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MON NATIONAL RELIEF COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

OCTOBER

1995

THE FIVE POINTS OF THE AIM OF THE MON NATIONAL RELIEF COMMITTEE

1. Resettlement of the refugees who become homeless due to the oppression of Rangoon military regime.
2. To help for the welfare of the refugees who become jobless due to the oppression of Rangoon military regime.
3. To take care and look after the health of the refugees.
4. To fight against illiteracy for the children in the refugee camps.
5. To struggle for human rights.

The Organization of The Mon National Relief Committee

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Phra Wongsā Pala | - Chairman |
| 2. Nai Shwe Thein | - Vice-Chairman |
| 3. Nai Banya Leir | - Secretary |
| 4. Nai Kasāuh Mon | - Joint-Secretary |
| 5. Nai Chit Nyunt | - Member |
| 6. Nai Pho Sein | - Member |
| 7. Phra Nonda Pala | - Member |

MONTHLY REPORT OF MON NATIONAL RELIEF COMMITTEE (October, 1995)

Meeting with Thai authorities

On 27 October, by the arrangement of some Thai authorities, the MNRC and the NMSP (New Mon State Party) leaders had a meeting with Thai military and border police commanders regarding the Mon refugee repatriation process.

In the meeting, some military commanders from Bangkok Thai Military Headquarters and Ninth Division of Kanchanaburi Province participated and discussed about for the possible repatriation and smooth resettlement of Mon refugees.

In the discussions, the Thai officials did not mention for the amount of needed supplies and they agreed to allow transportation of all amounts of *resettlement assistance* by crossing border that provided by international aids NGOs until April 30, 1996 as deadline. But they mentioned the international aids NGOs may be allowed in travelling just right to border and no permission to cross the border.

For the treatment of serious patients, the Thai officials mentioned that the NMSP officials must discuss with the Thai-SLORC Joint Border Committee in Three Pagoda Pass and to inform that border officials for patients those need treatments and it is possible for them to allow for better treatment in hospitals of Thailand.

In the road constructions, they agreed to provide assistance like the permission of bulldozers to construct the roads. For the roads to Bee Ree and Payaw, the MNRC must take responsibilities to build and spend for the constructing charges. They promised they will construct the road to Halockhani and for the road constructions in Burma side, the MNRC or NMSP can hire the bulldozers from Thailand.

In the discussions, the MNRC also explained the experiences of last year transportation of supplies which made time-waste in asking permission from local district officers after Bangkok MOI of Thai government allow to transport the supplies. In this coming transportation, as the MNRC would like to transport supplies very quickly and asked the Thai officials to help facilitate quick transport of provisions to newly built-up villages before the refugees move in. In this case, they responded when the MOI permit for the transportation of supplies to camps, to send one copy of those permission to Ninth Division and they can help.

When the MNRC asked for the tax-free of agricultural commodities produced by Mon people at the Thai-Burma border, they explained it is concerned to government policy and they will put it to cabinet and no respond for the moment.

When the MNRC asked for the UNHCR monitoring and NGOs visits, they mentioned that for the international community present in the repatriation process, the NMSP need to ask to the SLORC to agree. If the SLORC agreed, they will agree for such monitoring. Therefore, the MNRC asked the NMSP for help for the present of Rangoon branch UNHCR for monitoring in Burma side of resettlement sites.

In the future, after the repatriation process completed in this dry season, they stated they will close all border entrances which passed through the refugee camps, except Halockhani entrance. And, they mentioned they allow for the entrance of Three Pagoda Pass and the Mon people can use it.

The visit of UNHCR

At the beginning of September, the MNRC has asked Bangkok branch for the independent monitoring in the Mon refugee repatriation process. Because of this invitation, the UNHCR representative came to Sangkhlaburi and discussed for the possible monitoring with MNRC on 17th October. In the discussions, the UNHCR representative asked to assure for voluntary repatriation. The UNHCR explained that it can participate in monitoring, if the Thai government agreed on that and the monitoring can be done only in Thailand side of the border.

According to the UNHCR representative, the UNHCR ever made cross border monitoring with the agreement of all parties concerned in Cambodia refugee repatriation. To assure for voluntary repatriation and for the confidence building of the repatriated refugees, it needs for all parties agreement for the present of UNHCR in repatriation. All parties in this case are Thai Government, SLORC and NMSP. According to Thai officials of 27th October meeting, Thailand can allow for monitoring in Thailand side and told to NMSP leaders to ask for agreement from SLORC for the monitoring in Burma side.

On 18th October morning, the UNHCR representative visited to Halockhani camp. In the camp, the representative inquired the desires of the refugees in returning back. As the Halockhani camp is situated inside the Burma side of the border, some refugees will continuously stay in the camp and work in farmlands outside the camp. According to camp leader, for the present situation, as the Halockhani camp is in Burma, about 50% of refugees will remain in Halockhani main camp and Boleh Donephai section. The rest will move to Palaing Japan, Pongkatar and Chedeit areas.

The MNRC also explained that among all Mon refugee camps, only one camp, Payaw, is situated in Thailand and it need to repatriate all of those refugees into Burma. When the UNHCR asked to assure for voluntary returning of Payaw refugees and the MNRC responded that those refugees may return voluntarily to Tavoy district area if they have farmlands close to border area. For UNHCR, it principally has responsibility to take care of Payaw refugees who all of them are in Thailand side of the border. However, it needs MNRC and NMSP to request for the monitoring of Rangoon branch UNHCR.

On 18th October evening after the representative returned back from Halockhani, he also met with President of NMSP, Nai Shwe Kyin. In the meeting, Nai Shwe Kyin also offered a letter to UNHCR representative for the explanation of his letter to Gen. Charan, Secretary-General of National Security Council of Thailand and requested the UNHCR for the possible help for the refugee repatriation as the MNRC has asked. *(The letter of Nai Shwe Kyin to UNHCR representative also attached on the next page.)*

The representative also explained to NMSP President the important points which could provide for the UNHCR present in the repatriation are voluntary returning and agreement from all parties concerned.

In the recent BBC Burmese section radio broadcast program, the representative already propose for the request of MNRC to Geneva UNHCR office and the Geneva office already informed to Rangoon UNHCR office. According to him, there is no response from SLORC yet for such monitoring in Burma side or resettlement site.

For MNRC, it requests for all parties concerned to agree on the international monitoring for confidence building, and long-term safety and development of those long suffering resettled refugees.

ဇော်ချင်မန်တုံ

(ဌာနီဂအုပ်ဗဟို)

THE NEW MON STATE PARTY

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

Mr. Ruprecht Von Arnim
Representative
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Bangkok.

Dated, October 17, 1995

Subject: Resettlement of Mon refugees.

Dear Sir,

The Thai Royal Government looks forward to the quick systematic repatriation of Mon refugees stranded on Thai-Burma border into Burma. Therefore, in reference to my letter to General Charan, Secretary-General to the National Security Council, dated August 1, 1995, a copy of which was also forwarded to you, I made a request for supply of food, medicines, seeds and necessary farm tools to facilitate the resettlement of Mon refugees for 6 months.

The Mon National Relief Committee (MNRC) which have all along been taken appropriate action to facilitate the welfare of Mon refugees, had already requested for food, medicines and other necessary assistance from the Non-government Organizations for one year is quite adequate.

The request made by the New Mon State Party (NMSP) to the Thai Royal Government should not be confused with the request made by the MNRC to the NGOs. The two requests, actually supplement each other in the smooth resettlement of Mon refugees.

The NMSP hope that the UNHCR would give every possible help to the request made by the MNRC, dated September 5, 1995, to it, regarding the resettlement of Mon refugees.

Shwe Kyin

(Nai Shwe Kyin)

President

New Mon State Party

**THE REFUGEE POPULATION OF THE FOUR CAMP ARE AS FOLLOW
(October,1995)**

No	Camp	Families	Adult		Children		Total
			M	F	M	F	
1	Bee Ree	261	302	347	468	480	1597
2	Payaw	677	831	1061	969	1149	3410
3	Prachuab	317	381	374	443	527	1725
4	Halockhani	852	968	1037	1325	1889	5219
	Total	2107	2482	2809	3205	4045	12551

**THE MATERIALS RECEIVED BY THE MON NATIONAL RELIEF COMMITTEE
(October, 1995)**

No	Organization	Rice (sack)	Fish Paste (kg)	Salt (kg)	Chilly (kg)	Remark
1	COERR	100	550	-	-	Consortium already provided for rainy season stock-piling for all camps
2	Consortium	-	-	-	-	
	Total	100	550	-	-	

Map of resettlement sites of Mon refugees and immigrants

(The resettlement program will start in December and complete in April, 1996. In the program, it will resettle not only refugees but also immigrants who have been resided mostly in Kanchanaburi Province of Thailand. Estimatedly, the MNRC and the Development Committee of New Mon State Party have to resettle about 18,000 populations as following sites.)

