



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Incident Report

December 2nd 2021 / KHRG # 21-276-I1

Taw Oo District Incident Report: Killing case in Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, July 2021

This Incident Report describes an event that occurred in Daw Hpa Hkoh (Thandaunggyi) Township, Taw Oo (Toungoo) District in July 2021. On July 9th 2021, two villagers attacked Saw B--- and his family members in A--- village, Si Pin Ka Lay village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District because they thought that Saw B--- was an informant or spy providing information to State Administration Council (SAC) soldiers and police. Saw B--- and his wife were killed, and his son and granddaughter were seriously injured. The Karen National Union (KNU) authorities arrested the two villagers accused of committing the murders on the same day as the incident; however, the investigation is still ongoing.¹

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	Killing case
Date of Incident(s)	July 9 th 2021
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	A--- village, Si Pin Ka Lay village tract, ² Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District

Victim Information				
Name	Saw ³ B--- (Dead)	Naw ⁴ C--- (Dead)	Saw D--- (Alive)	Naw E--- (Alive)
Age	55	50	30	7
Sex	Male	Female	Male	Female
Nationality	Karen	Karen	Karen	Karen
Family	Married	Married	Married	Single
Occupation	Plantation worker	Plantation worker	Plantation worker	Dependent

¹ The present document is based on information received in September 2021. It was provided by a community member in Taw Oo District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions on the ground. The names of the victims, their photos and the exact locations are censored for security reasons. The parts in square brackets are explanations added by KHRG.

² A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

³ Saw is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

⁴ Naw is a S'gaw Karen female honorific title used before a person's name.

Religion	Christian	Christian	Christian	Christian
Position	Villager	Villager	Villager	Villager
Village	A--- village, Si Pin Ka Lay village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District	A--- village, Si Pin Ka Lay village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District	A--- village, Si Pin Ka Lay village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District	A--- village, Si Pin Ka Lay village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District

Perpetrator Information (Civilians)		
Name(s)	Occupation	Village
Saw F---	A local businessman	A--- village, Si Pin Ka Lay village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District
A friend of Saw F---	Unknown	Bo Del Kone Section, Thandaung Town, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

Daw⁵ F---, Naw E---'s grandmother [and Saw D---'s mother-in-law], contacted a KHRG researcher over the phone and informed him about this incident. The researcher then went to meet her and conducted an interview. The researcher also went to meet Saw D---, who had been shot, after he was discharged from the hospital and interviewed him regarding the incident. KHRG's researcher also spoke with Naw G---, Saw B---'s daughter and a witness to the incident, over the phone.

2. Explain how the sources verified this information.

The first source is a family member of both surviving victims, and the second source is one of the surviving victims. The third source is a family member of the two surviving victims. She was hiding in the house at the time of the incident and witnessed what occurred.

Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail. For each incident, be sure to include 1) when the incident happened, 2) where it happened, 3) what happened, 4) how it happened, 5) who was involved, and 6) why it happened. Also describe any villager response(s) to the incident, the aftermath and the current living situation of the victims. Please use the space prepared below, and create an attachment if needed.

Saw B--- (55 years old), his wife Naw C--- (50 years old), their son Saw D--- (30 years old), their daughter Naw G--- (15 or 16 years old), and their granddaughter Naw E--- (7 years old), lived together in the same house on their rubber plantation near A--- village, Si Pin Ka Lay village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District. They work as plantation workers to earn their livelihood. They also run a small shop in their house for additional income.

⁵ Daw is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person's name.

According to Naw G---, Saw B---'s teenaged daughter who was hiding in the house throughout the incident, on July 9th 2021 at around 2:00 p.m., Saw F--- (who lives in A--- village), came to their shop and asked Saw B---, "*Uncle, how are you? What are you doing?*" After he said this, he shot Saw B--- in the chest with his gun [a .22 Long Rifle that Saw F--- owns and uses for hunting, according to Saw D---, another victim in this incident]. Saw B--- died at once. He [Saw F---] killed Saw B--- because he thought that Saw B--- was *da lan* [an informant]. He accused Saw B--- of providing information to State Administration Council (SAC)⁶ police and soldiers. There seems to be no strong evidence or any clear proof to support this accusation. According to KHRG's researcher, Saw F--- believed that, since Saw B--- ran a shop and met with many buyers, he might be passing information to some buyers who were police. There was, however, no proof of this. Saw F--- had come to kill Saw B--- with a friend, but this friend was hiding somewhere near the house when he [Saw F---] killed Saw B---.

Saw D---, Saw B---'s son, who had been working nearby on his rubber plantation, stated that, at this time [when he heard the gunshot], he came back to the house from the rubber plantation and saw what had happened to his father. Saw D--- went to wrestle Saw F---. While they were wrestling, Naw C---, Saw B---'s wife, tried to use the phone to call other villagers and her relatives who live in the village for help. Saw F--- took his .22 Long Rifle and shot Saw D--- in the abdomen. Saw D--- fell to the ground and could not move, as he was seriously injured. Once he fell, he pretended to be dead. Then Saw F--- told him, "*Go and die*". After this, Saw F--- went back to his friend [who was hiding outside] and told his friend, "*I did it. I killed them. Now you have to kill the rest of his family.*" His friend came to the house and asked Saw B---'s wife, Naw C---, "*Aunty, how can I help you?*" After he asked this, he stabbed her in the chest with his knife, killing her.

At that moment, Naw E---, Saw D---'s daughter [who had also been present in the house throughout the attack], went to her father where he had fallen. Saw F---'s friend saw her and stabbed her once in the chest and cut the fingers on her left hand. She was seriously injured but did not die. Then, he left the house.

Shortly after he [Saw F---'s friend] left, Saw D---'s relatives from the village arrived. They hired a car and sent Naw E--- and her father Saw D--- to Thandaunggyi Hospital for medical treatment. Thandaunggyi Hospital could not sufficiently treat them [as their injuries were too serious], and after three or four days they were sent to Nay Pyi Taw [1000-bed] hospital. After a month in Nay Pyi Taw hospital, a doctor told them to go back home and rest because they should not stay in hospital for a longer period due to the COVID-19 situation. Though they were discharged from the hospital and returned to their village, their injuries were not fully healed. The doctor who treated them at Nay Pyi Taw hospital suggested that they should return to the hospital once a month for further treatment.

Saw F--- and his friend were arrested by Karen National Union (KNU)⁷ authorities on the night of July 9th 2021, and were brought to the KNU District office. According to the victim [Saw D---],

⁶ The State Administration Council (SAC) is the executive governing body created in the aftermath of the February 1st 2021 military coup. It was established by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on February 2nd 2021, and is composed of eight military officers and eight civilians. The chairperson serves as the de facto head of government of Myanmar and leads the Military Cabinet of Myanmar, the executive branch of the government. Min Aung Hlaing assumed the role of SAC chairperson following the coup.

⁷ The Karen National Union (KNU) is the main Karen political organisation. It was established in 1947 and has been in conflict with the government since 1949. The KNU wields power across large areas of Southeast Myanmar and has been calling for the creation of a democratic federal system since 1976. Although it signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2015, relations with the government remain tense.

the KNU authorities have not yet made any decisions on the perpetrators' punishment in this case, as the local KNU police [Karen National Police Force]⁸ are still investigating. According to an update from a KHRG researcher on October 5th 2021, the process of investigation and legal action might take longer than usual due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

Did the victim(s) provide permission to use this information? Explain how that permission was provided.

The surviving victim, Saw D---, and the two other sources, Daw F--- and Naw G---, have given KHRG permission to use the information to shed light on the crime that was committed.

Further background reading on other incidents of violence between civilian villagers in Southeast Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [*"Taw Oo District Incident Report: Rape case in Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, August 2020"*](#), February 2021.
- [*"Hpa-an District Incident Report: Witchcraft-related killing in T'Nay Hsah Township, July 2020"*](#), November 2021.

About KHRG

Founded in 1992, the Karen Human Rights Group is an independent local organisation committed to improving the human rights situation in Southeast Myanmar. KHRG trains local people to document and gather evidence of human rights abuses, and publishes this information to project the voices, experiences and perspectives of local communities. More examples of our work can be seen online at www.khrq.org.

⁸ The Karen National Police Force is the law enforcement agency of the Karen National Union. It was established in 1991.

Taw Oo (Toungoo) District

