



Incident Report

December 13th, 2024 / KHRG # 24-257-11

Taw Oo District Incident Report: SAC soldiers tortured and killed a 68-year-old villager in Htaw Ta Htoo Township (March 2024)

This Incident Report describes events that occurred in Htaw Ta Htoo (Htantabin) Township, Taw Oo (Toungoo) District, in March 2024. On March 15th 2024, a skirmish occurred between State Administration Army (SAC) Infantry Battalion (IB) #73 and local armed resistance groups near A--- village, B--- village tract, Htaw Ta Htoo Township. During the skirmish, villagers fled from the village to a nearby forest. After the skirmish, the SAC soldiers entered the village and killed a displaced 68-year-old villager who had returned home to feed his animals. The soldiers bound and cut him and poured gasoline on him and burned his face. His body was found eight days later by his daughter when she returned to the village to check her property. The victim's family members are very sad about what happened to him.¹

Part 1 – Incident Details

Type of Incident	Killing [and torture] case
Date of Incident(s)	March 15 th 2024
Incident Location (Village, Township and District)	A--- village, B--- village tract ² , Htaw Ta Htoo Township, Taw Oo District

Victim Information	
Name	U ³ C---
Age	68 years old
Gender	Man
Ethnicity	Bamar ⁴
Marital Status	Married

¹ The present document is based on information received in August 2024 (and updated in November 2024). It was provided by a community member in Taw Oo 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 'U' is a Burmese title used for elder men, used before their name.

⁴ The majority ethnic group in Myanmar, also known as ethnic Burmese or Burman

Occupation	Farmer
Religion	Buddhist
Position	Villager
Village	A--- village, B--- village tract, Htaw Ta Htoo Township, Taw Oo District

Perpetrator Information (Armed Actors)				
Name(s)	Rank	Unit	Base	Commander's Name
-	State Administration Council (SAC) ⁵ soldiers	Infantry Battalion (IB) ⁶ #73	Zayet Gyi Town, Htaw Ta Htoo Township, Taw Oo District	-

Part 2 - Information Quality

1. Explain in detail how this information was collected.

A village head from A--- village informed [a KHRG researcher] about this incident. Then, [the KHRG researcher] went to the victim's house and conducted an interview with the victim's daughter, named D--- (32 years old).

2. Explain how the source verified this information.

This information was verified by U E---, a village head from A--- village who documents and monitors the human rights situation in his area [, and by the victim's daughter, who retrieved the body of the victim].

Part 3 – Complete Description of the Incident

Describe the Incident(s) in complete detail.

On the afternoon of March 15th 2024, a skirmish happened between State Administration Council (SAC) Infantry Battalion (IB) #73 and combined forces of the People's Defence Force (PDF)⁷ and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)⁸ near A--- village, B--- village tract [Hper Htee area], Htaw Ta Htoo Township, Taw Oo District. During the skirmish, everyone in the village fled [to a nearby forest]. After the skirmish, [about 20] SAC soldiers from IB #73

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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.

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

entered A--- village. On the evening [of the same day], a displaced villager named U C--- (68 years old) returned to his house in the village in order to feed his animals. They [SAC soldiers] found U C---, as he was feeding his pigs, and arrested him and they tied his hands and legs with a rope. They cut his throat. They poured gasoline on his body and they burned his head. [Even though the villagers did not witness this event, the evidence of these actions was found on the body, next to the villager's house, including the bucket of gasoline left nearby. Villagers also found pig food left in the pigsty, but they did not find the pig, so assumed the SAC killed the animal for food]. After the incident, the SAC soldiers went back to their army camp in Zayet Gyi Town, Htaw Ta Htoo Township.

U C---'s family members had also fled to a [nearby] forest during the skirmish. After eight days, U C---'s daughter, named D---, and some other villagers returned to the village [to check their properties] and they found a dead (and burned) body of a villager. His body had already started rotting and decomposing. D--- realised that the villager was her father because she recognised her father's clothes. She went to inform her mother and family members in the forest. Then, they returned to the village and buried U C--- in the village cemetery. U C---'s family members and villagers do not know why U C--- was killed.

There are seven people in U C---'s family. U C---'s family members felt very sad about what happened to him. Currently [as of November 2024], U C---'s family members and other villagers are displaced in the forest as they are afraid to stay in the village. They do not receive any support from any humanitarian organisation. Only a few villagers returned to the village.

As of June 1st 2024, some of U C---'s family members have returned to the village [temporarily] because they need to take care of their properties. However, they do not feel secure in their village. Many displaced villagers are still staying in the nearby forest due to fear of shelling from SAC IB #73 and fighting with armed groups.

This photo was received in June 2024 from a local villager in A--- village, B--- village tract, Htaw Ta Htoo Township, Taw Oo District. It shows the dead body of U C---, a villager who was tortured and killed by SAC soldiers from IB #73 in A--- village, after a skirmish occurred near the village, on March 15th 2024 with armed resistance groups. *[Photo: A local villager]*

Part 4 - Permission for Using the Details

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

The victim's daughter gave KHRG permission to use this information for publication.

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

- ["Taw Oo District Short Update: SAC shot dead a minor and arbitrarily arrested, detained and tortured a villager in Htaw Ta Htoo Township \(May 2024\)"](#), July 2024.
- ["Mergui-Tavoy District Incident Report: Arbitrary arrest and killing of a villager by the SAC in K'Ser Doh Township, October 2023"](#), March 2024.
- ["Doo Tha Htoo District Incident Report: A male villager was arrested, tortured and killed by the SAC in Kyeh Htoh Township, in July 2023"](#), January 2024.
- [*Deadly Encounters: Killings of civilians by armed actors in Southeast Burma \(October 2022 - April 2023\)*](#), June 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.khr.org.

