



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Situation Update

July 26, 2018 / KHRG # 18-48-S1

Dooplaya Situation Update: Kyonedoe and Kyainseikgyi townships, January to April 2018

This Situation Update describes events occurring in Kyonedoe and Kyainseikgyi townships, Dooplaya District between January and April 2018. It includes information on access to education, military activities and agribusiness.

- *In 2018, the Border Guard Force (BGF) Battalion #284 strengthened its military camp. It also built a helicopter landing pad on top of Kalee Hkee hill, Noh Taw Pla village tract, Kyainseikgyi Township.*
 - *The Hplon Sgaw Hpoh Livestock Company started operating a livestock farm in Htee Saw Shee Nee village in 2015. The unsanitary practices of this company have negatively affected the health of the local community.*
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Situation Update | Kyonedoe and Kyainseikgyi townships, Dooplaya District (January to April 2018)

The following Situation Update was received by KHRG in April 2018. It was written by a community member in Dooplaya 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.¹ This report was received along with other information from Dooplaya District, including one other incident report, five interviews and 56 photographs.²

Introduction

This Situation Update describes events that occurred between January and April 2018 in Kyonedoe and Kyainseikgyi townships, Dooplaya District. This report includes information on access to education, military activities and agribusiness.

¹ 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.

² In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in southeastern Burma/Myanmar, KHRG aims to make all field information received available on the KHRG website once it has been processed and translated, subject only to security considerations. For additional reports categorised by Type, Issue, Location and Year, please see the Related Readings component following each report on KHRG's website.

Education

In 2017, the Burma/Myanmar government built a school in Noh Ler village, Kruh Kweh village tract, Kyonedoe Township, Dooplaya District. Previously, Noh Ler village did not have a school. Local children had to go to school in another village.

[To make education more accessible to their children], the local community asked [the Burma/Myanmar government] to build a school in their village. As requested, a primary school was built. It will be opened later this year. The school will have a kindergarten and teach up to Standard Four.³ The T’Na Mon Company constructed the school [on behalf of the Burma/Myanmar government]. The person in charge of the construction was Min Nyan Htun.



This photo was taken on March 25th 2018 in Noh Ler village, Kruh Kweh village tract, Kyonedoe Township, Dooplaya District. This photo shows the school that was built by the T’Na Mon Company. The construction took place from September 17th 2017 to February 28th 2018. The school will teach from kindergarten to Standard Four. It will be opened in time for the 2018-19 academic year. [Photo: KHRG]

Military activity

The Border Guard Force (BGF) Battalion #284 is based on Kalee Hkee hill, Noh T’Kaw Township, Dooplaya District.⁴ BGF Battalion #284 reconstructed its army camp and started building a small helicopter landing pad in front of their army camp.



This photo was taken on February 18th 2018 on the top of Kalee Hkee hill, Noh Taw Plah village tract, Kyainseikgyi Township, Dooplaya District. This photo shows a helicopter landing pad built by the BGF Battalion #284 in front of their military camp. [Photo: KHRG]

³ A standard refers to a school year in the education system of Burma/Myanmar. The basic education system has a 5-4-2 structure. Primary school runs from Standard 1 to Standard 5, lower secondary school is Standard 6 to Standard 9, and upper secondary school is Standard 10 to Standard 11.

⁴ 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.

On February 18th 2018, local people reported that the helicopter landing pad was finished. In addition to this, the BGF increased the frequency of their patrols and strengthened their military camps.

Agribusiness

The Hplon Sgaw Hpoh Livestock company started operating in Htee Saw Shee Nee village, Htee Guh Thaw village tract, Kyonedoe Township, Dooplaya District on January 1st 2015. Its plans to operate its livestock business in the area until 2025. The company raises chickens and pigs on an industrial level.

The owner of this company is Wee Cheer, who lives near Mae Sot, Thailand. The person who oversees the business activities is Ma Aye Myint who lives in Hpa Thi village, in Burma/Myanmar.

The company's practices are not sanitary. [KHRG has received reports that] the company does not dispose of the animals' dung properly. Therefore, the dung spreads into the surrounding lands. Local villagers are worried that the dung will flow into their village and negatively affect their health during the rainy season. The strong smell of dung is already difficult for the local community. Some villagers have become ill from breathing the air.

Even though the community has reported this situation to the Kyonedoe Township authorities, the Hplon Sgaw Hpoh company continues its unsanitary practices. In addition to this, the company constructed more buildings to raise livestock this year.

Naw L--- and Naw H---, two local women, became sick. The villagers are worried for their own health [considering that the livestock farm will operate in the area] for the next 10 years. The villagers want the local leaders to advocate on their behalf in order to make the company raise their livestock in a sanitary manner.





The first three photos were taken on April 2nd 2018 in Htee Saw Shee Nee village, Htee Guh Thaw village tract, Kyonedoe Township, Dooplaya District. These photos show how the Hplon Sgaw Hpoh Company raises livestock. This company started operations on January 1st 2015. The company was founded by Wee Cheer and is managed by Ma Aye Myint. Local villagers have complained that the unsanitary practices of the company have negatively affected their health.

The photo on the bottom right was taken on March 23rd 2018 in Htee Saw Shee Nee village. This photo shows a local woman, Naw H---. She is experiencing swelling and pain. The village health workers believe that her symptoms are caused by the company's unsanitary practices. *[Photos: KHRG]*

Conclusion

The construction of the school was a beneficial development that positively impacts children in the village. However, villagers are concerned by the BGF activities as they have strengthened their army camp and constructed a helicopter pad near the village. The practices of the livestock business are becoming more dangerous to villager's health, as the company lacks or fails to meet sanitary standards.

Further background readings on the situation in Dooplaya District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- "Dooplaya Interview: Saw G---, February 2018", (July 2018)
- "Dooplaya Interview: Saw J---, January 2018", (July 2018)
- "Dooplaya Situation Update: Kyainseikgyi and Kyonedoe townships, November 2017 to January 2018," (March 2018)
- "Dooplaya Situation Update: Kyainseikgyi Township, July to August 2017," (December 2017)
- "Dooplaya Situation Update: Kawkareik Township, November 2016 to January 2017" (October 2017)

