



KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

&

MONTHLY REPORT

MAY, 2009

Karen Refugee Committee

Newsletter & Monthly Report

May, 2009

This month on the 1st of May, labourers throughout the world have celebrated (May Day) the worker's day but workers in the camps do not have the right to celebrate the worker's day. For workers in the camps are not considered in the category of the international workers who have the right to enjoy the international labour union law which protects them from selfish and unscrupulous employers. But workers in the camps be they manual/white collar workers working under the NGOs got to work (8) hours a day but are under paid and so far there is no one who will speak out for them that they are being exploited.

At present the situation inside Burma relating to the refugee camps along the Thailand-Burma border, the SPDC has changed its administrative method over its alliances DKBA and other groups and are joining hands with them to fight against all the outpost of other factions along the border who are opposing them. On account of such repercussion induces people to escape the fighting by crossing over to Thai soil for safety. Some even entered the camps and settled down without permission. The objective of the SPDC offensive according to some observer is to console the international community that all dissidents and opposing groups are crushed and that the 2010 election shall be carried out as planned without hindrances. On the other hand the KNLA splinter group with the help of the SPDC will make arrangement for the repatriation of the refugees and hinting of trying to get international support which is causing much unrest in the camp. At the same time at one of the camps a chemical powder was discovered and could not be determined whether it was connected to the present situation along the border.

Because of the "Pin long" Agreement of 12th February 1947, Burma gained independence from the British in January 4th 1948 but until now it is still under the rule of military Dictatorship. Self rule under democratic system of the Union Government of Burma could be maintained from 1948 to 1962 a period of only 14 years a non military rule. Since 1962 to 2009 a period of exactly 47 year is under the repressive military rule.

According to the "Pin Long" agreement there is a clause stating the ethnic nationalities have the right to secede from the Union after 10 year since independences in 1948. Most observers had conceded that not wanting to honour the said clause of the "Right to secede" Ne Win and his military henchmen took over power proclaiming itself Military Council Government.

Claiming that the military (Tatmadaw) for the good of the country and in a bid to protect the country from disintegration had to take over power.

And now the military government in an attempt to gain international support and adopt a democratic system of government will be holding a democratic election in the year 2010 according to the will of the people. Many are waiting and watching whether it will be a truly free and fair election. While the civil war is still raging the democratic movement is going on and many human rights activists are still under detention. We still have to wait and see what the election result will be.

Regarding the situation of the camps since last two months, cases have been happening constantly. The people in the camps seem to be living in a separate world for quite some time and are suffering from psychological effect which prompts them to cause problem. More over, living in a community comprises of many nationalities, with different language, belief, creed and code can stir up problem. According to last month's report in a camp of 18,000 people there were (24) cases relating to drunkenness, (11) cases of household violence, (2) cases of illicit drugs, (4) cases of forest destruction. In other camps cases such as killing, rape, striking with chopper have occurred intermittently.

We are grateful for receiving support from donors until now, but on the other hand considering the increase of camp population (high childbirth rate), economic recession, world wide, we fear that the helping hand of donors might lessen.

After all, the refugees are victims of conflict and confrontation. Though they are yearning for the word peace, they have no power to make it becomes true. By waiting day by day upon those who could probably make it become true, they have been waiting in the camp for three generations already.

We the KRC with great hope for genuine internal peace based on equality and the emergence of democracy are expecting to lead our refugees from the camps back to our own country when peace and order are restored.

K.R.C – Activities – Report.

May– 2009

- 11/5/09 – Karen Refugee Committee education entity (KRC-EE) together with ZOA, KRC-Maesariang went to Mae La Mat Luang and Mae La Oon camps for the reforming of new camp education committee.
- 15/5/09 – KRC Social affair Coordinator call on Umphiem Camp committee, Teachers, Vocational Training responsible person and briefing on account of education, Vocational Training in camp and other issues raised.
- 19/5/09 – Karen Refugee Committee attended a NGOs meeting which was organized by MOI and P’La- in Umphiem camp regarding road improvement in the camp and other issues.
- 20-21/5/09 – With Mr. Oneua and K.R.C reconcile accounts and prepare AFS of 2008
- 21/5/09 – The secretary of Karen Refugee Committee, KRC-EE advisor and KRC social welfare coordinator visit Mae La camp for monitoring the activities of education, vocational meanwhile had discussion, information sharing, and encourage to the responsible person.
- 25/5/09 – Karen Refugee committee attended Karen information centre meeting organized in Mae Sod. The prioritized issues discussed were collaboration in news and means of improving their activities.
- 26/5/09 – KRC Social welfare coordinator call on Mae La camp committee, vocational training incharge, Teachers, camp-CBOs, representatives of different NGOs for discussing of vocational issue and a new committee of vocational training was reformed.
- 27/5/09 – Thailand, Public Accountants Auditors from Chiangmai audits KRC’s final financial account of year 2008.
- 30/5/09 – KRC representative attended Health, Medic meeting in Mae La Camp and pursue for better and closer cooperation in future.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS May, 2009.

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	7,817	11,979	12,374	3,622	3,405	2,413	2,260	36,053
	UmPhiem Mai	4,328	6,073	5,907	1,527	1,378	1,713	1,572	18,170
Total		12,145	18,052	18,281	5,149	4,783	4,126	3,832	54,223
NORTH	Mae Ra Moe	2,990	6,009	5,927	1,952	1,720	1,227	1,270	18,105
	Mae La Oo	2,918	5,695	5,437	1,644	1,627	1,137	1,066	16,606
Total		5,908	11,704	11,364	3,596	3,347	2,364	2,336	34,711
SOUTH	Noh Poe	5,898	6,183	5,590	1,461	1,393	1,197	1,218	17,042
	Ban Dong Yang	833	1,519	1,587	374	345	342	346	4,513
	Htam Him	978	1,426	1,482	499	445	359	335	4,546
Total		7,709	9,128	8,659	2,334	2,183	1,898	1,899	26,101
Grand Total		25,762	38,884	38,304	11,079	10,313	8,388	8,067	115,035

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. TBBC is Supporting with Camps Management program to help with Administration, Management and Stability improvements in all (7) Camps.

TBBC - Has been providing **KRC** with administrative & organizational Support. It has also supported with remuneration for **KRC** members and workers.

MSF – Support in Medical and Health facilities.

AMI – Support in Medical and Health facilities.

ARC – Support in Medical and Health facilities.

M.I (Malteser International) formerly MHD – Support in Medical and Health facilities.

ZOA – Support in Educational facilities and Teachers' Training.

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

TOPS – Support in Educational facilities Nurseries.

ICS – Asia – Support in Educational facilities, Teaching, Learning Aid.

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

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

UNHCR – For Registration Process, Protection and Ultimate Safe Repatriation. Now helping with Resettlement.

SMRU – Support with Malaria Control, Prevention and Treatment.

SVA – Support with Libraries in the camps.

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

SOLIDARITES – Support the Burmese refugees in the camp addressing sanitation issues.

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

Mobile: +66 878 498250