



KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

FEBRUARY, 2006

Karen Refugee Committee
Monthly Report
February, 2006 – Newsletter

This month, we look back (59) years, to the 12th Day of February 1947, and of what happened at a small Town in the Shan State, called “Pang Long”. It was there that many of Burma’s National Leaders, including the AFPFL (Anti-Fascist-Peoples-Freedom-League) Party Leaders, led by General Aung Sann (Daw Aung Sann Suu Kyi’s father), the Shan Sao Phas, the Kachin Duwas, the Chin Chiefs and other Ethnic Leaders assembled, with the purpose of working for unity amongst all Ethnic in Burma and for achieving Independence from British Rule. An agreement was signed, the “Pang Long Agreement” on the strength of which, the United Peoples of Burma are to demand Independence from Britain, joining other free nations of the World. But it is still a mystery why other Prominent Ethnic Group Leaders, like the Karen, the Karenni, the Rakhine, and the Mons never put their signatures to the agreement, although some of them attended the assembly as observers.

One tacit understanding in the agreement was that, any Ethnic State of the Union can have the choice of separation from the Union, after (10) years of membership. When General Aung Sann was asked, as to the Wisdom of allowance for Separation, he simply replied that it would be just a” failure” on the part of the Burmese if other Ethnic Groups find it necessary to want separation, after (10)years of living together.

The Shans, with their chieftains, the Saw Bwas were the strongest Ethnic Group, backing an Independent Union of Burma, with Equality for all. They even designated the 12th of February as the Shan National Day. Their effort was rewarded by a Shan Chief the Saw Bwa of Yawng Hwe, being installed as the First President of Independent Burma. Sad to say, with broken agreements and reneging of promises and with Equality just a lure for participation, the spirit of “UNION” was never realized. The First President of the Union, Sao Shwe Thike, was later to be defamed, with his dreams shattered. He wanted Equality for all Ethnic and he died in Prison.

Today in Burma there are the (7) States, The Shan, The Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, the Rakhine and the Chin States together with the (7) Divisions (Taings) The Rangoon, Irrawaddy, Pago, Tenasserim, Magwe, Mandalay, Sagaing Division that make up the Union of Myanmar. “Union” was in namesake only, with the Junta in over – all Power Control with Division and State Chiefs (Taing Hmoos) all Military Commanders. The Junta is now going it alone with its Process of the (7) step “Road Map” and where they never tried to hide the fact that they are just stepping on with their sole intent of imposition of Military Rule.

For the moment, the Burmese Junta seems to have its own way amongst Nations, as they have many Powerful and Influential Friends. But the Belligerence of the Junta is such that suspicions and doubts are beginning to appear, even with “Friends”.

The Junta never shows sincerity in its effort for Peace and Reconciliation. They never show interest in reform or dialogue. Daw Aung Sann Su Kyi and over a thousand Political Prisoners are still under detention. The Economy is in a mess. The living standard for the common peoples, that is quite down – under is still going down. The Kyat is almost worthless.

This month, Burma, for the first time issued Regulations on how Agencies, International and Domestic Organizations must operate in the Country. The (7) Page Guidelines, given to U. N. Agencies and other NGOs include Rules on Employment where works applications to NGOs/ INGOs are to be put up to SPDC Authorities for confirmation. There is also the requirement that SPDC officials must accompany Agencies/ NGOs Work Staff when they Travel. This follows on the heels of the reported Global Fund Aid withdrawal from Burma.

And around the world, the Rising Oil Prices, resulting in rising of other commodity prices, “Terrorism”, the on-going suicide bomb Blasts, the Nuclear attempts, the Big corruptions, the weather affectations, Political and the Religious Strife are features that can never be encouraging.

But despite all the Negatives, there is still room for optimism where Humanity is concerned. Aid/ Support Receivers, especially Refugees, are in the best position to know that there are still many “Good – Hearts” pulsating in our troubled world of today, and which can be seen only as an uphill battle, to balance all the negatives around.

K.R.C - Camps- Activities – Report.

February – 2006

◆7/ 2/ 2006 – IOM Personnel Bangkok visited Ban Don Yang Refugee Camp in Sangklaburi District. They gave Trainings to (61) people who are to be resettled in Norway.

◆8/ 2/ 2006 – Meeting in Mae La Camp, Participated by the Camp Commander (MOI) UNHCR, Personnel from the Thai Police Department, the Thai lawyers Council, KRC, the Camp Committee Members, the Camp Karen Women Organization together with those responsible for Camp's Security.

Matters related to application of Justice, application of Laws and addressing Legal problems were discussed.

◆10/ 2/ 2006 to 18/ 2/ 2006 – Due to SPDC Troop Operations in Than Daung and Tantabin Townships, many villagers were affected and displaced. 30 Families of (140) persons crossed the Border to seek refuge at Mae Ra Ma Luang Camp.

◆12/ 2/ 2006 – US Embassy Official from Burma together with the US Counsel in Chiangmai visited KRC on a fact finding mission. Matters related to Karen Refugees and Circumstances related to their seeking of Asylum were discussed. Discussions touch on the Past, Present and Future of the Karen Refugees.

◆14/ 2/ 2006 – KRC members, together with CMP Camp Management Program Personnel visit Tham Hin and Ban Don Yang Camps. The purpose being for updating the Population figures of the Camps, together with improving and adjusting the Feeding and Eating Figures, getting information on the extra – needs of the Camps and for improving the statistical Records and Reporting and Monitoring Processes.

◆15/ 2/ 2005 – The KRC Chairman facilitated the Camps Administrative Committee Elections in Mae Ra Ma Luang Camp. Elections for Camps Administrative Committee were held every 2 years in all Refugee Camps.

Elected Camp Committee Members;

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Chairperson | – Saw Baw Poe |
| 2. Vice Chairperson | – Naw Htee Tha Wee |
| 3. General Secretary | – Saw Milter |
| 4. Assistant Secretary | – Naw Ta Be Than |
| 5. Camp Affairs coordinator | – Saw Ywa Baw |
| 6. Quarter Master 1 | – Saw Pweh Mu Heh |
| 7. Quarter Master 2 | – Saw Taw Tot |
| 8. Security Coordinator 1 | – Saw Myat Tun |
| 9. Security Coordinator 2 | – Saw Po Say |

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| (10) Health/ Medical Coordinator | – Saw Wilmen |
| (11) Building/ Construction | – Saw Dee Mu |
| (12) Auditor | – Saw Ywa Hay |
| (13) Treasurer | – Saw Khar Po |
| (14) Education Coordinator 1 | – Naw Say Say |
| (15) Education Coordinator 2 | – Saw Hay Po |

◆21/ 2/ 2006 to 24/ 2/ 2006 – KRC members, together with CMP Personnel visit Mae La, Um Phiem and Noh Poe Camps, where the same processes of Population updating, improving of Reporting and Monitoring Processes was conducted.

◆25/ 2/ 2006 – In Mae Ra Ma Luang Camp, Holding Centre for 500 New Arrivals is now being constructed but due to material shortage, Toilets/ Latrines are still in need of construction. The holding centre is now accommodating 4 families of New Arrival refugee seekers.

◆27/ 2/ 2006 – Mae La Oo Refugee Camp – Families in Sections (2) and (4), in danger of threat from landslides, to be relocated at a site in Pway Baw Lu. Roads are being cleared and constructed so that TBBC can send Building Material to the new site.

◆27/ 2/ 2006 – Thailand (MOE) notified Mae Ra Ma Luang Camp that one Training Workshop will be conducted in the Camp, beginning March 23, 2006. The Training will be concerned with Teaching of Thai Language in Camps Schools.

◆28/ 2/ 2006 – A General meeting between the Karen Elders Advisory Board (KEAB), KRC, CMP and Camps Committees was held at KRC office TBBC also participated.

The purpose was for partners working together for the support of Refugees, to have awareness of the difficult Task and Procedures of Support, the need for improvement in commitment, work efforts and processes together with importance of getting proper Eating Feeding population figures, proper distribution, Reporting and monitoring.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS FEBRUARY, 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	8624	16493	15895	4622	4226	3620	3413	48269
	Um Pheim Mai	3566	6399	6108	1922	1738	1599	1439	19205
	Total	12190	22892	22003	6544	5964	5219	4852	67474
NORTH	Mae Ra Moe	2230	4323	4055	1315	1225	994	982	12894
	Mae La Oo	2722	5155	4742	1700	1524	1093	1083	15297
	Total	4952	9478	8797	3015	2749	2087	2065	28191
SOUTH	Noh Poe	3294	4296	4103	1149	1203	828	806	12385
	Ban Dong Yang	949	1403	1548	441	381	307	256	4336
	Htam Him	1907	3150	3223	1099	1086	704	660	9922
	Total	6150	8849	8874	2689	2670	1839	1722	26643
	Grand Total	23292	41219	39674	12248	11383	9145	8639	122308

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.

Address: P.O Box- 5, Mae Sot, Tak-63110, Thailand.

E- Mail: krc.academic@gmail.com.

Ø: (055) Intl: +66 55 532 947.

Fax : (055) Intl +66 55 546 869

