

Statement by the Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT)
November 28, 2014

**KWAT condemns repeated Burma Army shelling along Kachin-China border,
threatening tens of thousands of civilians**

The Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT) strongly condemns the repeated Burma Army shelling in the Laiza and Maijayang areas during November 19 to 23, 2014, which not only killed 23 cadets, but also endangered the lives of tens of thousands of civilians. KWAT is calling urgently for the Burma Army to end its offensives and begin troop withdrawal.

Three days after firing shells in the Laiza area on November 19, which killed 23 cadets and injured 20 others, the Burma Army fired six shells west of Maijayang, which landed near Nhkawng Pa IDP camp, housing 1,616 IDPs, and in the villages of Bum Kahtawng and Mahtang, populated by hundreds of people. Fortunately, no one was injured, but many of the IDPs fled in terror to the nearby jungle.

On November 23, the Burma Army fired eight shells in the vicinity of Laiza, which has a population of about 20,000 people. One shell landed at Alen Bum, in the western section of the town, where there is a boarding school housing about 1,000 IDP children. Another shell landed only 50 meters from Je Yang IDP camp, housing 8,870 people. One shell overshot Hpun Lum Yang IDP camp, housing 2,010 people, and exploded on the China side of the border.

During the past week, hundreds of Burma Army troops have been sent to reinforce positions around Laiza and near Bhamo, instilling fear among local populations of fresh attacks.

KWAT deplores this increased military aggression, which is not only endangering large numbers of civilians, but also completely destroying trust in the current peace process.

“Why is the Burma Army renewing its attacks at this critical time of nationwide ceasefire negotiations? Do they want to sabotage the peace process?” asked Shirley Seng of KWAT.

In order to restore trust, it is urgently needed for the Burma Army to stop its offensives in the ethnic areas and withdraw from front line positions. The Burmese government must also begin political dialogue with the ethnic armed groups towards genuine federal reform.

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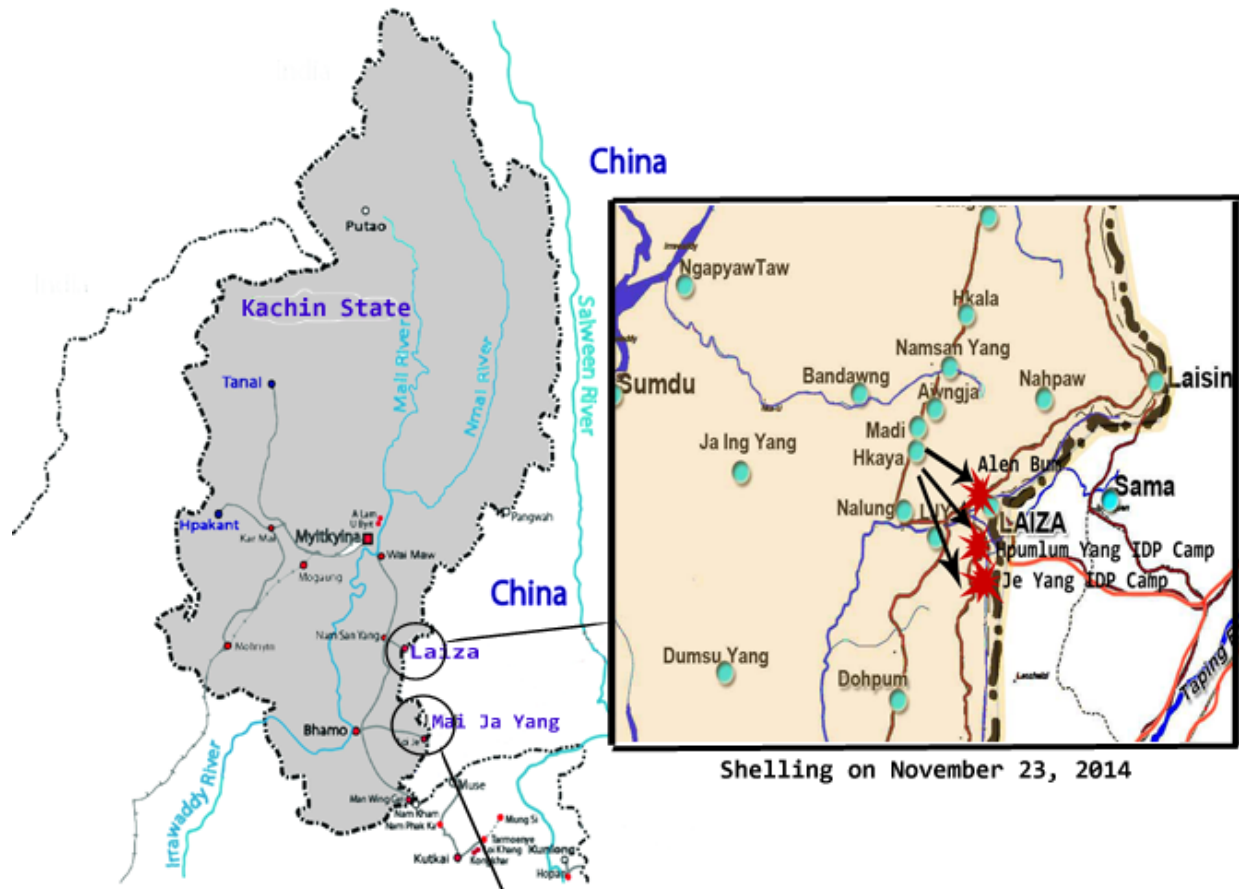
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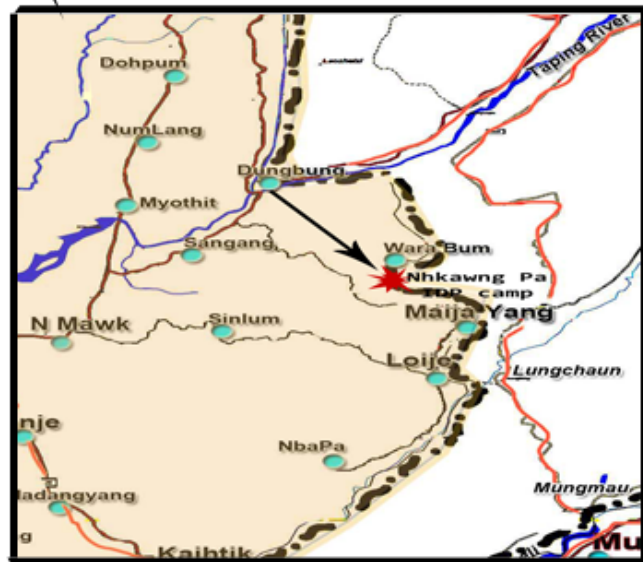
Kachin Women's Association Thailand (KWAT) is a non profit-making organisation working on behalf of Kachin women. We have a vision of a Kachin State where all forms of discrimination are eliminated; where all women are empowered to

participate in decision making at a local, national and international level; and where all Kachin children have the opportunity to fulfill their potential.

Map showing civilian areas shelled by the Burma Army



Shelling on November 23, 2014



Shelling on November 22, 2014