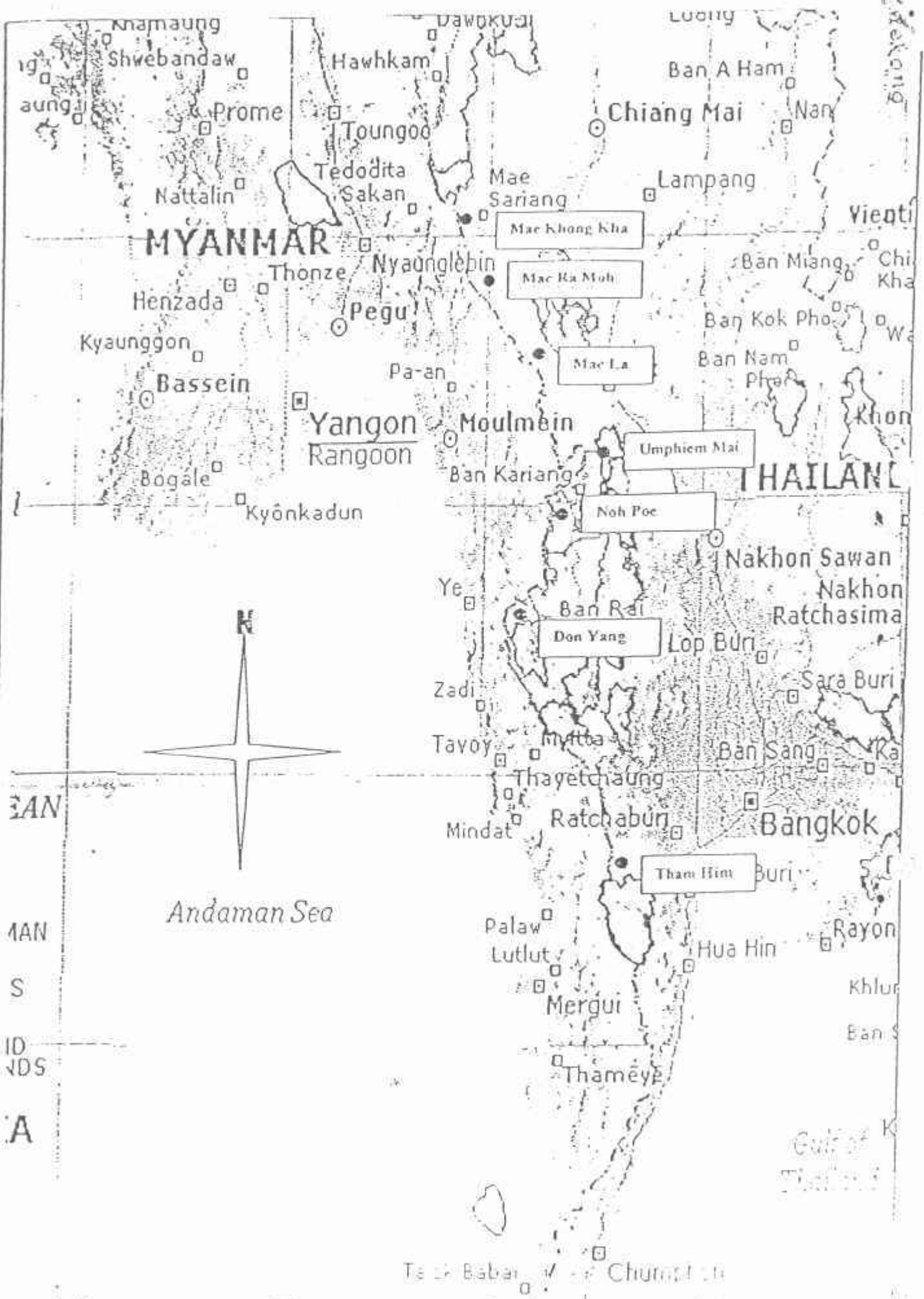


KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE

MONTHLY REPORT

July, 2003



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On July 7th 1962-just four months after the taking over of Power by General Ne Win on March 2nd 1962, a severe confrontation took place between the Military and the University Students in Rangoon, resulting in the Tatmadaw sending in Troops into the University Compound. Intensive shooting by soldiers resulted in the deaths of many Students, and many injured. The next evening, July 8th 1962, the University Student Union Building was totally demolished by dynamite, with some students still hiding inside the building. The University was closed and there was severe clamp down on students all over the country.

Decades later, when there was questioning about the Union Building destruction, General Ne Win, the Revolutionary Council Chairman altogether denied responsibility. Brigadier Aung Gyi, the No.2 Man at that time, but who later, became an Opposition Activist also denied responsibility, putting blame on others. What came out was that a certain Colonel Min Thein gave out the Order for the demolition of the Building. When the Colonel was asked about the Demolition Order, his response was that he didn't understand what he made out, as it was written in English. It was a deed which could be called "Ngo Ar Htet, Yi Ar Than" which would mean "More Laughable than Cryable"- although the deaths of hundreds of students and the Complete obliteration of the Student Union Building can never be considered laughing matter. Many students missing are unaccounted for unto this day. That was the forerunner to the 4 Eight Incident of 1988, in which many hundreds are shot dead, after the comment by General Ne Win that "when soldiers shoot, they don't shoot in the air- they shoot straight". That was the only justification for the Tatmadaw action. There was no remorse by the Military. There was no attempt at healing the wounds. No wonder, students are crying out for Justice all these years.

July 19th 1947 also would be the Day, most People in Burma will remember. It was on that Day, just five months before Burma was to achieve Independence from Britain, that General Aung San and many other National Leaders were gunned down by assassins. Which came to show that Burma was in trouble even before it achieved independence. It was quite evident that People are already struggling to achieve Power for themselves.

To day, many people still remember what General Aung San had said some months before he died. He was quite unhappy with the disunity and the unconcerned, easy going way of the Burmese People. He was quite blunt in saying that the People of Burma need to work "until their bottom split" to catch up with the developing world.

Living conditions in Burma at that time was one of the best in South East Asia. Considering the sorrowful conditions in Burma to day, more than "Double Split" would be needed for the country to achieve the living standard at the time of independence.

> With the end of July, two months have passed by when there was an "incident" near the little Town of De Pae Yin in upper Burma. It was at that place that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, other NLD leaders and Party members, who were on an Organizational Tour were attacked by a group of unidentified malicious men. There is, as yet, no exact account of what happened there. The SPDC announcement was that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was kept under Protective Custody at some undisclosed place for her own Personal Safety. Then, the Junta said that NLD leaders were arrested because they were plotting to overthrow the Military Government, that they were planning to assassinate the Junta leaders. It was too farcical to be believed. The truth of what had happened at De Pae Yin will surely come out.

Many are of the opinion that the Junta must have found the need to do something to contain their "little Sister". The Democracy leader was proving herself to be a very tough and unaccommodating adversary in fact, she was just speaking out the Truths, but what others dare not- what is actually happening in the country, the inefficiencies, the failures, the drawback, the mistakes, the need to mend, the need in changes, which all seem to bear out the shortcomings of the Generals. She was drawing huge appreciative crowds, which the Junta in all their Power and Effort cannot match. However, after the De Pae Yin debacle, there was intense, immediate out- cry from many countries and groups. Even friendly countries are put in very difficult positions. The Foreign Minister rightly expressed that the situation is now hot, inside as well as outside. For Burma as a whole, it is a

very big setback for Reconciliation and Peace, which seemed to be in the offing, and which the whole world is hoping for.

As of now, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi will be spending her time in solitary Confinement, or rather, Protective Custody- pending the Junta's Cooling Period. The Military said she was being kept in a Government Guest House, for her own safety. She was not even allowed to attend the Martyrs' Day Ceremony, on July 19th, honoring her father and other Fallen Leaders. This then must be the way of the Generals, for they are always saying that they are working towards achievement of Democracy, in Their Own Way, which must include putting people in cages at will.

But then, a cage is a cage, whatever you call it.

KRC CAMPS ACTIVITIES

Mae Kong Kha Refugee Camp- In Mae Sariang Township- Mae Hong Son District- will be relocated to a new site- because of *its* situation *in* the protected Forest Reserve and for Seasonal threat from Heavy showers, floods and landslides. Over 16,800 Refugee will be moved to a new site in Sop Moi Township.

July 21st to July 23rd 2003

KRC- UMPHTEM CAMP COMMITTEE - CONDUCTED assembled meeting to discuss holding of Election for New Camp Administrative Committee. Measures for improvements in Camp Affairs Management were discussed and guidelines were to be provided by KRC Election to be held on the 13th-14th-August 2003.

July 24th 2003- There was an NGOs- KRC meeting at KRC office- Issues relating to support, service and problems addressing were discussed - problems relating to newly arrived asylum seekers in Refugee Camps, Refugees going out of Camps and persons of Concerns to be sent to camps.

Mae La Camp. Social Relations Wording Group.

Evaluation of work Progress in the Camp- (33) work members attended the Evaluation meeting. One work success- in Mae La camp before, when work Process began 6 months ago there was found to be dozens of Drugs abusers. Now, because of corrective measures and education, few Drugs abusers were to be found in Mae La Camp. There was also great improvement in the overall Camp sanitation with regard to systematic litter collection and disposal.

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS July, 2003.

	CAMP	No. of	Over- 12Yrs		5 - 12 Yrs		Under 5Yrs		Total
		families	M	F	M	F	M	F	
MAE									
SOT	Mae La	5,416	10,857	10,573	3,547	3,328	2,181	2,071	32,557
AREA	Um Pheim Mai	3,509	6,337	6,039	2,093	1,972	1,237	1,168	18,846
	Total	8,925	17,194	16,612	5,640	5,300	3,418	3,239	51,403
NORTH	Mae Ra Mu Luang	1,894	4,187	3,702	1,256	1,130	752	725	11,752
	Mae Kha & Sa la	2,798	5,669	5,194	1,646	1,555	1,580	1,443	17,087
	Total	4,692	9,856	8,896	2,902	2,685	2,332	2,168	28,839
SOUTH	Noh Poe	2,859	3,923	3,761	1,678	1,528	741	808	12,439
	Ban Dong Yang	736	1,083	1,198	412	391	280	287	3,651
	Htam Him	1,652	2,047	2,188	1,422	1,395	857	871	8,780
	Total	5,247	7,053	7,147	3,512	3,314	1,878	1,966	24,870
	Grand total	18,864	34,103	32,655	12,054	11,299	7,628	7,373	105,112

RICE AND OTHER ITEMS RECEIVED DURING THE MONTH

FROM	CAMP	Rice 100 Kg Sack	Salt Kilos	F -paste 15-Kg Tin	Yellow Bean- 60 Kilo Sack	Chilies Kilos	Cooking Oil 200 ltr	Charcoal 30 kg saks
B.B.C	Umphiem Mai	5,952	7,683	1,280	301	2,402	90	2,637
	Mae La	14,090	18,142	3,006	712	5,680	213	10,822
COERR	Um Pheim	250	-	-	-	-	-	-

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. EVT- 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.