



Incident Report

January 24th 2024/ KHRG # 23-336-I1

Doo Tha Htoo District Incident Report: A male villager was arrested, tortured and killed by the SAC in Kyeh Htoh Township, in July 2023.

This Incident Report describes a killing incident in Kyeh Htoh (Kyaikto) Township, Doo Tha Htoo (Thaton) District. On July 18th 2023, Saw A--- accidentally toppled the motorbike of a State Administration Council (SAC) soldier. He was then arrested and taken to Artillery Unit #310 by soldiers from SAC Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) #207, based in Thein Za Yet Town, Kyeh Htoh Township, Doo Tha Htoo District. After Saw A--- was detained, he never returned to his home. His family members got worried and searched for him. On the next day, Saw A---'s mother identified his dead body covered with black and blue marks in a hospital in Thein Za Yet Town.¹

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	Arbitrary arrest and killing
Date of Incident(s)	July 18 th 2023
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	Thein Za Yet Town, Kyeh Htoh Township, Doo Hta Htoo District

Victim Information	
Name	Saw ² A---
Age	25 years old
Gender	Man
Ethnicity	Karen
Marital Status	Married
Occupation	Seller
Religion	Buddhist

¹ The present document is based on information received in November 2023. 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 Saw is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

Position	Unknown [Villager]
Village	B--- village, Hsaw Thuh Hkee village tract ³ , Kyeh Htoh Township

Perpetrator Information (Armed Actors)				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
Unknown	Unknown	Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) ⁴ #207, under Light Infantry Division (LID) ⁵ #44	Thein Za Yet Town, Kyeh Htoh Township	Unknown

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how you collected this information.

A KHRG field researcher received this incident's information from the village head [village administrative] of B--- village. The KHRG researcher went to Saw A---'s house and conducted an interview with his wife and mother.

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

Saw A---'s mother provided the information. She was involved in identifying Saw A---'s dead body and arranging his burial service.

Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail.

On July 18th 2023, around 7 am, Saw A--- drove to Thein Za Yet Town, Kyeh Htoh Township, Doo Tha Htoo District, to purchase goods because the stock [from his shop] had been sold. At 11 am he had finished gathering all the goods on his motorbike. At that time, he accidentally jolted the motorbike of an State Administration Council (SAC)⁶ soldier, who was not wearing

³ A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

⁴ A Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) comprises 500 soldiers. 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, particularly following the signing of the NCA. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

⁵ A Light Infantry Division (LID) of the Tatmadaw is commanded by a brigadier general, and consists of ten light infantry battalions specially trained in counter-insurgency, jungle warfare, search and destroy operations against ethnic insurgents. They were first incorporated into the Tatmadaw in 1966. LIDs are organised under three Tactical Operations Commands, commanded by a colonel, three battalions each and one reserve, one field artillery battalion, one armoured squadron and other support units. Each division is directly under the command of the Chief of Staff (Army).

⁶ 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

his uniform, knocking the motorbike over. To resolve the case, Saw A--- sent the SAC soldier's motorbike to a mechanic shop [with the soldier's approval]. After the motorbike was fixed, the SAC soldier [called somebody] on the phone, before going away. The soldier returned ten minutes later with a few other SAC soldiers, and had changed to a full SAC uniform. [As witnessed by the seller working at the shop,] the SAC soldier told Saw A--- to follow them for a few minutes, and took him to Artillery Unit #310's camp. Saw A--- left his goods at a nearby shop and followed the SAC soldiers. That day, Saw A--- did not return home, and his wife tried to search for him but could not get any information on his whereabouts.

On the morning of July 19th 2023, Saw A---'s mother travelled to Thein Za Yet Town [to find out what happened to him]. There, she found out from the shop seller that her son had been taken to Artillery Unit #310's camp. So, she went to Artillery Unit #310's camp, but she could not get any information on his whereabouts, because they [the SAC soldiers from Artillery Unit #310] told her that they did not know [anything about him]. [Then, she went to the police station.]

[At the police station,] the mother overheard that a hospital in Thein Za Yet Town had an unidentified dead body, so she went to the hospital. There, she found Saw A---'s corpse. His body was covered in black and blue marks and bruises. His shirt had been torn. When the mother was preparing to take her son's corpse home, a police officer from Thein Za Yet informed her that the cremation of the corpse could be [arranged] by the hospital, or that the body could be brought back to her hometown.

Later, Saw A--- was [wrongly] accused of supporting the People's Defence Force (PDF)⁷ by [the local police officers from] Thein Za Yet police station, [although] he was just a regular villager. Saw A--- was a shop owner. He had two children; the youngest child was three months old [in July 2023]. Even though he did not know it at the time of his death, his wife was pregnant with their third child, and has since given birth [as of January 2024]. The [SAC] police gave 200,000 kyat [95 USD]⁸ in cash to the mother as compensation for Saw A---'s [death]. The mother did not want to take the money, but she worried about further retaliation, so she accepted the two hundred thousand kyat from the SAC police. She agreed to the cremation of her son's body at the hospital on the same day. Local police officers from Thein Za Yet purposefully misidentified Saw A--- as a Zee Pyaung villager, [and accused him of being] a PDF supporter. [Because of this,] Saw A--- was recorded as a Zee Pyaung (Section 1) villager by the hospital.

When the mother spoke to the seller [working at the shop] where Saw A--- regularly bought goods from, the shop seller told her that Saw A--- had around 600,000 to 700,000 kyat [285 to 330 USD] and a phone with him [before he was taken by the SAC soldiers].

When the mother followed up with the hospital about her son's death, the hospital gave her the written hospital records about her son. The record read that on July 18th 2023, at night time, Saw A--- had a motorbike accident and was sent to the hospital by an unknown group of people. [A nurse from the hospital] told the mother that Saw A--- was already dead when [he was brought] to the hospital.

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.

⁷ 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.

⁸ All conversion estimates for the kyat in this report are based on the January 16, 2024 official market rate of 2101 kyats to US \$1. www.xe.com/currency/mmk-burmese-kyat

Three days after Saw A--- was buried, [SAC soldiers from] Artillery Unit #310 informed the mother that she could go [to the camp] and take Saw A---'s motorbike if she wanted to. The mother did not go to pick up her son's motorbike, as the motorbike was not comparable to the loss of her son [she did not care about the motorbike].

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

Saw A---'s mother and his wife gave KHRG permission to use the information as needed.



This is a picture of Saw A---'s body taken at Their Za Yet Town hospital, where the corpse was found. Saw A--- was arbitrarily arrested in Their Za Yet Town, Kye Hto Township, Doo Tha Htoo District, and killed by SAC soldiers from Artillery Unit #310. KHRG received this picture from Saw A---'s mother on July 19th 2023. *[Photo: Local villager]*

Further background reading on the situation on killings in Southeast Burma can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [“Dooplaya District Short Update: Killing, house burning, shelling, and displacement”](#), from January to February 2023
- [“Mergui-Tavoy District Short Update: Killing, house burning, forced portering and use of civilians as human shields, in Ler K’Saw Township”](#), July 2023
- [“Taw Oo District Incident Report: Killings, property destruction, and indiscriminate shelling by the SAC in Daw Hpa Hkoh Township”](#), July 2023
- [Deadly Encounters: Killings of civilians by armed actors in Southeast Burma](#) (October 2022 - April 2023)

About KHRG

Founded in 1992, 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.khrq.org.

Doo Tha Htoo (Thaton) District

