



Incident Report

January 5th 2021 / KHRG # 21-360-I1

Doo Tha Htoo District Incident Report: SAC and BGF tortured and killed a female villager in Bilin Township, December 21st 2021

This Incident Report describes the torture and killing of a female villager by State Administration Council (SAC) and Border Guard Force (BGF) troops on December 21st 2021 in Bilin Township, Doo Tha Htoo (Thaton) District.¹

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	Torture and killing
Date of Incident(s)	December 21 st 2021
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	K--- village, Noh Beh Baw village tract, ² Bilin Township, Doo Tha Htoo (Thaton) District

Victim Information	
Name	Naw ³ H---
Age	56 (possibly closer to 60)
Sex	Female
Nationality	Karen
Family	Married
Occupation	Farmer
Religion	Buddhist
Position	Villager
Village	K--- village

¹ The present document is based on information received in December 2021. It was provided by a community member in Doo Tha Htoo 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 Naw is a S'gaw Karen female honorific title used before a person's name.

Perpetrator Information (Armed Actors)				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
SAC and BGF soldiers	Unknown	SAC Light Infantry Division (LID) ⁴ Ta Ma #22, Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) ⁵ #104 [possibly Infantry Battalion (IB) ⁶ #101] ⁷	From K'Ter Tee Town	SAC (unknown)/BGF General Bo Maung Soe

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

After KHRG received news from local villagers about the killing of a female villager, KHRG researchers interviewed three local villagers about the incident. One of the interviewees is the victim's husband, who himself fled during the fighting.

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

The three interviewees are from the local community and are familiar with 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.

After local Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)⁸ troops in Bilin Township occupied a Border Guard Force (BGF)⁹ army camp in Yo Klah on December 17th 2021, the KNLA troops stayed in

⁴ Like a Military Operations Command, a Light Infantry Division has ten (Light Infantry) battalions divided into three Tactical Operations Commands and is used for offensive operations. However, LIDs take their orders from the Ministry of Defence rather than the Regional Command.

⁵ A Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Yet up to date information regarding the size of battalions is hard to come by. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

⁶ An Infantry Battalion (Tatmadaw) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Infantry Battalions in the Tatmadaw are under-strength with less than 200 soldiers. Yet up to date information regarding the size of battalions is hard to come by, particularly following the signing of the NCA. They are primarily used for garrison duty but are sometimes used in offensive operations.

⁷ According to the Karen National Union (KNU), the battalion (LIB) number was 101. See the KNU Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/KNUHQKTL/photos/pcb.1593061831076134/1593061147742869/>.

⁸ The Karen National Liberation Army is the armed wing of the Karen National Union.

the community to defend their territory [from further trespass and attack]. Some of the KNLA soldiers set up base in villagers' huts in K--- villagers' rubber plantations. According to one hut owner, Saw¹⁰ M---, *"I told the KNLA soldiers not to stay in my hut, but instead to go and stay in my hill farm hut [far from the village]. [I told them:] 'If you stay here, then if they [SAC and BGF] come, they will do [commit violations against] us.'"*

The State Administration Council (SAC)¹¹ sent [date unknown] about 40 soldiers [according to a Karen National Union (KNU) news source, there were 60 soldiers¹²] including BGF soldiers to Yo Klah village. The SAC and BGF troops are from K'Ter Tee Town. The SAC troops¹³ are from Light Infantry Division (LID) #22, Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) #104 [possibly Infantry Battalion (IB) #101, see note above] and the BGF soldiers [battalion unknown] are under the command of General Bo Maung Soe [who accompanied them to Yo Klah army camp].

On December 21st 2021, the SAC and BGF troops arrived at the rubber plantation of one villager from K--- village, Noh Beh Baw village tract, Bilin Township at about 8:00 am. Since the KNLA were also in the rubber plantation, fighting broke out between the KNLA and SAC/BGF for about 30 minutes. Two villagers, Naw H--- and her husband, were working on their plantation at the time, so both of them had to flee out of fear for their life. As Naw H---'s husband, Saw M---, testified, *"When we were in the rubber plantation, we heard gunfire so I told her [my wife]: 'Dah [a Karen term of affection]!!! Run along the fence!!' [...] I was running behind her and did not see her anymore so I thought she had run further [from the incident place]. I called her once, but she did not hear me. At that time, I heard a lot of gun sounds behind me so I could not look for her."*

Due to the security risk, Naw H---'s husband and two other villagers could not go to the incident place until 5:00 pm that evening, which is when they found Naw H---'s corpse on the ground. The local villagers believe that the SAC and BGF troops caught Naw H---, questioned her [probably about the KNLA], tortured her and then killed her in the plantation. According to one of the interviewees, Naw U---, *"I think they [the SAC and BGF] tortured her before they killed her because her whole nose bone was broken. The bullet went out the back of her neck so we [villagers] think they [the SAC and BGF] forcibly put the muzzle [of the gun] into her mouth and shot her dead."*

That same day (December 21st 2021), the SAC and BGF troops arrived at Yo Klah village and stayed in the village. On December 23rd 2021, the SAC and BGF called a meeting with Yo Klah

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ Saw is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

¹¹ 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.

¹² See the KNU Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/KNUHQKTL/photos/pcb.1593061831076134/1593061147742869/>.

¹³ 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.

villagers ordering villagers not to go to Yo Klah army camp yet because of the landmines planted in the area. The SAC and BGF also said that they would clear the landmines, and that they would stay in the village for several days. They bought 20 sacks of rice from Yo Klah villagers the morning of December 23rd, so villagers assume they will stay more than several days in the village.

Due to the killing case, villagers in the nearby communities are now at high security risk and do not feel secure to go to their farms and plantations anymore. Yo Klah villagers are afraid that more of this kind of incident will happen in their village so the majority of the villagers do not feel safe to return to their village yet [villagers began fleeing on December 17th 2021 after the KNLA took over the BGF army camp at Yo Klah]. Moreover, Naw H---'s family is now concerned that the SAC and BGF will commit more violations against the family so they do not feel secure to go outside of the village.

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

The three interviewees gave KHRG permission to use the information.

Further background reading on the situation of fighting in Doo Tha Htoo District in Southeast Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [“Doo Tha Htoo District Incident Report: SAC shot on sight a pregnant woman and her husband in Paw Township, September 2021”](#), December 2021.
- [“Doo Tha Htoo District Short Update: Forced labour, looting and skirmishes between the SAC and the KNLA, August 2021”](#), December 2021.
- [“Doo Tha Htoo District Situation Update: Fighting between the BGF and KNLA, and pressure to close KECD schools \(April to June 2021\)”](#), November 2021.
- [“Doo Tha Htoo Situation Update: Fighting and indiscriminate shelling by SAC forces, April to May 2021”](#), June 2021.
- [“An End to Peace Efforts: Recent fighting in Doo Tha Htoo District between the KNLA and the Tatmadaw following the 2021 Myanmar military coup \(March and April 2021\)”](#), May 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.khrg.org.



This photo was taken on December 22nd 2021 in K--- village, Noh Beh Baw village tract, Bilin Township, Doo Tha Htoo District. It shows the funeral service being held for Naw H---. *[Photo: KHRG]*



This photo was taken on December 21st 2021 in K--- village, Noh Beh Baw village tract, Bilin Township, Doo Tha Htoo District. It shows Naw H---'s body when her husband found her after she had been tortured and killed. *[Photo: Villager]*

Doo Tha Htoo (Thaton) District

