



Burma frees fishermen

Thai fishermen freed by a Burmese government have happily after arrival at Don Muang airport. Above: Release of one of the freed fishermen at Don Muang airport. The fishermen are jailed for allegedly fishing in Burmese territorial waters.

Tak families flee Burma fighting

Tak—A total of 167 Thai families from a border village in Tha Song Yang district took refuge in a temple as fighting resumed between Karen rebels and Burmese government troops, sources said yesterday.

The Thais left Baan Tha Song Yang to Border Patrol Police and rangers and took shelter at Wat Mongkhon Khiri on Sunday.

The Karens have tried for several days to regain the Mae Taw Wah camp opposite the Thai village. The camp was captured by Burmese government forces in 1984.

Karen sources said there are four strategic camps around Mae Taw Wah which must be seized to gain control of the area. The Karens have already captured two of the camps and expect to seize the remaining two within three days.

The number of Burmese students and protesters taking refuge in three Karen rebel camps on the border has increased to more than 1,200.

Sources said 839 of them are living in the They Baw Bo camp, 315 in the Kle Day camp and 72 others in the Wang Kha camp.

As Burma continued to simmer, sources said communist guerrillas shot down a Burmese government plane on Tuesday.

The plane was struck while attempting to drop supplies to Rangoon troops engaged in clashes with Burma Communist Party rebels in an area near the Chinese and Laotian borders.

Rangoon sent a fresh battalion to reinforce the area on Wednesday and troops previously stationed along the border opposite Fang and Mae Ai

districts were pulled out to reinforce the northern border.

After the Burmese troops pulled out, rebels of the Wa National Army and Shan State Army took control of their Burmese camps.

● In Ranong, more than 20 Burmese students who landed here yesterday were charged with illegal entry and deported to Victoria Point.

The 23 students, mostly from Moulmein University, were the first batch of 100 who arrived in Thailand and will be sent back to Burma.

Police said the students were deported because it was against Thai policy to provide sanctuary to political immigrants from Burma.

The remainder landed at local piers in two other trawlers and would be arrested on the same charge and deported, police said.

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