



KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY , 2006

Karen Refugee Committee
Monthly Report
January, 2006 – Newsletter

With January of 2006, we are entering the New Year, the year of the Dog. We will not know what would be our lot in this New Year, although, things would not differ much with all of us, who call Mother Earth their home. But as one, all of us will be hoping for a better New Year.

For the country called Burma, it's embarking on the (58th) year of Independence from Britain. Burma achieved Independence, on the 4th of January 1948. But conditions on the New Year of 1948 are quite different from what we see in this New Year. Simply said, the abundance, free living of 1948 – contrasting with the deprived, suppressive living in fear of today.

With Independence in 1948, Power was vested in the Central Government, formed by the AFPFL, Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League Party, headed by U Nu who became Prime Minister. Rule was Democratic, but seemed to be in name only. There was very little regard for the aspirations of the Ethnic Peoples, whose voices were simply neglected. Understandably, there came dissenting voices and efforts from Ethnic Quarters, most notably the Karens, Karennis, Mons, Shans and Kachins. Some resorted to arms to express their grievances.

In 1962, the Tatamadow's General Ne Win took over power with the express intention of "Saving the Union from Ruin". Then his Grandiose "Burmese Way to Socialism" Rule over the country seemed to have gone awry, which resulted in the country declining into the status of "Least Developed Country", despite the fact that the country was blessed with abundance of resources, productive land and work force. The problem seemed to be only with the Repressive Rule and the mismanagement. General Ne Win's pledge to "Save the Union from Ruin" came to be seen as nothing but the hollow boast of an inept despot.

Today, General Ne Win and the Burmese way to Socialism are no more. But the General's legacy of Military Rule is very much in control unto this day. The on-going National Convention can only be considered as an attempt by his disciples to continue with "that Rule" although with some semblance of legitimate Features, and which can only be suspect. Needless to say most people feel that it's just another hollow boast in repeat again.

So, in this New Year, there's very little other than to expect seeing our poor country spiraling downwards. Then features are such that many countries around the world will do no better, seeing there are deeds and developments, which can never be encouraging. The world, to be explicit, is faced with dwindling of resources. On the other hand, there will be difficulty in sustaining the ever increasing population and which will ultimately lead to severe limited living for all. Attempts to have access to resources may lead to conflicts.

Then, the world will still be facing extremes of weather, the onslaught of destructive natural forces and incidences of Epidemic Diseases. Added to that would be the set mind of Extremism in many, which will in no way help with peaceful living. For that matter, we are hearing of the intent to “Wipe off” or do away with others. We are seeing attempts at Nuclear Capability. Intent and capability can be a very dangerous combination. And no Target will be without Fangs. If there were moves, there can only be counter – moves, and then more moves and counter – moves.

Wisdom in common sense and reasoning caution, together with tolerance can truly be helpful.

For in this age of the Missile and the Nuke, if there were to be conflicts, it would be a wonder if any one party comes out the winner.

K.R.C - Camps- Activities – Report.

January – 2006

- ◆ 4/ 1/ 2006 – Education Coordinator and Camp Committee Mae La meet to discuss about establishing a Post Ten School.
- ◆ 10/ 1/ 2006 – School Head Masters meeting Umphiem Camp.
Discussion on Adolescent Health Education, library in schools.
- ◆ 14/ 1/ 2006 – Mae La Oo Camp – Sections 2 and 4 – Areas regarded as prone to destruction by Natural forces (Rain Landslide) Households to be shifted to another site Pway Baw Lu. TBBC will help with relocation.
 - (1) Section 2 – 105 houses
 - (2) Section 4 – 80 houses
 - (3) Primary School – 1
 - (4) Bible School 1 with 3 Boarding Houses
 - (5) Store / Go-down – 2
 - (6) Clinic – OPD – 1
 - (7) DARE – Building – 1
 - (8) Nursery School – 1 – All waiting for Material to start with relocation.
- ◆ 18/ 1/ 2006 – Mae La Camp work shop on Vocational Training.
- ◆ 18/ 1/ 2006 – I. O. M Bangkok, interviewed Mae Ra Ma Luang Camp's people who are to be resettled in Norway. Number of people interviewed (157). These people will have Cultural Orientation Training, which was discussed by the Camp Committee, K. R. C. and I. O. M. Bangkok Representatives.
- ◆ 19/ 1/ 2006 – Umphiem Camp work shop on Vocational Training.
- ◆ 25/ 1/ 2006 – Toungoo – Karen State – Region – (67) villagers – (14) Families Crossed over the Border to Mae Ra Ma Luang Camp – to seek Refuge. These people are from Bu Khee, Ta Kwee Soe, Bu Hsa Khee villages, destroyed by SPDC Troops – More Refuge seekers are expected.
- ◆ 26/ 1/ 2006 – K.R.C. – NGO meeting at K.R.C. office.
Discussed matter related to, Resettlement, shelter building material support and Education.
- ◆ 27/ 1/ 2006 – Students from the United Nations Information Centre Australia and the Pacific, Sydney NSW, Australia 2001 – College, visited Mae La Camp

and meets the KSNG Student Body. They visited several schools and discussed conditions, problems of schools and students. They donated Bt. 8000 for Students Activities Promotion.

- ♦ 28/ 1/ 2006 – Professor Gil Loescher and Mr. James Milner of Oxford University, England Visit Mae La Camp.

They met with the Camps Authorities and leadership, together with Community leaders, Religions leaders and Educational Workers and discussed, exchange, information on issues related to Refugees. Resettlement in a third country for Refugees, with improvement of living conditions, Health and Education were widely discussed.

- ♦ 30/ 1/ 2006 – K. R. C. and K. E. D. meet at K.R.C office.

Discussed were matters related to: -

- * Karen Education Department Structure and Functions.
- * Vocational Training Plans.
- * HIV / AIDS Training.
- * Establishing LMT College in Mae La.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS JANUARY, 2006.

MAE SOT AREA	CAMP	No. of families	Over - 12 Yrs		6 - 12 Yrs		Under 5 Yrs		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	
	Mae La	8627	15514	15194	4623	4228	3531	3344	46434
	Um Pheim Mai	3568	6406	6111	1924	1738	1558	1416	19153
Total		12195	21625	21305	6547	5966	5089	4760	65587
NORTH	Mae Ra Moe	2199	4283	4000	1294	1200	976	979	12732
	Mae La Oo	2733	5092	4703	1745	1547	1121	1122	15330
Total		4932	9375	8703	3039	2747	2097	2101	28062
SOUTH	Noh Poe	3283	4212	4077	1139	1176	859	829	12292
	Ban Dong Yang	949	1535	1556	492	447	262	237	4529
	Htam Him	1700	2546	2816	1040	1038	594	584	8618
Total		5932	8293	8449	2671	2661	1715	1650	25439
Grand Total		23059	39293	38457	12257	11374	8901	8511	119088

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.

TBBC – Support in Food and Shelter Material. TBBC is also supporting with warm clothing for all the camps.

MSF – Support in Medical and Health facilities.

AMI – Support in Medical and Health facilities.

ARC – Support in Medical and Health facilities.

MHD – Support in Medical and Health facilities.

ZOA (ABW aid) – Support in Educational facilities Teachers' Training.

Consortium – Support in World Educational facilities, Teachers' Training and Education for Deaf / Mute / Blinds.

TOPS – Support in Educational facilities.

ICS – Asia – Support in Educational facilities and school buildings.

COERR – Rice and Educational support. **EVI** – To be involved with Extremely Vulnerable people.

H.I – Support for Refugee Handicaps with Prosthesis and rehabilitation and also year – end sporting events for Handicaps.

NCA – (Norway Church Aid) has been providing **KRC** with administrative & organizational Support. It has also supported with remuneration for **KRC** members and workers.

UNHCR – For Registration Process Protection and Ultimate Safe Repatriation.

SMRU – Support with Malaria Control, Prevention and Treatment.

SVA – To support with Libraries in the camps.

PPAT – Parenthood Planning Association Thailand – Supporting with Family Planning and Preventive/ Education in Refugee Camps.

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