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ကမ္ဘာတဝှမ်း ဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေးအဖွဲ့

ရေခဲ

ပစ္စည်းကုန်သွယ်ရေးနှင့် ဖွံ့ဖြိုးရေး

MON RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

MARCH

2000

**The Five Points of the Aim
of Mon Relief and Development Committee**

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- 1. To provide temporary settlement to the refugees in Thailand-Burma border areas who become homeless and helpless situation due to the oppression of Rangoon military regimes.
- 2. To help the welfares of the refugees in border areas and IDPs who are displaced inside the country, with foods, shelter and possible protection.
- 3. To coordinate with local Mon people in developing the grassroots community in the fields of health, education, literacy, agricuture and other rural development projects.
- 4. To empower the local community for the participation of decision making processes for their own lives and communities.
- 4. To struggle for the human rights.

The Organization of Mon Relief and Development Committee

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- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Phra Wongsā Pala | - Chairman |
| 2. Nai Kasauh Mon | - General Secretary |
| 3. Nai Dung Htaw | - Member |
| 4. Nai Aung Mon | - Member |
| 5. Nai Chit Nyunt | - Member |
| 6. Nai Tay Jae | - Member |
| 7. Nai Glae | - Member |

Monthly Report of Mon Relief and Development Committee (March, 2000)

Politics, War, Human Rights and Population Displacement in Burma's Ethnic Areas

Like previous years, while the Mon and other ethnic refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are facing various types of difficulties and hardships during their flee and displacement, the international community and humanitarian organizations have constantly provided with humanitarian assistance to those refugees and displaced persons. The problems of the refugees and internally displacement have constantly occurred during the five-decades-long civil war in Burma. So, there is a clear evidence that without a solution for the political problems in Burma, the problems of increasing refugee fluxes and internally displacement would not ceased.

Like other ethnic people in Burma, the Mon people are similarly suffered by war and later on the gross human rights abuses violated by the military regime, SLORC/SPDC and its local troops. Thus, the population displacement and abandon of the native homes still have happened even after NMSP-SLORC ceasefire, which was the both sides agreed in June, 1995. As an conclusion for Burma, the refugees and population displacement happened in Burma not because of war but also human rights abuses and less protection to civilians by the government.

After NMSP-SLORC ceasefire, the Mon refugees who had to return from Thailand to Burma did not receive any international protection and monitoring when they were repatriated. During they were repatriated, the returnees clearly knew that if they arrived back to their native villages, they could not get possible to make farms or occupations and could not get protection from any governments. When the self-help repatriation was conducted, the refugees had no choice but to settle only in NMSP control areas. After ceasefire, NMSP and MNRC (Mon National Relief Committee) planned to resettle those repatriated refugees and with the participation of refugee community, three temporary resettlement sites were created in NMSP control areas. Due to well-informed human rights situation in their native homes, from where they fled, most refugees refused to return to their native homes and chose to stay on in the resettlement areas to receive protection from NMSP.

However, both NMSP and MNRC at that time, could not estimate the duration when those refugees in the resettlement sites could return to their homes. But we could roughly estimate when Burma retained peace following the political negotiations among all groups which have different political opinions, those refugees could return their homes. During the repatriation of the Mon refugees, most Mon leaders thought the whole country ceasefire would happen and the then political negotiation would come along with ceasefire. However, after NMSP-SLORC ceasefire, the military government, SLORC, became more aggressive and forced another remaining ethnic groups to give promise to surrender if they would like to deal for ceasefire talks. Therefore, there has been no political armed group has dealt for ceasefire with SLORC. Only some splinter groups surrendered to SLORC/SPDC. After many groups agreed for ceasefire with the regime, the Burmese Army operated more intensive military offensives against the armed oppositions, which did not agree for ceasefire. Since

1996, there were more offensives in Shan State, Karen State and Tenasserim Division, in where some ethnic armed groups remained in fighting against the military government.

During the offensives, the local ethnic people were the most suffering people in the community. Whenever the Burmese Army (*tatmadaw*) launched the military offensives against the ethnic armed oppositions, the rural ethnic villagers are always accused rebel-supporters and the ethnic villages are similarly accused as rebel bases. Therefore, the rural ethnic villagers always faced cruel mis-treatment by *tatmadaw* troops. The abuses such as forced relocation and burning of the villages related to suspicions that those rural ethnic villagers are used as bases of the rebels. During the military operations, many hundreds of ethnic villagers are used in porter service and they are also used as mine-sweepers or human shields.

On the other hand, for the ethnic villagers whose the concerned the ethnic armed group entered for ceasefire agreement with regime, are suffered by other way. After ceasefire, the regime could have more control and *tatmadaw* has special opportunity to deploy more troops in the concerned ethnic areas. Actually, under the ceasefire situation between the regimes and many ethnic armed oppositions, they could not build any trust each other. By the time while the regime remained only little number of organization, it still increases its armed forces, because the regime still considers all ethnic groups both who agreed for ceasefire and who have not agreed as "enemy". For the ceasefire groups, they would not accept any request from SPDC to surrender. During the ceasefire period, they would try to develop their own area and wait for the political negotiation for genuine peace in the whole country. Until now, their dreams have not come true.

At the same time, the ceasefire group also could not protect their own people as a whole. They could protect and provide protection to the villagers who are only under the control. Thus, the remaining majority ethnic people are still forced to be forced labour, to pay various type of tax, to sell their paddy, rubber and other raw materials to government at low price, etc. During the ceasefire, the authorities and army have more opportunity to have accessed many parts of ethnic area and adopted their administration. Before ceasefire, the government has no authority in many parts of ethnic areas and no chance to adopt their administration. After they have their administration, the army and authorities have used the villagers as forced labourers, asked various types of tax, confiscated villagers' lands and looting their belongings.

In Mon State, after ceasefire, the regime increased the number of its troops and confiscated many hundreds acres of land from the local villagers. In these confiscated lands, the army deployed new battalions and made farms to grow paddy. Additionally, after the army could control many parts of Mon areas, the authorities have chances to create many paddy-buying centers and forcibly buy the paddy from farmers at low price. After the authorities received the possible amount of paddy, they also have to share some amount of food supplies to army, which base in Mon State.

On the other hand, due to mis-management of the government and low income received from the government, the authorities and army commanders are participating in deep corruption. They planned to collect various types of tax from the citizens and under the name of rural area development, they take both tax and labour contributed by villagers. They always use their authorities and armed forces in taking labour, tax and other belongings from villagers.

Not only the war and the related accusation of rebel-supporters, the constant conscription of forced labour also force the villagers to be displaced. When the government implemented the development projects in areas where they could not have control in the past, it also gives responsibility to implement. Normally, when the army takes responsibility building roads and bridges in Mon areas, the army constantly forced villagers to contribute their labour. But they are not paid. If one family could not provide one member to work in

the construction, they also have to pay fine for their absence. At the end, many poor families who could not work longer for the army had to leave from their native homes and displaced.

Actually, the government has not taken responsibility to protect the civilians to be displaced. It has forced the ethnic villagers to be displaced and fled from their homes. Sometimes, when the civilians' lands are confiscated, the villagers also lost chance to do farming which they have done as their traditional occupation, and left from their villages.

Thus, the people in Burma who are facing unstable life and potential displacement because of war or abuses require some international protection and assistance. The people must have too much suffering if we waited until the Burma retained genuine peace and democracy.

THE REFUGEE POPULATION OF THE THREE CAMPS
(March, 2000)

No.	Camp	Number of Family	Over 12 years		5-12 years		Under 5 years		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	Bee Ree	538	995	1100	283	313	171	178	3040
2	Tavoy	542	980	956	295	288	174	204	2897
3	Halockhani	1416	2170	2170	794	791	484	510	6919
	TOTAL	2496	4145	4226	1372	1392	829	892	12856

THE MATERIALS RECEIVED BY THE MON RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(March, 2000)

No	Organization	Rice (Sack)	Fish Paste (kg.)	Salt (kg.)	Sadine (tins)	Remark
1	COERR	120	360	240	3000	
2	BBC	3, 000	-	-	-	
	TOTAL	3,120	360	240	3000	

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(March, 2000)

No.	Camp	Number of Family	Over 12 years		5-12 years		Under 5 years		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	Bee Ree	538	995	1100	283	313	171	178	3040
2	Tavoy	542	980	956	295	288	174	204	2897
3	Halockhani	1573	2354	2358	888	902	532	558	7592
	TOTAL	2640	4329	4414	1466	1503	870	940	13529

THE MATERIALS RECEIVED BY THE MON RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(March, 2000)

No	Organization	Rice (Sack)	Fish Paste (kg.)	Salt (kg.)	Sadine (tins)	Remark
1	COERR	120	360	240	3000	
2	BBC	3, 000	-	-	-	
	TOTAL	3,120	360	240	3000	

Map of Ye River
Resettlement sites (Nov, 1995)

N

Hpa Kall Lay Chaung

Kim Hla (K)

Amon (K)

To Hpa Pagoda Pass

Hai Gyl (K)

Kyauk Taling (K)

Myin Da Lye (K)

Thong Zim

Kivan Pelr, S

Yang, S

Kivank Oni (K)

Mayan Chaung

Ankai, S

Naling Kok

Kanul, S

Kyau Klalk, S

Salang

Sal Kalung, S

Abyau Chaung

Ye, S, H

Kyan Loung

Middle Palang

Haul

Payauk

Payauk Kar

Yang Ryl

Yin Ye Chaung

Kanul Chaung

Ye Pal, S

Palang Kyauk, S

Jayao Hlaot

Pasala

Wel Hlon Alal

Kamar Chaung

Pong Kassar

Nyl Sa, S

To Haprao Chaung

To Haprao, S, H

Nating Pering

Balei Dee Thut

Ye Chaung

Donbon Chaung

Distances

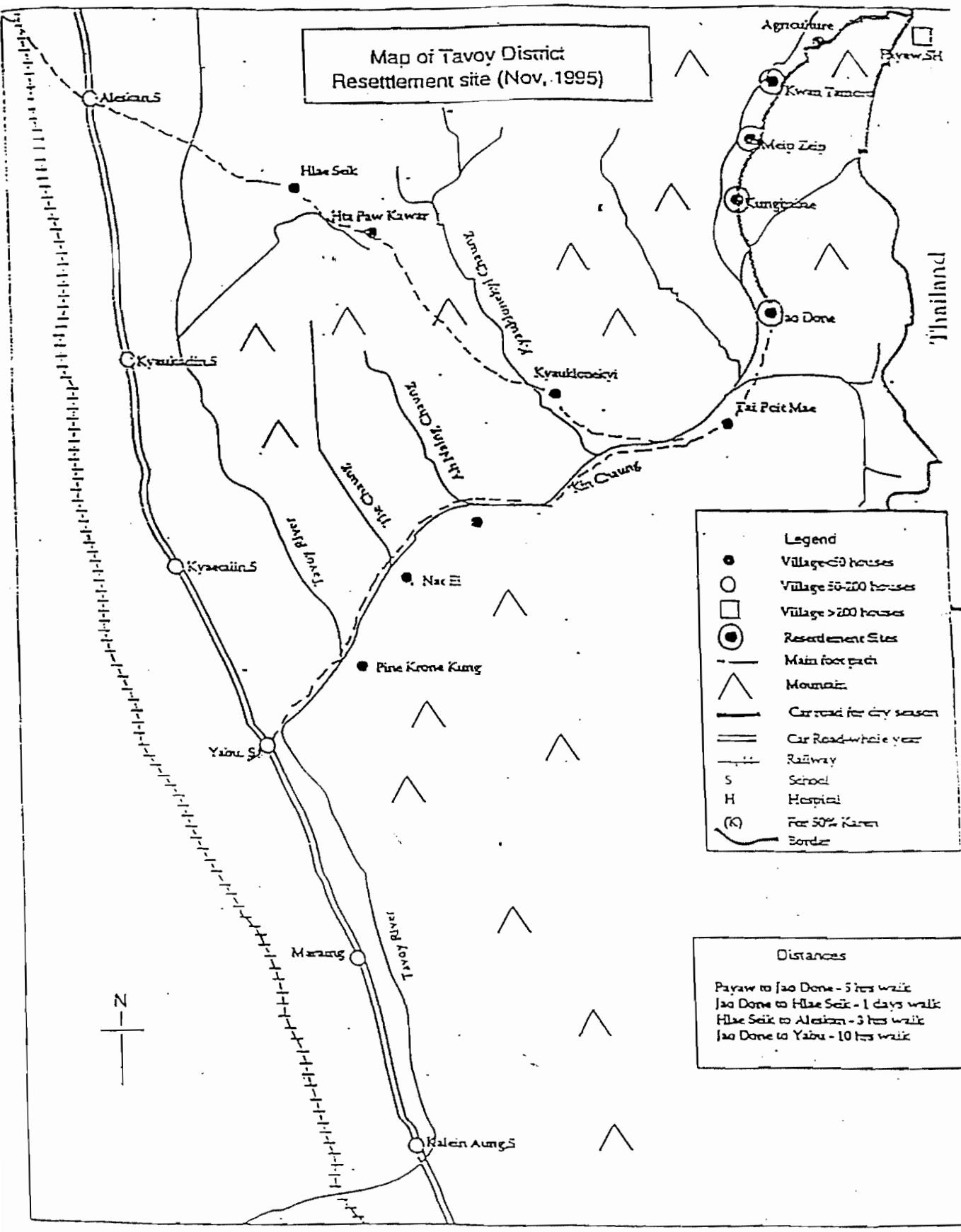
To Haprao to Nyl Sa - 30 min walk
Nyl Sa to Nating Pering - 15 min walk
Nating Pering to Haul - 4 hrs walk
Nyl Sa to Ye - 1 day walk (or) 3 hrs by boat
Ye to Nyl Sa - 6 hrs by boat

Thailand

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)



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

Distances

Payaw to Jao Dome - 5 hrs walk
 Jao Dome to Hlae Seik - 1 days walk
 Hlae Seik to Alesiam - 3 hrs walk
 Jao Dome to Yabou - 10 hrs walk