



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

Press Release

Pre-Election Military Operations by SPDC

July 26, 2010

The SPDC military junta has started pre-election military operations, targeting the innocent Karen civilians in the Karen State and other KNU areas.

1. On July 23 at 10:00 am, the SPDC troops heavily shelled with mortars Tha-dah-Der village in Papun (Mudraw) District for more than 4 hours and at about 2:30 pm, the SPDC troops entered the village and burnt down 57 houses, one Christian church, one middle school building and other farm huts . The villagers had to flee for their lives and go into hiding, leaving most of their possessions. There are 540 persons in hiding, including 178 students and villagers from a nearby village. They are now hiding in the jungle without proper shelter, facing much problem as it is now the middle of the rainy season with daily heavy down pours. Particularly, the women and children are in high risk health situation in the jungle, with swarms of disease bearing bugs and mosquito and the scarcity of clean water.

2. The villagers in Wawlay areas to the south of Myawaddy town ,Doopla Ya district start to flee since a few days ago. Yesterday, on July 25, more than 100 families had gathered near the border, and some families have already crossed into Thailand for refuge, as the combined SPDC and DKBA troops are approaching the area in preparation for offensive. It appears that with its heavy weapon support, the SPDC again is forcing the DKBA units loyal to it to attack, occupy and control the area.

3. On July 10, 2010, troops of Column-2 from LIB-704 commanded by officer Mo Aye and under the Military Operation Command-4, active in the Papun area, stopped for the night in Kay Kaw village of Papun District. One of the soldiers from the column, named Than Htun Aye, raped a married woman Naw Mu Hseet, aged 27 at about 1:30 am, while she was going out to the toilet. He seized her, covered her mouth with clothes and raped her.

4. The SPDC troops continue widespread human rights violations against the civilians in Karen State and other Karen areas. In this month, the human rights violations by the SPDC troops are on the increase in Papun (Mu-draw), Kawkareik (Doo-pla-ya), Toungoo (Taw-oo), Thaton (Doo-tha-htoo) and Nyaungglaybin (Kler-lwee-htu) Districts.

It appears that there will be more attacks on Karen civilians and human rights violations in the Thai-Burma border areas. All concerned should respond to this emergency so that the fleeing civilians may take refuge in safe areas and get necessary support for survival of the new refugees. We would like to call on the international community including U.S, UK, EU and UN agencies to call on the SPDC military regime to stop immediately the military attacks and gross human rights violations against the Karen people, who have been reduced to the status of one of the poorest peoples in Burma, because of decades of severe oppression by successive military dictatorships, in the never ending civil war.

Supreme Headquarters
Karen National Union

For more information contact: 087 207 9296