



Situation Update by Shan Human Rights Foundation

March 04, 2015

Shooting, killing and torture of civilians by Burma Army during Kokang conflict

Interviews by SHRF provide evidence that during the current conflict in the Kokang area, Burma Army soldiers have been indiscriminately shooting at civilians, causing injury and death; have used civilians as hostages for ambush; and have also tortured civilians on suspicion of supporting the Kokang armed resistance group.

We have documented the following cases:

Feb 13, 2015 – approx 4 pm	Shooting and injury of two women, one aged 76 and one aged 47, who were riding in a car through Laogai
Feb 13, 2015 – approx 6 pm	Shooting and killing of a married couple - wife aged 48 and husband aged 33 – who were riding their motorcycle through Laogai
Feb 13, 2015 – night-time	Villagers used as hostages to try and ambush Kokang soldiers
Feb 19, 2015 – approx 3 pm	Shooting and injury of a 61-year-old farmer in a village 6 miles south of Laogai
Feb 19-20, 2015	Torture of four male villagers at the main Burma Army base in Laogai; one has disappeared

Witnesses also described seeing other bodies of civilians lying in the street in Laogai, some with their hands tied, indicating that the scale of the killings is greater than we have documented.

SHRF strongly condemns these attacks and abuses against civilians, and urges the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Ms Yanghee Lee, to visit the Kokang area as soon as possible to monitor the human rights situation there, and push for accountability for abuses that have taken place.

Details of incidents (based on interviews conducted in the last week of February, 2015)

Real names of all victims, apart from those which were killed, have been withheld for security reasons.

- 1. Shooting and injury of two Kokang women riding a car through Laogai on February 13, 2015**

“Nai Nai” (aged 76) lived in Laogai. On February 10, after fighting broke out, she had fled with other members of her family to the China side of the border. On February 13 she went back to release her six pigs, as no one was feeding them. She went back alone, as other family members did not think it was necessary to accompany her. They assumed that no one would harm an old woman.

When she was at her house, a convoy of Burma Army cars came and stopped nearby. Some soldiers got out and broke down the door of a neighbor, who had a small drink and snack shop, and helped themselves to some drinks. They saw the old lady, but did not say anything to her. They then went to another house, and told the inhabitant to tell the old lady she should leave her house and go to China.

She then contacted someone to bring a car and drive her and two other women to the border. It was a sedan car, with tinted windows. At 4 pm, they were driving on the road between the town and the Donchan casino area, when they were suddenly sprayed with machine gun fire, which hit one side of the car. Some bullets pierced the side of the car, and the old woman, who was sitting in the front, was hit in the left foot. Another woman, aged 47, in the back seat was shot in the leg. The bullet passed through her left calf and hit her right calf. The car stopped, as its tyres were punctured. Then about 4 or 5 Burmese soldiers appeared carrying machine guns from a building south of the road.

When the soldiers came to the car, one of them could speak Chinese. He asked “Why are you coming through here?”

The old woman answered: “Because you ordered us to go to China. Why did you shoot at us?”

The soldiers then told the women to go and find medical treatment. They did not help them. The women had to phone for another car to come and pick them up. They were then taken to the Donchan area, where a youth group helped them, but there were no medical staff, and the old lady’s foot was bleeding all night.

The next morning, they were taken by car to the 125 border crossing. On the way, they saw four bodies of young men (aged 17-18 years old) in civilian clothes lying by the road in the Jin Xiang Cheng area. When they reached the border, they were sent straight away for treatment at a hospital in Nansan.



Photos from social media

2. Shooting and killing of couple riding motorbike in Laogai on February 13; civilians used as hostages to ambush Kokang soldiers

A Kokang woman (Chen Xing Zi, aged 48) and her Chinese husband (Yang Er, aged 33), lived in Laogai at Manka, near the market. They reared pigs and had a small shop. They had two young children of their own, and the mother also had four older children from earlier marriages.

The family fled on February 10 to the Chinese side of the border when fighting began. On February 12, the couple went back to feed their pigs. They crossed over in the morning, and rode their motorcycle back. When they went past a Burmese checkpoint in the town, the soldiers just smiled at them, so they thought there was no problem. They came back to the Chinese side in the evening.

On February 13, the couple crossed over again to go back and feed their pigs. However, in the evening, they did not return to the Chinese side, and their family became worried, and tried to call their mobile phone, but there was no answer. Only the next day, members of the family saw pictures of the dead couple lying in the road on social media.

On February 14, a relative went with three other people to collect the bodies and cremate them at the border. On the way, he saw 10 other bodies of men by the road, with their hands tied.

The bodies of the dead couple had bullet wounds on them. The wife had been shot in her thigh, her arm and her back. The man had been shot in the head, and also in the side. They had been shot on their motorbike on the way back to the Chinese side of the border. Belongings which they were bringing from their house, including CDs for their children, were scattered in the road beside them.

On February 14, another relative came to the Chinese side and told his family that he had seen the couple riding past him in the street in Laogai the day before at about 5.30 pm, when they were heading home. Shortly after that, he had heard shooting and had ducked for cover. When he stood up, he saw a Burmese soldier, who then arrested him. There were about 20 Burmese soldiers in the group that arrested him.

He said he was taken with a group of other Kokang villagers in several trucks outside the town to a place called Jiufang. The group was then made to wait in one place, while the Burmese soldiers hid nearby. They intended to ambush the Kokang troops if they came to rescue the captured men. However, they did not appear. They therefore moved to several other places, and also did the same, but nothing happened. Finally, they returned to the Burma Army regional operation command base at Laogai, where they were kept for the night. They were then released in the morning. There were given no food while they were captured.



Photo from social media

3. Shooting and injury of a 61-year-old Kokang farmer south of Laogai on February 19

“Ye Ye”, aged 61, is from the village of Nan Fu Tan, about 6 miles south of Laogai. He has three children, and also grandchildren. He had fled to China with his family since the fighting started, and they were staying in one of the refugee camps south of Nansan at border crossing 137.

On February 19, he crossed back over the border and went back to check on his farm. At 3 pm, a group of Burmese soldiers suddenly started firing guns at his village. When the firing began, he and another neighbor ran outside to try and take shelter in a sugar cane field. The other neighbor luckily escaped without being hit, but when he was just about to reach the sugar cane, he saw a Burmese soldier about 30 meters away. The soldier could see clearly that he was in civilian clothes, but he aimed his gun at him, and shot him in the thigh. It passed through one side of his left thigh and out the other side. He managed to hobble into the sugar cane, where he fell down and took shelter. The soldier kept firing after him but didn't hit him again.

He lay there for about 25 minutes, until it seemed the soldiers had left. Then he called out, and some other neighbours came to find him. A group of them carried him to the border, where he was brought to a hospital in China for treatment. He was bleeding badly but luckily no artery was severed, and he is recovering.

4. Torture of four male Kokang villagers at the Burma Army regional operation command base at Laogai on February 19; one has disappeared

Four male Kokang villagers from Bauk Bauk village, one mile west of Laogai, were in their houses on February 19, when about ten armed Burmese soldiers arrived at their village at about 10 am. They came from the direction of the nearby Burma Army regional operation command base.

The soldiers called the men outside, searched them and took their phones and money. One man lost about 600 yuan. The soldiers then tied the villagers' hands behind their backs and blindfolded them. They were made to walk to the army camp, across burned sugar cane fields. As they walked, the soldiers kicked them and hit them with their guns.

When they got to the army camp, they were interrogated one by one in a room. They couldn't speak Burmese, but one of the soldiers could speak a bit of Chinese. They asked where the villagers' guns were. The villagers said they didn't have any guns, but the soldiers kept asking them and hitting them.

The villagers were hit again and again with guns and also a plastic pipe. One man was also burned with a lighter on his temple and his foot.

After this, they were brought outside, where some soldiers again kicked them.

They were kept in the camp for one night. The next day, they were beaten again, twice with a piece of wood, and then released. The soldiers took their photos, and told them not to go back to their homes or they would be killed. However, only three men were released. One was left behind at the camp, and has not been seen since.

The three villagers found a car, and went straight to the China border. They went to hospital to treat their wounds. One man had serious internal injuries from the beating.



Photo from social media

For more information please contact,

Email: shrf@shanhumanrights.org, shrf@cm.ksc.co.th

Website: www.shanhumanrights.org

Mobile Phone: +66(0)93- 297-7754