



# **KAREN REFUGEE COMMITTEE**

## **MONTHLY REPORT**

**APRIL, 2007**

**Karen Refugee Committee**  
**Monthly Report**  
**April, 2007 – Newsletter**

April is the Month of “Thin Gyan” – The Buddhist end of the Year, and also, the entrance of the New Year. Celebrations are made with throwing of Water to welcome the New Year, to show Good will, and wishing for Peace, Harmony and Prosperity.

But looking around this New Year, there is little, that can be called joyful. Even in this land of Smile and Harmony, we are now seeing dissent and explosions, of set minds and intent, which will not help with advancement, with prosperity. There is need for all of us, who are blessed by this beautiful land, to help with conserving the serenity and the harmony.

This April, we remember April 14-15 of Year 1912. The British Ocean liner, the TITANIC was embarking on the Trip from England to the United States. The Pride of British Shipping, the TITANIC was supposed to be unsinkable. The Ship was carrying Thousands of passengers, and considering it to be unsinkable, there was lack of preparation, measures, to help all of the passengers in any eventuality of disaster. That was what happened. There were not enough lifeboats to save all passengers. So, people are divided, those to go with the live-boats, and those who will have to remain on the doomed ship and die with it. A Most sorrowful event.

What doomed the ship was just Solid Water, an Iceberg floating around, seemingly posing no danger. But it was the sheer size of the Iceberg, which dwarfed the giant ocean liner. The Iceberg must have struck the liner, or the liner must have struck the Iceberg. But Struck they did. Man can only lose when striking against the Force of Nature. Over a thousand and five hundred lives were lost in that shipping disaster.

And now, all signs are that Man will be faced with a lot of threatening Natural Forces including Climate Change. What is needed can only be awareness, acceptance, and containing efforts, to face danger in reality.

Then, Man can suffer from his own doing, from his own cleverness. Sometimes harm are being done intentionally. But sometimes, harm can come accidentally.

We need to remember the event of April 26 – Year 1986. It was at Chernobyl, near Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, then a part of the Soviet Union. What happened was an accidental explosion at the Nuclear Power plant – Nuclear Energy harnessed for Peaceful use. (31) People died in the immediate aftermath. Radioactive material spread over much of Europe. An estimated (135,000) people were evacuated from the region, some of which were uninhabitable for years. As a result of the radiation released, tens of thousands of excess cancer deaths as well as increased birth defects were to follow.

For the world's power hungry, harnessing Nuclear Power for Energy, a clever effort can be helpful. But at the same time, it can look more like making a dangerous enemy working for you. You will not know, or cannot know, when that friendly enemy will turn Nasty. To be sure, many of the world's people will not know what destruction, Radiation can bring about, apart from its means to help. Then, Nuclear Explosions, whether accidental or intentional, can be most deadly, destructive, as witnessed in Japan near the end of World War – (II). Today, many countries are in possession of this awesome destructive Power, and still many are attempting to possess that power. With the intent to “wipe off” the other, the feature can only be most alarming.

The intent of Man can also be most alarming, especially when covered, or neglected. On April 18<sup>th</sup> 2007, a young student at the Virginia Tech University went on a shooting spree. (32) Innocent, unknowing students and teachers died before the gunman committed suicide. One thing, known by a few, was that, long before the shooting, one court ruling gave the “warning” that the said Young Man Could be an “imminent danger to others”. The warning was taken lightly, and so the tragedy. Negligence can be the word. Negligence on a higher, larger scale could be more tragic.

As for Refugees in these Border Camps, the talk of the town is Resettlement. Resettlement is generating great interest and activity among Refugees. As of now Refugees feel, they have no home, no country, no government, no resources, no life support, being dependent solely on sympathy. Back inside is no home, no welcome. As far as the Ruling Regime is concerned, Refugees / Displaced People are simply “Good – Riddance”. Before, this “Good – Riddance” would mean only Eastern Border Displaced People. But now the feature will include “Good – Riddance” from other Regions as well, the Shan, Kachin, Chin, Arakans, Mons, as well as central opposition peoples.

Many countries are opening up with Resettlement Efforts based on sympathy and concern, but which may not be quite simple and easy, as things are being done in somewhat of a rush. However, the Goodwill can never be contested.

For Refugees / Displaced peoples who see this opening as the only acceptable way, they will seize, the opportunity come what many. They may see trouble, problems, difficulty, but also, they can take this as the best in Humanitarian Effort and Value. Value can come at great costs. For Refugees / Displaced Peoples, facing difficulty has become second nature to them. One more trouble will be just one more trouble. What cannot be denied is that Good Fortune will always be favored by the intrinsic values, of Man, where ever, whatever.

## **K.R.C – Camps – Activities – Report.**

### **April – 2007**

- ▲ 2 – 4/4/2007 - Meeting in Chiang Mai. Attended by K.R.C. Representative. Meeting, facilitated by N.C.A (Norwegian Church Aid) was the “Mid – Term Review” of the N.C.A Country Plan for Burma / Myanmar (2005 / 2009) Participating were (13) Recipient Groups which received financial support from N.C.A. Each Group Give Presentation on their Project Programme and works Activities. There were discussion / workshop activities based on 3 categories and Rights, which are (1) Protection relative to Security Activities. (2) Participations with regard to Political Activities. (3) Equity with regard to the Economic, social, Cultural conditions, Situations. There were also discussions on how to improve with failures, what and how to implement and who were to participate. At the same time, N.C.A helps with training / knowledge, related to Budget Proposals and Financial Reports
- ▲ 3/4/2007 - Local Thai Authorities, went into Mae Ra Ma Luang and Mae La Oo Refugee Camps, for the Purpose of Providing Camps People with Refugee I.D. Cards Distribution of Cards accomplished in Mae La Oo by 25.4.2007
- ▲ 7/4/2007 - Thai Burma Border, Opposite Mae Ra Mat Township. There was skirmishes, Artillery shelling, fighting between SPDC / DKBA Troops and KNU troops. About 350 villagers flee from fighting, crossing the Border (River Moei) to seek Temporary refuge. T.B.B.C and K.R.C with Thai Border Authorities visited these displaced people, and helped with support material, food and water.
- ▲ 9/4/2007 - K.R.C initiated joint “2007 Activities” programme beginning with Mae La Camp. The purpose of the Programme being.
- (1) For setting up proper and effective Relationships, communication and Cooperation between the K.R.C with Camp’s Committees and CBOs.
  - (2) Proper relay and sharing of information.
  - (3) Regular Access and meeting, information dissemination with the Camps Population.
  - (4) Cooperation, sharing, joint activities with Responsible NGO Staff in Camps.
  - (5) Settling of Problems in cooperation, joint actions between all responsible parties.
- ▲ 14/4/2007 - Local Thai Military officers make visit to Refugee Camps by Helicopter. They made inspections round the Refugee Camp, with the purpose of setting up appropriate security measures for the Camp. The K.R.C Chairman helped them with transport on their inspection rounds.
- ▲ 18/4/2007 - U.S committee for Refugees and Immigrants (3 Thai Committee Members) visit K.R.C for fact finding and discussions on Resettlement for Karen Refugees from the (7) Camps. Matters related to Resettlement Programmes, issues, views were discussed. The visitors were headed by Mr.Pradit Chatcharat koon, Country Director for USCRI Thailand.

▲ 24/4/2007 - Local Thai Authorities security people and the Camp Committee meet to look into the matter of New Arrivals, coming in and staying in Camps. They find no reason to expel these New Arrivals, so, they just ask questions, take notes, and ask the Camp Committee to address this New Arrival problem by them selves. As small groups of New Arrivals enter Camp from time to time, the figure add up to (65) persons in April 2007.

▲ 25/4/2007 - There was held a protection work shop in Mae Ra Ma Luang, facilitated by UNHCR, where Camps Responsible Committee, and works members attended.

▲ 30/4/2007 - K.R.C / UNHCR / NGOs meeting. This meeting is the first for year 2007. Meetings were supposed to be held every 2 months. But meetings had to be postponed from time to time due to various circumstances. Such meeting are without doubt, a necessity. It is the best way to help with building relationship, sharing information, putting up problems and difficulties and then addressing them in a friendly and appropriate way. Meetings help greatly with proper and appropriate ways in work relations between Support / Service groups.

## NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMPS APRIL, 2007.

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	9,668	16,581	16,055	5,254	4,794	3,583	3,485	49,752
	Um Pheim Mai	4,061	7,587	7,232	1,943	1,802	1,484	1,293	21,341
	<b>Total</b>	<b>13,729</b>	<b>24,168</b>	<b>23,287</b>	<b>7,197</b>	<b>6,596</b>	<b>5,067</b>	<b>4,778</b>	<b>71,093</b>
NORTH	Mae Ra Moe	2,787	5,506	5,235	1,687	1,469	1,103	1,139	16,139
	Mae La Oo	2,717	5,558	5,013	1,655	1,526	1,054	987	15,793
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5,504</b>	<b>11,064</b>	<b>10,248</b>	<b>3,342</b>	<b>2,995</b>	<b>2,157</b>	<b>2,126</b>	<b>31,932</b>
SOUTH	Noh Poe	4,566	5,695	5,170	1,646	1,646	924	979	16,060
	Ban Dong Yang	967	1,501	1,563	382	370	359	363	4,538
	Htam Him	1,488	2,392	2,447	828	842	551	473	7,533
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7,021</b>	<b>9,588</b>	<b>9,180</b>	<b>2,856</b>	<b>2,858</b>	<b>1,834</b>	<b>1,815</b>	<b>28,131</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>26,254</b>	<b>44,820</b>	<b>42,715</b>	<b>13,395</b>	<b>12,449</b>	<b>9,058</b>	<b>8,719</b>	<b>131,156</b>

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.

**AM I** – 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 (ABW aid)** – Support in Educational facilities Teachers' Training.

**World Education / 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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