



KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

SEPTEMBER, 2005

Karen Refugee Committee
Monthly Report
September, 2005 – Newsletter

With September, we have come around again, to remember the Day on September 11th - 2001, when the world was horrified to see the suicidal attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon in the United States. The attacks carried out by a group of young zealots, showed that any target whether military or otherwise, however well guarded or seemingly safe can be assaulted and destroyed, so long as people are dedicated enough to die for their cause.

There is surely no shortage of such fanatical young people, as shown by the 9/11 attacks and the suicidal bombings that took place almost daily around the world. With such deaths, destructions and terror, we are seeing reprisals, retaliatory strikes, leading to more deaths, more destructions and more hatred. The question is whether these deadly sacrifices achieve; any positive out-comes with regard to their causes. Many simply are of the opinion that the deaths of such dedicated people are just a waste of precious lives, whose commitment applied elsewhere may well benefit the world as a whole.

Going back further to September of 1939. On the 1st of September 1939. Adolf Hitler, the German Dictator embarked on an adventurous undertaking by invading Poland. Britain and France were literally forced to declare war on Germany and on the 3rd of September 1939, World War (II) began which resulted in deaths and destructions never witnessed before. Japan became the only country to be hit by the ultimate weapon, and the terrifying destructive power, unleashed by the “Bomb” can only be imagined with horror. Today, Man has in Possession, Ultimate Weapons which can destroy the world many times over. Still many Nations will be attempting to be “Nuclear Capable”.

Now, after more than half a century of the end of World War (II), we are still seeing that Man Still likes to play with fire-works. We are still seeing these plays almost daily. This, on top of the Menace, from the ominous changing weather, the onslaughts of Natural Forces, the ravages of Disease and Famine. Together with Population Congestion and Dwindling of Resources, Man is in trouble already. However the Predilection for vengeance, confrontations, for fighting, for conflict has never diminished with the passage of time.

As for People in Burma, this month will make them remember the Day in September 1988, when a group of Tatmadaw Men took over Total Power, calling themselves the State Law and Order Restoration Council. But their Law and Order came out from the Barrel of the Gun, which severe consequences made people really suffer. But then, looking back, we see that they are not a new breed, but proponents of a new adaptation of the abhorrent system laid down by none other than the now depersonalized General Ne Win. The Rule System being “The Burmese Way to Socialism”. Many are now of the opinion that the system of (ism) laid down was none other than “Pauperism”. The way to “Pauperism” would be none other than the way towards abject poverty for the people under the “Rule” and who would be in no position to question the imposition of Total Control.

For how can one justify the stoppage of English Teaching at the Primary Level which would mean curtailing of Education and which was reserved only for the “Elite.” The Nationalization of Industry and work Places, the Nationalization or Confiscation of land and Property, the Forced relocation of People, Restriction of movement, travel, Trade. The only qualification for top Management was unquestioned loyalty. Farm people are made to harvest unfamiliar Crops, (like rice farmers, forced to plant Beans / Peas.) There was Total Control of the Economy, Finance, Trade, Transport, Education, Medical Health, with stress on total acquiescence to Law and Order. People were made to suffer, to be so much in need of self or family support to survive that they can never take the time nor the opportunity to voice open dissent. Voicing dissent would mean instant arrest, incarceration or even death.

We can go back even a little further. Burma became Independent in 1948 as a Union with (8) Dominant Ethnic Groups. (10) Years after Burma’s Independence, there was Dissenting Voices by the lesser Ethnic Groups due to lack of equality and sharing. Prime Minister U Nu handed power briefly to Gen. Ne Win to address the Ethnic Dissents. (This had connections to the Document “Twilight over Burma” by the Austrian-Shan Princess). Of course, U Nu took over Control again knowing full well the evil in Ne Win. But the Evil Genius had tasted Power and liked it. Thus the take over of Power on March 2, 1962.

So, today, the feature in Burma is the fear, the impotence, the lethargy, topped by the deepening Pauperism which is hitting all sectors of society. This resulted in the hopelessness, the Silence, the Kind of “Shattering Silence” that would impel Great Men of Peace like Mr. Vaclav Havel and Bishop Desmond Tutu to speak out. Now it will be time to wait and see how the Supreme Body of the United Nations will handle and address this cause for Humanity. But for the people of Burma it will only be just hoping and waiting, as they are in no position for “Koh Htoo, Koh Hta” or “Self lift- Self stand”, just leaving everything to Fate.

K.R.C - Camps- Activities – Report.

September – 2005

◆ 12-9-05 – KRC Chairman and Branch Members visit Mae La Oo Refugee Camp in Mae Sariang District for the purpose of;

(1) Addressing matters related to sales of Support Material which need to be curtailed and prevented.

(2) Restriction on Camps Population for the prevention of the environment (Cutting trees/bamboos).

(3) Replacement of Camp Vice-Chairman who was dismissed due to misappropriation.

◆ 13-9-05 – KRC visit Umphiem Camp to meet/discuss with Camp Commander together with MOI, Camp Committee, KWO, KYO, KSNG, Education Committee and Religions Groups. Discussed were matters related to the Coming Camp Elections and whether there was any need for zone committees. There was agreement not to keep zones Committees as they were seen to be leading to divisive features in the Camp. Camp Elections to be held after completion of the Registration Process.

◆ 15-9-05 – UNHCR and KRC Mae Sariang meet with Camp Leaders, Mae Ra Moo and Mae La Oo, to share information -

Norway will accept (240) persons for Resettlement from Mae Ra Moo.

Canada will accept (500) persons for Resettlement from Mae La Oo.

There will be interviews. Resettlement will begin in 5 months time.

Priority will be given to –

(1) Families with many children.

(2) Orphans and Vulnerables.

(3) Handicapped and those who are in peril.

◆ 18-9-05 – KRC and KnRC Members Participated in Meets/Workshop in Chiang Mai. (Protection Workshop).

K.R.C. made Presentations on Karenni/Karen Refugees - Background, Structures, Challenges and Expectations. Also participated in Information sharing, Group Discussions/Workshop on Refugee Protection Issues.

◆ 25-9-05 to 28-9-05 – K.R.C- Executive Committee visit Noh Poe Camp. Meet with Camp Committee and Section Leaders. Hold talks on Camp Management/Administration, Share Information, Exchange Views and discuss improvements of Communications and relationships.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS SEPTEMBER, 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	7557	14949	14925	5133	4795	2983	2859	45644
	Um Pheim Mai	3555	6384	6090	1923	1737	1467	1314	18915
	Total	11112	21333	21015	7056	6532	4450	4173	64559
NORTH	Mae Ra Moe	2170	4693	4287	1401	1259	1038	1024	13702
	Mae La Oo	2667	5117	4611	1585	1460	1142	1100	15015
	Total	4873	9810	8898	2986	2719	2180	2124	28717
SOUTH	Noh Poe	2325	4289	4171	1128	1177	850	824	12439
	Ban Dong Yang	854	1325	1516	479	438	234	210	4202
	Htam Him	1744	2522	2730	1078	1069	623	666	8688
	Total	4923	8136	8417	2685	2684	1707	1700	25329
	Grand Total	20908	39279	38330	12727	11935	8337	7997	118605

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- " " " " " "

ARC- " " " " " "

MHD- " " " " " "

ZOA (ABWaid) - 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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