



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

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

Summary

The present report, prepared by the civil administration of 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 August 2010. In this report, Karen state means the present SPDC-defined Karen State, some parts of Pago (Pegu) Division, Mon State and Taninthayi (Tenasserim) Division.

The Burmese military dictatorship in its war against the KNU is targeting Karen civilians in Karen state and other Karen areas, 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 arrests, physical or mental abuses, killings, extortion, robbery, forced labor, etc.* based on information collected in the 7 districts of the KNU. This report is far from comprehensive as there are large parts of the Karen State where the KNU civil administration is unable to collect data on human rights abuses.

During this period, 2 villagers (and 2 cows) were killed, 2 injured, 2 arrested, physically abused and robbed of money, 2 physically abused and 3 arrested. 480,000 Kyats (US\$ 516.1290), 360 bamboo poles and another unknown quantity of cash, bamboo, wood and

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.

roofing leaves were demanded. 50 villagers, including 14 females, and another unknown number of villagers were subjected to forced labor. In additions, human rights violations such as restrictions on freedom of movement, the imposition of a ban on means of livelihood, threats, disturbance of civilians' daily lives and use of landmines in the vicinity of villages also took place.

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 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 willing and ready to cooperate with the world community and welcomes its participation 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 or Sa Ka Kha = Military Operations Command, TOC or Na Ba Ha = Tactical Operations Command, SOC or Sa Ba Ha = Strategic 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.

Key abuses

1. Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder

- 2 villagers and 2 cows killed
- 2 villagers injured, including 1 losing his leg to an SPDC landmine
- 2 villagers arrested, physically abused and robbed of money
- 2 villagers physically abused
- 3 villagers arrested

2. Extortion and pillage

- 480,000 Kyats (US\$ 516.1290) and another unknown amount of cash demanded
- 360 bamboo poles and another unknown quantity of bamboo, wood and roofing leaves demanded

3. Forced labor

- 50 villagers, including 14 females, and another unknown number of villagers subjected to forced labor

4. Other forms of human rights violations

- Restrictions on freedom of movement
- The imposition of a ban on means of livelihood
- Threats, including death threats
- The disturbance of civilians' daily lives
- Use of landmines in the vicinity of villages

1. Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder

In Karen State, civilians are arrested, abused, injured and/or killed at the whim of SPDC or DKBA troops, and this has been going on like this for decades. In the past seven months, 18 villagers were killed, 21 injured, 11, including women, subjected to mental and/or physical abuses, 34(including 11 females), arrested and 1 missing. In the month of August, 2 villagers (and 2 cows) were killed, 2 injured, 2 arrested, physically abused and robbed of their money, and 2 more physically abused and 3 arrested. (See the following situation reports for details.)

Toungoo (Taw Oo) District

- On 19 August 2010, in Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Township, SPDC troops from IB-73 based in Za-yat-gyi Town, entered Mala-gone village and arrested two villagers: (1) Saw Moo Thaw, aged 22, son of Saw Moo Rah and (2) Saw Kho Kler Htoo, aged 19, son of Saw Moo Rah. The two brothers are innocent civilians. No one knew why they were arrested or where they were taken. However, it was learnt that they were released on 28 August 2010. On 23 August 2010, SPDC troops, from LIB-102 under MOC-7 and based in Klaw-mee-der area, forced 14 female and 16 male villagers, a total of 30, from Klaw-mee-der village to transport supplies from Klaw-mee-der and Pa-let-wa army camps. (Also see 3. Forced labor)
- On 21 August 2010, in Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Township, on their way back from a grocery trip to Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Town, Saw Hsa Nay Trei, aged 40, (son of Saw Paw Htoo, from Shah-si-bo village) and Saw Da Tuu Ko, aged 32, (son of Saw Poe Hter, from Da-ba-khee village), were arrested by SPDC troops from IB-73, in Paya-ywa village. The troops punched and threatened the two villagers in various ways, then

robbed Saw Hsa Nay Trei of 20,000 Kyats and Saw Da Tuu Ko of 30,000 Kyats and finally released them. On 24 August 2010, SPDC troops from IB-102 under MOC-7 and based in Hplay-hsa-lo army camp demanded 200 fifteen-foot-long *Wa-doh* bamboo poles from villagers in Hplay-hsa-lo area. On 25 August 2010, the same infantry battalion demanded another 100 bamboo poles from the same area for repairing their army camp. SPDC troops have reopened trails/roads in lowland areas, and demand 500 Kyats per person, who comes to buy betel-nut leaves in Day-you-khee area. However, they still keep the trails/roads in Pa-let-wa and Klaw-mee-der areas closed. (*Also see 2. Extortion and pillage and Other forms of human rights violations*)

- On 28 August 2010, in Htan-ta-bin (Hta-wa-ta-htoo) Township, SPDC troops from IB-102 based in Klaw-mee-der army camp, forced 20 villagers from Klaw-mee-der village to transport supplies to Pa-let-wa army camp. On 27 August 2010, in Daw-hpa-kho Township, Saw Ber Ka, aged 20, (son of Saw Shwe Win, from Tha-bah-per village) lost his leg to a landmine of SPDC near his village. (*Also see 3. Forced labor*)

Nyaunglaybin (Kler Lwee Htoo) District

- On 3 August 2010, SPDC troops from LIB-361, while on patrol, arrested 2 villagers from Mu-theh village in a slash-and-burn farm hut, (Saw Maw Thay, aged 45, and Naw Paw Mu Wah, aged 43). The troops punched and hit the two villagers with their guns, inflicting serious injuries on them. When the troops left, they took the man with them releasing him sometime later.
- In Mone (Moo) Township, on 12 August 2010, at 1700 hours, SPDC IB-48 troops led by Deputy Battalion Commander Htin Kyaw and Company Commander Khin Maung Kyaw, with 12 soldiers, left Mala-daw army camp for Der-kwe-lay-kho village. While on patrol, they saw villagers in a barn and shot at them, killing Saw Ba Koo, aged 35, and injuring Saw Moo Dah, aged 11. Two cows were also shot. When they returned to the army camp, they ordered Mala-daw villagers to bring the dead body and the wounded villager back to the army camp. Then they ordered them to take the wounded villager to Tha-byay-nyunt village, and warned them not to tell anyone that they had shot villagers. On 16 August 2010, Deputy Battalion Commander Htin Kyaw ordered villagers of Mala-daw village to get National Registration Cards (NRC), demanding 7,500 Kyats from each of them. Troops are now active in Mala-daw, Kyauk-tan, Hsaw-wah-der and Tha-byay-nyunt areas. 30 SPDC troops, including some members of Mala-daw garrison, led by Company Commander Khin Maung Kyaw have banned villagers of Mala-daw village from buying and transporting commodities for their daily needs and/or for sale,

threatening to kill those who do. (*Also see 2. Extortion and pillage and 4. Other forms of human rights violations*)

- A combined force of SPDC troops based in Myaung-oo village and People's Militia (*Pyithusit*), led by Officer Thant Zin Oo is active in Htee-to-lo, Paw-pi-der and Mayung-oo areas. The troops disturb the daily lives of civilians in these areas, and arrested Kyaw Than from Nyaung-bin-tha village. A combined force of 50, from SPDC battalions 599, 590 and a further 48 soldiers, led by Battalion Commander Tin Aung Kyaw and Deputy Battalion Commander Htin Moe Kyaw, are active in this region. (*Also see 4. Other forms of human rights violations*)

Papun (Mu Draw) District

- On 29 August 2010, DKBA troops from Brigade 555 and led by Saw T'blei and Saw Do Baw killed Saw Da Lar, aged 35, from Ma-lay-ler village. His body was found on 2 August 2010. They had cut his throat and killed him because DKBA member Mg Myint Oo had surrendered to the KNU. DKBA troops based in Kwee-ta-mar area threatened civilians with the disappearance of a village chief if any of their DKBA members disappeared. DKBA troops from Brigades 999 and 333 led by Hsa Mu Htaw and Kya Min Naing have made the lives of villagers from Noh-hta, and Ma-lay-ler village tract, extremely difficult. On 17 July 2010, they banned them from going to their farms. They forced 5 villagers a day to stay at A'lar-kyo. A lot of landmines in the vicinity of the village have been planted, now no one dares to go out and travel. They threatened to kill those whose slash-and-burn farms close to A'lar-kyo. On 21 August 2010, the DKBA and SPDC LIB-701 troops led by Than Net, (based in Ma-htaw army camp), demanded 260 bamboo poles: 20 from Ma-htaw village, 70 from Thwa-kho-lo, 50 from Chaw-klah, 70 from Tha-ma-kyu-lo and 50 from Da-huu-lo village. The deadline for the delivery of the bamboo poles was 2 September 2010. (*Also see 2. Extortion and pillage and 4. Other forms of human rights violations*)

2. Extortion and pillage

Forced labor, extortion and pillage are the most widespread forms of human rights violations in Karen State, Burma. SPDC and DKBA troops demand or rob civilians of cash, wood, bamboo, roofing leaves, domesticated animals, household items, clothing, items of value, food, etc. In this month of August, 480,000 Kyats, 360 bamboo poles and an unknown quantity of cash, bamboo, wood and roofing leaves were demanded. (See the following situation reports for details.)

Thaton (Doo Tha Htoo) District

- In Pa-an Township, Thommana from the DKBA, has in the past, demanded money from Ta-kaw-bo village tract to hire soldiers. On 2 August 2010, still short of money, he again demanded 2,000 Kyats from every household in the entire village tract. The deadline for the delivery of money was 7 August 2010. In Bi-lin Township, DKBA troops led by Saw Dah Wai from Brigade 333 demanded 20 *Wa-mei*⁴ bamboo poles from each household in Mae-pray-khee, K'zer-po, Nya-shghu-hta, See-ko, Pa-dut-daung, Baw-paw-hta, and Waw-lay villages. The deadline for the delivery of the bamboo poles to Pa-dut-daung area was 15 August 2010. They also demanded household registration documents from the villagers.
- On 27 August 2010, DKBA Thommana and Gu Kyo, personally demanded money from villages in the Ta-kaw-bo village tract. They demanded 50,000 Kyats from Koe-dah-kyi, 30,000 from Sei-kyaw, 20,000 from Let-pa-dun, 30,000 from Mae-pu, 60,000 from Kyo-bin-seik, 40,000 from Mae-lae-hta, 30,000 from Mae-lae-khee, 20,000 from Tho-aye, 20,000 from Mer-rer, and 30,000 from Weh-pyan-khyaung village.

Toungoo (Taw Oo) District

- On 10 August 2010, SPDC troops based in Hplay-hsa-lo army camp demanded 60 fifteen-foot-long *Wa-doh*⁵ bamboo poles from Hplay-has-lo village, and 3 pleats of *Loh*⁶ roofing leaves from each household in the village.
- On 21 August 2010, in Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Township, on their way back from a grocery trip to Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Town, Saw Hsa Nay Trei, aged 40, (son of Saw Paw Htoo, from Shah-si-bo village), and Saw Da Tuu Ko, aged 32, (son of Saw Poe Hter, from Da-ba-khee village), were arrested by SPDC troops from IB-73, in Paya-ywa village. The troops punched and threatened the two villagers in various ways, then robbed Saw Hsa Nay Trei of 20,000 Kyats and Saw Da Tuu Ko of 30,000 Kyats and finally released them. On 24 August 2010, SPDC troops from IB-102 under MOC-7 and based in Hplay-hsa-lo army camp demanded 200 fifteen-foot-long *Wa-doh*⁷ bamboo poles from villagers in Hplay-hsa-lo area. On 25 August 2010, the same infantry battalion demanded a further 100 bamboo poles from the same area for repairing their army camp. Now, SPDC troops have reopened trails/roads in lowland areas, and demand 500 Kyats per person, who comes to buy betel-nut leaves in Day-you-khee area.

⁴ *Wa-mei* is a type of bamboo.

⁵ *Wa-doh* is a type of bamboo.

⁶ *Loh* is a type of palm.

⁷ *Wa-doh* is a type of bamboo.

However, they still keep the trails/roads in Pa-let-wa and Klaw-mee-der areas closed. (Also see 1. *Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder and 4. Other forms of human rights violations*)

Nyaunglaybin (Kler Lwee Htoo) District

- In Mone (Moo) Township, on 12 August 2010, at 1700 hours, SPDC IB-48 troops led by Deputy Battalion Commander Htin Kyaw and Company Commander Khin Maung Kyaw, a total of 12 soldiers, left Mala-daw army camp for Der-kwe-lay-kho village. While on patrol, they saw villagers in a barn and shot at them, killing Saw Ba Koo, aged 35, and injuring Saw Moo Dah, aged 11. They also killed two cows. When they returned to the army camp, they ordered Mala-daw villagers to bring the dead body and the wounded villager back to the camp. They then ordered villagers to take the wounded villager to Tha-byay-nyunt village, and warned them not to tell anyone that they had shot villagers. On 16 August 2010, Deputy Battalion Commander Htin Kyaw, ordered villagers of Mala-daw village to get National Registration Cards (NRC), demanding 7,500 Kyats for each one. Troops are now active in Mala-daw, Kyauk-tan, Hsaw-wah-der and Tha-byay-nyunt areas. 30 SPDC troops, including some members of Mala-daw garrison, led by Company Commander Khin Maung Kyaw, banned villagers of Mala-daw, from transporting commodities for their daily needs and/or for sale, threatening to shoot and kill those who do. (Also see 1. *Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder and 4. Other forms of human rights violations*)

Papun (Mu Draw) District

- On 29 August 2010, DKBA troops from Brigade 555 and led by Saw T'blei and Saw Do Baw, killed Saw Da Lar, aged 35, from Ma-lay-ler village. His body was found on 2 August 2010. They had cut his throat and killed him, because a DKBA member, Mg Myint Oo, had surrendered to the KNU. DKBA troops based in Kwee-ta-mar area threatened civilians with the disappearance of a village chief if any of their DKBA members disappeared. DKBA troops from Brigades 999 and 333 led by Hsa Mu Htaw and Kya Min Naing, have made the lives of villagers from Noh-hta village, (Ma-lay-ler village tract), extremely difficult. On 17 July 2010, they banned them from attending to their farms. They forced 5 villagers a day to stay at A'lar-kyo. Landmines have been planted in the vicinity of the village, so that no one dares to go out and travel. They also threatened to kill those whose slash-and-burn farms close to A'lar-kyo. On 21 August 2010, the DKBA and SPDC LIB-701 troops led by Than Net and based in Ma-htaw army camp demanded 260 bamboo poles: 20 from Ma-htaw village, 70 from Thwa-kho-lo, 50 from Chaw-klah, 70 from Tha-ma-kyu-lo and 50 from Da-huu-lo village. The deadline

for the delivery of the bamboo poles was 2 September 2010. (*Also see 1. Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder and 4. Other forms of human rights violations*)

Kawkareik (Dooplaya) District

- On 4 August 2010, 15 DKBA troops led by A'kyi from Battalion 3 and based in Prawt village, shot a pig for food and forced the villagers of Noh-neh, Noh-ta-kaw, Ywa-dun-shay and Noh-shwe-mo villages to pay for the pig. On 9 August 2010, they summoned the village chiefs of Noh-neh, Noh-ta-kaw, Ywa-dun-shay and Noh-shwe-mo villages, and demanded “porter fees” of 25,000 Kyats from each village.
- On 15 August 2010, Column 2 Commander Than Myint Naing from SPDC IB-283, ordered Kroo-kweh village tract to build a pavilion (or the like), for BGF transforming ceremony, for the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA). Kroo-kweh village tract was ordered to provide sufficient wood, and Hpa-thay village tract was ordered to provide sufficient bamboo for the construction of the pavilion. He ordered one person from each household in Hpa-thay village to build the pavilion in the village. (*Also 3. Forced labor*)

3. Forced labor

Extortion, pillage and forced labor are among the most widespread forms of ‘human rights’ violations in Karen State, Burma. The forms of forced labor, imposed by the military junta on villagers in the Karen State, include, (but not limited to), engaging in daily chores such as cooking, water fetching, etc., road construction, building bridges, army camps, bunkers, trenches, sentry huts, sentry duties and portering. In the past seven months, 1,649 villagers, including at least 65 females, 5 villages, 1 village tract and another unknown number of village tracts and villagers were subjected to slave labor, and 142 bullock-carts were commandeered to transport supplies. In this month of August, 50 villagers, including 14 females, and another unknown number of villagers were subjected to forced labor. The villagers had to transport supplies for SPDC troops or build a pavilion (for Border Guard Force [BGF] transforming ceremony), for the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA). (See the following situation reports for details.)

Toungoo (Taw Oo) District

- On 19 August 2010, in Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Township, SPDC troops from IB-73 based in Za-yat-gyi Town, entered Mala-gone village and arrested two villagers: Saw Moo Thaw, aged 22, (son of Saw Moo Rah), and Saw Kho Kler Htoo, aged 19, (son of

Saw Moo Rah). The two brothers are innocent civilians. No one knew why they were arrested or where they were taken. However, it was learnt they were released on 28 August 2010. On 23 August 2010, SPDC troops, from LIB-102 under MOC-7 and based in Klaw-mee-der area, forced 14 female and 16 male villagers, a total of 30 from Klaw-mee-der village, to transport supplies from Klaw-mee-der and Pa-let-wa army camp. (*Also see 1. Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder*)

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4. Other forms of human rights violations

In this month of August, other forms of human rights violations include, but not limited to, restrictions on freedom of movement, the imposition of a ban on means of livelihood, threats, including death threats, the disturbance of civilians' daily lives and use of landmines in the vicinity of villages. (See the following situation reports for details.)

Toungoo (Taw Oo) District

- On 10 August 2010, in Htan-ta-bin (Hta-wa-ta-htoo) Township, Col. Soe Tin Hlaing from SPDC LIB-426 under MOC-7 made villagers' lives difficult. He ordered the villagers of Kler-la, (Kaw-thay-der area), to ensure that no gun battles broke out. He threatened to close all the roads to villagers' plantations, orchards, farms, etc. and ban people from entering and leaving the village, if skirmishes took place. Since 20 August 2010, SPDC troops, based in Pa-let-wa, Klaw-mee-der and Hplay-hsa-lo areas, MOC-7, and SPDC

troops, based in lowland areas and from Southern Regional Command, have banned villagers from attending to their work places, farms and lowland areas. Villagers from the hills and lowland areas are unable to engage in their daily business, that provides their living. Villagers are living in fear because the SPDC troops have threatened them and restricted their movement. Since the villagers cannot work, they have no income or sustenance from their farm produce. They are faced with a daily struggle for survival.

- On 21 August 2010, in Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Township, on their way back from a grocery trip to Htan-ta-bin (Htaw-ta-htoo) Town, Saw Hsa Nay Trei, aged 40, (son of Saw Paw Htoo, from Shah-si-bo village) and Saw Da Tuu Ko, aged 32, (son of Saw Poe Hter, from Da-ba-khee village), were arrested by SPDC troops from IB-73, in Paya-ywa village. The troops punched and threatened the two in various ways, then robbed Saw Hsa Nay Trei of 20,000 Kyats and Saw Da Tuu Ko of 30,000 Kyats. They were later released. On 24 August 2010, SPDC troops from IB-102 under MOC-7 and based in Hplay-hsa-lo army camp demanded 200 fifteen-foot *Wa-doh* bamboo poles from villagers in Hplay-hsa-lo area. On 25 August 2010, the same infantry battalion demanded a further 100 bamboo poles from the same area, for repairing their army camp. Now, SPDC troops have reopened trails/roads in lowland areas, and demand 500 Kyats per person, who comes to buy betel-nut leaves in Day-you-khee area. However, they still keep the trails/roads in Pa-let-wa and Klaw-mee-der areas closed. (*Also see 1. Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder and 2. Extortion and pillage*)

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Papun (Mu Draw) District

- On 15 August 2010, the TOC commander of Ka-ter-ti army camp summoned village chiefs, and ordered them to collect the number of DKBA soldiers, the names of farm owners and the number of acres, in total.
- On 29 August 2010, DKBA troops from Brigade 555 and led by Saw T'blei and Saw Do Baw, killed Saw Da Lar, aged 35, from Ma-lay-ler village. His body was found on 2 August 2010. They had cut his throat and killed him, because a DKBA member, Mg Myint Oo, had surrendered to the KNU. DKBA troops based in Kwee-ta-mar area, threatened civilians with the disappearance of a village chief, if any of their DKBA members disappeared. DKBA troops from Brigades 999 and 333 led by Hsa Mu Htaw and Kya Min Naing have made the lives of villagers from Noh-hta village, (Ma-lay-ler village tract), extremely difficult. On 17 July 2010, they banned them from attending to their farms. They forced 5 villagers a day to stay at A'lar-kyo. Landmines planted in the vicinity of the village, now prevents anyone to venture out. They also threatened to kill those whose slash-and-burn farms, close to A'lar-kyo. On 21 August 2010, the DKBA and SPDC LIB-701 troops led by Than Net and based in Ma-htaw army camp demanded 260 bamboo poles: 20 from Ma-htaw village, 70 from Thwa-kho-lo, 50 from Chaw-klah, 70 from Tha-ma-kyu-lo, and 50 from Da-huu-lo village. The deadline for the delivery of the bamboo poles was 2 September 2010. (*Also see 1. Arbitrary arrest, torture and murder and 2. Extortion and pillage*)

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