



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Short Update

July 22, 2014 / KHRG #14-28-D2

Hpa-an Short Update: Don Yin Township, March 2014

This Short Update describes the confiscation of land belonging to villagers in Don Yin Township, Hpa-an District. The land was confiscated under the threat of violence by members of the Karen National Liberation Army, the KNU/KNLA-Peace Council and other individuals.

Short Update | Don Yin Township, Hpa-an District (March 2014)

The following Short Update was received by KHRG in March 2014. It was written by a community member in Hpa-an District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions. It is presented below translated exactly as originally written, save for minor edits for clarity and security.¹ This report was received along with other information from Hpa-an District, including seven situation updates, 1,080 photographs and one video clip.²

Situation Update: March 18th 2014

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];³ (4) KNU/KNLA-PC Headquarters Commander Saw Joe Set and his soldiers; (5) and a Mon [man],⁴ U Aung Mya, who is rich. The first person whose land was confiscated is B---; three acres of

¹ KHRG trains community members in eastern Burma to document individual human rights abuses using a standardised reporting format; conduct interviews with other villagers; and write general updates on the situation in areas with which they are familiar. When writing situation updates, community members are encouraged to summarise recent events, raise issues that they consider to be important, and present their opinions or perspective on abuse and other local dynamics in their area.

² In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in eastern Burma, KHRG aims to make all field information received available on the KHRG website once it has been processed and translated, subject only to security considerations. For additional reports categorised by Type, Issue, Location and Year, please see the Related Readings component following each report on KHRG's Website.

³ 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 30th 2010.

⁴ 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.

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].



The photos were taken on March 17th 2014 in northern A--- village, Tha Ya Kon Kyay Naing village tract, Hpa-an District. These photos show rubber plantations being cultivated on land that was confiscated from villagers in the area by KNLA/KNU-Peace Council soldiers. The name of the KNLA/KNU-PC officer who confiscated the land is Mya Aye and his commander is Saw Kyoh Seh who lives in Htoh Kaw Koh village. The villagers have requested that their lands be returned many times, but the requests have been ignored. [Photos: KHRG]

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

- “Negative impacts of dam building and drug use in Paingkyon and Nabu townships, Hpa-an District, May 2014,” (July 2014)
- “Hpa-an Situation Update: Nabu Township, May 2012,” (July 2014)
- “Chapter: The impact of anti-personnel and other mines in Southeast Myanmar since the January 2012 ceasefire,” (July 2014)
- “Chapter: Drug production, use and the social impacts in Southeast Myanmar since the January 2012 ceasefire,” (June 2014)
- “Hpa-an Situation Update: Paingkyon Township, June to November 2013,” (June 2014)

Hpa-an District



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