



# Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

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## Short Update

July 31<sup>st</sup> 2025 / KHRG # 25-50+66-D1

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## Taw Oo District Short Update: SAC air strikes and shelling damaged houses and caused displacement in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township (January and February 2025)

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*This Short Update describes events occurring in Daw Hpah Hkoh (Thandaunggyi) Township, Taw Oo (Toungoo) District, from January to February 2025. On January 25<sup>th</sup> 2025, State Administration Council (SAC) soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) #603 fired three rounds of mortar into Tar Pu Town, damaging three villagers' houses. On February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025, the SAC conducted shelling into A--- village, Tar Pu village tract, damaging a road. On February 4<sup>th</sup> 2025, an SAC fighter jet conducted an air strike on F--- village, Tel K'Ler Toe village tract, after an SAC army camp was attacked in the village by the Karen National Defence Organization (KNDO). The air strike damaged and destroyed two villagers' houses. On February 7<sup>th</sup> 2025, the SAC conducted air strikes and shelled into Tel K'Ler Toe village tract. Due to the air strikes and shelling, more than 2,000 villagers from the village tract fled from their villages. The displaced villagers were in need of support for their livelihoods. On February 8<sup>th</sup> 2025, the SAC crashed a truck into a villager's house in Day Loh Mu Nu Lar village tract, after a tripwire attack by Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), and conducted shelling, causing fear among local communities.<sup>1</sup>*

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### January 25<sup>th</sup> 2025: SAC shelling damaged villagers' houses in Tar Pu (Leik Tho) Town, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township

On January 25<sup>th</sup> 2025, at 1:45 pm, two unknown members [of an unknown armed resistance group], covering their faces, carrying guns and riding a motorbike, shot at a State Administration Council (SAC)<sup>2</sup> police station in Tar Pu (Leik Tho) Town, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District [and immediately fled afterwards]. No SAC police were injured or killed in this attack.

After the attack, SAC soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion (LIB)<sup>3</sup> #603, also based in [an army camp in] Tar Pu [Leik Tho] Town, indiscriminately fired rounds of 40 mm mortars and 81 mm

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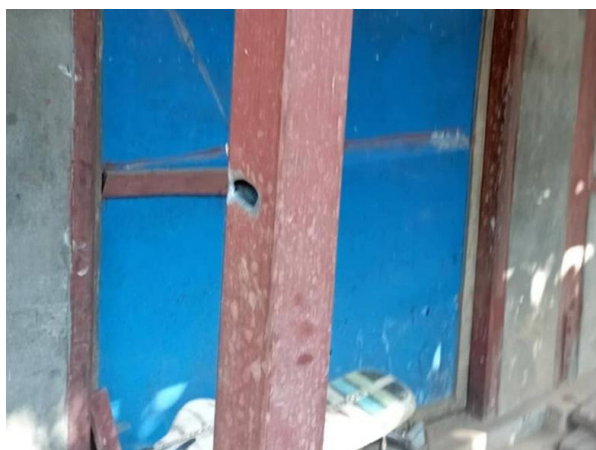
<sup>1</sup> The present document is based on information received in February 2025. It was provided by a community member in Taw Oo District who has been trained by KHRG to monitor human rights conditions on the ground. The names of the victims, their photos and the exact locations are censored for security reasons. The parts in square brackets are explanations added by KHRG. This document combines several received reports with the following KHRG internal log numbers: #25-50-D1; #25-51-D1; #25-64-D1 and #25-66-D2.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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

mortars into the town. Six mortar shells landed and exploded in the town. One of the mortars exploded in the town near the house of a villager named Saw<sup>4</sup> C--- and damaged three villagers' houses. The explosion damaged the roofs, walls, doors, house pillars, and brick fences of all three houses. The attack also damaged one wardrobe, one car, clothes, and bamboo trees that were on the property of the three houses. The owners of the damaged houses are Naw<sup>5</sup> D---, Naw E---, and Saw C---. According to local villagers, they saw that another mortar shell landed and exploded in a banana plantation [KHRG cannot get any further information about whether there was any damage]. One other mortar shell landed and exploded on a football ground. [The other three mortar shells landed and exploded outside of the town, but KHRG could not get any further information about whether there was any damage].

When the mortar shell landed and exploded near Saw C---'s house, Saw C---, Naw D--- and Naw E---, and their family members were in their houses. The shelling did not kill or injure anyone. However, all of the family members were very frightened, in particular the children, elderly people, and sick people. [None of the owners of the destroyed houses received any financial support after the attack.]



KHRG received these photos in January 2025 from two local villagers who live in Tar Pu (Leik Tho) Town, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District. On January 25<sup>th</sup> 2025, SAC soldiers from LIB #603 army camp, based in Tar Pu Town, fired rounds of mortar into the town, damaging three villagers' houses after a SAC police station in Tar Pu Town was attacked. These photos show three villagers' houses, damaged by the SAC shelling. *[Photos: local villagers]*

### **February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025: SAC shelling damaged a road in A--- village, Tar Pu village tract**

On the night of February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025, SAC soldiers from LIB #603, based in Tar Pu (Leik Tho) Town, fired three rounds of 60 mm mortars into Tar Pu village tract, P'Saw Loh village tract, and

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by, particularly following the signing of the NCA. LIBs are primarily used for offensive operations, but they are sometimes used for garrison duties.

<sup>4</sup> 'Saw' is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

<sup>5</sup> 'Naw' is a S'gaw Karen female honorific title used before a person's name.

Har Thel Poe Li village tract, all in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township. On that day, neither the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)<sup>6</sup> nor other local armed groups attacked SAC troops or carried out military activities in the area.

One of the mortar rounds landed on a road beside a cemetery near A--- village, Tar Pu village tract, and exploded. The road was damaged. The road is used by many people [to travel to and from Tar Pu Town]. [Villagers felt afraid when they saw the damaged road because they felt they might be hit by a mortar if they travelled on that road as well.] The other two mortar rounds landed and exploded in P'Saw Loh village tract and Har Thel Poe Li village tract. KHRG does not know where exactly those two mortar rounds landed and exploded, or whether they caused any damage or led to any casualties. However, villagers were really worried that the mortar rounds would land and explode on their houses.



This photo was taken in February 2025 on a road beside a cemetery near A--- village, Tar Pu village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District. On February 3<sup>rd</sup> 2025, SAC soldiers from LIB #603 army camp, based in Tar Pu (Leik Tho) Town, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, fired three rounds of 60 mm mortar into Tar Pu village tract. One of the mortar shells landed and exploded on the road beside a cemetery near A--- village. The road was damaged due to the explosion. The photo shows the road, damaged by the mortar explosion. [Photo: KHRG]

### **February 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> 2025: SAC air strike and shelling cause damage and displacement in Tel K'Ler Toe village tract**

On January 31<sup>st</sup> 2025 at around 9 am, Battalion #4 from the Karen National Defence Organization (KNDO)<sup>7</sup>, in Brigade #2, attacked SAC soldiers based at Tel K'Ler Toe army camp using a tripwire bomb when the soldiers were going to get water near their [SAC] army camp. These SAC soldiers are from Infantry Battalion (IB)<sup>8</sup> #144. [SAC's] Tel K'Ler Toe army camp is located in F---village, Tel K'Ler Toe village tract. Some [unknown number] SAC soldiers died in this attack [as reported to KHRG by KNLA authorities]. Again, on February 1<sup>st</sup> 2025, at around 7 am, snipers from KNDO Battalion #4 shot SAC soldiers from Tel K'Ler Toe army camp [while they were in their camp].

On February 4<sup>th</sup> 2025, an SAC fighter jet conducted an air strike on F--- village. [Local Karen National Union (KNU)<sup>9</sup> authorities told KHRG that the fighter jet had come from Nay Pyi Taw.] It

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<sup>6</sup> The Karen National Liberation Army is the armed wing of the Karen National Union.

<sup>7</sup> The Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO) was formed in 1947 by the Karen National Union and is the precursor to the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Today the KNDO refers to a militia force of local volunteers trained and equipped by the KNLA and incorporated into its battalion and command structure; its members wear uniforms and typically commit to two-year terms of service.

<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> 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



dropped a bomb in the village. It also strafed the village two times with machine guns. The air strike damaged a villager's house and destroyed another villager's house. The destroyed house is owned by Saw G---. His house, along with almost all of the things in his house, were destroyed. Only a ladder was not damaged. The roof, wall, house pillar, and window of the other house that was hit were damaged by the machine gunfire.

On February 6<sup>th</sup> 2025, at 6 am, snipers from KNDO shot SAC soldiers from Tel K'Ler Toe army camp again [while the SAC soldiers were in the SAC camp]. In response, SAC soldiers from LIB #603, based in Tar Pu (Leik Tho) Town, fired one round of mortar into Tel K'Ler Toe village tract.

On the same day, SAC soldiers, based in Shwe Nan Klay army camp (in Shwe Nan Klay village, Shwe Nan Klay village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township), also fired one round of mortar into Tel K'Ler Toe village tract. Their battalion commander is Lin Aung. One of the mortar shells landed on a villager's house in F--- village, but it did not explode. However, the house was slightly damaged. The house is owned by Saw I---. He was not in his house when the mortar shell landed on it, so he was not injured. The serial number of the mortar shell that landed on his house was 539/02.



KHRG received this photo from a local villager on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2025. On February 6<sup>th</sup> 2025, SAC soldiers from Shwe Nan Klay army camp (in Shwe Nan Klay village, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District) conducted shelling into Tel K'Ler Toe village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, after Tel K'Ler Toe army camp was attacked by the KNDO. The mortar shell landed on a villager's house in F--- village, but did not explode. The house was slightly damaged. The photo shows the SAC mortar, which remained unexploded, and its serial number is 539/02.  
*[Photo: a local villager]*

On February 7<sup>th</sup> 2025, a group of SAC soldiers from Nay Pyi Taw were travelling to [SAC's] Tel K'Ler Toe army camp in order to help defend the camp. KNDO Battalion #4 attacked them on the way to the army camp [, somewhere in Tel K'Ler Toe village tract]. [Local KNU authorities told KHRG that] many [SAC] soldiers died in the attack. The KNDO Battalion #4 was able to confiscate one gun and several mortar shells from the SAC soldiers. As well, on February 7<sup>th</sup> 2025, at 4 pm, an SAC fighter jet came to shoot into Tel K'Ler Toe village tract with a machine gun but no villager was injured or killed.

After the KNDO attacked Ter K'Ler Toe army camp, another SAC fighter jet conducted air strikes three more times into Tel K'ler Toe village tract sometime during January 31<sup>st</sup> to February 7<sup>th</sup> 2025. [Local KNU authorities told KHRG that the fighter jet was from Toungoo air base.]

No villagers from H--- village and F--- village, in Tel K'ler Toe village tract, were injured or killed due to the air strikes and shelling. All of the villagers from these two villages fled from their villages as they were afraid. Some villagers from other villages also fled to their plantations as they were afraid of future air strikes. [Some villagers fled to nearby forests and plantations. Others fled to other places in Tel K'ler Toe village tract, to Leik Tho Town, and to Toungoo

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Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in 2015, following the 2021 coup staged by Burma Army leaders, the KNU officially stated that the NCA has become void.

Town.] They remained displaced as of February 2025. There are 86 households in H--- village, and there are 200 households in F--- village. There are more than 2,000 displaced villagers in total, according to the KNU's Tel K'ler Toe village tract leader.

The displaced villagers worked on turmeric and coffee plantations to support their livelihoods [before they were displaced]. This is the harvesting period for turmeric and coffee. [Turmeric and coffee harvesting takes place during January to March,] however, due to the armed conflict, these villagers could not work on their plantations. These villagers are in need of support for their livelihoods. There are also many elderly people and children among those who fled from their villages.



KHRG received these photos from a local villager on February 9<sup>th</sup> 2025. On February 4<sup>th</sup> 2025, the SAC conducted an air strike onto F--- village, Tel K'ler Toe village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District, after SAC soldiers from IB #144 were attacked. The air strike destroyed a house, owned by Saw G--- and damaged a house, owned by another villager. The left photo shows Saw G---'s house, destroyed by the SAC air strike and the right photo shows another villager's house, damaged by the SAC air strike. *[Photos: a local villager]*

### **February 8<sup>th</sup> 2025: SAC fired shells, and a truck crashed into a house in Day Loh Mu Nu Lar village tract**

On February 8<sup>th</sup> 2025, at around 3 pm, ten SAC military trucks were travelling back from Ba Yin Naung army camp (in Thandaunggyi Town) to Toungoo Town, in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township. When they [SAC trucks] arrived on a road between J--- village and K--- village, in Day Loh Mu Nu Lar village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, KNLA Company #3, under the command of KNLA Battalion #5 in Brigade #2, attacked the SAC military trucks using a tripwire landmine.

At around 3:30 pm, one of the SAC trucks crashed into a villager's house in the middle of J--- village. When the SAC trucks crashed into the villager's house, J--- villagers did not hear any gunshots or the sound of the tripwire landmine exploding. It is unclear whether the SAC truck crashed because it was damaged by the KNLA attack or because the truck driver had lost control of the truck after he was frightened by the KNLA attack. Local villagers in J--- village told KHRG that six SAC soldiers died and six SAC soldiers were injured in the truck crash. [After the crash, some of the SAC soldiers continued to Toungoo Town while some stayed in the village.] Some of the deceased SAC soldiers are SAC military officers, including one Company commander [unknown Company number].

The house is owned by Saw L---. Due to the crash, the house, including its kitchen, was completely destroyed. Saw L--- was not injured as he was not in the house when it happened. As of February 11<sup>th</sup> 2025, the SAC had not retrieved their military truck. However, the SAC soldiers had come to stay in villagers' houses in the village in order to protect their military truck.

The SAC also did not let villagers take photos of their military truck. One of the SAC soldiers who stayed in the villagers' houses told local villagers that the cantonment area commander from Ba Yin Naung army camp would rebuild the damaged house. [As of the end of February 2025, the SAC had not rebuilt the damaged house.]

After the KNLA attack, on February 8<sup>th</sup> 2025, at 8:51 pm, SAC soldiers from Ba Yin Naung army camp fired six rounds of mortar into M---, N--- and J--- villages, in Day Loh Mu Nu Lar village tract. No villager was injured or killed due to the shelling, but villagers were very afraid.



KHRG received this photo from a local villager on February 8<sup>th</sup> 2025. On February 8<sup>th</sup> 2025, an SAC truck crashed into a villager's house in the middle of J--- village, Day Loh Mu Nu Lar village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District, after the SAC convoy was attacked by the KNLA. The photo shows a villager's house, which was damaged as a result of the crashed truck. [Photo: a local villager]

Further background reading on the situation of SAC attacks in Daw Hpah Hkoh District in Southeast Burma/Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [ကဘီယုဟဲလ် Aircraft coming! : Impacts of air strikes on local communities and villagers' protection strategies in Southeast Burma since the 2021 coup.](#) November 2024.
- ["Taw Oo District Short Update: SAC troops conducted shelling, causing casualties, and carried out arbitrary arrests, physical violence, and explicit threats in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township \(January to March 2025\)"](#), July 2025.
- ["Taw Oo District Situation Update: SAC shelling, drone attacks, forced recruitment, threats, and other military activity, causing casualties and livelihood challenges in Htaw Ta Htoo and Daw Hpah Hkoh Townships \(November 2024 to January 2025\)"](#), May 2025.

## 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](http://www.khrq.org).



