



# Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

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## Photo Set

March 9, 2016 / KHRG #15-5-PS1

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### **Doplaya Photo Set: Road construction and expansion results in destruction of villagers' plantations in Kyonedoe and Kyainseikgyi townships, December 2014 to July 2015**

*This Photo Set illustrates road construction and expansion taking place in Kyainseikgyi and Kyonedoe townships, Doplaya District between December 2014 and July 2015. These projects, managed by Khin Zaw Company, as well as another unknown company that has been subcontracted by the Burma/Myanmar government, destroyed villagers' betel nut and rubber plantations. The affected villagers have not yet received any compensation for their losses.*

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### **Photo Set | Kyonedoe and Kyaiseikgyi Townships, Doplaya District (December 2014 to July 2015)**

*The following photos were taken by a community member in Doplaya District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions. They are presented below, censored where necessary for security purposes.<sup>1</sup> The ten photos below were received along with other information from Doplaya District, including 405 other photos, eight video clips, and a general update on the situation in Doplaya District.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> KHRG trains villagers in southeast 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, villagers 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.

<sup>2</sup> This Photo Set was compiled by KHRG office staff and is based on information from a community member from Doplaya District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor local human rights conditions. In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in southeast 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 redesigned Website.

## 1. Road construction by Khin Zaw Company



The photos above were taken on December 19<sup>th</sup> 2014 on A--- road, in B--- village, Kyainseikgyi Township, Dooplaya District. The first photo shows a villager looking at a large truck transporting soil. The second photo shows a person dressed in a white shirt standing beside a mound of upheaved soil. This man's name is Khin Zaw and he is the owner of Khin Zaw Company, which has been constructing the A--- road depicted here, as well as other roads in Kyainseikgyi Township. [Photos: KHRG]



The photos above were taken between C--- and D--- villages, Kyainseikgyi Township, Dooplaya District, on December 12<sup>th</sup> 2014. They show another road that was being expanded by Khin Zaw Company. In the process, the company destroyed villagers' betel nut<sup>3</sup> trees and the land owners are very upset with destruction. To villagers' dismay, Saw Mee Ka, the manager of the road expansion, told them that they must come to terms with the fact that their trees had to be destroyed. [Photos: KHRG]

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<sup>3</sup> In Burmese, 'betel nut' and 'betel leaf' are referred to as *konywet* and *konthih*, respectively, as if they are from the same plant. The Burmese names are also commonly used by Karen language speakers. Betel nut is the seed from an areca palm tree, *Areca catechu*; "betel leaf" is the leaf of the piper betel vine, belonging to the *Piperaceae* family.

## 2. Road construction by unknown company



The photos above were taken on March 21<sup>st</sup> 2015 in Kyainseikgyi Township, Dooplaya District. The first two photos were taken in the upper part of E--- village. They show the road that stretches to Three Pagodas Pass and which destroyed over 30 rubber trees belonging to villagers. The last two photos were taken in the upper part of F--- village, also known as G--- village, on March 17<sup>st</sup> 2015. They show the road construction which damaged 40 three-year-old rubber trees. The plantation belonged to Burmese villagers who live in H--- village. The plantation owners in both cases were not compensated for their losses. [Photos: KHRG]



These photos were taken on July 14<sup>th</sup> 2015, in I--- village, Kyonedoe Township, Dooplaya District. They show the road being constructed by an unknown company, which has been subcontracted by the Burma/Myanmar government. This construction project destroyed many of I--- villagers' rubber trees. I--- villagers said that they were promised a small sum



of money in compensation for the destruction, but no compensation money has been distributed in the year that has passed since. One villager said, *“They told us that we will get compensation, but they do not give anything, so do I have to wait till I die to get it?”* [Photos: KHRG]

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

- “The 2015 Elections and Beyond: Perspectives from villagers in rural southeast Burma/Myanmar,” (February 2016)
- “Doooplaya Interview: Naw A---, July 2015,” (February 2016)
- “Doooplaya Interview: Daw A---, October 2015,” (February 2016)
- “Doooplaya Situation Update: Win Yay Township, March to May 2014,” (February 2016)
- “Doooplaya Situation Update: Kyonedoe and Kawkareik townships, July to November 2014,” (January 2016)

## Dooplaya District



Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)