September 14, 2017

Indiscriminate Burma Army shelling, shooting cause 300 villagers to flee in Mong Yai, northern Shan State - three villagers arrested, one beaten
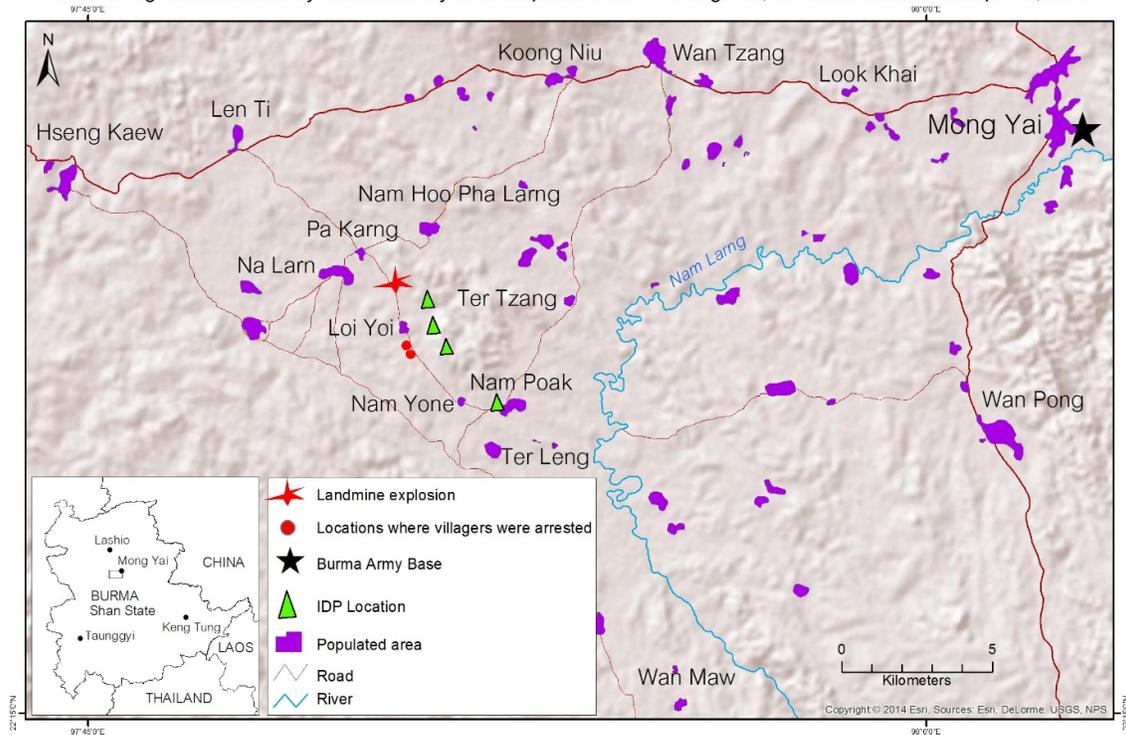
On September 10 at 8:00 am, a group of about 60 Burma Army troops from LIB 325 based in Mong Yai and the local Nam Pawng pro-government militia, were on patrol north of Wan Loi Yoi, Pa Karng tract, Mong Yai township, when they encountered a land mine blast. They then started indiscriminately shelling and shooting.

When they heard the shelling and shooting, all the residents of Wan Loi Yoi – about 300 people from 50 houses - fled their homes in three cars and Chinese trucks. About 100 villagers fled to Wan Nam Poak (a Shan village with over 200 inhabitants) in Pa Karng village tract, taking refuge there for one day, and about 200 villagers fled into the jungle and sheltered in farm tents. Wan Loi Yoi is situated about 20 miles from Mong Yai town, in the southwest of Mong Yai township, Lashio district, northern Shan State.

That day at 9:30 am, the Burmese troops met Sai Hsarng Hla who was on his way back from taking food to his hill farm workers south of Wan Loi Yoi. They arrested him, took off his shirt, tied his hands behind his back and took him with them in the direction south of Wan Loi Yoi village. About 10 minutes later, they saw suspected footprints of Shan soldiers and began searching around, and found Sai Hsarng Kyaw, a villager of Wan Na Larn, Pa Karng village tract, who was tending his hill corn farm and asked him. "Did you see Shan soldiers?" he replied, "No I didn't". A while later, gun fire was suddenly heard. They then hit him with fists, causing his left eye to become bruised, and said "Why did you lie to us?" They then fired shells and shot indiscriminately around the area. They forced him to carry their military bags at 3:30 pm.

They continued south, and when they were approaching the north of Nam Yone village at about 4:00 pm, they met another villager, Sai Hsarng Korn who was taking his buffalo home. The troops found a walkie-talkie on him, and arrested him. They took him with the other two villagers, forcing him to let his buffalo loose. The three villagers were kept at Wan Nam Poak, Pa Karng village tract, Mong Yai township, for one night. Sai Hsarng Hla and Sai Hsarng Korn were kept at other villagers' houses, and were not tied up, unlike Sai Hsarng Kyaw who was kept tied up at the cow stall of a villager called Lung Swe, an elder of Wan Nam Poak village from 7 pm till the next morning. In the morning of September 11, Lung Swe came to guarantee the villagers' innocence. They were then released.

Human rights violations by Burma Army and displacement in Mong Yai, N. Shan State on Sept 10, 2017

On September 9, before the shelling, the 60 Burma Army troops from the LIB 325 Mong Yai based and the Nam Pawng militia, had come to Pa Karng village and camped there at local school for one night before continuing to patrol the next day.

The details of the three villagers who were arrested are as follows:

1. Sai Hsarng Hla, aged 29, son of Lung Aww and Pa Kya, villagers of Wan Loi Yoi, Pa Karng village tract, Mong Yai township.
2. Sai Hsarng Kyaw, aged 36, son of Lung Tun and Pa Koam, villagers of Na Larn, Pa Karng village tract, Mong Yai township.
3. Sai Hsarng Korn, aged 32, son of Lung Sanda and Pa Moan, villagers of Wan Loi Yoi, Pa Karng village tract, Mong Yai township.

Villagers fleeing from Loi Yoi

On September 11, 2017 about 30 Burma Army troops from IB 147, based in Nawng Kaw, Khai Hsim, were coming from the direction of Hsawng Ke to the deserted village of Wan Kao Koong Mued in Hsipaw township, when they began shelling and shooting around the village, instilling fear among nearby villagers.

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