



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Short Update

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Taw Oo District Short Update: SAC indiscriminate shelling killed one villager and injured six, including children, and destroyed villagers' property in Daw Hpah Hkoh and Htaw Ta Htoo Townships (October and December 2024)

This Short Update describes events that occurred in Daw Hpah Hkoh (Thandaunggyi) and Htaw Ta Htoo (Htantabin) Townships, Taw Oo District, in October and December 2024. On October 7th 2024, State Administration Council (SAC) soldiers from Infantry Battalion (IB) #39, conducted indiscriminate shelling into Seik Hpoo Taung village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, injuring a villager. On October 8th 2024, SAC soldiers, based in Shel Tho Maing Town, conducted shelling into P'Saw Loh village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, minorly injuring four villagers, including two children. On October 30th 2024, another SAC troop fired three mortar rounds into Day Loh village tract, Htaw Ta Htoo Township, killing a villager, who was a widow with three children. On December 12th 2024, SAC soldiers, based in Shel Chauk Maing, Thandaunggyi Road, conducted shelling into P'Saw Loh village tract, injuring an 8-year-old and damaging three houses. During these three incidents, property, plantations and vehicles owned by villagers were also damaged and destroyed.¹

SAC indiscriminate shelling in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township

First incident: October 7th 2024

On October 7th 2024, at 6:45 pm, State Administration Council (SAC)² soldiers from Infantry Battalion (IB)³ #39 based in A--- village, Thandaunggyi Road, Taw Oo District, fired three rounds of mortar into A--- village, Seik Hpoo Taung village tract⁴, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo

¹ The present document is based on information received during the period between October and December 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. This document combines several received reports with the following KHRG internal log numbers: #24-410-D1, #24-411-D1, #24-431-D1, and #24-473-D1.

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

District. Fighting had not happened before in or near the village but the SAC conducted indiscriminate shelling into the village. One of the mortars landed onto the betel nut⁵ trees of a villager named Saw⁶ B---, next to a well near his house in the village, and it exploded. Shrapnel from the mortar explosion hit and damaged Saw B---'s betel nut plants, mango trees, motorcycle, house wall, and zinc roof. There were five people staying inside the house, including B--- (47 years old), when the mortar landed and exploded. A shrapnel hit Saw B---'s right eyebrow and lodged on his skin. The other family members of Saw B--- took the shrapnel out from his skin with a nail clipper and provided the treatment at home. Saw B--- got a fever due to the injury and had to stay in bed. [As of January 2025, he has recovered from his fever.]

These photos were taken in October 2024 in A--- village, Seik Hpoo Taung village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District. On October 7th 2024, SAC soldiers from IB #39 fired three rounds of mortar shells into A--- village. One of the mortars landed in Saw B---'s betel nut trees near his house and exploded, damaging his plantation, motorbike and house. The two photos on the top row show the damage to Saw B---'s house. The photo on the bottom left shows his destroyed motorbike. The photo on the bottom right shows the remnants of a mortar fin that landed on the betel nut trees. [Photos: KHRG]

Second incident: October 8th 2024

On October 8th 2024, at around 7:47 pm, SAC soldiers, based in Shel Tho Maing Town, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, fired two mortar rounds into P'Saw Loh village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township. Fighting did not happen [on October 8th 2024] in the area but the SAC soldiers indiscriminately fired mortar rounds. One of the mortar rounds landed in a place between two

⁵ In Burmese, 'betel nut' and 'betel leaf' are referred to as konywet and konthih, respectively, as if they are from the same plant. The Burmese names are also commonly used by Karen language speakers. Betel nut is the seed from an areca palm tree, *Areca catechu*; "betel leaf" is the leaf of the piper betel vine, belonging to the Piperaceae family.

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

houses of two villagers named U⁷ C--- and Daw⁸ D---, in E--- village, P'Saw Loh village tract, and it exploded. Daw D--- is 25 years old. U C---, her father, is 56 years old.

U C--- and his wife, Daw F---, were staying at home when the mortar landed near their house. Due to the explosion, a piece of mortar shell hit U C---'s right knee and was injured. U C--- received medical treatment in his house [from his family members]. The mortar also damaged the house's roof, wardrobe, bricks of the house's wall, planks of wood of the house's wall, a Buddha shrine shelf, the toilet, the pigsty, the water tower, a water container [used for bathing and washing clothes] and a cooking pot, as well as other household materials.

Four members of Daw D---'s family were staying in her house when the mortar landed near the house. Pieces of the mortar shell grazed D---'s thighs and minorly injured them. Daw D---'s two sons, named G--- (six years old) and H--- (one and a half years old), were also injured by the shrapnel. A piece of the mortar grazed G---'s belly and his belly was injured. A piece of the mortar also grazed the right side of H---'s head and his head was injured. [All three injuries were minor enough that they received treatment at home.] Daw D---'s house was also damaged including the house's roof, house's door, a bucket of glue, bricks of the house's wall, two chicken coops and other household materials.

On the next morning after the incident, Daw D---'s family moved to stay in her relative's house in another village [I--- village, P'Saw Loh village tract] and they received home medical treatment in the relative's house. Her father, U C---, and mother, Daw F---, stayed in the village in their own house.

These photos were taken in October 2024 in E--- village, P'Saw Loh village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District. These photos show villagers' houses in E--- village which were damaged by the SAC shelling

⁷ 'U' is a Burmese title used for elder men, used before their name.

⁸ 'Daw' is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person's name.

that was conducted on October 8th 2024. The shelling also injured four villagers, including two children.
[Photos: KHRG]

Third incident: December 12th 2024

On December 12th 2024, at 8:39 am, SAC soldiers from an army camp, based in Shel Chauk Maing (16 Miles) village, also known as Yay Pu San village, Thandaunggyi Road, Taw Oo District, fired two rounds of mortars into I--- village, P'Saw Loh village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township. One of the mortars landed on a villager's house inside the village and exploded. The house owner is U J---. The mortar explosion destroyed U J---'s [family] house and other household materials inside the house including chairs, an electricity fan, cooking pots and an electric motor for the water pump. U J--- and his wife were not hit or injured as they were in front of the house at the time the SAC conducted shelling.

The shrapnel also hit and damaged the glass windows of Ma⁹ K---'s house. Ma K--- is the oldest daughter of U J---. In addition, the shrapnel damaged L---'s house wall, the house's roof and the house's glass windows. L--- is the youngest daughter of U J---. The 8-year-old son of L---, named M---, [who was near the house] was hit by a small piece of mortar shrapnel and he sustained a minor injury on his right thigh. The injured villager received medical treatment at home from his family and he recovered.

Villagers did not hear the sound of the other mortar explosion, so they did not know where it landed.



These photos were taken in December 2024 in I--- village, P'Saw Loh village tract, Daw Hpah Hkoh Township, Taw Oo District. On December 12th 2024, SAC soldiers from Shel Chauk Maing (Yay Pu San) village conducted shelling into I--- village, destroying the houses and property of three villagers. The two photos on the top row show the house of a villager named U J---, which was destroyed by the mortar explosion. The photo on the bottom left shows U J---'s electric motor for a water pump, which was destroyed by the explosion. [Photos: KHRG]

⁹ 'Ma' is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person's name.

SAC indiscriminate shelling killed a villager in Htaw Ta Htoo Township

On October 30th 2024, at around 4 pm, SAC soldiers, based in an army camp near N--- village, Thandaunggyi Road, Taw Oo District, fired three rounds of mortar into N--- village, Day Loh village tract, Htaw Ta Htoo Township. Fighting did not happen on that day but the SAC fired rounds of mortars into the village. At the time [of the shelling], a villager named Ma O---, also known as P---, was taking a bath beside a well, a bit far from the [centre of the] village. The well is also near the village monastery. One of the SAC's mortar rounds landed and exploded in a place which is about five yards [4.5 metres] away from where Ma O--- was taking a bath. The shrapnel hit Ma O---'s neck and her two legs as well as all over her body. As a result, she died on the spot. Ma O--- was 30 years old and a mother of three children [all three are boys under the age of eight]. Her husband had died from an illness [liver disease] 19 days before the incident date. 20 days after her husband died, Ma O--- was killed by the shelling. Other family members of Ma O--- are now taking care of her three children.

The other two mortars landed and exploded in a teak plantation, owned by the Burma government, located a bit far from the village. [The explosion damaged some of the teak trees.]

Update from January 3rd 2025:

As of January 2025, the SAC had not paid any compensation for the casualties or damage caused by the shelling. They also did not apologise to villagers for what they did. Villagers [from the impacted villages] want justice for these incidents. Villagers have a deep concern for their security due to the SAC shelling. They want KHRG to report this situation and advocate for them in order for the SAC to stop shelling their villages.

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

- *Striking Fear: Impacts of State Administration Council (SAC) shelling on villagers' lives in Southeast Burma (January to October 2023)*, December 2023.
- ["Mu Traw District Incident Report: SAC shelling killed a villager and destroyed plantations \(September 2023\)"](#), December 2024.
- ["Dooطلا District Situation Update: SAC shelling, militarisation and air strikes causing casualties, displacement, and education, healthcare and livelihood challenges in Kaw T'Ree Township \(January to August 2024\)"](#), December 2024.
- ["Doo Tha Htoo District Short Update: Indiscriminate shelling causing 11 casualties, destruction, and mass displacement in Tha Htoo Township, May 2024"](#), November 2024.

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.

