



Statement by Karen Peace Support Network

For Immediate Release

21<sup>st</sup> July 2020

**Burma Army robbery and killing of Karen woman in Mutraw highlights urgent need to end military impunity**

On 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020, two Burma Army soldiers shot and killed a Karen mother of three, Mu Naw, in her home, and stole jewellery from her dead body. The killing took place in Po Lo Hta village, Dweh Lo Township, Mutraw, Kawthoolei (Papun District, Karen State).

The Burma Army has used the ceasefire with the Karen National Union to increase its military presence in the area, as documented in our previous report, “Virus Warfare: Burma Army destruction of Karen community defences against COVID-19”.

The two soldiers, believed to be called Than Moe Lwin and Aye Min Tun, are from Light infantry Battalion 409, based at the Ku Thu Hta army base. They arrived at Po Lo Hta village at noon and had lunch at a Monastery in the village.

They then went into the house of Mu Naw, where they shot her in the eye, mouth and chest and stole her gold jewellery. They left the village immediately afterwards. KPSN sources believe the soldiers were transferred from the base after the incident.

Mu Naw was 40 years old. She is survived by her husband, whose name is Saw Pu Aye, and three children (age 18, 15 and 12).

Saw Pu Aye told the Karen Peace Support Network that the Burma Army post in their area makes the lives of local people very difficult. People live in fear of the soldiers and can't move around freely to work and farm. Local people want the Burma Army to withdraw from their areas and their military bases removed.

Saw Pu Aye called for the soldiers responsible to be punished, and called for action from the international community against the Burma Army to stop them killing civilians.

Across Burma, ethnic civilians continue to be killed with impunity by the Burma Army. Living in a ceasefire area is no guarantee of safety. Even where there are high profile cases which pressure the military to take action, trials are held in secrecy, any punishment is often secret, and it is not known if soldiers convicted of these type of crimes even serve their sentences. An approach like this from the top of the military encourages soldiers to feel that they can get away with such crimes.

Ending impunity is an essential part of building any genuine peace process, and to prevent further killings such as that of Mu Naw.

**For more information, please contact:**

Naw Wahku Shee: +66 86118 2261 ( English, Karen)

Saw Hayso Thako: +66 97 998 7048 ( English, Karen, Burmese)