



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Incident Report

December 18, 2018 / KHRG #18-116-I1

Hpapun Incident Report: A village head sustained serious injuries after being tortured by BGF #1014 in Bu Tho Township, November 2018

A soldier from the Border Guard Forces #1014 seriously beat a village head in Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract because he crossed a checkpoint after 5 PM. The victim sustained serious injuries on his head and body.

Incident Report | Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District (December 2018)

The following Incident Report was written by (1) a community member in Hpapun District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor local human rights conditions.¹

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	Torture by BGF resulting in serious injuries
Date of Incident(s)	28 November 2018
Incident Location	T--- village, Htee Th'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District

Victim Information	
Name	Saw K---
Age	31
Sex	Male
Ethnicity	Karen
Family	Married

¹ KHRG trains community members in southeastern Burma/Myanmar to document individual incidents of abuse 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 incident reports, community members are encouraged to document incidents of abuse that they consider to be important, by verifying information from multiple sources, assessing for potential biases and comparing to local trends.

Position	Village head
Village	T--- village

Perpetrator Information				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Commander Hpo Dah	Platoon Commander	Border Guard Force #1014	K"Ter Tee	Battalion Commander Bo Maung Chit
Kyeh Nee	Soldier	BGF #1014	T--- Ta Law Thaw	Platoon Commander Hpo Dah

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

A KHRG researcher heard about the incident and contacted a person from T--- village to collect this information.

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

The person who shared this information was a first-hand witness of the incident.

Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail.

On 28 November 2018, Saw K---, the village head of T---, was on his way back from Hkaw Taw Poo [Myaing Gyi Ngu]. He was travelling with two local teachers returning from the funeral of U Thuzana. They were travelling by boat on the Pweh Loh Kloh river between Myaing Gyi Ngu and T--- village.

On that day, BGF #1014 had set up an informal checkpoint at the end of the Htee Lah Beh Hta Bridge. According to local people, it was not a regular checkpoint. This particular BGF checkpoint did not allow people to cross the river after 5 PM.

On 28 November 2018, Saw K--- crossed the Pweh Loh Kloh river with a few travellers. According to local witnesses, they arrived at the check point at 5:58 PM, after which the village head got off the boat and made himself known to BGF #1014. Then, the platoon commander Hpo Dah ordered a soldier, Kyeh Nee, to beat the village head.

Following that order, the soldier beat Saw K--- with a bamboo stick without any explanation. Saw K--- was the only one beaten by the soldier. The local people travelling with him saw him faint after his head was hit twice. The soldier proceeded to beat his body, which left him with very serious injuries.

Eventually, Saw K--- was taken to the local hospital in Myaing Gyi Ngu. Health workers questioned the persons who brought him about the cause of his injuries. However, they

were too afraid to say that he had been beaten by the BGF, because their base is close to the town. Saw K--- did not recover from his injuries despite spending a few days in the Myaing Gyi Ngu hospital. On 4 December 2018, he was sent to a hospital in Hpa-an.

On 3 December 2018, Saw K---,s wife went to the BGF #1014 office in T--- village in order to report the case. The BGF claimed that, even though Saw K--- is a village head, he deserved to be beaten because he did not respect the time restrictions of the checkpoint. Then, they gave her 300,000 kyat (US \$189.10) as compensation. However, they did not take any action to punish the perpetrators.

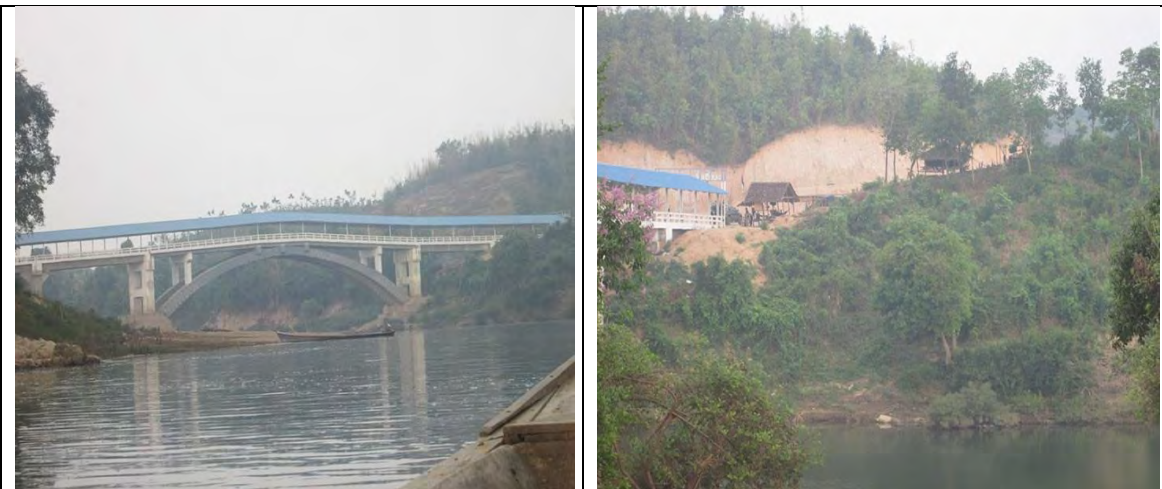
According to local people, Saw K--- is experiencing serious health problems due to his heavy injuries and traumatic experience. A doctor even stated that part of his brain had been damaged. Saw K--- is now scared whenever he hears people speaking, and he also has trouble communicating.

This incident had an impact on the whole community in T--- village. A community member reported that people are now afraid to travel because of what happened to their village head.

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's family allowed KHRG to use this information.



The photo on the left shows Htee Lah Beh Hta bridge. The photo on the right shows the BGF checkpoint. [Photos: KHRG]

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

- “Hpapun Incident Report: Tatmadaw road construction results in the indiscriminate firing of mortars and displacement in Lu Thaw Township, March 2018”, (June 2018)
- “Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township and Dwe Lo Township, September 2017 and February 2018”, (June 2018)
- “Hpapun Situation Update: Lu Thaw Township, February to March 2018”, (May 2018)
- “Attacks on villagers, ongoing fighting and displacement in Hpapun and Toungoo districts from January to April 2018”, (May 2018)

Mu Traw (Hpapun) District



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