

Month Activities Report for February

Date: 5th Mar

Village: Wan Aung village

Township: Baw La Khae

Country: Myanmar

On the 19/2/2019, Sae Reh and Aung Thu went to the Baw La Khae township and had meeting with the Yae Ta Lae tribe at Wan Aung village and had discussion with them and observed about their tribe people livelihood issue, land issue, the environment concern and social issues of the villagers. We had 22 Yae Ta Lae people were participated during our meeting.

First of all, we had self-introduction session. After that, we started our questioned that what are they doing for they livelihood as the indigenous people in here? In Karenni State (Kayah State) has 9 different tribes. Among those 9 different tribes Yae Ta Lae has the smaller number of population comparing to the other tribe in this state. From the BC (2700) this Yae Ta Lae tribe used to stayed in the Mandalay and they migrated to the Karenni State later on. Currently, only 1500 of population are still left it as a Yae Ta Lae tribe. Due to the very less of population, can be face a risk of extinction soon too. Those Yae Ta Lae tribe is doing farming, agricultural and so much depend on the forest for their livelihood as other tribe in Karenni State people do. Mainly, they plant the sesame because they are living in the hot weather zone.

As a seasonal plant we grow the pigeon pea, maize and green vegetables and for another income, we do animal husbandry such as pigs and chicken small scale business. We stay near by the Than Lwin (Salween) river, Htoo Chaung, Pone Chaung river areas so that we can do the fishing for our livelihood too.

They are also doing boat tourist guild for those who would like to visit to the Budish temple, agricultures lands because they are using boat transportation to go other villages. In their village got the electricity since 2015. For the forest areas and traditional holy land areas, they manage them self as the customary management system and most of the agriculture lands had the land document type (7) because the land department from the government gave to the villagers. However, for the community own land areas are not yet recognize by the government yet. Those who staying Baw La Khae areas can easily accessible for the water, however for those who staying at Wan Aung villagers are facing water problem and to get the water they have to go till Pone Chaung. We are not receiving any water yet even some of the NGOs are helping to build the water storage place and preparing water pipeline in the village.

In our village, we only have the primary school of education, after the primary school the students have to go to other place for the high school education with the big task because of they need to use daily boat transportation. Due to those kinds of challenges became one of the reasons of school withdraw, most of the kids are not going for the high school after finished primary school of educations. Most of the youth from the village went out to the other place and other country to earned money for their family income. Before we had a lot of big tree and we can do logging for our livelihood, however we can't do logging because the government shut down on the logging permit and most of the forest areas are gone. Due to that reason, we are only depending our livelihood in doing of agriculture.

We mostly cultivate sesame and corn without using of chemical fertilizer in our areas. While we doing of cultivation we have different income in each year because it depends on the crop production. We faced less income and product some year in the reason of when we suffer from drought, when the birth came to destroy the crops, when the crops be infested with insects. Sometimes due to the heaving rain can also destroy our plants too.

Engage in trade of sesame, we got very less price from the past 5 years and within 2018 and 2019 we got a little higher price than before. However, we face decreasing of crops production levels. Our Yae Ta Lae people are mostly used to stay near by the river areas. For those who stay in Baw La Khae township, our people used to stay near by the Than Lwin (Salween) river, Htoo Chaung, Pone Chaung river areas. Our people are doing agriculture beside of the both river bank areas for their livelihood.

In 2010, the dams project is being developed by companies from Thailand, China, and Burma. In 2013, Burma's Deputy Minister of Electric Power informed Parliament that 7 dam projects on the Salween River had been approved. Among those 7 dam projects one of the dame location is those who Yae Ta Lae people are staying areas near by Salween river. With a combined installed capacity of 15,000 MW. Due to this big project, the Environmental activities, civil society groups, communities' people and indigenous people those who are staying near by the Salween river are gather to oppose and protest the construction of dams on the Salween River. If they happen to build the dam it will impact to the people those who is staying at the Upper Salween, that will be very big impact to the Yae Ta Lae people and can destroy their forest, their housing too. And also, it's can impact to the Lower part of Salween can be block fish migration routes and reduce the food and job which riverine people depend and it can impact to the riverine route transportation too.

Moreover, due to the dam it can destroy of the Yae Ta Lae people respect customary, history, historical place and building too. Therefore, we need to oppose not to build dam in our

areas, because if we lost our livelihood, our land, our traditional, our culture, it can extinction our people and we cannot able to live as an indigenous people in the near future.

