

Two Burmese soldiers were killed and three were injured during two attacks on an Election Commission convoy by Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) troops near Three Pagodas Pass. The convoy was transporting ballot boxes from Kyar Inn Seik Gyi, according to Karen sources.

The junta troops, led by Col. Myo Myint Aung, commander of Infantry Battalion 405, were providing security for the convoy while enroute to Three Pagodas Pass. The convey was attacked on both Tuesday and Thursday.

“Our guerrilla troops attacked them twice. Two were killed and three were wounded in the first attack. In the second attack, we do not know how many were killed,” said Capt. Hten Nay of KNLA Brigade 6.

He said the first attack occurred at 10:45 a.m. between Aplong and Myine Thayar villages. Two township election commissioners traveled with the convoy, which was also carrying new national flags. It was not known if they suffered injuries.

Clashes between the KNLA and Burmese troops is a regular occurrence in the area near Three Pagodas Pass, a stronghold of armed ethnic groups including the KNLA, the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA).

Local residents have expressed fear that more attacks will break out as the Nov. 7 election nears. Several bombings occurred in the area during August.

The regime plans to operate six polling stations in Three Pagodas Pass to serve more than 8,000 potential voters. During the past month, the junta has tighten security in the town and reenforced troops.

The NMSP and DKBA have all rejected the junta's order to transform their troops in a border guard force.