



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

---

### Short Update

February 28<sup>th</sup> 2025 / KHRG # 24-200-D1

---

## Mu Traw District Short Update: SAC air strikes destroying civilian houses and property and causing displacement and livelihood challenges in Bu Tho and Dwe Lo Townships (April 2024)

---

*This Short Update describes events that occurred in Bu Tho and Dwe Lo Townships, Mu Traw District, in April 2024, including air strikes in civilian areas. Prior to the incidents, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) had conducted drone strikes on the State Administration Council (SAC) army camps of Light Infantry Battalions (LIBs) #340, #341, #434, and the SAC's strategic hilltop base, in Hpapun Town area. Following the KNLA drone attacks, the SAC conducted several air strikes into the villages located close to their army camps, including Aa--- village (Htee Th'Bluh Hta village tract) and Ab--- village (Meh Klaw village tract), within a two-week period. The air strikes caused destruction and damages to houses, civilian property, religious buildings, livestock, and plantations, and forced villagers to flee. The villagers feared for their future food security, as their livelihoods were severely impacted.<sup>1</sup>*

---

### SAC air strikes caused damages in Bu Tho and Dwe Lo Townships

[Recurrently in March and April 2024,] the KNLA [Karen National Liberation Army<sup>2</sup>] attacked with drones the SAC [State Administration Council<sup>3</sup>] army camps of Battalions [Light Infantry Battalions (LIBs)<sup>4</sup>] #340, #341, #434 and the strategic hilltop base [all based close to Hpapun Town, Mu Traw District]. Following the drone attacks, the SAC [recurrently] conducted air strikes into the villages located close to their army camps. Within one day, the SAC would conduct between 10 to 40 air strikes [into nearby villages]. The [affected] villages located near the [SAC]

---

<sup>1</sup> The present document is based on information received in April 2024. It was provided by a community member in Mu Traw 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. This document combines several received reports with the following KHRG internal log numbers: # 24-200-D1; #24-200-D2 and # 24-200-D3.

<sup>2</sup> The Karen National Liberation Army is the armed wing of the Karen National Union.

<sup>3</sup> The State Administration Council (SAC) is the executive governing body created in the aftermath of the February 1<sup>st</sup> 2021 military coup. It was established by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing on February 2<sup>nd</sup> 2021 and is composed of eight military officers and eight civilians. The chairperson serves as the de facto head of government of Burma/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.

<sup>4</sup> A Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. Most Light Infantry Battalions 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.

army camps include Ac---, Ad---, Ae---, Af---, Ab---, and Ag--- villages, in Meh Klaw village tract<sup>5</sup>, Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District, and Ah---, Ai---, and Aj--- villages, in Ma Htaw village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw District, as well as Section #1 and Section #2 in Hpapun Town, Mu Traw District.

[During March 2024,] the SAC had often conducted air strikes in the Hpapun Town area, so the villagers from the villages located close to Hpapun Town had fled to K'Mah Moh Town [in Doo Tha Htoo District], Hkaw Taw Town [in Hpa-an District], and Hpa-An Town [in Doo Tha Htoo District]. The SAC air strikes [in March 2024] caused casualties among villagers, including a monk, as well as damage to houses.<sup>6</sup>

Whenever the SAC soldiers were attacked, nearby or far from the villages [in the Hpapun Town area], the SAC conducted air strikes on the villages. The SAC attacked and threatened civilians rather than their enemies [resistance armed groups].

- **April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024: Air strikes in Dwe Lo Township**

On April 1<sup>st</sup> 2024, at 1:30 am, an SAC aircraft dropped bombs into Aa--- village, Htee Th'Bluh Hta village tract, Dwe Lo Township [also located near Hpapun area]. In total, 28 bombs were dropped [in the area. This was counted by a local community member who heard the sound of 28 explosions].

Among these 28 bombs, five bombs landed on the monastery compound in Aa--- village and damaged the monastery wall, the kitchen wall, and the dining room roof. Furthermore, the bombs explosions damaged nearby villagers' houses, including the house wall of a villager named Saw<sup>7</sup> A--- and the water tank and toilet of a villager named Saw B---. Three bombs landed on Saw C---'s garden, which is next to the house of Saw D--- and the house of Saw E---. The explosions damaged the roof and wall of Saw D---'s house. Saw E---'s house was destroyed by the explosion. Three bombs landed beside the house of Saw F--- [but did not damage the house]. Three bombs landed behind Saw G---'s house and damaged his house roof, a pot, and killed one chicken. The rest of the bombs landed on farms and plantations in Aa--- village area.

Before the air strikes, an [SAC] aircraft conducted reconnaissance [over Hpapun Town area] for two days, on March 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> 2024. When they [SAC aircraft] bombed Aa--- village, no villagers were injured [as they had already displaced]. Aa--- villagers were afraid to stay in the village and fled to their huts in farms, plantations and forests [where they continue to be displaced as of February 2025].

- **April 8<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2024: Air strikes in Bu Tho Township**

On April 8<sup>th</sup> 2024, at 7:30 am, an SAC aircraft dropped bombs into Ab--- village, Meh Klaw village tract, Bu Tho Township. When the SAC aircraft dropped bombs into Ab--- village, the house roof of a villager named U<sup>8</sup> H--- was damaged. [In addition,] the house of a villager named U I--- was destroyed, and his coconut trees, plantations, and furniture were damaged.

On April 14<sup>th</sup> 2024, at 10 am, an SAC aircraft dropped bombs [again] into Ab--- village, Meh Klaw village tract. The bombs landed next to Saw I---'s house and damaged the roof and wall of

---

<sup>5</sup> A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

<sup>6</sup> KHRG, [“Photo Set: Villagers’ displacement in Southeast Burma, and reported challenges, from January to October 2024”](#), December 2024.

<sup>7</sup> ‘Saw’ is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

<sup>8</sup> ‘U’ is a Burmese title used for elder men, used before their name.



the house. One [bomb] landed behind J---'s house and remained unexploded. Many [bombs] landed beside the roads and the village [Ab--- village].

Due to the SAC air strikes, villagers [from villages located close to Hpapun Town] fled from their villages and were unable to continue their livelihood activities, so they worry about their food [security] in the future [as of February 2025].



KHRG received these photos from Meh Klaw village tract, Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District, on April 27<sup>th</sup> 2024 [source details censored for security reasons]. The two photos on the top row and the photo on the bottom left show that house of a villager named Saw I--- was damaged by SAC air strikes on April 14<sup>th</sup> 2024 in Ab--- village, Meh Klaw village tract. The photo at the right bottom shows the remains of a bomb's fin dropped by an SAC aircraft in Ab--- village on April 14<sup>th</sup> 2024. *[Photos: Local authority]*

Further background reading on the human rights situation in Mu Traw District in Southeast Burma can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- ["Mu Traw District Incident Report: SAC arbitrary arrest, use of villagers as forced navigators and human shields, mistreatment, and looting in Bu Tho Township \(April 2024\)"](#), January 2025.
- ["Photo Set: Villagers' displacement in Southeast Burma, and reported challenges, from January to October 2024"](#), December 2024.
- [ကဘီယုဟဲလ် Aircraft coming! : Impacts of air strikes on local communities and villagers' protection strategies in Southeast Burma since the 2021 coup](#), November 2024.
- ["Mu Traw District Incident Report: One teenager was killed and another was severely injured by a UXO explosion, in Lu Thaw Township \(July 2024\)"](#), September 2024.

## About KHRG

Founded in 1992, the Karen Human Rights Group is an independent local organisation committed to improving the human rights situation in Southeast Burma. 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](http://www.khrq.org).



