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Update by the Shan Human Rights Foundation

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Burma Army provokes fighting with Shan NCA signatory, shells civilian areas, displacing 2,000 in Mong Kung

SHRF condemns the Burma Army's provocation of fighting with the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA) in Mong Kung, central Shan State, despite the RCSS/SSA signing the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement. The fighting has involved shelling of civilian areas and displacement of about 2,000 villagers since the start of October 2016.

On October 1, about 40 Burma Army troops from IB 292, based in Nawng Wo, Lawksawk township, arrived without warning in the village of Pang Poi, about 25 miles north of Mong Kung town, and released 24 people being kept in the RCSS's local detention centre for drug offenders. When RCSS troops based nearby came to intervene, fighting broke out from 4 to 7.30 pm.

The next day, about 200 Burma Army troop reinforcements were sent in from the Na Boi army base in Laikha township, leading to further clashes with RCSS near Koong Sar village, about one mile northeast of Pang Poi. Two Burma Army helicopters also flew over the area. This caused over 700 villagers from Pang Poi (including 15 pregnant women), as well as about 200 villagers from the nearby villages of Nar Loi, Wan Mong, Hoi Jik and Koong Sar to flee to seek shelter in temples in Tong Lao, about 1 ½ miles east of Pang Poi. About 1,000 Tong Lao residents also went to sleep at the temples at night as they were afraid that fighting would spread to their village.

On October 3, the IB 292 troops retreated from Pang Poi village, escorting the 24 detainees and two warders to the LIB 505 base in Namlan, about 20 miles north. The Burma Army troops then fired mortar shells at Pang Poi village, damaging housing and vehicles. The detainees, including six women, were made to walk between the Burma Army troops, apparently as human shields to prevent RCSS attacks.

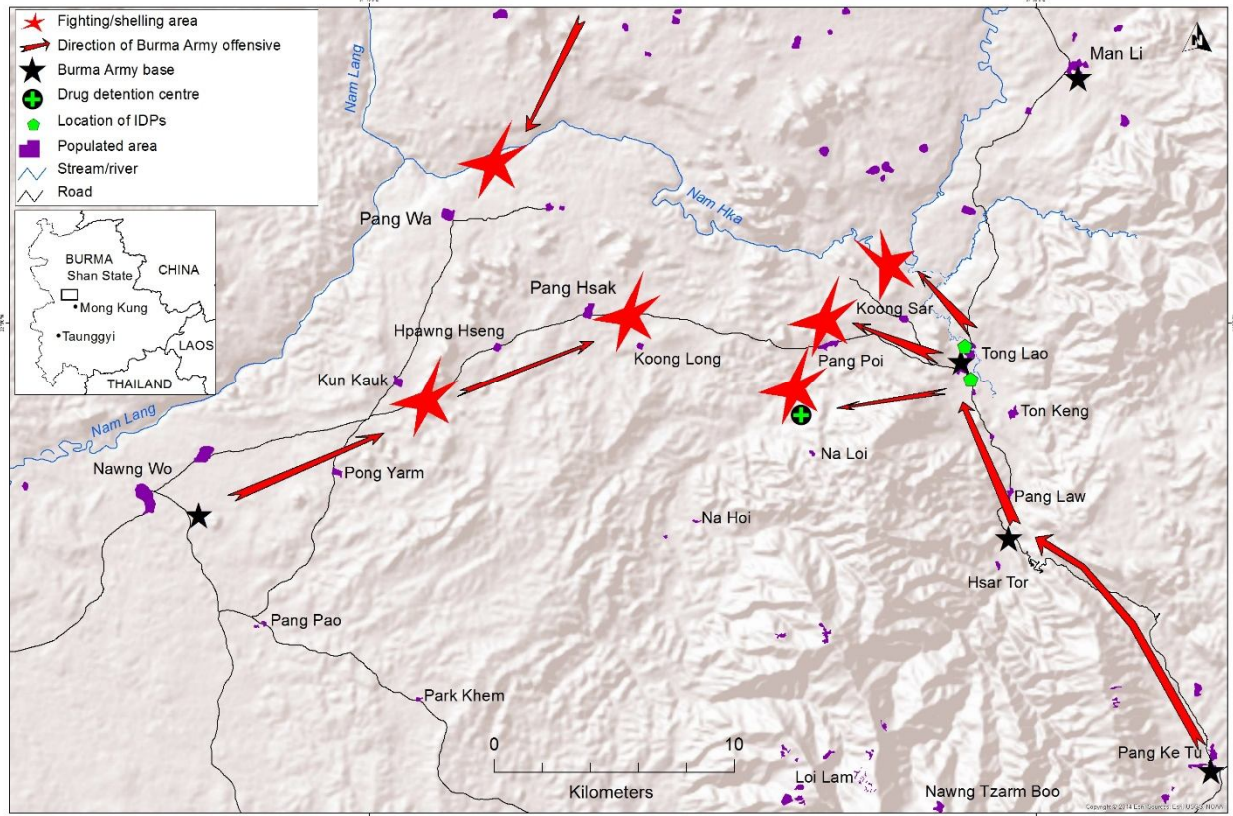
On October 4, about 180 more Burma Army troops were brought in from Mong Pai (on the Shan-Karenni State border) to Tong Lao, making many of the villagers too afraid to return home.

On October 7, the detainees were all released. However, the two civilian warders of the detention centre -- Sai Kyaw Lu, age 18, and Sai Aung Myint, age 40 -- are still being detained at the LIB 505 base in Namlan. On October 9, the Pang Poi headman, the Tong Lao headman, an SNLD MP from Hsipaw, and the Namlan administrative chairman went to request the release of the two warders from Namlan IB 243 base. However the commander said he could not release the two men without the permission of

the regional commander. The families of the two men are extremely worried about what will happen to them.

SHRF calls for the immediate release of the two warders, who have committed no crime and who were serving their community in running the detention centre, and calls on the Burma Army to stop provoking fighting, withdraw its troops from this area and allow the displaced villagers to return home safely.

Burma Army attack on NCA signatory RCSS/SSA in Mong Kung, Oct 2016



Background of the Pang Poi drug detention centre

The detention centre in Pang Poi was set up by RCSS at the request of the local community, who were concerned at the increasing availability of drugs and high rates of drug addiction in the Mong Kung and Namlan areas. Methamphetamine (“ya ba”) pills are cheap and easily available, meaning that even children as young as 10 years old are taking them. The cost of a methamphetamine pill is only 150 kyat (about USD 0.12). Adult drug dealers and users have been detained at the centre for 5-6 months.



Villagers made to walk between Burma Army soldiers to prevent attack

The list of those who were detained at the Pang Poi centre on October 1 is below. On 9 June 2016, Tun Tun Win, the 21-year-old son of the Burma Army IB 292 commander, had been arrested at an RCSS gate for carrying about 20 methamphetamine pills and placed in the detention centre. However, he had broken out of the centre on September 22, 2016. This appears to have been a reason why the IB 292 commander authorized the raid on the detention centre on October 1, 2016.

No.	Name	Age	Address
1	Ai Sai	35	Namlan, South Quarter
2	U Law Ka	47	Namlan, South Quarter
3	Nang Oo	43	Namlan, Ju Daw Quarter
4	Daw Hla Khin	53	Namlan, Factory Quarter
5	Sai Nyunt	47	Man Li tract, Ko Hark village
6	Poe Sar	47	Man Li tract, Ko Hark village
7	Sai Maung	43	Man Li village
8	Nang Horm	50	Man Li village
9	Daw Aye Larn	29	Man Li village
10	Nang Li	30	Man Li Village
11	Daw Aye Larn	30	Man Li village
12	Sai Larn	28	Wan Jing tract, Nam Saung Ku village
13	Lon Sanda	50	Wan Jing tract, Koong Sar village
14	Hla Shwe	21	Mong Khur tract, Man Pang village
15	Ai Sai	50	Mong Kung Township, quarter 4
16	Lon Nyo	51	Mong Kung Township, Ho Khai village
17	Sai Mong	23	Mong Kung township, Quarter 3
18	Sai Naung	34	Mong Kung township, Kie Oo village
19	Ai Pu Jin	36	Mong Kung township, Pang Ke Tu tract, Nam Mark Kin Village
20	Ai Aw	44	Mong Kung Township, Pang Ke Tu tract, Wan Ku village
21	Ai Lu	18	Tong Lao Tract, Lu Kan village
22	U San Saw	51	Mong Kung township, Pang Kart village
23	Myint Win	19	Naung Khio Township, Naung Long tract, Tharsi village
24	Sai Lin	31	Lawk Sawk township, In Daw tract, Nam Ku village

List of IDPs in Tong Lao (October 11, 2106)

The numbers of displaced villagers sheltering in Tong Lao on October 11, 2016, was as follows:

Village of origin	Age under 5	Age 5-17	Age 18-49	Age above 50	Total
	Male / Female	Male / Female	Male / Female	Male / Female	
Pang Poi	63 / 76	70 / 63	183 / 196	50 / 67	768
Koong Sar	13 / 12	36 / 47	53 / 75	16 / 21	273
					1,041



Villagers sheltering at temple in Tong Lao



Exploded Burma Army shell found in Pang Poi village



Damage to villager's house caused by Burma Army mortar shell in Pang Poi

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