



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Photo Set

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Dooplaya Photo Set: Land confiscation in Kawkareik and Kyainseikgyi townships, December 2013 to September 2014

This Photo Set depicts land confiscated in Kawkareik and Kyainseikgyi townships, Dooplaya District for infrastructure development and military purposes. These projects include the expansion of existing roads and the construction of new roads, as well as the construction of buildings for use by the Tatmadaw. The photos were taken between December 2013 and September 2014. Villagers did not receive any compensation for their land which was confiscated and destroyed.

Photo Set | Kawkareik and Kyainseikgyi townships, Dooplaya District (December 2013 to September 2014)

The following photos were taken by a community member in Dooplaya District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor local human rights conditions. They are presented below, censored where necessary for security purposes.¹ The ten photos below were received along with other information from Dooplaya District, including 411 other photos, 54 video clips, one situation update and 54 interviews.²

¹ KHRG trains villagers in eastern Burma/Myanmar to document individual human rights abuses using a standardised reporting format; conduct interviews with other villagers; and write general updates on the situation in areas with which they are familiar. When writing situation updates, villagers are encouraged to summarise recent events, raise issues that they consider to be important, and present their opinions or perspective on abuse and other local dynamics in their area.

² This Photo Set was compiled by KHRG office staff and is based on information from a community member from Dooplaya District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor local human rights conditions. In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in eastern Burma/Myanmar, KHRG aims to make all field information received available on the KHRG website once it has been processed and translated, subject only to security considerations. For additional reports categorised by Type, Issue, Location and Year, please see the Related Readings component following each report on KHRG's redesigned Website.



These photos showing road construction occurring between Law Pa and A'Kluh village were taken on December 10th 2013 in Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District. The photo on the left depicts the harm done to a coconut grove due to the construction. The photo on the right shows heavy machinery clearing the community's coconut plantation to construct the road. The road will connect Kawkareik and Kyonedoe townships and has negatively impacted villagers' livelihoods due to the loss of land and destruction of agricultural products. *[Photos: KHRG]*



These two photos were taken on April 24th 2014 in A--- village, Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District. All of the buildings in the picture on the left were constructed by the Tatmadaw for military purposes on land taken from a female villager. The photo on the right shows a woman whose home and plantation were also levelled by the Burma/Myanmar government. The property was passed down to her by her parents, yet the Burma/Myanmar government has since cleared all of her land. She reported the incident to local government officials but they did not help her. She was visibly upset while talking about her loss and lacks any means of retrieving her land. *[Photos: KHRG]*



The two photos above were taken on September 15th 2014 in B--- village, Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District. The photo on the left shows a fence that the Tatmadaw built around the land they confiscated from villagers in B--- village. The building that you can see in the picture on the right was built for the Karen Peace Force (KPF)³ and Border Guard Force (BGF).⁴ It was built on the farmland of a local villager without his permission. Militarisation has increased in this area, with villagers having their land confiscated for military use without receiving any compensation. [Photos: KHRG]



The two photos above were taken on March 15th 2014 and document two different road construction projects that have affected local livelihoods. The photo on the left shows a road that is being repaired around Bler Doh village in Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District. The planned road cut across a corn plantation which was confiscated and converted into roadway. The photo on the right is of the main road from Kyain town to Kyeik Don town. In this picture you can also see part of a rubber plantation that was damaged by the construction of the road. The rubber plantation is in C--- village close to D--- village in Kyainseikgyi Township, Dooplaya District. The land owner has not heard anything from the construction company about whether or not he will receive compensation. [Photos: KHRG]

³ Karen Peace Force was formed in February 1997 after splitting from the KNU/KNLA and surrendering to and signing a ceasefire with the Burmese military government. The KPF controls some administrative areas in Three Pagodas Pass and operates a number of road and river checkpoints in the area of Three Pagodas Pass. Following repeated rejections of Burmese government proposals to reform KPF into the Tatmadaw Border Guard, substantial elements have since reformed in the Tatmadaw Border Guard in 2010 while others remain independent.

⁴ Border Guard Force (BGF) battalions of the Tatmadaw were established in 2010, and they are composed mostly of soldiers from former non-state armed groups, such as older constellations of the DKBA, which have formalised ceasefire agreements with the Burmese government and agreed to transform into battalions within the Tatmadaw. BGF battalions are assigned four digit battalion numbers, whereas regular Tatmadaw infantry battalions are assigned two digit battalion numbers and light infantry battalions are identified by two or three-digit battalion numbers. For more information, see [“DKBA officially becomes Border Guard Force”](#) *Democratic Voice of Burma*, August 2010, and, [“Exploitation and recruitment under the DKBA in Pa’an District,”](#) KHRG, June 2009.



The photo on the left was taken on April 24th 2014 in Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District, and shows that the road between Bler Doh village and Thay Baw Boh village has been enlarged. The corn field of a villager was destroyed in the process of this expansion. When speaking to the researcher, the villager was unsure of what to do next since almost all of his crop land was destroyed by the project. The photo on the right is of a new road development notice board and was taken on March 27th 2014. The construction team started to construct this road from Kawkareik town through the towns of Kyeik, Kyeik Don, and A'Zin in 2013, damaging yards and plantations owned by civilians. We do not know if compensation has already been paid or not. The particular portion of road shown in this photo is between Kawkareik town and A'Hpa Gyi village. *[Photos: KHRG]*

Further background reading on the situation in Dooplaya District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- "Dooplaya Situation Update: Kawkareik, Kyainseikgyi and Kyonedoe townships, May to October 2014," (February 2015)
- "Dooplaya Interview: Ma A---, May 2013," (January 2015)
- "Dooplaya Field Report: January to December 2013," (December 2014)
- "Dooplaya Situation Update: Kawkareik Township, September 2014," (November 2014)
- "Dooplaya Interview: Naw A---, July 2013," (October 2014)

Dooplaya District



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