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Update by Shan Human Rights Foundation

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Naypyidaw's escalated offensive in central Shan State displaces over 6,000; four civilians injured by indiscriminate shelling and shooting

The SHRF strongly condemns the escalated attacks in the past week by the Burma Army against the Shan State Progress Party/Shan State Army (SSPP/SSA) in central Shan State, involving indiscriminate shelling and shooting of civilians. The attacks have caused displacement of over 6,000 civilians from 22 villages in three townships since early October.

Naypyidaw has deployed 14 battalions to Mong Hsu, Mong Nawng and Ke See townships in a large scale offensive against the SSPP/SSA since October 6, allegedly to force SSPP/SSA to withdraw from "unauthorized" territories. In fact, the territories now being defended by SSPP/SSA have been under Shan administration for decades, as recognized by SSPP/SSA's bilateral ceasefire in January 2012. Naypyidaw is therefore blatantly violating its existing bilateral ceasefire agreement.

Initial attacks to seize the strategic Ta Sarm Boo river crossing in Mong Hsu caused over 3,600 villagers to flee from their homes. Despite SSPP/SSA withdrawal from Ta Sarm Boo on October 15, Napyidaw troops are now advancing closer to the SSPP/SSA Wan Hai headquarters in Ke See. Fighter jets flew over Wan Hai on October 25, terrifying local villagers, who feared they would be bombed.

On October 26, the Burma Army shelled the village of Wan Mwe Taw, south of Wan Hai, damaging civilian houses, and seriously injuring a 25-year-old villager, who was trying to run away from the shelling. On the same day, Burma Army troops shot and injured a 53-year-old farmer from Wan KoongNim village, southeast of Wan Hai, who had fled from his home in early October, but was returning to tend his farm.



Loong Boi, who was shot by Burmese troops



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လိဂ်း = လီးကုင်း
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Sai Oong who was injured by shrapnel

At midnight on October 28, the Burma Army began firing 120 mm shells at Wan Hai, precisely as hundreds of villagers were gathering at a temple to celebrate the end of Buddhist Lent. Eight shells landed in and around the village, damaging two houses and injuring two villagers, a 40-year-old woman and her 5-year-old daughter, who were sleeping at home.



Shrapnel damage at Nang Kaeng's house



A car which was damaged by Burmese shrapnel

This attack has caused the entire civilian population of Wan Hai, about 2,000 people, to flee from their homes and seek refuge in nearby villages and towns. Together with ongoing displacement from other areas, this brings the total number displaced by the current offensive to over 6,000. These displaced have had to abandon their homes and farms, and are in dire humanitarian need. 14 schools have been forced to close, with over 1,250 children unable to attend classes. Since November 1, 2015, the Burma Army has blocked all vehicles and people from accessing Hai Pa IDP camp.



IDP camp at Hai Pa Temple, Mong Hsu township

SHRF deplors this relentless military invasion of Shan administered territories, and the scale of human suffering being inflicted on local civilians. Nanyidaw is entirely responsible for these attacks, displacement and abuses. The attacks rip the mask off the so-called peace process, making it clear that Nanyidaw has no interest in a negotiated settlement to the conflict, but only in military subjugation of the ethnic peoples.

SHRF strongly urges the international community to publicly denounce Nanyidaw’s military aggression and to withhold further support for the “peace process” until Nanyidaw ends these systematic offensives against the ethnic peoples.

Details of civilian injury during recent Burma Army attacks

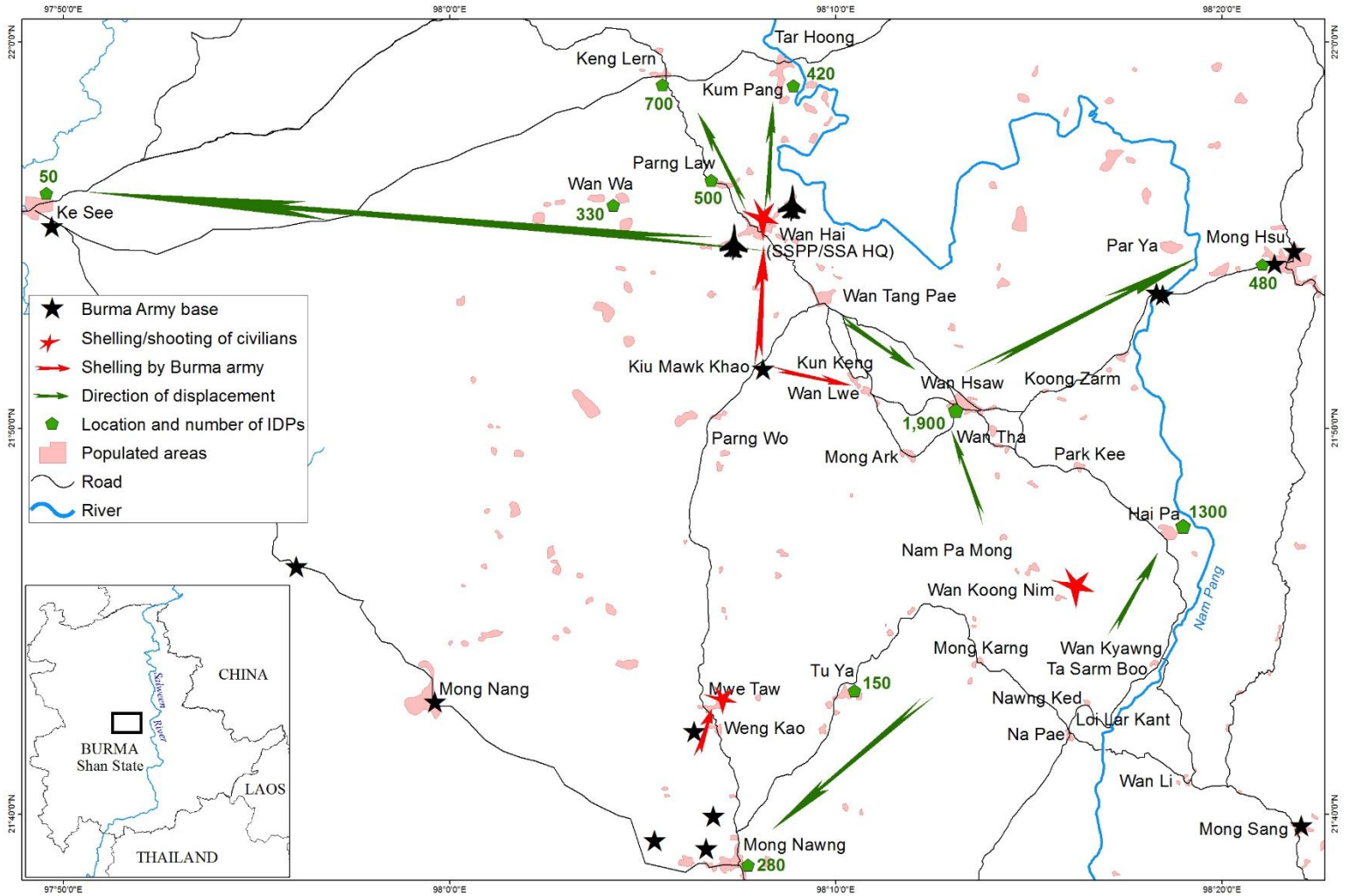
| Date | Civilian injury | Location | Details |
|--------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Oct 26, 2015 | 53-year-old villager shot by Burma Army troops; injured in | Wan Koong Nim, Hai Pa tract, Mong Su | Loong Boi, who had fled to Hai Pa, was returning to his farm |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|---|
| 10 am | arm | township | when he was shot at by Burmese soldiers. Two bullets hit his arm. He was operated on at Wan Hai medical centre. |
| Oct 26, 2015 9 pm | Shell injures 25-year-old villager in abdomen; 3 civilian houses damaged by shelling | Wan Mwe Taw village, Waeng Kao tract, MongNawng township | Sai Oong was running from Burma Army shelling of his village, but was hit by shrapnel, causing heavy bleeding. He was sent to MongNawng Hospital on Oct 27. |
| Oct 28, 2015 Midnight | Shelling (120 mm mortars) injures a 40-year-old woman and 5-year-old girl; 2 houses and cars damaged by shelling | Wan Hai, Ke See township | The Burma Army fired mortar shells at Wan Hai while about 200 villagers were celebrating the end of Buddhist Lent in a temple. Shells landed near the temple and school, hitting 2 houses, in which Nang Kaeng and her young daughter, Nang Hom Khao, were sleeping. Nang Kaeng was hit by shrapnel in the forehead; Hang Hom Khao was hit in the head and leg. |

Current numbers and locations of displaced villagers due to Burma Army offensive in central Shan State since October 6, 2015

| Current location of IDPs | Number | Origin of IDPs |
|--|--------------|---|
| Wan Hsaw village, Mong Hsu township | 1,900 | 22 villages (including Wan Lwe, Koon Keng, Mong Ark, KoongZarm, Wan Nur, Wan Hai, Wan Tam, Wan Kyaung, Nam Pa MOUNG, Nam Soam, ParkKee) |
| Mong Hsu town: - Wat Hom Yaen Temple; - Kyaung Waeng Zarn Temple; - Paukke 1 quarter; | 480 | |
| Hai Pa village, Mong Hsu township: - Hai Pa Temple | 1,300 | |
| MongNawng town: - Mingala Yan Aung Temple | 280 | |
| Du Ya | 150 | |
| Keng Lern, Wan Wa, Kum Pang, Ke See, Parng Law | Est. 2,000 | |
| Total | 6,110 | |

Burma Army attacks and displacement in central Shan State (Oct 24-29, 2015)



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