



Update by the Shan Human Rights Foundation

June 17, 2022

## Wa youth sentenced to death by SAC court after forced confession to bombing in Tachileik

The SAC district court in Tachileik, eastern Shan State, has sentenced a Wa youth to death by hanging after he was tortured to confess to throwing a bomb at a pro-regime rally in Tachileik town on February 1, 2022.

Ai Hseng Mong, age 24, was arrested the day after the explosion, and detained for four months before being sentenced on June 1, 2022, under Section 54 of the Anti-Terrorism Law and Section 368 (1) of the Criminal Procedure Code.

The pro-military rally was organized at the Shan Yoma playing field in Tachileik on February 1, 2022, on the one year anniversary of last year's coup. The participants were mainly SAC military family members, as well as villagers from Mong Hsat forced to attend by pro-regime Lahu militia groups.



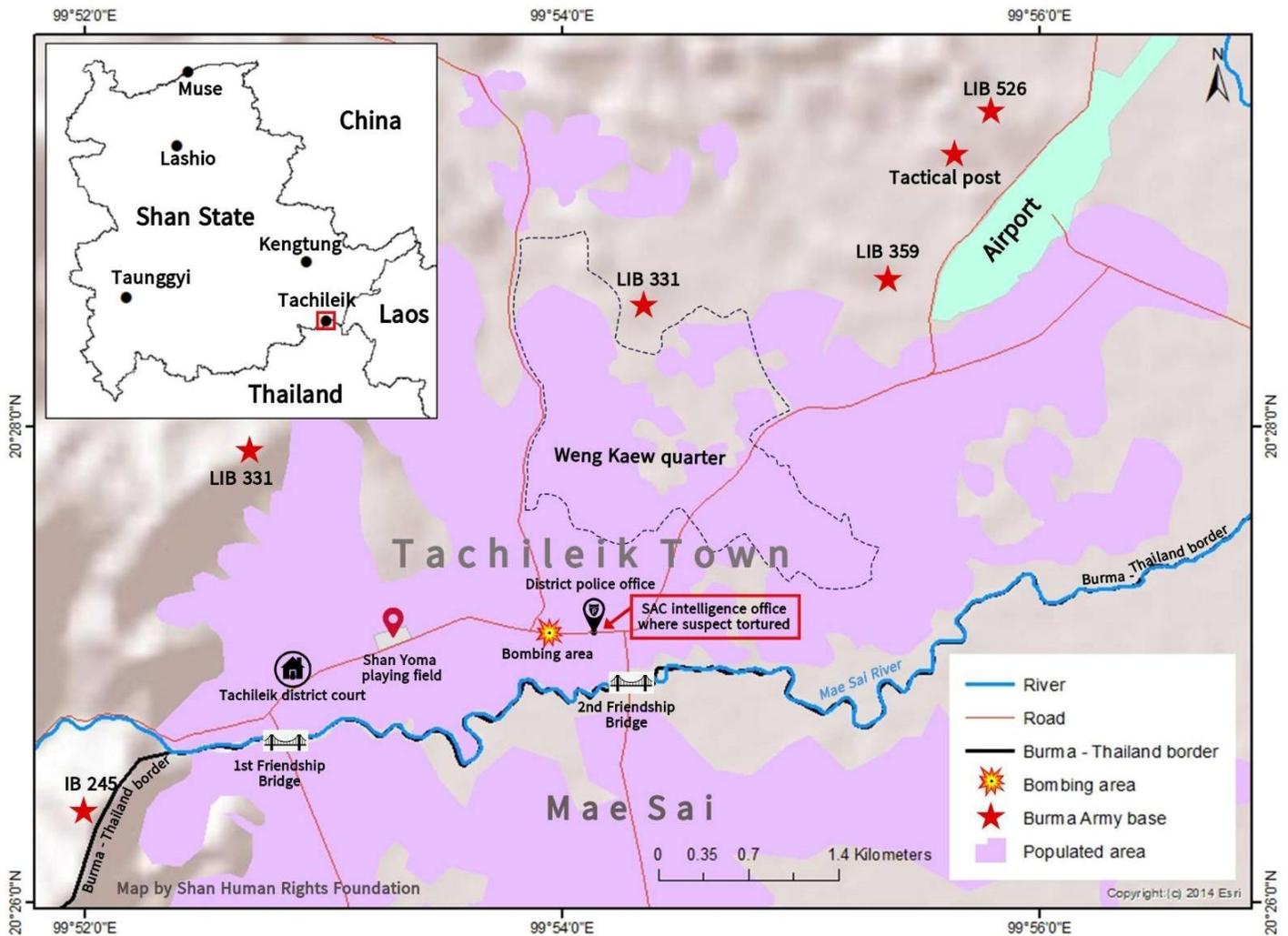
*Bomb explosion in Tachileik on Feb 1, 2022*

As the participants were parading through the streets, holding up pro-military banners and national flags, a bomb exploded in front of a high school in Sansai quarter at around 12 noon. People scattered in chaos, and the SAC soldiers and pro-regime militia taking security for the rally began shooting indiscriminately into the crowd. The incident left four people dead and over 30 injured. According to local sources, the casualties were mostly caused by the random firing of security forces.

The SAC police, intelligence and soldiers searched around the area for suspects linked to the bomb explosion, and on February 2, arrested Ai Hseng Mong and one of his friends at their boss's house in Weng Kaew quarter, where they were hired as laborers. They were then taken to the Tachileik intelligence office.

The intelligence officers informed Ai Hseng Mong that CCTV had recorded him riding his motorbike near the explosion site, and beat him severely to force him to confess. According to others detained at the same time but later released, Ai Hseng Mong was beaten until unconscious. Ai Hseng Mong was repeatedly beaten for one week, until he ended up confessing to the crime. He was then charged, and finally on June 1, the Tachileik District Court handed down his sentence. He was then transferred to Kengtung Prison.

### Location of events linked to wrongful death sentence in Tachileik



Another youth called Htet Lin Aung, age 21, was also charged by the Tachileik district court for involvement in the bomb explosion, and received a prison sentence of seven years.

Ai Hseng Mong was originally from Pangsang township, in the Wa Self-Administered Division. According to local sources, he was just a migrant worker, and was not involved in any political associations.

He is not fluent in Burmese, and his family and friends have been trying to appeal for his release. A community group called the Progressive Wa Youth Network issued a statement on June 3,

strongly opposing this unjust death sentence, and urging all Wa organisations to help solve the issue.

SHRF also calls urgently for the death sentence against Ai Hseng Mong to be revoked, and for his immediate and unconditional release.

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