



**Karen National Union**  
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[www.knuhq.org](http://www.knuhq.org)

## **KNU Statement on the Construction of a New Illegal Casino Town in Karen State**

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Foreign criminals who escaped from law enforcement agencies in Cambodia, have planned and are implementing new city construction projects in order to operate illegal gambling activities in the Mor Hto Talay area of Karen State.

The groundbreaking ceremony of the new city project in Mor Hto Talay area, south of Myawady City was held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020. Saw Roger Khin attended the ceremony as a witness on behalf of the local landowners and the public, which was initially understood to be the signing of a land lease contract for the start of business between Trans-Asia International Holding Group (Thailand) Co., part of Huanya International Holding Group. Ltd and Mu-La-Ei Alin Company Limited, a Karen local company.

However, at the event, a sign was posted by the Company saying "**Signing Ceremony for Cooperation between KNU and Huanya International Holdings Group**". This was not in accordance with what Saw Roger Khin, local landowners and the public were told and understood, which led to the public's misunderstanding of Saw Roger Khin, Heads of the Defense Department and one of the members of KNU and KNU's Central Executive Committee.

Starting from the six (6) month period when the construction work started, "Mu-La-Ei Alin Company Limited had a continuous dispute with "Trans-Asia International Holding Group (Thailand) Co. Ltd, (a subsidiary of Huanya International Holdings Group), based in Thailand. Mu-La-Ei Alin Company Limited withdrew from the project in 2022. In its place, another local company (Trust Star Com. Ltd) replaced them at the end of 2022.

However, on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2023, a Thai based news agency reported that Saw Roger Khin had granted a permit to Huanya International Holdings Group to do business. Because of this report, misunderstandings about KNU have appeared once again.

It is officially announced that KNU has no involvement in any such projects or any other illegal gambling and financial service activities, including other activities that are related to the crimes, which are not accepted in Karen State and by the KNU.

Any KNU member is forbidden to engage in business activities related to such crimes and in any activities that lead to aiding and abetting.

We strongly believe that any gambling business that comes to Karen State will only bring serious social problems and increase the crime rate in the region. The KNU wants to eliminate gambling businesses that are associated with illegal criminal activities in Karen State.

As the KNU, we will actively cooperate with international organisations, either with law enforcement organisations or any organisations, including civil organisations in order to eliminate illegal criminal activities, reducing gambling activities in Karen State and the establishment of a federal democracy country. It is announced that efforts are being made for the rule of law.

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