Beat: Travel

At least 30 killed in northern Thailand refugee camp fire

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USPA News - At least 30 refugees from Myanmar were killed after their camp in northern Thailand caught fire, local authorities said Friday. The fire broke out Friday evening at around 6 p.m. local time at the Mae Surin refugee camp, located in the district of Khun Yuam in Mae Hong Son province, which neighbors Myanmar.

District police station chief, Colonel Nitinart Witthayawuthikul, confirmed the incident and the number of deaths, the Bangkok Post reported. Around 1,800 ethnic Karen refugees reside in the camp, where houses are primarily made of bamboo and dried grass. As a result, of the camp`s 281 houses, around 200 were destroyed. In addition to the 30 fatal victims, officials said some 200 others were also injured and taken to local hospitals. The surviving victims were taken to shelters, as the province of Mae Hong Son holds three different refugee camps. Initial investigation reports said a kitchen fire broke out while a refugee was cooking, and it quickly spread throughout the camp. Nonetheless, Thailand`s Interior Minister Charupong Ruangsuwan regretted the incident, saying the number of casualties "should not be so high," the media outlet said. The minister also called for a thorough probe into the fire.

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