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MON NATIONAL RELIEF COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

MARCH

1997

The Five Points of the Aim of Mon National Relief Committee

- 1. Resettlement of the refugees who become homeless due to the oppression of Rangoon military regime.**
- 2. To help the welfare of the refugees who become jobless due to 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 Mon National Relief Committee

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Phra Wongsala Pala | - Chairman |
| 2. Nai Shwe Thein | - Vice Chairman |
| 3. Nai Kasau Mon | - Acting Secretary |
| 4. Nai Dung Htaw | - Member |
| 5. Nai Chit Nyunt | - Member |
| 6. Phra Tay Jae | - Member |

Monthly Report of Mon National Relief Committee

(March, 1997)

Arrangements for Smooth Transportation of Supplies

Since the beginning of the year, the MNRC has arranged for smooth transportation of necessary supplies for refugees in 1997. Normally the MNRC has sent the most essential food supplies for refugees are rice, prawn-paste, salt and others. As the MNRC is working as a community based local organization to help the Mon refugees who are remaining on the border area, it had to arrange initially to re-build the roads that were destroyed in the rainy season.

Before the end of 1996, the MNRC, by approaching the NMSP, tried to repair the roads with machine "bulldozer", and the NMSP took responsibility to discuss with local concerned Thai authorities. In January, the NMSP had a official meeting and asked the Thai authorities to re-build the roads that need to send supplies with big machine, but they did not allow as the most roads are passed into forestry department's reforestation area. However, they allowed to build with "man power" roughly.

Then, the MNRC organized the refugees and truck drivers to re-build all roads that reached to the respective camps. While the Halockhani refugee campsite is situated on a way possible to travel and send supplies, but the other camps have more difficult ways to reach. Since the road was possible, the MNRC could send food supplies to Halockhani before the end of 1996. Bee Ree and Tavoy camps are more than fifty kilometres far from Sangkhlaburi town where the MNRC put main supply warehouse. Because of the cooperation of refugees from respective camps, the road reconstructions were completed before the end of January after the MNRC spent for two weeks.

Actually, the MNRC has only about five months in dry season to send all food and other sheltering supplies for the whole year. In January and February, as MOI permission of Thai government to send the supplies came in time, we have possible chance to send all supplies for two months. In March, when we planned sending March and April supplies for two months as initial transportation for stock-piling. But we delayed for one week transporting rice as the permission letter came late. The MNRC could send the supplies in mid of March after the permission was stuck for a while. Up to the end of March, the MNRC could send large amount of supplies to respective camps.

After the end of March, the MNRC may have another two months to complete all stock-piling food supplies to send into camps. Because of limited time, the MNRC has a serious situation to send all supplies to complete all transportation before the rain came.

For the smooth transportation of supplies, the MNRC should receive food ration for the rest months within two months in time and the MOI permission should have for the whole range duration of two months. Thus, we need the complete cooperation of aids agencies, Thai authorities and local concerned officials to participate in completing the transportation process of food supplies to the refugees.

Last year, when we tried sending supplies to respective camps, we have four permanent ten wheels trucks and it made more possible chance for us to complete the transportation in time. This year, we left only two ten wheels trucks and we will also have more difficulties to complete the transportation if compared with last year. Since we could not use bulldozer to repair the

roads, the roads are not so smooth like last year and the trucks took more hours to reach to camps of the same trip. Anyhow, we have to adopt proper arrangements to complete all processes. So we would like to request the concerned organizations to provide us helping hands in providing food supplies to suffering refugee community.

The Forced Relocation, Military Offensive and New Arrivals

Even the NMSP reached for ceasefire agreement with SLORC, there has been no official talk to accept a political solution to halt violating human rights of local inhabitants. In Mon and Karen areas of southern part of Burma, the local troops of SLORC always conscripted the local villagers to be forced labourers in the government infrastructure projects or porters to carry supplies and ammunitions to the battle fields.

The Mon local inhabitants also recently have been suffered from the forced relocation of local SLORC troops of LIB No. 243, under suspicion of the supporters of a robber group. Since the NMSP reached ceasefire agreement with SLORC, the NMSP had to agree to withdraw its troops from deep inside Burma and abandoned several its control areas. But the SLORC troops could not provide control to areas where the NMSP troops left and besides, whenever they reached to the area, they also abused the villagers.

In Kywe-tho-nyima area, it became under loose control of SLORC, some villagers in the area took up arms and formed robber group and collected tax to traders and boat owners who are travelling along the seacoast area of Andaman Sea. As they could control some part of seacoast area, they threatened and collected tax from those traders and if the traders refused they will use forces to arrest those traders and took them as hostages to pay them tax.

The robber group has taken base in an island close to gas-pipeline area about 10 kilometres of the north, the activities of the group also created threats to project and the SLORC tried to arrest them. But SLORC local troops, themselves could not manage to catch any robber and they have suspected the villagers in Kywe-tho-nyima village tract as robber-supporters.

Then, in first week of February, five Mon villages were ordered to relocate within one week. The villages under the SLORC troops' intrusion were Mae Taw, Mae Than Taung, Cha Bone, Chaung Pyar and Mae Ying villagers of Yebyu township. Recently, the villagers have been normally suffered from conscription of forced labour to build Ye-Tavoy railway construction. Before the NMSP-SLORC ceasefire agreement was reached the most villagers in the area had been displaced because of human rights abuses of local SLORC troops. When the NMSP reached for ceasefire, the villagers returned back to their villages and resettled by themselves again with hopes they could stay in the village peacefully.

After ceasefire and SLORC could not control the area, the robber group took more control and the villagers were accused as robber-supporter. Under this suspicion, the troops came into villages and drove out the villagers from their homes. In Mae Taw village, the troops came into village and rounded outside of village and arrested every villagers including women and children. Then they were tied by soldiers and asked how the villagers have connection with robber group. When the villagers refused they have no contact with robbers, they were severely beaten or when the villagers tried to flee they were also shot by soldiers. They also beat the village headmen and some were severely beaten and got several wounds.

At the end, about 4 houses in Mae Taw village were burnt and all villagers' belongings were also confiscated by soldiers. When the troops burned the houses, the rice in the warehouse that kept under the houses were also burnt into ash. Because of terrible mis-treatment in forced relocation program, the villagers in the villages were afraid and moved to Kywe-tho-nyima vil-

lage or displaced in other places. Some families also escaped to refugee camp. As the Mon refugee camps' situation was not so stable enough very small number of villagers reached to the camp.

The most percent Mon villagers moved into Kywe-tho-nyima village and they had to abandon all their living stocks in their village including rice farms and other plantations. Some also moved into Thailand with the whole family while some also moved to Ye and Thanbyuzayat townships. The most of them faced food-shortage problems after the soldiers looted their rice and other belongings.

At the same time, the SLORC has also launched military offensive to KNU bases and because of several kinds of human rights, many hundreds of Karen villagers also fled into border refugee camps. According to escapees, in the beginning when the SLORC launched offensives they forced the villagers to stay in villages and restricted movement and the rice in villages was also confiscated. After the military confiscated rice, they shared little amount of rice to village families. In some villages, soon after they arrived they tried to take base and forced the villagers to build the military barracks for them. In some cases, they arrested Karen villagers and accused as rebel-supporters and forced them to show the KNU bases. The villagers were normally beaten by soldiers when they could not find the KNU bases or their manner was not reached to be satisfied for soldiers.

The also arrested several Karen villagers to use them as porters to carry supplies and ammunition to frontline and sometimes they were also used as mine-sweepers by soldiers according to escapees. When they were in their villages, besides the shortage of food after it was confiscated by soldiers, they also faced several kinds of mis-treatments. Thus, they had to leave their villages and abandoned living stocks from native places.

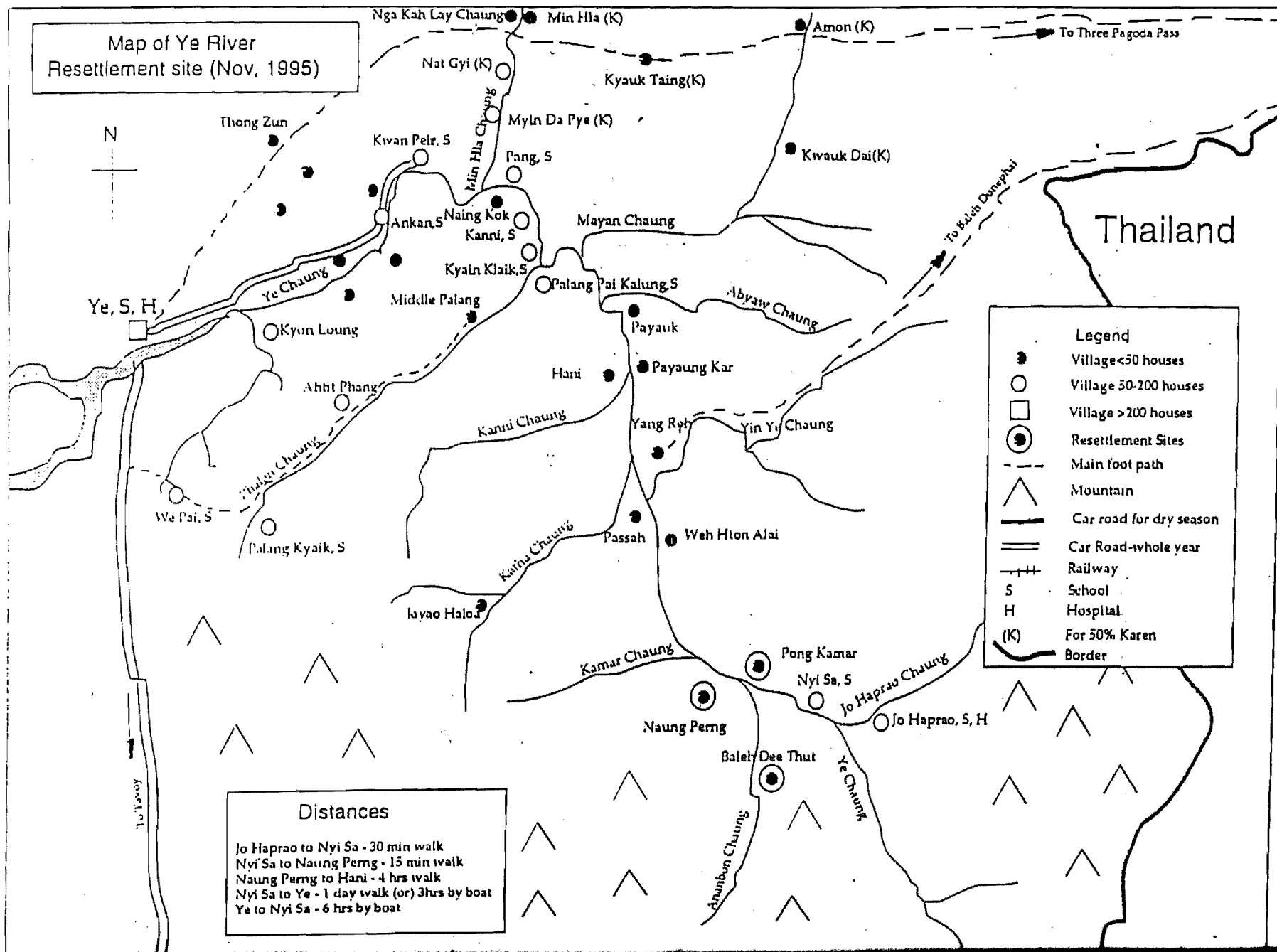
**THE REFUGEE POPULATION OF THE FOUR CAMP ARE FOLLOW
(March, 1997)**

No	Camp	Family	Adult		Children		Total
			M	F	M	F	
1	Bee Ree	415	486	543	688	772	2489
2	Tavoy	685	878	1087	989	1144	4098
3	Prachuab	491	452	558	702	771	2483
4	Halockhani	1011	1324	1376	1686	1733	6119
	Total	2602	3140	3564	4065	4420	15189

**THE MATERIALS RECEIVED BY THE MON NATIONAL RELIEF COMMITTEE
(March, 1997)**

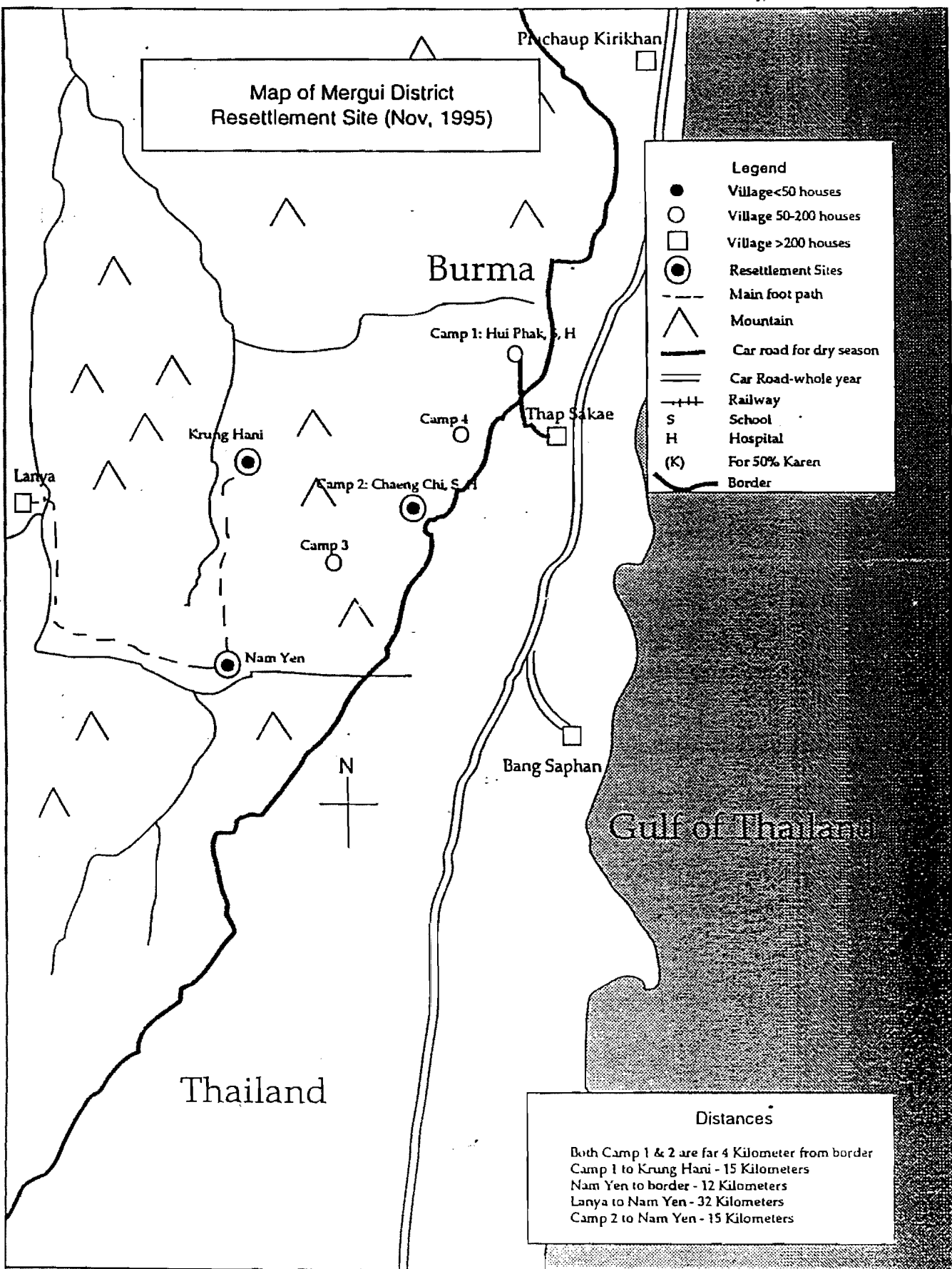
No	Organization	Rice (Sack)	Fish Paste (Kg)	Salt (Kg)	Bean (Kg)	Remark
1	COERR	250	1688	1125	1588	
2	Consortium	-	-	-	-	
	Total	250	1688	1125	1588	

Map of Ye River
Resettlement site (Nov, 1995)



Map of Mergui District Resettlement Site (Nov, 1995)

- Legend**
- Village <50 houses
 - Village 50-200 houses
 - Village >200 houses
 - ⊙ Resettlement Sites
 - - - Main foot path
 - △ Mountain
 - Car road for dry season
 - == Car Road-whole year
 - +++ Railway
 - S School
 - H Hospital
 - (K) For 50% Karen
 - Border



Map of Tavoy District Resettlement site (Nov, 1995)

Agriculture
Payaw, SH

Kwan Tamoit

Meip Zeip

Kungbabae

Jao Done

Tai Poit Mae

Thailand

Hlae Seik

Hta Paw Kawar

Kyauklonekyi

Kyauklonekyi

Al Nang Chaung

The Chaung

Nat Ei

Pine Krone Kung

Yabu, S

Maraing

Tavoy River

Kalein Aung, S

Legend

- Village < 50 houses
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Distances

Payaw to Jao Done - 5 hrs walk
Jao Done to Hlae Seik - 1 days walk
Hlae Seik to Aleskan - 3 hrs walk
Jao Done to Yabu - 10 hrs walk

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