



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

News Bulletin

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Pa'an Interview: Saw Ht---, March 2012

This report contains the full transcript of an interview conducted during March 2012 in T'Nay Hsah Township, Pa'an District by a community member trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions. The community member interviewed Saw Ht---, from M--- village, who described being injured by a landmine planted by Border Guard forces near villagers' plantations. Saw Ht--- described receiving no assistance from the Border Guard, neither with transportation to hospital or money for medical costs, and explained how he was instead taken to hospital by friends, and his medical treatment fees paid by a local humanitarian organisation. This interview is also available in a thematic report published by KHRG on May 21, 2012, Uncertain Ground: Landmines in eastern Burma.

Interview | Saw Ht---, M--- village, T'Nay Hsah Township, Pa'an District (March 2012)

The following interview was conducted by a community member in Pa'an District, and is presented below translated exactly as it was received, save for minor edits for clarity and security.¹ This interview was received along with other information from Pa'an District, including two incident reports, 44 other interviews and 683 photographs.²

Ethnicity: Karen

Marital Status: Married

How do people call you?

¹KHRG trains community members in eastern Burma to document individual human rights abuses using a standardised reporting format; conduct interviews with other villagers; and write general updates on the situation in areas with which they are familiar. When conducting interviews, community members 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.

²In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in eastern Burma, KHRG aims to make all field information received available on the KHRG website once it has been processed and translated, subject only to security considerations. As companion to this, a redesigned website will be released in 2012. In the meantime, KHRG's most recently-published field information from Pa'an District can be found in the report, "Pa'an Interview: Saw Hn---, March 2012," KHRG, May 2012.

People call me Ht---.

Where do you live?

I live in M--- village.

Whose bomb did you get hit by?

I got hit by the Border Guard's bomb.

Why did you get hit by the bomb?

I was hit when I was on the way to burn wood to make coal.

Was it very far from your village to the place where you went to burn wood for coal?

They planted the bombs beside the flat field.

Did your cows and buffalos also get hit?

No, they didn't. But other people's cows and buffalos got hit. One of the cows belonging to my mother-in-law got hit.

Are you married?

Yes, my wife just passed by here a minute ago.

How many children do you have?

I have two children, but one died so only a girl is left.

Did anyone help you when you got hit by the bomb?

Yes.

Did the villagers carry you to the hospital when you got hit by the bomb?

No, I went back by myself to the village and my friends sent me to the hospital.

Can you tell me about the process of how you got hit?

I got hit when I came back from burning wood for coal. They planted it beside the road, not on the road. I didn't know it [was planted there] while I was walking, so I got hit. It also hit one of my testicles.

Did you have to pay the hospital bill by yourself?

No, they [a local humanitarian organization] paid the hospital bill for us.

Did you also spend any money for the hospital bill?



This photo, taken in March 2012, shows Saw Ht--, 25, from Noh Kay village tract in T' Nay Hsah Township, Pa'an District, who stepped on a landmine planted near a flat paddy field while he was on his way to make charcoal in the woods. He told a community member trained by KHRG that the mine blast injured one of his testicles; the scarring is visible on both of his legs in the photo above. [photo: KHRG]

Yes, but I don't have any money, so I borrowed from others. I have debt, so I have to pay it back.

Did the Border Guard [soldiers] come and give any support to you?

No, I didn't see any of them come.

So, they didn't help you?

Yes, they didn't. They didn't help anyone who got hit by their bombs. It was so boring to stay in the hospital for 23 days.

How many wounds did you get?

I got hit on my whole body, so the wounds are everywhere on my body. Now, some of the wounds have already healed. If you had seen [the wounds] when I got hit, you wouldn't have dared to look at them.

Further background on the current situation in Pa'an District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- "Pa'an Interview: Saw Hn---, March 2012," (May 2012)
- "Pa'an Situation Update: T'NayHsah Township, September 2011," (May 2012)
- "Pa'an Situation Update: Nabu Township, September 2011 to January 2012," (May 2012)
- "Villagers used as human shields in Pa'an District, October 2011," (March 2012)
- "Pa'an Interview Transcript: Naw D---, November 2011," (March 2012)
- "Pa'an Interview: Naw G---, November 2011," (January 2012)