

Burma

Shan Villagers Flee Myanmar Military Raid after Four Soldiers Die

Monday 22 March 2021, by [The Irrawaddy](#) (Date first published: 21 March 2021).

More than 1,500 villagers from three villages in Pekon Township, Shan State, have fled their homes after the military regime vowed retribution after the death of four soldiers on March 15.

The regime said on Saturday it had lost contact with four soldiers, including two officers, traveling to Pekon Township to address an administrative issue after receiving a report they were confronting a mob.

The junta said it found their bodies tied with ropes in a hole near Lelhton village and their burnt-out vehicle in a ravine.

Four villagers have been detained and another four have been interrogated.

The regime threatened extreme action against those involved.

Sources said since March 17, the military, claiming that the four soldiers were missing, has raided villages in Shan State near the Kayah State border and used tear gas, rubber bullets and live rounds against villagers protesting against their deployment.

The military has reportedly occupied a church, school and a home to accommodate its troops, causing many villagers to flee.

On Thursday, 20 villagers and Ko Khun Myo Hlaing Win, a member of Kayah State's anti-regime general strike committee who had consulted with the military to secure the villagers' release, were also detained.

Ko Khun Myo Hlaing Win, who was released on March 19, told The Irrawaddy on Sunday that villagers had been tortured until they were unconscious and deaf during interrogation.

He said 18 out of 20 villagers were released by the military after their investigation.

Around 200 troops are reportedly deployed in Lelhton.

More than 1,500 villagers from Lelhton, Wari Taung Chay and Saungkan have fled to avoid arrest.

"The military needs to retreat from the villages so people can return to their homes," said Ko Khun Myo Hlaing Win.

In Sagaing Region, thousands of residents from five villages in Depayin Township have fled their homes after a military deployment in response to an incident that left two police officers dead and a

police captain injured on March 17.

Tens of thousands of people across Myanmar have taken to the streets day and night to defy the regime.

The security forces have been cracking down on peaceful anti-regime protests using live rounds, rubber bullets, tear gas, stun grenades and deadly air-guns firing lead pellets.

Since the Feb. 1 coup, more than 240 anti-regime protesters have been killed by the security forces.

The Irrawaddy

P.S.

- The Irrawaddy 21 March 2021:

<https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/shan-villagers-flee-myanmar-military-raid-four-soldiers-die.html>