

Date: 8th August, 2017

## Press release by Kachin CSOs

### **Appeal for the immediate release of Kachin farmer Nlam Bawk Naw, arbitrarily arrested on the Ledo Road by the Burma Army on June 20, 2017**

Kachin CSOs are calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Kachin farmer Nlam Bawk Naw, who was arbitrarily arrested by Burma Army troops on the Ledo Road in eastern Hpakant township on June 20, 2017.

On that day, at about 3 pm, there had been an armed clash between the Burma Army and the Kachin Independence Army along the Ledo Road east of Kamaing. Shortly after the fighting, 50-year-old farmer Nlam Bawk Naw, who had been drinking alcohol, was walking from his house to a row of restaurants in the middle of Lawah village, which lies on the Ledo Road.

When Nlam Bawk Naw was about 100 feet from the restaurants, several restaurant owners and other villagers witnessed a group of Burma Army soldiers stopping him, hitting him in the head with rifle butts, punching and kicking him. He was seen being led away, his hands tied behind him, towards the temple compound at the entrance to Lawah village, where the Burma Army troops were camping. Early the next morning, the troops left the village, and Nlam Bawk Naw has not been seen since.

The column involved was comprised of troops from IB 86, 297 and 298. However, enquiries with these battalions have yielded no result. On June 20, two of Nlam Bawk Naw's daughters went with the Lawah village headman to the military camp of IB 298 at Jahtu Zup to ask after their father, but were not allowed into the camp.

On July 24, 2017, Nlam Bawk Naw's eldest daughter wrote a formal appeal to the Kachin Chief Minister and Northern Regional Commander asking them to locate and release her father. Copies were sent to the State Counsellor and the head of the Myanmar Human Rights Commission. There has been no reply.

Nlam Bawk Naw is a widower with five children. "Since our mother passed away, we have depended on our father," said his eldest daughter Kaw Mai. "We are so afraid something bad has happened to him. I can't bear to think about it. Our whole family does not feel safe."

Kachin CSOs have grave fears for the safety of Nlam Bawk Naw, and call urgently for his immediate and unconditional release.

Endorses by:

1. Kachin National Youth Network (KNYN)
2. Never End Tomorrow (NeT)
3. Kachin Development Networking Group (KDNG)
4. Kachin Women Association (KWA)
5. BRIDGE
6. Htoi Gender and Development Foundation
7. Kindness
8. Kachin Lawyer Group

9. Kachin State Women Network
10. Kachin Women Union
11. UOKTHON
12. Wunpawng Amyu Sha Zinlum Hpung
13. Kachin Youth Organization
14. Kachin Alliance USA
15. Kachin Women Peace Network (KWPN)
16. Kachin Canadian Association( Canada)

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