

Shan Community groups' statement

Charges must be brought against the Burma Army for their crimes, not against protesters demanding justice in Kyaukme

July 13, 2020

We, the undersigned Shan community groups, support the mass protest on July 10 by Kyaukme residents demanding justice for their fellow villagers who were killed, tortured and wounded by the Burma Army on June 29, 2020, in Kyaukme township, northern Shan State.

Over 15,000 people gathered in Kyaukme to protest against the Burma Army and demand accountability for the crimes against their fellow villagers.

Protesters came from different directions by truck and on foot to Kyaukme town, holding banners stating in Shan, Burmese and English: "We don't need military (Tatmadaw) that kills innocent people", "Tatmadaw (Burmese military) beats and kills innocent civilians." Kyaukme police put up a blockade to stop the protesters entering the town, but later allowed them in.

The banners showed pictures of Loong Su, the elderly farmer from Pang Gaen village who was shot dead, as well as 55-year-old Pa Hsai, who was injured by gunfire, and 56-year-old farmer Loong Maung Kay, who was beaten unconscious. These crimes were committed by Burma Army troops of IB 23, IB 22 and IB 147.

In response to the mass protest, the Burma Army announced in the evening of July 10 that they were filing charges against three villagers for leading the protest: U Sai Than Maung, U Jotika and U Aria. They were charged under Section 19 of the Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Law and Section 18 of the Communicable Disease Prevention Law.

We strongly support the Kyaukme protesters' demands for justice, and urge that charges against the protest leaders are immediately and unconditionally dropped.

We urge the international community to pressure the Burmese government to take action against the Burma Army for their ongoing crimes against the ethnic peoples, and to end the impunity they have enjoyed for decades.

1. Shan Human Rights Foundation
2. Shan State Farmers' Network
3. Shan Sapawa Environmental Organization
4. Shan Student Union (Thailand)
5. Shan Youth Organization (Pong Pa Kaem)
6. Tai Youth Network
7. Overseas Shan Europe
8. Shan National Organization (Thailand)
9. Lin Mork Mai
10. Toom Toan Tai
11. Yawnghwe Office in Exile
12. Shan State Refugee Committee (Thai border)
13. Kong Moong Murng IDP Camp Committee

14. Loi Tai Laeng IDP Camp Committee
15. Loi Lam IDP Camp Committee
16. Koung Jor Refugee Camp Committee
17. Loi Sam Sip IDP Camp Committee
18. Loi Kaw Wan IDP Camp Committee
19. Ho Yarn villagers (Kunhing township, in Thailand)
20. Na Hla villagers (Kunhing township, in Thailand)
21. Woh Long villagers (Kunhing township, in Thailand)
22. Nam Poon villagers (Kunhing township, in Thailand)
23. Na Koon villagers (Kunhing township, in Thailand)
24. Ho Na villagers (Kunhing township, in Thailand)
25. Keng Kham villagers (Kunhing township, in Thailand)
26. Hsai Khao villagers (Kunhing township, in Thailand)
27. Shan Youth Network (Thailand)
28. Hern Hoam Hark
29. Koon Pang Koon Khoang
30. Hoam Heng Jai Tai
31. Hsen Tang Mai Htung Mao
32. Hark Nam Jai (Shan migrants, China)
33. The One Mai (Mong Khun, China)
34. Tai Public Media
35. Shan Association Mahachai (Thailand)
36. Foung Mod Band

Contact:

Sai Leng	+66 86-188-9827	(Burmese, English)
Nang Charm Tong	+66 81-603-6655	(Thai, English)
Sai Hor Hseng	+66 94-728-6696	(Shan, English)