



Update by the Shan Human Rights Foundation

August 26, 2014

Shan IDPs petition President Thein Sein for Burma Army withdrawal from their homes

About 300 displaced villagers sent a petition letter today to President Thein Sein, calling for the withdrawal of Burma Army troops from their village Wan Pasaung in Ke See township, and demanding compensation for damage to their homes and farms during the past two months.

Since June 2014, about 3,000 Burmese government troops have been deployed to Ke See, Murg Hsu and Tangyan townships, in an offensive to seize territories of the Shan State Army-North/Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP), in violation of an existing ceasefire agreement. On June 26, the Burma Army began occupying and firing shells from the village of Wan Pasaung, causing about 300 people to flee to the nearby village of Wan Warp. Over 500 heavily armed troops remain stationed in Wan Pasaung until today, causing destruction of property and crops.

On August 7, 14 Shan community based organisations sent an open letter to US Secretary of State John Kerry, requesting him to raise concerns about this new offensive in Shan State during his visit to Burma. However, the Burma Army continued their military operations during his visit, clashing with SSPP on August 8 and 9 only four miles south of Wan Pasaung. Most recently, on August 22, Burmese government troops again intruded into SSPP territory, firing mortar shells at SSPP troops about six miles north of Wan Pasaung.

The IDPs are sheltering in a temple in Wan Warp, relying on donations of food and other supplies. They are being guarded and their movements restricted by Burmese troops. A deaf villager was beaten and kicked when he was unable to hear an order from the troops.

In their petition to President Thein Sein, 291 IDPs have requested compensation for damage caused by the occupation of their village, including destruction of 422.5 acres of farmlands, such as rice, peanut and corn fields, and loss of cattle, pigs and chicken, which have been killed and eaten by the Burma Army troops.

Copies of the letter have also been sent to the Burma Army Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing, the four Regional Military Commanders in Shan State, the Shan State Chief Minister, as well as to the Shan political parties.

A copy of the petition is attached, and can also be viewed on www.shanhumanrights.org

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