



Incident Report

December 15th 2021 / KHRG # 21-247-11

Mu Traw District Incident Report: A male villager was injured in a landmine explosion in Bu Tho Township, August 2021

This Incident Report describes an incident that occurred in Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw (Hpapun) District in August 2021. At 10:00 pm on August 23rd 2021, a villager living in Hkaw Poo village tract stepped on a landmine next to the Toh Thwah Hta River, near K--- village. His right leg was injured in the landmine explosion. He was hospitalised for a time in Thailand since P--- Hospital did not have sufficient medical supplies. Because they have not been informed where landmines have been planted, villagers in H--- village live in fear of landmine explosions.¹

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	Landmine explosion
Date of Incident(s)	August 23 rd 2021
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	Toh Thwah Hta River, near to K--- village, Hkaw Poo village tract, ² Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District

Victim Information	
Name	Saw ³ C---
Age	37
Sex	Male
Nationality	Karen
Family	Married
Occupation	Farmer
Religion	Buddhist
Position	Villager
Village	H--- village, Hkaw Poo village tract, Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District.

¹ The present document is based on information received in August 2021. It was provided by a community member in Mu Traw 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 A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

³ Saw is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

KHRG's researcher was informed of the landmine incident by a villager. The researcher then spoke with the father of the landmine victim and several of the victim's friends, who provided information on the incident.

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

The friends interviewed by KHRG were with the victim when the landmine exploded and helped transport the victim from the site of the incident. The other source is the victim's father, who has knowledge of the incident and what happened to the victim following the incident.

Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

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 an attachment if needed.

At 10:00 pm on the night of August 23rd 2021, a villager named Saw C--- (37 years old) living in H--- village, Hkaw Poo village tract, Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District, stepped on a landmine that villagers believed to have been planted by State Administrative Council (SAC)⁴ troops. [Villagers in K--- village, which is near H--- village, saw SAC troops⁵ patrolling the area the morning of the incident and so believed the landmine was planted by the SAC at that time]. Saw C--- stepped on this landmine [while returning home] along Toh Thwah Hta River, close to [about 15 minutes away from] K--- village, Hkaw Poo village tract, Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District, and sustained injuries to his right leg.

Earlier that day, Saw C--- and some of his friends went to attend a meeting in M--- village, Hkaw Poo village tract [another village close to H--- village]. After the meeting, Saw C--- and his friends joined a group of 15 other villagers who helped to carry meeting materials [from M---

⁴ 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 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.

⁵ Tatmadaw is the term most commonly used in referring to Myanmar's armed forces. The term has been used by KHRG throughout its reporting history, and most consistently during periods of civilian government. Since the February 1st 2021 coup and the military's establishment of the State Administration Council (SAC) as the executive governing body of Myanmar, Myanmar's armed forces have also come to be referred to as the SAC military. KHRG uses the term SAC military in specific reference to the Myanmar military since the February 1st 2021 coup. During previous periods of military rule, KHRG also used the names adopted by the military government in referring to the Tatmadaw (i.e. SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) between 1988 to 1997, and SPDC (State Peace and Development Council) from 1998 to 2011), because these were the terms commonly used by villagers in KHRG research areas.

] to K---village. Saw C--- stepped on a landmine next to Toh Thwah Hta River on his way back to H--- village. Though he was returning with four of his friends, he was the only one to sustain injuries. Immediately after the incident, Saw C---'s friends carried him back to K--- village. He was then sent to P--- Hospital [in P--- village, another nearby village] and arrived there at 3:00 am on the morning of August 24th 2021. Because of inadequate medical supplies in P--- Hospital, he was sent to Hkoh Nee Hkoh Place in D--- village, Bu Ah Der village tract, Bu Tho Township [because he would be able to cross the Salween River to Thailand from that location]. The Karen National Union (KNU)⁶ medic [from P--- village] stayed with him [until Saw C--- crossed into Thailand].

On the morning of August 25th 2021, [Thai authorities allowed Saw C--- to cross the river] and he was sent to a hospital in Mae Hong Son, Thailand for further treatment, No one was allowed to accompany him to Thailand. The doctor at the hospital in Mae Hong Son amputated his right leg. In Thailand, a Karen charity organisation assisted him with the process of accessing treatment at the hospital [including assisting with translation from Thai to Karen]. He was discharged from the hospital and returned to Myanmar during the last week of September, and had to return [to Thailand] for a check-up in October 2021.

Saw C--- and his wife have three children and, with the injuries he sustained, it will be difficult for him to carry out his livelihood [as a farmer] to support them. He has received some support from friends and relatives, but has not received support from any other organisation [aside from the Karen charity in Thailand]. Villagers were not informed that there are landmines planted in the vicinity of the village, leading them to live in 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 sources have given KHRG to use the information they provided.



These photos were taken on August 24th 2021 in Hkoh Nee Hkoh place, D---village, Bu Ah Der village tract, Bu Tho Township, where Saw C---had to spend the night prior to crossing the river to go to the hospital in Thailand. [Photo: KHRG].

⁶ The Karen National Union (KNU) is the main Karen political organisation. It was established in 1947 and has been in conflict with the government since 1949. The KNU wields power across large areas of Southeast Myanmar and has been calling for the creation of a democratic federal system since 1976. Although it signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in 2015, relations with the government remain tense.

Further background reading on landmine explosions in Mu Traw District in Southeast Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- "[*Mu Traw District Incident Report: One villager died and another two villagers were injured due to landmine explosions along a road in Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District, July 2021*](#)," September 2021.
- "[*Mu Traw District Incident Report" A 10-year-old boy was injured after stepping on a tripwire that detonated a landmine in Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw District, June 2021*](#)," September 2021.
- "[*Mu Traw District Incident Report: Two villagers were seriously injured as a result of landmine explosions in Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw District, June 2021*](#)," July 2021.

About KHRG

Founded in 1992, the Karen Human Rights Group is an independent local organisation committed to improving the human rights situation in Southeast Myanmar. 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.

Mutraw (Hpapun) District

