



For Immediate Release

November 1, 2013

Call to End the War Against Civilians in the Kachin Region of Burma

Today, members of the Kachin community living in the United States held a demonstration to demand an end of the war against civilians in the Kachin region of Burma in front of the Myanmar Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Since the war escalated in the Kachin region, civilians have endured mass atrocities and abuses by the Burma Army. In September, 2013, women were gang raped and nine villagers were arrested and tortured in Nhka Ga village near Putao. Two out of nine villagers arrested were later killed. 53 villagers from Nhka Ga have been held as hostages by the Burma army in their own village since September. The villagers have been cut off of supplies and humanitarian aid workers have also been barred from reaching them. In recent incidents in Mansi township, the Burma army not only indiscriminately attacked, killed, injured, arbitrarily arrested, tortured, and forced civilians to work on the front line but also held them as hostages. Several hundreds of villagers from Mungding Pa have fled their village after being trapped in their own village. Thousands of civilians from Kawng Ja, Mungding Pa, Mahkaw Yang, Nam Hpu and Namlim Pa villages in Mansi township are severely affected by ongoing offensive launched by the Burma army. In Namlim Pa, over 1200 IDPs and village residents are currently facing food shortage as the army encircles their village. In addition to offensives in Mansi township and Nhka Ga, Burma Army launched a new offensive in Loi Hkam Bum area in Northern Shan State on October 30, 2013. Over 1000 civilians have been displaced within a couple of weeks after the most recent peace talks in Myitkyina.

In some areas, the government's abuse is manifested in the form of land grabs and detainment of those who attempt to help civilians or promote human rights. For example, Daw Bawk Ja, a well-known Kachin land rights activist, was arrested unlawfully and is currently on trial for charges which are politically motivated.

In solidarity with these civilians who have been killed, tortured and abused, we urge the Burmese government to take the following actions immediately:

- (1) To immediately release villagers from Nhka Ga being held as hostages and cease actions which put the lives and well-being of vulnerable civilians at risk
- (2) To immediately release Daw Bawk Ja and discontinue arbitrary arrests and torturing of civilians
- (3) To immediately withdraw troops from the conflict areas and end the ongoing military offensives in the Kachin regions
- (4) To follow ALL conditions agreed upon in the agreement made with KIO on October 10, 2013 in order to encourage the progress of current peace talks because failure to follow the agreed upon conditions is disturbing the progress.

For more information, please contact the Kachin Alliance.

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