More than 20 soldiers from a Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA) splinter group surrendered to the Burma Army on Saturday, a week after their leader joined an ethnic armed group coalition operating in northern Shan State known as the Northern Alliance, said state-run media.

According to a Myanmar News Agency report on Sunday, 23 members of the DKBA splinter group—also known as the Klo Htoo Baw Karen Organization (KKO)—disagreed with KKO leader Col. San Aung and wanted to live peacefully.

The group was led by a soldier named Soe Soe, who contacted a local Burma Army unit for their surrender.

“23 members of the KKO of Saw Hsan Aung [Col. San Aung] returned to the legal fold bringing along with them arms and ammunition to Hlaingbwe Township, Kayin [Karen] State, yesterday [Saturday],” read the report.

The defected DKBA splinter members brought “eight assorted weapons, 149 rounds of bullets, eight magazines, three bombs, and seven mines.”

Col. San Aung recently told The Irrawaddy that seven members of his troop surrendered to the Burma Army earlier this month.

He joined the Northern Alliance in northern Shan State after losing bases in Karen State in battles with Burma Army and the Border Guard Force in October and November last year.
The Northern Alliance is comprised of four ethnic armed organizations—the Kachin Independence Army, the Ta’ang National Liberation Army, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army, and the Arakan Army—and is still engaged in fighting with the Burma Army.

The DKBA splinter group led by Col. San Aung has been fighting the Burma Army in Myaing Gyi Nyu and Mae Tha Waw regions of Pa-an District in southern Karen State and on the Asia Highway road in Myawaddy Township in October and November last year in which about 5000 villagers were displaced.