



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

---

## **KNU President Gen. Mutu Say Poe's Felicitation Letter Sent on 73<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of Kawthoolei Day**

June 14, 2022

**Dear Patriot Leaders, Military Personnel and All Karen Nationals,**

Today, June 14 is the anniversary of **Kawthoolei Day**. On June 14, 1949, meeting of the administrative and military officials was held in Toungoo Town. At the meeting, the situations of the Karen Revolution were reviewed and a conclusion was reached that the Kawthoolei government and administrative structures had to be set up, and accordingly the Kawthoolei government was established. The day was officially designated as the Kawthoolei Day. Moreover, for the future generations to honor and celebrate Kawthoolei Day, the day has been recognized as a historic day.

The Kawthoolei Day is a day that has highlighted the historical passage and experiences our Karen national leaders had passed through. At the start of the revolutionary armed struggle, the Karen forces were able to occupy many villages and towns, one after another. However, the revolution was weak in the civil administrative sector. As a government, it could not entirely have effectively organized civil administration and management for the many villages and towns. Though some civil society groups had requested for civil administrative officials for villages and towns administration and management, the revolution was totally unable to fulfil the request. As some leaders viewed such needs as emergencies, an emergency meeting was held on January 14, 1949, in Toungoo Town, and the Kawthoolei government was formed on the same day, and that day was designated as **Kawthoolei Day**.

In like manner also, President Saw Ba U Gyi and some leaders had realized the need to reform the KNU civil administrative and the defense sectors, such as the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO). For that reason, under the leadership of President Saw Ba U Gyi, the Papun Congress was held from July 17 to 19, 1950.

At that Congress, Gen. Sankay proposed for reform of the constitutional structure of the KNU. Gen. Min Maung and Padoh Laurel Poekee also proposed respectively for the reform of the KNDO and the civil administrative sector. However, as some leaders strongly opposed the proposals, the Congress was unable to adopt the proposals for the reform of the KNU constitutional structure and civil administration and management.

The fact of the matter was that in those days, some leaders in dominant position were under influence of the thinking in currency that the civil administrative tasks and management, which would be extra undertakings and burden should not be undertaken,

during the revolutionary period. A civil governance like in an established country cannot be set up during the period of revolution. The predominant views and assumptions at the time were that the civil administrative tasks and management were extra burdens that would be a hindrance to the speedy success and early victory of the revolution. For that reason, the military was given the power, in the belief that the military only had to be given power, and military administration was established.

In such a situation, President Saw Ba U Gyi who had to issue military directives had no power any longer to do so. All in leadership positions were given military ranks and all the mandates for governance were put in the hands of the military, and the military administration and dominance were founded. After the establishment of the military administration, some junior military officers no longer acquired the advice and guidance of senior officers. They even looked down upon their own senior officers and those responsible for the civil administration. There was no longer respect for political directives. Eventually, they gave priority to and worked only for their own self-interest, and engaged in anti-mass activities. For that reason, some people became demoralized and abandoned the revolution.

**Dear Patriot Leaders, Military Personnel and All Karen Nationals,**

There are two points for us to learn as a lesson from the history of Kawthoolei administration and reformation concomitant to the **Kawthoolei Day**, which is related to the history of the Karen people's revolution. The first point concerns the acquirement of political directives and guidance, and the second point concerns the skills and knowledge of civil management.

The failure of those who are in armed struggle to respect and follow the political leadership and guidance, could commit anti-mass activities, and would not get support of the people. Similarly, if members of the revolution lack the skills and knowledge of civil management, there could be no victory for the revolution. Members of revolution in some countries had received the people's best support during the entire length of the revolution, but when they took part in civil administration, management and governance, after the victory of the revolution, they no longer received the support of the people like before.

For that reason, on the occasion of the anniversary of **Kawthoolei Day**, on the day of which **Kawthoolei Government** was established, the lessons we have to learn are that, even during the time of the revolution, we should not forget the political guidance and teachings, civil management, and the work of producing future youth leaders. In conclusion, I would like to urge for making the effort for self-determination, and producing new generation youth leaders by training them for political skills and knowledge, and the civil management, which are progressing in step with the advancing time.

Thank You,

President  
Karen National Union  
Supreme Headquarters