



## Situation Update

February 28, 2017 / KHRG #16-100-S1

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## Hpapun Situation Update: Dwe Lo Township, August to September 2016

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*This Situation Update describes events occurring in Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District during the period between August and September 2016, including education, military activity, and illegal logging.*

- *There are two types of schools in Dwe Lo Township; the Burma/Myanmar government schools and the Karen National Union (KNU) schools.*
  - *The Border Guard Force (BGF) now patrols the Taw Tho Lo Tatmadaw Army Camp; however, four Tatmadaw soldiers also operate with the BGF.*
  - *Commander of BGF Company #3, Bo Maung So, illegally logged teak trees near Ff--- village. He took the teak logs to K'Ter Tee by truck on October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016, at around 08:00 AM.*
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## Situation Update | Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District (August to September 2016)

*The following Situation Update was received by KHRG in November 2016. It was written by a community member in Hpapun District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions. It is presented below translated exactly as originally written, save for minor edits for clarity and security.<sup>1</sup>*

This Situation Update from Dwe Lo Township was documented between August and September 2016. There has been no change to the education situation in Dwe Lo Township. As usual, there are two education systems, one is led by the Burma/Myanmar Government School [Education Department] and the other is led by the Karen National Union School [Education Department]. The Karen Education Department (KED)<sup>2</sup> supports civilian schools by providing stationary and by paying part of the teachers' salary.

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<sup>1</sup> KHRG trains community members in southeast 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, community members 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.

<sup>2</sup> The Karen National Union's Education Department. The main goals of the KED are to provide education, as well as to preserve Karen language and culture. During the civil war in Burma/Myanmar the KED became the main organisation providing educational services in the KNU controlled areas in southeast Burma/Myanmar. The KED also previously oversaw the educational system in the seven refugee camps along the Thai-Burma/Myanmar border,

Not many issues arose in the area of Dwe Lo Township between August and September 2016. However, Saw Gg---, who lives in Hh--- village, Htee Tha Blu Hta village tract, reported that the Border Guard Force (BGF)<sup>3</sup> was rotating now [at the time the report was written]. The Tatmadaw army camp in K'Hser Ther Pler (Taw Tho Lo) is patrolled by Battalion #1013<sup>4</sup>, which is led by Bo<sup>5</sup> Maung So, who is the Commander of BGF Company #3. There are four Tatmadaw soldiers operating in [Taw Tho Lo] BGF army camp; there is a ration commander, a Lance Corporal, a Corporal and a Sergeant. The villager did not know the reason why the four Tatmadaw soldiers stayed [operated] with the BGF.

Furthermore, Commander of BGF Company #3, Bo Maung So, illegally logged teak trees, which are located beside Ff--- village. He obtained 21 logs of teak, which measured [the same as] six sets of fingertips to elbow [18 inches] in length. On October 23<sup>rd</sup> 2016, he used a truck to take it [the logs] to K'Ter Tee at around 08:00AM

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

- "Hpapun Interview: Saw A---, March 2016," (January 2017)
- "Hpapun Field Report: January to December 2015," (December 2016)
- "Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, June to August 2016," (November 2016)
- "Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, March to May 2016," (September 2016)
- "Two separate landmine incidents happened in Hpapun and Nyaunglebin districts, March and April 2016," (August 2016)

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however in 2009 these activities were restructured under the Karen Refugee Committee – Education Entity (KRCEE). See "[Conflict Erupts over Govt teachers deployed to KNU areas](#)," Karen News, August 20<sup>th</sup> 2013 and the KRCEE website: "[About](#)," accessed July 21<sup>st</sup> 2015.

<sup>3</sup> 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 Burma/Myanmar 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.

<sup>4</sup> KHRG continues to receive reports discussing abuses involving BGF Battalion #1013 and #1014, including: "[BGF Battalion #1014 demands forced labour, asserts heavily militarised presence in villages in Hpapun District, June 2015](#)," KHRG, December 2015; "[Hpapun Incident Report: Villager killed by Border Guard Force \(BGF\) Battalion #1013 in Bu Tho Township, March 2015](#)," KHRG, September 2015; "[Human rights violations by Border Guard Force \(BGF\) Battalion #1014 in Bu Tho Township, Hpapun District, May 2012 to March 2014](#)," KHRG, July 2015; "[BGF Battalion #1014 forced labour and forced recruitment, April to May 2012](#)," KHRG, June 2013. Further reports detailing abuses involving these battalions are also available on the KHRG website.

<sup>5</sup> *Bo* is a Burmese title meaning 'officer.'

# Mu Traw (Hpapun) District



Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)