



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

News Bulletin

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Dooplaya Situation Update: August 2011 to September 2011

This report includes a situation update submitted to KHRG in September 2011 by a villager describing events and military activities occurring in Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District, during the period between August and September 2011. The villager describes the shelling of civilian areas by DKBA troops resulting in the destruction of a villager's house, and villagers' fears of violence by DKBA forces following the defection of a DKBA soldier to Tatmadaw Border Guard troops and his transport through the area around their community. The report also details demands for payment issued by KNU/KNLA Peace Council soldiers; discusses the death of a KNU/KNLA Peace Council officer by natural causes; and raises villagers' concerns about the flooding of bean and corn plantations along the Moei River at the beginning of September which resulted in destruction of farmers' seeds and crops.

Situation Update | Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District (September 2011)

The following situation update was written by a villager 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

On August 24th 2011, KNU/KNLA Peace Council² forces became active in the Palu area and they taxed every house 100 baht, but no one knows what they will use that money for.

On September 1st 2011, Saw Paw Moo, the Brigadier Warrant Officer in the KNU/KNLA Peace Council also called *Thu Koh Hter Kee* [literally 'Officer One-Two'] died. In the past he was a Company Sergeant Major [with the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)] and he cooperated with the KNU [Karen National Union] for many years and many months. What happened then, we do not know but he left [the KNLA] and joined the KNU/KNLA Peace Council controlled by General Htein Maung based in Htoh Gkaw Ko [in Dta Greh Township, Pa'an District]. He had been working less [recently] because he had developed a kidney disease, so he went to Mae Sot hospital on September 1st 2011. He left his organisation, the KNU/KNLA Peace Council, and

¹ KHRG trains villagers in eastern Burma 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, villagers are encouraged to summarise recent events, raise issues that they consider important, and present their opinions or perspective on abuse and other local dynamics in their area. KHRG's most recent analysis of the situation in Dooplaya District can be found in the recent Field Report, "Threats to human rights, obstacles to protection: Conditions for civilians seeking refuge in Phop Phra District, Thailand," KHRG, November 2010.

² The KNU/KNLA Peace Council, also called the Karen Peace Council or KPC, is an armed group which split from the Karen National Union (KNU) in 2007 and subsequently refused to comply with orders from the then-SPDC government to transform its forces into the Tatmadaw Border Guard; see: "KNU/KNLA Peace Council," *Mizzima News*, June 7th 2010 and "KPC to be outlawed if it rejects BGF," *Burma News International*, August 30th 2010.

he went to be with his Father in heaven. His funeral was held in Gklay Thoo Kloh on September 3rd 2011.

On the morning of Sunday, September 4th 2011, at 6:30 am, the DKBA [Democratic Karen Buddhist Army] fired two small mortars in the area of D--- village. The DKBA tried to attack the place where the Border Guard soldiers under the command of *Bo Gkya Na Bpa* are based. The mortar shells hit a house, but no one was injured. Only villagers live in the places they shelled; there were no any army troops there.³

On September 8th 2011, at 9:00 am, a DKBA [soldier] named G--- defected to the Border Guard forces under *Bo Gkya Na Bpa* and brought an M16 and one magazine. Two cars came and drove him up into the Palu area [to] D--- village. Because of this, the [D---] village head is worried that the DKBA soldiers who live in the jungle will come and bring violence upon the village.

Because of the heavy rain between September 9th to 13th 2011, a few of the cornfields and bean fields beside the [Moei] River flooded. If it does not stop raining and the rain continues as it has, many crops and seeds will be destroyed. This is a natural disaster, but no one will help the farmers, neither the government nor organisations. This is our fate and we have to accept it.

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

- “Dooplaya Situation Update: August 2011” (October 2011)
- *Displacement Monitoring: Regular updates on protection concerns for villagers in • Dooplaya and Pa’an districts and adjacent areas in Thailand* (October 2011)
- “Village heads negotiate with Tatmadaw, armed groups to forestall human rights threats amid continued conflict in Dooplaya District (August 2011)
- “Dooplaya Interview: U Sa---, July 2011” (July 2011)
- “Tatmadaw shelling kills one child, injures another in Mae T’Ler village” (June 2011)
- “Three villagers killed, eight injured during fighting in Kyaikdon area” (May 2011)
- *Human rights abuses and obstacles to protection: Conditions for civilians amidst ongoing conflict in Dooplaya and Pa’an Districts* (January 2011)

Recent photos from the area are presented in *KHRG Photo Gallery 2010* and *KHRG Photo Gallery 2010-B*. These and other KHRG reports and maps of the region can be found on the KHRG web site at <http://www.khrg.org>.

³ On November 4th 2011, media sources reported that DKBA 5th Brigade under Brigadier Na Kha Mway, which had been engaged in active conflict with government forces in Dooplaya and Pa’an districts since the November 7th 2010 election, agreed to a ceasefire with Burma government representatives. See “DKBA Brigade 5 Reaches Ceasefire with Naypyidaw,” *The Irrawaddy*, November 4th 2011. As of October 21st 2011, KHRG had published 88 short updates about human rights abuses and protection concerns of civilians during the post-election conflict in Dooplaya and Pa’an districts; see *Displacement Monitoring: Regular updates on protection concerns for villagers in Dooplaya and Pa’an districts and adjacent areas in Thailand*, For further background information on the origins of the conflict, see *Protection concerns expressed by civilians amidst conflict in Dooplaya and Pa’an district*, KHRG, November 2010.

