

A decorative border of small, stylized butterfly illustrations surrounds the text. The butterflies are arranged in a continuous line along the top, bottom, left, and right edges of the page.

KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

MAY 1997



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By the end of May, the rainy season seemed to have begun in Tak section of the border area, since there were two or three heavy down-pours in the last week of the month. We can breathe a sigh of relief with regard to one aspect of worry, the fire hazard, which is at the top of the list of hazards in the dry season. Fortunately, the victims of fire attacks on Wangkha and Donpakiang, who had been moved either to Wangkha or Maela, and Maela have managed to rebuild their houses (huts) in time.

Ta Per Poo refugee camp, which came under fire attack in April, was dismantled and the people were moved on May 26th to Noh Po camp with the help of local Thai authorities. About half of the refugee population from this camp chose to return to the other side, at the time of relocation, since it is the beginning of farming season and they would rather face the persecution or test the promise to treat them well by the SLORC, rather than to become separated from their lands.

For the refugees in the south, in the border areas of Kanchanaburi and Ratchaburi provinces, where the monsoon begins in early May, however, the rain is rather a curse, because they still have to live in make-shift shelters, on wet ground, as the location for setting up the camp has not been decided by the local Thai authorities yet. Suggestions or outright threats of forced repatriation and barriers in the way of NGOs providing relief have apparently subsided thanks to the concern raised by the International Community and some Thai organizations that are more conscious of Thailand's status in the civilized community of the world. Is it the final triumph of sense or rather the long standing humanitarian and noble tradition of Thailand over the chase for easy profit? We would like to think that it is, but all concerned should not let the guard down yet, as the drive for easy profit may not be lulled for long.

Of the more than 2,000 persons in Nyang-lay-bin district totally uprooted by the SLORC offensive with attendant atrocities, which began in early February, a few have arrived at the border. According to still unconfirmed reports, some of their own areas moving from one hiding place to another, as they prefer not to take the risks of going through areas crawling with SLORC troops.

Before closing, we, the Karen Refugee Committee, would like to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to the Thai authorities concerned and the Royal Thai Government for allowing the Karen refugees to take refuge in the border areas of Thailand and for permitting the international NGOs to provide the basic needs of the refugees. We are also much indebted to the various NGOs, aid organizations and agencies, the democratic countries and the International Community, including the UNHCR and EU, for providing relief assistance to the refugees or raising concern whenever necessary. We are also thankful to our friends far and near for their valuable advice and for their prayers in time of our need.

May God bless all of you.
I beg to remain

Yours faithfully,



Robert Htwe
Chairman
Karen Refugee Committee

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS.

MAE SOT AREA	CAMP	No.of families	Over 12 YRS		5- 12 YRS		Under 5 YRS		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	
	Wang Kha (Huay Ka Lok)	1689	3021	2964	799	766	614	603	8767
	Mae La	4088	8890	7967	3317	2519	1517	1308	25518
	Sho Klo (Mae Song)	1026	1676	2040	1042	1426	369	368	6921
	Maw Ker	1495	3258	2686	869	762	791	712	9078
		8298	16845	15657	6027	5473	3291	2991	50284
N O R T H	Mae Ra Ma Luang	793	1588	1444	600	490	344	310	4776
	Khun Mae Kong Kha	515	842	950	377	389	257	282	3097
	Sa La	336	680	592	237	229	84	101	1923
	Mae Sa Kup	380	726	728	277	240	108	159	2238
	Khlo Pa	349	685	668	266	225	162	177	2183
	U Da Hta	422	944	814	238	217	177	208	2598
	Mae Ye Hta	295	633	539	257	200	80	75	1784
		3090	6098	5735	2252	1990	1212	1312	18599
		11388	22943	21392	8279	7463	4503	2991	68883
S O U T H	Noh Po	1878	3146	2599	1620	1561	1060	987	10973
	Kanchanaburi Province								
		1576							10398
		14842							90254

RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED FOR THE MONTH

FROM	ITEMS					School Supplies		
	Rice sacks	Salt kgs	F.Paste tins	M.Nets Pcs.	Pressed Sawdust bundle	Set	Sharpener	Chalk small boxes
B B C	7386	16,350	3,091	22350	A 11,900	-	-	-
B B C	100	-	-	-	B 2,100	-	-	-
COERR	350	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ZOA	-	-	-	-	-	3324	39	270

A (3 bundle / family) B (2 bundle / family) Mae La + Sho Klo only.

DISTRIBUTION OF RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED

CAMP	Rice	Salt	F. Paste	M.nets	School supplies					Big shar-pener	Chalk small boxes
					KG	Pn	Mid	High	teacher		
Wang Ka	1,376	3,400	553	3,000							
Mae La	3,946	7,850	1,533	8,800							
Sho Klo	1,119	2,150	445	2,350	740	458	125	46	55	29	190
Maw Ker	1,394	2,950	560	3,000							
Noh Po	-	-	-	5,200	400	800	560	60	80	10	80
KRC/MSF	20	-	-	-							

SCHOOL SUPPLIES SET

Kindergarten - contain/set	Primary - contain /set	Mid/High/Teacher -contain /set
1. Note-book 10 Pcs.	Note-book 15 pcs.	Note-book 20 Pcs.
2. Pencils 8 Pcs.	Pens 4 pcs.	Pens 10 pcs.
3. Colour pencils 1 pcs	Pencils 12 pcs.	Pencils 6 pcs.
4. Drawing book 2 pcs.	Ruler 1 pcs.	Ruler 1 pcs.
5. Colouring book 1 pcs.	Eraser (pencil) 2 pcs.	Eraser (pen) 2 pcs.