

Interview 3 - Lor Xiong (age 15)

2.3 Interview - Lor Xiong

Lor Xiong, a fifteen year-old male Hmong, was working in a field approximately 200 metres from the village of Ban Pak Oi in the Phu He area at the time of the attack. He heard, but did not see, a jet aircraft make one pass over the area of his village. The weather at that time was partially cloudy. Shortly after the departure of the aircraft, Lor Xiong saw a yellow rain shower descend on him. The substance felt wet and passed right through his long sleeved shirt and long pants. Lor Xiong immediately went home to change his clothes and to wash. Approximately ten minutes after he had washed he began to feel sick. He felt pain in his chest and had difficulty in breathing. He became very drowsy and his hearing became impaired. Lor Xiong continually vomited with blood during the night. He also had diarrhoea with blood during the same night and throughout the following day. He did not take any medicine.

Lor Xiong saw one person die after having eaten contaminated food, possibly tapioca. Many other villagers became ill. His sisters, who were at home in their thatched hut during the attack, were not at all affected. Lor Xiong saw a large number of chickens die in the village. Some plants, including tapioca, developed dry leaves and died.

At the time of interview, Lor Xiong continued to experience chest pains and had difficulty in breathing when walking. Sixty to seventy percent of his body, including face, was covered with severely discoloured skin lesions that looked like scabs and eruptions. The skin remained very itchy and painful. Medical doctors at Ban Vinai have not been able to identify the cause of the skin problem but agreed that it was not the result of scabies. Lor Xiong appeared very subdued and tired throughout the interview.