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Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

Situation Update

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Doplaya District Situation Update: SAC air strikes, education challenges, drug issues, and military activities in Noh T’Kaw and Kruh Tuh townships (January to June 2025).

This Situation Update describes events occurring in Noh T’Kaw and Kruh Tuh townships, Doplaya District, during the period between January to June 2025, including air strikes, education challenges, drug issues, and military activities. In Noh T’Kaw Township, villagers have difficulty accessing education. After the 2021 military coup, some Burma government schools had been closed, so many students stopped attending school. In some areas, villagers established self-funded schools for children to be able to continue their education. However, due to State Administration Council (SAC) air strikes on villages, the students who were able to continue studying had to study in fear. In Noh Taw Pla village tract, villagers reported that the bunker they had built to protect themselves had helped protect students and teachers during SAC reconnaissance flights. From January to June 2025, children in some areas also struggled to attend school due to flooding. On April 26th 2025, the SAC conducted air strikes on T’Ree T’Kaw village tract, destroying many houses owned by villagers and killing four goats. Moreover, the SAC bombed mining sites in Noh T’Kaw Township at least four times and injured civilians. There was also a growing issue with gambling and yaba use, as more villagers became involved in consuming. In Kruh Tuh Township, on June 9th 2025, the SAC conducted air strikes on Paing Ya village tract, killing three children, one teacher, and one villager; injuring at least 29 people, including 25 students; and damaging 12 houses.¹

Noh T’Kaw Township: SAC air strikes and education and health challenges (January to April 2025)

In 2024, a local community-based organisation (CBO) [name censored for security] provided support for local villagers to build a bunker in Ac--- village, Noh Taw Pla village tract², Noh T’Kaw Township, Doplaya District. The teachers at the local high school, run by the Karen Education and Culture Department (KECD)³, said that this bunker is useful and important for the

¹ The present document is based on information received in May and July 2025. It was provided by a community member in Doplaya 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: #25-165-S1, #25-220-D1, #25-251-D1, and #25-220-A1-I1. KHRG received further photographic evidence, stored on file, not attached to this published report.

² A village tract is an administrative unit of between five and 20 villages in a local area, often centred on a large village.

³ The Karen Education and Culture Department is the education department of the Karen National Union. Its main goals are to provide mother tongue education services to rural Karen populations in Southeast Myanmar, as well as

students. This bunker was built because the villagers saw the news on social media that State Administration Council (SAC)⁴ aircraft targeted monasteries and churches, so they were afraid. In 2025, teachers and students had used this bunker twice for self-protection when an SAC aircraft flew over the school area. Some of the self-funded high schools in Noh T’Kaw Township reported that they also needed bunkers.

Since Burma government schools cannot operate regularly as they could before [the February 2021 military coup], the students' parents were worried, and [many] students who were living in SAC-controlled areas in Kya Inn Seik Gyi Township [Noh T’Kaw Township] did not continue their studies. Some of them were helping their parents run their family businesses, while some students who had finished high school found ways to go to Thailand to improve their lives and livelihoods. Some students went to Thailand illegally, but could not find jobs and had to return to their village.

- **Education challenges in T’Ree T’Kaw village tract:**

Before the [February 2021] military coup, in Aa--- village, T’Ree T’Kaw village tract, Noh T’Kaw Township, Dooplaya District, there were 50 houses, all of which were built by the Nippon Foundation, and a [Burma government] primary school. The villagers had stayed in those houses, and the children had studied in that school until the military coup [in 2021]. [After the February 2021 coup, the school stopped receiving support from the SAC. Therefore, the villagers started paying the teacher’s salaries themselves.]

In 2025, the [self-funded primary] school was closed due to concerns about [SAC] air strikes. After the school was closed, the villagers re-established the self-funded primary school in a safe place outside the Aa--- village. During the rainy season, the students might face issues related to flooding, and some students might not be able to come to school if it is raining or there is flooding.

On April 26th 2025, at 8:20 pm, unexpectedly, the SAC conducted an air strike onto Aa--- village. Most of the 50 houses in the village were damaged due to the bomb explosions. The explosions hit the houses which the owners had already left, so there were no casualties. The explosions killed four goats owned by a villager named Naw⁵ Af---. The villagers who were living in those small houses [the Nippon Foundation houses] had already fled to the jungle [before the air strike], while some had fled to the houses of their relatives. Some of them had built temporary shelters with a tarpaulin in the village [following the attack]. A local village security guard [with no affiliation to the SAC or Karen National Union (KNU)⁶] provided this information.

to preserve the Karen language, culture and history. Despite being an important education provider in the region, it is not officially recognised by the Myanmar government.

⁴ 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 on July 31st 2025 to State Security and Peace Commission (SSPC).

⁵ ‘Naw’ is a S’gaw Karen female honorific title used before a person’s name.

⁶ 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.



These photos were taken in June 2025, in Aa--- village, T'Ree T'Kaw village tract, Noh T'Kaw Township, Dooplaya District. On April 26th 2025, at 8:20 pm, the SAC conducted an air strike onto Aa--- village and damaged most of the fifty houses in the village. All fifty of the houses had originally been built by the Nippon Foundation. The attack also killed four goats and forced the villagers to flee the village. These photos show some of the villagers' houses that were damaged by the SAC air strike. [Photos: KHRG]

- **Other military attacks in Noh T'Kaw Township:**

During January to May 2025, there was no fighting between joint-Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA)⁷ and People's Defence Force (PDF)⁸ troops against the SAC in Noh T'Kaw Township, Dooplaya District. However, the KNU maintained a brigade office and district office [in the township], while the combined armed groups' [the KNLA/PDF] maintained a main checkpoint. There were also several mining areas.

From January to May 2025, SAC fighter jets dropped 500-pound bombs at least four times onto places that they considered belonging to their enemy, injuring a number of civilians who were working at one mining site. Fortunately, nobody was killed.

- **Drug abuse and related issues in Noh T'Kaw Township:**

The KNU do not fully control areas in Noh T'Kaw Township located near the SAC army camps. There is 'Anglo' [a Burmese dice game], gambling, and other game shops in those areas, and

⁷ The Karen National Liberation Army is the armed wing of the Karen National Union.

⁸ 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.

villagers, including elderly people and children, come to play at them. Yaba⁹ is sold secretly, so more people from the villages and town consumed it, causing problems with their livelihoods. This led many to incur debt.

In some villages located near the towns which the KNU was unable to fully control, thieves stole rubber latex [from villagers' plantations], no matter whether it was daytime or nighttime [constantly]. Therefore, the villagers not only faced problems related to inflation, but also faced problems related to thieves. [High levels of theft only made an already bad economic situation worse for villagers].

In March 2025, in Kya Hka Chaw village tract, Noh T'Kaw Township, four thieves were arrested [by KNU village authorities]. During the investigation, they were found to be stealing because of [to support their] drug use and gambling. According to a local authority, those thieves lived in Seik Gyi (Kyainseikgyi) Town, an SAC-controlled area [in Noh T'Kaw Township]. They came to a KNU-controlled area and stole, so [KNU] village tract leaders held court [and decided disciplinary actions].

- **Overall healthcare situation:**

In Noh T'Kaw Township, when comparing the current situation [2025] to [the situation in] 2024, health care issues and education [access] have improved since military activities have decreased. The villagers feel more comfortable living in the villages because fighting has not happened [during January to May 2025]. However, villagers still have to stay alert for SAC aircraft.

Kruh Tuh Township: SAC air strike killed five villagers and injured 29 villagers (June 2025)

In Ab--- village, Paing Ya village tract, Kruh Tuh Township, Dooplaya District, there was a self-funded middle school with around 90 students. Due to security concerns [raised by local village leaders], instead of studying in the school, teachers instructed students to secretly study in villagers' houses.

On June 9th 2025, at 1:45 pm, an SAC fighter jet dropped multiple 500-pound bombs and various types of small mortar shells, while a helicopter fired machine guns onto Ab--- village. [As one of the bombs landed on the house where students were studying,] the air strike killed three students, one teacher, and one villager and injured at least 29 people, including 24 students, one 4-year-old child, and four villagers. The villagers who were killed are: U¹⁰ A--- (69 years old), Daw¹¹ B--- (40 years old), Maung¹² C--- (7 years old), Ma¹³ D--- (6 years old), and Ma E--- (8 years old). The air strikes also damaged at least 12 houses owned by villagers. After the

⁹ Yaba, which means 'crazy medicine' in Thai, is a tablet form of methamphetamine. First developed in East Asia during the Second World War to enhance soldiers' performance, methamphetamine has become increasingly popular in Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, and Burma/Myanmar where it is typically manufactured. See: UNODC, "[Yaba, the 'crazy medicine' of East Asia](#)", May 2008; KHRG, Chapter IV, in *Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response in Southeast Myanmar since the 2012 ceasefire*, , June 2014; KHRG, "[Thaton Situation Update: Bilin Township, July to September 2016](#)," April 2017; and KHRG, "[Dooplaya Field Report: A quasi-ceasefire? Developments after the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, from January to December 2016](#)", September 2017.

¹⁰ 'U' is a Burmese title used for elder men, used before their name.

¹¹ 'Daw' is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person's name.

¹² 'Maung' is a Burmese male honorific title used before a person's name.

¹³ 'Ma' is a Burmese female honorific title used before a person's name.

attack, villagers with serious injuries sought treatment in Hpa-an and Mawlamyine towns, while those with less severe injuries were treated in nearby villages.¹⁴



KHRG received the photo on the right on July 12th 2025, from a KNU township authority in Kruh Tuh Township, Dooplaya District. On June 9th 2025, an SAC fighter jet dropped 500-pound bombs and small mortar shells, while a helicopter strafed Ab--- village, Paing Ya village tract, Kruh Tuh Township, Dooplaya District. The attack killed five villagers and injured at least 29 other villagers, mainly students. The photo shows the bodies of Maung C--- (7 years old), Ma D--- (6 years old), and U A--- (69 years old) before the funeral service. The photo on the left was taken by a KHRG researcher in July 2025, in Ab--- village, and shows the damage caused to a villager's house by the SAC attack. [Photos: KHRG/Township authority]

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

- [ကဘီယုဟဲလ် Aircraft coming! : Impacts of air strikes on local communities and villagers' protection strategies in Southeast Burma since the 2021 coup.](#), November 2024.
- ["Kler Lwee Htoo District Incident Report: An SAC air strike on a school injured a villager in Hsaw Htee Township, May 2025."](#), November 2025.
- ["Taw Oo District Short Update: SAC soldiers shot and injured a villager, and conducted shelling and an air strike causing destruction, in Htaw Ta Htoo and Daw Hpah Hkoh townships \(January to March 2025\)"](#), August 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.

¹⁴ KHRG, “[ဒူးပလာယာခရိုင် မှခင်းဖော်ပြသည့်မှတ်တမ်းလွှာ- ကရုတ်းမြို့နယ်အတွင်း SAC လေကြောင်းတိုက်ခိုက်မှုကြောင့် အရပ်သားများ \(၅\) ဦးသေဆုံး၍ \(၂၉\) ဦးဒဏ်ရာ ရရှိ \(၂၀၂၅ ခုနှစ်၊ ဇွန်လ\)](#)”, November 2025.

