

Regional Overview: Southeast Asia 26 January – 1 February 2020

acleddata.com/2020/02/05/regional-overview-southeast-asia-26-january-1-february-2020/

Elliott Bynum

February 5, 2020



ACLED
Bringing clarity to crisis

In Southeast Asia, key developments last week included: civilian deaths amid ongoing conflict in Myanmar and separatist violence in Thailand; a clash between Papuan separatists and state forces in Indonesia; increased drug-related violence in the Philippines; and labor protests across several countries in the region.

Civilians in **Myanmar** continue to be injured and killed in the ongoing conflicts between the military and ethnic armed groups. Last week, two women in Kyaukme township in Shan state were killed during clashes between the military and the Palaung State Liberation Front/Ta'ang National Liberation Army (PSLF/TNLA). In Rakhine state, deadly fighting between the military and the United League of Arakan/Arakan Army (ULA/AA) was reported in Myebon township. The military likewise forced a camp for internally displaced villagers in the township to close (Radio Free Asia, 27 January 2020).

Meanwhile, in Kayin state and the Bago region, a road construction project continues to be the source of tension between the military and the Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA). Last week, mines planted by the KNU/KNLA were triggered by military convoys. In Hpapun township in Kayin state, a mine explosion led to the reported death of a military officer. The KNU/KNLA, which recently marked its 71st anniversary, views the ongoing road construction by the military in areas controlled by the KNU/KNLA as a violation of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), which it signed in 2015 (Irrawaddy, 30 January 2020).

Separatist violence was reported in **Thailand** and **Indonesia**. In Indonesia, the separatist West Papua National Liberation Army (TPNPB) clashed with state forces in Papua province, resulting in one reported fatality. There were conflicting reports over whether the fatality was a civilian or a member of the TPNPB. In Thailand, suspected separatists attacked and reportedly killed one civilian in Narathiwat province. Recently, Thailand and Indonesia signed an agreement to share intelligence concerning separatist activity in Thailand's deep south (Reuters, 14 January 2020).

In the **Philippines**, there was an increase in reported incidents of drug-related violence stemming from police raids as well as attacks on civilians by anti-drug vigilantes. At least 32 fatalities were reported last week. The fatalities come as the Philippines finds itself under increasing international pressure over the ongoing extrajudicial killings. The US recently decided to revoke the visa of one of President Duterte's allies, the former chief of the Philippine National Police, over his involvement in the "war on drugs." This has led to Duterte threatening to end the Philippine-US Visiting Forces Agreement (Asia Times, 27 January 2020).

Labor protests were reported in **Cambodia**, Thailand, Myanmar and Indonesia. Protests over the omnibus bill in Indonesia were reported in East Java and Central Jakarta. Meanwhile, in Myanmar, schoolteachers and students opposed to the extension of the school year continued to protest as part of a green-ribbon campaign. Notably, a group of students protested during a speech by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the State Counsellor, in the capital, Nay Pyi Taw (Irrawaddy, 29 January 2020).



ACLED is the highest quality, most widely used, real-time data and analysis source on political violence and protest around the world. Practitioners, researchers, and governments depend on ACLED for the latest reliable information on current conflict and disorder patterns. Data and analysis are found on acleddata.com.

© 2020 Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). All rights reserved.