



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Short Update

15 September 2026 / KHRG #26-246-D1

Mergui-Tavoy District Short Update: Burma Army air strike killed a villager in Ler Muh Lah Township (August 2026)

This Short Update describes events occurring in Ler Muh Lah Township, Mergui-Tavoy District, in August 2026. On 4 August 2026, at 4:07 pm, the Burma Army from Bleik (Myeik) Town conducted an air strike, dropping six bombs from three aircraft into Aa--- village, T'Hpoh village tract, killing a 63-year-old woman, burning two villagers' houses and damaging three others, and damaging villagers' plantations. The air strike intensified villagers' fear. Thus, following the incident, villagers who did not have bunkers dug bunkers for their safety and security.¹

On 4 August 2026, in the afternoon, at 4:07 pm, three helicopters [of the Burma Army²] from Bleik (Myeik) Town came and dropped six bombs into Aa--- village, T'Hpoh village tract,³ Ler Muh Lah Township, Mergui-Tavoy District. [Villagers believed the aircraft came from Myeik Town because there is a Burma Army airbase there. The researcher assumed the aircraft were helicopters because they had rotors above their fuselage and not at the back, and they had tails.] Bombs were dropped in three rounds. Two bombs were dropped each round. The first round of bombs exploded on a villager's rubber plantation, located at the edge of the village. The second round of bombs exploded near a clinic, in front of a villager's house that had containers of petrol stored inside. Fragments of the bombs hit the petrol containers and set the house on fire. Then, the fire spread to another house. Thus, in total two houses were burned, and three houses sustained damages. The third round of bombs exploded beside a river, located a bit far from the village. The second round of bombs fatally injured a villager, damaged [three] villagers' houses, burned two villagers' houses, and damaged villagers' plantations, [including] betel nut, rubber, and other types of plantations. The first and third rounds of bombs did not injure any villagers.

The villager who died was named Daw⁴ A---, 63 years old. Her ethnicity was Bamar and her religion was Buddhist. [Before the air strike happened,] the villager went to a clinic for a medical checkup. When the villager was doing her checkup, [three] aircraft came and dropped bombs.

¹ The present document is based on information received in August 2026. It was provided by a community member in Mergui-Tavoy District who has been trained by KHRG as a researcher 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: #26-246-D1 and #26-246-M1/P1.

² The terms Burma military, Burma Army, SAC, Tatmadaw, and junta are used interchangeably throughout this report to describe the Burma military regime's armed forces. Villagers themselves commonly use Burma Army, Burmese soldiers, or alternatively the name adopted by the Burma military regime at the time —from the 2021 coup to July 2025, the State Administration Council (SAC). On 31 July 2025, the military junta changed its name to the State Security and Peace Commission (SSPC).

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

So, she ran into a bunker [to hide]. After the first bombs were dropped, the villager thought that no more bombs would be dropped. She left, worried for her husband, who was paralysed and left at home. Thus, she came out of the bunker to check on her husband. Soon [when she arrived near the house that had stored petrol], the [second round of] air strikes happened and she sustained an injury to her left shoulder and left thigh. Then the three aircrafts dropped two more bombs nearby a river, located near the village. After the air strikes, when villagers extinguished the fire, they found that Daw A--- was dead, near the house that stored petrol [and caught fire]. Villagers brought back [the corpse of] Daw A--- to her house, and on 5 August 2026, villagers cremated the corpse. One of Daw A---'s children took over the care of their father after Daw A---'s death.



These photos were taken in August 2026, at Aa--- village, T'Hpoh village, Ler Muh Lah Township, Mergui-Tavoy District. On 4 August 2026, three Burma Army aircraft came from Bleik (Myeik) Town, Ler Muh Lah Township, and dropped six bombs into Aa--- village, killing a villager named Daw A---, 63 years old. In addition, the air strikes damaged villagers' houses. The photo on the top left shows one of the houses that was hit and burned. The photo on the top right shows one of the villagers' plantations that was damaged by the air strike. The photo on the bottom left shows a physical photo of the body of Daw A---, prepared for cremation. [Photos: KHRG]

A local authority, the village head of Aa--- village, said: *"[We] don't know why the aircraft came and dropped bombs near the clinic. When the bombs exploded, wind blew and burned villagers' houses instead of the clinic. Before the air strikes, wounded PDF [People's Defence Force]"*⁵

⁵ The People's Defence Force (PDF) is an armed resistance established independently as local civilian militias operating across the country. Following the 1 February 2021 military coup and the ongoing brutal violence enacted

soldiers from the battlefield were brought back to this clinic to receive treatment. After the soldiers had returned to their place [left the village], the air strike happened.”

The villagers were terrified by the incident because it was the first time that air strikes happened in Aa--- village. Some villagers’ houses have bunkers, and some didn’t. So, villagers who didn’t have bunkers started to dig bunkers. Schools were forced to shut down [for three days] due to the air strikes [before beginning classes again in a different location for safety], and it intensified fear and wariness of parents to send their children to school.

Further background reading on the situation of air strikes in Southeast Burma/Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- [ကဘီယူဟဲလ် Aircraft coming! : Impacts of air strikes on local communities and villagers’ protection strategies in Southeast Burma since the 2021 coup](#), November 2024.
- [“Mu Traw District Incident Report: Burma Army air strikes killed a four-year-old, injured 12 villagers, including two children, and caused displacement in Bu Tho Township \(December 2025\)”](#), September 2026.
- [“Taw Oo District Short Update: Burma Army air strikes injured a 16-year-old girl and damaged six houses in Daw Hpah Hkoh Township \(February to March 2026\)”](#), May 2026.

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.

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 5 May 2021 as a precursor to a federal army.

