



Update by the Shan Human Rights Foundation

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Local villagers forced by SAC troops to build outpost near planned coal mine in Namzarng, southern Shan State

At the end of March 2022, over 100 villagers from Nawng Hee tract in Namzarng township, southern Shan State, were forced by SAC troops to build a new military outpost, about one mile from a large new coal mining operation planned by a subsidiary of Mandalay-based Ngwe Yi Pale company.

On March 29 and 30, 106 residents of Nam Mo village went to build the outpost north of Koong Di village in Nawng Hee tract, about 15 miles northeast of Namzarng town. The villagers were forced to dig bunkers, cut bamboo and erect fencing.

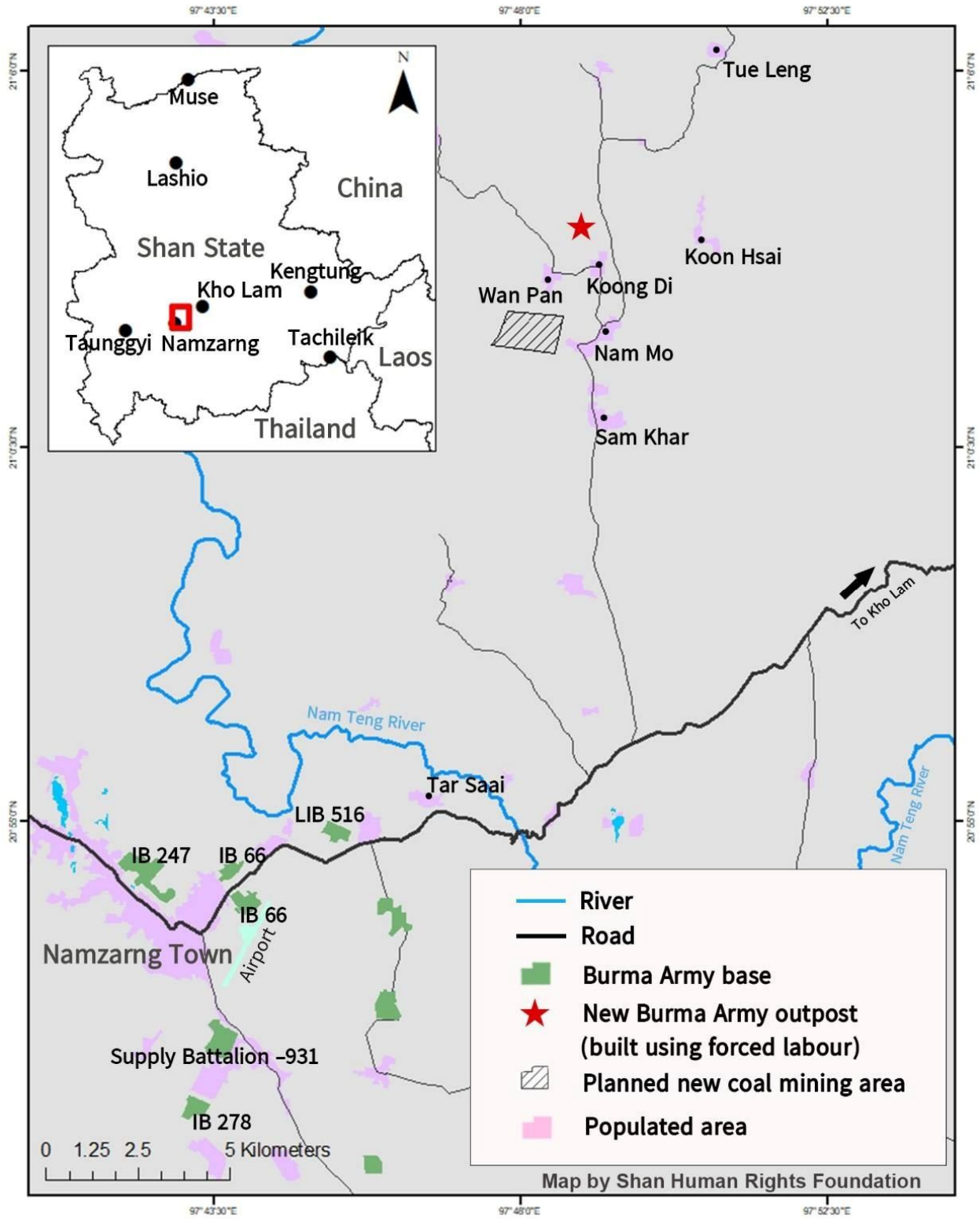
The outpost has been built on farmland belonging to a Nam Mo villager called Loong Hsa. He was not informed in advance that his land would be seized, and has received no compensation.

On March 23, about 35 SAC troops from LIB 553, based in Mong Karn, under the Triangle Regional Command in Kengtung, eastern Shan State, came from the Kho Lam-Namzarng main road and entered Koon Hsai village in Nawng Hee tract. The troops camped at Koon Hsai school for several nights, then moved to Tue Leng village, where they spent one night before arriving in Nam Mo village on March 28. The SAC troops camped in Nam Mo temple and that evening at 6 pm summoned the village head and asked to see the village household list. There are 63 households in Nam Mo village, and the troops ordered one person from each household to go and build the outpost for three days, but the villagers decided to send 106 people each day in order to finish the work in two days.

On March 31, the SAC troops moved from Nam Mo temple to stay at the new outpost, which is located about 20 miles from the SAC's Central Eastern Region Command headquarters at Kho Lam. Local villagers fear that this new military expansion will worsen the human rights situation in their area.

In the list of countrywide mining permits released by the SAC Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MONREC) in November 2021, there are five coal mining concessions in Nawng Hee tract of Namzarng, totalling 500 acres. All have been granted to Mandalay Distribution and Mining Company, a subsidiary of Ngwe Yi Pale.

Location of forced labour to build new SAC military outpost in Namzarg, S. Shan State



According to local villagers, company representatives informed Namzarg township authorities last month that coal surveying would begin soon in Nawng Hee.

This is a source of great concern for local farmers, as the planned coal mining area is located on lands where they plant corn as their main source of income.

According to the SAC MONREC website, Ngwe Yi Pale is currently the largest producer of coal in northern Shan State, where its mines in Hsipaw, Tangyan and Mong Yai have caused serious damage to the environment, health and livelihoods of local communities.

Mandalay Distribution and Mining Company currently operates another coal mine in Lawksawk in southern Shan State.

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