**To whom does he ask for help?**

To villagers from other villages. The villagers that fled are from Mone Township and Ler Doh Township.

**What do they [Saw Htoo and villagers] name the school that they established here in Ler Doh village?**

They named it B--- Karen Mission High School. There were some difficulties when establishing the school as they needed the school materials for building up a school so he [Saw H---] sold his heritage field from his parents, around 5 to 6 acres. He started to establish the school like that and built up a small building and at the time we had a proper food supply (paddy) but he prioritised to do the needed things first. At the beginning it was



not easy to collect the salary for teachers but later on villagers supported that gradually. Our betel plantation in Mone Township was gone for that school.

**So the teachers have to fund themselves?**

Yes, just for only one to two years and the villagers also understand the difficult situation and at the time the official salary of teachers is 200 kyat to 300 kyat but villagers only able to pay 150 kyat by the understanding.

**Where does he [Saw H---] get the teachers?**

Just among from the people who fled.

**Are they Karen or Burmese?**

All are Karen.

**Are there any other ethnic people come and attend that school?**

Many Burmese come and attend that school because it is the first high school and the grade is only up to 6 standards in Ler Doh. So people who have money they just go to Toungoo and Nyaunglebin to continue the high school and for those people [who] do not have money they just quit the school after they reached 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> standards. Because of that condition my father established the high school. The vision was [that] education is the main [priority] and because we do not have education so education was the main [way to] control [people], not power as [the way to] control. As a proverb said 'wisdom is supreme: if we have knowledge and wisdom then we will have a stable life'. We were displaced in 1959 and now [after that] [we wanted to live stably so we established a high school in 1960 and in 1964 our school became a Myanmar government school. And in 1970 my father formed a Bible school as there was only Insein Bible School at that time and there is difficulty to go and attend that school.

**Did the Myanmar government give him [Saw H---] permission to form that [Bible] school?**

Yes, when we lived in M--- they [Myanmar government] told us that you live close to outside people [KNU] and as it is in the between of KNU and Myanmar government one of them will misunderstanding for sure as you live between them. So come back and live under the Myanmar government control then my father came back [to] live under the Myanmar government control.

**So Myanmar government recognises the place that you recently [now] live in?**

Yes, they [Myanmar government] asked my father to come and have a look at the place and my father chose the place by himself. There was no Myanmar military department office or other building at that time. Just after we resettled over there they [Myanmar military] requested to come and live in it. And my father considered that he just has to have [a good] relationship with them so he allowed the Myanmar military to come and live on [the land].

**How many acres of land was he [Saw H---] allowed by the Myanmar military to live in?**

At that time he was allowed to live on the whole military place and what I heard is that it was around 20 acres. The total extensive of the military land is 46 acres and my father was allowed to live in for 20 acres and it was half of the land that my father was able to use. But they [Myanmar military] also came and lived on it and my father told them 'please stay a little

bit far from us,' and they replied that they just want to live close to us. But now our missionary land was left as only 8 acres since they [Myanmar military] put in their buildings but the buildings are getting damaged then they plan to move to Battalion #60.

**Have people from the land management ministry come and measured your [missionary] land?**

Just once at the beginning and when the issue is getting more then they measured again and the extent of our land was left as very little. They just kept the measurement result at their office, they did not show us. They just told us when we went to their office that your land was not 40 acres anymore and what was left was very small.

**What is the size they said when they measured the land for the first time?**

It was 46.20 acres. The top leaders from Bago and Yangon Divisions came and they asked the land management department to measure the land.

**Do you know their names?**

Commander Khin Ohne and Commander Sein Win who is the first Senior General of Myanmar.

**In what year was the land confirmed [as a missionary land]?**

In 1964 and they gave us the map of the land but our land remaining as application land [land pending a land title]. Then my father asked responsible people about the land and they replied that it is fine if you have the map of this land because you are the first who entered onto this land and you already have evidence so people cannot make trouble [take your land]. And we made sure and asked the land management and they said that it is correct. At that time no one who is dealing [with] land issues [had problems] like that.

**Did you get a land grant at that time?**

No one in Shwegin and Ler Doh [Townships] has [a] land grant because it was the conflict time. Even now there are many people who do not have a land grant. But those who have a close relationship with the leaders [Tatmadaw], they do have land grants, and those who do not have a close relationship do not.

**In what year do they [Myanmar military] take back the land?**

As I have mentioned, since we entered and resettled onto that land they also came and lived on it.

**How do they put their base camp on it?**

They just came and repaired the place for their soldiers on somewhere [on the land]. At the time there was only military and later on they were asked to move back to Than Bo then they reduced their soldiers and when they reduced their soldiers on that land they built up their township office again. At that time we did not have a chance to report or submit the complaint letter about so our land was not left [with] much [acreage].

**Do they repair [improve] their buildings after 1960?**

They did not improve the buildings after 1960 and their buildings were damaged then they came and lived in our church buildings which are bible student buildings and bible teachers

buildings and [the] township office. The township office was totally damaged and my father repaired the other two damaged buildings. Because we lived in the border area for 17 years and my father lost the connection with the relevant leaders but in the past if something happened they came and informed my father and because my father lost connection with them while living on the border area my father was not able to repair our church buildings and they were damaged. We came back [from the border] in 1997 and my father checked those buildings and repaired some of the damage buildings. And when he repaired the buildings he faced some difficulties and he said to the Myanmar military that you guys came and lived in our buildings and now you do not allow me to repair the buildings.

### **Who did not allow him?**

Tactical Commander U Thet Oo. U Thet Oo got promoted to the position very quickly because he was taking too much [a lot of] power when he was in Mone Township and when he came here my father faced [spoke] with him directly and then he disappeared. He was just abusing his power that like and when came back again to Ler Doh after he disappeared for a while he detained two of my father's subordinates who my father asked to take down the buildings and he [U Thet Oo] charged my father for 4000 kyat for each of his subordinates to take them back [release them] from his detention.

### **What does the current situation look like by now?**

In 2012 when we were cleaning the compound [church land] another tactical commander came and told us that he does not know all of the story regarding this church land and he said that [we should] just leave a plot of land for him and clean the rest of the land. And then the officers from the township level asked us to stop cleaning the land as the peace [military situation] is not surely stable. Then we stopped since then and now we started over again because our land was almost confiscated and now the opportunity has opened up [to reclaim it]. Like before, some students have to go and attend the school at the refugee camp and they have difficulties and now the situation is getting better and people would like to come back inside of the country. [They would like to] attend either the bible school or the government school here in Ler Doh that is why we need more place [land] for the learning centre. Now we need the place for the students and for the dining place and agriculture place and we have to put up those buildings. And on other hand, our land was confiscated by people [Myanmar government] and we have to try to get back the rest of our remaining land. Actually we just want to stay on our land peacefully but they do not care about that.

### **What did they tell to you?**

According to our previous meeting with township officers – not the top one [highest-ranking officer] just the lower two officers - they said that they do not know about this land [confiscation] issue and they just got the order from the Nay Pyi Taw [headquarters] to inquire and report about it and they did it. But, 7 to 8 months after that report about our investigation [about the land confiscation issue] we did not get any response from them. They also told me that they do not know about the building [on the confiscated land] as well so you have to ask about that to general administration officer but at lunch time we cannot find the general administration officer and we do not know where he is. So we do not know what their tricky action [plan] to us is.

### **Have they built up the buildings a lot? What have they built up?**

There are three types of building that they plan to build up which are the cooperative office, the commission office and the community development office. The first building that they started to build up was [being built] only for two or three weeks. The construction workers are saying that they [are] just doing this because of the order and if we got the order to stop constructing the building then we can stop.

**Do they build up any other buildings on the land?**

I heard that the municipality is the contractor for the building which is constructed on our church land. So we just let it continue and we don't want the thing get messed up [cause trouble] and we just want to get the rest of our remaining land. I don't know how much of our remaining land is left and I think it would be only around 4 to 5 acres. I have no idea how to tell them to stop building on our church land or [if we should] let them just finish the first building that they have already constructed and not continue the other two buildings because even one building takes a up a large space. We do not know what to do about this and if we just let them carry on then our land will be gone [lost].

**Have you ever tried to take any action based on what they are doing?**

We tried to submit the complaint letter once to twice, but they did not send our complaint letter to the above [relevant department that deals with land issues]. They just said that it is not easy to deal with this, as your land has no [land] grant and you don't have enough evidence [that you own it]. But the third time, our complaint letter arrived to the superiors, and they ordered [their staff to] investigate this land issue, but I don't think this guy [their assistant leader] will help us with the land issue. They just know that our Karen people are easy going, so they do not take us seriously and just treat us this way.

**How many buildings have they already built?**

They have started to build up the first building by now.

**I mean since in the past and till now a day.**

In the past when my father came back [to Ler Doh] they built up the USDP [Union Solidarity and Development Party] office and the exchange office. I head that they also repaired the information office but the situation was getting worse so they stopped however I heard that they rebuilt it in another place. For us, we are just waiting for the order from the leaders in Nay Pyi Daw about how they will handle this for us but we have not heard anything and now they [Myanmar military] have started putting the buildings up.

**So how do you feel when you got no response for what your actions taken [submitted the complaint letter]?**

Our Karen people are the people who want to live life peacefully. Then I tried to organise up [the community] but our villagers and religious leaders have different opinions and just because [of this] they [Myanmar military] take the opportunity on it [to take the land]. Since the B--- village was formed I organised villagers [young people] and village leaders and church leaders and we acted in our own sectors and cleaned up the land. Now I find the way and we should not give up easily like before when people threatened us and we were afraid of the challenges. Our forefathers have been committed [by] themselves to establish villages for a long time and now those people [military] do not need to commit anything [to establish a new village] and they can make up this [claim] for the land to become their property. Now we feel that it is not appropriate to lose our heritage land from our forefathers easily therefore we need to stand up and work together and now I think the opportunity is open up for us [to act]. However they [Myanmar military] have no idea why we try to take back the remaining land and what are we going to do on it. So I plan to clean the land just to put the playground for the children, such as a cane ball ground and a badminton playground, and agricultural land. I would be grateful if the villagers help us in cleaning the land.

**How much of your land do you think has gone for the buildings that they [Burmese**

**military] have already built on your land?**

When my father was alive we already gave them [military] one football ground and the land for the high school and the land for the electric office and the construction site also [so it] would be around 10 acres. And now they again are putting the buildings such as the USDP office and the exchange office and it would take around 5 acres [extra]. So the land already was gone is around 15 acres and we do not want to make any problem for these 15 acres of lost land. The remaining land left is only around 5 to 6 acres.

**Do they still plan to keep confiscating the land or [will they] stop confiscating it?**

I met with the Tactical commander for the issue of this land and he said that this land was first requested by the military and he did know what the above order is, so he cannot handle for it at the moment. The township [responsible people] do not let us to meet with them [Tatmadaw] who confiscated the land, so maybe they are just abusing the military power in some way by thinking that we do not dare to complain to them [about] the way that [the] military is living on our land. If they give us a chance to meet with them then we can discuss about the land. Now they play a tricky game to us whether it is military or government [who we should talk to].

**Does the military still live on this land?**

There are only three soldiers guarding the land and they are just drinking alcohol and if people pass over [by the land] they ask [the villagers] to buy the beer for them. They told us that if you are gaining [taking] this land please let us [go] back because here we have nothing to do [guarding the land]. And another thing is I think maybe they want the plants that are existing such as ironwood, teak and gum trees on the land because those plants are really expensive. They have already cut down those trees a lot and when they cut down the trees we told them that they is belong to our church land and now there are not many plants left.

**So when they came and cut down the trees and when you told them like that, how do they respond to you?**

We did not complain at first, we just started complaining to them when we started cleaning the land around two or three weeks ago but in the past they did whatever they wanted. At that time even you complained it wasn't effective at all.

**Now when you are complaining to them how do they respond to you?**

The people who came and cut the trees said that they already took the permission from the Tactical commander and that they thought that the land belonged to the Tactical commander. Then they apologised to us because they said that they did not know it belonged to the church but in the past they just cut the trees with the permission of the Tactical commander.

**The people who cut the trees are soldiers or villagers?**

They are just the villagers who cut the trees for others and they got the profit for it.

**I want to ask another thing. Is do you have any plan to clean up the land put and or repair the building?**

The problem right now is that we have a crowded space for the dormitory students but we were not able to build more buildings, however if the military give us their old buildings and



we can repair them [we will have more space]. Actually they should give us [the buildings] because they are already damaged, three of our buildings and the building that they store the paddy in are totally damaged. At that time my father was alive and he repaired it and it cost 1,300,000 kyat. So I just want them [military] to help us as much as they can and then we will try for the rest [of the cost of repairs] by ourselves. We have to try a lot and other buildings also have to be repaired and we will do it gradually.

**How many ways have you tried to get back this place [church land]?**

At first I started trying to get the land back alone and no one gave me suggestions for it. And my father also used to tell me before he died; he said that when other ethnic [groups] come and stay with you then you may not be able to live peacefully. Since then I tried to submit the complaint letter two to three times and I did not have success. Finally my complaint letter arrived to Nay Pyi Daw and later on I submitted the complaint letter to the KNU [Karen National Union], KPP [Karen People's Party] and NLD [National League Democracy] and to all people who I think are powerful. So now I am starting over again together with villagers and we just only need unity as we do not have unity. But the thing is we are easily scared and if people are more serious [strict] against us then we just want to give up as we do not want to face complicated things [trouble].

**Are there any other activities that you do?**

There is nothing special right now and I can [will] build a proper relationship with the people from the land registration department except the top one as that one [person] does not know me yet.

**So there is nothing special that you do [to get the land back]?**

Yes, before we get this land we start cleaning the land but the problem is that there is a trench used for communication and we have to [work] hard to clean it. But there is one thing that we have no idea on where to ask for help because as it is a former place of military there will be military equipment remaining such as bombs and ordnance so please keep in mind for us [how] to get help for that. The trench is very wide and it was along all the land.

**How many acres would it [the trench] be?**

The trench was dug surrounding the 46 acres of land and sometimes the fighting happened with outside people [KNU]. That is why they [Myanmar military] dug the trench along the land.

**What is the extent [size] of the trench?**

From the eastern part it would be about a mile long. So that would be great if people could clear up the remaining bombs and ordnance as those are the risky things. Now the young villagers are cleaning the land without considering that risk because in the past when we cleaned the land we used to find bombs and we have no idea whether it can explode or not.

**Did people who clean the land find anything special such as ordnance?**

We were not aware of that because we did not get into the trench and we were just cleaning the surrounding [land]. The trench is so deep and only if you light it with torch light then you can see in it. I just worry for my young villagers who clean the land because they are working carelessly and [if] they got into the trench they probably would be in danger.

**How long have you been cleaning the land?**

Just only for three days, it was on Saturday, Monday and Tuesday.

**Do they see you guys when you guys are cleaning the land?**

They just look at us like that.

**Did they say something to you?**

No.

**Do you also go and meet with them?**

Yes, we met two and three people of [controlled by] the Tactical commander.

**What did they say to you guys when you met with them?**

They just told us that if you can negotiate this land [issue] successfully then we will go back to our place [military base] because we are getting bored living here without anything to do. My personal opinion is maybe the township responsible leaders want these plants [trees] on the land, so they ask the soldiers to come and stay on it [church land].

**How many of their [Myanmar military] buildings remain [on the church land]?**

Only one building is left and it is almost ruined.

**How many soldiers live in it?**

Just three soldiers and if three of them go back then another three soldiers come back again.

**Where are they from?**

They are from Than Bo [Town].

**You said that they always stay there [church land]?**

That is right and they are always drunk.

**What is your future plan?**

We just have to wait and see the situation. However I have distributed the complaint letters to many groups [relevant organisations] but I did not hear back anything from any of them. So we just pray to God and by the grace of God the opportunity will open up for us. Now there is one opportunity from you [KHRG researcher] if your organisation [can] help me in one way. We just want to live peacefully because we have been suffering from this for around 50 to 60 years. We do not want to be against [fight] and we just want to deal it peacefully. We have heard that after the land confiscation the compensation follows so we do not want those complicated things. We just want back the remaining land and we want them to give it us back in a peaceful way so that we can work on it freely.

**How many acres of land were remaining?**

I think that it would remain only around 5 to 6 acres. The land would remain more if they do not put the buildings in it and if their soldiers get out of the land and there will be one more



acre of land left.

**Do you have any special plan to let the soldiers get out of the land?**

They [soldiers that come and stay in the land] just asked us to try to solve the land problem and if it is done then they can go back to their own place because perhaps they do not like living on the land as they feel like the ghost is haunting [the land].

**Do they help people that go around in front of them?**

No.

**Do they question people at all?**

No, they are just satisfied when villagers bring a can of beer for them.

**But if villagers do not bring them a beer what then?**

Because they are used to getting the beer from villagers so if they see the villagers then they ask for the beer.

**What is your opinion based on my interview with you?**

This is a kind of opportunity. We have never seen any reporter within 50 years because our land was recognised as a black area so we cannot do anything. NGOs, media, reporters and photographers, none of them can come to our area. However now I have a chance to speak with you and I share the information to you [researcher] because I believe that it will be beneficial for something. I understand that we should stand and work together in our own sector in order to achieve the prosperity for our people. I also believe that there might be a positive outcome for the thing [reporting] that you have done with me. In the past we just thought that we are going to give up easily because many people have been scared in their life. But now the opportunity is opening up and we should stand up and move forward as much as possible in order to be able to live peacefully in our region and the region should become the light area [legal area] as it was recognised as a black area.

**Is there anything else that you would like to add if I have not asked you?**

We should give a commitment when we try to get something. When I process the complaint letter also as I am the leader for making [writing] up the complaint letter. I have to pay for the expense. So we should not doubt that will there be no meaning for the things that we are doing because we are just doing them for our people. We lost our house, our properties while living [over] 50 to 60 years. In the past we live [stuck] between the powerful people like if we give one cow to the Myanmar government we also have to give one hen to the outside people [KNU]. And sometimes they blame us, such as complaining that we give the other group [Myanmar government] more and just give them [KNU] less and it is not fair. So we have to face the armed conflict between these two groups and we lost our home and lands. However, although we have suffered this much we are still able to survive just because we have the firm [strong] spirit. We have the spirit that can face the challenges and we do not have the attitude against those who oppress us. Moreover, we have the attitude to forgive others. Just the only thing we do not have is intelligent [understanding about] how to move forward. You [researcher] also inform your leaders to come and have a look of our place. When my father was alive he always travelled. So after my father passed away we should go around and encourage each other. Now I do not travel like my father but I wrote the letters and distributed it to the villagers and tell them that to be united and encourage them to move forward as we have been struggling for more 50 years. You also have conducted the

interviewed with me so please report it [to the headquarters office].

**What would you like to suggest our KHRG organization to be improved in the future? What do you see as our weak point or [what is] needed?**

We just heard about this organization but we have never seen it. Because the situation is getting better I have met with you [KHRG member] now and if possible in the future I would like to provide one office [site for] your organization to [have] contact with your team if any kind of human rights problem happens. We just have to consider our situation if our condition is good I would like to offer an office [site] for your organization. The situation right now is educated people are gone and poor people continue to face hardship. I think it is better that we die because some people underestimate themselves and some are over-arrogant. So we just need to correct our attitude and cooperate united and as the saying [goes], "give yourself, know yourself and be yourself," we have to be like that.

**Anything else you would like to say?**

I have to do [the same work] like my father as he used to visit bible teachers, township leaders and make up [organise] the fellowship, so I have to go around and meet with relevant leaders, villagers and young people in order to build up the understanding [cooperation]. The important thing is we should be able to have a good relationship and cooperate together. Thank you so much for the interview.

**Thank you so much for your time and it was a bit long.**

#### Source #157

<b>Log #</b>	16-4-A2-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooplaya Interview: Naw E---, received in January 2016
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Kaw T'Ree [Kawkareik] Township, Dooplaya
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Good morning.</b></p> <p>Good morning.</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw E---.</p> <p><b>How old are you?</b></p> <p>I am 40 years old.</p> <p><b>Do you have family?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>How many children do you have?</b></p> <p>I have four children.</p> <p><b>What do you do?</b></p>	

I am a hill farmer.

**What is your township?**

Kaw T'Ree [Kawkareik] Township.

**You live in F--- [village], Kaw T'Ree [Kawkareik] Township. Is there a Tatmadaw army camp based near your village?**

There is no army camp in F--- village.

**What about near your village?**

Yes, some army camps are based near my village.

**Since the ceasefire was signed, have you, as a mother with four children, seen any changes [to the lives of women here]?**

Yes, since the ceasefire was signed we can travel a bit more freely; in the past, it was not as free as it is now.

**What do you mean you can travel a bit more freely? Do you mean you do not have to pay the travel fees [at checkpoints] or that you can travel more freely [between places]?**

In the past, we always had to pay at the checkpoints, but now we can travel a bit more freely [do not have to pay as much as before].

**To the previous question you replied that there are Tatmadaw army camps near your village. So, as a woman, what benefits do you get from the Tatmadaw?**

We do not get any benefits from the Tatmadaw; instead, we are afraid of them.

**The ceasefire has already been signed, but you are still afraid of them?**

Yes, because we do not know their intentions.

**Why are you afraid of them [the Tatmadaw]?**

If we run into them while travelling, we are afraid of them.

**Are you afraid of them because they are not from your ethnic group?**

Yes.

**So, you do not get any benefits even though they are based near your village, as you are woman?**

Yes [correct]. Do you mean the Tatmadaw or the KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army]?

**The Tatmadaw?**

We do not get any benefits. We are afraid of them when they are based near our village.

**Are you happy to let them stay there or would you feel more secure [if they were**

**based somewhere else]? Do you feel that they are disturbing you?**

In my opinion, I think it would be better if they stayed away from our village. I feel like they are disturbing us. We want to live freely in our own village.

**As you are a woman, how do you think women want their lives to change? Have you thought of anything?**

We want women to collaborate closely with the leaders.

**What better opportunities do you think women need?**

We need more freedom of movement.

**What about education?**

And education. We need more [opportunities] to access education.

**Do you need more opportunities to participate as social workers?**

Yes.

**Why do you want that?**

We want more women to participate in social work because we do not want people to oppress us.

**The ceasefire is already signed but the Tatmadaw have not withdrawn their army camps from Karen State yet. Do you have any future concerns for women [related to this]?**

Yes, we are concerned for women because we have experiences of Tatmadaw soldiers raping women. We want the Tatmadaw to reduce their military presence; we do not want them to increase their numbers.

**So, if it is possible, would you want the Tatmadaw to build more army camps or withdraw the army camps that are based near your village?**

We do not want them to build more army camps; instead, we want them to relocate their army camps.

**As you are a woman, do you need any suggestions or support for future collaboration [in society]?**

Yes, we need support and collaboration.

**What kind of support do you need?**

We just need it.

**So, you do not know what you need. How about support for women to be able to speak and to participate in organisations?**

Yes, we need that.

**So, as you are woman, do you think that you already have enough education?**

We do not have enough education; we need more education.

**So you need more education to be able to compare your shoulders with other people [act on the same level]?**

Yes.

**I will ask you only that much. Do you want to ask me any questions?**

No, I do not know what to ask you.

**You can ask me why I am conducting this interview with you and what you're the purpose of it is. So if you want to ask anything, feel free to ask me.**

I do not have anything to ask.

**So, if you do not have any questions, I will say thank you to you.**

Yes, thank you.

**Source #158**

<b>Log #</b>	16-4-A3-I1
<b>Title</b>	Doolaya Interview: Naw N---, Interview Received in January 2016
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Kyainseikgyi Township, Doolaya District
<b>Full Text</b>	

**Good morning**

Good morning.

**What is your name?**

My name is Naw N---.

**Where do you live?**

I live in G--- village.

**In which township is G--- village located?**

It is located in Kyainseikgyi Township.

**Do you have family?**

Yes.

**How many children do you have?**

I have three children.

**How many female and male children?**

Two female children and one male child.

**What do you do for a living?**

I work on a hill farm and a plain farm.

**Is there any Tatmadaw army camp based near your village in Kyainseikgyi Township?**

Yes. They usually come to our village.

**As you are a woman, how do you feel when they come to your village?**

When they come to our village we are afraid of them and we do not even dare to let our female children go around in the village. We asked our female children to hide indoors.

**Why do you not want them to be seen when the Tatmadaw soldiers are coming into the village? Do you have any reason for this?**

If the Tatmadaw soldiers see pretty girls they name the parents [of those girls] “parents-in-law,” and some of them are very sleazy.

**So you do not want them to call you “parent-in-law?”**

Yes [correct].

**Do you feel safe when the Tatmadaw are based near your village?**

No, we do not feel safe and they sometimes go around in the village asking for chickens and pigs. We do not feel safe.

**So it is causing problems?**

Yes.

**How do you think that women’s lives have changed since the [2012 preliminary] ceasefire?<sup>524</sup>**

Traders can travel more freely, but they still have to pay tax [at check points].

**Do they have to pay [tax to] the Tatmadaw?**

Yes, they pay the Tatmadaw military. They demand 2,000 kyats [at each check point].

**Do they demand tax because their leaders order them to, or do they do it for their own**

<sup>524</sup> The KHRG community member is referring to the preliminary ceasefire agreement that was signed on January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012 between the KNU and the Myanmar government in Hpa-an. For KHRG’s analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the preliminary ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014. On October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015, after a negotiation process marred with controversy over the notable non-inclusion of several ethnic armed groups and on-going conflicts in ethnic regions, a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed between the Myanmar government and eight of the fifteen ethnic armed groups originally invited to the negotiation table, including the KNU, see [“Myanmar signs ceasefire with eight armed groups,”](#) Reuters, October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015.

**benefit?**

I do not know about that, because I have never fully investigated it.

**Seeing as you live in Kyainseikgyi [Township], and you said that the Tatmadaw are based near your village, and it is causing problems for you, is there anything you want to say or request [in order to improve your situation]? What opportunities do you need in order to [increase] participation [for example in various organisations]?**

We need many things. We cannot even list all that we need.

**Can you give me one example?**

We need safety. We also need social organisations to provide local development [and trainings] to the villagers in order for us to be safe.

**The ceasefire is already signed but the Tatmadaw have not withdrawn from any of their army camps. Does this cause any concerns for the future?**

Yes, we are concerned about it. They should relocate all army camps and if it is possible, there should be no [Tatmadaw] military [presence in Karen National Union (KNU) areas]. They should relocate and build their camps in the [Myanmar government-controlled areas]. We want the Tatmadaw to relocate all their army camps from Karen State.

**Why you want them to relocate? How is it causing problems and what are your concerns?**

They are male and they also carry weapons. We are afraid of them when we travel because we are women. As you know, they killed and raped villagers as they wanted in the past.

**Is it still happening these days?**

We do not know because we are not able to see their intentions. People say that they have seven fish hooks in their hearts.<sup>525</sup>

**Do you need any suggestions or support in order for women to participate more?**

As we are women, we need [high] education in order to compare our shoulders [rise to the same level] with men and to be able to work with different organisations because many NGOs [non-governmental organisations] are present in Myanmar now but I do not know their names. And also, in my village there is no high school, they only teach up to Standard<sup>526</sup> 4 in the school.

**So you feel like there is a lack of women's involvement these days?**

Some women are able to work [in qualified sectors such as education, healthcare or management] but some, if they do not have certificates [of secondary education], they are not allowed to participate in those roles.

**So you mean that they have to finish school with certificates from the Myanmar**

<sup>525</sup> To have seven fish hooks in one's heart refers to a Karen saying which means that one is evil.

<sup>526</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.



**government to be able to work?**

Yes.

**So in your village, where the school is up to Standard 4, do those who finish get Myanmar government certificates or certificates from the KNU?**

In our village the school is not supported by the Myanmar government so they only get KNU certificates.

**So the students who finish KNU schools and government schools, are they all treated equally as women? Do they get the same opportunities?**

They are not treated equally. Even though they have already finished [their education] in KNU schools, they have to take a government examination in Yangon or Mawlamyine towns in order to get a Myanmar government certificate. They need the government certificate in order to be allowed to work with them [Myanmar government organisations].

**So as you are woman, how do you feel about that?**

Even if our children finish [KNU] schools they still have to take a government examination in order to get a certificate. We have to spend a lot of money on it so it causes problems for villagers who do not have enough money. So even if they finish [KNU] schools, they can only do ordinary jobs.

**You told us about the situation in your area, so we got to know more the situation for women. So, you need more support in terms of education?**

Yes.

**And you also want other organisations to collaborate with your village?**

We really need their collaboration and help in order for us to improve our village.

**So you mean that they do not provide opportunities to the villagers who live in your village?**

They [the Myanmar government] only provide opportunities to the people who have finished Myanmar government schools. People who have finished government schools have government certificates and if they are required to show their certificates they can show them.

**So, if people finish KNU schools, that have a high quality of education, it does not match the requirements?**

Yes [correct], they [the Myanmar government] say that they [are not qualified because they] do not have Myanmar government certificates.

**So they [the Myanmar government] do not provide equal opportunities?**

Yes [correct], they do not provide equal opportunities. Thus, we are not able to compare our shoulders.

**So, as women, in order to be able to compare your shoulders [with men], what opportunities do you need?**

For example, when people [KNU and government representatives] discuss the peace process, women are also involved. However, I think that no one pays attention to the women even though they express their opinions, because if they would pay attention to women's concerns, there would be equality. In terms of certificates [of secondary education], we asked for it but they did not pay attention to us.

**Now we have got to know more [about the situation for women] from you. Would you like to ask me any questions?**

As you are coming to our village and asking for information, I want to ask you what organisation you are working with.

**[The KHRG researcher explains to the villager about the purpose of conducting the interview.]**

**Thank you very much.**

Thank you.

#### Source #159

<b>Log #</b>	16-4-A4-I1
<b>Title</b>	Dooطلا Interview: Naw F---, Received in January 2016
<b>Publishing Information</b>	Previously unpublished
<b>Location</b>	Kaw T'Ree [Kawkareik] Township, Dooطلا
<b>Full Text</b>	
<p><b>Good afternoon.</b></p> <p>Good Afternoon.</p> <p><b>What is your name?</b></p> <p>My name is Naw F---.</p> <p><b>Do you have family?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p> <p><b>Where do you live?</b></p> <p>I live in G--- village.</p> <p><b>What township is that in?</b></p> <p>It is in Kaw T'Ree [Kawkareik] Township.</p> <p><b>What do you do for a living?</b></p> <p>We work on the hill farm in a plantation.</p> <p><b>So are you a farmer?</b></p> <p>Yes.</p>	

**As you are a farmer I want to ask you some questions. So, as you live in G--- village in Karen State, what improvements have you seen since the ceasefire was signed?**

I have not seen any improvements and nothing has changed.

**You did not see any improvement?**

Yes [correct].

**Is there any Tatmadaw army [camp] near your village?**

Yes, there is. They are based in their army camp on a mountain.

**How do you feel when that Tatmadaw are based near your village? Do you feel that you are safe or not?**

We feel that we are not safe and it also causes problems for us.

**What kind of problems?**

We sometimes cannot travel freely, and if they come down to our village they sometimes ask for food, such as chickens and pigs.

**Has this happened since the ceasefire was signed?**

Yes.

**Do you know what army group [battalion number] they are?**

I do not know. I do not remember.

**So you only know that they are Tatmadaw?**

Yes.

**Have you even seen the women in Kaw T'Ree [Kawkareik] Township working with any organisations?**

In this area I have not seen women working with organisations.

**What do you think about [the ceasefire] that was signed between the KNU [Karen National Union] and the Myanmar government? Do you think anything has changed, or that there have been any benefits for women?**

I think [the ceasefire] has not brought any benefits for women.

**What benefits have you seen since the government signed the agreement?**

In my area I have not seen any benefits brought by the ceasefire.

**Do families in Karen State still face oppression from the Myanmar government?**

Do you mean the Myanmar government or the Myanmar government military [Tatmadaw]?

**The Myanmar government military [Tatmadaw]?**

Yes, the Tatmadaw still oppress us because they want to control [everything]. They told us that they are based here and that these places are controlled by them and they also belong to them.

**The places which are near where they are based?**

Yes. They do not allow people to work [in those places].

**So, in the past those places were villagers' lands?**

Yes, before they were based here, the villagers planted crops on the lands that they are based in. But after they [the Tatmadaw] came, they forbade us to work on those lands. They said the lands have become their lands and they can control them. Thus, as we live here we feel very bad.

**So they are the military and they confiscated the villagers' land. How do you want to deal [with this issue] in order to avoid this oppression?**

In order to avoid oppression we want the Tatmadaw to relocate their army camp away from us.

**How do you want them to relocate?**

We want them [the Tatmadaw soldiers] to relocate and stay away from us, and stay in the place that they were based in before.

**You want them to withdraw the new army camps that they have built?**

Yes, we want them to withdraw from the army camps located in our area.

**Do women in your village or in Karen State get opportunities to do everything they want and are they encouraged to grab those opportunities?**

I do not know because for me, I always go to the hill farm and do my daily work.

**You can tell me as you understand it, and if you do not understand that is fine?**

Yes.

**Do you think women and men are treated equally here?**

No, they are not treated equally.

**So, who gets more opportunities?**

Here, men get more opportunities.

**As a woman, what do you think about the period of transition in Myanmar? Do you understand my question? For example the organisation or department support in terms of education, healthcare for building schools or hospitals. Do you think it is enough or do you need more [support]?**

Regarding healthcare, it is improving but there is not enough [material for the medical

treatment]. As far as I know, they do not give as much medicine as the people here [the KNU] give us.

**So, there should be more improvement [in terms of healthcare]?**

Yes. If the people here [the KNU] give enough medicine for seven days, they give enough for only three days.

**Do they take a good care of the patients?**

No, they not take care of them adequately.

**So, regarding healthcare, problems still exist?**

Yes.

**So, as you are a woman, you are very close with your children, so do you face more problems [than men]?**

Yes, we face more problems. I will tell you as I have experienced it. They provided contraceptive pills to villagers, but the villagers were not confident enough to use them and follow up with them [on how to use the pills], and they didn't even provide detailed information.

**Did you get free medicines provided by them [Myanmar government health workers] or did you have to buy them?**

We did not buy them.

**So if you get seriously ill and go for medical treatment do you get free medicine?**

Yes, we sometimes get it for free.

**For example, what if you live here and you go for medical treatment in Kye Doe Town or Kyaw Hta [village]?**

We do not get free [medical treatment] if we go there.

**So you get free treatment when they come and provide it in the village?**

Yes.

**Do both the KNU military [Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)] and the Tatmadaw give opportunities to the female villagers? For example, do the KNU military [KNLA] give women a chance to work and travel, while the Tatmadaw do not??**

As far as I know, those opportunities have not yet been given to women.

**I think you are not clear with my question and understand the situation as you live in a local village?**

Yes.

**Do Karen women and Bamar women get the same opportunities?**

You mean regarding education?

**Yes, do they have the same opportunities to access education?**

No, they do not get the same opportunities.

**Can you tell me why?**

Yes. It is not easy for most Karen students to graduate.

**Is that because the Myanmar government does not provide opportunities or because the parents lack financial resources to support their children?**

The parents lack financial resources to support their children, therefore the children are not able to enter the examinations [Myanmar government examinations].

**So, you mean that if you have financial resources you can pay them in order to make it easier to pass the examinations?**

Yes.

**Is that true?**

Yes. I saw that most of the students in Standard 10<sup>527</sup> did not pass their examinations. The students live in V--- [village] and entered the examinations but none of them passed the exams.

**We wanted to know about women and their problems following the ceasefire as I have asked you. So, would you like to ask me any questions about why you conducted this interview with me?**

No.

After the ceasefire was signed we saw the Tatmadaw walking around with their military equipment. Do you think this is a good idea?

**How did you feel when you saw them with military equipment?**

We were afraid of them when we saw that they brought military equipment with them when we were going to our hill farms, plain farms and huts. They brought the equipment with them even after the ceasefire had already been signed. We would be very happy if they did not bring it with them.

**Based on this issue we want you to tell us openly because the Myanmar government [Tatmadaw] set up their military base near your village. We want to know how you feel when they are based near your village. We are very happy that you told us about your feelings**

Yes.

**Thank you very much for your information and that we got to know about the villagers suffering.**

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<sup>527</sup> A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Burma/Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standards 6-9, and upper secondary school is Standards 10-11.

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