



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Incident Report

December 2nd 2021 / KHRG # 21-276-I2

Taw Oo District Incident Report: A villager's house was damaged by indiscriminate gunfire from a drunk SAC military officer in Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, August 2021

This Incident Report describes an event that occurred in Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo (Toungoo) District in August 2021. On August 10th 2021, a State Administration Council (SAC) military officer from a company under LIB #604 got drunk and indiscriminately fired his pistol at a villager's house in A--- village, Chee Thu Saw village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township. The gunfire damaged the roof and caused fear in the community. One of the community members informed Major Hein San Htun, the battalion commander of LIB #604, about this incident, but no action was taken against the officer who caused the damage.¹

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	Indiscriminate gunfire at a villager's house
Date of Incident(s)	August 10 th 2021
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	A--- village, Chee Thu Saw village tract, ² Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District

Victim Information	
Name	Saw ³ C--- (House owner)
Age	Over 50 years
Sex	Male
Nationality	Karen
Family	Married
Occupation	Plantation worker
Religion	Christian
Position	Villager

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.

Village	A--- village, Chee Thu Saw village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District
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Perpetrator Information (Armed Actors)				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Naing Lin Htun	Captain	Light Infantry Battalion #604	Pyinmana Township (in Nay Pyi Daw) but temporarily operating out of Day Dah Hkoh army camp, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District	Major Hein San Htun

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

Saw B--- (a former village head) contacted a KHRG researcher on the phone and informed him about the incident.

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

KHRG's researcher heard villagers talking about this incident. Then Saw B--- contacted the KHRG researcher and informed him about this incident over the phone. Local Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)⁴ authorities also told the researcher about this incident.

Saw C---, the homeowner whose house was damaged by the gunfire, told Saw B--- about the incident. Saw B--- then informed KHRG's researcher about the incident and shared the information Saw C--- had provided to him.

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.

On the night of August 10th 2021, Captain Naing Lin Htun and two of his fellow soldiers from an unknown company⁵ under State Administration Council (SAC)⁶ Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)⁷

⁴ The Karen National Liberation Army is the armed wing of the Karen National Union.

⁵ Military unit of approximately 100 soldiers.

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.

#604, and temporarily based in and operating out of Day Dah Hkoh army camp, near A--- village, Chee Thu Saw village tract, Daw Hpa Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District, left the army camp and entered the village, where they drank alcohol. [Soldiers are not supposed to leave the camp. Captain Naing Lin Htun and his fellow soldiers were able to do so because Captain Naing Lin Htun is the highest authority at the camp.] While they were drunk, Captain Naing Lin Htun took his pistol and fired at a house owned by a villager named Saw C---. The roof of the house was damaged by the gunfire [the gunfire damaged one of the zinc panels on the roof as well as a wooden roof support].

Villagers were not happy about this incident and they complained about it. One community member called Major Hein San Htun, battalion commander of SAC LIB #604, and informed him about this incident [Major Hein San Htun is located at Thout Yay Ket army camp, Thout Yay Ket village, Kay Lay Koh village tract, Thandaunggyi Township]. Major Hein San Htun then called and met with Captain Naing Htun Lin. He [the major] said that he would punish Captain Naing Lin Htun for this incident. However, Major Hein San Htun did not hand down any punishment nor take action against Captain Naing Lin Htun for what he did. Because of Major Hein San Htun's failure to take action, the villagers are worried that SAC soldiers will commit similar acts in the future.

The villagers were worried for their security when they [the soldiers] entered the village at night, because past actions of this type [by Tatmadaw⁸ soldiers] have caused the villagers to fear for both their lives and their property [for example, in the past Tatmadaw soldiers would enter the village at night to threaten and even arrest villagers]. Local villagers also have recent experience with property damage caused by SAC soldiers from the Day Dah Hkoh army camp. In March 2021, when SAC soldiers cleaned the area surrounding their army camp [by cutting and burning grass and bushes], they burned down some of the gardens owned by villagers. No compensation was provided to the owners following this incident.

According to the KHRG researcher, the relationship between the villagers and SAC soldiers who live in Day Dah Hkoh army camp is not very good. Villagers worry about their security due to their [the SAC soldiers'] presence near the village.

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

Both the victim and KHRG's direct source have given KHRG permission to use this information.

⁷ A Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. Most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers, yet up-to-date information regarding the size of battalions is hard to come by, particularly following the signing of the NCA. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

⁸ The term most commonly used in referring to Myanmar's armed forces is Tatmadaw. The term has been used by KHRG throughout its reporting history, and most consistently during periods of civilian government. Since the February 1st 2021 coup and the military's establishment of the State Administration Council (SAC) as the executive governing body of Myanmar, Myanmar's armed forces have also come to be referred to as the SAC military. KHRG uses the term SAC military in specific reference to the Myanmar military since the February 1st 2021 coup. During previous periods of military rule, KHRG also used the names adopted by the military government in referring to the Tatmadaw (i.e. SLORC [State Law and Order Restoration Council] between 1988 to 1997, and SPDC [State Peace and Development Council] from 1998 to 2011), because these were the terms commonly used by villagers in KHRG research areas.

Further background reading on human rights abuses committed by SAC soldiers in Southeast Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [*"Doo Tha Htoo Short Update: Looting by BGF and SAC soldiers, June 21st 2021"*](#), July 2021.
- [*"Kler Lwee Htoo District Incident Report: One villager injured, another one missing after being shot at by the Tatmadaw in Moo Township, May 2021,"*](#) June 2021.
- [*"Kler Lwee Htoo District Short Update: Tatmadaw soldiers confiscate two motorbikes and threaten local villagers in Hsaw Htee Township, April 2021"*](#), April 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.khrg.org.

Taw Oo (Toungoo) District

