



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Short Update

February 3, 2015 / KHRG #14-85-D3

Thaton Short Update: Bilin Township, October 2014

This Short Update describes events occurring in Bilin Township, Thaton District during October 2014, including development projects such as water supply, road construction and building clinics.

- *The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) went to Bilin Township and requested the presence of village representatives from 12 villages, so that they could state their core needs in their villages, which included a healthcare centre, schools, road construction in the village, hostels for teachers and water supply.*
 - *On October 23rd 2014, a KHRG community member went to Noh Ka Neh village to attend a workshop conducted by a SDC field director and his officers. The community member interviewed the director about what he was doing and the director explained about initiating a village committee for building a school for the villagers.*
-

Short Update | Bilin Township, Thaton District (October 2014)

The following Short Update was received by KHRG in November 2014. It was written by a community member in Thaton District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor local 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 Thaton District, including two situation updates, eight incident reports, nine interviews, 143 photographs and ten video clips.²

In 2014, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) requested 12 villages in Bilin Township, Thaton District to state their root needs. These included: (1) healthcare centres, (2) schools, (3) construct roads in the village, (4) water supply (5) hostels for the staff [teachers and medics]. In the beginning of 2014 they came and observed the 12 villages [and their situations]. Some villages stated similar root needs and some villages stated different ones. The SDC also asked one villager from each village to cooperate with them. On October 23rd 2014, a [SDC] field director, Saw Min Naung, met with each village that he had a plan for. He held the workshop and developed a committee [from the village representatives]. This committee is responsible

¹ KHRG trains community members in eastern 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 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/Myanmar, 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.

for working closely and openly with project coordinators and is in close discussions regarding the villagers' needs and transportation. Saw Min Niang [commenting on Saw Min Naung's project]: "*The project will be implemented in December 2014.*" Saw Min Niang lives in Mawlamyine and his organisation's office is situated in Yangon.

Further background reading on the situation in Thaton District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- "Field Report: Thaton District, September 2012 to December 2013," (December 2014)
- "Thaton Situation Update: Hpa-an and Bilin townships, July to September 2013," (November 2014)
- "Thaton Situation Update: Hpa-an Townships, January to June 2014," (October 2014)
- "Thaton Situation Update: Bilin Township, May 2014," (October 2014)
- "Land confiscation due to a road repair and expansion project in Bilin Township, Thaton District, January 2014," (September 2014)

Doo Tha Htoo (Karen)

