June 21, 2017

On June 11th, 2017, a nine-year-old girl from Pha None village, Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State, was raped by her brother-in-law.

Ma S— had been living with her elder sister, Ma M—, along with her brother-in-law, Mg K—, and her brother Mg T—. They had recently moved to Pha None from Ye Pyan village, West Zee Gon Township, Bago Region, to work on a nearby farm. Read more on page 3 >>

April 7, 2017

On January 28th, 2017, a 13-year-old boy from KyikeYae village, Mudon Township, Mon State, was beaten by an unknown group from Taw Kuu village and hospitalized with serious injuries. Read more on page 4 >>
Over the past 6 months, calls for the protection and promotion of child rights in Burma have never been louder. Families and civil society have joined together in protesting the ongoing issue of violence toward children and have repeatedly called upon the Burma government to draft new legislation and strengthen existing laws pertaining to the prevention of violence against children and the promotion of their rights as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Since 2013, violence toward children in Burma has been an increasingly visible issue, with the number of reported cases, particularly of sexual violence, rising dramatically. Police statistics over the last 3 years show that reports of sexual violence toward children, particularly young girls, grew from 43% of all reported rapes in 2013 to 61% in 2016. In Mon State alone, the Mon Women and Children Upgrade Committee (MWCU) recorded over 98 incidents of sexual violence toward minors between 2014 and 2016.

In March 2017, Woman and Children Rights Project (WCRP) released: ‘Cracks in the Silence: Sexual violence against children and challenges to accessing justice in Mon State and Mon areas of southeast Burma.’ This report analyzed cases of sexual violence toward children and explored how families navigated the pluralistic legal system in Burma, as well as the challenges they face when accessing justice.

The report identified four major obstacles to accessing justice for both women and children in response to crimes of a sexual nature, including: traditional beliefs that add to a culture of silence and tacit acceptance; low socio-economic status which can encourage victims to accept compensation in lieu of legal action; a lack of trust in legal processes and authorities; and unsatisfactory legal outcomes and lack of rule of law. Although Burma has been signatory to the CRC since 1992, many of its obligations under the convention have yet to be legislated into domestic law, instead relying on a set of antiquated and fragmented laws in the absence of a formal child protection policy.

WCRP strongly demands the implementation of a nation-wide child protection policy and legislation designed to prevent violence toward children and promote their rights.
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News

9-YEAR-OLD GIRL RAPEd BY HER BROTHER-IN-LAW IN KYAIKMAYAW TOWNSHIP

Around 5:00 pm on June 11th, Ma S— went with her brother and brother-in-law to the farm they worked on as there was a heavy insect infestation and they needed to rescue as many plants as possible before they were destroyed. Mg K— and Ma S— collected the eggplants while Mg T— transported the rescued plants to their home.

After two trips by Mg T—, Mg K— returned home with Ma S— on his motorbike around 7:00 pm. As soon as they arrived home, Mg T— noticed bleeding from around Ma S—’s vagina and reported it to his elder sister, Ma M—.

Ma M— asked Ma S— what happened to her and the young girl replied that she had been bitten by a leech. However, upon inspection Ma M— found no indication of a leech. As the bleeding did not stop, they went to the village clinic. The Pha Nong village clinic were unable to stop the bleeding so Ma M— called her husband Mg K— and her neighbor Daw T— and they brought the child to the Mudon Hospital.

The doctor at the Mudon Hospital was suspicious about the cause of the bleeding and gently asked Ma S— what happened to her in privacy. Ma S— revealed that she was raped by her brother-in-law Mg K—. Upon learning the truth, the doctor phoned the Mudon Police and Mg K— was arrested at the hospital.

After arresting him, Mudon Police transferred Mg K— to the Khang Ha Kwa Police Station in Kyaikmayaw Township near where the assault took place. Ma M— has filed a lawsuit against her own husband and the Khang Ha Kwa Police Station have charged Mg K— under with Penal Code #376 (punishment for rape) and Penal Code #363 (punishment for kidnapping).

Ma S— has been transferred to the Mawlamyine Women and Children Hospital, where Dr. Zar Chi Oo, confirmed she was raped. Ma S— later revealed that her brother-in-law raped her in a hut and threatened that he would kill her if she told the truth.

On June 12th the Khang Ha Kwa Police Station transferred the case to the Kyaikmayaw City Police Station.

Ma S— is currently receiving treatment from the Mawlamyine Women and Children Hospital and the perpetrator is being detained at the Kyaikmayaw Police Station.

Sexual violence toward children in Burma is an increasingly visible and controversial. For a more in-depth discussion of the issue, see HURFOM’s March 2017 report, ‘Cracks in the Silence: Sexual violence against children and challenges to accessing justice in Mon State and Mon areas of southeast Burma.’

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**News**

**62-YEAR-OLD WOMAN RAPED BY HER NEIGHBOUR IN KYAIKMAYAW TOWNSHIP**

June 26, 2017

**HURFOM:** On June 17th 2017, Daw T—, a 62-year-old woman from Kyune Kone village, Tarana village tract, Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State, was raped and strangled by U N—, her 45-year-old neighbour. Daw T— survived the incident and the perpetrator was arrested and charged by the Kyaikmayaw Township Police the following day.

The perpetrator was known to Daw T—, as the two were friends who often drank alcohol together. At 10 pm on June 17th, U N— visited Daw T—’s house and asked her if she would like to have a drink. Daw T— denied his request but the two engaged in a short conversation.

“We talked for about 15 minutes. After that he went back saying that there would be a misunderstanding if the neighbors saw us together late at night. I went to bed as soon as he left my house. But he didn’t return home and he came into my bed,” said Daw T—.

According to Daw T—, U N— pushed her down while strangling her and raped her in her bed for approximately 30 minutes.

“He came into my bed and said not to shout for help. He squeezed my neck, punched my waist, and raped me. I was feeling weak and nearly fainted. I think he left me as he thought I was dead. I don’t know when he left my house,” said Daw T—.

After regaining full consciousness, Daw T— asked her neighbors to call her son and daughter-in-law.

“My husband is aphasic [unable to speak] so the neighbors had to call me. My mother-in-law explained everything to me. That same night, we tried to report [the incident] to three different 100-household chiefs. But no one got up [heard] as it was raining [loudly] outside. So we decided to file a report the next morning and went back home,” said Mi C—, the daughter-in-law of Daw T—.

Daw T— is currently on bed rest recovering from her assault.

At 6 am on June 18th, Mi C— and her younger sister reported the rape to the Kyun Kone village administrator, who reported the incident to the Tarana village tract administrator. A law suit against U N— was filed at the Kyaikmayaw Police Station at about 2 pm, according to the Tarana village tract administrator, Daw Than Htay. The daughter-in-law also brought the clothes and skirt of Daw T— as evidence of the attack and gave them to the Kyaikmayaw Police.

After checking the evidence and receiving Daw T—’s medical report from Mawlamyine General Hospital, the Kyaikmayaw Police arrested U N— and charged him with Penal Code #376, punishment for rape.

The first legal proceeding in the Kyaikmayaw Township Court is scheduled for June 26th 2017, according to Mi C—. Daw T—’s family have been receiving legal support and advice from a lawyer, as well as support and security against perpetrator reprisal from the Jeeyah Civil Society Development Organization (JCSDO).

**FAMILY UNHAPPY WITH POLICE INACTION OVER AN ATTACK THAT LEFT A 13-YEAR-OLD BOY HOSPITALIZED**

While a group of youths from KyikeYae village were outside playing, another group of children from Taw Kuu village came and began to beat them with sticks. The KyikeYae children were injured, including a 13-year-old boy, Maung D—, who was subsequently hospitalized with serious wounds to the head.

Due to the severity of his injuries, the local doctor referred Maung D— to the hospital in Mawlamyine. Maung D— was then transferred to ahospital in Rangoon by his family after he did not improve in Mawlamyine. Several days later, Maung D— moved back to the free hospital in Mawlamyine as his family could not afford the hospital services in Rangoon, according to Maung D—’s father.

When the victim’s father reported the incident to the KyikeYae village administrator, no action was taken. Neither was any action taken when the family later reported the incident to the Mudon Township police.

“I heard that the police had arrested two men, but when we asked the police they said they hadn’t arrested anyone yet. One of the policemen told me that, if the perpetrator comes and discusses about the case [with us], just accept it [the outcome],” said the victim’s father, U M—.

He added that, “we have discussed [about what to do next] at the lawyer DawSandraThein’s house one time already. We don’t have any money to pay for the cost of the hospitals; we are poor and uneducated, so no one cares about us. Even though we reported about our problem to the authorities, nothing happened.”

Due to the fact that the village administrator and the police in Mudon Township did not take any action, the victim’s family reported the incident to the MudonCourt. The victim’s family wishes that the authorities would take action in accordance with the law in order to get a fair decision on their case.
FAMILY UNHAPPY WITH POLICE HANDLING OF 16-YEAR-OLD GIRL’S KIDNAPPING AND RAPE

June 13, 2017

HURFOM: The family of a 16-year-old girl from Mote Tama City, Mawlamyine District, Mon State, is unhappy with police action after she was kidnapped and raped. They voiced their concerns on June 7th 2017 to Hinthar Media Corporation, a private media group based in Mawlamyine, commenting that the perpetrator has only been charged with kidnapping under Penal Code #363 and has already been released on bail.

According to the family, on May 4th 2017, 16-year-old Ma H— was lured by a distant relative’s husband, Ko D—, to accompany him to Myawaddy, a town on the border of southeast Burma and Thailand, where he forced the girl to engage in sexual activity. The following morning, the girl asked him to send her home and immediately revealed what had happened. The police were informed and ordered her not to tell her family what had happened, but Ko D— was already free of the charge under the Monogamy Law again after the charges were dropped already once before.

Only after realizing that the girl’s family had reported her disappearance to the local police station did Ko D— consent to her return alone with 2,000 kyat (US $1.47) via a privately run mini-van service. Before she left, he threatened her and ordered her not to tell her family what had happened and to lie and say she had returned from a trip to Rangoon (Yangon). He also told the girl that he intended to continue the relationship with his wife, the girl’s third cousin, and that she should remain silent about the incident upon her return home.

On May 7th 2017, the girl arrived back home and immediately revealed what had happened during her absence. Daw M— took Ma H— to the police station and reported that the missing girl was now found and that Ko D— had kidnapped and raped her.

“I’m angry that even though he has a pregnant wife, he raped a distant cousin of his wife. So I asked the police to charge him and they charged him under Penal Code #363 – Punishment for Kidnapping. I understand nothing [about the law] so I accepted everything. The police detained him at the station,” said the girl’s mother. “We went nowhere and waited for the police to update us at home, but Ko D— was released on bail three days after his arrest and the police did not inform us about anything.” continued Daw M—.

Frustrated, Daw M— consulted with a lawyer who advised her to request the record of Ko D—’s arrest from the police. Upon seeing the record, Daw M—’s legal counsel suggested she file a lawsuit against Ko D— citing violation of the Monogamy Law.

“The lawyer said that he should not be released [from jail]. I must sue him with the Monogamy Law. He [lawyer] wrote a letter and told me to go to the police and file a lawsuit. The police did not receive our complaint on that day, but we went to the station again on May 14th 2017 and the police accepted our lawsuit and arrested the culprit. But he was released again. The police told nothing to us and we knew nothing [again],” continued the girl’s mother.

According to the family, the police informed them that they must release Ko D— [on bail] under Penal Code #363; moreover, Ko D— was already free of the charge under the Monogamy Law. The family has been waiting for a call from the police regarding the remaining charge related to kidnapping; however, there has been no reply from the police for almost a month now.

“I want everything to happen in accordance with the law. He was freed from the charge under the Monogamy Law. He was freed from such a big accusation [of rape]. So I don’t know how the police will handle the charge under Penal Code #363. Now we have no money so we just wait and see. Even though there is a charge under Penal Code #363, the police do not inform us of any developments,” said Daw M—.

Daw M— revealed her anger and dissatisfaction with the police’s handling of her daughter’s case to the Hinthar Media Corporation, asking the audience if it was possible to sue Ko D— under the Monogamy Law again after the charges were dropped once before.

Over the last several years, violence and sexual abuse toward children in Burma has become an increasingly visible and controversial issue. Police statistics show that reports of sexual abuse of children, especially young girls, has increased significantly over the last three years, rising from 43% of all reported rapes in 2013 to 61% in 2016. The Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) itself has seen a significant rise in the number of reported cases of sexual violence toward children. For more information on sexual violence toward children and the challenges to accessing justice in Mon State and Mon areas of southeast Burma, see HURFOM’s March 2017 report: Cracks in the Silence.

I’m angry that even though he has a pregnant wife, he raped a distant cousin of his wife. So I asked the police to charge him and they charged him under Penal Code #363 – Punishment for Kidnapping. I understand nothing [about the law] so I accepted everything. The police detained him at the station,
CHILD LABOURER SEVERELY ABUSED, SHOPKEEPER RECEIVES SEVEN-YEAR PRISON SENTENCE

June 12, 2017

On May 18th 2017, the Mawlamyine Township Court sentenced local shopkeeper Daw Aye Aye Soe to seven years in prison with labour for voluntarily causing grievous harm to a child.

Daw Aye Aye Soe, who owns a small restaurant at the Sel-Myo-Nel (Ten Township) male ward at the University of Mawlamyine, was convicted after pouring boiling water over her 14-year-old kitchen helper who she accused of stealing two oranges on December 16th 2016. According to the victim, she was also beaten over the head with a piece of firewood.

The judge presiding over the case sentenced Daw Aye Aye Soe to seven years in prison under Penal Code #326 for voluntarily causing grievous hurt by dangerous weapons and means, as well as an additional one-year sentence in accordance with Penal Code #323, punishment for voluntarily causing hurt. The judge allowed Daw Aye Aye Soe to serve out her sentences concurrently, reducing her total time to be served from eight years to seven, according to Daw Thi Thi Nwe, a member of Mitta Zone Zee, an organization who supports vulnerable women and children.

Daw Thi Thi Nwe said, despite the length of the jail term, she just wanted the abuser to change her behaviour and be able to empathize with the young girl who worked so laboriously under her orders.

“It’s not a jail sentence with hard labour. It’s just a jail sentence and labour. If she is jailed with hard labour, she has to hammer stones or do other hard work. But now, she has been punished with a jail sentence and labour, so she only has to work at the factory in the prison. Even though she has been jailed, she won’t be able to empathize with how difficult it is to deal with hard labour,” continued Daw Thi Thi Nwe.

The young girl suffered severe burns to her back and serious head injuries as a result of the attack. According to Mitta Zone Zee, she was admitted to the Neuro-Medical Department of the Yangon General Hospital where she was treated for her injuries.

Her memory is not good. She forgets easily. She looks like she is suffering from mental illness,” said Daw Thi Thi Nwe.

The girl is now under the care of the Mitta Zone Zee organization who have been providing her with food, health, and safety. They are accepting donations from the public on her behalf and plan to open a bank account to help support her in the future, in addition to teaching her livelihood skills such as sewing. Mitta Zone Zee has decided to work with the Department of Social Welfare, the Ward Administrator, and the media, in returning custody of the young girl to her family.

Child labour is pervasive throughout Burma, where children are often employed as domestic workers in private homes or as helpers in restaurants. Burma lacks a national child protection policy and has limited resources and capacity to prevent and respond to child protection issues. This and an overall lack of awareness on child labour and protection issues leaves children at a high risk of abuse during employment.

15-YEAR-OLD GIRL RAPED BY HER FATHER IN KYAIKMAYAW TOWNSHIP

January 17, 2017

WCRP: On November 15, 2016, a 15-year-old girl was raped by her 42-year-old father in Ka Line Ka Naing village tract, Kyaikmayaw Township, Mon State.

The perpetrator has two daughters and a son. On the night of the incident, his eldest daughter went to Rangoon/Yangon and his wife and son went to Kyaikmayaw Town and stayed there for one night. The perpetrator and his younger daughter were left at home alone.

In the early morning of November 15, the perpetrator told his daughter that he was feeling sick and asked his daughter for a massage and then raped her. He also threatened his daughter to not tell her mother and if she did tell, he would kill her.

The girl was afraid of her father and did not dare tell her mother at first. Sixteen days after she was raped, she told her mother about it and her mother reported the case to the police station in Kyaikmayaw Town. Deputy Police Officer U Ti Oo is handling the case.

The police officer said, “The police charged the perpetrator under Article #376 of Burma’s Penal Code and are still investigating the case. When we asked the girl, she said she was raped and when we asked her father he said he was just playing with his hand.”

Similarly, in 2014 a 13-year-old girl was raped by her 28-year-old brother in Thaton Town, Mon State. The Mawlamyine Court sentenced the perpetrator to prison for only 1 year and 2 months as punishment.

The girl and her three siblings had been spending nights with an elderly neighbor, as her parents were working and sleeping in the plantation fields. On the night of May 24th, her younger brother had fallen asleep while watching a video at their parent’s house, so she stayed the night there to look after her brother as she could not carry him to the neighbor’s house.

At midnight, Mg A—, holding a headlamp for light entered the house and raised the girl’s skirt in an attempt to touch her thigh. The girl was awake and Mg A— told her not to shout out. However, the girl cried, “U A— came into my house,” and called for her elderly neighbor.

Mg A— ran away and escaped via the back of the house, leaving his headlamp behind. When the girl cried out, no one except the elderly neighbor appeared as most of the neighbors are Mg A—’s relatives.

The next morning, the girl called her mother and after discussing the incident with her school’s principal, they reported the case to the village headman. The village headman did not take action immediately; however, Mg A— was arrested on May 26th 2017 and an investigation was started.

During the investigation, the abuser replied that he knew nothing about the incident because he was intoxicated with drugs.

Mg A— is currently being detained at a nearby base of the New Mon State Party (NMSP).

This is the third incident of sexual violence against children in Mon State and Mon areas of southeast Burma occurring in May 2017 that HURFOM has received. On May 4th, a 16-year-old girl was kidnapped and raped by a relative and on May 15th a 3-year-old girl was raped by a 35-year-old male leaving her in critical condition.

Sexual violence toward children in Burma is an increasingly visible and controversial. For a more in-depth discussion of the issue, see HURFOM’s March 2017 report, ‘Cracks in the Silence: Sexual violence against children and challenges to accessing justice in Mon State and Mon areas of southeast Burma.’
Today HURFOM’s Women and Child Rights Project (WCRP) releases their latest report, “Cracks in the Silence: Sexual violence against children and challenges to accessing justice in Mon State and Mon areas of southeast Burma.”

Since 2013, the number of reported cases of violence, particularly sexual violence, toward children in Burma has increased dramatically. HURFOM itself has seen a significant increase in the number of cases of violence toward children received between 2013 and 2016. However, due to the shame and stigma associated with sexual violence, as well as the challenges faced when accessing justice in Burma’s complex, pluralistic legal system, it is likely that the number is much higher than actually documented.

This report analyzes 20 cases of violence toward children received from Mon State and Mon areas of southeast Burma between December 2013 and January 2017. The types of violence ranged from rape to human trafficking; however, in the majority of cases sexual violence was identified as the primary motive. In all cases received by HURFOM, the victims were female and those experiencing violence ranged in age from as young as three to 17 years of age. While HURFOM acknowledges the small size of the dataset, this report aims to provide a platform for community perspectives on issues that they have identified as important to them, rather than to make general conclusions regarding the phenomenon.

While analyzing the cases, interesting patterns in how families navigated the pluralistic legal system in Burma emerged, as well as a number of challenges they face when accessing justice while reporting a crime involving sexual violence. Thus, this report looks not only at individual cases, but also at the challenges villagers face when pursuing justice and the forms of agency, both individual and collective, they use to overcome these obstacles.

As law makers in Burma are currently drafting a national policy on the prevention of violence against women, as well as amending the 1993 Child Law, this report’s findings and recommendations are particularly relevant and serve as a guide for law makers to promote and protect women and child rights.
EXTRA SCHOOL FEES IN NYNE HLONE LEAVES PARENTS WORRIED ABOUT HOW TO PAY FOR THEIR CHILDREN’S EDUCATION

June 9, 2017

HURFOM: Schools fees for students at Nyne Hlone High School in Nyne Hlone village, Mudon Township, Mon State, are set to increase next month. The Nyne Hlone School Committee and teachers announced that they would begin to collect extra education fees from high school students, leaving some parents worried their children will no longer be able to afford to attend school.

In Nyne Hlone, high school students are required to attend nightly study sessions in addition to their normal, daily class schedule. As per the school committee, Grade 10 (Standard Nine) and Grade 11 (Standard Ten) students will now have to start paying for night study classes at an annual cost of 200,000 kyat (US $148) and 300,000 (US $222) respectively. Parents who are experiencing financial hardship feel they have no alternative but to pull their children from school all together.

The issue of extra education fees in Mudon Township is not new. Last year, a report was submitted to the Chief Officer of the Mudon Township Education Office outlining the collection of extra education fees from students. Although the report was well organized and contained detailed information, it was not received officially as it was anonymous.

“No one [in the government] will take accountability for the report to the Mudon Township Education Chief. And there has been no investigation or action [related to the information in the report]. The [Nyne Hlone] School Committee will start to collect extra education fees from 300,000 to 200,000 kyat in July. The salaries of the school teachers are already paid by the Ministry of Education so there is no need to collect extra fees. This is a problem as the students’ parents do not dare speak out against collecting extra fees,” said Nai Seik Loon, a father from Nyne Hlone village.

The collection of extra fees, including donations, is publicly and officially prohibited by Burma’s Ministry of Education. However, most schools in Burma practice some forms of extra fee collection, with varying reasons and amounts.

“Even the schools in our town have been collecting extra fees for a long time. But this isn’t once a year; [the students have to pay] every three months. In total, the amount they have to pay is more than that of the fees in Nyne Hlone. Some of the students’ parents think that collecting extra fees for night study is fair, so they don’t submit a report [to the relevant authority],” said Nai Wai from Lamine sub-Township, Mon State.

Nyne Hlone School Committee’s plan to begin collecting extra school fees was publicized after a group from Nyne Hlone village wrote a post on their Facebook page. The uproar over the post has been a huge blow for the School Committee and school teachers; however, there is no visible change related to their policy to start collecting extra fees.

On May 5th 2017, a Nyne Hlone village group submitted a report to the Chief of the Mudon Township Education Office.

“In our village, when an exam is upcoming, a Grade 11 student must pay 100,000 kyat (US $74) to their teachers for the cost of night study. The students’ parents have accepted that teachers should collect extra fees for the extra class exam study guide, so they voice no complaints. The student’s parents keep silent,” said Nai B’nyair from Pa Nga village.

The Ministry of Education has stated previously that any form of collecting extra fees, including donations or selling school/classroom seals, has been prohibited and urged parents to cooperate with the Ministry by reporting any type of this behavior.

“Extra school fees in Nyne Hlone leaves parents worried about how to pay for their children’s education. The issue of extra education fees in Mudon Township is not new. Last year, a report was submitted to the Chief Officer of the Mudon Township Education Office outlining the collection of extra education fees from students. Although the report was well organized and contained detailed information, it was not received officially as it was anonymous.”
ATTEMPTED RAPE OF A 9-YEAR-OLD GIRL IN THANBYUZAYAT TOWNSHIP

January 17, 2017

WCRP: On November 3, 2016, an 18-year-old man attempted to rape a 9-year-old schoolgirl in A— village, Thanbyuzayat Township, Mon State.

According to the girl’s grandfather who was witness to the event, 18-year-old Mg Seik Chan from A— village attempted to rape her at around 7 am in her home. The girl’s grandfather, [upon hearing the noise], rapidly woke up and saw him with the girl. He thought that a thief had come and was stealing something in their house. When he came to look, the perpetrator was running away.

“At first, we thought that we would not report about this to the [village] administrator. We didn’t even want other people know about us. [After the incident], our granddaughter was looking unhappy and was quiet, but the perpetrator was looking very happy and singing songs [in the village]. We feel [the perpetrator and his family] don’t care about us. If they apologized to us early on, we would have felt fine and may have forgiven them. We never thought that he would do this to my granddaughter because his parents were working in our rubber plantation and he always visits our house,” said the grandfather.

After the incident, the girl did not go to school for 3 days. She is studying at elementary school in A— village. Her teacher told her that, if someone at the school jokes or talks to her about the incident, to just report it.

The grandfather U B— added that, “The administrator [village head] has negotiated the case between the victim’s family and the perpetrator; both sides agreed to 1,000,000 kyat compensation. The perpetrator gave 750,000 kyat to the victim and said that he would pay the remaining money later, but the rest of the money did not arrive.

According to militia leader U Pin [from an unknown Border Guard Force (BGF) battalion stationed in the village], he advised the victim’s family [upon hearing of the incident] that if they agreed to compensation this time, the perpetrator may commit it [a similar crime] again later. After, the victim’s aunt reported the case to the Thanbyuzayat Police Station and the police charged the perpetrator under Article #376 (concerning rape) of the Burma Penal Code.

According to the medical report after the girl was examined on November 6 at the Thanbyuzayat Hospital, the girl was not raped [penetrated] and the police have not yet requested further information from the family about the case yet.

A 9-YEAR-OLD GIRL RAPED IN MAWLAMYINE

February 2, 2017

On January 23, 2017, a 9-year-old girl was raped by her aunt’s husband in Zay Yar Myine Ward, Mawlamyine. The offender is 31 years old and a father of two. He raped the girl in the morning as the victim was left home alone when her mother went to the market to sell goods.

After being raped, the offender, himself, went to the market at 7 am and told her mother that the girl was crying because there was bleeding from her anus, according to Daw M—, the victim’s mother.

“When B— [the offender] told me [about her injury] at 7 am, I went back home and asked her what happened to her. When I asked her in the kitchen if she fell on a box, she answered, ‘yes’. I thought she said yes because she was afraid of B—. So, I requested B— to buy benzene [antiseptic liquid] and sterilized her injury. After that I went back to the market. At 11 am, my husband came to the market and asked me to return home as our daughter was suffering from bleeding. Upon reaching home, I found that there was bleeding from her vagina, so I brought her to the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the American Hospital,” said Daw M—, the mother of the girl.

“She was discharged on the 25th after staying for 2 days in the hospital. But she still wanted to go to the hospital as she is suffering from pain. She requested me to accompany her and not to leave her alone and asked me to save her. I couldn’t stand looking at her suffering any longer so I brought her to the hospital again on the 26th. She recovered on the 27th and was discharged,” continued the mother.

According to the medical results from the American Hospital, the mother realized that her child was raped so she gently asked the child on January 24th. She replied that when she was sleeping, the offender brought her to the floor, restrained her arms and raped her.

When she tried to cry, the offender covered her mouth. The offender also threatened her that she will be beaten by her mother if she told her mother what happened to her.

Daw M— reported U B— to the police for raping her child on January 24, 2017 and the Zay Yar Thiri Police charged him under Article 376 of the Penal Code. The offender was arrested on January 24 and he confessed that he raped the child.

It is reported now that Mitta Zone See Organization and other social welfare organizations have been supporting the victim’s family.

On the day of abuse, her father was at a festive event at Byine Nha Kaung Pagoda in Mudon Township and her mother was at the market in Zay Yar Myine Ward. The offender and his wife slept at the girl’s house the night before the day of abuse and they often spend the night at the girl’s house, according to the victim’s parents.
3-YEAR-OLD RAPE VICTIM IN CRITICAL CARE, VILLAGE ADMINs ORDER FAMILY NOT TO SEEK MEDICAL TREATMENT OR REPORT TO POLICE

HURFOM: On May 15th 2017, a three-year-old girl from Ka Log village, Ye Township, Mon State, was raped by a 35-year-old, male neighbor. The child is currently in critical care in the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Mawlamyne’s Women and Children Hospital, according to Chief Physician Dr. Nine Oo.

Deputy Chief of Ye City Police, Officer Soe Mon, stated that the child was playing in her home compound when she was taken by her neighbor and raped in the plantation behind her home. The assault was discovered after the girl’s 25-year-old aunt and guardian, Mi B—, questioned the victim after the child was seen crying in pain. When asked, the child disclosed that she had been slapped in the face by their neighbor, while also indicating that a sexual assault had taken place.

On May 16th the girl’s aunt filed a report with the Ka Log village administration office. Upon arriving at the office, the aunt found that Village Administrator U Pyat Ta, Office Clerk Daw Mee, and two Village Development Committee members — U Tin Soe and U Nay Lin — had already gathered. Mi B— reported that after listening to her report of the rape of her niece, the village administrator and others present told her that they would solve the problem at the village level. Mi B— also reported that they pressured her not to report the case to the police, telling her that she had no witnesses to corroborate her story even if she did, while intimating that the perpetrator would seek revenge on her, endangering their lives upon his release from prison if he were convicted. The girl’s aunt was persuaded to accept 1 million kyat (US $740) in cash as compensation in exchange for signing an agreement stating satisfaction with the outcome of the case. In addition, the village administration office told her not to seek any medical treatment for the child, including going to Ye General Hospital or consulting with health workers or midwives.

On May 22nd, Mi B— was told to report to the village administration office on May 22nd to receive her 1 million kyat compensation, however according to police records the victim’s family only received 400,000 kyat (US $296).

After receiving the compensation, the victim’s family remained silent about the rape, however the young girl continued experience severe pain from her injuries sustained during the attack. The girl was brought by her aunt to the Ye General Hospital where upon examination the doctor determined that the girl had been raped. The hospital refused to start treatment until the family reported the assault to the police.

“Before reporting to the Police Station, the victim’s family, the village administration, and other prominent persons in the ward, tried negotiate a mutual agreement and the problem was settled after the victim received 400 thousand kyat of compensation. When they [the family] reported to the police, we seized 350,000 kyat (US $259) in cash as evidence,” explained the Deputy Chief of Police.

On May 28th, Ye City Police arrested the perpetrator and charged him with rape under Burmese Penal Code 376 and criminal intimidation under Penal Code 506. The village administrator and others present at the meeting with Mi B— were charged under Burmese Penal Code 202, or intentional omission to give information of offense by person bound to inform.

According to reports, the Ye City Police need permission from the Ye Township General Administration Department (GAD) office in order to arrest the Ka Log village administrator, his clerk and the two committee members. The police have requested permission from the Ye Township GAD, however there has been no reply to date.

An unnamed social welfare group transported the three-year-old girl to Mawlamyne’s Women and Children’s Hospital where she finally received treatment two weeks after sustaining her injuries.

Sexual violence toward children in Burma has been an increasingly visible and controversial issue. Official police statistics show that reports of sexual abuse of children, especially young girls, has increased significantly over the last three years, rising from 43% of all reported rapes in 2013 to 61% in 2016.

For more information on trends in sexual violence toward children in Mon State and Mon areas of Burma see the Human Rights Foundation of Monland’s (HURFOM) March 2017 report: Cracks in the Silence: Sexual violence against children and challenges to accessing justice in Mon State and Mon areas of southeast Burma.
14th Annual Mon Women’s Day Celebrations Held in Mawlamyine

March 15, 2017

On March 9, 2017, Mon women joined together in celebration of the 14th annual Mon Women’s Day held in Mawlamyine, Mon State.

The event was organized by five Mon groups, including the Mon Women’s Organization (MWO); the Saytanar Foundation; the Border Health Initiative; the Mon Youth Educator Organization; and the Women’s Empowerment Project.

The celebrations ran all day and were attended by people from community-based organizations (CBOs) in Mawlamyine and over 200 civilians from Chaungzone Township, Mudon Township, Ye Township, Paung Township, and Kyaikmayaw Township.

"I am very happy because we are all working together for our event and some villages are also holding celebrations in their area. If we can do more [organizing and campaigning] than now we can get more women’s participation [in the event]. Our women also need to prepare to be women leaders in the future," said Mi Kun Chan Non, deputy chairwoman of MWO.

Mi Kun Chan Non, spoke at the event and explained the purpose of celebrating Mon Women’s Day. Mi Lwin Han from the Mon National Education Committee briefly spoke about the history of Mon Queen Shin Saw Puu during the celebrations.

A male participant at the event expressed, “I gained a lot of knowledge from this event. I think it is very important to have equal rights between males and females. I wish this not only for Mon women, but that all women in Burma may see development and success within their life.”

A press statement for the event released the same day identified a number of key women’s issues: women’s involvement in the peace process and participation in national issues; women in leadership positions; collaboration and participation in the global fight for women’s rights; and the elimination of violence against women.

In addition, the statement highlighted other issues affecting women and children in Mon State including, women and child survivors of war, increasing reports of cases of child rape due to lack of rule of law, and recent armed skirmishes in Mon State.

“We always appreciate feedback from our readers. Please feel free to contact our mailing or email address.”

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