

THAILAND - Displaced Persons

Date: January 31 - February 9, 1983 (FY 83)

Location: The villages of Khok Sung, Ban Non Mak Mun, and Nong Chan in Taphraya District of Prachinburi Province

No. Dead: One villager

No. Injured: One villager; at least 100 camp residents

No. Affected: 20,000-30,000 camp residents; an unreported number of Thai villagers

Damage: Several houses destroyed

The Disaster

During the early months of 1983, Vietnamese forces (PAVN) based in Kampuchea launched an offensive against Khmer resistance groups concentrated near the Thai-Kampuchean border. An attack against the border camp of Nong Chan (190 km east of Bangkok) on January 31 drove some 20,000 to 30,000 of the camp's residents into Thailand. Heavy Vietnamese artillery fire during the fighting (through February 9) occasionally overshot the border and landed on or near the adjacent Thai villages of Khok Sung, Ban Non Mak Mun, and Nong Chan in the Taphraya District of Prachinburi Province. Civilian residents of the affected villages were evacuated; however, the Royal Thai Government reported that one villager was killed and another wounded, and several houses were destroyed as a result of the attack.

Action Taken by the Royal Thai Government (RTG)

The RTG's emergency evacuation plan for the civilian population was utilized, and most of the women and children of the three affected villages were removed to safer areas. Two camps were established at Ang Sila and Nong Samet to house and feed the refugees from Nong Chan until they could return to Kampuchea. In early March, officers of the Thai Supreme Command accompanied the U.S. and Swiss ambassadors on a tour of the border area affected by the shelling.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government (USG)

U.S. Ambassador John G. Dean determined on February 24 that an emergency situation warranting USG assistance existed in Thailand as a result of the Vietnamese military attack against Nong Chan. He exercised his disaster assistance authority and committed \$5,000 to the RTG for the care of the affected Thai villagers. While on a tour of the border area on March 2, Ambassador Dean presented a check to the village of Khok Sung to be used for rehabilitation projects as decided by village committees.....\$5,000

TOTAL \$5,000

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

Assistance Provided by the International Community

Voluntary agencies with ongoing programs in the border area worked with the RTG to coordinate relief activities during this emergency. Information is unavailable as to the type and value of assistance. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees continues to provide assistance to Khmer refugees in holding centers, while the United Nations Border Relief Organization delivers relief to refugees along the boundary. For a more detailed description of conditions along the Thai-Kampuchean border, the reader is referred to the OFDA case report, THAILAND - Displaced Persons/Refugees (FY 79 and FY 80).