



**Update by the Shan Human Rights Foundation**

October 12, 2021

**Local farmers oppose Ngwe Yi Pale's planned coal mining expansion along Pang River in Tangyan, northern Shan State**

Local farmers are opposing plans by the Mandalay-based Ngwe Yi Pale conglomerate and regime authorities to expand their damaging coal mining operations along the Pang River in Na Hook village tract, Tangyan township, northern Shan State.

The new mining area spans about 850 acres of farmlands on both sides of the Pang River, a mile west of the existing coal mine at Tak Liet, where the entire village has been forced to move due to underground excavation.

Locals are resisting the expansion not only because of direct farmland loss, but also fears of further damage to the ecology of the Pang River, from pollution and planned mining beneath the riverbed. 14 villages in the area, with over 3,000 residents, rely on the Pang River for their farming livelihoods, growing thousands of acres of rice, corn and ground nuts.

The Pang River is the main tributary of the Salween River in Shan State, and a vital water source for tens of thousands of villagers.

The plans for the new mine were revealed on May 7, 2021, when 15 farmers were summoned by the chairman of Na Hook village tract, and asked to sign a letter agreeing to coal exploration on their lands. The farmers, from Wan Long, Wan Kyaung, Wan Kao and Wan Peing Moang, were informed of the meeting the day before, and told to bring their ID cards with them. The chairman, Loong Sai Goam Hsa (a.k.a. Loong Sai Sai Sang Saw), told them that Ngwe Yi Pale company would just be doing test digging in small plots of one square meter, so four farmers agreed to sign, but the rest refused to do so.

The chairman then forged the signatures of the remaining eleven villagers, which were collected in the afternoon by Aung Ko Hlat, the Ngwe Yi Pale manager based at Tak Liet.

On May 8, the farmers wrote a letter to the SSPP/SSA, the local SNLD office and the Mong Ha militia, complaining about the forging of their signatures and asking for help in stopping the new coal mine.

Villagers heard nothing further until September 18, when the 15 farmers were again summoned to meet the village tract chairman. This time the Ngwe Yi Pale manager Aung Ko Hlat was also there. The chairman and the manager again urged the farmers to sign their agreement to mining exploration on their lands. However, the farmers said they would never



*Farmlands along the Pang River threatened by new coal mine*

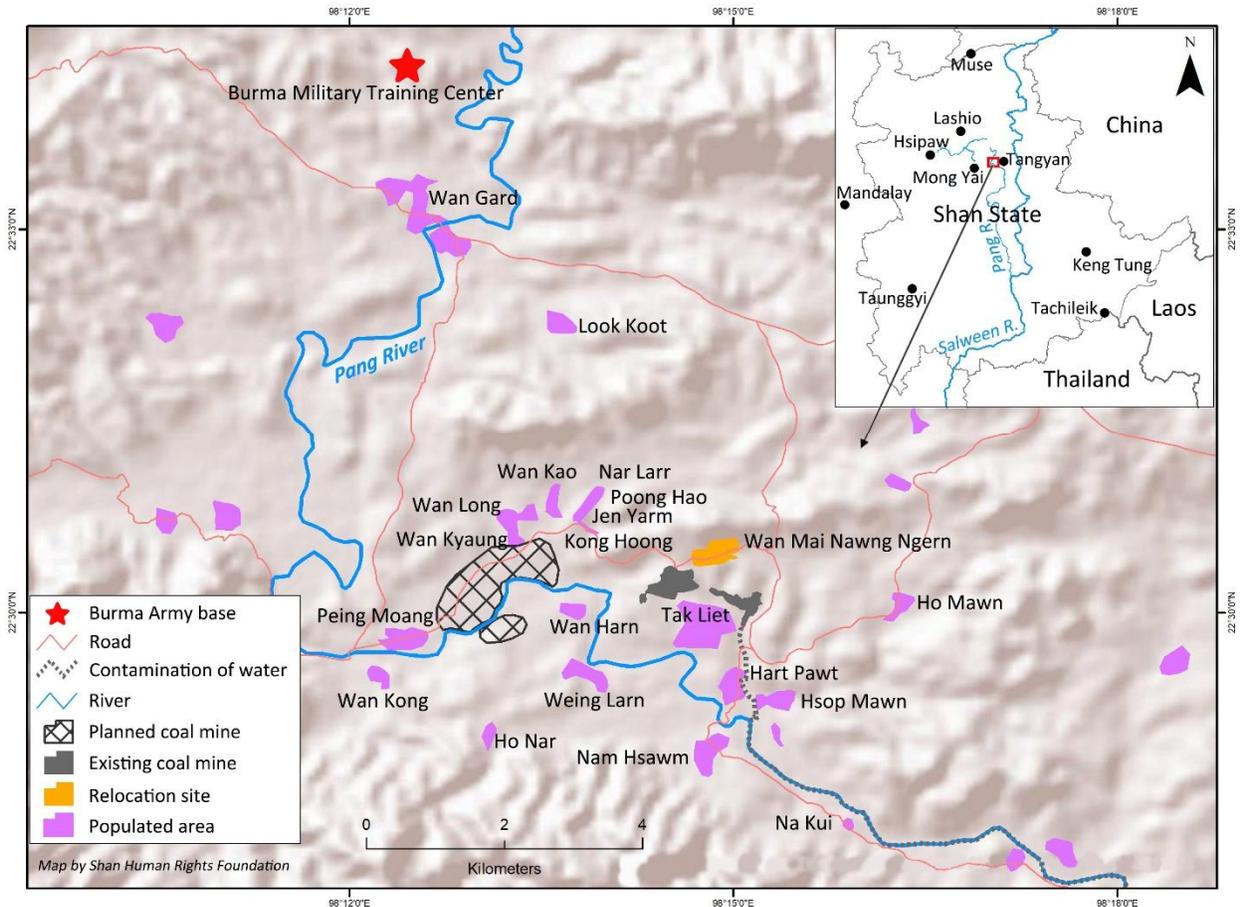
sign, whatever they were offered. They said they relied on their farmlands for their livelihoods and no amount of money could provide for them throughout their lives like their lands.

Since this meeting, youth from many villages in the area have been mobilizing and planning action to oppose the new mining.

The Na Hook tract chairman Loong Sai Goam Hsa was appointed after the military coup and is not supported by local villagers. The former chairman Sai Bom had sided with the villagers in opposing the coal mining in 2020, and been threatened by the Mong Ha militia as a result.

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### Planned coal mining expansion along the Pang River in Tangyan



**Population and farmland area of 14 villages near planned new coal mine**

<b>No.</b>	<b>North of Pang River</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>People</b>	<b>Rice fields (acres)</b>	<b>Cornfields (acres)</b>	<b>Groundnut fields (acres)</b>
1	Wan Long	42	195	735	432	1,250
2	Wan Kyaung	34	170	398	120	1,250
3	Wan Kao	43	225	900	1,440	1,850
4	Look Koot	45	235	750	1,200	3,000
5	Kong Hoong	34	170	600	120	2,500
6	Peing Moang	104	442	1,860	1,416	250
7	Poong Hao	80	390	1,650	400	1,000
8	Nar Larr	60	310	1,650	160	1,250
9	Tak Liet	65	345	1,200	100	1,050
<b>Total</b>		<b>507</b>	<b>2,482</b>	<b>9,743</b>	<b>5,388</b>	<b>13,400</b>

<b>No.</b>	<b>South of Pang River</b>	<b>Households</b>	<b>People</b>	<b>Rice fields (acres)</b>	<b>Cornfields (acres)</b>	<b>Groundnut fields (acres)</b>
1	Weing Larn	40	163	2,300	80	
2	Nam Hsawm	38	159	1,200	60	80
3	Ho Nar	23	85	660		
4	Wan Harn	20	90	690	250	100
5	Wan Kong	20	118	4,050		
<b>Total</b>		<b>141</b>	<b>615</b>	<b>8,900</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>180</b>

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