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Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Situation Update

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Mu Traw District Situation Update: SAC air strikes and shelling caused death, injuries, and damage in Dwe Lo, Bu Tho, and Lu Thaw townships (January-April 2025)

This Situation Update describes events occurring in Dwe Lo, Bu Tho, and Lu Thaw townships, Mu Traw (Hpapun) District, in January, March, and April 2025. In January, one villager from Aa--- village, K'Tai Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township, and four villagers (including a child) from Ab--- village, Kyaw Pa village tract, Bu Tho Township, were killed due to State Administration Council (SAC) indiscriminate air strikes in the area. The air strikes also injured six villagers from Ab--- village and damaged houses, a monastery, and a church. The SAC conducted further attacks in Bu Tho Township in March. On March 2nd 2025, an SAC drone strike severely damaged a primary school in Ah--- village, Meh Pree village tract. On March 4th 2025, SAC shelling injured four villagers from Aj--- village and damaged a church from Ai--- village, both in Kaw Ma Naw village tract. In addition, on March 5th 2025, an SAC fighter jet dropped two 500-pound bombs and fired from an aircraft into a monastery in Al--- village, Meh Pree village tract, killing the abbot, injuring two monks (including an underage novice), and burning down the building. Moreover, also in March, the SAC conducted air strikes on Am--- village, Ler Muh Plaw village tract, Lu Thaw Township. In Dwe Lo Township, on April 12th 2025, the SAC dropped two bombs on the Yoon Sa Lin River bridge, near An--- village, Meh K'Law village tract. On April 27th, SAC soldiers conducted shelling and later conducted air strikes into Ap--- village, Htee T'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township. Due to constant shelling and air strikes in the area, villagers were displaced and facing difficulties.¹

[This Situation Update covers human rights violations that occurred in January, March, and April 2025, in Dwe Lo, Bu Tho, and Lu Thaw townships, Mu Traw District.] State Administration Council (SAC)² air strikes and shelling killed multiple civilians at once and constitute war crimes. The perpetrators of these human rights abuses were soldiers from SAC artillery units and the air force, acting under the command of General Min Aung Hlaing³. The order [to conduct these air

¹ The present document is based on information received in May, 2025. It was provided by a community member in Mu Traw 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: #25-175-S3, 25-175-S2, 25-175-S1, #25-175-A2-I1, 25-175-A5-I1, and #25-175-A9-I1.

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 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. The military junta changed its name in July 31st 2025 to State Security and Peace Commission (SSPC).

³ A Senior General in the Burma Army who has served as Chairman of the State Administration Council, the executive body governing Burma/Myanmar since February 2021. He has also served as the Commander-in-Chief of Myanmar's Armed Forces since March 2011. Min Aung Hlaing seized power after overthrowing the civilian

strikes and shelling] came from General Min Aung Hlaing. The SAC attacks targeted villagers, as 500-pound bombs and shells landed in villages that had no connection to any military activity. Moreover, suicide drones landed in school compounds, and religious buildings such as churches, monasteries, and mosques were frequently attacked by air strikes and shelling. Therefore, villagers believe that the SAC forces attacked villagers because they have not been able to achieve victories over armed resistance groups.

January 2025: SAC air strikes caused casualties and damage in Dwe Lo and Bu Tho townships

From December 9th 2024 to January 31st 2025, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)⁴ and the People's Defence Force (PDF)⁵ attacked and captured the SAC K'Tai Tee army camp, located near K'Tai Tee village, K'Tai Tee village tract⁶, Dwe Lo Township. During the attacks, the SAC used its air force and dropped bombs on villages that were non-combatant areas.

- **January 2nd: SAC air strike on K'Tai Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township**

On January 2nd 2025, a bomb [dropped by SAC aircraft] landed on Aa--- village, K'Tai Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township. An 18-year-old student from Aa--- village, named Saw⁷ A---, was killed on the spot by a bomb explosion. Additionally, the house of a 60-year-old villager named Saw B--- was burned down, and the houses of Tee⁸ C--- (75 years old), Saw D--- (60 years old), Sayar⁹ E--- (40 years old), and Saw F--- (35 years old), as well as a kitchen, were damaged.

- **January 28th: SAC air strike on Kyaw Pa village tract, Bu Tho Township**

On January 28th 2025, at around 6 pm, although there was no fighting, an SAC fighter jet dropped two 500-pound bombs that exploded inside Ab--- village, Kyaw Pa village tract, Bu Tho Township. [As a result,] four villagers, Naw¹⁰ G--- [46 years old], Saw H--- [30 years old], Naw I--- [26 years old], and Saw J--- [3 years old] were killed. One of the bombs landed between the houses of Naw G--- and Naw I---. At the time of the explosion, Naw G--- was inside her house. Likewise, Naw I---, her husband Saw H---, and their child were inside their house. The explosion set both houses on fire, killing everyone inside.¹¹

Additionally, [six] other villagers were injured. Two of them sustained severe abdominal injuries, with their abdomens cut open horizontally. Local villagers carried them to Ac--- clinic, located in Ad--- village, Day Wah village tract, Bu Tho Township, because there was no clinic in Ab---

government led by Aung San Suu Kyi on February 1st 2021, ending a nearly ten-year period of civilian rule. He has appointed himself as Prime Minister of Myanmar on August 1st 2021, and became Acting President of Myanmar on July 22nd 2024.

⁴ The Karen National Liberation Army is the armed wing of the Karen National Union.

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

⁶ A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

⁷ 'Saw' is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

⁸ 'Tee' is a S'gaw Karen male honorific title used before a person's name.

⁹ Sayar (male) or sayarma (female) is a Burmese term used for any teacher, pastor, or any person to whom one wishes to show respect.

¹⁰ 'Naw' is a S'gaw Karen female honorific title used before a person's name.

¹¹ KHRG, "[Mu Traw District Incident Report: SAC air strikes cause death, injuries, displacement, and destruction in Bu Tho Township \(January 2025\)](#)", July 2025.

village. The distance between Ac--- clinic and Ab--- village is approximately four miles [6.4 km]. However, Ac--- clinic did not have adequate equipment to provide treatment, so they were referred to Ae--- Hospital, outside of Ae--- village, K'Law Hta village tract, Lu Thaw Township, which is run by the KNLA. The villagers did not have to pay for treatment. As of November 11th 2025, the two victims had completed their treatment and were living in their village. [The KHRG researcher does not know how long they were hospitalised.]

The injuries of the [four] other villagers were not severe, so they received treatment at home. In total, [five] houses were completely burned down.

- **January 28th: SAC air strike on K'Tai Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township**

On January 28th 2025, at around 6:30 am, an air strike also happened [was conducted by the SAC] on Ac--- village, K'Tai Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township, located north of Ab--- village. Two bombs completely destroyed two halls and the glass windows of a monastery.

On January 31st 2025, the SAC K'Tai Tee army camp was captured. However, the soldiers from the camp fled and hid in caves and canals behind the camp. [The caves and canals are] located [in the area controlled by] the BGF [Border Guard Force¹²] Battalion #1013, which has a bordered fence with Aa--- village, K'Tai Tee village tract. This made it difficult for the KNLA and PDF soldiers to finish capturing [the soldiers who fled from the army camp]. At the time, the KNLA and the PDF were cooperating to capture the SAC soldiers who had escaped.

In addition, two more air strike incidents happened [were conducted by the SAC] in K'Tai Tee village tract in January 2025, on unknown specific dates. Due to the explosions, a hall behind a Christian baptist church was damaged in Af--- village, K'Tai Tee village tract. Similarly, five cows were killed and the kitchen of a monastery was damaged in Ag--- village, K'Tai Tee village tract.

March 2025: SAC air and drone strikes, and shelling caused casualties and damage in Bu Tho and Lu Thaw townships

- **March 2nd: SAC drone strike on Meh Pree village tract, Bu Tho Township**

On March 2nd 2025, a primary school in Ah--- village [Meh Pree village tract, Bu Tho Township, Mu Traw District,] was severely damaged by a suicide drone. Villagers reported that the suicide drone hit the school and damaged the school's files, stationery, and equipment. At first, villagers thought it was a shell, but when the KNU [Karen National Union]¹³ came to the damaged school and examined [the place], they found a battery used for drones. They also found the drone's tail and fins. Thus, it was later confirmed that the school had been destroyed by an SAC suicide drone strike. However, nobody was injured or killed.

- **March 4th and 5th: SAC shelling into Meh Pree village tract, Bu Tho Township**

On March 4th 2025, a 120 mm shell [fired by the SAC] landed on a Catholic church near Ai--- village [Meh Pree village tract, Bu Tho Township], and damaged its roof. The church is far from

¹² Border Guard Force (BGF) battalions of the Tatmadaw were established in 2010, and they are composed mostly of soldiers from former non-state armed groups, such as older constellations of the DKBA, which have formalised ceasefire agreements with the Burma/Myanmar government and agreed to transform into battalions within the Tatmadaw.

¹³ 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 Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in 2015, following the 2021 coup staged by Burma Army leaders, the KNU officially stated that the NCA has become void.

villagers' houses, so no one got killed or injured. Moreover, on the same day, at 4 pm, four more 120 mm shells landed on Aj--- village, Meh Pree village tract, injuring four villagers. Saw K--- (65 years old) was injured on his shoulders; Saw L--- (20 years old) was injured on his back; Saw M--- (45 years old) was injured on both of his thighs; and a two-year-old baby (unknown name and gender) was slightly injured on their forehead. All four injured villagers were sent to a hospital in K'Ma Maung Town [Bu Tho Township], in an area under the control of the SAC, because there are no hospitals in Aj--- village, and later referred to Ak--- Hospital [run by the SAC] in Hpa-an Town, Hpa-an District. On March 7th 2025, the victims were still hospitalised. Villagers believe that the shells were fired by an SAC artillery unit based in K'Ma Maung Town.

[Similarly,] on March 5th 2025, although there was no fighting [ongoing inside or near Al--- village, Meh Pree village tract], an SAC fighter jet came to Al--- village, dropped two 500-pound bombs, and fired for 20 minutes from an Oerlikon [mounted cannon from an aircraft]. The bombs landed on a monastery, killing an abbot and injuring two other monks. The abbot (head of the monastery) was named U¹⁴ N--- and was 70 years old. [Of the two injured monks,] one was a secretary monk named U O--- (25 years old), and he was injured on his left hand. The other was a 14-year-old novice, who was injured on his left elbow and on the sole of his left foot. The attack almost completely burned down the monastery. The injured monks were sent to Ak-- Hospital. On March 7th 2025, they were still receiving treatment at the hospital.

- **Other SAC attacks in Lu Thaw and Bu Tho townships in March**

[Furthermore, for an unknown specific period of time,] the SAC soldiers from K'Ma Maung Town shelled indiscriminately into villages near K'Ma Maung Town [Bu Tho Township] almost every day, causing many damages. Likewise, SAC air strikes occurred [were also conducted in other parts of the district like] in Am--- village [Ler Muh Plaw village tract, Lu Thaw Township], on an unknown specific date, and a bomb landed on a villager's house and destroyed it.

Due to SAC [constant] shelling and air strikes almost every day [in March 2025], around 3,000 villagers from the other side of Yoon Sa Lin River, located near An--- village, Meh K'Law village tract, Dwe Lo Township, were displaced, as they did not dare to stay in their village. Some fled to Ao--- special area, others to K'Ma Maung Town. Meanwhile, some villagers did not flee far away and instead dug bunkers to hide near the riverbank. While villagers were displaced, no humanitarian, private, or religious organisation, nor any other type of organisation, came to provide support. As of November 11th 2025, villages had not received any support.

April 2025: air strikes and shelling caused damage in Dwe Lo and Bu Tho townships

- **April 12th: SAC air strike on Meh K'Law village tract, Dwe Lo Township**

On April 12th 2025, even though there was no fighting at the northern side of Yoon Sa Lin River bridge, An--- village, Meh K'Law village tract, Dwe Lo Township, an SAC aircraft came and dropped two bombs on Yoon Sa Lin River bridge. [No villagers were injured or killed because they had displaced to safer locations in advance.] Nothing was damaged.

- **April 27th: SAC shelling into Htee T'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township**

On April 27th 2025, an SAC artillery unit based in K'Ma Maung Town conducted shelling into Ap-- village, Htee T'Daw Hta village tract, Bu Tho Township, and, on the same day, an SAC aircraft also came and dropped [bombs] into Ap--- village, but caused no damages or casualties, as villagers had been displaced prior to the incident. As of November 11th 2025, villagers still had not returned to their village.

¹⁴ 'U' is a Burmese title used for elder men, used before their name.

Further background reading on the situation of air strikes and shelling in Mu Traw District, Southeast Burma/Myanmar can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- ["Mu Traw District Incident Report: SAC air strikes cause death, injuries, displacement, and destruction in Bu Tho Township \(January 2025\)"](#), July 2025.
- [*Community spaces under fire : Attacks and destruction of community buildings and cultural events in Southeast Burma by the State Administration Council \(SAC\) \(January - June 2025\)*](#), August 2025.
- [*Stolen Childhoods: Violations of children's rights, urgent needs, and local agency in rural Southeast Burma during the conflict*](#), October 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.

