



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Short Update

July 31st 2024 / KHRG # 23-118-D1

Dooplaya District Short Update: SAC shelled into villages causing 19 casualties and destruction, and killed a civilian providing humanitarian support, in Kruh Tuh Township (January and March 2023).

This Short Update describes events that occurred in Kruh Tuh (Kyonedoe) Township, Dooplaya District, in January and March 2023. On January 21st 2023, the SAC military indiscriminately fired mortar shells into villages in Kruh Tuh Township, Dooplaya District, injuring two villagers. On March 25th 2023, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and People Defense Force (PDF) attacked the SAC police office in Kruh Tuh Town, and the SAC police force and SAC Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) #546 indiscriminately fired 120mm mortar shells in Kruh Tuh Township. A 15-year-old boy was killed by the shelling in Z---village, Kaw Wah Leh village tract, Kruh Tuh Township. Mortar shells that landed into Kruh Tuh Town damaged 39 civilian houses and injured 16 civilians, including two children. On the same day at 8:30 am, the SAC shot and killed Saw A---, who had gone to the town to distribute drinking water to people who were trapped there by the shelling and fighting. On March 26th 2023, the same SAC soldiers indiscriminately fired mortar shells again into Kruh Tuh Town, killing a 67-year-old woman named Daw B---.¹

January 2023: SAC shelling caused civilian casualties in Kruh Tuh Township

On January 21st 2023, at about 12 am, the State Administration Council (SAC)² Infantry Battalion (IB)³ #97, and Artillery Unit #321, under Military Operations Command (MOC)⁴ #12,

¹ The present document is based on information received in February and April 2023. It was provided by a community member in Dooplaya 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 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 Burma/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.

³ An Infantry Battalion (IB) 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.

⁴ Military Operations Command (MOC) is comprised of ten battalions for offensive operations. Most MOCs have three Tactical Operations Commands (TOCs) made up of three battalions each.

indiscriminately fired mortar shells into Y--- village, Raw Keh village tract⁵, Kruh Tuh Township injuring two villagers. Saw⁶ C--- (19 years old) was injured on his leg. U⁷ D--- (87 years old) was also injured on his leg. Since U D--- sustained serious injuries by shrapnel from mortar shells, he was sent to Aa--- clinic, Wa Ka village tract, Kruh Tuh Township, for treatment.

March 2023: SAC shelling and killing in Kruh Tuh Township

On March 25th 2023, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)⁸ and People Defense Force (PDF)⁹ attacked the SAC police office in Kruh Tuh Town, Kruh Tuh Township, Dooplaya District. Due to the fighting that broke out [after the office was attacked], civilians in Kruh Tuh Town were trapped in their homes, and were afraid to go out.

At about 7:30 am, SAC Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)¹⁰ #546, under MOC #12, based in Kyone K'Lay military camp, indiscriminately fired 120mm mortar shells into villages [in Kruh Tuh Township], and some mortar shells landed in Z--- village, Kaw Wah Leh village tract, Kruh Tuh Township. From this shelling, a 15-year-old boy, Saw E---, was hit by the shrapnel on his neck and he was killed immediately.

At 8:30 am, a civilian named Saw A--- (23 years old), with 'the heart of a humanitarian' [someone willing to help], voluntarily went to [Kruh Tuh] Town and provided drinking water as a donation for civilians who were trapped in their homes in the town. While he was providing drinking water to civilians who were trapped by the fighting, a SAC soldier shot at him, and he was killed immediately.

Due to the attack [on the office of the SAC police], SAC LIB #546, under MOC #12, based in Kyone K'Lay camp, also shelled mortar rounds to Kruh Tuh Town in order to help defend it against KNLA and PDF soldiers. As a result of this shelling, 39 civilian houses were damaged and many civilians in Kruh Tuh Town were injured by the shrapnel of mortar shells.

In Section #2 of Kruh Tuh Town, Kruh Tuh Township, six civilians were injured by shrapnel from mortar shells:

No.	Name	Age	Treatment
1	U F---	44 years old	Thar Yar Kon, Kyon Doh hospital
2	Daw ¹¹ G---	40 years old	Thar Yar Kon, Kyon Doh hospital

⁵ A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

⁶ 'Saw' is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

⁷ 'U' is a Burmese male honorific title used before a person's name.

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

⁹ The People's Defence Force (PDF) is an armed resistance established independently as local civilian militias operating across the country. Following the February 1st 2021 military coup and the ongoing brutal violence enacted by the junta, the majority of these groups began working with the National Unity Government (NUG), a body claiming to be the legitimate government of Burma/Myanmar, which then formalized the PDF on May 5th 2021 as a precursor to a federal army.

¹⁰ A Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. However, most Light Infantry Battalions in the Burma military 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 2015 Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

¹¹ 'Daw' is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person's name.

3	Maung ¹² H---	5 years old	Thar Yar Kon, Kyon Doh hospital
4	U I---	65 years old	Thar Yar Kon, Kyon Doh hospital
5	U J---	55 years old	Kwen Thit Taung K'Lay hospital
6	K---	40 years old	Kar Nar Taung K'Lay hospital

In Section #3 of Kruh Tuh Town, Kruh Tuh Township, one civilian was injured by shrapnel from mortar shells

No	Name	Age	Treatment
1	L---	40 years old	Taung K'Lay hospital

In Section #4 of Kruh Tuh Town, Kruh Tuh Township, 9 civilians were injured by shrapnel from mortar shells:

No.	Name	Age	Treatment
1	U M---	65 years old	Taung K'Lay hospital in Hpa-An
2	Daw N---	60 years old	Taung K'Yin Su hospital in Hpa-An
3	Maung O---	6 years old	Taung K'Yin Su hospital in Hpa-An
4	Ma ¹³ P---	48 years old	Taung K'Yin Su hospital in Hpa-An
5	Ko ¹⁴ Q---	35 years old	Taung K'Yin Su hospital in Hpa-An
6	U R---	54 years old	Taung K'Yin Su hospital in Hpa-An
7	Maung S---	45 years old	Taung K'Yin Su hospital in Hpa-An
8	Maung T---	92 years old	Taung K'Yin Su hospital in Hpa-An
9	U V---	50 years old	Mawlamyine hospital

On March 26th 2023, at about 10 am, SAC LIB #546, under #12, based in Kyone K'Lay camp, indiscriminately shelled mortar shells 120mm [again] into Kruh Tuh Town, [fatally] injuring Daw B--- (67 years old). As soon as she was injured by shrapnel from mortar shells, she was sent to Kruh Tuh hospital for treatment. However, since Daw B--- was a person living with heart disease, and was [severely] injured, she passed away in the hospital.

[In total,] from March 25th to 26th 2023, 16 villagers were injured and two villagers were killed by SAC shelling in Kruh Tuh Township; and one villager was shot dead by the SAC in Kruh Tuh Town.

¹² 'Maung' is a Burmese male honorific title used before a person's name.

¹³ 'Ma' is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person's name.

¹⁴ 'Ko' is a Burmese male honorific title used before a person's name.

Further background reading on the human rights situation in Dooplaya District in Southeast Burma can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [“Dooplaya District Incident Report: SAC shelling into a village injured two villagers, including a 15-year-old, in Kruh Tuh Township, May 2023”](#), June 2024.
- [Photo Set: SAC indiscriminate shelling in Southeast Burma, and its impacts on villagers, January 2023 to February 2024](#), June 2024.
- [“Dooplaya District Incident Report: SAC shot and injured a villager in Noh T’Kaw Township, October 2023”](#), May 2024.
- [Undeniable: War crimes, crimes against humanity and 30 years of villagers’ testimonies in rural Southeast Burma](#), December 2022.

About KHRG

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



<p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Town ■ Village ● Village tract point ■ Army Base ■ Army Camp — Major Road - - - Sub-Road - - - Tatmadaw Road — Water --- Kawthoolei Township boundary --- Kawthoolei District boundary 	<p>Elevation (meter)</p> <table border="0"> <tr><td style="background-color: #e0f0e0;">35 - 15</td><td style="background-color: #d9ead3;">493 - 841</td></tr> <tr><td style="background-color: #c6e0b4;">15 - 96</td><td style="background-color: #c45c5c;">841 - 1,337</td></tr> <tr><td style="background-color: #999999;">96 - 261</td><td style="background-color: #800000;">1,337 - 2,016</td></tr> <tr><td style="background-color: #666666;">261 - 493</td><td style="background-color: #4f4f4f;">2,016 - 5,711</td></tr> </table>	35 - 15	493 - 841	15 - 96	841 - 1,337	96 - 261	1,337 - 2,016	261 - 493	2,016 - 5,711	<p>Map ID: KHRG_District_Map_Dooplaya Date: 25-Aug-2022 Size: 33.11 X 46.8 inches</p>	<p>KHRG Karen Human Rights Group <small>Documenting the impact of human rights in east Burma</small></p>
35 - 15	493 - 841										
15 - 96	841 - 1,337										
96 - 261	1,337 - 2,016										
261 - 493	2,016 - 5,711										