

# KNU AND KAREN STATE GOVERNMENT MEET TO DISCUSS LAND ISSUES

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**The Karen National Union (KNU) met with officials from the Karen State Government to discuss cooperation on solving ongoing and future land issues on 6 December at the Karen State Government office.**

Karen State Government officials including the Security and Border Affairs Minister Colonel Aung Lwin and the Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation Minister Saw Myint Oo met with the KNU delegation led by Joint Secretary (2) Padoh Mahn Mahn Mahn and the KNU Forestry Department head Padoh Mahn Ba Tun.

Padoh Mahn Mahn Mahn spoke to *Karen News* about the meeting.

“There are two main reasons for the meeting: how to cooperate in solving land issues and how to coordinate the [Burmese] government’s land policy and our land policy.”

Padoh Mahn Mahn said that both sides had agreed on practical methods to achieve those aims, such as holding workshops to coordinate land issues in January.

This meeting was the first informal talks on land issues between the KNU and the Karen State Government since the KNU signed the nationwide ceasefire agreement (NCA). As well as land issues implementation of the peace process was also discussed at the meeting.

The Karen State Agriculture, Livestock, and Irrigation Minister Saw Myint Oo said: “The peace process evolves as a result of meetings like this. There are land issues in the [Karen] state, they are very broad and no decisions have yet been made. We have talked about meeting up again to discuss the details.”

According to the rules laid down for implementing the NCA land and the natural environment are one of the five main topics that have to be discussed as part of the political dialogue.

Currently, there are ongoing land disputes and land confiscations in Karen State and in KNU-controlled areas. The KNU enacted a land policy in December last year that has been providing land registration and land measurement in Karen areas under its control.

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