

Since March 13, the confrontation between the residents of Aksai village (Kyrgyzstan) and Vorukh exclave (Tajikistan) is still ongoing. There are wounded on both sides, the Tajik media report of two dead.

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Blocked road in Aksai village. Photo: CABAR.asia

Authors: Ulan Mukkambaev (Aksai-Batken), journalists from Tajikistan and Timur Toktonaliev (Bishkek)
The Tajik news agency Asia Plus [reports](#) that another citizen of Tajikistan died of gunshot wounds in a hospital on March 14. Allegedly, he was injured by a shot from the Kyrgyz side. The first casualty was reported a day earlier.
A representative of the State Border Guard Service of Kyrgyzstan told CABAR.asia journalist that the Kyrgyz side would start investigating these cases if they receive an official message from Tajikistan.
“Officially, the Tajik side reported only on the injured policeman,” said Salkyn Abdykarieva, spokesperson of the State Border Service on March 14. “If there is an official information,

there will be investigations by the relevant structures.”

A representative of the press center of the General Border Security Force Directorate of the State Committee for National Security of Tajikistan told CABAR.asia journalist that these cases are being investigated now and there will be no comments until the end of investigation.

Cause of Conflict

The clash between residents of two border villages occurred due to the resumption of the Aksai-Tamdyk bypass road construction by Kyrgyzstan, which is to connect Kyrgyz villages with Batken regional center, bypassing the Tajik Vorukh exclave.



The map shows Aksai village, where citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic blocked the road for residents of Tajik Vorukh. In Chorku village, Tajiks block the road (white line), so that citizens of the Kyrgyz Republic cannot drive to Batken regional center.

Since March 13, we have been receiving information on the wounded and the mutual infliction of material damage from both sides.

From the day the conflict began, residents of both countries staged a transit blockade: residents of Kyrgyz villages blocked the road connecting Isfara district of Tajikistan with its exclave Vorukh. Residents of Tajikistan blocked the Batken-Leilek highway, which passes through their territory.

Currently, high-ranking delegations from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan at the Vice-Prime Ministerial level are negotiating in the conflict zone.

This is not the first serious conflict that occurs due to the construction of this road. The Tajik side believes that construction is being carried out on the disputed part of the border, and fears that Vorukh residents may find themselves in transport isolation. Kyrgyzstan does not agree with these arguments.

Read more in the IWPR article: [Kyrgyz-Tajik Row After Border Clash \(January 2014\)](#)

A spokesperson of the Batken regional state administration (Kyrgyzstan), Cholpon Berdikulova, said that a few days ago only “the roadworks grading for cattle drive” was carried out, not the resumed construction of this road. According to her, this was carried out on the site not belonging to the disputed territories.

“There was a notification [to the Tajik side]. Akims of Batken region and Isfara region (Tajikistan) held discussions, and only after that, the work began. However, it was not revealed to the people [of Tajikistan],” Cholpon Berdikulova told CABAR.asia.

“This territory [where the road was graded] directly belongs to Kyrgyzstan. However, it is located near the uncoordinated part of the Kyrgyz-Tajik border. Tajikistan relies on an intergovernmental agreement that no construction work should be carried out on uncoordinated parts of the border,” said the spokesperson of the Batken regional state administration.

Provocation Accusations

The authorities of Tajikistan are commenting on this conflict laconically. The authorities refer to the statement of the press center of the General Border Security Force Directorate of the State Committee for National Security of Tajikistan.

In addition to the above causes of conflict and information on the wounded, it separately notes that the incident was provoked by the chairperson of the Aksai village council, a citizen of Kyrgyzstan, Roza Usarova, “who acted to seize the area adjacent to Khoja Alo village”.

“Recent events indicate that Roza Usarova (in Kyrgyz, Өсөрова - Ed.) is a constant instigator of the Tajik-Kyrgyz relations deterioration, stoking ethnic tensions between the Kyrgyz and Tajik peoples,” the press center [states](#).

Roza Usarova says that this conflict was brewing for a month. On March 7, the local law enforcement agencies and the authorities managed to calm down the people from both sides after the verbal exchanges and teenagers’ fights.

“I did not ask them to block the road in Tort-Kocho village, so that this conflict would occur. They themselves start it all. I am not an enemy of the people,” she told CABAR.asia.

TIMELINE:

22:30 Government of Kyrgyzstan: Negotiations with the Tajik side to resolve the

situation on the state border section continue

“Vice-Prime Minister of the Kyrgyz Republic Zhenish Razakov and Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Tajikistan Azim Ibrohim are at the emergency site. Earlier, Zhenish Razakov held a meeting with local residents, including elders and youth representatives, where he noted the need to prevent further escalation of the confrontation at the border,” the Kyrgyz government states.

20:26 Statement by the Press Center of the General Border Security Force Directorate of the State Committee for National Security of the Republic of Tajikistan

The state information agency Khovar [published](#) a statement of the press center, which notes, “Despite the measures taken to resolve the conflict, the situation on the state border of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Kyrgyz Republic remains difficult.”

“From the side of Kyrgyzstan citizens and the border guards of the Kyrgyz Republic there have been cases of gross violations of the state border, insubordination to the competent authorities of this state, which led to an escalation of clashes with dangerous consequences on the state border line.”

18:24 Presidents of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan discussed the current situation on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border by telephone, the press service of the President of the Kyrgyz Republic [reports](#).

“Sooronbay Jeenbekov and Emomali Rahmon noted the need to create a joint commission for objective investigation and prevention of similar situations in the future, as well as for intensifying negotiations on the process of state border delimitation,” the message said. It also notes that Rahmon and Jeenbekov “agreed in opinion that the peoples of the two countries, having time-honored good neighbor relations, should live only in peace and friendship.”

17:30 Zainuriddin Zahayrizoda, a resident of Vorukh village of Isfara district of Tajikistan, works in the city of Isfara (50 km away from the village). He heard about the incident at the Tajik-Kyrgyz border in a phone call from his parents.

“I was at work. My parents called me and said that there was a conflict on the border and the roads are closed. I started to feel fear and anxiety for my relatives. I have parents, wife,

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children and sister there. I left my job and immediately went to the bus station to go to my family, to the village. However, the road was closed. Since yesterday, I want to reach my family by foot, but no success. It's good that there is a connection and I call them every hour to keep the track of events," he told CABAR.asia.

He also notes that this is not the first incident. There are always conflicts in their district and they are all resolved peacefully. He believes that this time everything will be in favor of the border villages' residents of the two countries as well.

17:12 Vice-Prime Minister for Security of the Kyrgyz Republic Zhenish Razakov arrived to Aksai village for negotiations with his Tajik colleague. Photo of the government's press service.





16:45 Information on the number of Kyrgyz and Tajik villages residents

About 76 000 people live in the Vorukh and Chorku jamoats, which belong to Tajikistan. Many villages of these two jamoats border Kyrgyz villages. The latest incident caused the closure of the road to Vorukh jamoat, populated with about 36 000 people.

1 300 people live in Somoniyon village of Chorku jamoat, where the incident occurred. It borders Kok-Tash village (1 200 residents) of the Batken region. However, the houses of these two villages are in staggered rows.

“Today, on March 14, Somoniyon and Kok-Tash schools are closed. Before the issues are resolved, it is decided that children should stay in their houses,” said a journalist from Isfara.

15:30 Photos of Aksai village (CABAR.asia):



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15:00 Information on the road Aksai-Tamdyk construction:

The construction of the Kok-Tash-Aksai-Tamdyk road began in 2013. The total length of the road is 24.5 km; the estimated cost is 606 million som. To date, work has been completed on 165.5 million som and, accordingly, a section of the road from Kok-Tash village to Aksai village (13 km) has been built, according to a press release of the Ministry of Transport and Roads of Kyrgyzstan.

“In 2018, at the initiative of the Batken district state administration, construction engineering machines were transferred from aiyl aimaks (*rural districts - Ed.*) and a road (path) 3-3.5 meters wide, 4 km long (from 13-up to 17 km) was constructed using an hashar method (*hashar is the Tajik tradition of voluntary work to benefit of the community - Ed.*), from Aksai village to Tamdyk village, towards the border zone,” the message says. The deployed machinery for further construction work on the Aksai-Tamdyk site since March 9, 2019, was used at the request and with the consent of the head of the Batken regional state administration. Construction of the above-mentioned section of the road was resumed according to the requests of local residents; one loader and an excavator were

involved here, the press release notes.

14:03 Photos of the blocked Aksai-Vorukh road (CABAR.asia)

CABAR.asia journalist in the Batken region, Ulan Mukkambaev, who is in Aksai village, reports that the road between the villages of Kok-Tash (Kyrgyzstan) and Chorku (Tajikistan), through which Kyrgyz citizens get from or to the city of Osh-Batken-Isfara, remains closed. In their turn, residents of the Kyrgyz villages of Kok-Tash, Aksai and Ortoboz blocked the Vorukh-Isfara road.



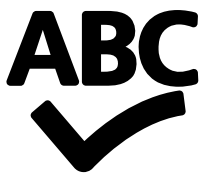
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12:16 Anarkul Karaev, a resident of Sumbul village of Leilek district:

“We are returning from Bishkek. At 6 AM, we came here, and the road is closed. Except for us, there are other people. Citizens of Tajikistan have closed the road, and do not allow to pass. In the morning, a truck arrived; they did not let it in as well. We will stand here, until they let us. The authorities say that the issue will be resolved. When it is resolved, we will go”.



If you have found a spelling error, please, notify us by selecting that text and pressing *Ctrl+Enter*.