

**KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE**

**MONTHLY REPORT**

**MARCH, 2005**

**Karen Refugee Committee**  
**Monthly Report**  
**March, 2005**

Sixty years ago, on March 27<sup>th</sup> 1945, near the end of World War II, the Burmese “Tatmadaw” or Army, under General Aung San suddenly joined the Allied Forces and turned their guns on the Japanese Army which had been occupying Burma since the beginning of the War. The Japanese Army was soundly defeated and – March 27<sup>th</sup> was celebrated as “Resistance Day” and then later as “Tatmadaw” or “Army Day” to commemorate that “Day”.

The “Tatmadaw” which was initiated with a core of the “Thirty Comrades”, headed by General Aung San and which was trained by the Japanese Army and formed into the “Burma Independence Army (B.I.A) fought alongside the Japanese Forces in their offensive into Burma, at that time, ruled by Britain. The Japanese Army, at that time was invincible and the British Troops, together with the British Burma Rifles, had to withdraw to India.

Near the end of World War II, when Allied Forces launched a big invasion into Burma, The Burmese “Tatmadaw”, renamed the BDA – Burma Defence Army – joined the returning Allied Troops to fight against the Japanese Army, and which was completely destroyed. The “Tatmadaw” was hailed as the Liberation Force, ridding the country and People of Fascist Occupation and Rule.

However, the driving force behind the Tatmadaw and the Independence Movement, General Aung San didn’t live to see the Day of Independence on January 4<sup>th</sup> 1948, as he and many able colleagues were assassinated just a few months before the country achieved independence.

With Independence, the country seemed to be thriving and people were enjoying comparatively good-living for quite some time. But then there surfaced dissent, arguments, and wrangling but which then are to be expected in a UNION made up of many diverse Ethnic Peoples.

Then, on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 1962, the “Tatmadaw” under General Ne Win took over Power from the then CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT OF Prime Minister U Nu of the A.F.P.F.L Party. The reason for taking over of Power, cited by General Ne Win was to “Safe-Guard the UNION”. The Tatmadaw had made the decision to solve the Country’s Problems in its own “Way”.

From that time, unto this day, the “Tatmadaw” has been in Total Control of the country and People. Although, during U Ne win’s “Burmese Way to Socialism Program Party” Government, there was some semblance of Civilian Control. What cannot be denied at that time was the Presence of Military Men in all high places, but who are made to dress in civilian garbs.

These days, since after the 1988 Movement, the country is again under Complete Military Rule. The country was classified as the Least Developed Country together with a bad reputation to go along with.

Once touted as the Liberator of the country from Fascist Rule, for many people, the “Tatmadaw” has now become synonymous with repression, relocation, deprivation, displacement and abuses. “Tatmadaw” has become the name used to intimidate, to disorientate and to instill fear in people.

What is surprising is that the “Tatmadaw” Leadership never worried about the tarnished name and image. They like being considered “Tough”. They are set to continue with their tarnished Rule.

One helping factor is that the “Junta” is not lacking in influential Friends. There is the saying “La Thar Doan Bine Ngin” which means “Spinning the yarn while the Moon Shines”. It is only natural that People will side with the winning party, and benefiting from that suspect friendship.

Meantime, the National Convention, one component of the on-going Road Map was suspended and postponed to the end of the year. One reason cited by the SPDC was the “Hot Weather” and the coming Monsoon. But people can understand. It was not wholly unexpected. It was just one stalling tactics by the Tatmadaw, to prolong the Road Map and to hold on to Power, as long as possible.

Now, with the arrests and detention of the Country’s Shan Leaders together with the incarceration and side-lining of many Opposition Leaders, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the country seems to be sliding back to where it all began.

Then, there is the “Chair of ASEAN” in 2006, which is making all concerned Peoples, jittery. The SPDC does not seem to care much, although many people will feel that it can be the straw that breaks the camel’s back.

## **K.R.C - Camps- Activities**

### **March – 2005**

#### **Camp Management Program (CMP) – Activities in Camps. – March 2005.**

◆1-3-2005 – 3-3-2005 – There was a General Meeting between the Tham Hin Camp committee and NGOs – MSF- H.I- COERR – SGBV – KWO, KYO, SVA, VT, ZOA and then went into different Sections of the Camp and had discussion relation to organizing, communications and information taking and giving and how to help with support needs for the Camp and Camp Committee.

◆3-3-2005 – There was meeting in Tham Hin Camp between the UNHCR, KWO and KYO where there was discussions related to forming a Girl Scout Unit in the plan. The aim is to promote knowledge, and intelligence in young people in the camp.

◆10-3-2005 – TBBC Bangkok, KRC, KnRC – together with TBBC Field Coordinators from Mae Hong Song, Kanchanaburi, Mae Sariang met in Bangkok to make reassessment/evaluation of the Works Processes in Refugee Camps.

◆11-3-2005 – In ZOA office, concerning Vocational Training meeting was held once two months regularly. KRC Education coordinator, V.T. coordinator and Camp V.T. Coordinator participate in discussion and the main subject of discussion was to abide the rule and regulation lay down by the camp. Besides, those who assist the camp would like to request then to support is in time.

◆12-3-2005 – KRC Education Coordinator arranging the 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade Examination Questions to arrive to Mae La and Um Phiem Camp in time.

◆15-3-2005 –◆30-3-2005 – MSF Home Visitors give training is Than Hin Camp on the subjects of;

1. Hemorrhagic Influenza
2. Chronic T.B.
3. Pregnant Mothers
4. Nutrition
5. Pregnancy Prevention

The aim being to lessen Family Health – Problems together with the knowledge to avoid getting infections.

◆23-3-2005 – School Teachers, KWO and HI met in Tham Hin Camp to discuss measures to help teach Handicapped people in the Camp.

◆25-3-2005 –◆30-3-2005 – KRC – Education Coordinator discussed with Mae La and Umphiem Mai Camp's responsible people, matters related to Karen Education Policy. There were open discussions by all attending, School Heads, Teachers, and Educational Workers. There are over 70 teachers in Mae La Camp will be leaving for resettlement in some third country and still over 300 teachers remain in teaching.

From◆27-3-2005 to ◆31-3-2005 – with the supervision of MOI, UNHCR took responsible in sending POC to Hta Hin, Dong Yan +Noh Po refugee Camps. The camp people are giving a helping hand in clearing the place to be appropriate. BBC also supporting the needs of constructing materials, Ration, home paraphernalia to the POC. The total amount of people who arrived in:

Noh Poe are (786) people  
Htam Hin (415) people and  
Dong yan (395) people.

◆28-3-2005 – On the 25<sup>th</sup> of March 2005, Thai Education assume responsibility presenting refugee camps in Thailand, should teach Thai language as a subject. Therefore, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of March 2005, KRC Education Coordinator, ZOA assume responsibility personnel and KRC Committee discussing how to handle and execute it.

KRC Chairman went to Noh Poe, met with Camp Committee, discussing the requirement of POC who arrive in Noh Poe, participate with UNHCR, MOI and NGOs for the convenience. Though the Camp Committee term is complete of time to have new Election, there is an obstacle of UNHCR going to have new registration process. Therefore, after the registration process, Camp election will be held was the decision and affirmation was made in the discussion.

♦31-3-2005 – This month UNHCR’s POC (Persons of Concern) are being registered by the Immigration Department Mae Sot and transported to Noh Poh Camp Reception Centre. They will have to stay there until their Repatriation for resettlement in a third country can be effected. There are now (786) POCs in Noh Po Camp, there is also a reception Centre for POC’s in Tham Him and Ban Dong Yang Camp.

This year Um Phiem Camp the situation is quite differ than previous year, because of water problem. Water getting scarce from the sources which is the spring from the mountain. Therefore, ARC having discussion with the camp committee to increase the require pump in the suitable place. But up to now still have difficulty concerning water.

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS MARCH, 2005.**

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	5,183	10,385	10,218	3,990	3,707	2,292	2,216	32,808
	Um Pheim Mai	3353	6242	5942	2124	2046	1232	1103	18689
Total		8536	16627	16160	6114	5753	3524	3319	51497
NORTH	Mae Ra Moe	2082	4533	4098	1381	1222	983	957	13174
	Mae La Oo	2632	5449	4686	1707	1574	890	735	15041
Total		4714	9982	8784	3088	2796	1873	1692	28215
SOUTH	Noh Poe	2261	3962	3985	1267	1162	842	883	12101
	Ban Dong Yang	747	1139	1340	449	420	190	175	3713
	Htam Him	1583	2439	2657	1009	1011	592	628	8336
Total		4591	7540	7982	2725	2593	1624	1686	24150
Grand Total		17841	34149	32926	11927	11142	7021	6697	103862

**RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH.**

[illegible]

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.

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

MSF- Support in Medical and Health facilities.

AMI- " " " " "

ARC- " " " " "

MHD- " " " " "

ZOA(ABWaid)- Support in Educational facilities Teachers' Training.

Consortium - Support in 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 [win3@loxinfo.co.th](mailto:win3@loxinfo.co.th)

Ø (055)Intl: +66 55 532 947.

Fax:(055)Intl +66 55 546 869.