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ပရဟိတတရားအဖွဲ့ချုပ်မှ

MON RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

JUNE

2003

Aim and Objectives of Mon Relief and Development Committee

Aim:

Provide temporary shelters, basic needs and development assistance to refugees and the displaced persons who become homeless and helpless situation due to the oppression of Rangoon military regimes in Mon territory along Thailand-Burma border.

Objectives:

1. To help the welfares of the refugees in border areas and IDPs who are displaced inside the country, with foods, shelter and possible protection.
2. To coordinate with local Mon people in developing the grassroots community in the fields of health, education, literacy, agriculture and other rural development projects.
3. 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

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Nai Wongsala Pala | - Chairman |
| 2. Nai Kasau Mon | - General Secretary |
| 3. Nai Dung Htaw | - Member |
| 4. Phra Htaw Son | - Member |
| 5. Nai Glae | - Member |
| 6. Nai Chit Nyunt | - Member |
| 7. Nai Tay Jae | - Member |
| 8. Nai Jon Dae | - Member |
| 9. Nai Chan Done | - Member |

Monthly Report of Mon Relief and Development Committee (June 2003)

Population Displacement and the Plights of IDPs in Burma

Over five decades long civil war, the increasingly intensive offensives by the Burmese Army, and worst human rights violations committed by the Burmese Army, have forced thousands of ethnic civilians in the rural Burma to leave from their native homes and to be in the situation of displacement. On the other hand, there are several thousands of ethnic people, who have to leave from their homes because of development projects and troop deployment implemented by the current regime, State Peace and Development Council.

The majority of displaced persons, have to flee from their homes because of fighting and additional human rights violations. The majority of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) displace along the Thailand-Burma border, from Shan State to Tenasserim Division. It is situating in eastern and southern parts of Burma.

Along this border area, except New Mon State Party (NMSP) all armed ethnic opposition groups, Shan State Army; Karen National Union, Karenni National Progressive Party, have not ceased their fighting against the central military government, SPDC, and its Burmese Army. If compared with the situation before 1988, although these ethnic revolutionary groups are weak in the number of troops and control areas, however, they have been still waging fighting against the Burmese Army for greater autonomy.

From 1970-80s until now, the Burmese Army has used various tactics to cut the supports from the ethnic civilians to armed groups. First they have used 'four cuts campaign' to cut recruitment, information, food and shelter supporting from the civilians to the ethnic rebel armed groups concerned. Later, they used 'rounding up campaign' with objective to overthrow ethnic armed bases and take bases in many areas as much as possible by rounding up with their enormous number of troops in a specific area.

In both types of campaigns or in any offensives launched by the Burmese Army, the ethnic civilians in the rural areas are inhumanely and seriously treated by the soldiers. Many innocent civilians are killed; women are raped; the suspects (supporting the rebel soldiers) are tortured, arrested, and imprisoned; villages are burnt down; crops are confiscated or burnt down into ashes; men are forced to be in notorious porter service. These types of human rights violations have forced the rural civilians or villagers to flee from their homes and hide in forests, jungles and in many insecured places. If they are re-arrested by Burmese Army's soldiers, they are again killed or inhumanely tortured.

Population displacement has created unnecessary situations.

1. Population displacement totally destroyed the livelihoods of the local ethnic villagers. Normally, the majority of the people are farmers and the have main livelihood in agriculture. Most villagers in both lowland and high-land areas grow paddy as the rice is the main food that they eat every meal. Besides agriculture activities, some villagers also involved in trading, raising animals, transporting, fishing and other livelihoods. When there is population displacement or when the local villagers fled from their homes, they also have to abandon their agriculture lands and other livelihoods. For example, a trader could not move easily as he like from one place to another to do his/ her trading work. He/she could be accused as 'rebel-supporters' if the Burmese Army's soldiers found him/ her with foods or goods. In the early 2003, the Burmese Army's battalions, which launched the military activities in southern part of Ye Township, Mon State, ordered the traders to not buy foods, medicines and batteries from towns. They suspected the villagers would support the soldiers with these goods.

For a farmer, if he could not go and work in his farms, his crops would be destroyed by wild animals or taller grass grow or water canal destroy or crops are attacked by insects. Normally, if a farmer abandon his farms for a few months, he could lost every thing in his farms. Thus, all displaced villagers could lose their livelihoods, incomes and crops that they receive on a regular basis for their survival.

2. Population displacement also destroys the whole system of community practices and development. The villagers have to abandon their churches, monasteries, community gathering and other spiritual practices. Kind people feel hate and most people lost their tolerance. Most people who are taught to be kind, respect each other would like to involve in revenge against the Burmese Army.

The children have to abandon their school and end their education. More and more people in the rural areas became illiterate. They end their life in hiding and never know how the importance of the education and have no idea how the world developed with science, technology and new ideas. Most serious situation that the children and women are facing during the displacement is worse health condition. They could not get access to medicines and medical treatments. They are sick because of unclean water, malaria, no well sanitation and other situations.

3. Another the most serious situation is food-shortage problems. During displacement, the rural ethnic civilians could not get access to foods. When they flee, they could not bring sufficient foods along with them. Or, when they flee if they were arrested with food supplies, they could be suspected as rebel-supporters. On the other hand, if the Burmese Army troops are launching military activities, the villagers could not move easily and so that they could get foods.

Population displacement in Burma is a serious 'humanitarian crisis' and it needs to solve urgently. The IPDs also really the international protection in accordance to the "Guiding Principle on Internal Displacement.

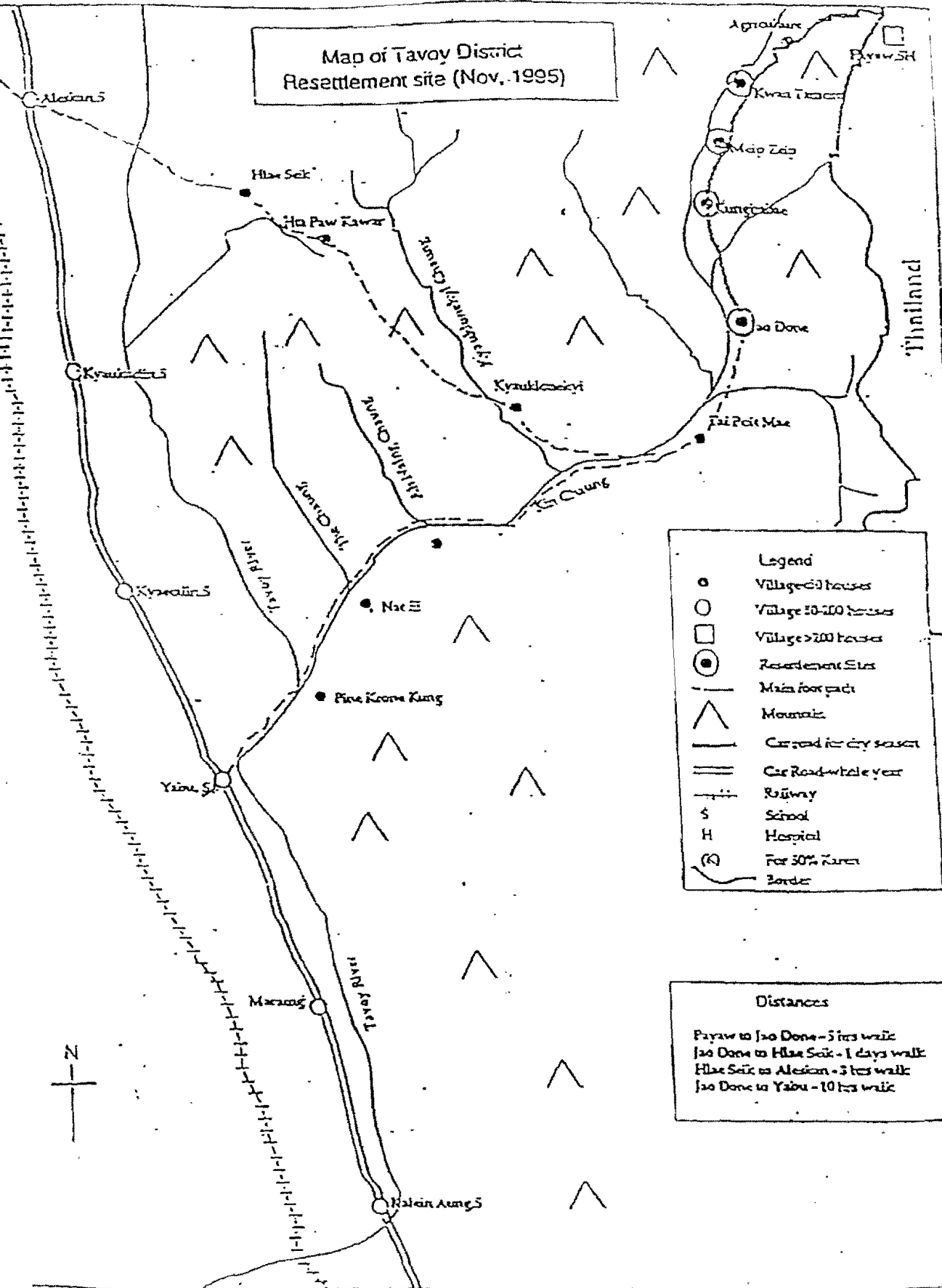
THE REFUGEE POPULATION OF THE THREE RESETTLEMENT SITES
(June, 2003)

No.	Camp	Number of Family	Over 12 years		5-12 years		Under 5 years		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	Bee Ree	668	1196	1300	409	415	168	197	3685
2	Tavoy	620	1045	1042	398	396	189	191	3261
3	Halockhani	945	1603	1672	492	507	280	321	4875
TOTAL		2210	3844	4014	1299	1318	637	709	11821

THE MATERIALS RECEIVED
BY THE MON RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(June, 2003)

No	Organization	Rice (Sack/ 100kg.)	Fish Paste (kg.)	Salt (kg.)	Bean (Kg.)	Remark
			-	-		
	TOTAL		-	-		

Map of Tavoy District Resettlement site (Nov, 1995)



Map of Ye River Resettlement sites (Nov, 1995)

