



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Incident Report

February 25th, 2025 / KHRG # 24-270-I1

Taw Oo District Incident Report: SAC shelling killed four villagers and injured two, including a 15-year-old boy, in Htaw Ta Htoo Township (May 2024)

This Incident Report describes events occurring in Htaw Ta Htoo (Htantabin) Township, Taw Oo (Toungoo) District, in May 2024. On May 13th 2024, State Administration Council (SAC) soldiers from Infantry Battalion (IB) #73 army camp (in the vicinity of Zayet Gyi Town, Htaw Ta Htoo Township) shelled two mortar shells that landed into Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area. The explosion of the first mortar shell injured a 35-year-old villager from Z--- village, named Maung P---. A number of villagers' houses were damaged and two cows were injured by the explosion of the mortar shell as well. The explosion of the second mortar shell hit the house of a family. Four members of the family were killed by the explosion. A 20-year-old villager named Ma N--- died immediately after the incident. One of the villagers named U E--- (50 years old) died before he reached the hospital. And the other two villagers, named Daw L--- (54 years old) and U G--- (79 years old), died after they reached the hospital. Two more members of the same family, U D--- (50 years old) and Maung T--- (15 years old), were present during the incident but only Maung T--- was injured minorly on the foot. This incident resulted in villagers living with trauma, anxiety and insecurity.¹

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	[SAC] shelling killed four villagers and injured [two, including] one teenager
Date of Incident(s)	May 13 th 2024
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area, Htaw Ta Htoo (Htantabin) Township, Taw Oo (Toungoo) District

Deceased Victims Information				
Name	U ² G---	U E---	Daw ³ L---	Ma ⁴ N---
Age	79 years old	50 years old	54 years old	20 years old
Gender	Man	Man	Woman	Woman

¹ The present document is based on information received in June 2024. It was provided by a community member in Taw Oo (Toungoo) 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 ‘U’ is a Burmese title used for elder men, used before their name.

³ ‘Daw’ is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person’s name.

⁴ ‘Ma’ is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person’s name.

Ethnicity	Bamar ⁵	Bamar	Bamar	Bamar
Marital Status	Married	Single	Married	Single
Occupation	Unknown	Farmer	Shopkeeper	Unknown
Religion	Buddhist	Buddhist	Buddhist	Buddhist
Position	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Village	Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area	Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area	Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area	Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area

Injured Victims Information		
Name	Maung ⁶ T---	Maung P---
Age	15 years old	35 years old
Gender	Boy	Man
Ethnicity	Bamar	Bamar
Marital Status	Single	Single
Occupation	-	Farmer
Religion	Buddhist	Buddhist
Position	-	-
Village	Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area	Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area

Perpetrator Information (Armed Actors)				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Unknown	Unknown	State Administration Council (SAC)'s ⁷ Infantry Battalion (IB) ⁸ #73	Zayet Gyi [Town], Htaw Ta Htoo Township	Unknown

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how this information was collected.

⁵ The majority ethnic group in Myanmar, also known as ethnic Burmese or Burman.

⁶ 'Maung' is a Burmese male honorific title used before a person's name.

⁷ 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 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.

⁸ An Infantry Battalion (IB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Infantry Battalions in the Burma military 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. They are primarily used for garrison duty but are sometimes used in offensive operations.

The [KHRG] researcher conducted an interview [with two villagers to get detailed information] after being introduced by another villager from the incident area [Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area]. [The researcher] interviewed a 60-year-old relative of the victims, named U J---, and the 50-year-old administrator [of Z---] village, named U V---, about the mortar shells that landed into the village. [The researcher also talked to a villager named U Y---, also from Z--- village, to confirm the details of the first mortar shell.]

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

U J--- is a relative of the victims and a neighbour of the victims, so he witnessed this incident first hand. U V---, the village leader [administrator], also approached the incident place to help [the victims]. As such, the researcher knew [confirmed] this [information] is authentic. According to U J---, he went to check the incident place a short time after the mortar shells landed [and exploded] and he heard his nephew [U E---] calling for help. When he reached the incident place, he saw four people were lying down [injured from the mortar explosion]. Among them, only U E---, who sustained life-threatening injuries, was asking him for help [meaning the rest were not conscious]. The researcher also received the information [from U J---] that U E--- died before he reached the hospital. U J--- saw the bodies of his four family members at the incident place, which caused him to be in distress and experience a panic attack. U V---, the village administrator, confirmed that four villagers were killed due to the mortar explosions. [U Y--- from Z--- village witnessed the first mortar shell incident.]

Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail.

On May 13th 2024, at around 10 pm, [State Administration Council (SAC) soldiers from] Infantry Battalion (IB) #73 [whose army camp is located in the vicinity of Zayet Gyi Town, Htaw Ta Htoo (Htantabin) Township, Taw Oo District] fired two rounds of mortar into Z--- village, Zayet Gyi Toungchan area, Htaw Ta Htoo Township. There had been no prior fighting before the attack. The two mortar shells landed in the village and exploded.

The first mortar shell injured a villager named Maung P--- (35 years old) on his leg and arm. Maung P--- is Bamar ethnic, Buddhist, and a farmer. The first mortar shell also injured two cows and damaged nearby houses and the properties inside.

The second mortar shell hit [near a house] and killed four members of a family. A total of six family members were living in the house. Five family members were hit by the second mortar shell. Four family members were killed [under their stilted house] while going to their makeshift bunker [location censored for security], when the mortar exploded approximately 15 to 20 feet [4.5 to 6 metres] from the house. Two family members [U D--- and Maung T---] were still inside the house [about to go outside] when the explosion occurred, resulting in one of them [Maung T---] getting minorly injured [on his heel]. As a result [of the explosion], they [Daw L--- and U G---] were severely injured and died when they reached Toungoo Hospital, located in Toungoo Township, Pel Khu Region [an SAC government-controlled area]. [They were transported by the village administrator and some other villagers.] [Ma N--- was killed instantly and U E--- died before reaching the hospital.]

There was no fighting in or near the village [before the attack] but the SAC still shelled the village. [As explained by U J---, the family member of the victims, there is a People's Defence Force (PDF)⁹ camp located near that area, however there was no fighting prior to the attack.]

The four deceased villagers are:

- U G--- (79 years old), from [a piece of] shrapnel that hit his right eye and passed through the back of his head. He died when he reached the hospital;
- Daw L--- (54 years old), U G---'s daughter, from a piece of shrapnel that passed through the nape to the front of her neck. She died when she reached the hospital;
- U E--- (50 years old), U G---'s son, from shrapnel that perforated the right side of his stomach and passed through the left side of his chest, and another shrapnel which hit his right knee. He died before he reached the hospital;
- Ma N--- (20 years old), U G---'s granddaughter and Daw L---'s daughter, from three [pieces of] shrapnel [that hit] her right hand and passed through her right and left buttocks. She died immediately.

The remaining family members are U G---'s son-in-law, named U D--- (50 years old), married to Daw L---, and his [U G---'s] 15-year-old grandson, named Maung T---. Maung T--- sustained a small injury on one of his heels but survived [without lasting injuries].

U D--- suffers from trauma after surviving the incident. The loss of his wife and daughter impacted his feelings [he feels depressed]. His son, Maung T---, was slightly injured on his heel during the incident. The surviving members of the family [U D--- and Maung T---] are experiencing difficulties [to guarantee] their livelihood. U D--- suffered a motorbike accident and had a steel rod inserted in one of his injured legs prior to the SAC shelling incident. He was relying on his family members to support him financially due to his mobility issues. Given financial difficulties, he is being treated with traditional medicine, and still [as of November 2024] cannot walk properly. Consequently, he cannot work.

The two interviewees informed the [KHRG] researcher that after the occurrence of this incident, villagers live their lives full of anxiety and insecurity.

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

U J---, a relative of the victims, allowed this information to be used in a report.

⁹ The People's Defence Force (PDF) is an armed resistance established independently as local civilian militias operating across the country. Following the February 1st 2021 military coup and the ongoing brutal violence enacted by the junta, the majority of these groups began working with the National Unity Government (NUG), a body claiming to be the legitimate government of Burma/Myanmar, which then formalized the PDF on May 5th 2021 as a precursor to a federal army.

Further background reading on the situation of shelling in Southeast Burma/Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [Striking Fear: Impacts of State Administration Council \(SAC\) shelling on villagers' lives in Southeast Burma \(January to October 2023\)](#), December 2023.
- ["Mu Traw District Incident Report: SAC shelling killed a villager and destroyed plantations \(September 2023\)"](#), December 2024.
- ["Doo Tha Htoo District Short Update: Indiscriminate shelling causing 11 casualties, destruction, and mass displacement in Tha Htoo Township, May 2024"](#), November 2024.
- ["Doooplaya District Short Update: SAC shelling and air strikes resulted in civilian casualties, property destruction and displacement, in Kruh Tuh Township, December 2023"](#), August 2024.

About KHRG

Founded in 1992, 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.

