



June 10, 2019

Statement by Ta'ang civil society groups on the Burma Army's failure to take action over the rape of a young Ta'ang woman

1. A 27-year-old Ta'ang woman, "Lway Sein" (not her real name), was raped by two Burma Army soldiers, out of uniform but holding pistols, when she went to a tea farm at about 1.30 pm on 10 May, 2019, in Namsan township, Northern Shan State. Burma Army Battalions no. 258, 252 and 255, under the control of Division 101, were operating in the area of her village.
2. According to eyewitnesses, the incident happened at the foothill of the tea farm, while a battalion was operating on the hilltop above. After Lway Sein was raped, she went back to the village, where she reported what had happened to the village chairman and elders. The chairman then made a complaint to Burma Army Commander Ye Min. After that, Battalion 258 was investigated, but the two other battalions (252 and 255) were not.
3. The chairman and the woman's parents reported the case to the Namsan police station, and the police investigated the scene of the crime, and collected detailed evidence, including medical records of the doctor who examined the rape victim. However, the police have said they are

unable to bring the case to court, because they cannot identify the culprits. We are very concerned about the delay in bringing the case to justice.

4. Even though the Office of the Commander in Chief has extended the unilateral ceasefire, military offensives have been continuing in ethnic areas including Ta'ang areas. Serious human right violations are still happening, including this recent rape case, and, in our analysis, can cause a barrier to the peace process.

5. Regarding this case, we request the commanders of all three battalions to authorize immediate, unconditional investigations of their personnel in order to identify and take action against the two perpetrators. We also request a process of rehabilitation for the victim, with a formal apology to the family.

6. We also would like to request the police in Namsan township to launch an immediate, unconditional investigation into this case, to find out the truth and let justice be served.