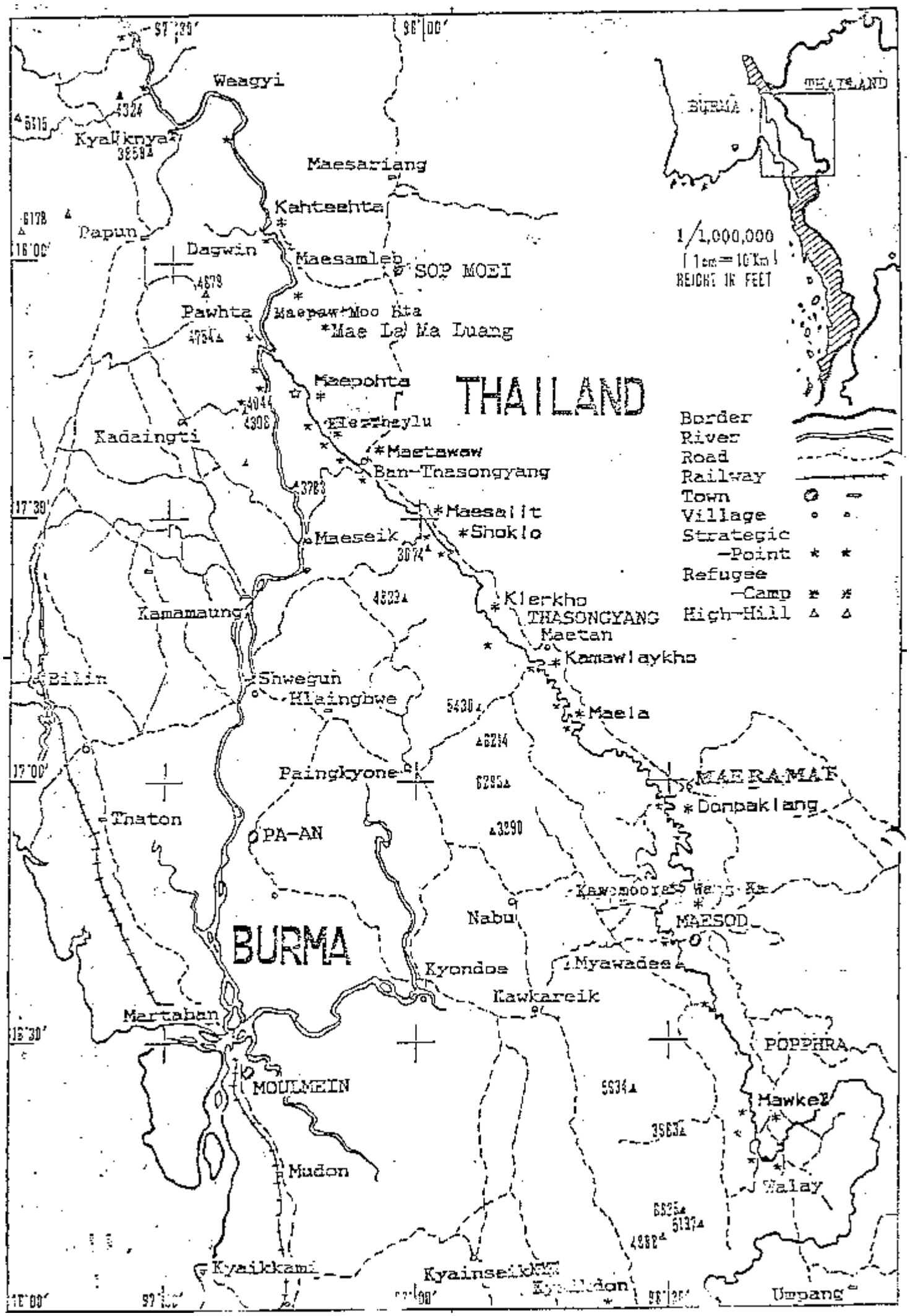
KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

MARCH 1996


THAILAND
BURMA
1/1,000,000
(1cm=10Km)
HEIGHT IN FEET
Border
River
Road
Railway
Town
Village
Strategic
—Point
Refugee
—Camp
High-Hill
Weagyi
Kyaiknya
Maesariang
Kahteehta
Papun
Dagwin
Maesamleb
SOP MOEI
Pawhta
Maepaw
Moo Kta
Mae La Ma Luang
Maepohta
Kadaingti
Maetawaw
Ban-Thasongyang
Maesalit
Shoklo
Maeseik
Kamamaung
Klerkho
THASONGYANG
Maetan
Kamawlaykho
Bilin
Shwegun
Hlaingbwe
Maela
Paingkyone
MAERAMAE
Donpaklang
Thaton
PA-AN
Nabu
MAESOD
BURMA
Kyondoe
Myawadee
Kawkareik
Martaban
POPPHRA
MOULMEIN
Hawkel
Mudon
Walay
Kyaikkami
Kyainseikkyi
Umpang

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Amid fear and speculation of more turbulence during the dry season, life in the Karen refugee camps seems to go by quietly as the refugees struggle from day to day in order to survive and they have come safely to the end of yet another summer month. It is sad to note however that, unfortunately, life had not been so calm or uneventful for everybody.

Schools are now closed for the summer holidays and will reopen in June.

Scarcity of water is a big problem in the camps now as is usual each year during the peak of summer. Efforts are made by all those concerned to help solve the problem.

The rainy season is not too far away now and this is the time when people in the camps are busy with repairing and putting new roofs on their houses. It came as a tragic blow when about midnight on March 30, a fire broke out in the outer sector of the market place adjacent to Wang Ka camp. In less than an hour, more than a hundred shops and houses in the area were razed to the ground before the fire could be brought under control. Many houses in section 8 of Wang Ka camp which is adjacent to the market place but in another direction were affected by the fire.

The Karen Refugee Committee expresses its sincere gratitude to the Thai authorities and to the people of the Kingdom of Thailand for the kindness and understanding they have shown in granting refuge to the Karens and to other displaced people from Burma who are in trouble and need. The committee is fully aware of the fact that, unless for the kindness and understanding manifested in the name of humanity, the refugees would not be able to survive. This noble gesture of goodwill is sincerely appreciated and will always be remembered .

The Karen Refugee Committee also expresses its sincere gratitude to the individuals and agencies concerned, for their help and support in many ways and through the years to provide the refugees with those basic items of need. The commitment of all those involved in this mission of mercy is sincerely appreciated and will also be remembered by all of us .

The situation has again become relatively quiet for the moment but people are still living in an unpredictable state. The refugees greet the new year with a feeling of fear and uncertainty but deep in their hearts still flickers a faint ray of hope for better days. They long for peace, genuine and honourable peace to come back to their greatly troubled land. They count on the help and support of all peace loving people around the world.

The Karen Refugee Committee reiterates its firm belief that it is in the best interests of the refugees that they should ultimately return to Burma. It believes however that return must be voluntary and to a situation of safety. It is disturbing to note however that Karen civilians in many parts of Burma continue to go through very difficult and perilous times.

The committee believes that in order to allow for the safe voluntary return of refugees to Burma, effective monitoring by an appropriate independent monitoring body should be regarded as the necessary prerequisite.

Until and unless such an independent monitoring body can say in all certainty that it is safe for the refugees to go back, the Karen Refugee Committee humbly appeals to the Royal Thai Government, to the people of the Kingdom of Thailand and to the international community to continue granting permission for these refugees to remain in the Karen refugee camps in Thailand.

I beg to remain,

Yours faithfully,

Robert Htwe
Chairman
Karen Refugee Committee

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS.

CAMP		No.of	Over 12 YRS		5-12 YRS		Under 5 YRS		Total
		families	M	F	M	F	M	F	
MAE	Wang Kha (Huay Ka Lok)	1188	1958	2213	656	607	568	530	6532
SOT	Don Pa Kiang	605	1030	922	291	290	270	283	3086
AREA	Mae La	3730	8392	7785	3431	3363	1289	1309	25569
	Sho Klo (Mae Song)	1232	2532	2599	1097	1177	376	375	8156
	Maw Ker	1143	2218	2116	575	535	750	681	6875
		7898	**16130**	**15635**	**6050**	**5972**	**3253**	**3178**	**50218**
N	Mae Ra Ma Luang	815	1491	1411	518	443	367	332	4562
O	Khun Mae Kong Kha	415	687	759	332	335	214	233	2560
R	Sa La	259	531	473	179	140	79	91	1493
T	Mae Sa Kup	281	559	538	195	166	113	138	1709
H	Khlo Pa	212	447	409	157	142	96	91	1342
	U Da Hta	248	555	479	189	178	113	116	1630
	Mae Ye Hta	300	635	520	231	185	135	114	1820
		2530	4905	4589	**1801**	**1589**	**1117**	**1115**	**15116**
S	Ta Per Poo	389	791	576	226	178	117	143	2031
O	No Pa Doh (Nong Luang)	126	239	198	84	82	49	54	706
U	NohKaHtawWah	367	727	623	161	191	163	168	2033
T	Mae Ta Raw Khee	377	655	642	308	291	171	138	2205
H	Htee Hta Baw	699	1429	1424	772	655	236	272	4788
	T' Kwee Klaw	162	250	270	85	102	73	58	838
		2120	**4091**	**3733**	**1636**	**1499**	**809**	**833**	**12601**
	Total	**12548**	**25126**	**23957**	**9487**	**9060**	**5179**	**5126**	**77935**

RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED FOR THE **MONTH**

FROM	ITEMS			
	Rice/sacks	Salt/Kgs	F. Paste/tins	Pressed Saw Dust/bundles
BBC	7581	15750	3160	*11300
COERR	350	-	-	-
Total	**7931**	**15,750**	**3,160**	**11,300**

*Mae La Camp only - 3 bundles/ family

DISTRIBUTION OF RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED

CAMP	RICE	SALT	F. Paste
	SACKS	KGS	tins
Wang Kha (Huay Ka Lok)	1016	2350	405
Don Pa Kiang	480	1200	200
Mae La (area)	4055	7550	1600
Sho Klo	1300	2350	520
Maw Ker	1080	2300	435
Total	**7931**	**15750**	**3160**