



**OFFICE OF THE SUPREME HEADQUARTERS
KAREN NATIONAL UNION
KAWTHOOLEI**

**Monthly KNU Report on Human Rights Violations in Karen State, Burma
(May 2010)**

Summary

The present report, prepared by the Karen National Union (KNU)¹, covers human rights violations perpetrated by the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC)² army and its proxy, the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA)³, in Eastern Burma, in May 2010. In this report, Karen state means the present SPDC-defined Karen State, some parts of Pago (Pegu) Division and Taninthayi (Tenasserim) Division.

The Burmese military dictatorship in its war against the KNU is targeting Karen civilians in Karen state, Eastern Burma. The United Nations (UN) has described human rights violations by the military junta in Karen State as war crimes and crimes against humanity. This human rights update highlights some of the abuses, *mainly arbitrary arrest, extortion and forced labor* based on information collected in the 7 districts of the KNU. This report is far from being comprehensive as there are large parts of Karen State where the KNU is unable to collect data on human rights abuses.

During this period, 9 female village chiefs were arrested. 200 planks, 12,117 bamboo poles, 350 pleats of roofing leaves, 93,000 Kyat, 1 tin of rice and 3 coconuts were demanded. 17 villagers, 5 villages and another unknown number of villagers subjected to slave labor.

¹ The KNU was officially founded on the 5th of February 1947 by merging the four Karen organizations, namely the Karen National Association (KNA), the Karen Central Organization (KCO), the Buddhist Karen National Association (BKNA) and the Karen Youth Organization (KYO), to unify the Karen people's struggle for their rights.

² The SPDC is the military dictatorship of Burma.

³ The DKBA, a splinter group from the KNU, was founded in January 1995 and is a proxy of the SPDC.

The KNU hopes that the present report will assist the international community in its endeavor to ensure the implementation of the aims and objectives of the international bill of rights – i.e. the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) – and of subsequent various other human rights agreements. Specifically, it hopes that this report will assist the international community in its effort to bring about a social order that respects, promotes, and protects universal human rights in Burma, where various ethnic groups reside. As a democratic organization genuinely committed to peace, freedom, justice, democracy, human rights and federalism, the KNU is also willing and ready to cooperate with the world community and at the same time, welcomes its cooperation in this regard.

Word and Abbreviation: *KNU = Karen National Union (Political wing of the Karen resistance); KNLA = Karen National Liberation Army (Military wing of the Karen resistance); SPDC = State Peace and Development Council (Military dictatorship of Burma); DKBA = Democratic Kayin Buddhist Army (A puppet army of the SPDC); MOC = Military Operations Command, IB = Infantry Battalion, LIB = Light Infantry Battalion, Baht = Name of Thai currency; Kyat = Name of Burmese currency; Viss = 1.6 Kg; A Pyi of rice = 2 Kg; A Tin of rice = 16 Kg or 4 gallons in volume; A Basket of rice = 32 Kg or 8 gallons in volume; A sack of rice = 48 Kg.*

1. Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder

- 9 female village chiefs arrested.

2. Extortion and pillage

- 200 planks, 12,117 bamboo poles, 350 pleats of roofing leaves, 93,000 Kyat (95.3846 US), 1 tin of rice and 3 coconuts demanded.

3. Forced labor

- 17 villagers, 5 villages and another unknown number of villagers subjected to slave labor.

4. Other forms of human rights violations

- Reckless shelling, threats, etc.

1. Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder

In the past four months, 13 villagers were killed, 14 wounded, 4 subjected to physical abuses, 5 arrested and 1 missing. This month, 2 female village chiefs were arrested and beaten up, and 7 female village chiefs were arrested and detained. The 7 village chiefs were arrested and detained by SPDC troops because they could not provide the bamboo, roofing leaves and timber that the SPDC troops had demanded. (See the following situation reports for details)

Kawkareik (Dooplaya) District

- On 9 May 2010, at 14:40 hours, Chi Ko from DKBA Company 3 under Battalion 3 under Brigade 999 summoned the village chiefs of Khoo-doh and Chaw-pya villages, took them to Ta-mae-kho army camp where they beat them up and then sent them to SPDC MOC-12. The names of the village chiefs are Naw Moo Wee, aged 46, from Chaw-pya village and Ma Hla Thein, aged 48, from Khoo-doh village.
- At 18:30 hours, accusing that village chiefs failed to deliver bamboo, roofing leaves and timber that had been demanded, column 2, under SPDC LIB-545 and led by Myo Win Soe, arrested and detained (1) Daw Kyi Aung, aged 46, from Traw-doo village, (2) Daw Kyi Aye, aged 48, from Traw-doo village, (3) Mu Nau, aged 38, from Au-krau village, (4) Naw Peh, aged 36, from Au-krau village, (5) Naw Kyoo Kho, aged 32, from Ywa-thit-gone village, (6) Mu Kyeet Poe, aged 35, from Kawt-new village and (7) Htoo Nuu, aged 39, from Kawt-new village.

2. Extortion and pillage

Extortion and pillage is among the most widespread forms of human rights violations in Karen State. The SPDC and DKBA troops usually extort and/or loot money, jewelry, domestic animals, roofing leaves, bamboo, timber, food, etc. from civilians. This month, 200 planks, 12,117 bamboo poles, 350 pleats of roofing leaves, 93,000 Kyat, 1 tin of rice and 3 coconuts were demanded. (See the following situation reports for details)

Thaton (Doo Tha Htoo) District

- On 8 May 2010, SPDC troops led by Kaw Nyo from LIB-205 called a meeting in Wamee-bwa and demanded 10 nine-foot-long 2x5⁴ and 2x4⁵ planks from each of the 20 villages, beginning from E-heh village to villages located downhill, in Bi-lin Township.

⁴ A 2 inch-thick and 5 inch-wide plank.

⁵ A 2 inch-thick and 4 inch-wide plank.

Toungoo (Taw Oo) District

- On 4 May 2010, SPDC IB-261 based in Play-hsa-lo demanded 17 *Wa-doh* bamboo poles and 3 coconuts from villagers from Play-hsa-lo village. On the same day, they forced 2 villagers from the same village to transport supplies from Play-hsa-lo village to Thabyay-nyunt village. (Also see 3. *Forced labor*)
- On 24 May 2010, in Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Township, SPDC troops, under MOC-7 and based in Play-hsa-lo area, forced villagers from Play-hsa-lo village to send them 50 fifteen-foot-long *Wa-doh* bamboo poles.

Pa-pun (Mu Traw) District

- On 1 May 2010, DKBA officer Hser Hti and Ba Chit from Ka Hsaw Wah Battalion extorted 20,000 Kyat from Klaw-lo-kloe-hta and Htee-ber-kha-hta villages.
- SPDC LIB-434 demanded 3,000 bamboo poles and 60 pleats of roofing leaves from Bo-baw-kho village, 3,000 bamboo poles and 50 pleats of roofing leaves from Ta-nwee-kho village, 3,000 bamboo poles and 50 pleats of roofing leaves from Noh-law-hsoo village, 1,000 bamboo poles from Klau-hta village, 1,000 bamboo poles and 60 pleats of roofing leaves from Ngah-aye-hsu village and 1,000 bamboo poles and 20 pleats of roofing leaves from Koo-chit village. The deadline for the delivery of the materials was 15 May 2010.
- On 13 May 2010, the battalion commander of SPDC LIB-439 demanded 60 pleats of roofing leaves from Htee-ber-kha-hta village.
- On 15 May 2010, Koo Chit Army Camp Commander Aung Si Kyaw from SPDC LIB-434 demanded 50 pleats of roofing leaves, 50 *Wa-klu* bamboo poles and 3,000 Kyat from Noh-law-hsoo village.
- On 15 May 2010, Pah Chit from the DKBA, after having drinks, demanded 6,000 Kyat from Bo-baw-kho village, 6,000 Kyat from Koo-chit village, 6,000 Kyat from Klau-hta village, 6,000 Kyat from Nu-koo-nah village, 3,000 Kyat from Noh-law-hsoo village and 3,000 Kyat from Ta-nwee-kho village to pay for the drinks.

Kawkareik (Dooplaya) District

- On 10 May 2010, SPDC LIB-231, led by Column Commander Mae Loe and under MOC-12, demanded 1 tin of rice and 20,000 Kyat from Sein Sein Oo from Kawt-nwe village and they then went back to Ta-nay-moo village.
- On 15 May 2010, at 03:30 hours, one landmine planted by SPDC LIB-409 outside the army camp located in Lay-naw village killed 1 cow owned by Ma Chit Suu, aged 25. The troops demanded 20,000 Kyat as “compensation” for the landmine from her, and she complied. In addition, the troops took the dead cow for food, without even giving her a Viss of it. (*Also see 4. Other forms of human rights violations*)

3. Forced labor

In the past four months, 1,093 villagers and another unknown number of villagers were subjected to unpaid forced labor, and 142 bullock-carts were commandeered to transport supplies. This month, 17 villagers, 5 villages and another unknown number of villagers were subjected to forced labor. The five villages had to transport 390 sacks of rice, each of which usually weighs 48 Kg, for SPDC LIB-423 under MOC-7. (See the following situation reports for details)

Thaton (Doo Tha Htoo) District

- On 18 May 2010, in Bi-lin Township, Commander Bhi from the DKBA Brigade 333 started building his army camp in Pa-dut-daung and since then, has forced 4 people a day from Zee-gone and Kloo-htaw-law villages, and 1 person from each household in Pa-dut-daung village to provide unpaid labor. The camp is not finished yet.

Toungoo (Taw Oo) District

- On 1 May 2010, the SPDC troops based in Maw-koe-der army camp forced 15 villagers from Maw-koe-der village to transport back rice from Maw-koe-der army camp to Kler-la in Daw-pha-kho Township.
- On 2 May 2010, SPDC troops led Myo Htun, from LIB-423 under MOC-7, forced villagers to transport rice from Maw-koe-der village to Kler-la village, in Daw-pha-kho Township. The villages subjected to forced labor were:

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|-------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Naw-thay-der village | 10 sacks of rice |
| 2. Maw-koe-der village | 80 sacks of rice |
| 3. Der-doh village | 100 sacks of rice |

4. Beh-kaw-der village 200 sacks of rice

- On 4 May 2010, SPDC IB-261 based in Play-hsa-lo demanded 17 *Wa-doh* bamboo poles and 3 coconuts from villagers from Play-hsa-lo village. On the same day, it forced 2 villagers from the same village to transport supplies from Play-hsa-lo village to Tha-byay-nyunt village. (*Also see 3. Extortion and pillage*)

4. Other forms of human rights violations

Papun (Mu Traw) District

- On 18 May 2010, 1 buffalo owned by Saw Pah Boo from Mae-bwe village tract, hit a DKBA landmine between Wa-klu-kho and Ta-ber-pah areas.

Kawkareik (Dooplaya) District

- On 8 May 2010, at 21:00 hours, a branch of a tree fell on a landmine, and the landmine went off. Subsequently, SPDC troops fired two mortar shells from distance, but no civilians were hurt. SPDC troops ordered civilians from Lay-naw and Lay-khaw-hti villages to relocate to the monastery's temple (*Damar-yone*).
- On 9 May 2010, at 09:00 hours, Myint Zaw, the commander of TOC-1 under MOC-8, summoned the village chiefs of Pa-naw-kleh-khee, Way-kha-na, Mau-htee and Khaw-klah villages to Noh-hsoe-neh army camp, interrogated them and ordered that their villages be burnt down if skirmishes broke out in or outside their villages. As for the village chiefs, they will cut their throats.
- On 15 May 2010, at 03:30 hours, one landmine planted by SPDC LIB-409 outside the army camp located in Lay-naw village killed 1 cow owned by Ma Chit Suu, aged 25. The troops demanded 20,000 Kyat as "compensation" for the landmine from her, and she complied. In addition, the troops took the dead cow for food without even giving her a Viss of it. (*Also see 2. Extortion and pillage*)

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