



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Incident Report

June 3, 2014 / KHRG #14-14-I1

Hpapun Incident Report: Tatmadaw's mortar shelling and military activities in Lu Thaw Township, December 2013

This Incident Report describes the ongoing military activities and mortar shelling by Tatmadaw forces in Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District in December 2013. Villagers reported that, despite the 2012 ceasefire between the KNU and Burma government, they do not feel it is safe enough to return to their village after decades of displacement. The resulting lack of access for villagers to their land and livelihoods increases the risk of food insecurity.

Incident report | Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District (December 2013)

The following Incident Report was written by a community member who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights abuses. It is presented below translated exactly as originally written, save for minor edits for clarity and security.¹ This report was received in March 2014 along with other information from Hpapun District, including five other incident reports, four interviews, one situation update, 86 photographs and three video clips.²

Part 1 – Incident(s) Detail

Type of Incident	Tatmadaw mortar fire
Date of Incident(s)	December 18 th 2013
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	B--- village, Hpla Hkoh village tract, Lu Thaw Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District

Victim Information								
Name	Age	Sex	Nationality	Religion	Family	Occupation	Responsible	Village

¹ KHRG trains community members in eastern Burma to document individual incidents of abuse 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 incident reports, community members are encouraged to document incidents of abuse that they consider to be important, by verifying information from multiple sources, assessing for potential biases and comparing to local trends.

² In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in eastern Burma, 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 categorized by Type, Issue, Location and Year, please see the Related Readings component following each report on KHRG's Website.

Saw C---	62	Male	Karen	Animist	Married	Farmer	Village head	A--- IDP ³ camp
Saw D---	32	Male	Karen	Animist	Single	Farmer	Village head assistant	A--- IDP camp



This photo was taken on December 22nd 2013 in E--- place, Hpla Hkoh village tract, Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District, and it shows Saw C---, 62 years old, who is B---'s village head. He reported on the Tatmadaw's mortar shelling and military activities in Lu Thaw Township. *[Photo: KHRG]*



The photo was taken on December 22nd 2013 in E--- place, Hpla Hkoh village tract, Lu Thaw Township, Hpapun District, and it shows the vice village head of B--- village, Saw D---, 32 years old, who also reported about Tatmadaw's mortar shelling and military activities in Lu Thaw Township. *[Photo: KHRG]*

Perpetrator Information				
Name	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander
N/A	N/A	N/A	Hpla Hkoh army camp	N/A

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

³ IDP refers to an internally displaced person.

On December 22nd 2013, I met with B--- village head, Saw C---, and the vice village head, Saw D---, in A--- [IDP camp] where they have been displaced since the Tatmadaw attacked them in 1975.

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

People who gave this information witnessed this incident and suffered it themselves.

Part 3 – Incident Details

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail. For each incident, be sure to include 1) when the incident happened, 2) where it happened, 3) what happened, 4) how it happened, 5) who was involved, and 6) why it happened. Also describe any villager response(s) to the incident, the aftermath and the current living situation of the victims. Please, use the space prepared below and create attach if needed.

On December 22nd 2013, I met with B--- village head, Saw C---, and vice village head, Saw D---, in Maw A--- [IDP Camp] and they explained the situation as the following.

[They said that,] “Since we fled from our village on September 11th 1975, we have not been able to go back and live in our village. Now, even though it is a ceasefire period,⁴ we dare not go back as the Tatmadaw are based in [nearby] Hpla Hkoh [army camp] and they repair [reinforce] their place [army camp] and their vehicle road, and are being sent rations. Also, they still fire [shell] mortars.

On December 18th 2013, they [Tatmadaw at Hpla Hkoh] fired three mortars to B--- area but, because it does not reach to the village and the plantations, villagers were not injured. They did not burn down and destroy the village nor shoot the villagers. However, it is not easy for us to go back and stay in our own place [B--- village]. We have been displaced and fled for many years and we do not have any farm to work on. So we are faced with insufficient food. This year, on December 23rd 2013, KORD [Karen Office for Relief and Development] helped us with three milk tins (0.48 kg. / 1.08 lb.)⁵ of milled rice per person and food expenses for three months as support against food insecurity.

We hope that the government military [Tatmadaw] will go back and stay in their own place so that we can go back [to our village] and would be able to work peacefully without fear.”

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

The victims gave us permission to use this information so that villagers would get their rights [feel safe] to return and live in their own places [villages] and that other countries would know about their [village] situation and what they are suffering.

⁴ On January 12th 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma government in Hpa-an, the capital of Kayin State. The exact terms for a long-term peace plan are still under negotiation. For updates on the peace process, see the [KNU Stakeholder webpage on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website](#). For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see [Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire](#), KHRG, May 2014.

⁵ A milk tin is a unit of volume used to measure paddy, milled rice and seeds. One milk tin is equivalent to 0.16 kg. or 0.36 lb. of paddy, and 0.25 kg. or 0.55 lb. of milled rice. It is also equal to 1/64 of a big tin.

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

- *Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuses and local response in Southeast Myanmar since the 2012 Ceasefire*, (May 2014)
- “Ongoing Militarisation Prevents Lu Thaw Township IDPs From Returning Home,” (February 2014)
- “Hpapun Interview: Saw B--, February 2013,” (February 2014)
- “Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, August to October 2013,” (February 2014)
- “Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, March to May 2013,” (December 2013)

