

Hell of the grandmother from Northern Shan State

Anna

"Until now, I have not found the reason that they arrested a me, a 62 years old woman, bashed and beat me with a gauntlet. I lost my front two teeth. I still suffer those pains now."

"On 17.11.2011, the military troop KLY (252) arrested Daw Dshwe Yeon during the night time at her home which is located in Northern Shan State, Nant Khan Township, Panlon section" said Daw D' Shwe Yone.

She had seven children – five sons and two daughters all of whom are married. After her children were married she stayed alone in her house in the village on the top of the mountain. She worked making charcoal and doing hillside cultivation to support her children's education.

"The soldiers arrested five sons and my elder daughter's husband at night at 11.10 pm. They accused my sons of hiding weapons for the Kachin Independent Army (KIA). In the morning at 6 am, they arrested me, all my grandchildren, my daughter who was pregnant, and they locked us up at Nawara Police station (1). In the evening, my grandchildren were starting to cry because they were hungry".

"They pointed guns at us and asked us where the weapons were hidden. They locked up my sons in different prison cells. They locked up my family one night and released us in the morning. They threatened us to not let other people know about things that happen with us" said by Daw D' Shwe Yone.

After I arrived home, the chairman of my village (village headman) told me that we need to sign an order to release my sons. I am very happy so I follow him to Nawara Police Station without finishing my breakfast. They asked me to sign a white piece of blank paper, without any letter inside the paper. After I signed, they locked me up again.

Her neighbours were moved to other places because when they saw her family members arrested and tortured, they feared that the same would happen to them.

"I said to the militia 'She only takes care of her grandchildren. She did not go anywhere. What kind of mistake has she done that you guys arrest her like this?' She was very old. Her sons were not working as KIA soldiers. They often come in and out from my house. I knew everything that they were doing for their livelihood. Not only me but also the chairman of village (village headman) knew it. 'You can also ask the village headman. Why do you guys torture women that are your grandmother's age?' said U Maung Than's Pastor of Palaung Ethnic.

"They were threatening me to sign the white paper. I told them 'I cannot sign the white paper without describing anything. I will go back go now, and release my grandmother so she can go back with me. They did not release her. I had to come back alone and unhappy" said by village headmen.

After that torturous hell started again for the grandmother. They said to her *"Your sons said they give guns to you."* I had never seen or touched any guns before. I did not tell lies, I told the truth. They struck me with a gauntlet and a stick, and beat me with the gun. I do not remember how many times as I fluttered in and out of consciousness."

She heard her sons being tortured from the other prison cell.

"I heard my sons being tortured from the other prison cell. I felt pain when I heard my sons' screams. I asked them to let me stay in the same prison cell with my sons. I told them 'I will stay with them'."

Her sons were tortured in front of her. She said *"They touched my son with electric wire. The blood was collecting on the floor and become a pond, the whole room was full with the smell of the blood until they moved my son to other prison cell. They moved me to another room and tortured me again"*

She asked the people who tortured her to kill her and release her sons.

She continues her story. *"In the morning I regained*

consciousness. One of the men asked me 'Don't you want to go back home?' I said 'Yes I do'. He took me out from the prison cell to the back door. He told me 'Don't look back, do not go back by the street way, go the jungle way'. I ran into the jungle and went back to my house,".

When she arrived back at her house, she heard the news that her elder daughter's husband, her son-in-law was dead.

Later she was arrested again. She was sent to Nah Khan's police station, and then to the Musel's township police station. She was accused of contact with a rebel group, and she was sentenced to two years in prison for this reason.

"Now my elder daughter is left with five children. She has to struggle alone." Told to Daw D' Shwe Yone.