

SPDC and DKBA order documents

October 2007 to March 2008



Karen Human Rights Group

Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

SPDC and DKBA order documents: October 2007 to March 2008

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Abstract

As evidence of ongoing exploitative local governance in rural Burma, this report comprises a collection of 59 translated order documents issued by SPDC and DKBA officers to village heads in Karen State between October 2007 and March 2008. The orders provide tangible confirmation of rural villagers' consistent testimonies regarding the regular demands for labour, money, food and other supplies to which their communities are subject by local military forces. Amongst other things, these order documents articulate demands for the payment of money and food; fabrication and delivery of building supplies; attendance at meetings; road clearance and construction; portering of military supplies; agricultural labour and the delivery of bullock carts. In almost all cases, such demands are uncompensated and backed by an implicit threat of violence for non-compliance. Almost all demands articulated in the orders presented in this report involve some element of forced labour in their implementation.

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I. Introduction and executive summary

As Burma's ruling military regime has sought to extend and consolidate State control across all areas of the country, regional army units have been required to utilise local labour, as well as money, food and other supplies extracted from local communities to support this military expansion.¹ Forced labour and other exploitative demands thus remain amongst the most pervasive of human rights abuses in Karen State and other, especially rural, areas of Burma. The military's dependence on the appropriation of labour, money, food and supplies from local communities in rural Burma was made explicit in a 1997 order by the central War Office to the country's 12 Regional Commands to acquire all logistical needs locally, rather than from central reserves.² Supported by the military's logistical dependence on civilian communities, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) Army as well as its largest local ally, the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), have been expanding troop numbers, camps and bases in Karen State.

Given the widespread and systematic character of forced labour and other demands for money, food and supplies, these abuses have directly contributed to livelihoods vulnerability for large numbers of villagers across rural Karen State. Persistent – and almost always uncompensated – forced labour cuts into villagers' own work time, which remains crucial for tending agriculture crops or addressing other means of livelihood, engaging in wage labour or attending to household chores. Monetary extortion depletes villagers' limited financial savings, which could otherwise serve as a form of insurance to buffer against unexpected shocks, losses and personal expenses. Demands for food and other supplies undermine villagers' own nutritional and household needs. Combined over time, this systematic appropriation of labour, money, food and supplies erodes livelihoods, exacerbates poverty and worsens the region's humanitarian crisis.

Despite the harmful consequences of this exploitation, both SPDC and DKBA authorities have continued to regularly impose their demands on the civilian population of rural Karen State. These demands are often issued in the form of written order documents. These documents are written by the officers themselves or otherwise dictated by an officer and written down or typed by a scribe, before being dispatched to particular villages by a messenger (who is typically a local villager forced to serve in this role without compensation). Given the important role of order documents as evidence in advocacy around forced labour in Burma, there has been an increasing reluctance by military authorities to set down in writing specific demands and instead call village heads to attend 'meetings' at which they elaborate on what is required. Nonetheless, specific demands for labour, money, food and other supplies continue to be issued through written order documents dispatched by SPDC and DKBA authorities to village heads, backed up by an implicit threat of violence and in some cases an explicit threat that 'action' will be taken against those who do not comply (see for example order #27). Village heads who receive an order document with a stated demand or are called to a meeting where they are subsequently given demands must then arrange for the residents of their respective villages to comply or else attempt to respond in a manner that allows them to reduce or otherwise completely avoid the stated requirements.³

¹ Such forms of appropriation are often termed as 'rents', which are "commonly defined as the extraction of uncompensated value from others." (See, MacLean, K. 2007. "Spaces of extraction: Governance along the riverine networks of Nyaunglebin District," in *Myanmar – The State, Community and the Environment*, Asia Pacific Press, p. 259.)

² Selth, A. 2002. *Burma's Armed Forces: Power Without Glory*. Norwalk: Eastbridge, p. 136; see also, Callahan, M. 2007. "Of kyay-zu and kyat-su: the military in 2006." In *Myanmar – The State, Community and the Environment*, eds. Monique Skidmore and Trevor Wilson. Canberra: Asia Pacific Press, p. 46.

³ For a thorough analysis of the function, implementation and consequences of forced labour and other demands in Karen State, see KHRG's comprehensive August 2007 report *Shouldering the Burden of Militarisation*.

The present report comprises a collection of 59 translated order documents issued by SPDC and DKBA authorities in Toungoo, Nyaunglebin, Papun and Thaton Districts of Karen State between October 2007 and March 2008. Out of the total 59 documents, 15 were issued by SPDC authorities and 44 were issued by DKBA authorities. As the DKBA operates under sanction of the SPDC and as the two groups often participate in joint operations, demands on the civilian population issued by this group should be understood as having been sanctioned by the SPDC.⁴ The eradication of DKBA-demanded forced labour is thus part of the SPDC's wider obligation to end this practice in Burma.

Orders dispatched by SPDC authorities were written solely in Burmese, while DKBA authorities dispatched order documents written in either S'gkaw Karen or Burmese. Order documents from both groups were either hand written or typed. Both SPDC and DKBA officers issuing the orders typically certified the letters with an official stamp. The order documents issued by SPDC authorities contained in this report include demands for thatch shingles, bamboo poles, pork, chicken, money and information. Compliance with these demands requires forced labour in the delivery of the stated items to specified army camps and bases. Further forced labour is also required in the collection of raw materials for, and in the fabrication of, thatch shingles and bamboo poles. The SPDC orders also include demands for other forms of forced labour involving attendance at meetings, carrying water, clearing and repairing vehicle roads and dismantling farm field huts. Other SPDC orders presented below that may not directly involve forced labour address restrictions on the sale of meat, announcements about landmine-deployed areas, registration of muskets and permission for specific villagers to travel. Those order documents issued by DKBA authorities and contained in this report include demands for the delivery of thatch shingles, betel nut, money, teak wood, rice and bullock carts; clearance and construction of vehicle roads; weeding of cashew plantations; attendance at meetings; provision of villagers to serve as soldiers and porters; the handing over of an escaped porter; permission to travel and restrictions on the use of rice mills. For a detailed list of the order documents contained in this report see the table included below on page ten.

On the one hand, these orders demonstrate the persistent threat of military predation to livelihoods vulnerability in rural Karen State. On the other hand, they reveal the determined opposition of villagers to such exploitation. Order document #38, for example, is in fact a follow-up letter appealing to the relevant village head to comply with a previously issued (yet simply ignored) order. Other orders contain additional comments added by KHRG field researchers about the particular responses of village heads to these demands. Delayed responses and late compliance on the part of villagers are common (for example order #31). Compliance is also frequently only partial in character. In response to order #17, for example, the relevant village head complied in principle with a demand for money, but gave 200,000 kyat (US \$168) short of the amount demanded – telling the issuing officer that his villagers simply could not pay the initially-specified amount. The compliance in this case, furthermore, came four days later than the date demanded. Interestingly, order #56 is a demand for the relevant village head to turn over a porter who absconded while doing forced labour carrying military supplies. While such resistance, in the form of delayed or partial compliance, may seem slight at first glance, it is important to recognise that villagers employ such tactics in large numbers across rural Karen State (and presumably across much of rural Burma). While not formally organised, these daily acts of resistance go a long way in undermining the authority, and limiting the usable resources, of local military units.

What becomes clear from an examination of the order documents presented below is that both SPDC and DKBA units are essentially dependant on the uncompensated extraction of

⁴ Mary Callahan in her paper *Political Authority in Burma's Ethnic Minority States: Devolution, Occupation, and Coexistence* (East-West Center Washington, May 2007, p.39) terms the particular form of mixed political authority in DKBA-controlled areas as 'coexistence' between the SPDC and DKBA.

labour, money, food and supplies from rural communities across Karen State. The appropriation of these resources is widespread and systematic and plays a large role in undermining livelihoods, exacerbating poverty and worsening the region's humanitarian crisis. Nevertheless, as villagers are themselves fully aware of the harmful consequences of these demands, they have sought, through everyday forms of resistance to reduce or, where possible, wholly mitigate the demands imposed upon them.

Notes on the text

This document comprises 59 order documents which State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) and Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) officers issued to villagers in Karen State between October 2007 and March 2008. Many of the place names mentioned in the report are indicated on the accompanying maps. Most districts, townships, villages and rivers have both a Karen and Burmese name. While districts are identified with Burmese names, their boundaries follow Karen designations as used by local people and the Karen National Union (KNU) but not the SPDC. Under SPDC designations, sections of western Nyaunglebin and Toungoo Districts fall within eastern Pegu (Bago) Division, while western Thaton and Dooplaya Districts form part of Mon State.

In the text of the orders, 'Sd.' indicates the signature of the issuing officer. The village head to whom the order letter is sent is often referred to as 'Gentleman' or 'Chairperson'. In some instances familial names such as uncle, brother and mother are used as a form of politeness without implying any actual blood ties. Village and personal names have been censored using single and double letters (beginning from A--- and continuing alphabetically to Cj--- as they first appear in the report) which do not represent the first letters of the censored words. Other identifying alphanumeric characters have been censored with hash marks (##) and dashes (--). In some cases, original order documents have included incomplete dates written with dashes which do not indicate censored information.

DKBA orders often include the Burmese transliteration of the group's English language acronym. This has been transliterated back into English in this report as 'Dee Kay Bee Ay'. Italicised notes at the bottom of individual orders are additional comments which KHRG field researchers who collected the documents in Karen State provided to elaborate on the context. We have tried to accurately reflect the grammar and layout of the original documents wherever possible. Thus, missing words and poor grammar have been retained in the orders for the sake of accuracy. Further detail or explanations have been added in square brackets within the text of the order documents where clarification is needed.

Terms and abbreviations

DKBA	Democratic Karen Buddhist Army; an armed group allied with the SPDC
IB	Infantry Battalion
KNLA	Karen National Liberation Army
KNU	Karen National Union
LIB	Light Infantry Battalion
SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
VPDC	Village Peace and Development Council
<i>kyat</i>	Burmese currency; US \$1 equals 5.8 kyat at official rate, approx. 1190 kyat at current market rate
<i>loh ah pay</i>	A Burmese term traditionally referring to voluntary service for temples or the local community, not military or state projects; now commonly used to refer to most forms of forced labour.
<i>Sd.</i>	Denotes the signature of the relevant official at the end of a given order document
<i>viss</i>	A local unit of volume measurement equal to 1.63 kg. / 3.6 lb.





II. List of order documents

#	Source	District	Date issued	Content / Order requirement	Page #
1	SPDC	Papun	October 2007	Attend a meeting; restrictions on the sale of meat	11
2	SPDC	Papun	October 2007	Deliver thatch shingles and pork	11
3	SPDC	Papun	December 2007	Deliver chicken meat	11
4	SPDC	Thaton	October 2007	Register muskets	12
5	SPDC	Thaton	November 2007	Attend a meeting; provide information	12
6	SPDC	Thaton	November 2007	Provide information on road construction	12
7	SPDC	Thaton	November 2007	Attend a meeting; provide information	13
8	SPDC	Nyaunglebin	December 2007	Dismantle farm field huts	13
9	SPDC	Thaton	October 2007	Deliver money	14
10	SPDC	Thaton	November 2007	Road construction and clearance	14
11	SPDC	Thaton	November 2007	Deliver bamboo poles	14
12	SPDC	Thaton	December 2007	Announcement about landmine deployment	15
13	SPDC	Toungoo	January 2008	Travel permission	15
14	SPDC	Thaton	April 2008	Attend a meeting	16
15	SPDC	Thaton	December 2007(?)	Rotational duty carrying water	17
16	DKBA	Thaton	October 2007	Attend a meeting; provide a soldier	18
17	DKBA	Thaton	November 2007	Deliver money	18
18	DKBA	Papun	October 2007	Travel permission	19
19	DKBA	Papun	October 2007	Attend a meeting	19
20	DKBA	Papun	November 2007	Attend a meeting	20
21	DKBA	Papun	November 2007	Attend a meeting	20
22	DKBA	Papun	November 2007	Provide porters	20
23	DKBA	Papun	October 2007	Travel permission	21
24	DKBA	Thaton	December 2007	Attend a meeting	21
25	DKBA	Thaton	December 2007	Deliver thatch shingles; restrictions on rice mills	22
26	DKBA	Thaton	October 2007	Attend a meeting	22
27	DKBA	Thaton	October 2007	Provide information	22
28	DKBA	Thaton	December 2007	Attend a meeting; provide betel nut	23
29	DKBA	Papun	December 2007	Attend a meeting	23
30	DKBA	Papun	December 2007	Attend a meeting	24
31	DKBA	Papun	October 2007	Do plantation work	24
32	DKBA	Papun	October 2007	Do plantation work	25
33	DKBA	Thaton	November 2007	Provide thatch shingles	25
34	DKBA	Thaton	November 2007	Provide thatch shingles	25
35	DKBA	Thaton	November 2007	Attend a meeting	26
36	DKBA	Thaton	October 2007	Travel permission	26
37	DKBA	Thaton	October 2007	Provide a soldier or money	27
38	DKBA	Thaton	October (?) 2007	Deliver teak	27
39	DKBA	Thaton	October 2007	Purchase and deliver a goat	27
40	DKBA	Thaton	November 2007	Attend a meeting	27
41	DKBA	Thaton	December 2007	Attend a meeting; road construction and clearance	28
42	DKBA	Papun	November 2007	Attend a meeting; provide money	28
43	DKBA	Papun	February 2008	Provide money	28
44	DKBA	Papun	February 2008	Provide thatch shingles	29
45	DKBA	Papun	February 2008	Provide money	29
46	DKBA	Papun	February 2008	Deliver rice and thatch shingles	29
47	DKBA	Papun	March 2008	Provide money	30
48	DKBA	Papun	October 2007	Do plantation work	30
49	DKBA	Thaton	December 2007	Provide a soldier or money	30
50	DKBA	Thaton	January 2008	Provide labourers for construction work	31
51	DKBA	Thaton	December 2007	Attend a meeting	31
52	DKBA	Thaton	January 2008	Attend a meeting	31
53	DKBA	Thaton	January 2008	Deliver bullock carts	32
54	DKBA	Thaton	January 2008	Attend a meeting	32
55	DKBA	Thaton	January 2008	Attend a meeting	33
56	DKBA	Thaton	December 2007	Hand over an escaped porter	33
57	DKBA	Thaton	January 2008	Attend a meeting	33
58	DKBA	Thaton	December 2007	Attend a meeting	33
59	DKBA	Thaton	November 2007	Attend a meeting	34

II. SPDC order documents

Order #1 (Papun District)

Date: 5.10.2007

Stamp:
Myanmar SPDC group
A--- police office / Papun township

To

Village head
B--- village

The resident C--- (D--- villager) who lives in the Gentleman's village sells beef from B--- village to A--- village. E--- who has a legal license came and informed [us about this]. When [you] receive this letter have him [C---] come at once to the camp.

Next time, if the Gentleman's villager kills a cow, never come and sell the leftover beef in A--- village. This is to inform you.

Sd.

Camp Commander
A--- police office
Papun township

Order #2 (Papun District)

Stamp:
#20 Infantry Battalion
Letter
Date.....
Battalion Headquarters

Date: 5/10/2007

To

Chairperson
F--- village

Subject: Request for help sending thatch shingles

For G--- camp, [we] request [your] assistance to send 200 thatch shingles so that [they] are able to arrive on 15.10.2007.

Notice: When the rotating duty of sending pork reaches [you], send 7 viss [11.41 kg. / 25.2 lb.] of pork.

Sd.

Spy
#20 Infantry Battalion

Order #3 (Papun District)

30.12.2007

To

Chairperson
H--- village

Subject: Request for help

Gentleman, due to my camp facing a food problem, please help by providing 60 *tha* [0.98 kg. / 2.16 lb.] or 50 *tha* [0.82 kg. / 1.8 lb.] of a chicken [to the army camp] for curry. You are informed.

Sd.

Camp Commander
I---

Send it with a sentry tomorrow.

Order #4 (Thaton District)

Date: 24.10.07

Stamp:
 Frontline #118
 Light Infantry Battalion
 Column ##
 Headquarters
 Letter
 Date

To

Chairperson (H--)

Subject: Collecting those people who use muskets

Regarding the above subject, [I] know that villagers are using muskets for hunting in the fields. As for the security situation, the village heads and villagers must take responsibility [for it]. Therefore, [this is] to inform you that the village head and the villagers who use muskets in the village must come to the camp on 25.10.07 without fail to register [the muskets].

Sd.
 Camp Commander
 I-- camp

Order #5 (Thaton District)

Date: 17.11.07

Stamp:
 Frontline #118
 Light Infantry Battalion
 Column ##
 Headquarters
 Letter
 Date

To/

Chairperson

H-- village

Subject: When the Chairperson himself gets this letter come promptly to give information.

Notice: It is important.

Sd.
 Column Commander (representative)
 LIB #118

Order #6 (Thaton District)

Date: 16.11.2008

Stamp:
 Frontline #118
 Light Infantry Battalion
 Column ##
 Headquarters
 Letter....
 Date.....

To

Chairperson

H-- village

Subject: Come and report information about the completion of the construction of the vehicle road and also about the present situation.

The Chairperson himself must go and check the area between J-- and H-- village and then send the information.

Sd.
16.11
Column Commander (representative)

Order #7 (Thaton District)

Date: 17.11.2007

Stamp:
Frontline #118
Light Infantry Battalion
Column ##
Headquarters
Letter....
Date.....

To
Chairperson
J--- village
Subject: When the Chairperson himself gets this letter come promptly to deliver the information.

Notice: It is important

Sd
Column Commander (representative)
LIB #118

Order #8 (Nyaunglebin District)

Stamp:
Village Peace and Development Council
Letter.....
Date.....
Kyauk Kyi township

To
Gentleman (K---)

Date: 18.12.2007

Subject: The issue of dismantling the huts in the farm fields
Reference: Township Peace and Development Council – 14-12-2007. Letter number ###/##-##/##-##

Regarding the above subject, from the day when [you] receive this letter the farmers in the village must dismantle the huts in their farm fields according to this order.

When the dismantling of the farm huts is finished, allow one villager to come promptly to inform the VPDC at L---. If the dismantling is not yet finished, it is your responsibility.

Sd.
Chairperson
Village Peace and Development Council
L--- village, Kyauk Kyi township

Order #9 (Thaton District)

Stamp:
Peace and Development council
M--- village tract
Letter.....
Date.....
Pa'an township

Date: 24.10.2007

To

U N---
(Chairperson) O---

From the Gentleman's village, for the (52nd) anniversary of State day, collect (100,000) one hundred thousand kyat [approx. US \$84] in cash and come and give it to the secretary on 26.10.2007 without fail. This is to inform you.

The order is from the [VPDC] chairperson.

Sd.
Member
Peace and Development Council
M--- village tract/ Pa'an township

The VPDC Chairperson stationed at M--- camp, issued this same letter to all villages in M--- village tract and in Pa'an township, Thaton District.

Order #10 (Thaton District)

To

Chairperson
N--- village

14.11.2007

Subject: The announcement about coming to examine the construction of the village roads.

Regarding the above subject, the Gentleman's village must take responsibility for [the clearance and repair of] the vehicle road from O--- to P---. It must be done by 15.11.2007. [We] will come to examine it after it has been done. This is to inform you.

Sd.
14.11.2007
Battalion Commander
Frontline #9 Light Infantry Battalion

Notice

When [you] receive this letter, quickly clear the fallen down trees and bamboo poles on the road. If the chairperson's village is finished later than other villages, it is the responsibility of the village chairperson.

In compliance with this order document, 80 villagers including both men and women went to clear the vehicle road and also to repair a bridge on November 16th and 17th 2007. These villagers have had to do this road clearance and repair twice annually without any form of payment.

Order #11 (Thaton District)

To

Chairperson
Q--- village

Date: 30.11.07

Subject: Announcement for providing 50 bamboo poles

Regarding the above subject, provide 50 bamboo poles for A--- army camp. Send [them] to G--- army camp on (3.12.2007) without fail. This is to inform you.

Stamp: #20 Infantry Battalion Battalion Headquarter Letter..... Date.....
--

Sd.
Intelligence
#20 Infantry Battalion

In order to comply with this order for 50 bamboo poles, the village head requested four villagers to cut down the necessary bamboo poles and keep them beside the vehicle road. These villagers started cutting the bamboo poles on December 2nd 2007. They received no payment for this work.

Order #12 (Thaton District)

To

U Kaung (chairperson)
Q--- village

Date: 8.12.2007

Subject: Announcement about deploying landmines

Regarding the above subject, the area of Frontline #20 Infantry Battalion in Papun, both on the right-hand side and left-hand side and the surrounding area is deployed with our anti-personal landmines and unexploded landmines. This is to let you know that the villagers are not to travel around the mined area.

Stamp: #20, Infantry Battalion Battalion Headquarter Letter..... Date.....

Sd.
Intelligence
#20 Infantry Battalion

An officer of IB #20 issued this order letter to every village in the area at the time when the Burma Army was sending out rations to Frontline camps.

Order #13 (Toung00 District)

Date: 16/1/2008

To

MOC ## commander Cj---
(##) Base Military Operation Command Headquarters
Ci---

Subject: Informing [you] to allow [a villager] to go to Toungoo town

Regarding the above subject, give permission to R---, resident of S--- village, section (1), [son of] (Father) U T---, whose ID is still being processed, to go shopping from Ae--- to Toungoo. This is to inform you.

Motorcycle #: _____
Model: _____
Visitor's residence: his own house
Return date: 20.1.08

Stamp:
 Letter #.....
 Date.....
 Than Daung township
 Ae--- tract
 Village Peace and Development Council

Chairperson
 Registrar
 Ae---

Stamp:
 Letter # just allow [him] to go for one time
 Date: 20.1.08
 Military Operation Command Headquarters
 #10, Base Military Operation Command Headquarters

Sd
 15/1/08
 As the order from Military Command
 Commander
 Ae---
 Village Peace and Development Council
 Ae--- tract – Than Daung

Order #14 (Thaton District)

Stamp
 Frontline #34
 Infantry Battalion
 Column ##
 Letter....
 Date....

Chairperson, secretary
 U---

Date: 27-4-2008

Subject: Invitation for a meeting

Regarding the above subject, the chairperson or secretary must come Friday to the weekly meeting that we always hold at 9 o'clock in the morning without fail. If [you] are late or fail to attend the meeting, [you] will be fined to provide 1 *viss* [1.63 kg. / 3.6 lb.] of chicken.

1 *viss* of chicken which has been fined [from those who do not attend] will be cooked for the chairperson[s] who attends the meeting.

Notice: If the chairperson / secretary are not free, [you] can send your representative to come.

Sd
 Deputy Battalion Commander
 Battalion Commander (representative)

Order #15 (Thaton District)**The timetable for the dry season rotation of water carrying**

No	Month	Starting date	Ending date	Village name	Notice
1.	January	1.1.08	6.1.08	V---	
2.	"	7.1.08	12.1.08	W---	
3.	"	13.1.08	14.1.08	X---	
4.	"	15.1.08	18.1.08	Y---	
5.	"	19.1.08	24.1.08	Z---	
6.	"	25.1.08	30.1.08	Aa--	
7.	February	31.1.08	5.2.08	Ab--	
8.	"	6.2.08	11.2.08	B--	
9.	"	12.2.08	17.2.08	Ac--	
10.	"	18.2.08	23.2.08	W---	
11.	"	24.2.08	25.2.08	X---	
12.	"	26.2.08	29.2.08	Ad--	
13.	March	1.3.08	6.3.08	Z---	
14.	"	7.3.08	12.3.08	Aa--	
15.	"	13.3.08	18.3.08	Ab--	
16.	"	19.3.08	24.3.08	B--	
17.	"	25.3.08	30.3.08	Ac--	
18.	April	31.3.08	5.4.08	W---	
19.	"	6.4.08	7.4.08	X---	
20.	"	8.4.08	11.4.08	Ad--	
21.	"	12.4.08	17.4.08	Z---	
22.	"	18.4.08	23.4.08	Aa--	
23.	"	24.4.08	29.4.08	Ab--	
24.	May	30.4.08	5.5.08	B--	
25.	"	6.5.08	11.5.08	Ac--	
26.	"	12.5.08	17.5.08	W---	
27.	"	18.5.08	19.5.08	X---	
28.	"	19.5.08	23.5.08	Y---	
29.	"	24.5.08	29.5.08	Z---	
30.	May + June	30.5.08	4.6.08	Aa--	
31.	June	5.6.08	10.6.08	Ab--	
32.	"	11.6.08	16.6.08	B--	
33.	"	17.6.08	22.6.08	Ac--	
34.	"	23.6.08	28.6.08	W---	
35.	"	29.6.08	30.6.08	X---	

Notice: If [anyone] is absent for a day, [they] will have to pay a daily fine of (5000) [kyat (US \$4.20)].

Although the date of issue for this order is not clear, it was likely issued in December 2007 just prior to the first rotation of water carriers which began on January 1st 2008. SPDC officials at A--- village tract order local villagers to collect and deliver water to the SPDC Army camp every year during the dry season. Each village must provide a bullock cart and each cart must remain at the army camp and carry out the duty of carrying water for a period of two to seven days. Following each shift, a subsequent village must send labourers to carry out the water carrying duty. If any village does not provide a bullock cart, the local SPDC authorities fine that village 5,000 kyat [US \$4.20] as explained at the bottom of the above order.

III. DKBA order documents

Order #16 (Thaton District)

Date: 10.10.2007

To
Chairperson Af---

Come to meet U Ag--- at Ah--- camp. It is an urgent issue.

Brigade #333
Battalion ##, Deputy Battalion
Commander
Ah--- Camp

10.10.2007
(-- --) Saw Ai---
Sd.
Dee Kay Bee Ay

When the village head arrived at the DKBA's Ah--- camp, the local DKBA commander informed him that his village was required to provide one person to serve as a soldier. The DKBA commander reportedly said, "Your village has provided a villager to be a KNU soldier so you must give me one as well. If you cannot, then you must pay 100,000 kyat [approx. US \$84]. I don't think the villagers will come, so it's better to collect the money. After you collect the money come and give it to me promptly. I will give you just 25 days time."

Order #17 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
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8.11.2007

To
Urgent issue
To let you know with a few words

When [you] receive this letter promptly send the money. Don't waste your time. The other villages have already sent it. Only your village is left.

Aj--- village
Ak---
Al--- camp
Ag---
Sd.
8.11.2007

The DKBA commander who issued this order letter had previously demanded that each village in his area of operation deliver 1,000,000 kyat [US \$840.34] in cash. However, the village head of Aj--- sent only 800,000 kyat [US \$672.27] on November 12th – four days after this order document was sent. The village head informed the issuing officer that although his village had tried to gather the specified amount, they were unable to come up with the total amount required and some households did not even have enough food to eat.

Order #18 (Papun District)

<p align="center">Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>

Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Date: 17 / 10 / 2007

To

Village heads
E--- village

Subject: The issue to giving permission for the public servants to take rest

1. Regarding the above subject, the public servants that the village heads sent to (Dee Kay Bee Ay) Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion have finished carrying out their duty successfully.

2. Therefore, those public servants, for the celebration of the donation festival in their village, starting from the 7th day of the waxing moon of Tha Tin Kyaut [one of the months in the Burmese calendar] to the 3rd day of the waning moon of Tha Tin Kyaut, give them permission to return to their native village.

Notice: On the 5th day of the waning moon of Tha Tin Kyaut, ask them to arrive at Am--- headquarters.

Distribution - Battalion Commander

Notice: On the 3rd day of the waning moon of Tha Tin Kyaut start to leave – on the 4th day arrive at A--- -- on the 5th day [they] must arrive at Am---.

Sd.
17-10-07
Office Manager (-- --)
Major, Ap---
K' Hsaw Wa Battalion
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Copy:

Captain (Aq---) A--- Frontline office
Company (3) commander - Ar--- camp
Company (2) commander - As--- camp
Office Copy

Order #19 (Papun District)

<p align="center">Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>

Date: 28.10.07

To

B--- village head
With much respect for each other

Writing to let you know with a few words, when [you] receive this letter do not delay, come immediately.

-- -- --
-- / -- . --
Sd.

Order #20 (Papun District)

Stamp:
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

To our Karen Buddhist Army

Date: 3/11/2007

To
Village head
B---

Writing to let you know

Subject: When [you] receive this letter, go to meet with your porters at Ch--- army camp at once. Your porters want to see you.

After receiving [the letter] comply with it.

From

Sd.
A--- Frontline office

Order #21 (Papun District)

Stamp:
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

Date: 7.11.07

To/ B--- village head

With much respect

Subject: Writing to let you know with a few words that when [you] receive this letter come on 9.11.07 to meet with your porters at Am--- as soon as you can. Inform us whether or not you will come.

You are informed
That's all – signed

Sd.
7.11.07
A---
Frontline office

Order #22 (Papun District)

Stamp:
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

Date: 7.11.07

To/ An---
Village head

With respect

Subject: To let you to know with a few words that when [you] receive this letter, [then] on 9-11-07 send porters as soon as you can. Inform [me] if you send [them] or not.

You are informed
with a few words
Signed
Sd.
7-11-07

A---
Frontline office

Order #23 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A.</p>

Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Date: 17/10/2007

To/
Village heads
Ao--- village

Subject: The issue of giving permission for the public servants to take rest

1. Regarding the above subject, the public servants that the village heads sent to Dee Kay Bee Ay Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion have finished carrying out their duty successfully.
2. Therefore, the public servants, for the celebration of the donation festival in their village from the 2nd day of the waxing moon of Tha Tin Kyaut to the 3rd day of the waning moon of Tha Tin Kyaut have permission to return to their village.

Notice: On the 5th day of the waning moon of Tha Tin Kyaut, make them come to Am--- headquarters.

Distribution - Battalion Commander

Sd.
17-10-07
Office Manager (-- --)
Major Ap---
Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Copy:

Captain (Aq---) A--- Frontline office
Company (3) commander – Ar--- camp
Company (2) commander – As--- camp
Office Copy

Notice: On the 3rd day of the waning moon of Tha Tin Kyaut – [the public servants] must start to leave; on the 4th day [they] must arrive at A--- – on the 5th day [they] must arrive at Am---.

Order #24 (Thaton District)

To/

Date: 15.12.2007

Progressive Buddhist Karen National Association

Respectfully writing to inform the Chairperson and village head [that] when [you] receive this letter, in order to have an important discussion, come to I--- camp without fail. This is to inform you.

At-- camp
Dee Kay Bee Ay
Lieutenant Au---

This order, at first sight, appears to be written to the Progressive Buddhist Karen National Association (the DKBA), but it is actually from the DKBA. The use at the start of letters of the Burmese word for 'To' is a

convention adopted from English. In this case no recipient was listed after 'To' and the words 'Progressive Buddhist Karen National Association' are a heading rather than the addressee.

Order #25 (Thaton District)

Stamp:
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

29.12.2007

To

Ay--- / Aw--- / Ax---

All the villages and village heads

[Writing to you] with love, individual villages must help me with 500 thatch shingles for my army [camp] by sending [the shingles] to the Ay--- village head.

In each village, only one Hala [brand] rice mill will be allowed to exist. If there is more than one, they will be taken away and [we] will take action.

Notice:

[This is] the duty commander's order

That's all

Sd.
19/12
Big Commander
Duty Commander
Regional Army
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #26 (Thaton District)

Stamp:
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

Date: 28.10.07

To

Ay--- village head

Respectfully

Subject: Just to let you to know with a few words that when [you] receive my letter, come to meet me today at any time when you are free. Come together with the messenger.

-- -- / -- / -- --
Sd.

Order #27 (Thaton District)

Stamp:
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

1.10.2007

To

Ay--- village

Village head

Starting from 1/10/07, [I] inform you of the upper leader's order that for village development, in regards to the smuggling of cattle and buffalo whether many or few [animals] enter and cross through your area and village, you must promptly inform me so that [I] know the names of the traders and the number of animals.

Notice:

[Against] those people who do not follow the order, action will be taken.

That's all

Sd.
1/10
Commander
Association Department
Dee Kay Bee Ay
Area Duty Commander
#333 Association Department
From/ Saw Az---'s father
Ba--- village

Order #28 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

4.12.07

To

Bb---'s father

When [you] receive this letter, come and meet me at Bc---. Bring along the Bd--- village head, Be--- village head, Bf--- village head, Aw---, Bg---, H--- and all of the village heads around there. I have to stay here all the time and will not go anywhere.

Notice:

Bring along betel nut and get it from my mother.

That's all

Your younger brother

Bh---'s father
Adjutant area

In this case, it appears the order has been written by a scribe, who is himself carrying out forced labour in a DKBA army camp. When he was ordered to write this order letter to his own village, he took the opportunity to tack on a request to a fellow villager to bring him betel nut from his mother.

Order #29 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
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Date: 12.11.2007

To

Chairperson
Bi--- village

[As] the representative of the deputy commander, [I write] that [you] must come for a meeting with the new commander on the day of 14.11.2007 at 10:00 o'clock at the edge of the village at U Bj---'s house without fail. [You] are informed.

Sd.

Saw Bj--- (Duty person)
 Papun – Frontline office
 Dee Kay Bee Ay

The DKBA officer issued this letter in order to conduct a meeting to introduce village heads to the new DKBA deputy battalion commander who replaced the former deputy battalion commander who had recently died. At the introduction meeting, the new deputy battalion commander told the assembled village heads that the Karen people had to be united and work together in the future.

Order #30 (Papun District)

Date: 3.12.2007

To

Chairperson
 Bi--- village

In order to hold an emergency meeting on the day of 5.12.2007, Wednesday at 10:00 o'clock, come to the Dee Kay Bee Ay Frontline office which is located at Bk--- monastery. You are informed

Notice

If [you] do not arrive on time, it is the Chairperson's responsibility.

Sd.

Saw Bj--- (representative)
 Papun – Frontline office
 Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #31 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: 20.10.2007

To

Village head
 Bl---

The issue of weeding the cashew plantation

In order to weed the cashew plantation at the edge of the village, come to Bl--- village with 15 people on Wednesday 22.10.2007. This is to inform you.

Sd.

Saw Bj--- (representative)
 Papun – Frontline office
 Dee Kay Bee Ay

Although the issuing officer demanded that the village head send 15 people to weed the DKBA cashew plantation on October 22nd 2007, the village head sent only 13 villagers to do the forced labour on October 24th – two days after the required work date.

Order #32 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: 20.10.2007

To
Chairperson
Bi--- village

The issue of weeding the cashew plantation

In order to weed the cashew plantation at the edge of the village, on 22.10.2007 come along with 5 people to the edge of the village. This is to inform you.

Sd.
Saw Bj--- (representative)
Papun – Frontline office
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #33 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: 30th.Nov.2007

To
Bm--- village
Chairperson

Dee Kay Bee Ay families which are based in your village need roofing shingles for [rebuilding] the roofs of their homes. Send 2,000 thatch shingles on 1/1/2008 to Brigade #333, Battalion ## at Bn--- camp without fail. This is to inform you.

Sd.
Battalion Captain
Battalion ##
Dee Kay Bee Ay

The DKBA commander who issued this order has demanded 2,000 thatch shingles from all villages in Thaton District for the families of his soldiers annually. In this case, villages located far from his camp were ordered to send money instead.

Order #34 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: November 30th 2007

To
Bo--- Village
Chairperson

Dee Kay Bee Ay families which are based in your village need roofing shingles for [rebuilding] the roofs of their homes. Send 2000 thatch shingles on 1/1/2008 to Brigade #333, Battalion ## at Bn--- camp without fail. This is to inform you.

Sd.
Battalion Captain
Battalion ##
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #35 (Thaton District)

To

Chairperson [of] Bp---

Come to P--- camp on (3.11.2007). You are informed.

Bq--
P--- camp

The villager who had received this order letter informed KHRG that he did not immediately go to meet with the DKBA authorities, as demanded.

Order #36 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
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Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Date: 17.10.2007

To

Village heads
Q--- villageSubject: The issue of allowing the public servants to take rest

1. Regarding the above subject, the public servants that the village heads sent to Dee Kay Bee Ay Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion have finished carrying out their duty successfully.
2. Therefore, those people are allowed to go back to their village for the donation festival. They are given permission starting from the 7th day of the waning moon of Tha Tin Kyaut until the 3rd day of the waxing moon of Tha Tin Kyaut.

Notice: Let them come back to Am--- headquarters on the 5th day of the waxing moon of Tha Din Kyo.

Distributed by: Battalion Commander

Notice: They must start leaving on the 3rd day of Tha Tin Kyaut, arrive at A--- on the 4th day of Tha Tin Kyaut, and on the 5th day arrive at Am---.

Sd.
17.10.07
Officer (-- --)
Major Ap---
Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion
Dee Kay Bee Ay

The DKBA sent this letter in regards to those serving as 'public servants'. These are villagers who must serve with DKBA authorities for specified periods. Those villages unable to provide people to serve as 'public servants' must pay money instead.

Order #37 (Thaton District)

Stamp:
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

Date: 10.21.2007

To
Ag--- [wants to] to let you to know that on 10/-/- or 28/-/- [he] must receive money and people. If on 28/-/- [he] has not received anything yet, he himself will come to collect it.

He orders [me] to let you know
Urgent order

From
Ah--- camp
--/ -- Ag---
Sd.
Br---, Bs---, Bt---

The DKBA issued this order to demand one person from each village to serve as a DKBA soldier. The villagers dared not comply and therefore had to give money instead. Individual villages had to pay 600,000 kyat (US \$504.20). As there were three villages, the DKBA commander received 1,800,000 kyat (US \$1,512.61). The money was sent to him on October 27th 2007.

Order #38 (Thaton District)

To
Chairperson [of] Bo---
The teak wood has not yet been sent to P--- camp. This is to inform [you] to send the wood.

Notice: Pass this information to Bp--- [village] as well.

Sd.
Bq---

Order #39 (Thaton District)

To
Chairperson [of] Bo---
Bq--- who is based in P--- [army] camp informs [you] to buy a goat that costs 25,000 kyat [approx. US \$21] and send it. It must be a male goat.

Bq---
P--- camp

In compliance with this order document, the village head purchased one male goat and sent it to the DKBA camp on October 10th 2007.

Order #40 (Thaton District)

To
Chairperson [of] Bo---
Come to P--- camp on 3.11.2007.

Bq---
P--- camp

Order #41 (Thaton District)

To

Chairperson [of] Bp---
Come to P--- camp on (2.12.07).

Bq---
P--- camp

The local DKBA authorities who sent this order informed the village head when he arrived at the DKBA camp that he was to arrange for his villagers to clear a local vehicle road and repair damage incurred during the rainy season. The village head arranged for his villagers to conduct this work on December 6th and 7th 2007. The post-rainy season forced and uncompensated reparation and clearing of vehicle roads is an annual task imposed on villagers in Karen State which must be completed before army units can send their rations to frontline camps.

Order #42 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: 11.1.08

Progressive Karen National Army

To

Chairperson [of] Bu---

The reason is to let you to know through this letter.

On Monday 14.1.08 at 11 o'clock come to Bv--- monastery for a discussion and bring along the public servant's salary. This is to inform you.

Notice

The chairperson himself must definitely come.

Sd.

11.1.08

Civil servant officer in-charge
Dee Kay Bee Ay
Papun Frontline office, Papun town

Order #43 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: 8.2.08

Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army

To Chairperson [of] Bu--- village

The reason is to let you to know through this letter. The reason is for collecting the salary for the public servants for the 2nd month. The final date [to pay the money] is 15.2.08 and send it to U Bw---. This is to inform you.

Sd.

8.2.08

Public servant officer in-charge
Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion
Frontline office Papun township
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #44 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: 18.2.08

Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army

To Chairperson [of] Bu---. The reason is to let [you] know through this letter. The reason is that the time is up for individual households to provide 50 thatch shingles for one year [which] by the end of the full moon of Ta Paung are to be sent to Bx---'s house. This is to inform you.

Sd.
Deputy Battalion Commander
Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion
Frontline Papun
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #45 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: 8.2.08

Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army

To Chairperson [of] By---

The reason is to let [you] know through this letter. The reason is to collect the salary for the public servants for the 2nd month. On 15.2.08 at the latest send it to U Bw---. This is to inform you.

Sd.
8.2.08
Public servant officer in-charge
Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion
Frontline office Papun town
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #46 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Date: 18.2.08

Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army

To Chairperson [of] Bz--- [this is to] let [you] know through this letter. The reason is that the time is up to send a big sack of rice and 50 thatch shingles for one year. The latest date for sending it is at the end of the full moon of Ta Paung and send it to Bx---'s house. This is to inform you.

Sd.
18.2.08
Deputy Battalion Commander
Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion
Frontline office Papun town
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #47 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>
--

Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army

Date: 3.3.08

To Chairperson [of] Bz--- [this is to] let [you] know through this letter. The reason is to collect the salary for the public servants for the 3rd month and the final date is on 15.3.08. Send it to U Ca---. This is to inform you.

Notice: The final date is this week so bring the amount of money for 3 months. You are informed.

Sd.
3.3.08
Public servant officer in-charge
Gk'Hsaw Wah Battalion
Frontline Papun town
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #48 (Papun District)

<p>Stamp: Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A Progressive Buddhist Karen National Army</p>

Date: 20.10.2007

To
Village head
Bz--- village

The issue of weeding the cashew plantation

To weed the cashew plantation located at the edge of the village, there are 15 people from Bz--- village [who] must come on 22.10.07, on Tuesday. This is to inform you.

Sd.
20.10.07
Saw Bj--- (officer in-charge)
Frontline office Papun town
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #49 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>

Date: 10.12.2007

To
Ag--- orders [me] to let you know that between the day of the 10th and 28th people and money must be received. If [these] are not received on the date of 28th, [he] will go and collect those things by himself.

He orders [me] to let you know
Urgent order

Ah--- camp
Operation Commander
Ag---
Sd.
Br---, Bs---, Bt---

See note under order #37 for further explanation regarding this order.

Order #50 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>

Date: 1.2.28

Bt--- chairperson

To let you to know through this letter

Cb--- monastery road is not yet complete. Provide more people for *loh ah pay* [forced labour; our italics]. One person from each house is to come and help with it. This is to inform you.

Arrived on 2.2.28
The representative of Cb---
Sd.

DKBA soldiers ordered one person from each house to construct the monastery at Cb---. For this work local villagers had to collect and deliver sand, stones, brick and other materials. The DKBA continued to demand uncompensated labourers until monastery construction was completed on February 20th 2008. In this order letter the DKBA authorities are demanding labourers to finish the construction of the road leading to the monastery.

Order #51 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>

Date: 27.12.2007

To

Cc---, B---

Subject: To let [you] know with a few words

If you get my letter, do not delay. Come promptly with the messenger when [you] receive the letter.

It's an urgent case

From
--/ --/ --
-- / --

Order #52 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>

Date: 1/8/2008

--- / -- / --

To/ B--- chairperson

With respect
Writing to let you know, if you receive my letter on 9/1/ [September 1st] come to meet me at the As---
chairperson's house. Follow [according to this order] promptly.

--- --/ -- / --
-- / -- (##) -- / -- / --
Cd---

Order #53 (Thaton District)

Stamp
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

Date: 22.1.08

To/ B--- village
Village head

With respect to each other

Subject: To let you know that when [you] receive my letter, help me with 2 bullock carts. Send them to the
battalion commander Ce--- at 20:00 hours. Ce--- ordered Cf---'s mother's younger brother named (Cg---) to
arrange it for him. You can ask him about it. When [you] receive [this letter] follow [the order] promptly.

That's all, signed your younger brother Ch---
A---
Frontline office
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #54 (Thaton District)

Stamp
Karen Buddhist Army
D.K.B.A

Date: 27.1.08

To/ B--- village
Village head

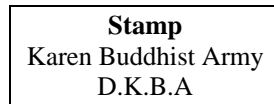
With respect to each other

Subject: To let you to know that when [you] receive my letter, do really come to meet me. When [you] receive
[the order letter] follow it.

That's all with a few words

Sd.
27.1.08
A---
Frontline office
Dee Kay Bee Ay

Order #55 (Thaton District)



10.1.2008

Gk'Hsaw Wah / -- --

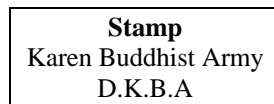
B--- chairperson

To let you to know with respect

When [you] receive my letter, on 13.1.2008, come to meet me at the As--- chairperson's house. Follow [the order letter] when [you] receive [it].

As--- camp, Commander Cd---

Order #56 (Thaton District)



Date: 27.12.2007

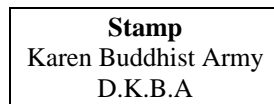
To

Ce--- B--- village head

Subject: What did you do with the escaped porter? Anyway, when the letter arrives [to you], come to meet me promptly. If you don't give [the porter to] me, I will report it to the upper leader. Come promptly when [you] receive the letter.

With a few words
Sd.

Order #57 (Thaton District)



Date: 10/1/2008

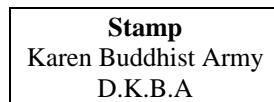
----- / ----

Cf--- chairperson

To let you know with respect, when [you] receive my letter, on 13.1.2008, come to meet me at the As--- chairperson's house. Follow [the order letter] promptly.

As--- camp
Commander Cd---

Order #58 (Thaton District)



Date: 30/12/2007

----- / ----

To/ B--- chairperson

With respect to each other

Writing to let you know that when [you] receive my letter, on 1/1/- [January 1st], come to meet me at the As--- chairperson's house. Follow [the order letter] promptly. Do not delay. Come promptly.

----- / ----
-- / -- (##) -- / -- / --
Cd---

Order #59 (Thaton District)

<p>Stamp Karen Buddhist Army D.K.B.A</p>

Date: 19.11.2007

To

Chairperson B---

When [you] receive my letter, arrange a porter and come to send him promptly tomorrow. Now my commander orders me to let Cg--- go back. After he leaves [here] for a day, send your man to Am--- promptly. My battalion commander asks me to write to let you know about it. Do not delay. When [you] receive [the order letter] follow [it] promptly. It is an urgent case.

Sd.
19.11.2007