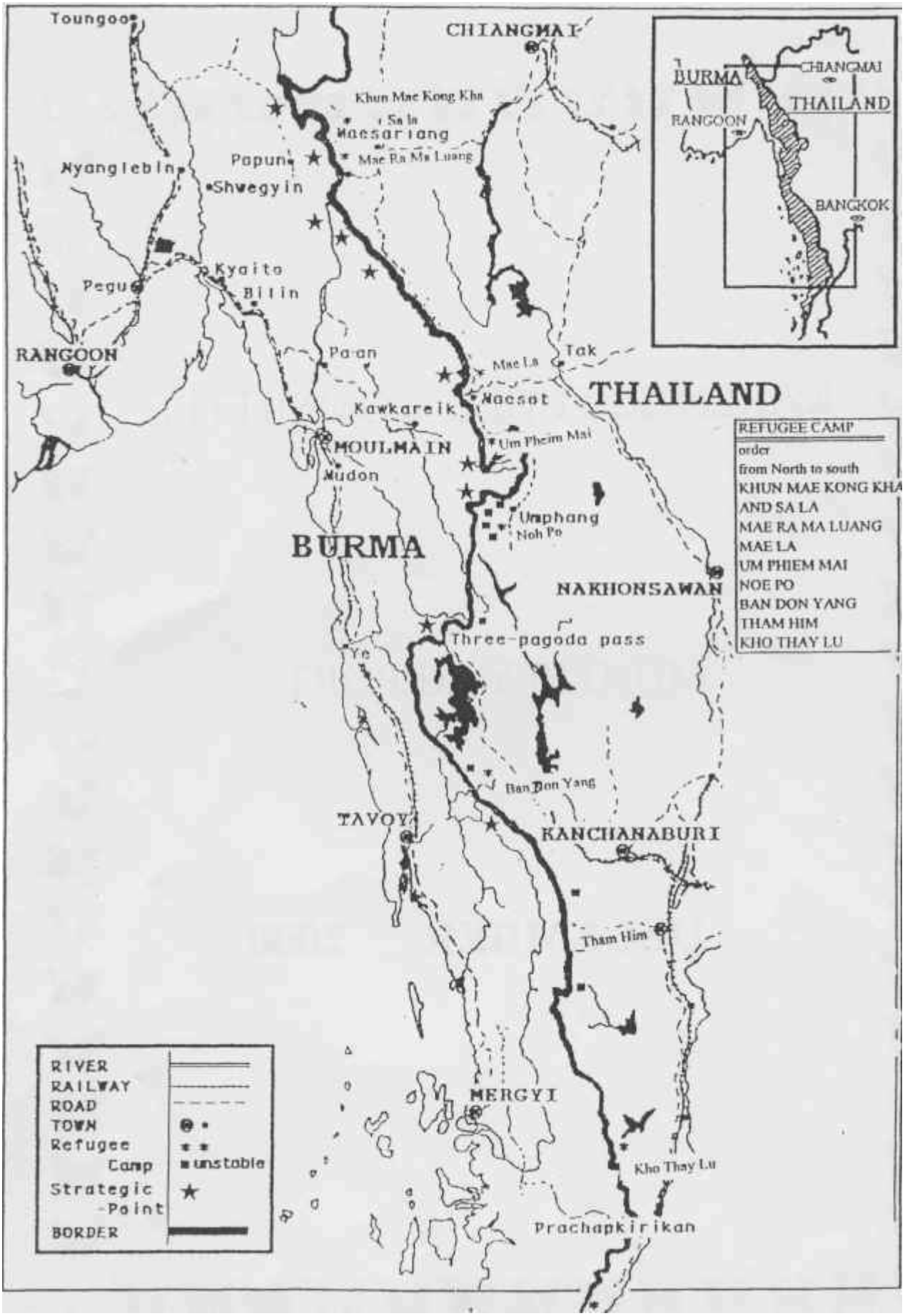
KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

DECEMBER 2000


Toungoo
CHIANGMAI
Khun Mae Kong Kha
Sa la
Maesariang
Mae Ra Ma Luang
Papun
Nyanglebin
Shwegyin
Kyaito
Pegu
Bilin
RANGOON
Pa-an
Mae La
Tak
THAILAND
Maesot
Kawkareik
MOULMAIN
Um Pheim Mai
Mudon
Umphang
Noh Po
BURMA
NAKHONSAWAN
Three-pagoda pass
Ye
Ban Don Yang
TAVOY
KANCHANABURI
Tham Him
MERGYI
Kho Thay Lu
Prachapkirikan
BURMA
CHIANGMAI
THAILAND
RANGOON
BANGKOK
REFUGEE CAMP
order
from North to south
KHUN MAE KONG KHA
AND SA LA
MAE RA MA LUANG
MAE LA
UM PHIEM MAI
NOE PO
BAN DON YANG
THAM HIM
KHO THAY LU
RIVER
RAILWAY
ROAD
TOWN
Refugee
Camp
unstable
Strategic
-Point
BORDER

KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE
DECEMBER , 2000

With December 2000, we have again come to the Season dedicated to Peace and Goodwill. This December ought to be Special, as we are saying "Farewell" to the Twentieth Century and are welcoming in the Twenty- First Century AD. But to all appearances Man will still have to contend with more and more problems, natural, Man induced or otherwise in the coming New Century.

In the Karen Mountains, at the beginning of December, Church Bells used to toll to usher in Sweet December. For many years and unto now, many Bells have fallen Silent and the Sweetness was being marred by sorrow and suffering, brought on by people intent on imposing their will on others.

Even in the Holy Land, where Christ was born 2000 years ago, Peace and Goodwill is still as elusive as ever. Around the world, conflicts are going on, with people trying to destroy each other in the name of Race, Religion, Politics, Ideology or simply Personal Glory. This month, the world's Three great Religious Festivities are being celebrated within a few days of Each other.

On December 25th Christians around the world Celebrated Christmas. Then Jewish People are celebrating Hanukkah, commemorating the Rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem, Muslims around the world are celebrating Eid al-Fitr, marking the end of the Fasting Month of Ramadan.

For Refugees in this Thai- Burma Border region, who are a mix of many Religions and Beliefs, it still is the passing of one more year of life as refuge seekers who still has no knowing what the future holds for them. What is quite clear however is that the situation back home is still not conducive to peaceful, proper and decent work-living, much more so for the Ethnic Peoples, who are considered undesirables.

A case comparison may project why people feel unsafe and unhappy about life in Burma, especially in the border Regions where the "Law" comes only from the Military. Along the Border, roads are being built or renovated mainly for accessibility and containment and control of the Region and Population. On the Thai side, we see well paid, well qualified and satisfied work people, using advanced machinery, equipment and material, while on the other side, we see such works done invariable by manual labour of villagers forced to work, unpaid and unfed, digging earth, breaking rocks, carrying, filling, levelling surfacing , often under threat and physical abuse. These on top of other repressive measures and deprivations. Such are the lot of the common people. No wonder. People find life miserable, resulting in many trying to find ways of escape. This compounded the situation along the Border- asylum seekers, migrant workers and people who will do anything for money.

For us, though, its understanding, that together with others, we have become a burden to the host country. It is our fervent hope to see the day when we can go back and live in Peace and Harmony and which can only be possible if there is domestic healing within. As of now, in welcoming in the New Century, we have only appreciation and Gratitude towards all of our benefactors.

We convey our heart felt appreciation to the People and the Government of Thailand for their concern and sympathy, in providing us with safe Refuge.

We convey our Gratitude to the Non Governmental Organizations, Support Groups and Individuals for their concern, sympathy and care.

The Norwegian Church Aid (NCA),
The Burmese Border Consortium (BBC),
Medicins Sans Frontiers (MSF),
Aide Medicale Internationale (AMI),
Malteser (MHD) Germany.,
American Refugee Committee (ARC),
International Christelijk Steunfonds- Asia (ICS),
ZOA - Netherlands.,
Catholic office for Emergency Relief and Refugees. (COERR),
Taipei Overseas Peace Service (TOPS),
Consortium - Thailand - Burma Border Project.,
Handicap International (H.I),
Shoklo Malaria Research Unit (SMRU),
UNHCR,
All Sympathetic, Support Groups and Individuals.

To all of them, we wish A Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year .

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS DECEMBER 2000.

	CAMP	No.of families	Over 12 YRS		9-12 YRS		Under 8 YRS		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	
MAE SOT AREA	Mae La Camp	6,514	11,457	11,217	2,059	1,967	4,838	4,496	37,070
	Um Pheim Mai Camp	3,233	5,254	4,975	1,936	1,778	985	1,157	16,085
		9,747	**16,711**	**16,192**	**3,995**	**3,745**	**5,823**	**5,653**	**53,155**
NORTH	Mae Ra Ma Luang	1,478	2,904	2,543	552	496	1,121	1,073	8,689
	Khun Mae Kong Kha And Sa La	2,139	4,159	3,837	919	824	1,597	1,493	12,829
		3,617	**7,063**	**6,380**	**1,471**	**1,320**	**2,718**	**2,566**	**21,518**
S O U T H	Noh Po	1,696	2,732	2,534	1,211	1,120	551	629	8,777
	Ban Don Yang	735	957	1,072	241	223	508	482	3,483
	Tham Him	1,694	727	656	1,304	1,335	1,892	2,154	8,068
	Kho Thay Lu	66	62	82	8	5	54	63	274
		4,191	**4,478**	**4,344**	**2,764**	**2,683**	**3,005**	**3,328**	**20,602**
	Grand Total	**17,555**	**28,252**	**26,916**	**8,230**	**7,748**	**11,546**	**11,547**	**95,275**

RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH

FROM	Rice 100kg sacks	Salt Kilos	Fish- paste 16kg tins	Yellow Bean Kilos	Chilies Kilos	Cooking Oil 13.75 liter tins	Cooking Fuel Kg.
BBC	8,265	21,286	3,541	53,261	6,653	49,503	418,259
COERR	350						

We shall always be grateful to the Thai People and Government for their sympathy and understanding in allowing us safe refuge.
We are also indebted to the NGOs for their Supports and Services.
BBC- Support in Food and Shelter Material and emergency Relief.
MSF- Support in Medical and Health facilities.
AMI-
ARC-
MHD-
ZOA(ABWAid)- Support in Educational facilities.
ICS. (Asia)- Support in Educational facilities.
TOPS - Support in Educational facilities Support for Nursery, Orphans and Elderly.
COERR- Rice and Educational Support for Orphans. Widows and Elderly.
CONSORTIUM- THAILAND.
H.I. Support for Refugee Handicaps with Prosthesis and rehabilitation and also year-end sporting events for Handicaps.
NCA (Norwegian Church Aid) has been prpviding KRC with administrative & Organizational Support . It has also made commitment to support with remuneration for KRC members and workers.
UNHCR- For Registration Protection and Ultimate Safe Repatriation.
A Singapore support Group provided clothing for Refugees at Mae La and Um Pheim Camps.