



Incident report

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Taw Oo District Incident Report: *Multiple instances of child rape, 2016 to October 2019*

Since 2016, Naw¹ C--- has been sexually abused multiple times by her uncle in D--- village, E--- village tract, Thandaunggyi Township, Taw Oo (Toungoo) District. On October 20th 2019, the uncle tried to have her dismissed from school as she was three-month pregnant. She eventually reported her situation to the headmistress, who then contacted the local authorities. The Myanmar Police Force (MPF) arrested the perpetrator later that day, but he was released on October 21st 2019 because no one filed a formal complaint against him. The local authorities then decided to banish the uncle from the village, allowing him to flee. At the request of the E--- village tract administrator, the perpetrator eventually turned himself in to the MPF on November 20th 2019, and is now awaiting trial in Hpa-an. Although the victim's mother and other relatives knew about the sexual abuses, they did not report the case as it involved two of their family members. Threats from her uncle also prevented Naw C--- from breaking the silence.²

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	Child rape
Date of Incident(s)	2016 to October 2019
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	D--- village, E--- village tract, Thandaunggyi Township, Toungoo District

Victim Information	
Name	Naw C---
Age	13
Sex	Female
Ethnicity	Karen
Family	Single
Occupation	Student
Religion	Christian
Village	D---

¹ Naw is a S’gaw Karen female honorific title used before a person’s name.

² The present document is based on information received in December 2019. It was provided by a community member in Hpapun District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions on the ground. The names of the victims, their photos and the exact locations are censored for security reasons.

Perpetrator Information		
Name(s)	Position	Village
Saw ³ F---	Ten households' leader	D---

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

I got this information from a KNU Township officer in Thandaunggyi Township, Taw Oo District. After that, I went to meet with the hundred households' administrator in D--- village.

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

The hundred households' administrator got the information about the multiple instances of child rape from the headmistress who reported the case to him. He then followed the investigation closely.

Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail.

Over the last three years, Naw C---, a 13-year-old girl, was raped multiple times by her uncle, Saw F---, in D--- village, E--- village tract, Thandaunggyi Township, Taw Oo District. The perpetrator is over 30 years old. He is married and has three children. After the divorce of Naw C---'s parents, she went to live with her uncle to be able to continue attending school. She is now in Standard 6 [sixth grade].

On October 20th 2019, Saw F--- went to his niece's middle school in D--- village to meet with the headmistress, Daw⁴ H---. He asked the headmistress to dismiss his niece from school as she was three-month pregnant. After that, the headmistress called Naw C--- and asked her about the situation. Naw C--- told the headmistress that she was raped by her uncle, and that he had been sexually abusing her for the past three years. On the same day, the school headmistress reported the case to the village authorities.

Saw A---, a local hundred households' administrator, explained: "*The headmistress called me and informed me that she could not do anything about what had happened to the girl, so I told her that I would inform the village tract administrator. Then, I went to the village tract administrator and informed him about the case.*" Later that day, the local authorities contacted the Myanmar Police Force (MPF) station in Thandaung Myot Thit, Thandaunggyi Township to report the case. After that, one police chief and five police officers came to the village and arrested Saw F---.

According to Saw A---: "*After we informed the police, they came to arrest him right away. They took him to the police station and kept him there for the night. The next morning, the police called us and asked about the victim. They said the victim should open a case [file a complaint], because they could not detain the perpetrator like that. No one from the victim's side showed up to open the case, so we informed the victim's father about the case but he showed up late.*"

³ Saw is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

⁴ Daw is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person's name.

Naw C---'s father, who lives in T--- village, Thandaunggyi Township was informed about the case. Saw B---, the E--- village tract administrator made travel arrangements for him to come to D--- village, but he did not get there on time because of the bad road conditions.

Saw F--- was therefore released on October 21st 2019. Local villagers were surprised by the fact that he was released so quickly despite the gravity of the crime. A member of the Karen Women's Organisation (KWO) in Daw Hpa Hkoh Township stated that the villagers were surprised because they did not know how the MPF had handled the case.

Later that day, the village tract administrator called a meeting with the villagers to decide on a punishment for the perpetrator. Local people ultimately agreed to banish him from the village. Saw A--- explained to KHRG that there was nothing else local authorities could do: "*He [village tract administrator] told me that they could only punish the perpetrator by banishing him from the village.*" The victim's father arrived late at the meeting, so the village tract administrator did not take his opinion into account as the decision had already been made.

Naw C---'s father was not satisfied with the way the case was handled by the local Myanmar government authorities and the MPF, so he reported the case to the Karen National Union (KNU)⁵ authorities in Thandaunggyi Township. The KNU investigated the case by talking to the E--- village tract administrator. Later, they found out that Saw F--- was in Kayah State, so it was not easy to bring him back to the village.

A KWO member reported that, while the local KNU authorities were trying to investigate the case, the E--- village tract administrator urged Saw F--- to turn himself in. On November 20th 2019, he eventually turned himself in to the MPF in Thandaung Myot Thit. On November 25th 2019, he was transferred to Hpa-an. A first court hearing took place at the Hpa-an District Court on December 16th 2019, but no decision was made. According to an update from a KHRG researcher, there will be a second court hearing in the early months of 2020 but the judge has not yet announced the exact date.

The victim is now living in N--- under the care of the Karen Women Empowerment Group (KWEG). However, she can no longer travel because of her pregnancy. Although other family members will try to go to court, only the victim can testify to the sexual abuse by her uncle. If Naw C--- is unable to attend the proceedings, this may have an impact on the trial process and its outcome.

Even though the mother and other relatives knew that Naw C--- was being subjected to sexual abuses, they did not report the case to the local authorities because it involved two of their family members. The uncle also threatened the victim not to tell anyone, which prevented her from seeking help. After she reported her situation to the headmistress, she dared not come back home before her uncle was arrested.

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

KHRG was not able to approach the victim. Her name and place of residence were censored for security reasons.

⁵ The Karen National Union is the main Karen group opposing the government.

Further background reading on the issue of sexual violence in Southeast Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [“Southeast Myanmar Field Report: Militarisation, environmental pollution and sexual violence against children, July to December 2019”](#), (February 2020)
- [“Dooplaya Incident Report: Multiple instances of child rape and domestic abuse in Noh T’Kaw Township, 2010 to 2019”](#), (January 2020)
- [“Hpa-an Incident Report: Arbitrary detention and lack of fair trial in sexual violence-murder case in T’Nay Hsah Township”](#), (December 2019)
- [“Nyaunglebin Incident Report: Child rape by a Myanmar police officer in Kyaukkyi Township, August 2019”](#), (November 2019)

About KHRG

Founded in 1992, the Karen Human Rights Group is an independent local organisation committed to improving the human rights situation in Southeast Myanmar. KHRG trains local people to document and gather evidence of human rights abuses, and publishes this information to project the voices, experiences and perspectives of local communities. More examples of our work can be seen online at www.khrq.org.