



**SHAN**  
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### Update by the Shan Human Rights Foundation

March 23, 2023

#### **At least 33 civilians killed by SAC troops during military operations in Pinlaung and Pekhon townships, southern Shan State**

SAC military operations against PDF groups in Pekhon and Pinlaung townships of southern Shan State since early this year have killed at least 33 civilians, including 21 massacred by SAC troops in Nam Neang village on March 11, and eight killed by SAC shelling of populated areas.

Apart from local battalions under the Eastern Regional Command, the SAC has deployed hundreds more troops from the Central Eastern Command and elite infantry divisions during the military operations. The troops who carried out the massacre, and torched 150 houses in Nam Neang village, were from ID 66 and LIB 518, under Military Operations Command (MOC) #2 of the Central Eastern Command.

#### **Widespread SAC shelling and airstrikes targeting civilian areas**

On January 8, 2023 at 9 pm, even though there was no fighting at the time, SAC troops from Infantry Division (ID) 55 stationed at Waree Su Palaing village, south of Moebye town, fired artillery shells into Moebye town. A shell landed on the house of U Leo Pan, aged 66, in Quarter 1, killing him.

On January 10, there was fighting between SAC troops patrolling west of Pekhon Lake and Pekhon PDF forces. Fighting then spread along the Shan and Karenni State border.

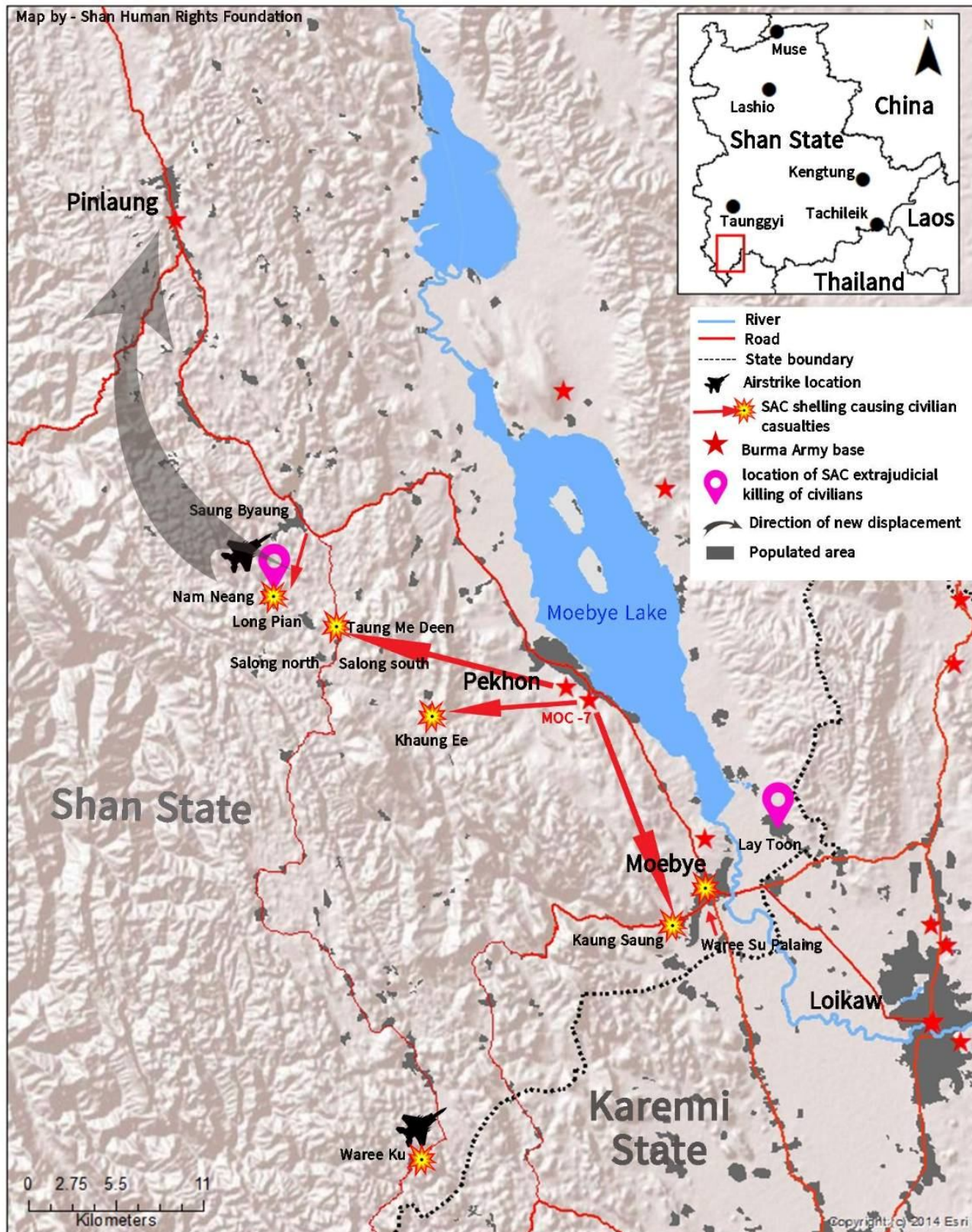
On January 16, at 8:15 pm, SAC artillery based in Pekhon indiscriminately shelled a temporary IDP camp near Kaung Saung village, west of Moebye town. Shrapnel hit and killed a 33-year-old woman called Daw Mu Lin and injured another two IDPs.

On January 24, fighting broke out between SAC troops and PDF forces in Moebye town. A shell hit a civilian house in Nyaung Wai quarter, causing it to catch fire.

In early February, SAC troops launched a military operation around Moebye and Pekhon, causing increased fighting. On February 10, the SAC used aircraft to bomb Waree Ku village, Ree Long Ree Kan village tract, Pekhon township. A bomb hit and damaged a local church.

On February 24, in the morning, the SAC troops and their PNO militia allies fought with the Karenni Nationalities Defence Force (KNDF) and other PDF forces at Taung Me Deen (Kaw Mai Hsang) village, Pinlaung township. Due to SAC shelling and the stationing of SAC troops in their villages, over 5,000 local villagers from Taung Me Deen, Long Pian, Salong South, Salong North and Nam Neang villages fled their homes to shelter in temporary IDP camps in Pinlaung town. Only a few villagers stayed behind to look after their property.

### Airstrikes, indiscriminate shelling and extrajudicial killing by SAC troops in Pinlaung and Pekhonn townships, S. Shan State, Jan-Mar 2023





On February 24 at 7 pm, SAC troops at the MOC #7 base in Pekhon indiscriminately shelled into Salong South, Salong North and Taung Me Deen villages in Pinlaung township. A shell hit and killed a 46-year-old woman in Taung Me Deen village.

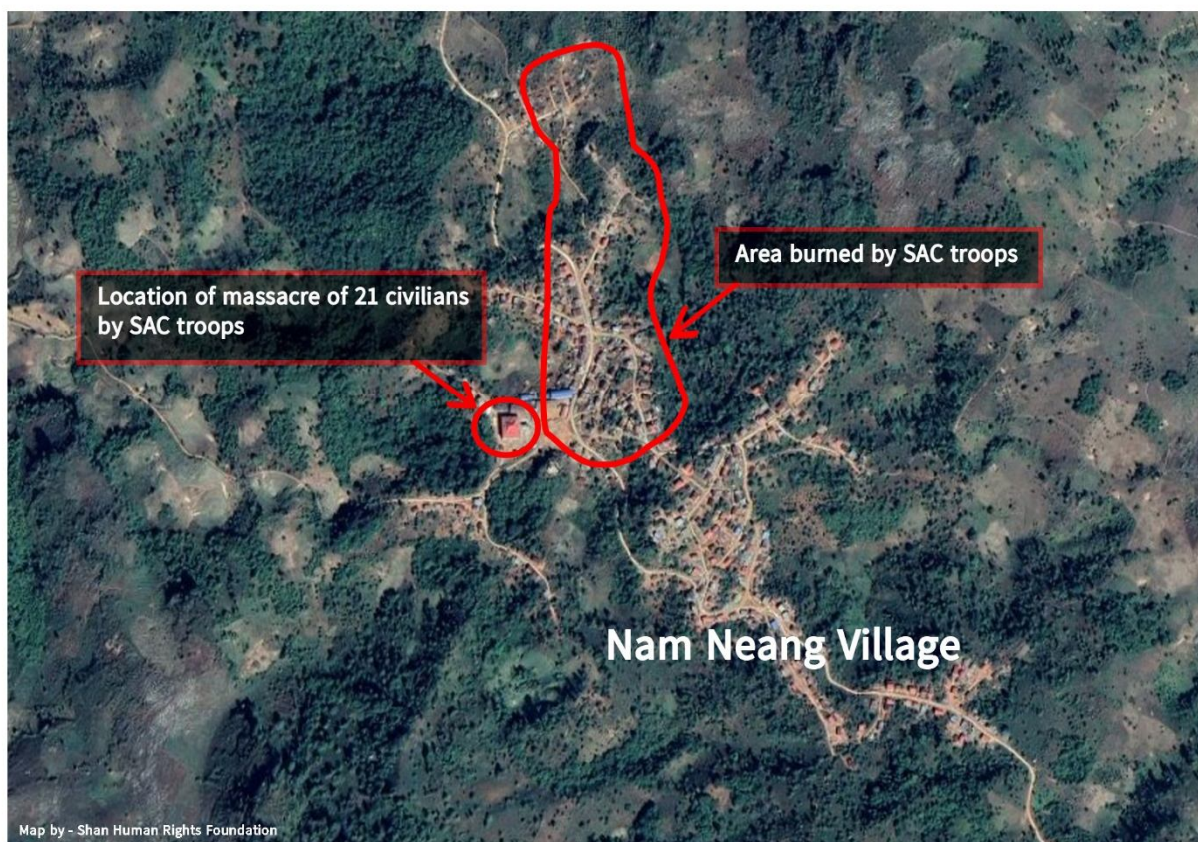
On February 27, at 8 pm, a 40-year-old man and 8-year-old child taking refuge at a local temple in Khaung Ee village, west of Pekhon, were killed by a shell fired from the MOC #7 base. The next evening, even though there was no fighting, the SAC troops shelled again into an IDP camp at a local temple in Khaung Ee village. A shell hit and killed two brothers aged 19 and 15.

On February 27, there was heavy fighting between SAC troops and PDF forces at Kaw Mai Hsang village, Pinlaung township. After the fighting, the body of one man and one woman were found in the village, and four men from the village also disappeared during the fighting.

### **Massacre at Nam Neang village**

On March 9 at 6 am, SAC troops from ID 66 and ID 77, with their PNO militia allies, fought against PDF forces near the villages of Saung Byaung, Taung Me Deen, Long Paen, Salong South, Salong North, Nam Neang and Panglong in Long Paen village tract, Pinlaung township. During the fighting, the SAC troops used military aircraft and heavy weapons to fire into populated areas. According to a Nam Neang villager hiding in the jungle, the SAC carried out at least 15 airstrikes from March 9 to 11.

#### **Location of massacre and torching of houses in Nam Neang village**



On March 10, in the evening, SAC troops stationed at Payakone hill, near Saung Byaung village, shelled into Nam Neang village, killing an elderly man, U Aye Ko aged 60, who was taking shelter at Nam Neang temple.

On March 11, in the morning, SAC soldiers at Payakone hill fired artillery indiscriminately and deployed more troops into Nam Neang village. Later that morning, SAC troops from ID 66 and LIB 518 called out 3 monks and 18 local villagers who were taking refuge in the Nam Neang temple building and shot them dead. After killing them, the SAC troops took photos of the corpses and shared the photos on social media, saying they had killed PDF forces.



*Houses burned by SAC troops in Nam Neang village*

The SAC troops then set fire to about 150 of the 350 houses in Nam Neang village.

On March 12, the KNDF and joint PDF forces were able to enter Nam Neang village and found the corpses of the monks and local villagers in front of the temple. There had been 6 monks at Nam Neang temple, but the remaining 3 monks have disappeared.

In the evening of March 12, IDPs sheltering at Lay Toon IDP camp, east of Moebye town, fled to nearby jungle when SAC ID 66 troops patrolling from Pekhon arrived at the IDP camp. However, two elderly IDPs, U Hla Ngein aged 78, and Daw Mu Lu aged 81, as well as 15-year-old Maung Kyaw Htoo (fled to join his family) were unable to escape in time, and were shot dead by the SAC troops. The corpses of the elderly IDPs were found burned.

Before the recent military operation, there were over 2,500 IDPs sheltering in various locations in eastern Moebye township, but most have now fled again in different directions.

Fighting is ongoing between the SAC troops and their PNO militia allies against joint PDF forces along the border of Pinlaung and Pekhon township.



*Residents of Nam Naeng and nearby villages fleeing attacks and taking shelter at a temple in Pinlaung town*

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