

The Drug War: Ethnic Cleansing of the Akha

Murder and Imprisonment of the Akha by Police and Army in Thailand.

The killings have always been going on, now under a new name. Investigating these killings has taken a long time, the Akha are afraid to speak out, warned that they will all be “exterminated” if they protest. But one day at Joh Hoh Akha near Phrao, Chiangmai, we came upon the case of three men killed, two of them just that morning.

Ah Yeh was shot while eating, shown on next page. And then a few days later Leeh Huuh at right and Loh Pah below, were called to the police station, but were ambushed by heavily armed men on a remote part of the road into town. Farmhouses in the area would have made it difficult not to have witnesses. The two men were shot repeatedly, from at least three different shooters. They tried in vain to escape but only made it about thirty feet, their faces, heads and backs shot many times.

The Thai authorities deny that these are police killings, can't explain all the coincidences, can't imagine that anyone cares and do not investigate. The police report for Leeh Huuh was half a page long. Autopsy said he died of many bullet injuries.

Do the Thai police and public realize that these killings have long term political and justice implications for the country of Thailand?

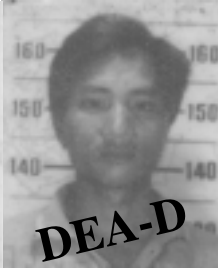
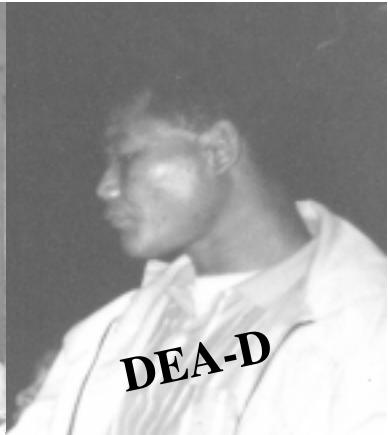
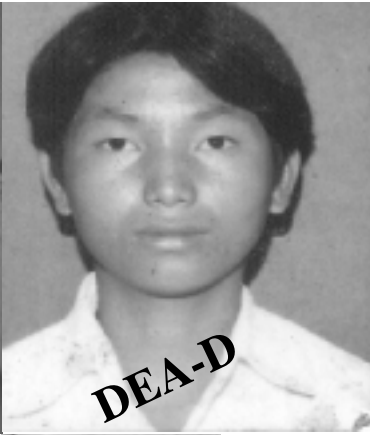
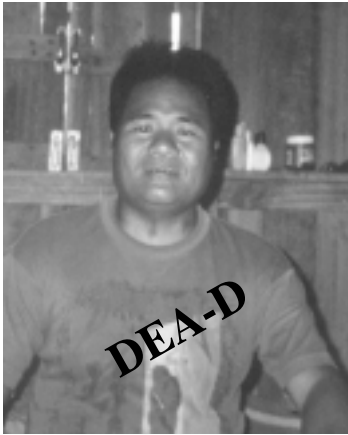


Reporting to the police as summoned, these men had little idea what awaited them.

For details go to www.akha.org/humanrights/police/johhoh/johhoh.htm



Joh Hoh Akha was forcibly relocated after 18 years . With no land to farm they struggle to live.



Ah Yeh from Ah Yeh Akha. Ah Zeh from Loh Sah Akha, Ayeh from Joh Hoh Akha were all killed. Ah Zeh's parents with a picture of their only son. Ah Meeh, wife of Ah Yeh from Ah Yeh Akha was shot five times in chest and left for dead. The Lahu man Eh Dturh was killed and the same people then killed Ah Zeh when they met him on the road minutes later.

Eh Dturh was chased and shot, Jah Boh is missing



Human Rights

Army, Police, Drug War and Prisons

Amnesty International:

Report On Thailand June 6, 2002

Amnesty International cited the killings of Akha men by both police and army in its report on Thai-

land issued last June 6, 2002.

For the entire report see our site on human rights at www.akha.org.

Also available on www.akha.org is a 20 case report of abuse, torture, extortion and extra judicial killings filed with the UN in Geneva, recipe below.

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These Akha had their picture taken by police under the accusation that they sold drugs, yet no arrests were made.

The Akha Journal

Change Of Command

After a year of brutalization and deaths, the hilltribe in the Haen Taek area, Ampur MaeFaluang of Chiangrai Province at least got a change of command. Col. Apisit and Maj. Orachai were transferred out of the area without promotion.

Problems still remain, robberies, the wrong person imprisoned and extra judicial killings. Flip a coin, was it the Army or the Police?

People are scared, and few people are talking. Since the army and police all knew who these people were, if they were engaged in illegal activity why weren't they in jail previously? Do police and army only move when the option they have been empowered with is to maim and kill people? There really isn't a sub-

stitute for good regular patrols both along the border areas and in the villages themselves including ID card checks.

Ambushes

In two cases, a group of Yao villagers from Palang, Chiangrai and two Lisaw from Hua Mae Kom were ambushed right after a meeting with the government offices, making it look very much like a set up. In the case of the Lisaw, the truck went off the road and two from the back escaped. The paluang and assistant were killed. Was this drugs or a power dispute? The Lisaw headman was said to have had differences with police and army. In

the case of the Yao, everyone in the truck was shot, six people.

The headman and his brother who replaced the first Lisaw headmen were killed within days of taking over in an ambush at the creek near their village. The first two headmen were shot at point blank range as they stopped their black Suzuki truck, heavy gunfire to the face completely removed the tops of their skulls. Only examination of the vehicles and the ambush location reveals the brutality of these attacks.



MUTILATED BY GUNFIRE





DEA-D

Ambushed

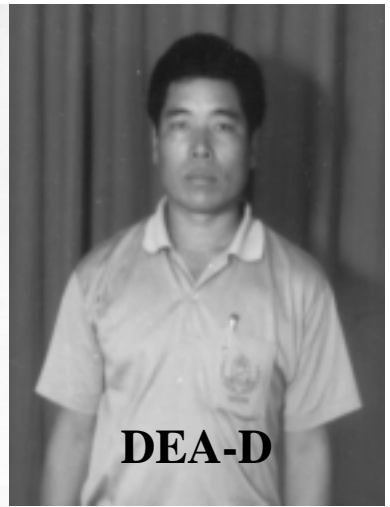
Boon Mah Sae Pahn, Yao Tribe, Palang Village Chiangrai province. 29 years. Obothor. Ambushed along with five other men from his village 27 February 2003 while returning home from a government meeting. (numerous ambushes have been conducted in this manner) Front window of truck was shot out by someone standing in the road. Boon Mah died from shot in head, and repeated gunshot wounds to the chest. Some tried to escape but were cut down with such heavy gunfire that they were disemboweled.

If this is justice, then will the same sort of justice be applied to politicians and corrupt police and army?



DEA-D

Get Dteeh Sap Sak Seeh Chompoo, Yao Tribe, 44, two boys, two girls, headman three years, shot five times in chest. Parents are 80 years old and are now left on their own.



DEA-D

Gow Gkway Sai Tuin, Yao Tribe, 44 years, three boys, two girls, farmer, had only one leg from accident, passenger in back of truck, shot so violently that he was disemboweled.



DEA-D

Naih Sahn Sai Tuin, Yao Tribe, 29, farmer. Shot repeatedly, disemboweled.



DEA-D

Ooh Gkway Sai Tuin, Yao Tribe, 29 years, two girls, Gah Mah Gahn for two years. Chest wounds, abdomen disemboweled.



Water Truck

The water truck of the second headman for Hua Mae Kom after the first were killed. The second headman was killed also.



The Akha at Bpah Mah Hahn are told to report on ballots who it is in their village that uses drugs. There is no government aid to this village, only repeated prosecution on all sides. Many village have this experience, no farming, no drugs.



Government Claims Success!

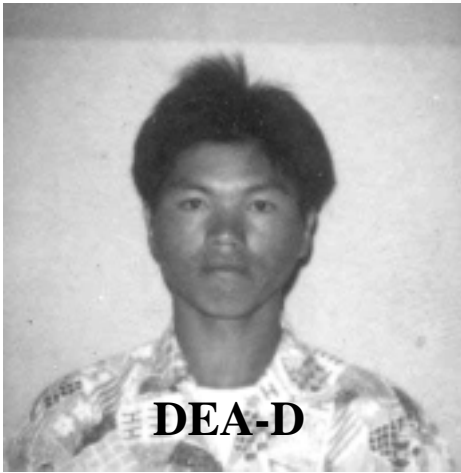
In the often rigged war on drugs the government claims another success. Illegal guns seized from hill tribes were in fact birding rifles, the barrels which can be bought in every Thai market. For this scam they flew out the Ampur of Mae Faluang

and the Governor of Chiangrai province, shown below in this rather fuzzy press photo of another successful sweep against hill tribe peoples. What did it cost the Thai government to do this operation, complete with helicopters? The weapons were described as “illegal guns”.



The Akha are not allowed to farm, their lands are taken away, their orchards are up rooted or cut down, their coffee plantations are threatened, they are told they are squatters on forestry land, they are prosecuted on every front. They are arrested for drugs and drug trafficking. Akha men are regularly shot down in broad day light by police death squads. Arrested men are beaten, bound and electrocuted. Most western nations stay friendly with Thailand. Thailand reaps huge profits from tourism that banners the hill tribe people, photos of the Akha on many advertisements of both print and TV media. Yet these are people without rights, the story seldom told, of what they endure. The sum of events shapes up to be nothing other than **ethnic cleansing**.

Isn't It Time You Made Your Voice Heard?



Loh Guuh's Family

Entrapment: A Man is shot dead, Lies are told, everyone agrees, the truth need not be known!

Loh Guuh was busy farming his rice. Men came to his village repeatedly asking to buy a large quantity of speed pills. They were the police. The village didn't have any pills. For three nights the police sent people to the village to try and get some pills, 15,000 they wanted, they had lots of money to show and wanted to close a fast deal.

One villager finally agreed but when he had troubles picking up the pills he asked Loh Guuh to stand in for him. Playing the fools game, Loh Guuh agreed to this misadventure.

But the game was already rigged. As Loh Guuh waited in the corn field for a man who was suppose to come with money, a policeman came instead, and said in a loud voice, "You drug dealer, now I kill you!" and kill Loh Guuh he did, with three shots, one in the back of the head, one that grazed his scalp and one in the back which exited the chest.

If it was the goal of the police to bring tragedy on the village that day, they did. Loh Guuh paid with his life and two boys were taken to prison.

Villagers who were witnesses to the wounds to the head and body refuse to testify for fear of police retaliation.



Loh Suuh got 50 years because he refused to admit he was in a drug deal. He finally signed a false confession to try and get his sentence reduced. The other boy got 25 years because he agreed to admit he helped plan the drug deal. How about the police who planned it all?

And what about the police involved in drugs? Why are none of them shot dead by internal affairs? Does Thailand even know what "internal affairs" is? Loh Suuh is now in Bangkwang prison in Bangkok still with a 50 year sentence.

The Drug War Booh Nmm's View

The mother of three children, Booh Nmm lives in a low land village relocated from the mountains. Her village is endlessly the subject of visits from Thais who are looking for drugs and police who are looking for Akhas.

Rather impoverished where she lives with her husband's father, the place sports the luxury of a rusty and battered refrigerator propped up on a shelf in the dirt floor hut. They didn't have enough wood or money to build a hut above the ground like the Akha normally do or like the hut she had before in the mountains of Hua Mae Kom where it was cool and the children didn't get sick much.

Whatever her fortunes she rues the day that her husband Loh Guuh got involved in a police sting operation at the low end of the village. While he waited a man in plain clothes walked up behind him and shot him in the back of the head from a meter away. His sister had just asked him who the man was but he looked and said he didn't know, just before turning away and then getting shot by the same man.

The police said that they had sent a Thai man to the village to try and buy drugs and that the Akha man was shot because of this. Do they shoot every Thai involved with drugs on the spot? Is that the law in Thailand? An unarmed man looking the other way?

Loh Guuh was 32 and was expecting his fourth child at the time. If he was a drug dealer his wife would like to know where he hid all the money?

The Chiangrai police called it a barbaric treatment of a human being but no officers were charged and the issue of due process was never addressed.

The Chiangrai Head of Police claimed that the incidents such as Ah Bpah and Loh Guuh "would not be swept under the carpet or forgotten" but that is exactly what has happened as the months have passed.

Finally in March of 2003 the case came to court. Though witnesses and the parents all claimed that Loh Guuh had one bullet entry wound to the back of the head, one entry wound to the back and out



the chest, the police report states that he only had a frontal chest wound. Only by exhuming the body can the state be sure who is telling the truth. However the judge declared that surely no one wants to do that, and why would all these people be lying? Could killing minorities have anything to do with it?

THE DRUG WAR IS A WAR OF TERROR ON PEOPLE!



(๑๖)

หมายเรียก
พยานบุคคล



เมื่อท่านไปศาลแล้วให้ชำระศาลไว้
ติดต่อก่อนหน้าบัลลังก์

คดีหมายเลขดำที่ _____ / ๒๕ _____
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ใช้ศาลกลางจังหวัด
ใช้บังคับมีอำนาจ

ถ้าไม่มาศาลในวันนัด
อาจฟ้องได้เมื่อมีหลักฐานพอหมาย

ในพระปรมาภิไธยพระมหากษัตริย์

ศาล _____ จังหวัด เชียงราย
วันที่ _____ เดือน _____ พุทธศักราช ๒๕ _____
ความ _____ ชาว _____
พนักงานอัยการจังหวัด เชียงราย ผู้ร้อง _____ โจทก์ _____

ระหว่าง

นายทศชัย เขษลิ่งคู่ ผู้ตาย _____ จำเลย

หมายถึง _____ นายทศชัย เขษลิ่งคู่ พยานชั้นที่ ๑

อยู่บ้านเลขที่ _____ หมู่ที่ _____ ถนน _____

ครอบครัว/ซอย _____ ใกล้เคียง _____ ตำบล/แขวง _____

อำเภอ/เขต _____ จังหวัด _____ โทรศัพท์ _____

ด้วย _____ จงหนัก อ้างท่านเป็นพยานในคดีเรื่องนี้

ศาลนัดนั่งพิจารณาวินาที _____ เดือน _____ พ.ศ. ๒๕ _____

เวลา _____ นาฬิกา ให้ท่านไปศาลตามที่กำหนดนี้ (ให้ดูวันเดือนหลังหมายนี้)

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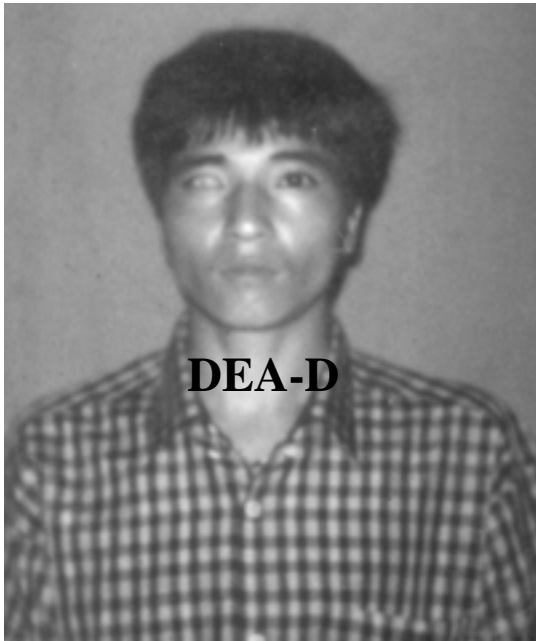
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Court Document

The family of Loh Guuh was given this document to appear in court to hear the final ruling of the judge on whether or not Loh Guuh had been killed legally.



DEA-D

Ah Buuh Cheh Muuh. Akha. 35. Ah Churh Akha Village, Chiangrai province. One boy, one girl. February 2003

Ah Buuh's house was broken into by a masked man at midnight. He and his wife were both shot. His wife shot five times in the abdomen and leg. Ah Buuh, injured, jumped up and ran from the back door. Three more masked men chased him and shot him to death within fifty meters of the house. He was blind in one eye. If he had committed some crime he could easily have been arrested. His wife Meeh Nay survived.



Three of the four sons of Ah Bah



DEA-D

Ah Bah, Akha, Gow Lang Village, 45, 4 boys, shot from behind in the head and chest around 9 pm, February 2003, while sitting by fire in front of house shown below.



Is America Sponsoring Thaksin's Drug War?

ONDCP and Money to Thailand 399

Bangkok Post

Oct. 28, 2002

WAR ON DRUGS

US to maintain level of support

80 tonnes of heroin to flood into country

Subin Khuenkaew - Chiang Mai

The United States has confirmed its continued support for Thailand's fight against drugs after a representative inspected the Pha Muang task force's anti-drug operations.

The representative was told that the drug-producing United Wa State Army was still very active in Burma at the border along Thailand's three northern provinces.

On Saturday, Barry Crane, deputy director for the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy, inspected anti-drugs operations in Doi Lang, Mae Ai district.

He flew to Doi Lang, a 43-square-kilometre disputed border area, on an army helicopter from Doi Kiew Hung where Yawn town, a UWSA stronghold in Burma, could be seen.

He was briefed on Wa drug activities along the border near Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai and Mae Hong Son.

Mr Crane said: "I always feel like Asia is my home.

"And I worry about the spread of narcotics in this region, especially in Thailand where teenagers

have drug addiction problems."

A source said Mr Crane paid special attention to news reports about drug suppression in Burma, but he doubted whether Rangoon's claims on its anti-drug operations were for real.

During his visit to the 5th Special Warfare Regiment's anti-drug task force 399 in Mae Rim, Mr Crane said the US would continue giving financial and technical support to the task force to combat drugs.

Mr Crane said he was willing to listen to the task force on its problems and help find solutions. (Our inquiries to ONDCP were ignored and our email finally blocked.)

Pitthaya Jinawat, director of the Northern Narcotics Control Centre, said he believed Washington would increase its support for Thailand to prevent more than 80 tonnes of heroin from the Golden Triangle entering Thailand this year.

The Narcotics Control Board had forecast that as much as 72 tonnes of heroin would be smuggled in from Burma and eight tonnes from Laos.

"If China prevents the smuggling of heroin via that country, more drug dealers will turn to our borders to get the drugs out to Europe and America. The US should be aware of this," he said.

(Within the first three months of Thaksin's drug war of 2003 more than 2274 suspects were gunned down in mysterious ways.)

Drugs sent to Taiwan

Is There More Than One Reason Why The Taiwanese Baptist Are So Intent On Evangelizing Border Villages?

Chinese Haws send pills to Thai workers

Bangkok Post

GENERAL NEWS - Sunday 22 September 2002 METHAMPHETAMINES

Anucha Charoenpo and Subin Kheunkaew

Chinese Haws in northern border villages use connections with their relatives in Taiwan to export illicit drugs for sale to Thai workers there, a military source says.

The drug business had been detected at villages in Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, which once housed refugee camps for remnants of the Kuomintang - former Chinese nationalists who fled Taiwan 50

years ago.

Most Kuomintang members escaped the fighting to Taiwan, but some also settled here.

The settlers in Thailand have maintained contacts with relatives in Taiwan and send their children to study there.

The source said many students later worked as Mandarin-speaking interpreters in Taiwanese factories and construction companies. That gave them a chance to contact Thai workers.

"Drug pushers among Chinese Haws exploit close ties between the children of nationalists and Thai workers to bring illicit drugs, mainly methamphetamines and heroin, into Taiwan, where they are sold to Thai workers addicted to drugs," he said.

Most drugs were taken in by parents and relatives visiting the students in Taiwan or by the students themselves, he said.

Some drugs were sent by mail or with consumer

goods to restaurants and karaoke bars.

A source at the Narcotics Control Board admitted Chinese Haws were suspected of being involved in the international drug trade and said the agency was tracking drug movements from Thailand to Taiwan.

The ONCB arrested a group of Chinese Haws boarding a flight to Taiwan a few years ago with several kilogrammes of heroin.

Over the years many Chinese Haws have been arrested on charges of trafficking in methamphetamines in Bangkok.

Taiwanese authorities have asked the ONCB for details on methamphetamine trafficking networks after an influx of speed pills.

Maj-Gen Nakorn Sripetphan, commander of the Pha Muang Task Force, said the army was aware that Chinese Haws were involved in trafficking from Thailand to Taiwan.

One target area was the villages at Ban Yang in Chiang Mai's Mae Ngon sub-district, a former production base of drug warlord Wei Hsueh-kang.

The village, about 30 km from the Thai-Burmese border and near Doi Angkhang, is among 66 villages which the task force tried to turn into drug-free areas last year.

Villagers at Ban Yang did not cooperate with the soldiers, said Capt Chusak Samakthanyakij, who supervised the project for the task force.

"Only a few villagers showed up when we held meetings about the project. Most were elderly people," he said.

Ban Yang is a prime target because parts of it look too wealthy. Villagers earn their living growing tea and lychee. But one house in the village boasts a swimming pool inside a five-rai modern concrete compound.

A military source said the house belonged to a close aide of Mr Wei, who once stayed in Mong Yawn, a drug production base of the United Wa State Army in Burma.

Other concrete houses here hide behind unusually high walls. Sport and luxury cars have been seen in the village.

Kittipong Yawuth, the village chief, said young villagers working as interpreters in Taiwan sent money home to their parents, which accounted for the development in the area.

He neither admitted or denied that drugs were smuggled from the village to Taiwan, but conceded drug gangs had used his community to store drugs.

Suchart Sae-tao, 46, who once worked as a

Mandarin-speaking interpreter in Taiwan, admitted many Chinese Haws from Thailand sold methamphetamine pills to Thai workers there. A pill cost at least 800 baht.

Some 3,000-4,000 Thais leave for Taiwan every month to work at construction sites and factories. Taiwan now employs about 130,000 Thai workers.

**NO
WITNESSES
NO TRUTH
NO
JUSTICE**



Army

Booh Saw went to her neighbor's house and got two kilos of rice because she had not finished her harvest. Once back in the road crossing to her own house the army arrested her. They had been watching the house for drugs and just then made a raid. Even though she had no connection to the house and was no longer even in it, they arrested her. She has now been months in the Chiangrai Prison and will have to wait another year for her trial to find out if she is even guilty of anything. She is a widow with four children to care for. Her oldest daughter is pictured below. If she was forced to go into the flesh trade would anyone care or be surprised? Surely not the benevolent Ampur of Mae Faluang who lets the army get away with such foolishness.

Ah Gauh, the village headman, went to the army and told them that she hadn't done anything wrong and they released her.

But they called the headman and Booh Saw back to Sam Yaek outpost 523 again in the morning to "talk" and when they got there the army arrested her again, far from the view of the village and sent her to jail at Ampur Mae Faluang where no amount of appeal would gain her release. She was then transferred to Chiangrai prison.



Booh Saw May Yurh Imprisoned





Yah Goh is Robbed

The month of August 2002 was a month for robberies of the Akha and Lahu. Trucks, gold, cash. Hill tribe people are not suppose to have money, so if they do they either stole it or sold drugs goes the thinking.



Yah Tooh of Booh Hah Akha was robbed of 91,000 baht by officers under the command of Maj. Orachai. After nearly six months 90,000 baht was returned..

Huuh Gkah Elderly Couple Robbed

This elderly couple lost 25,000 baht to Army soldiers.

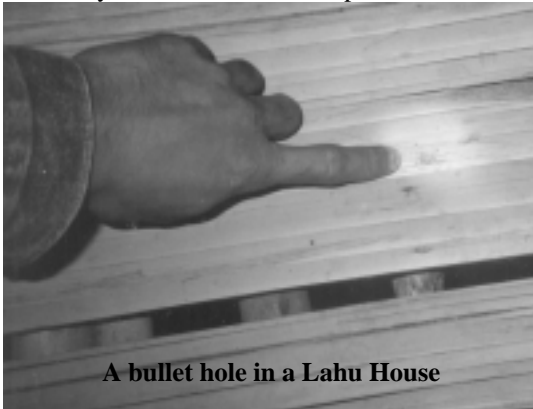


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Huuh Gkah Akha couple's statement about their stolen money.



Ah Dteeh survived his torture examination with Thai army. Others continue to experience the same.



A bullet hole in a Lahu House

Pills Gone Bad

Back in 2001 the Haen Taek and Chiangrai police asked the Lahu man Jeh Dtaw 37, if he would help them set up a drug deal for the TV. They said that they would in the end keep the pills, give them to the government, and that they would get six baht a pill from the government, two baht of which they would give to Jeh Dtaw and his crew. The Lahu were suppose to bring 200,000 pills and two kilo of heroin for the deal. The police were Eh Boh, Eh Day, Seh Dtay and Daw Luen. The Lahu were promised that nothing would happen to them, and

the whole thing would be kept secret. Three men from Burma, Lahu, delivered the pills. Jah Nuuh, Yah Chjoh Chjah Chjah and Chjah Cheeh. The drugs were picked up at Meh Maw in Ampur Mae Faluang.

The deal went according to plan and Jah Nuuh's younger brother, Chjah Cheeh's son, an unnamed man and Jeh Dtaw took the pills through the jungle to the location where they were suppose to stage the ambush near Doi Mae Salong at a place called Meh Dturh Akha. Jeh Dtaw guarded the pills with an AK-47 en route.

But when the staged ambush happened the Lahu panicked. While the ambush was being filmed, one Lahu was shot and killed. The pills were "captured" and the other Lahu "escaped". The capture of the pills and the Lahu killed for realism were shown on TV. But Jeh Dtaw was now in a problem, because there had been no mention of anyone being killed. There were also army near by and Jeh Dtaw wondered if he had been double crossed somehow. He now felt the fool for trusting the police. Jah Nuuh was angry when he found out that his brother was killed. He later ended up working for the Thai army at Sam Yaek. Jeh Dtaw was told all was well, not to worry. But then the army stole his money and motorbike. A woman named Jimmy in Burma wanted her money for the drugs and said she would pay to have who ever stole them killed. Jah Nuuh was still angry about his brother being killed and so he told the army. The army said that it was all Jeh Dtaw's fault, that Jeh Dtaw had stolen the pills which of course he had not, and that for the reward money they would kill Jeh Dtaw themselves if the woman Jimmy, in Burma would pay them. Jeh Dtaw had four children, two boys and two girls. Because of the problem his wife left him and took the children. Jeh Dtaw complained to the police but they just kept promising him the money for the pills but never paid him. While the police promised Jeh Dtaw safety, the army officer Poh Pah from Sam Yaek said that the next time he saw Jeh Dtaw he would kill him.

130,000 baht dug up at Pai ah Prai

Without comment, the army came to the house of one man and dug all around his house until they unearthed an old tin with 130,000 baht in it. His parents had sold water buffalo for many years and hid the money there a long time ago when hundred baht notes were very large. But the army took the money anyway, insisting it was drug money.

**Headman second in command still missing.
Shan man disappears at same time**

Mr. Ah Aw, the second in command headman from Meh Maw Akha has been missing for nearly a year, presumed dead, as well as a friend of his, the Shan man pictured at right.



If there has been an investigation the wife has not been told much of it.



This Shan man was taken into custody along with Mr. Ah Aw. He has disappeared and is presumed dead.



Leeh Cheeh Bpow

Still Missing

These two Lahu men from Loh Mah Cheh Lahu village in Ampur Mae Faluang, Chiangrai Provnice, have been missing since last August. Last seen in army custody after they returned from a trip to Burma, they never returned home. Locals claim that both men were shot while at the army camp and their bodies disposed of. Since the murder of hilltribe peoples by government forces continues, we include this case. Huai Moh army base.



Ah Tsah

Meh Joh Massacre not forgotten

The massacre of adults and children at Meh Joh Akha village in Myanmar has not been brushed aside as investigations continue into the number of children who were shot or burned alive. Witnesses put the total number around 50, including adults.



Not Enough To Eat No Prosecution

The wife of Ah Juuh Cheh Muuh says that her family doesn't have enough to eat, that the 500 baht a month of rice from the army doesn't go very far.

Ah Juuh Cheh Muuh died in an army detox camp from a beating. Though there was enough evidence to warrant the removal of numerous officers there was never any prosecution. The Haen Taek hospital helped in the cover up by refusing to release the autopsy.

Amnesty International sited the case in their June 6, 2002 report on Thailand, abuse of hill tribe peoples.

A year of brutality did little to improve the cooperation between hill tribe and authorities. In the minds of many of the hill tribe there lives are not worth very much to the powerful. With a little inspection one can see how this might be the case.

After Ah Juuh's death, a number of months, he became a father once again with the birth of his daughter at left..

The family gathers for a photo in the traditional Akha hut.

Donations of clothes or food for this family are welcome, contact us by email.



Just Beat It!

Whatever the army and police want to explain to the Akha is lost in the fact that for years the beatings, killings and other abuse have gone on. Rather difficult to tell the Akha that now they are being beaten for a “good” reason or a “new” reason. A beating is a beating.

Wonder Why?

Gen. Surayud wonders why there is a police investigation into the killings of the Burmese men of God’s army at the hospital some years back that still moves on. Gen. Surayud says he wouldn’t be in this mess if there was a new security law that gave immunity to the army for what they did while handling security matters. Or is that a way of saying you want to kill whom ever without the Geneva Convention on Prisoners of War?

Rumor has it that the men shown below of God’s army were lined up in a room at the hospital after it was stormed and they surrendered. No hostages were hurt. They were stripped, made to kneel on white sheets and shot in the back of the head one by one. Is this what Gen. Surayud wants the army to be immune from, killing prisoners????? That would make a tremendous number of soldiers in the mountains happy.



Ah Turh from Bpah Mah Hahn was dragged from his house and beaten on the accusation of another man who was already arrested from another village. He was beaten on the head, legs and back with an M-16, a concrete block, sticks and boots. Then the army discovered that the black ball they found in his house was not opium but a piece of resin used when chewing betel nut. He was released but took days to heal.



DEA

Unit set up to pass on intelligence from US Nugan Hand Bank

DEA to train Thai Army in suppression methods (SOA?)

The army has set up a new unit in Chiang Mai to coordinate the flow of information from the US Drug Enforcement Administration to the Third Army and Task Force 399 for drug suppression operations, an army source said. The drug information centre, based at the Third Development Battalion, has about 30 staff, and moder equipment provided by the DEA. There are no DEA staff assigned to the centre. The US agency would also provide intelligence and drug suppression training for Third Army personnel, the source said. Task force 399, set up with assistance from the DEA by Gen. Surayud Chulanont when he was army chief, is based in the 7th Infantry Regiment in Chiang Mai. Its current commander is Col. Chainarong Thanarun. Gen. Surayud, now supreme commander, visited the US from June 20-27 and discussed drug suppression and next year's Cobra Gold exercises with Gen Richard Myers, chairman of the US joint chiefs of staff. The American General is also seeking, like Gen. Surayud, to keep his troops free from liability for what they do during security actions that might constitute a war crime if done by someone like the Palestinians, Gaddafi or a general in Zaire. They don't make it into white flour for nothing.



Ah Nay from Bpah Mah Hahn was beaten in the face by the Thai army. They found opium ashes at his house, but he was in detox at the time.



Law Urh was beaten, tortured and told he would be killed. After ten days he was gotten out of detention by activist intervention. He was not arrested for any crime. Huai Moh army base, Chiangrai.

Forestry Arrests Farmers

Mr. Hoh Hah Gkah Gkay had eight Akha, Lahu and Lisaw farmers arrested for farming land the army gave them to farm. This is just part of the intimidation going along with the confiscation of all the land of the three Huuh Yoh villages. Two of the women were more than eight months pregnant. They had to pay 15,000 baht a piece in fines.



Prisons

Hills to Holes: A preliminary report on Akha in Thai prisons by Paul Hunt 14th February 2003

Bangkok's notorious, maximum-security Bangkokwan. Prison for men and Lard Yao women's prison are bleak holes where those with long-term or death sentences are swallowed and forgotten. Many are there due to Thailand's draconian anti-drugs laws. Some are innocent victims or unfortunate scapegoats. The Akha who find themselves locked and chained up in these institutions are farther than a cry away from their native hills, villages, families and friends.

In late January and early February other inmates I visited helped me to locate these lost Akha souls. Amidst their own forlorn circumstances they told me that the plight of the Akha prisoners in Thailand's badly overcrowded, cockroach- and disease-infested prisons was about as bad as it can get.

One foreign woman inmate at Lard Yao communicated this message to me: "There are 3 ladies in here that I know they don't have money and anyone taking care of them. Here their names 1. Sree Sae Yarg, she's Lao 2. Bu Mue Emily Soe, she's Akha 3. Aba (no last name), she's Akha-Nicon. Those ladies really need help... we buy everything in here, nothing free." (sic)

All prisoners I've visited in these prisons say prison food is not only inedible, but a major health hazard. Without support from family and friends conditions are hardly bearable. Many Thai and foreign prisoners receive food, toiletries, clothes, reading and writing materials sent to them by family, friends and various charity groups. Akha inmates are far from their homes; their families are usually too poor to travel to Bangkok to visit them in prison; they get forgotten by charity groups; and the general problems which afflict the Akha in Thailand, such as ethnic discrimination, lack of official ID, and no commonly used Akha script, are compounded in their abysmal circumstances.

Regulations for prison visits are strict. It is essential to know the names of the inmates you wish to visit, and in the men's prisons the building or block number they are in must be known as these have different visiting days. Prisoners and visitors are kept completely separated in the visiting areas, usually by about one-and-a-half meters with iron

Thailand's Startling Secret: Thousands of Akha in Prison - Ethnic Cleansing



bars and mesh on each side. In Lard Yao perspex and simple microphone-speaker systems are used. Not ideal for conversation, especially when the area is full of visitors and prisoners all talking or shouting in the same 30-minute visiting time.

Bu Mue Emily Soe at Lard Yao was the first Akha inmate I managed to locate and visit.

This is her story, in her words:

"I am Emily Soe, **age 53**, the one you visited on Friday 31st of January. I was born in a small Akha village hilltribe, in the year of 1950. I don't know my birthdate and month, my mother never tell me. After my father died my mother took me to a mission (Saint Loui's Roman Catholic mission in Keng Tung, East Shan State, Myanmar) and I was raised up in the school. I just passed only 5th standard as I told you in visit room, after I came out from school I help mission for 5 years in a leprosy colony. I had to look after children of lepers. My mother also worked in mission, she cooked for the school boys. So when I raised up, the parish priest not allow to let me stay in mission... **I have my own family, I gave birth of my second child and moved to Tachileik. I never do in any case of drug before and I am here because I don't have any experience of such like job as this, called drug. My friend persuade me to do.** My mother is still in Tachileik, Myanmar... I don't know how she live because she is very old now, 83 years old. I really feel very sorry that I cannot look and take care of her..."

Bu Mue was arrested by Thai police at the Maesai border crossing from Tachileik, Myanmar, on 24th November 1997 with 44,000 amphetamine pills. She got a life sentence, which means in Thailand just that - the rest of her life in prison. She spent 2 years in Chiangrai Prison, and has now been in Lard Yao for 3 years.

On Tuesday 4th February I visited Bu Mue again. She told me of 2 other Akha inmates, also

from Thachilek, awaiting death sentences, having already spent 4 years in Chiangrai and Lard Yao prisons. Their names are Nong Khrang Kavin and Mee Yo Ma Yer, partners arrested together.

That day I had some food to send in to Bu Mue through the prison officials. But they said new rules had come into force just the previous day not allowing this. The Thai government began a ruthless, merciless crackdown on drug traffickers this month - even the UN commissioner for human rights is concerned, but the Thai government is too busy to receive UN human rights officials who wish to investigate what's going on!

Bu Mue told me that there had been prisoner transfers recently from Chiangrai to Lard Yao, including Akha prisoners. Lard Yao now holds about 30 Akha women inmates.

Bangkwang Prison holds quite a few Akha men in blocks 5 and 6, with some in block 4. The total is likely to be much higher than in Lard Yao.

On 4th February I had a short visit with Kenny Lee held in block 4 at Bangkwang. He's from the Meichan area between Chiangrai and Maesai. His mother is Akha and his father is Chinese. He was born in Yunnan Province, China.

In the same block is Sura-chai Mon-kok-ku who communicated to me via another prisoner his wish for me to send news from the Akha village of Phamee, which is near the Myanmar border in the Maesai area.

Names and details are slowly filtering through the institutional walls for us to begin helping these lost and forgotten Akha souls. Their present situation is extremely dire and helpless.

A vivid account of conditions in Bangkwang



Prison can be found in "The Damage Done" by Warren Fellows. It is also published in the U.S.A. under the title "4,000 Days - My Life and Survival in a Bangkok Prison".

"Forget You Had A Daughter" by Sandra Gregory is a more recent personal account of time spent in Lard Yao.

Bangkwang and Lard Yao are located north of Bangkok city center. Bangkwang can be reached by taking a Chao Phraya River boat to the northernmost stop at Nonthaburi. The prison is only a 5-minute walk from the pier. Lard Yao is a 10-minute walk from Bangkhen railway station, on the line from Bangkok's central Hua Lam Pong Station, and only about 10 kms. south of the station at Dom Muang Airport. Bus numbers 63 or 114 can be taken to get from one prison to the other.

Bangkwang Prison

117 Nonthaburi Road,
Suan Yai,
Nonthaburi 11000

Central Women's Correctional Institution

33/3 Ngam Wong Wan Road,
Lard Yao,
Chatuchak,
Bangkok 10900

Contact has since been made with the mother of this prisoner in Burma, who is a very aged Akha woman who survives by begging in a Burmese town. She has no idea her daughter will never be home again.

Neither she nor the daughter are helped by the church in any fashion despite their service of many years.





The Opium Life

Pills, Powder, Paste and Addiction

Some drugs are illegal in Thailand, but so is prostitution. Why all the work to find the little teensy weensy pills and kill people but no work to find the much bigger slave girls, release them and prosecute their pimps and mamasan's? Trafficking in women is certainly a human rights abuse, yet Thailand is continuously coddled and told to do better enforcement while hill tribe girls are pressed en masse into the flesh trade all over Thailand.

Police are almost always involved in the trade.

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