



Statement by the Shan Human Rights Foundation

July 10, 2014

Burmese government must stop new military operation against ceasefire army in northern Shan State

Since June 2014, the Burma Army has deployed nearly 2,000 troops from over 10 battalions in an operation against a ceasefire group, the Shan State Progress Party/Shan State Army (a.k.a Shan State Army-North or SSA-N), in Kehsi and Murng Hsu townships. The operation has inflicted human rights abuses against hundreds of local civilians.

The first attack was carried out from June 11 to 14 in Murng Hsu, when hundreds of troops advanced on an SSA-N base near this ruby mining area. Shells were fired by troops stationed in a local village, placing civilian lives at risk. Villagers were also forced to act as guides and drivers for the troops during the attack.

On June 24, the Burma Army sent 50 trucks of troops, weapons and ammunition from Mandalay to the area. On June 26, Burmese troops began artillery attacks on the SSA-N about 20 kms northwest of the SSA-N headquarters of Wan Hai. For several days, shells were fired in this civilian-populated area. Since then, 800 troops from seven battalions have been stationed in local villages, restricting villagers' movements and transport of rice, patrolling through villagers' fields, destroying crops and fences, and looting villagers' livestock. This has caused about 200 local villagers to flee their homes and seek refuge in a local temple.

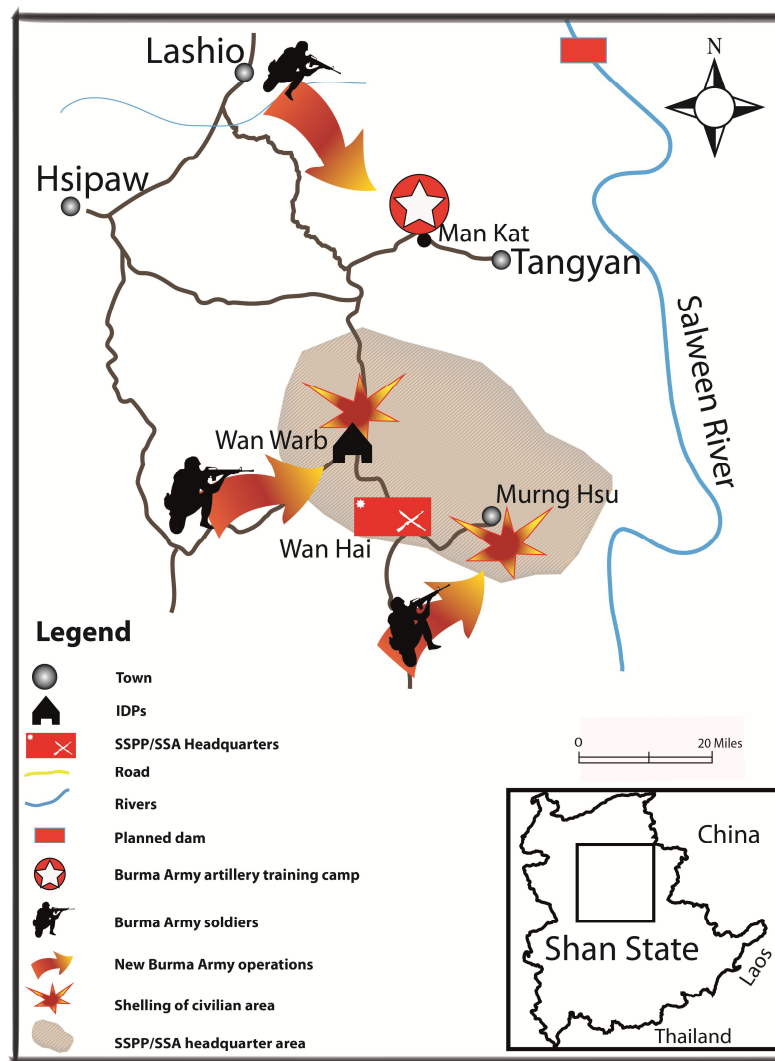
Since July 2, a further 18 trucks of Burma Army troop reinforcements have been sent into the conflict area from nearby command centres. Local villagers have also been ordered to provide 10,000 pieces of bamboo for the construction of barracks for a new artillery training centre at Man Kart, near Tangyan. A local Burmese military officer said this was specifically to prepare to attack the SSA-North.

SHRF is gravely concerned at this troop build-up and expansion of military infrastructure, which completely contradict the claims by the Burmese government that it is seeking a peaceful settlement to the conflict.

One aim of the offensive appears to be to clear out resistance forces so the government can proceed with control and exploitation of local natural resources, including hydropower. On May 22, 2014, a Memorandum of Agreement was signed between Burma's Ministry of Electric Power and Hydrochina Corporation to proceed with the Naung Pha dam on the Salween River, northeast of Tangyan, despite the fact that it lies in a conflict zone, and the issue of natural resource control has yet to be brought to the negotiating table. The local contractor for the project is the International Group of Entrepreneurs (IGE), owned by the family of former minister Aung Thaung, who conveniently brokered the renewed ceasefire agreement with the SSA-N in 2012.

In the interests of establishing genuine peace, SHRF strongly urges the Burmese government to immediately stop this military offensive against the SSA-N, stop the building of the new artillery training centre, and withdraw troops from the area.

SHRF also urges the Burmese government, Chinese and Thai investors to immediately cancel all dam projects on the Salween River, as they are fuelling the conflict.



Map of new Burma Army operation against SSA-N

Appendix:**Summary of human rights abuses by Burma Army during military offensives in northern Shan State, June to early July, 2014**

Date	Abuse	Location	Details
June 12, 2014	Villager forced to guide troops	Wan Keing Leun, Murng Hsu	Ai Kham, a male villager of Wan Keing Leun, was forced by Burma Army troops of Battalion 149 to guide them towards the SSA base in Loi Hseng
June 14, 2014	Villager forced to transport troops to battle	Wan Nam Tong, Murng Hsu	Loong Hsing Hsarng, a male villager of Wan Nam Tong, was forced to transport Burma Army troops of Battalion 149 in his truck to fight the SSA. When the convoy was attacked, he ran away, abandoning his truck.
June 14, 2014	Shelling in civilian area	Wan Nam Tong, Murng Hsu	Burma Army troops of Battalion 149 fired shells from the village of Wan Nam Tong. The shells landed close to the village, damaging farmland, including of Loong Hsarng Kya
June 26-27, 2014	Shelling in civilian area	Wan Warb, Kehsi township	Burma Army troops of Battalion 247 fired shells from the village of Wan Warb.
June 26 to early July 2014	Restriction on movement of villagers and rice; destruction of crops and fences; looting of livestock and property	Villages of Pang Se, Loi Yoi, Wan Warb, Hpar Hsong and Kong Lang in Kehsi township.	About 800 Burma Army troops from Battalions 516, 247, 248, 294, 287, 9, 12 have been stationed in these villages. They have been forbidding villagers from visiting each other's houses, and from taking rice outside the village. They have also been patrolling through villagers' fields, destroying crops and breaking down fences, and looting villagers' property and livestock.
late June to early July, 2014	Setting up military camp in village school	Wan Warb, Kehsi township	Burma Army troops set up base in the Wan Warb village school, causing 125 children to be unable to attend school.
June 27, 2014	Villagers forced to provide bamboo to build barracks for new military training centre	Man Kart, Tangyan township	A Burma Army Commander arrived at Man Kart, and ordered the delivery of 10,000 pieces of bamboo from the villages of Na Hok and Hko Yao for the building of new military barracks between Man Kart and Tangyan town and between Hpar Pien village and Tangyan.

Detailed list of villagers in Wan Hpar Hsong village, in Wan Warb village tract, whose property was damaged by the Burma Army since June 26, 2014

No.	Name	Property destroyed or looted				
		Chicken	Corn Field	Peanut Field	Rice Field	Others
1	Ai Mung			3		
2	Loong Hsor Long		6	6		
3	Loong Htun		5	5		
4	Loong Korn			1		
5	Ai Pi + Aye Nyuen		4	2		
6	Sai Ta		6	3		
7	Pu Yorne		3			
8	Hsarng Aor		3			
9	Kaw Ling		6			
10	Saw Ta		3			
11	Hsor Aorn		10			
12	Hsarng Nyunt		2		4	
13	Hsarng Aoong		6		1	
14	Nar Ling		6		4	
15	Loong Leang + Par Nang		3		2	
16	Par Aing		4		2	
17	Nan Ta		4			
18	Loong Yorn		4			
19	Loong Kyawng Leang		3			
20	Loong Aung Yarng		10			
21	Kyaw Lu		2			solar cell
22	Aye War		2			
23	Sai Kam		1			
24	Kore Kor		3			
25	Sai Moo			6		
26	Par Kham Li	10				solar cell
27	Par Noon	10				
28	Mee Ling	3				
29	Hsarng Theng					solar cell
30	Nai Nu	4				
31	Saw Ka	2				
	Total	29	106	26	13	3 solar cells
	Acre Total		141.33	34.6	17.2	

Interview with an elderly woman IDP from Wan Hpar Hsong:

“Now there is nothing left of our peanut and corn farm. The Burmese soldiers broke our fences and trampled on our crops. Our peanuts and corn were just beginning to sprout. Now it is all gone - my beloved farm which we depend on. I don't know what to do now. The Burmese soldiers have also been killing villagers' animals, such as chickens, for food. We fled since the waning moon day, (June 26, 2014).”



Villagers flee their homes and seek refuge in a local temple

The detailed update is attached, or can be viewed on www.shanhumanrights.org

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