

Interview 2 - Seng Pao Moua (age 32)

2.2 Interview - Seng Pao Moua

Seng Pao Moua, a 32-year-old Hmong male, was working with his family in the field planting rice at the time of the attack. The field was located about one hour's walk from his village in the Phu He area. The weather was cloudy. Seng Pao Moua heard a jet aircraft but did not see it. The aircraft made one pass and was gone. He claimed that his village had been attacked by aircraft on three previous occasions.

Approximately five minutes after the departure of the aircraft, Seng Pao Moua saw a yellow gas descend on the area. It covered trees, leaves and rocks and hit him and his family "wet like rain but with a different feeling". Seng Pao Moua was wearing a short-sleeved shirt and long pants at the time of the attack. The yellow substance felt "hot like chillies" on the skin which immediately turned red. Seng Pao Moua vomited with blood for about one hour. He felt nauseous, had chest pains and breathing difficulties, swollen eyes and a runny nose. He experienced blurred vision and could not see objects up close. His throat was sore enough that he could not drink or eat. Seng Pao Maua felt deaf for one night and continued to have diarrhoea with blood for six days. His wife and four children exhibited the same general symptoms but remained in Laos. Seng Pao Moua thought that the reason he did not die was the fact that he smoked a great deal of opium. He travelled to Thailand with the same group of interviewees but had not collected any samples himself.

Seng Pao Moua personally saw about sixteen people die in his village. They either died the night of the attack or during the following day. The first to die were babies, then middle aged adults and some very old persons. All had vomited with blood and had diarrhoea with blood. There were many other affected villagers who did not die. Approximately forty pigs died overnight in the village, apparently after having eaten affected leaves and grass. A large number of chickens also died. Among plants, Seng Pao Moua noted that leaves from the tapioca dried up and died.

At the time of interview, Seng Pao Moua still had difficulty in breathing and had a painful chest. His skin in the affected areas was very itchy and sometimes felt as if it were burning. He still felt tired, weak and had no appetite.