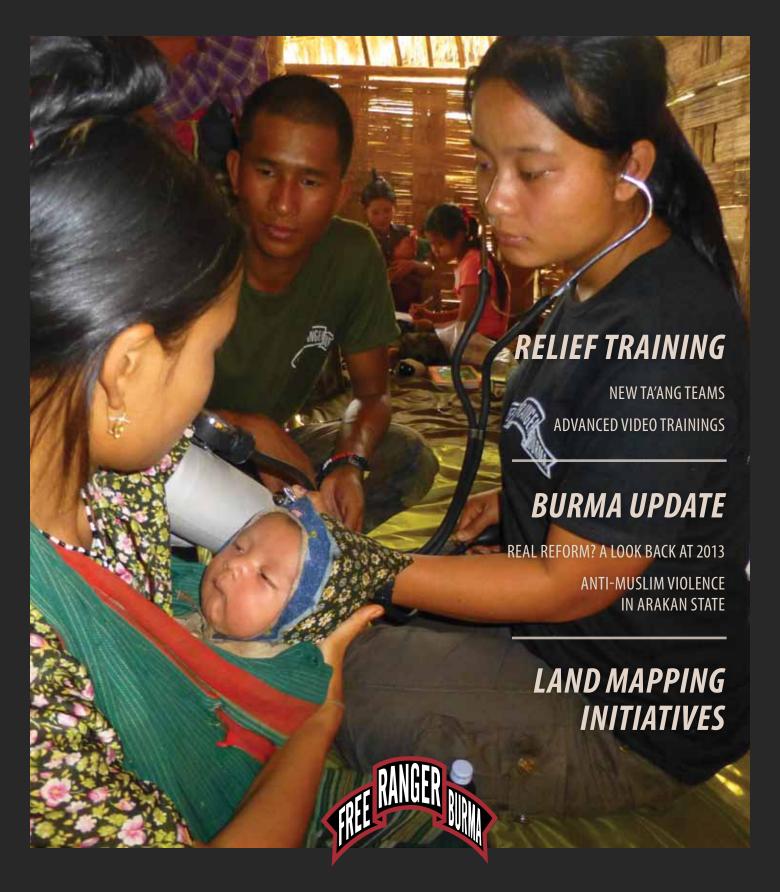
# FREE BURMA RANGERS

ANNUAL REPORT 2013



# IN MEMORIUM 2013





#### SAW WAH

Saw Wah, a 26-year-old Karen video cameraman working in Mergui-Tavoy District, died 23 May 2013, of pneumonia after months of fighting Systemic Lupus Erythematosus, which weakened his immune system. He is survived by his wife and infant son, and his mother and two sisters. Saw Wah served as a Free Burma Ranger on the Ler Doh Soe Township team.

Saw Wah was active, energetic, smiling and laughing as he worked. He was a good cameraman and crucial member of his team. His illness began while he was working for his people inside Burma; he was then taken to a hospital in Tavoy when he developed swelling all around his body. After two months there he was moved to the border for better care. His team leader, Saw Sei Sei, showed a great deal of care and concern, helping him throughout his illness. Some of us were able to visit him and pray with him before he died, along with a missionary in the area who faithfully kept trying to find good medical care for him. He had told her that he believed in Christ and wanted to go to Bible school if he recovered but he also knew he would go to Heaven when he died. Saw Wah said, upon joining FBR, "My goal in joining FBR is to help my suffering people. I give my life to help them until I die." This is what he did and we are grateful for his life, his service and his example that we will try to follow.

"MY GOAL IN JOINING FBR IS TO

HELP MY SUFFERING PEOPLE.

I GIVE MY LIFE TO HELP THEM."

## **LAI MWEH**

On the night of 1 February 2014, we lost a member of Free Burma Rangers (FBR). More importantly – we lost a friend. Lai Mweh drowned while fishing in a river near the training camp. He was a 20-year-old medic attending the Jungle School of Medicine – Kawthoolei. He had survived the Burma Army torching his home several times - not an unusual story for this part of Karen State, Burma. In between running for his life, he had doggedly pursued what education was available in the jungle. Considering the circumstances, getting through the seventh grade was a big deal.

And yet Lai Mweh wanted to do more to help his people. So last year he came to JSMK hoping to become a medic for the FBR. He soon ran into difficulties. Trying to master a real medical course with a seventh grade education was a challenge and he failed the test on basic foundational material at the end of the first three months. But that only seemed to make him try harder. He did not complain, and was known for his smile and willingness to work hard. As a new ranger student in training he had a smile and strong answer every time we asked during a tough physical session: "Easy way or hard way?"

"Hard way!" he would shout and smile; he was irrepressible. In the field on missions he was always up front as a medic, helping others and also doing any job that was needed. After his initial struggle with his studies, when the final exam came, ha passed with no problem and was excited for his future as a medic. He died just days after graduation.

He was humble, helpful and always cheerful. He has helped others and his actions convict and inspire. We are all very sad at his loss. We will miss him.

## DEAR FRIENDS,

Thank you for your support, love and prayers for the FBR mission. The 75 relief teams from 12 different ethnic groups give help, hope and love and shine a light in the oppressed areas of Burma. There are good changes in Burma but attacks and oppression continue and we have the mission to stand against that and to stand for love, freedom, justice, and reconciliation in Burma.

As we continue our mission we will also be helping to map land ownership in the ethnic areas. We help with mapping so that landowners will retain their property rights as well as have the opportunity to find a way to regain lost land. We also keep praying for the Burma government and new relationships with them. Our teams are made up of people of many ethnicities and religions but we are bonded together by a common purpose and love.

For me personally, my first mission is to obey Jesus and love Him and each other. Our mission in Burma is to be part of God's freeing of the oppressed and help to bring humanitarian assistance, justice and reconciliation to all we meet. God's mission is to free the oppressed everywhere, though sometimes, due to our own weaknesses, losses and the power of evil around us, we doubt that and are tempted to be confused, back off or give up. But this is God's battle and He is and will fight it. This is done, not by human might or power, but by His Spirit and we can be part of it because He saves us by grace, forgives, and leads us.

The battle here on the ground is physically deadly: the enemy is maneuvering and coming. We stand with the people who are under attack, helping them to work for political and spiritual freedom. We know the line of good and evil runs through all our hearts and so we pray for forgiveness, wisdom and love. God has called us all to trust and obey Him and be His instruments of love, healing, truth, and freedom. In this we pray to be bold in the things of Jesus and humble in the things of ourselves.

I would like to close with the words of General Wingate, in Burma in World War II: "Finally, knowing the vanity of man's efforts and the confusion of his purpose, let us pray that God may accept our service and direct our endeavors, so that when we shall have done all, we may see the fruits of our labor and be satisfied."

That is my prayer for us in FBR and you dear reader: that in spite of our weaknesses and failures, God will lead us to overcome, and help us do His will, His way. By God's grace we will see the fruits of our labor and be satisfied. Ephesians 2:8-10 reminds us that we are saved by grace not our own doing and that we are created in Christ Jesus to do good works which God prepared beforehand. God frees the oppressed and by His grace allows us all to be part of this freedom. Thank you for how you help us do this.

## MAY GOD BLESS YOU,

Dave Eubank

FOR WE ARE
HIS WORKMANSHIP,

# CREATED IN CHRIST JESUS FOR GOOD WORKS,

WHICH GOD PREPARED

BEFOREHAND,

THAT WE SHOULD

WALK IN THEM.

**EPHESIANS 2:10** 



Rangers bury a villager tortured and killed by the Burma Army in Kachin State.



Photos: Left - Ta'ang Ranger does dentistry on Kachin IDP. Middle - Displaced Kachin children at Good Life Club program. Right - Rangers document Burma Army activities.

## **OUR VISION**

To free the oppressed and to stand for human dignity, justice and reconciliation in Burma.

## **OUR MISSION**

To bring help, hope and love to people of all faiths and ethnicities in the conflict zones of Burma, to shine a light on the actions of oppressors, to stand with the oppressed and support leaders and organizations committed to liberty, justice and service.

## **OUR OBJECTIVES**

- 1) To inspire, train and equip people in Burma to bring positive change through acts of love and service.
- 2) To provide immediate medical assistance, shelter, food, clothing, educational materials and other humanitarian aid in the war zones and to improve logistics and medical evacuation.
- 3) To develop the Information Network of Burma that documents, reports and disseminates accounts of human rights violations and provides an early warning system of Burma Army attacks.
- 4) To provide prayer and counseling for victims of human rights abuses and to support programs for women and children.
- 5) To train, equip and sustain indigenous humanitarian relief teams in the field.



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# WHY BURMA?

# AN OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION JANUARY, 2014

Over 60 years of civil war have left Burma one of the poorest countries in the world. During this time, successive military dictatorships killed thousands of their own people and displaced millions in resistance areas, while effectively strangling the political process in areas under their complete control.

Recent developments in the government have included allowing Aung San Suu Kyi and the National League for Democracy to run and win in by-elections. There is more openness and less censorship in Burma, ongoing ceasefire talks with many ethnic groups, as well as our own unplanned but positive meeting with the Burma Army ceasefire delegation. At the same time, attacks and military buildup continue in most ethnic areas, while in Kachin State, the Burma Army continues an all-out assault on the people. In other areas there is ongoing laying of landmines, attacks on civilians, forced labor, destruction of civilian property and troop resupply.

The Free Burma Rangers formed in 1997 and are comprised of people from different ethnic groups within Burma providing direct relief to communities most affected by the results of the government's oppression. These teams are trained to provide medical care and counseling, while documenting and reporting human rights violations.

Since its formation, more than 500 missions have been conducted to assist over one million people. Together with other organizations working toward a free and peaceful Burma, 75 Free Burma Ranger relief teams bring help to people facing oppression.



## ETHNIC PEOPLE **OF BURMA**

There are over 135 different ethnic groups living in the seven ethnic states and seven administrative regions of Burma.

# **POSITIVE NEWS**AND IMPROVEMENTS:

# **NEW ATTACKS**AND ONGOING OPPRESSION:

- 1) Aung San Suu Kyi holds a position in parliament and she, along with others, continues to work for more freedom, reforms and justice in Burma.
- 2) There are some in the government at higher levels who do want to change the constitution and establish reforms before the 2015 elections.
- 3) Many political prisoners have been released and there are greater political freedoms.
- 4) Censorship and travel restrictions have been eased.
- 5) Ceasefire negotiations are ongoing with many of the ethnic groups and there is an overall reduction in fighting and displacement. Ethnic Armed Groups are negotiating with the government regarding political dialogue, credible monitoring mechanisms, and the need to consolidate existing ceasefires.
- 6) Burma Army leaders have signed an agreement to end forced labor and there has been a reduction in some areas.
- 7) The FBR had the opportunity to meet U Aung Min, the head of the government's ceasefire delegation, and some of the leaders of the government and this is a positive step.

100,000

PEOPLE DISPLACED IN KACHIN STATE SINCE 2011

1,200

MORTARS FIRED BY THE BURMA ARMY AT HKA YA BUM, KACHIN STATE, DURING A TWO-HOUR PERIOD IN JANUARY 2013

140,000

PEOPLE DISPLACED IN ARAKAN STATE
DUE TO INTER-ETHNIC VIOLENCE

1) In spite of and during ceasefire talks, the Burma Army's attacks against the Kachin continue with over 100,000 Kachin people displaced since 2011. In November and December 2013, the Burma Army attacked a Kachin IDP camp, burning shelters, looting rice stocks and displacing over 2,000 people who had to flee again. Attacks continued in this area into January 2014.

2) In northern Shan State, fighting against the Shan and Ta'ang people, and displacement, continue through 2013 and into 2014. Attacks are especially heavy in Kut Hkai, Nam Kham, Nam San, Mon Ton, Mu Se, and Kyauk Mae townships. Victims are Kachin, Shan and Ta'ang villagers. In January 2014 the Burma Army continued attacks into Kyauk Mae Township, in northern Shan State, capturing villagers and torturing local leaders.

- 3) In Karen State the Burma Army has taken advantage of the ceasefires to supply their camps beyond the normal supply rate and continues to use forced labor. In December 2013, they fired on villagers on nine different occasions in northern Karen State. They have also built new camps and reinforced existing camps. \*FBR January 2014 report.
- 4) The constitution has not been changed and the military retains control of power.
- 5) In Arakan State, over 140,000 people have been displaced by inter-ethnic violence between the Rohingya and Arakan. This has been partially fueled by repressive Burma government policies and actions. Rohingya refugees suffer brutal living conditions and live in constant fear of attack.
- 6) Humanitarian access is still blocked for IDPs in parts of Arakan, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, and Shan states.
- 7) There has been no apology, expression of remorse or establishment of a truth and reconciliation process to address Burma Army attacks, oppression, human rights violations, war crimes and displacement.
- 8) Karen and Karenni refugees continue to live restricted lives in refugee camps with a decrease of food supplies.
- 9) Land confiscation and land rights abuses have become worse due to government and business encroachment.

# WHY NOW?

# POLITICAL SITUATION UPDATE BY ASHLEY SOUTH\*

2013 was an extraordinary year for ethnic communities in Myanmar. For the first time since independence, government forces and most Ethnic Armed Groups have stopped fighting. This is an historic achievement in peace-making. However, the ceasefire process has yet to be transformed into a substantial and sustainable phase of peace-building.

In many areas, ceasefires between Ethnic Armed Groups and the Myanmar government and Army have resulted in significant improvements in the lives of conflict-affected communities. Many villagers say they can now travel more freely, and livelihoods are beginning to improve in some areas, with villagers having better access to their fields, and decreases in predatory taxation by Myanmar authorities. However, the government and Ethnic Armed Groups have so far failed to agree and implement a Code of Conduct, which would provide guarantees for the security of civilian populations. Likewise, ceasefire monitoring procedures agreed to in various ceasefire talks have yet to be implemented. The challenges to making ceasefire agreements work is illustrated by on-going clashes, and associated human rights abuses, in northern Shan and Kachin states - despite the agreement of ceasefires between Ethnic Armed Groups and the government (most recently the May and October 2013 truces agreed with the Kachin Independence Organisation).

\*Ashley South is an independent analyst and consultant, specializing in humanitarian, peace and conflict, and political issues in Burma/Myanmar

In addition to the need to consolidate the ceasefires, the peace process in Myanmar is unlikely to be sustainable without the start of political dialogue between the government and ethnic stakeholders. There is an urgent need to agree to a framework for talks, including not only Ethnic Armed Groups, but also ethnic political parties and civil society actors. The clock is ticking - with the 2015 elections less than two years away, and the prospect of a Naypyidaw government increasingly preoccupied by Chairmanship of the ASEAN regional grouping. The window of opportunity to reach an agreement will not remain open indefinitely.

In this context, Burma's Ethnic Armed Groups reached an unprecedented level of agreement at a meeting in late October and early November 2013, in the Kachin Independence Organisation town of Laiza. Although significant tensions and differences exist, most Ethnic Armed Groups are coordinating their positions through a National Ceasefire Coordinating Team - which met with the government in early November, in Myitkyina. This was the first time the government had met with Ethnic Armed Groups collectively, rather than on a group-by-group basis. Likewise, on the government side, there is now greater clarity and seeming ownership of the peace process. The most recent meeting between the two sides occurred in early March 2014 in Yangon, and resulted in the establishment of a Joint Nationwide Ceasefire Drafting Work Group, with nine members each from Ethnic Armed Groups and from the government side (three from the executive, three from Parliament and three from the Myanmar Army). That the two sides have agreed to work together to draft a National Ceasefire Accord is a very positive development - although there remain significant differences between the ethnic and government/Myanmar Army positions. Serious doubts remain whether the government and Myanmar Army will be willing to accept ethnic demands (for example, in relation to federalism), either in principle, or in practice. Furthermore, there is a need for international supporters and donors to the peace process to be better informed, and engage more constructively with ethnic communities.

## and Southeast Asia.

# TIMELINE OF IMPORTANT EVENTS FOR BURMA IN 2013:

MARCH **APRIL** MAY **FEB** JAN

Burma Army takes Hka Ya Bum from the Kachin Independence Army after launching over 1,200 mortars in two hours, the most recorded since fighting began in Burma over fifty years ago.

Burma police use incendiary devices containing phosphorus against protesters at the Letpadaung Mine, seriously burning dozens engaged in peaceful protest.

Deadly violence erupts in the central city of Meiktila between Muslims and Buddhists, and a state of emergency is declared. Curfews go into effect.

**President Thein Sein** pardons 93 prisoners, including at least 59 believed to be dissidents, a day after the EU lifts sanctions on Burma, Over 150 remain imprisoned.

**President Thein Sein** visits US President Barack Obama at the White House to become the first Burmese president to visit the United States since 1966.

# ANTI-MUSLIM VIOLENCE IN ARAKAN STATE

Violence and discrimination against the Rohingya Muslim minority of Arakan State continued unabated in 2013. The prominent Buddhist monk Wirathu fueled the sectarian violence with inflammatory rhetoric playing on the existing fears of his audience. He received international attention when his face appeared on the cover of a July issue of Time magazine with the headline "The Face of Buddhist Terror."

Many Rohingya attempt to escape this discrimination by fleeing the country altogether, but then face a series of further hardships. Most flee on makeshift or ramshackle watercraft, intending to sail to Malaysia. These are often intercepted along the way and incidences of human trafficking and human rights violations against fleeing Rohingya continuously increase. The inaction of the government casts doubt on both its will and ability to curb the problem.

## **DRUGS IN BURMA**

The production of opium in Burma in 2013 increased by 26% over 2012, the 7th straight year in which it has increased. Burma is the world's second-largest producer of illicit opium crops, led only by Afghanistan. Burma is also a significant producer of methamphetamines in Southeast Asia.

Some crops are small-scale productions, with the intention being for only local use.; addiction is a major problem in these areas. However, there are also large-scale production lines, with drugs being sold both inside Burma and to neighboring countries such as Thailand and China. Opium yields a significantly higher earning percentage than rice



crops, which is the primary reason villagers choose

to grow it. Currently, 92% of opium production in Burma occurs in Shan State, with the remainder being primarily in Kachin State.

Opium farmers harvesting in northern Shan State.

FBR visited the Pang Say area of Nam Kham Township, northern Shan State, to report on conditions on the ground. There were opium fields around every village visited. The Chinese families who are the primary cultivators here are uniformly poor, some wretchedly so. They are all under the control of the Burma Army-supported People Militia Force (Bi Thu Sit or Ta Ka Sa Pha in

wretchedly so. They are all under the control of the Burma Army-supported People Militia Force (Bi Thu Sit or Ta Ka Sa Pha in Burmese). The militia is led by an ethnic Chinese man named Kyaw Myint, who is also a member of Parliament representing Namkham No.2 constituency for the Burma government-backed Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP). Namkham is situated on the China-Burma border close to the Muse-Riuli crossing. The militia also controls methamphetamine trafficking and in this area a pill costs between 2,500 kyat- 3,000 kyat (\$3.00- \$4.00 USD).

# JULY AUG OCT DEC

Burma signs a peace treaty with the United Wa State Army, known for having the largest and most well-armed military of Burma's ethnic groups. They agree to hold regular meetings and withdraw to positions held prior to a recent standoff.

Sectarian violence between Buddhists and Muslims increases, as Muslim-owned shops and houses are burned in Sagaing Divison; a UN human rights envoy is attacked by a mob of over 200 people in Meiktila, the site of earlier anti-Muslim violence.

The Burma Army and Kachin Independence Organization hold peace talks in Kachin State and agree to work to end the fighting. One month later, the Burma Army attacks Nam Lim Pa Village, Kachin State, killing three civilians and forcing hundreds to flee.

Yangon University opened its doors for the first time since 1988, admitting 1000 students. However, according to UNICEF, only 58% of students in Burma continue their education beyond primary school.

9

Kachin State, Burma

#### **NEW ATTACKS IN KACHIN STATE**

On 22 October 2013, Burma Army soldiers from Infantry Battalions (IB) 47, 56, 236, 240, 276, and Light Infantry Battalions (LIB) 601 and 602, all under the command of Military Operations Command (MOC) 21, attacked Nam Lim Pa and Mung Ding Pa villages in Man Si Township, southern Kachin State. Some of these troops positioned themselves between Je Kham and Kawng Ja villages and at 1:05 p.m. they began firing 60mm mortars at Mung Ding Pa Village. At 2:05 p.m., Burma Army soldiers attacked the village.

At the same time, the commander of Burma Army MOC 21 arrested eight male villagers from Kawng Ja Village, ranging in age from 30 to 78. They were sent to Man Ta Village the next day. As of the latest field updates, these men were still held in Burma Army custody. Burma Army soldiers also took villagers' belongings, and caused 700 villagers from Mung Ding Pa to seek refuge in a local Christian church. Burma Army soldiers then held the villagers hostage inside the church.

The day before, 21 October 2013, Burma Army troops from IB 60 and LIB 323 had ordered villagers from Gawng Run, Nam Kahn and Je-U villages to remain within their villages, and the soldiers closed the road between Gawng Ru and Nam Lim Pa, which is in Kachin Independence Army's (KIA) 3rd Brigade territory.

Also on 22 October, fighting broke out at 10:30 a.m. between Nam Hkum and Awng Nan villages. 200 Burma Army troops from MOC 21 fought KIA Battalion 12 troops. Fire exchanges lasted until 4:00 p.m. the same day.

On 25 October 2013, KIA troops from Battalion 12, Brigade 3, exchanged fire with Burma Army soldiers from MOC 21 when Burma Army troops arrived at Saga Nam Hkaum, which is located in Man Si Township. On the same day, at 4:00 a.m., 500 Burma Army soldiers from MOC 21 came to Mung Ding Pa Village, which had been attacked three days prior, and captured 10 Kachin male villagers.

Also on the same day, in the KIA's 4th Brigade, there was fighting between KIA troops from Battalion 34 and Burma Army troops from LIB 502 from 8:00 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

#### BURMESE ARMY SOLDIERS GANG RAPE A 15-YEAR-OLD GIRL

At 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, 30 October 2013, Sumlut Roi Ja, a 15-year-old girl from Lu Htawng Village in Kachin State, was gang-raped by several Burma Army soldiers. The attackers were Captain Thet Hpyo Aung (also known as Captain Zaw Htet Aung), and two soldiers from LIB 116. Lieutenant Colonel Min Kyin San commands LIB 116, a mobile battalion under the Sagaing-based 33rd Light Infantry Division, which is commanded by Colonel Myit Maw. Later that evening, Sumlut Roi Ja was handed back to her parents. This rape report was relayed to FBR by Kachin Land News.

# REPORTS FROM THE FIELD BURMA ARMY ATTACKS KACHIN VILLAGES

#### KACHIN MOTHER RAPED; VILLAGERS TORTURED

On 2 September 2013, 200 Burma Army soldiers arrived at Nhka Ga Village, forcing KIA troops stationed there to decamp. Mr. Lahkyeng Hkaw Tup and Yung Hka Hkyen, both from Nhka Ga village, were tortured and killed by Burma Army troops from IB 137. Reverend Ram Me and 10 villagers were arrested and tortured after being questioned by Burma Army troops. John Seng Awng, of Nhka Ga Village, was tied up and badly tortured. Burma Army soldiers raped his wife, 29-year-old Nhtung Hkai Nang Htu, right in front of him. They have one child.

# SUMMARY OF BURMA ARMY ATTACKS AND ACTIVITY IN KACHIN STATE IN OCTOBER

During the month of October the Burma Army continued its campaign against the Kachin people in northern Burma. In a series of operational movements, government forces imprisoned civilians and forced them to work for military purposes, carried out attacks against villages, and according to a local newspaper (Kachin Land News), at least one officer and two soldiers gangraped a 15-year-old girl.

In the course of operations, the Burma Army encroached on Kachin-controlled land, reinforced and strengthened existing positions, and disrupted civilian activities throughout the area. Much of the fighting took place in Man Si Township of Kachin State, but conflict was present throughout other areas of southern Kachin and northern Shan states as well.

Between 9 October and 31 October at least six clashes took place. The Burma Army shelled two villages, resulting in three civilian casualties, two of which were children. Over the same time period, more than 700 civilians were temporarily detained in a church.



Photos: Left - A displaced villager in Kachin State, forced by Burma Army attacks to flee her home. Right - Destroyed home in Kachin State.

1 February 2014

Man Si Township, Kachin State, Burma

# 18 VILLAGERS CAPTURED; BODIES OF TORTURE VICTIMS DISCOVERED

#### BURMA ARMY ATTACKS NAM GAU AND NAM SAN VILLAGES

On 30 January 2014 Burma Army troops began attacking Nam Gau Village, of Man Si Township in Kachin State, firing at villagers and merchants and capturing 18 villagers. The fighting intensified on 31 January, with reinforced Burma Army troops attacking not only Nam Gau but also Nam San Village, located south of the first attack site. Heavy mortar and machine gun fire hit the village as Burma Army troops from Battalion 276 attacked.

The road leading north out of the village was full of fleeing villagers, merchants and trucks. Most residents of these two villages had already fled once before due to an earlier Burma Army attack; after these attacks all the remaining families have now fled. The KIA continued to defend the village; one KIA soldier was killed in the fighting.

#### **BODIES OF TORTURED VICTIMS FOUND IN NAM LIM PA**

Also on 30 January, Free Burma Rangers relief teams conducted a medical clinic in Nam Lim Pa for the few remaining IDPs there. Rangers found three bodies with evidence of torture. All three were killed when the Burma Army attacked Nam Lim Pa in late November 2013 (see FBR report); a total of seven people were killed in these November attacks. Family members of the victims are spread between different IDP sites, and some are in hiding near Nam Lim Pa.

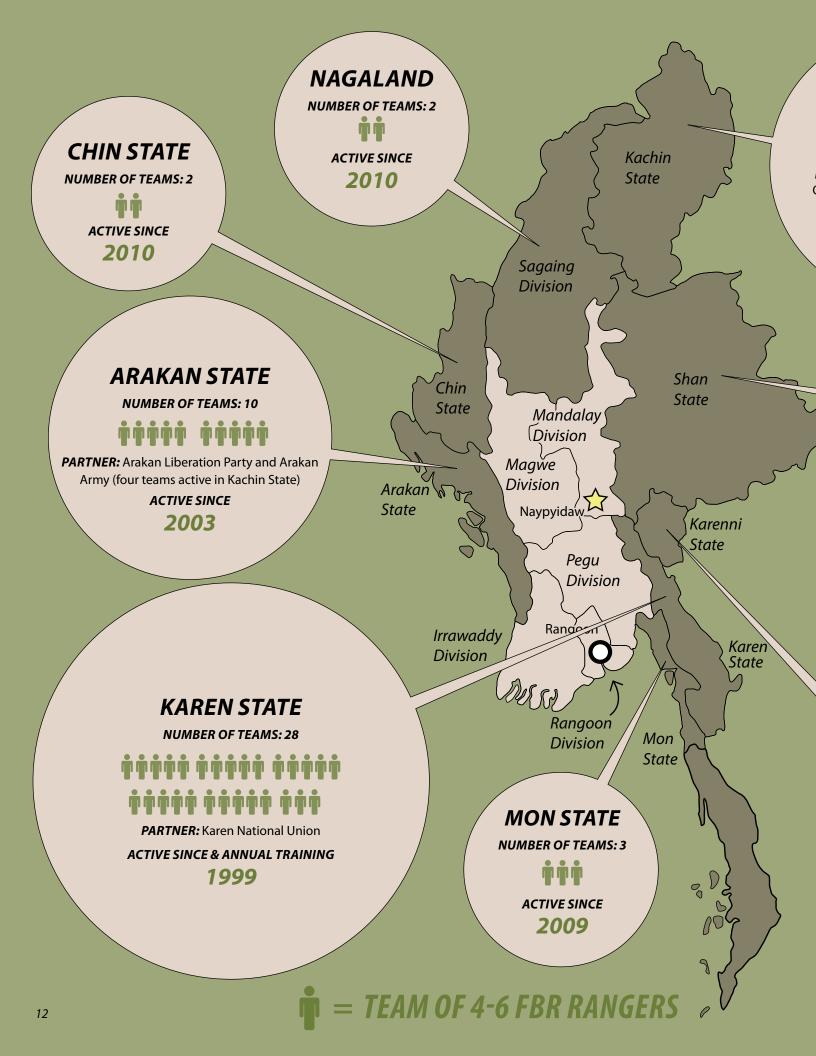
One of the victims was identified as Labang La; he was killed by the Burma Army in Nam Lim Pa and found by his family on 2 January 2014 with six deep knife or axe cuts on his back, as well as other signs of torture. Labang La was a deaf mute.

The sister of Nhkum Brang Aung, one of the men tortured and killed by the Burma Army in Nam Lim Pa on 17 November 2013, was able to provide details of his death. Nhkum Brang Aung was 20 years old and mentally disabled. When everyone else was fleeing the advancing Burma Army troops, he said he was not afraid of the Burma Army because he did not believe troops would bother someone like him. His body was found with rope burns, his head had been scalded with boiling water, and his body bore signs of additional torture; he had been shot to death.

# SURVIVING VICTIM DESCRIBES HOW THE BURMA ARMY CAPTURED AND TORTURED HIM

FBR also met with N'Dau Gam, a Kachin man who was captured and tortured by the Burma Army on 8 November 2013. He was captured at his farm near Nam Gau. The Burma Army troops handcuffed him with steel cuffs and beat his face, head and body for one hour as they questioned him. Then the commander ordered him to be shot. Two Burma Army soldiers took him into the jungle to kill him, but he broke away and, still cuffed, ran for his life and escaped. Currently, he is staying at Bum Hsit Pa IDP camp.

Free Burma Rangers are standing with people under attack. We pray for the Burma Army and for freedom, justice, and reconciliation for all.



#### KACHIN STATE

**NUMBER OF TEAMS: 8** 



**PARTNER:** Kachin Independence Organization and Kachin National Organization

ACTIVE SINCE 2008 TRAINING SINCE 2011

#### **ABSDF**

**NUMBER OF TEAMS: 1** 



**ACTIVE SINCE** 2012

#### TA'ANG

**NUMBER OF TEAMS: 6** 

PARTNER: Palaung State Liberation Front

**ACTIVE SINCE** 

2012

#### LAHU

**NUMBER OF TEAMS: 2** 



**ACTIVE SINCE** 2005



# **NUMBER OF TEAMS: 4**

**PARTNER:** Restoration Council of the Shan State

SHAN STATE

FBR works with four ethnic group in Shan State: Shan, Ta'ang, Lahu, Pa-oh.

SHAN

**ACTIVE & ANNUAL TRAINING SINCE** 

2004

#### PA-OH

**NUMBER OF TEAMS: 2** 



PARTNER: Pa-Oh National Liberation Organization

> **ACTIVE SINCE** 2010

#### KARENNI STATE

**NUMBER OF TEAMS: 5** 



PARTNER: Karenni National **Progressive Party ACTIVE SINCE** 

1999

# S FBR TEAMS CURRENTLY ACTIVE INSIDE



Headquarters teams work in the conflict zones all over Burma, conducting relief missions and trainings.



Photos: Left - Shan teams practice emergency evacuations. Right - Team members learn swimming, rappelling, and rope-bridge-building.

## WHAT RANGERS LEARN AT RELIEF TRAINING

Leadership Medical training and reporting Human rights violations recording and reporting
Video and digital camera use Map reading Compass reading Land navigation GPS (Global Positioning System)
Landmine removal Solar power and battery management Information gathering, analysis, and reporting
General reporting Counseling and Good Life Club Media and communications Field training exercises
Physical training Rappelling Rope bridge building Radio communications
Early warning system for villagers and IDPs Law of War and Geneva Conventions

2013 TRAININGS

#### EACH YEAR WE HOLD BASIC AND ADVANCED TRAININGS IN VARIOUS ETHNIC AREAS IN BURMA.

New rangers are required to complete basic trainings, including a three-day final exercise before graduating on to relief missions. Long-term rangers are often invited to advanced trainings that cover significant topics more in-depth, such as solar power and land rights investigation.

**FEB** 

PACK ANIMAL CARE
21 RANGERS

SOLAR POWER **29** RANGERS

# MARCH

SHAN MEDIC TRAINING **12** NEW ASSISTANT MEDICS

# **APRIL**

SHAN RELIEF TEAM TRAINING **9** TEAMS TRAINED

# MAY

KACHIN STATE, ADVANCED TRAINING **8** TEAMS

# SEPT

LAND RIGHTS
INVESTIGATION
28 RANGERS
INSTRUCTOR

TRAINING

MEDICAL CONFERENCE

#### OCT-NOV

KAREN STATE
RELIEF TEAM
TRAINING
13 NEW TEAMS

'13**FEB-FEB**'14

JUNGLE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

25 NEW MEDICS



#### SHIPPING IN MEDICAL UNITS

For an average month-long field mission, a team will carry one medical unit. Each unit is comprised of medications (tablets, injections, creams), supplies (dressings, malaria test kits, and IV solutions). The contents of a unit are matched to regional health care needs, as well as our treatment guidelines and training. An inventory system provides us with feedback about what is used and what is leftover. Medics often contribute any left-over medications to local clinics.



Arakan State Mandalay (Division Magwe Division Naypyidal) State (Division Naypyidal) State (Division State Division State Divi

When shipping medical supplies into Burma, each medical unit is split into 6 loads.

Mules can transport four loads. Rangers can carry one load. In 2013, we shipped 74 units inside. Four units are HQ which is spread out over a large area and not accounted for on the map.

# TRAINING IN NUMBERS

#### 2013 ADVANCED TRAININGS CONDUCTED:

Video training for six of our advanced videomen

Training-of-the-trainers class was conducted for FBR headquarters staff and instructors.

Land-rights and property documentation training was given to advanced reporting team members. Medical conference and training for ultrasound, lab and physical therapy techniques.

5 MAJOR TRAININGS BASIC MEDICAL TRAININGS

LEADERSHIP AND RELIEF TRAINING

160 PEOPLE TRAINED

# MISSIONS IN NUMBERS

#### 2013 EXPANSION OF MISSIONS:

In the last year, FBR expanded its mission area into the Ta'ang (Palaung) area of northern Shan State and was able to provide first-hand reporting on the narcotics-trafficking militias from those areas, as well as provide help and encouragement to the people caught up in that situation.

80 RELIEF MISSIONS

# MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

A valued component of the relief furnished by Free Burma Ranger teams is medical care to internally displaced persons (IDPs) within 12 ethnic areas of Burma. Many live a difficult 1-3 days walk from the nearest health care clinic, which is often short of supplies. FBR medical teams provide diagnosis and treatment for people they encounter on field missions. They manage many acute infections (e.g. malaria, pneumonia, diarrhea, soft tissue infections, typhus and urinary tract infections), medical concerns (e.g. kidney problems, hypertension, anemia, peptic ulcer) and injuries (e.g. burns, wounds, acute fractures). Many medics provide limited dental care as well.





Photos: Left - Karen medics treat injured Kachin soldier. Right - Saw BLH, 9-year-old patient met on a mission.

# ETHNIC HEALTH CARE IN A CHANGING BURMA

Despite new cease-fire agreements, access to health care in ethnic regions of Burma remains a challenge. A fraction of villagers live adjacent to central Burma and have greater access to care within the centralized Burma health care system. However, the majority of villages are too remote to take advantage of this. Isolated clinics struggle to provide services with limited staffing and supplies. Primary health care services such as vaccination, care of chronic illness, and referral for medical or surgical emergencies are either non-existent or sporadic. Transport of sick patients is still done on mountain paths, and crossing military controlled roads remains hazardous. Negotiations regarding convergence of health care services are underway in some states.

#### PATIENT PROFILE: SAW BLH

FBR encountered BLH while on mission. This 9-year-old boy, who had recently lost his eye due to a two-year-old injury, presented with four weeks of semi-consciousness and one week of recurrent seizures. His malaria test was negative. During our four days with him, we gave IV fluids, treated for severe malaria and meningitis, and did our best to control his seizures. Though his consciousness improved, he continued to have convulsions. We believed he had developed an obstructive hydrocephalus from neuro-cysticercosis (pork tapeworm cysts in the brain). We started the medications used to treat the cysts, but had insufficient resources to bring him to a more advanced facility to get the CT scan necessary for a positive diagnosis. His parents, in and out of the hospital with him for the last two years because of his eye injury, couldn't afford another evacuation. They have seven other children, and few resources left. After talks and prayers with them, we reluctantly agreed to send him home with medicine and treatment instructions. To our grateful surprise, about three weeks later we were notified that his seizures had stopped and that he was recovering.



PROVIDES MEDICAL CARE TO IDPS IN





Established in 2011, the Jungle School of Medicine-Kawthoolei (JSM-K) trains medics for the Free Burma Rangers (FBR) and the Karen Department of Health and Welfare (KDHW). 2013 was the third class of one-year medic students. During 2013, two buildings were added to the campus: housing for staff and the first section of a new building to provide a clean and cool operating environment for the lab, surgical and x-ray services. The first of six rooms is nearly completed, with the entire complex projected to take several years to complete.

## BAMBOO AMBULANCE PARKING LOT

Leaning against an earthen bank next to our hospital, this collection of bamboo poles was used to carry patients to JSMK. Some were carried up to five days distance. After discharge, these patients must be well enough to walk over the mountains and back home.





Photos: Left - Evacuating a patient by hammock stretcher. Above, left - Bamboo poles used to carry patients. Above, right - 2013 JSMK graduates at their graduation ceremony.

#### 2013 GRADUATES:

This group of students began their course of study by attending FBR's basic training in October 2012. After the basic training, students went on a relief mission to surrounding areas and were able to observe how the senior medics treated the patients they encountered. When the mission ended, they returned to JSMK to commence the classroom and clinical portion of their training. This began with two months of foundational lectures where they learned basic subjects, including math, English, anatomy and physiology, and infection control practices.

After the foundational courses were completed, they received in-depth medical lectures and began to see patients in the clinic, spending nine months learning and working in the clinic and hospital. They were then able to put all of their newly obtained skills into practice in the field by joining the next cycle of FBR training missions in December 2013.

After the mission, students were given one month of review lectures to study what they had learned during the past year before taking their final exam. All 26 students passed the written test and did very well on the practical test.



2013 IN NUMBERS

















Photos: Left - Rangers on reconnaissance of Burma Army camp. Center - Interviewing an IDP man in Kachin State. Right - Video man at work.

## REPORTING

FBR teams send out hundreds of situation updates annually, providing real-time information from regions throughout Burma that are under attack or being oppressed by the Burma Army. Teams interview Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), villagers and leaders during relief missions, and use digital and video cameras, and GPS systems to document what they witness. The information and media content are used in our web reports, as well as pushed out to media and news organizations.

## **VILLAGER TRAINING**

FBR continues to implement programs to train villagers in reporting strategies to increase the information flow in these areas. This training also provides more opportunities to critically analyze the changing context of Burma as the lives of local citizens are increasingly opened to and affected by national and international policies and actors.

## **VIDEO TRAINING**

In 2013, FBR increased focus on improving our video production capacity, conducting our first in-depth video editing training. FBR's more advanced videographers learned improved shooting techniques as well as how to edit and create a finished product, how to publish, and improved workflow technique to streamline the process of getting footage from the field to an audience. Several short new documentaries were created.



21 SATELLITES & COMPUTERS

16 SATELLITE PHONES

100 TWO-WAY

# **NEW PROGRAM:** PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION & LAND RIGHTS AWARENESS

In 2013, FBR began the process of training Rangers in investigation techniques that specifically focus on documenting human rights abuses pertaining to land confiscation

in Burma. Rural populations are at an extreme risk of having their land taken by the central government, and then in turn given over to corporations seeking to do development projects - chiefly mines, dams, roads and the building up of Burma Army bases. All of these projects are largely done without the consent of the local villagers, who are often displaced as a result. Our teams are being trained to travel throughout rural Burma and educate villagers about the UN Declaration concerning Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) - which essentially prohibits corporations or individuals from starting a development project without the local villagers being fully informed of the project, and granting their approval before it starts. Part of this is teaching village leaders how to negotiate with corporations, which they seem to enjoy. We are hopeful that all these initiatives will make a difference.

# GOOD LIFE CLUB PROGRAM

The Good Life Club program focuses on the special needs of mothers and children. It is based on the belief that God's promise of abundant life is for all people. The Good Life Club counselors are men and women of varying ethnicities and faiths (currently we are working with 12 different ethnic groups, who are animist, Buddhist, Christian or Muslim), and provide counseling and prayer for all people regardless of race, ethnicity or religion. They believe that good life is not just physical but emotional and spiritual as well, and is something God desires for all people everywhere.

Drawing inspiration from John 10:10, which contains the promise of Jesus that, "I have come that they might have life and have it abundantly," the GLC program includes singing and games for the children, a health lesson, and the giving of a small gift, such as a shirt or a gift pack that has been sent from children in other countries. **Hope is fueled in the people in the midst of a day of fun and by the knowledge that they are not forgotten.** 





Photos: Left - Rangers teach Kachin children health and anatomy. Right - Ta'ang children at a Good Life Club program.

## **GOOD LIFE CLUB PROJECTS**

**Training and supplying GLC counselors:** Equipping men and women who have a desire to help children to be able to do that better, as well as become a spiritual leader on their team.

**School tours:** Training missions that include Good Life Club programs held for many villages at a time - sometimes for as many as 1000 children at once - and features GLC counselors from many different ethnic areas who are ambassadors for FBR and ethnic unity. This Is a very hands-on part of their training.

**Junior Rangers:** as part of each GLC program, wherever the teams go, the Junior Rangers program offers the older students an opportunity to learn about leadership and practical FBR skills, in an effort to inspire young servant leaders, able and eager to help their people.

**Student interns:** in some areas, local high school students accompany the new teams on their training mission, learning about GLC, FBR and new ways to help their people in places they've never been before.

**Connecting children:** The GLC pack program encourages children from outside countries to connect with and help the children of Burma by putting together and sending personalized packs of hygiene supplies, toys and clothing.

#### THE BEADS

Each person the GLC meets is offered a five-colored bead bracelet. Each color represents a significant part of our understanding of the world and the plan God has for each person. The story begins with a gold bead, representing God's good creation, the promise of heaven, and the intrinsic value and beauty of each person in God's eyes. It goes through evil and sin with a black bead representing both the suffering we cause and suffering we are victims of. The red bead is Jesus' sacrificial love, so strongly committed to helping us be what he made us to be that he became human and sacrificed his life to model perfect love for us. A white bead is forgiveness and the grace that gives us a second chance. Finally, the green bead is for new life - thus ending again with God's creativity. Sharing this message, pointing people who are trapped in seemingly intractable human systems to a God of endless creativity and love, is one of the most important parts of our mission. In 2013, we began discussion of a chaplaincy program to spiritually build up all the

GLC counselors, so that they are not just accomplishing programs or marking off checkboxes, but sharing something that they already have, that is life-giving for both them and the people they are serving.







Photos: Left - Rangers learn mapping and navigation techniques. Right - Rangers learning how to pack a mule. FBR is funded by donations from individuals, churches, and other organizations from all over the world.

We are encouraged by and grateful for all of those who give to support the work in Burma.

#### **2013 BUDGET:** \$886,068 6.20% **EDUCATION: \$10,237** ADVOCACY: \$25,809 8.15% FACILITIES & TRAINING CENTER: \$32,474 ADMINISTRATION: \$47,538 TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL: \$47,538 COMMUNICATION & REPORTING: \$54,954 GIFTS & SUPPORT: \$72,224 64.4% RELIEF: \$579,620 **WHAT GOES** INTO RELIEF? 16% 11% 10% 6% The majority of FBR spending goes **VARIOUS GOOD LIFE** RELIEF RELIEF RELIEF MEDICAL straight to relief, which is broken down **MISSIONS** TRAINING **BURMA** CLUB **SUPPLIES** into five categories: Medicine INITIATIVES and units and logistics

\*All amounts given in U.S. Dollars





New Ranger teams graduate.

Since 1997, FBR has been training, supplying and sending teams into the conflict areas of Burma to provide emergency medical care, shelter, food, clothing and human rights documentation.

# CURRENT ACTIVE TEAMS Regaldown of Teams by State and District:

**ABSDF** — 1 TEAM **ARAKAN** — 10 TEAMS

**CHIN** – 2 TEAMS

**KACHIN** – 8 TEAMS

**KARENNI** – 5 TEAMS

**LAHU** – 2 TEAMS

**MON** – 3 TEAMS

**NAGA** – 2 TEAMS

**SHAN** – 4 TEAMS

**PA-OH** – 2 TEAMS

**TA'ANG** - 6 TEAMS

KAREN — 28 TEAMS

**KAREN DISTRICTS:** 

**THATON DISTRICT** – 2 TEAMS

**TOUNGOO DISTRICT** – 2 TEAMS

**NYAUNGLEBIN DISTRICT** – 5 TEAMS

**MERGUI-TAVOY DISTRICT** – 5 TEAMS

**PAPUN DISTRICT** – 6 TEAMS

**DOOPLAYA DISTRICT**— 6 TEAMS

**PA'AN DISTRICT**— 2 TEAMS

**HEADQUARTERS** – 2 TEAMS

SINCE 1997
Relief in Burma, by the numbers:

FBR HAS TRAINED

**300** TEAMS

WHO HAVE COMPLETED OVER

1,000 MISSIONS

ON WHICH THEY TREATED

**550,000** PATIENTS

AND AIDED OVER

1,200,000 PEOPLE





Photos: Left - Former Burma Army soldier is baptized. Right - Kachin women fleeing their homes in the face of ongoing Burma Army attacks.

# 10 REASONS TO GET INVOLVED

#### 1. HUMAN DIGNITY

Girls being raped, children chased from their homes, parents murdered, restricted education, and people living in fear, is wrong. Arbitrary arrest and forced relocation have been tools of successive governments to oppress the people. Human value crosses all political, religious, economic, and social lines and for this we need to stand with the people of Burma.

#### 2. THE RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY

There was a democratically-elected government that was forcefully displaced by a brutal dictatorship. In 2010, the dictators held their own elections that were neither free nor fair and continued to ensure their grip on power. In 2012, Aung San Suu Kyi was allowed to run in byelections, which she won. There is hope that this is a step towards restoration of democracy.

#### 3. THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS

Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi has been released from house arrest but there are still over 150 political prisoners.

#### 4. ETHNIC RIGHTS AND A DURABLE PEACE

Ethnic minorities comprise over 40% of the population of Burma and thus should be equitable partners now and in Burma's future. Without them there is no just or durable solution for a peaceful and democratic Burma. Burma's brutal campaign against the ethnic peoples has resulted in more than one million IDPs, over one million refugees, and gross human rights violations such as Burma's large scale use of landmines to target civilian populations. Many of the ethnic peoples of Burma were allies for freedom in World War II. It is a matter of honor not to forget them.

#### 5. PUBLIC HEALTH

There is a growing HIV/AIDS epidemic in Burma, and in overall health, Burma ranks as one of the worst in the world. Approximately one out of every 10 children in Burma die before their 5th birthday. The ratio is twice as high among the thousands of families forced to flee their homes by the military's ongoing campaigns.

#### 6. END RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

There is widespread religious persecution in Burma and this is a violation of a foundational and sacred human right.

#### 7. END FORCED LABOR AND HUMAN MINESWEEPERS

The government has forced thousands of people each year to work on state projects and, during military campaigns, uses people to carry supplies and as human minesweepers.

#### 8. THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Unchecked and large-scale clear-cutting of some of the world's last remaining natural teak and other tropical hardwood reserves, toxic mining practices, and the poorly-planned building and proliferation of dams are among the many destructive practices that are damaging the country now and for future generations. The wanton and unchecked destruction of the environment in Burma is not only harmful to Burma, but to all of the surrounding countries.

#### 9. THE CONTROL OF NARCOTICS

Burma, behind Afghanistan, is the #2 producer of opium/ heroin in the world. It is also one of the main producers of methamphetamines in Southeast Asia.

#### 10. REGIONAL SECURITY

Burma is building up its military with assistance from other area dictatorships and this, along with its interest in a nuclear program, makes it a potential regional security threat.



1. PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE OF BURMA

and join in the Global Day of Prayer for Burma.

2. ENCOURAGE YOUR GOVERNMENT

to help the people of Burma.

3. WORK WITH YOUR CHURCH, WORKPLACE,

or school to raise awareness of the situation in Burma.

- 4. SPONSOR AN FBR RELIEF TEAM
- 5. DONATE RELIEF SUPPLIES

or volunteer your time.

#### 6. ORGANIZE A RUN FOR RELIEF FOR BURMA

#### 7. DONATE FINANCIALLY

Donations can be sent in the following ways:

- Online at: www.freeburmarangers.org
- Thai Christian Foundation make a check payable to Thai Christian Foundation, designating it to FBR in a separate note. Send it to:

6116 N. Central Expressway, Suite 518, Dallas, TX 75206.

The TCF tax id is 75-1730295.



# DAY OF PRAYER FOR BURMA

FBR contributes to an annual Global Day of Prayer for Burma, held the second Sunday of every March.

An additional prayer aid is "Who Will Stand with the People? A Burma Prayer Almanac."

If you would like a copy of the Day of Prayer brochure or the prayer almanac, or have other questions about being involved, please contact us at info@freeburmarangers.org.

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Love each other
Unite and work for freedom, justice and peace
Forgive and don't hate each other
Pray with faith
Act with courage
Never surrender



For more information visit: www.freeburmarangers.org or write to: info@freeburmarangers.org

