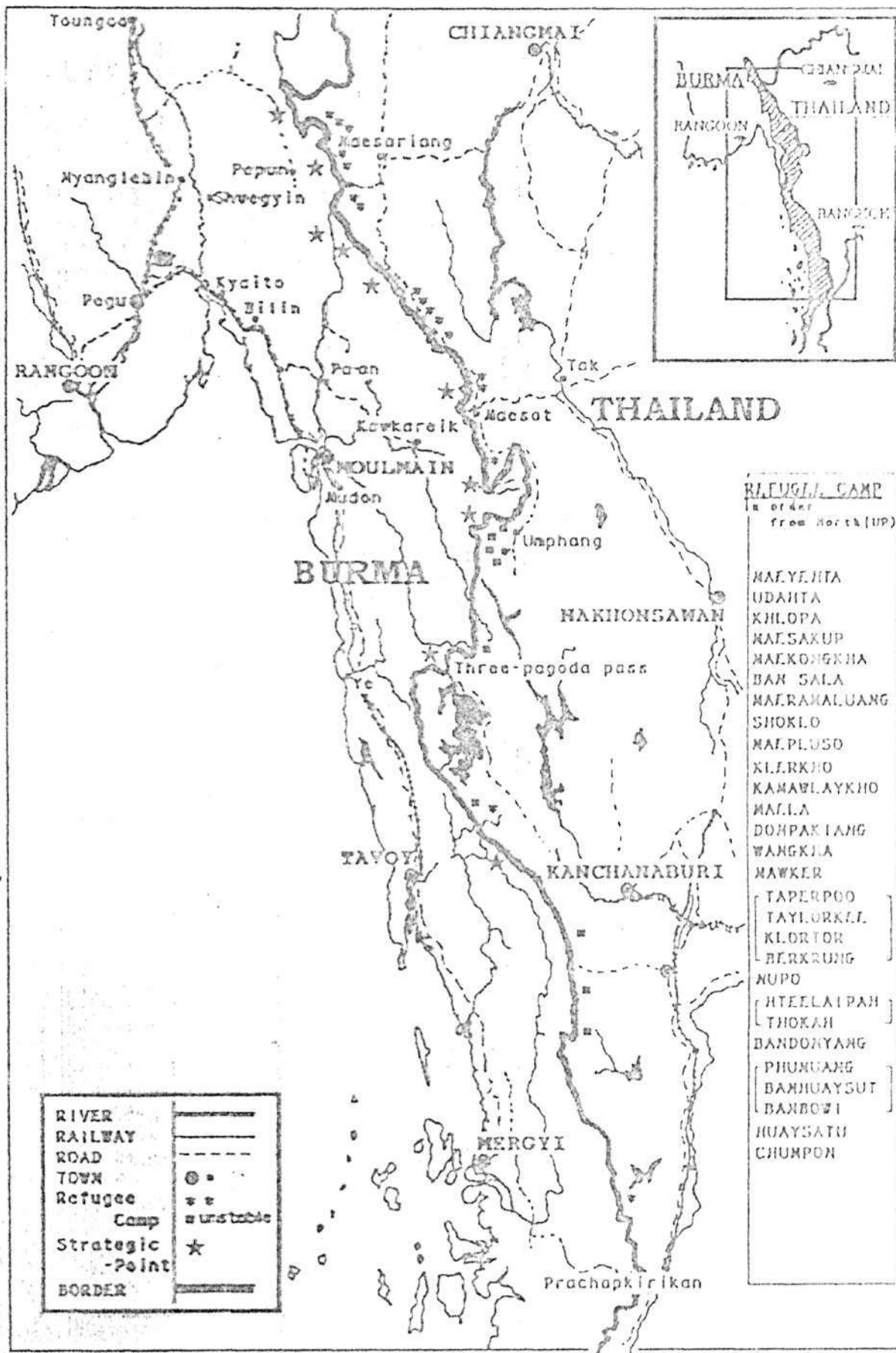




KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

DECEMBER. 1997



REFUGEE CAMP
in order
from North (UP)

- MAEYENITA
- UDAHITA
- KHLOPA
- MAESAKUP
- MAEKONGKHA
- BAN SALA
- MAERAMALUANG
- SHOKLO
- MAE PLUSO
- KLERKHO
- KAMAWLAYKHO
- MALLA
- DOHPAKIANG
- WANGKHA
- MAWKER
- TAPERPOO
- TAYLORKAI
- KLORTOR
- BERKRUNG
- KUPO
- HTEELAI PAH
- THOKAH
- BANDONYANG
- PHUMUANG
- BANHUAYSUT
- BANBOWI
- HUAYSATU
- CHUMPON

RIVER	
RAILWAY	
ROAD	
TOWN	
Refugee Camp	
Strategic Point	
BORDER	

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December, being the last month of the year, is the time for reflection, of looking back and evaluating on what we have accomplished in the task that we have set for ourselves.

As a team, we feel that we have not been able to achieve much of what was expected of us, considering the draw-backs, deficiencies and insufficiencies in many of our structural and work performances.

At the beginning of 1997, the refugee population in 20 camps along the Thai-Burma Border region was estimated at around 78700.

In January 1997, refugee camps at Wang Kha, near Mae Sot, and Don Pa Kiang in Mae Ra Mart District were attacked and burnt down by the DKBA and SLORC Troops. Planned attacks on other camps were being thwarted by protective measures initiated by the Thai Security Personnel.

More than 35000 refugees are being affected by these attacks, people losing what little they have of material possessions.

Refugees from Don Pa Kiang were relocated to Mae La and Wang Kha camps, material for building new shelters provided by BBC.

Beginning with mid-February, there was an influx of Karen refugees into Thai territory, the reason being the SLORC military offensives on the KNU 4th and 6th Brigade areas in Kawkaeik, Tavoy and Mergui Districts, opposite Umphang, Mac Sot and Kanchanaburi Districts of Thailand. Refugee camps inside the Karen State like Mae Tharaw Knee and Lay Pho Htar had to be abandoned. Some refugee camps in Thai Territory also had to be relocated.

Ta Per Poo, Noh Pha Doh, Noh Pa Htaw Wah, Htee Htar Baw, Ta Kwee Klaw arc being relocated to a new camp at Noe Poe.

By April 1997, there were 7 refugee camps in the Northern area, with total population of over sixteen thousand. In Mae Sot area, there were 4 camps with nearly forty nine thousand, in Umphang area, 2 camps with over twelve thousand, and in the South (Kanchanaburi) region, 4 camps with over ten thousand refugees - altogether 16 camps with about ninety thousand refugees. It can be assumed that a large number of displaced people are staying outside of camps, living on their own, working in towns and village farms.

By August 1997, the number of refugees in camps had risen to over ninety-one thousand. Refugees from Ta Per Poo were shifted to Noh Poe and Maw Ker camps for security reasons.

During August and September 1997, SLORC Troops intensified their imposition of the Four Cuts Policy of cutting off Food, Fund, Intelligence and Recruits for the Resistance forces. Widespread subjugation measures such as burning of whole villages, looting of properties, forced labours, atrocities and personal abuses were committed unchecked. Witnessed accounts say of loads of looted properties, including wood posts and plank from dismantled houses are being trucked back by military lorries.

As a result, large numbers of villagers are deprived of their place and source of living and thousands of them are trying to seek safe refugee in Thailand. But as there was no "Fighting" people were not allowed to cross the border, and those who had already crossed into Thailand were considered illegal entrants and to be treated as such. There was no allowance for these newly displaced people to enter refugee camps. Thousands of them are stranded in the forests along the border.

The KRC had tried to address this overwhelming problem, with whatever means at its disposal.

In November, an incident occurred when some Thai Security personnel tried to relocate the displaced community taking shelter near the village of Kwee Ler Taw in Umphang District. These people were to be sent back and relocated at a site on the Border. The Displaced Persons refused to be relocated to the new site, citing insecurity. Some people were hurt and many lied into the forest, to stay in hiding. Many people and groups were concerned. The NGOs tried in earnest to find and to support these people. Mention must also be made of unexpected help from another quarter, the Thai Karen villagers. They shared what they have with the displaced people, a magnificent gesture considering that these villagers were mostly subsistence farmers.

Of late. Goodwill prevails. Harmonious resolve was effected when the responsible authorities discontinued the process of "Returning" these displaced people. The KRC, as an umbrella organisation responsible for the refugees, has played its role, however "minute it may be, of safe guarding the welfare of the displaced people.

On the other hand though, there are restrictions of movements for refugees outside of camps, so it would be prudent to watch for any appearance of malnutrition, especially among those vulnerable, like mothers and young children, as most of them will have no access to essential food elements. But taking everything into consideration, the KRC feels that, though the situation as regards the overall refugee population, cannot be said to be excellent, it can be assumed to be reasonably conducive to personal survival.

December as afore said is the time for reflection. But it is also the season of Goodwill and Peace.

So, in this time of Goodwill and Peace, we wish all the People of the Kingdom of Thailand, a very Happy and a prosperous New Year. Our gratitude goes out to the Royal Thai Government for the provision of safe refuge for all of us, until the time as when safe return is assured.

Last, but not least, our gratitude and wishes for the Good Season goes out to the Non Governmental Organisations, Aid Organisations, Aid Groups and Friends, for their compassion and understanding and for their unfailing support for us through all these trying years.

May God bless all of you.

I beg to remain

Yours sincerely,



Robert Htwe
Chairman.

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)	1677	3111	3016	721	758	572	627	8805
	Mae La	4265	856	7940	3304	2507	1630	1401	25638
	Mae La T.B (CLINIC)								104
	Sho Klo (Mae Song)	1040	2113	2070	953	925	387	381	6829
	Maw Ker	1363	3040	2631	772	689	673	605	8410
		8345	9120	15657	5750	4879	3262	3014	49786
N O R T H	Mae Ra Ma Luang	788	1567	1464	652	495	352	335	4885
	Khun Mae Kong Kha	553	897	1006	399	402	272	302	3278
	Sa La	471	968	858	351	353	129	114	2773
	Mae Sa Kup	415	800	801	292	259	121	176	2449
	Khlo Pa	442	838	823	319	275	199	216	2670
	U Da Hta	545	1221	1003	381	362	214	224	3405
	Mae Ye Hta	2i.	635	533	259	203	86	81	1797
		3511	6946	6488	2653	2349	1373	1448	21257
S O U T H	Noh Po	1949	3541	2990	1103	1043	933	949	10559
	Ban Don Yang	317	348	389	271	234	129	117	1488
	Tham Him	1624	2043	2243	870	850	830	859	7695
	Hti Yo Ki	204	264	291	106	73	93	101	928
	Klio Thay Lu	70	77	85	22	16	36	44	280
		4160	6273	5998	2372	2216	2021	2070	20950
	Grand Total	16016	30339	28141	10775	9444	6656	6532	91993

RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH.

FROM	RICE 100kg sacks	Salt Kilos	F-paste 16kg tins	Yellow Bean kilos	Blanket Pcs.	Mosquito Net Pcs	Chillies kilos	Cooking Oil 13.75 litre tins	Sarong Pcs.	Sawdust Logs Bundles
BBC	9180	24350	3754	13800	120	650	1470	710	-	30536
COERR	350	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
ICS	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	*569	-

* For 569 male and female school teachers in the various Karen Refugee Camps.

DISTRIBUTION OF RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED.

Camp	ITEMS								
	Rice	Salt	Fish paste	Yellow Bean	Blanket	Mosquito Net	Chillies	Cooking Oil	Sawdust Logs
Wang Kha	1392	3600	560	1680	-	-	-	-	5040
Mae La	4110	10500	1605	4278	60	50	-	-	12904
Sho Klo	1100	2550	425	1042	-	100	-	-	3 120
Maw Ker	1382	3550	556	-	-	-	-	-	4120
Noh Poe	1526	3900	608	13800	60	500	1470	710	5352
KRC/MSF	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-