

# GLOBAL DAY OF PRAYER FOR BURMA



Families return home after the Burma Army turns back (story on page 2)

## MARCH 13, 2011

# The Power of PRAYER

Dear Friends,

Thank you for the past 13 years of praying on this Global Day of Prayer for Burma. We have included some stories this year that we and ethnic relief teams, who live year round inside Burma, wrote while in different ethnic areas. In spite of the obstacles and our own failings, when we pray together and obey, look what God does. (Psalm 107:1-3). Please use this book as a guide to pray, think and act as God leads you for the people of Burma.

God Bless you,  
David Eubank  
Christians Concerned for Burma

## **Power in prayer and praying for your enemies** (Cover Story)

While on a recent relief mission, the Burma Army moved to attack five villages. We divided our teams and moved between the Burma Army and the villagers. There were already thousands displaced and our teams had just buried a man decapitated by the troops. I prayed for three things: first, by God's power the Burma Army would turn back; second, that the villagers and our teams would not be hurt and third – this I did not want to pray, but felt led to – that the Burma Army would not be hurt and just go back. I was angry at the Burma Army and I also wanted to have a part in stopping them, but I knew I should pray for them. For four days we kept moving to keep between the Burma Army and the villagers as the Burma Army kept changing course until they went back to their base. No shot was fired and no one was hurt. All we did was pray, move and stand with the people.

– David Eubank

## **Praying with faith and persistence**

I read again Luke 18:1-8, about the widow who received justice because of her persistence and started to take this example of prayer SERIOUSLY. It was obvious that if the issues of Burma were heavy on my heart it would be easy to be 'persistent' about it. If I joined with others who also desired to pray 'persistently', could we really effect a change? Jesus says, "And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off? I tell you, he will see that they get justice, and quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?" Hebrews 11:1 tells us that "Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." Living with the people in Burma, I am certain of what I hope for on their behalf! Through the parable of the persistent widow, Jesus is inviting us to be involved.

We can pray with friends from many ethnic areas of Burma. We can pray together with many from overseas. We can pray with many who have lived with suffering and oppression in their own countries outside of Burma and have committed their lives to, "doing justice, loving mercy and walking humbly with God." We join with friends and families all over the world who pray persistently for Burma. Together we seek for justice, just as the widow did, crying out to God day and night. We believe God answers our prayers.

– Karen Eubank

This year, the words in Ephesians 6: 10-20 have been especially true for us. In the battle against the spiritual forces only God's power is able to defeat evil.

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm, then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints. Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should. Ephesians 6:10-20*



## **Who Will Stand With the People? A Burma Prayer Almanac**

If you would like a free copy of the Burma Prayer Almanac, please request one at [info@prayforburma.org](mailto:info@prayforburma.org)



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## Letter from Vaclav Havel to the people of Burma

Dear Burmese Friends,  
Dear David Eubank,

Thank you for your information on atrocities and human rights violations in the ethnic areas under attack by the Burma Army. I share your opinion that it is important to shed light on the fate of children in the war zone, and I am ready to endorse any report that would contribute to that aim.

Recently, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Iron Curtain and of the victory of freedom and democracy in Central and Eastern Europe. When I addressed the European Parliament on that occasion, I thought it important to point out that the people of Burma, and many other nations, still suffer today, and that it is our duty to stand by the oppressed. Let Burma be free!

*Vaclav Havel*

Vaclav Havel  
Former President of the Czech Republic and Nobel Peace Prize Winner

# MAPS

People Groups and Conflict in Burma

People Groups of Burma



The dictators of Burma have ordered the ceasefire groups to come under their total control. The ceasefire groups have so far resisted.

Conflict Areas in Burma



# Resilience

Good Life Club program,  
Western Karen State,  
January 2010



The following is from a report sent by a relief team leader that reflects what was seen on a mission in Karen State.

"We are on our fourth month of missions here and there is more good news than bad. All around us are reminders of the dangerous presence of the Burma Army — burned homes and displaced people. We met two villagers today who are from the plains and who escaped into the jungle after being beaten and tortured with boiling water by the Burma Army. In spite of this we see good things too and see that the story here is one of life and hope.

Last week, I was talking to a journalist friend who had walked in to write a story. We stood on one side of a field where the Good Life Club counselors (that are on every relief team) were leading the children in songs, dances and in learning anatomy and hygiene. At the same time my own children were racing their ponies up and down the field bareback and the IDPs were laughing as they watched, while on the other side of the field medics were giving medical and dental treatment.

The journalist turned to me, laughing, and said, "Who can I sell this story to? Where is the attacking Burma Army and fleeing people? Everyone here is laughing and having a great time. Maybe I could sell this story to a circus magazine!"

**As I thought about it, I realized that this was the story.**

**People laughing, playing and receiving help.** People rebuilding and opening the way for their own development. This is the story and it is one of hope and a good life. The Karen people here are not close to giving up even though the Burma Army has burned thousands of homes and displaced almost everyone in this area. There are more clinics and schools in this area now than ten years ago. In this area, the Burma Army built 103 new camps between 2006 and 2008 as well as starting three new roads in order to expand their control over the population. Due to the activities of the resistance (Karen National Union), only one road was completed and even this one is not useable. Also, over 40 camps have been abandoned as the Burma Army could not sustain them against a tenacious resistance.

Most important is the resilience of the people and how they keep rebuilding. As soon as a Burma Army unit has returned to their base, they come out of their hiding places and return to their fields and rebuild their villages. We do not know what the future holds, but we do know it is good to be here with these people and the new relief teams as they give help and love and receive the same."





Karen villagers receive dental treatment, January 2010.



Villagers in hiding after being tortured by the Burma Army, January 2010.



Teachers in IDP site, January 2010.



Remains of Bible in burned home, January 2010.

IDP = internally displaced person

- IDPs in Burma: 1-4 million
- Number of refugees in camps: 206,650 (UNHCR, June 2010)
- Total Population of Burma: 50 million

Source: [www.internal-displacement.org](http://www.internal-displacement.org)



Lego toys given as Good Life Club gift, January 2010.

# BURMA SITUATION UPDATE

## Aung San Suu Kyi and Elections

In November 2010, Aung San Suu Kyi was released from house arrest, where she had been detained fifteen of the past twenty-one years, and continuously since 30 May, 2003. A Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, she is the General Secretary of the National League for Democracy (NLD), the party that, in 1990, along with their allies won over 80% of the seats in parliament in what was Burma's only truly democratic election. The military regime did not recognize the internationally accepted results of that election and continued to hold power.

On 7 November, 2010, the regime held their own elections that were neither free nor fair. The SPDC has adopted an unjust constitution, enacted unfair election laws, banned voting in some ethnic areas, pre-assigned the parliamentary seats guaranteed to the military by the constitution and insured dominance by SPDC-backed parties in the campaigning process. Thousands of political prisoners are still in jail, ethnic minorities are attacked and the people of Burma remain under oppression.

It was Aung San Suu Kyi's request for prayer and unity that inspired the Global Day of Prayer for Burma.



## Nuclear Activities in Burma

With assistance and cooperation from regional powers, the regime in Burma has taken measurable steps to establish a nuclear weapons program.

In July 2010, North Korean Foreign Minister Pak Ui-Chun spent four days in Burma meeting with various officials of the regime. In recent years North Korea has become an important supplier of arms and technical assistance to Burma. Pyongyang's arms-trading network appears to be spreading. They have shipped components for long-range missiles, nuclear reactors and conventional arms to countries including Myanmar.

Earth Rights International (ERI) released a report including information from a defector from the dictators' nuclear program that linked the profits the Burmese regime received from gas projects led by Total and Chevron to the junta's nuclear activities. The regime had sought nuclear and missile technology from North Korea. The funds had enabled the country's autocratic junta to pursue an expensive, illegal nuclear weapons program while participating in illicit weapons trade in collaboration with North Korea, threatening the domestic and regional security balance.

Sources: *Wall Street Journal*, *Mizzima*, *The Guardian*, *The Associated Press*.

## Displaced Childhoods

### Human Rights and International Crimes Against Burma's Internally Displaced Children\*

Generations of children in Burma have grown up surrounded by tragedy, violence, poverty, and destruction, only to witness their own children endure the same experiences. This report documents the situation of children who face particularly extreme and appalling conditions in displacement settings. IDPs are forced to leave their villages, homes, farms, and livelihoods with very little advance warning. Often they are only able to take with them what they can carry and sometimes not even that. They find themselves in precariously unstable circumstances, lacking protection from human rights violations committed by the Burma Army and in danger of further displacement with little access to the most basic necessities, including adequate and sustainable food sources, clean drinking water, stable shelters, schools, and healthcare facilities. The SPDC frequently plants landmines around recently cleared villages and farmlands to prevent the return of villagers. As many as 330,000 to 990,000 of the displaced are children.

\*This is a report by Partners Relief and Development and Free Burma Rangers.





"We have a right to stay in our own homes and farms, as we always have. We don't need the dictators' army to control us. We want to be free."

---A Karenni grandmother whose village was attacked four times in six years but who refuses to leave her land

## CONFLICT

The conflict in Burma is as complex as it is long. With a military dictatorship in power, many in opposition are either imprisoned or killed. Demonstrations by the Burman population have been put down, some ethnic groups forced into surrender and ceasefires while in the other ethnic areas the regime's army continues to conduct large-scale offensives against the people. There are over one million internally displaced people, and over two million refugees who have fled the country. There is continual environmental destruction, an HIV/AIDS epidemic, the ongoing laying of landmines, human trafficking and religious persecution. Because of the government's mismanagement and corruption, Burma is the world's second largest opium producer and the main producer of methamphetamines in Southeast Asia. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace Prize recipient and the leader of the democracy movement, was released from house arrest in November 2010 after spending fifteen of the previous twenty-one years there. Thousands of political prisoners remain in jail.

The army extends their control over the ethnic minorities by building roads and camps in ethnic homelands, thereby forcing people to relocate or flee into the jungle. There is documented forced labor. They lay landmines to keep villagers from returning home and supporting the resistance. They aim to dominate the population, assimilate them and exploit them. They do this directly through military attacks, selective ceasefire agreements, and the use of proxy ethnic forces allied with the regime.

One devastating result is the internally displaced people, who are forced to flee their homes because of the army's ongoing attacks. Some are forcibly relocated and now living under the government's control. Some are attacked by the regime's army but are able to return to their homes after the army leaves. Others who are not able to return live in temporary sites nearby. Many are on the run or in hiding now.

All of these people lack security, food, health, education for their children, and suffer increased health problems.

Yet the people of Burma have not given up. **The internally displaced people's unwillingness to give up their homelands is one of the greatest examples of civil disobedience to the dictators.** The pro-democracy movement is still active. In the war zones the ethnic resistance attempts to protect their people. They help villagers escape pending attacks, clear landmines and help people cross army-controlled roads. There are also many non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations that work together to help provide basic services.

## CEASEFIRE GROUPS IN BURMA (article by Ashley South)

Between 1989-95, the SLORC regime negotiated ceasefire arrangements with some twenty-five armed ethnic groups, including a dozen local militias which agreed unofficial truces with the Tatmadaw. The first of these were ex-Communist Party Burma (CPB) groups, including the 20,000-strong United Wa State Army (UWSA). From 1991, agreements were struck with several groups allied with the KNU, such as the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO – 1994) and New Mon State Party (NMSP – 1995). The ceasefires were not peace treaties, and generally lacked all but the most rudimentary accommodation of the ex-insurgents' economic development demands. In most cases, the ceasefire groups were allowed to retain their arms, granted de facto autonomy and control of sometimes extensive blocks of territory in recognition of the military situation on the ground. The situation in ceasefire zones and adjacent areas remained very difficult for most people, with continued human rights abuses such as forced labour, and in some cases forced migration as a result of land confiscation for natural resource extraction (e.g. logging and mining), as well as taxation by 'multiple masters' (predatory government forces, ceasefire groups and insurgents). Nevertheless, in several cases (e.g. the Kachin and Mon ceasefires), military and political space opened up as a result of the ceasefires, and ethnic nationality civil society networks began to implement humanitarian and local development projects in areas previously affected by armed conflict. Also, the relative stability and improved trading conditions in ceasefire areas allowed some people to secure better livelihoods.

In late April 2009 the government proposed that those armed groups with which it had negotiated ceasefires transform themselves into Border Guard Forces (BGF), under the direct control of — and including key personnel to be imported from — the Burma Army. Several of the less militarily powerful ceasefire groups accepted transformation into BGF formations. Some of these created political parties to contest the November 2010 elections in Burma. However most of the stronger ceasefire groups, such as the UWSA, KIO and NMSP, resisted transformation into BGF battalions. It remains to be seen whether the government will move against these non-compliant ceasefire groups following the November elections, precipitating a return to armed conflict across much of northern and southeast Burma. In August 2009 the DKBA leadership agreed to transform their militia into a BGF - a process which got underway a year later (in August 2010). However, Col. N'kam Mweh, a DKBA commander in southern Karen State, resisted this transformation. In early November 2010, at the time of the elections in Burma, his troops briefly occupied the strategic border towns of Myawaddy and Three Pagodas Pass, sending a strong signal to the government and international community that ethnic nationality and other communities in Burma remain very unhappy with the situation in their country. Since August 2010, several hundred rank-and-file DKBA soldiers have defected from the organisation, with many (re-)joining the KNU. It seems likely that further DKBA defections can be expected. In the meantime, civilian populations continue to suffer from armed conflict and often brutal state suppression.

**Why Burma, not Myanmar?** When independence was gained from Britain in 1948, the official name of the country was the "Union of Burma." In 1989, as part of a broader exercise to rename geographical place names, the ruling military regime changed the name of the country to the "Union of Myanmar". Similarly, "Rangoon" became "Yangon," "Pegu" became "Bago," etc.. **The name changes are not accepted by most opposition groups,** who reject the legitimacy of the military regime to unilaterally change the name of the country and view the name changes as part of an effort to "Burmanize" the national culture. While the United Nations recognizes the name change and refers to the country as Myanmar, countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada use the name Burma.

# Ethnic Humanitarian Relief Teams Send News

from Arakan, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Kayan, Lahu, Mon, Naga, Pa-Oh and Shan areas of Burma. A selection of the teams' photos and stories are here. The relief team members risk their lives to be with the displaced and oppressed inside Burma and to collect this information.

**Relief teams help deliver baby in a hiding site in Karen State, Burma, 2010.**



**Mother giving birth to her baby in a hiding place after the Burma Army chased her from her home, February 2010.**



**Newborn baby being delivered by medics, February 2010.**

**Burma Army moves supplies to attack in Karen State, 2010.**





**Medical treatment and Good Life Club on Chin relief missions in western Burma, 2010.**



**Kachin relief team medic treats villagers in western Burma, 2009.**



**Naga, Mon, Pa-Oh, Karenni, Kachin, Lahu and Karen relief teams join together at leadership, relief and ethnic unity training, November 2010.**



**Multiethnic relief teams in training, November 2010.**



**New multiethnic relief teams evacuate patient, November 2010.**

#### **Risk vs. Gamble**

"To do anything good, risks must be taken. For us the difference between risk and gamble is this: a gamble is when we decide what to do, then ask God to help us do it. A risk is when we ask God what to do, then ask God to help us do it. We want to be obedient always, to take risks when needed, to be joyful and careful only of our souls."

— David Eubank

"If the highest aim of a captain were to preserve his ship, he would keep it in port forever."

— Saint Thomas Aquinas

"If you want the submarine to be safe, you should weld it to the pier."

— CDR Peter Dawson, U.S. Navy

#### **Forgiveness**

"In confronting evil, both within and without, the necessity for forgiving others cannot be underestimated. The Thai word for unforgiving means "to carry the punishment". This is a clear demonstration of the truth that when we punish other people in our hearts and minds because of what they have done to us, we are really carrying the punishment inside of ourselves. Refusing to forgive also prevents our overcoming evil."

— Allan Eubank

# Baptisms at Relief Team Training

A report from a Relief Team Leader from Karen State, Burma.

"On the Sunday before graduation of the new relief teams in December 2009, two team members asked to be baptized. Helping to baptize the two men was Hsa Ka Paw, the team leader and Good Life Club counselor of one of the southern Karen teams. Earlier this year he was captured by a proxy force of the Burma Army and he narrowly escaped with his life. The Free Burma Rangers has over 52 teams from different faiths and ethnic groups. All on the teams are welcome to believe as they choose. As someone who is motivated by Jesus' love, I share my own testimony of what God has done for me with all team members. We are made up of Buddhists, Animists and Christians and we are held together by a bond of love and a common purpose of freedom, justice and reconciliation in Burma. The two men Hsa Ka Paw and I baptized are both from northern Karen State.

One of the men, **Saw Bwe Say** was the same new team leader who was bitten by a poisonous snake at the beginning of the training. The medics treated him, we prayed and he had an amazing recovery and was back in training right away. Today, after graduation he won the sprint championship of the FBR jungle games. The other man is **Klo Law La Say**, a long time member of the FBR HQ group and one of the leaders of the Good Life Club (GLC) missions. Klo Law La Say is like a brother to us and takes care of my wife and our children on their Good Life Club missions.

We thank God for these two men, for Hsa Ka Paw's escape and for each man's dedication of their lives to helping their people."



Baptism of Klo Law La Say and Saw Bwe Say

# Escape from Captivity

**"Thank you all, and God,** for giving me a chance to share my experience. I was arrested by DKBA (Democratic Karen Buddhist Army, a proxy army of the Burma Army) on 26 February of this year (2009). A friend of mine was informed that DKBA troops were on their way and he was supposed to meet them, but he was too afraid so he sent me instead. He told me that there was nothing to worry about because those DKBA troops were his friends.

So I went to meet the troops at about 6 p.m. on that day. I was arrested as soon as I met them. I was told that there would only be two DKBA with five rifles. However there were 20 of them fully armed and pointing their rifles at me. I was then told to sit down and tied up.

As a Christian, I started to pray right away. They took me to the jungle and told me I would be shot if I tried to escape. At about midnight, some of my friends and villagers came to see me. They also arrested four of my friends. The next day I was asked if I was a spy for the KNLA (Karen National Liberation Army, Karen pro-democracy resistance). I told them I was a minister working in the Battalion 103 area. After that, we were taken to another place called Death Hill, where most people don't come out alive. Five of us were kept in a small room, so small that we could not stand up.

We slept on the ground and were not allowed to go out even to use the bathroom. They ate above us and sometimes poured water into our room. They asked 200,000 baht from each person to be released, but none of us could meet the demand.

Then one day the DKBA asked me to invite my family so that I could go out of my cell. My wife and all my children came to stay with me. It turned out that my wife and children became hostages so that I could not run away when the DKBA took me out to work. I became their slave. They, the DKBA, followed me everywhere I went or I asked to go, even when I went to church. After a while they did not always follow me anymore. When my family came, they came with all our belongings, showing we were not planning to run away. It helped me gain their trust. When the time came for my children to go to school, I requested to send my children to a school in Thailand. With their permission, my wife took my three children to this school. She often went to see them. After over two months of my family's arrival, over three months since I was arrested, we decided to run away.

One day, I told my wife not to come back when she went to see our children. I followed her the next day, leaving all our belongings at the DKBA camp. My family and I stayed at our friends' houses for several nights, knowing the DKBA would look for us, even in Thailand. After a while they gave up searching for us. My family and I now live in a refugee camp. I continue as a pastor and relief worker. **My faith is in God and I praise Him for my freedom. Please remember to pray for me."**

-- Hsa Ka Paw



# A Story of a Ranger's Time in Prison



*"Some people are doing mistakes repeatedly and they think and say that if they believe in God, everything will be ok.*

*But I thought if we believe in God, we should follow the guidelines in the Bible.*

*It was what Jesus said and very important for our future and hope."*

*– Soe Naing*

Dear Friends,

This is a story about a good friend and teammate in the Free Burma Rangers. His name is Soe Naing and he is the leader and coordinator of the three Arakan FBR teams providing relief to IDPs in Arakan State, western Burma. He attended his first FBR training in 2002 and then with very little support trained three relief teams of his own and conducted numerous relief missions to help Arakan people who were being attacked by the Burma Army.

In 2007, Soe Naing was arrested on the Bangladesh/India border and spent 11 months in a Bangladeshi prison for helping a journalist do a story on the situation of the displaced people in Arakan State. He had finished escorting the journalist on a relief mission in Burma and was taking the journalist's camera equipment back across the border through Bangladesh. He was arrested at the border and charged with illegal border crossing.

We prayed for him, advocated for him and the journalist helped pay a fine to get him out. When he was released 11 months later, he immediately went back into the Arakan State of Burma to help people under attack by the Burma Army. He then helped us coordinate the training of all western Burma FBR teams- Kachin, Chin and Kachin. We met again at the 2008 training and I said, "I am so sorry about your time in prison. We prayed for you and tried our best but could not get you out very fast."

Soe Naing replied,

*"It was a good experience for me, don't worry about it. It was a good opportunity for me. When they put me in prison right away I prayed and began to get to know the other inmates. I encouraged them and told them that there were many productive things that could be done in prison. I told them that we should not give up and do our best. I encouraged the Arakan prisoners and helped to strengthen their morale and to organize them. We developed a good information network in the prison and organized the inmates into political action teams for when they were released from prison. We encouraged many of them to join the Arakan pro-democracy resistance and they began to be happier and to have a new purpose in their lives. Seeing this change in attitude and the reduction of problems among the prisoners, the prison guards were grateful and soon gave me my own room, a TV and a cell phone! So you see, God took care of me and I was able to use that time to raise up more people who wanted to work for freedom in Burma. Thank you for your prayer, and God worked out my prison time for good."*

I wanted to share this story because it inspired me and helped me to live with more faith and to remember that God can bring good from every circumstance. I also wanted you all to know what kind of people you are supporting and how the light of love, faith and courage is bright in Burma.

Thank you and God bless you,  
Relief Team Leader, family and FBR teams

# The Displaced and Rangers Celebrate Christmas Together

25 December 2009, Karen State, Burma

Dear all,

Merry Christmas from here in Toungoo District, northern Karen State, Burma! We are still here as there is more Burma Army activity against the population. We spent the last three days watching the road while some of the team treated patients and did the Good Life Club (GLC) program. This part of Toungoo District is at the edge of the black zone and the brown zone — we are with the last IDPs before it becomes almost totally Burma Army controlled.

**Black zones** are areas designated by the Burma Army as free fire zones and where displaced people who do not want to be under Burma Army control are hunted by the regime's soldiers. **Brown zones** are where the Burma Army has control but there is still a strong underground movement against them. **White Zones** are where the Burma Army feels they have total control.

This week, 150 villagers in a Burma Army—controlled village two miles ahead of us — brown zone — were forced to carry loads. We went as close as we could and took pictures of people forced to carry loads to the Burma Army camps here. Along the roads the patrolling Burma Army shoot rifles, machine guns and mortars all day here to terrify the people and to keep the resistance from ambushing them. Two days ago, resistance soldiers providing security for the displaced people here engaged the Burma Army as they shot into the valleys and hills. The Burma Army responded with heavy fire and mortars from nearby camps. The mortars ended up falling on their own troops and the resistance was able to stop the Burma Army advance that day.

Back in camp, a lady and her children I have known for five years, came to me, all smiles and strength. She is the wife of the local resistance leader here who was captured and killed last year. As we talked, she and her daughter broke down in uncontrollable tears and sobbing. I sat with them and listened, talked to them, put my hand on them and prayed with them.

We gave them some help for rice and then I remembered I had one Good Life Club bracelet left. I gave it to the 14-year-old daughter and we talked through the meaning of each bead — and for black we included the sin of her father being killed and that God is over all and vengeance is His and He will do it — and at the same time we know that the Burma Army are God's children too and need our prayers. We felt the presence of God's love that comforted us and we ended up laughing together as I took their picture.

Zones of Control in Burma



Women forced to carry loads for the Burma Army, northern Karen State, 23 December 2009.



Widow and children, December 2009.



'Night Flower' is 15 years old and has only been able to go to school for two years of her life because of the fighting and displacement. She and all here are in real need and this is the end of the line in many ways.

Today is Christmas Day and we held a service with the IDPs here. We had hoped to be close to the Good Life Club mission group by now, but there is more shooting and there are more Burma Army now behind us. We will pray and plan how to use our teams to help. We still hope to link up by the New Year with my family and other team members who are a few days behind us, but will take this step by step.

I was reminded that we all — you there and we here — are each God's answers to the people's prayers here. As inadequate as that sounds, God uses those who are willing to be used and makes His eternal difference through them. His victory is sure, our lives are full and all things truly precious are safe forever in His hands. Here are some words to the song, "How Firm a Foundation Ye Saints of the Lord". This song describes what my soul feels and is a gift of hope, joy and present strength.

*"...What more can He say than to you  
He hath said, to you who for refuge to  
Jesus have fled.*

*Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not  
dismayed, for I am your God and will  
still give you aid,  
I'll strengthen you, help you and cause  
you to stand, upheld by My righteous  
omnipotent hand.*

*When through fiery trials your pathway  
shall lie, My grace all-sufficient, shall be  
your supply.*

*The flames shall not hurt you; I only  
design- your dross to consume and your  
gold to refine.*

*The soul that on Jesus has leaned for  
repose, I will not, I will not desert to  
His foes;*

*That soul, though all hell should  
endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never, forsake,  
I'll never, no never, no never, forsake."*



**Night Flower, 15 years old, in hiding,  
Toungoo District, Karen State,  
Christmas Eve 2009.**



**Medics treat IDPs in hiding place,  
Northern Karen State.**

May God bless you all,  
A Relief Team Leader and family, and FBR relief teams  
Northern Karen State, Burma, Christmas 2009

# Shan Team Member Gives His Life for Love and for Freedom



The Burma Army killed one of our Shan relief team members on 14 September, 2010, as he was giving humanitarian assistance to people in need in Shan State, Burma. While on a relief mission, Sai Yod (name changed to protect his family) was shot in the back and killed by Burma Army troops from IB 99, MOC 17, commanded by Aung Than Tai.

Sai Yod was the team cameraman as well as one of the Good Life Club team members who focused on helping children. He was a kind and smiling man who loved to help others, endured hardship without complaint and loved children. He was a hard worker, tough and never surrendered. The people he helped had a funeral service for Sai Yod and the team is continuing the relief mission. We will do our best to help his family and are grateful for your prayers.

We miss Sai Yod but hope that we will see him again in the place where all tears are wiped away.

"Greater love has no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends." --John 15:13

Thank you and God bless you,  
Shan Free Burma Rangers

**Sai Yod, Shan FBR team member, wearing green hat, killed by Burma Army on 14 September 2010.**





# Relief Mission in Shan State

July 2010

Multiethnic Karen, Karenni, Kachin and Shan teams provided relief to Wa, Shan and Lahu IDPs.



Wa soldier singing "Joy to the World", June 2010.



Shan, Lahu and Wa Children with GLC counselors, June 2010.



Wa, Shan and Lahu children receive GLC gifts, June 2010.



Karen medic performs surgery on a Wa woman, June 2010.

# New Wa Believers and Medical Care in Southern Shan State

August 2010

In the face of possible all-out warfare between the Wa and SPDC and a population that is over 90 percent Animist, the Wa church is growing. During June and July 2010, a Wa pastor and his team of Wa Christians baptized 301 new Wa believers in southern Shan State, Burma.

This is an area where many Wa families have been forced to move and they are in great need of spiritual, medical and educational care. The Wa church has worked with the Wa people and leaders in this area and has been able to build many new and good relationships. The following are pictures of some of the baptisms as well as church services given by the Wa team.



**ABOVE LEFT**  
New Wa  
believers  
baptized,  
August 2010.

**ABOVE RIGHT**  
Wa believers  
at church,  
August 2010.

**Wa village  
in southern  
Shan State.**



# “What can we do? They are dead but at least they are free. We want our children to be with us but at least they are free.”

-- Naw Pah Lah, a Karen mother of 5-year-old girl and 5-month-old boy shot dead at point blank range by the Burma Army

## Children Shot and Killed by the Burma Army on 22 March 2010 Ler Doh Township, Nyaunglebin District, Western Karen State

On 22 March, Naw Pah Lah and her children were returning home from visiting her parents when soldiers from Burma Army Battalion 369 attacked. As she ran, carrying her son and holding her daughter's hand, all three were shot by the pursuing troops. Five-year-old Naw Paw Bo, was shot in the head and killed, and 5-month-old Saw Hta Pla Htoo was shot on his mother's back. The baby and his mother, who was shot in the stomach as she carried him, escaped. The boy died two and a half hours later.

In the same attack, another villager, 37-year-old Naw La Pwey, was shot in the back and killed.

The mother told us, “I tried to hold my daughter's hand and pull her but she was already dead so I had to leave her on the trail. After the Burma Army left, we found my daughter's body in the bushes where they had thrown her. Her earrings had been ripped off. What can we do? They are dead but at least they are free. We want our children to be with us but at least they are free.”

The Burma Army also burned down nine homes in the village while the rest of the villagers fled. The Burma Army set fire to all 11 houses in the village, completely destroying six. Due to the attacks in this area, starting in January 2010, over 3,000 people remain displaced.



**Naw Pah Lah, 26 years old, mother of two children killed by Burma Army, was shot and wounded in the attack.**



**ABOVE Naw Paw Bo, 5-year-old girl shot and killed by the Burma Army.**



**BELOW Naw Law Pwey, 37-year-old woman shot and killed by the Burma Army.**

# G OD LIFE CLUB

The Good Life Club program is based on the words of Jesus in John 10:10,

*The thief comes to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly!*

The word *abundant* is so big and full. Only Jesus can truly meet all of our needs in an abundant way. In whatever ways we are able, we hope to bring love and faith, along with tools for a good life, body and soul. These include teaching Bible lessons and health care, songs and games, and giving a pack of teaching supplies to schools.



If you would like to contribute to the Good Life Club, one way is to put together packs of essential items for children, moms and babies. Relief teams deliver these packs to displaced children.

## *A contribution by Kim Kingshill*

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy

The thief= the devil, the forces against God's people; against the weak/poor/orphaned/widowed/alien.

Purpose= to steal, to destroy, to kill, maybe even to make orphaned, to make widowed, to make alien.

I came that they may have life and have it abundantly

I= Jesus, the One who freely lays His life down and who freely takes His life up.

Purpose= to offer life, to offer life abundantly, fully.

After all this scripture study it comes down to this...

***Even in the midst of the worst tragedy and the most horrific experience, do I/we believe that God is trustworthy and indeed has our ultimate good in His hands?***

### KIDS PACKS

Small comb and mirror  
1 box of children's chewable vitamins  
2 children's toothbrushes  
1 fingernail clipper  
1 small toy  
1 picture of you  
1 postcard from your city or state with a Bible verse

### MOM AND BABY PACKS

Small fingernail clippers  
Multi-vitamins for mom  
Pediatric vitamins (not needing refrigeration)  
2 outfits for baby, including cap, mittens, shirt (not a onesie) and socks  
1 teether  
1 picture of you  
1 postcard from your city or state with a Bible verse

### SHIPPING INFORMATION

Thank you for your help in sending the packs to us. At this time, it is still not possible to send charitable bulk shipments to us. Please send standard household/gift size boxes with the description "household/personal goods, no commercial value" on customs form.

Send packs airmail (USA: not to exceed 79 inches length/width/girth) to Christians Concerned for Burma (CCB), PO Box 14, Mae Jo PO, Chiang Mai 50290, THAILAND. Mark the Package: GLC



# Abundant Life in Burma

Tho Htoo is 11 years old but looks like he is nine, is small and thin but bright-eyed. His house had been burned down two months before and I wanted to hear his story in his own words; one week after we spoke to him, his family packed and ran again as the Burma Army again sent patrols toward his village.

Dah Wah is 19 years old and is in first grade. Both of her parents died when she was five years old. She had to run from Burma Army attacks as many as 10 times a year. The rest of her time was spent helping her family find food. She had no time for school. Now she lives in her township headquarters and the Karen National Union (KNU-Karen pro-democracy resistance) supports her schooling.

These are two of the nearly 3,000 students from over 50 schools who came to Good Life Club programs in northern Karen State in December and January. Out of 54 schools, three were high schools and ten were middle schools. Forty-one of the schools were primary schools. This means in 41 villages out of 54, children have few options for schooling after primary school - for most, education stops after sixth grade. School, such as it is, is interrupted by Burma Army attacks, by untreated illness, by hunger and the struggle to find food. This is not just education at risk - this is a people's hope for the future at risk.

And yet hopelessness is not what we find and we are greeted everywhere with smiles, with joy and often with gifts. I think of Psalm 23, where the psalmist says that, "*You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemy*" — and I realize that He has.

Here is a feast of good things: food, fellowship and sharing, while the enemy is only hours away. It is good: the joy is genuine, the fun is real, at times it seems as if the day is perfect. And this goodness is not canceled out by the presence of the enemy, by the desperate side of existence. Joy, and the faith and courage that sustain it, are the heart of the resistance and are what has allowed the people here to not lose hope, to not quit, after 60 years of war. We know that there is another enemy. The line between good and evil runs right through the heart of every person. There is a fight on. But, I believe, God still prepares a table for us, even in the enemy's presence. Even in our own embattled hearts and lives, He gives us good things to do and the strength to do them. It is a mystery, but a joyful one-- that the table God has laid for us is also the heart of our resistance to the enemy. So I'm encouraged to keep up the fight, even though I may fail every day, every hour. I know the fight is on - and I know the battle is the Lord's.

Thank you for being in this with us.

God bless you,

A Good Life Club leader and Free Burma Ranger

TOP Over 500 children came to one program in December 2009.

CENTER Medic teaches health and nutrition to children at GLC program, December 2009.

BOTTOM Games at Good Life Club program.



# HTOO HTOO EH COMMUNICATION AND GOOD LIFE CLUB RANGER



Htoo Htoo Eh joined the Free Burma Rangers in 2007 to serve his people. Htoo Htoo Eh is 26 years old, married and has a young daughter. He had already been accepted into an advanced academic program but decided to serve his community for a time before pursuing his personal academic goals. He came to FBR with excellent English language, technological and academic skills. He was already accomplished in leadership skills of organizing, presenting and performing.

Htoo Htoo Eh has multiple responsibilities for the Doooplaya District relief teams. He is responsible for communication and Good Life Club duties. In the communication role he is responsible for sending reports to headquarters, including photo and video logs, medical reports, and mission reports on team activities, Burma Army activities, the situation of Internally Displaced Persons and general information from the areas visited. He is in charge of communication for all Doooplaya District teams, which includes collecting and relaying mission reports from each team, coordinating team meetings and logistics, and communicating with several sets of leaders, including local area civilian and military leaders, as well as FBR leadership. His communication responsibilities also involve technical expertise with computer and satellite communication systems. His Good Life Club duties include identifying and responding to the needs of children in crisis communities through individual pastoral/trauma counseling and spiritual/educational group programs for families in these communities, as well as coaching and mentoring new GLC counselors. He has continued to develop these skills through attending advanced trainings, as well as helping to teach new relief teams.





**“I really want to change these situations and lead my people to freedom.”**

way to continue further study. I really tried to find a chance to go to university, but I could not. My parents do not have money to support me to go to university. This situation made me sad and gave me a lot of thinking. In 2004, I went to a refugee camp for further study. Then I found a further studies program and was accepted.

While I was studying in this school I became the chairman of Students' committee to lead the students' activities.

### ***In his own words...***

an excerpt from an autobiography by Htoo Htoo Eh

“My name is Saw Htoo Htoo Eh. I was born in a Karen village in southeast Karen State, eastern Burma. I lived with my parents when I was a child. My parents are farmers and they are Karen. I started going to school when I was five years old. I was a child who was interested in studying the most among my siblings. But I met many difficulties to go to school because of SPDC attacks and many fighting in the village. I remember the time when we had to sleep in fear and trouble nights. We always had nightmares, guns firing, mortaring and children screaming and people scared. We always went into the pit to be safe, because of the fighting when we were falling asleep. It is hard for my mother in this situation because I have many siblings. She had to carry and pulled us into the pit, dared not to use light, and had to be quiet. My life had to go through this situation for many years; it was a big stress and gave us a bad experience.

Even if I grew up under the war I like going to school. But the situation was not steady, sometimes, the school has to be closed and we fled to the jungle. The teachers tried and taught us in the jungle.

In 1995, I was eleven years old; I got a good chance to go to delta area to study in the city. Because I met with some Karen Baptist missionaries and they took me there to go to school. During that time, I had good situation to study well until I graduated high school. When I went to delta area, my family met difficult situation because of SPDC attack and major operation in Karen state. My father, mother and my brothers and sisters separated. My mother and some sisters went to Thailand, my father went to a refugee camp and some brothers and sisters lived separated in Karen state. In 1997, my house was destroyed by SPDC troops.

Since 1995 to 2001, I lived separated with my family and I even did not know where they had gone. After that, I came back to my village and found my family. But I did not have money and could not find the

After graduating, I immediately joined the Free Burma Ranger's Leadership and Ethnic Unity training and relief mission work. In my district, my duties are Communication, Good Life Club, Information and Report. I am also working with FBR headquarters group. I am also a young leader in the activities, especially I led the Good life Club program every single mission trip.

***I have a strong feeling for my people. I want to bring freedom for my people and let them live in peace.*** As I have done many relief missions, I got many kinds of experience and saw many kinds of different situations. These experiences and situations hurt my heart and make me cry many times. The people were attacked and killed, forced to move and relocate, even many innocent children were killed by Burma Army troops. They were displaced, properties were took over and destroyed. Many women were raped and killed, man were killed and forced to work. They were tortured and executed without any reasons. They do not have good education system and health care. In the same way, it is especially difficult to find daily food and have security. I really want to change these situations and lead my people to freedom.

My goal is to go to university, to get higher education, to improve my ability and talent. I recently can do many things for my community, but I need to improve my education and my ideas to have new vision for my people. One day, I want to be a great leader in my community. Then, I want to share young people the education I have. “

*Htoo Htoo Eh's situation in Burma is representative of many young leaders who have had opportunities for education and vocation stripped away by the ongoing civil war in Burma. Despite his lack of freedom to pursue professional advancement, Htoo Htoo Eh has used an amazing amount of ingenuity and energy to become a talented and compassionate leader in his community. Despite the fact that he has been denied basic civil rights in his own country he desires to study law to make a positive change for his people.*

# The Darkness Spreads but HOPE is Still Alive

19 December 2009



**Jumping and singing with IDPs two hours from Burma Army camp, 12 December 2009.**

"Dear friends,

We are sending this out from northern Karen State. We are in the midst of resilient and hopeful people even though they are chased, shelled, and displaced by the Burma Army who are all around them. We are here with the newly trained teams and they are doing a wonderful job. The Karen response to any difficulty or mishap is to laugh and since our mode of operation is closer to Mr. Bean than James Bond there is a lot of laughing. They know how to find joy and fellowship even in the most dire situations. At the same time darkness has invaded their land and its effect is constantly felt and people live always looking over their shoulders. The Burma Army is building roads and reinforcing their camps in this area and the darkness continues to spread.

On the way to do a photo reconnaissance of a Burma Army camp we met a mother and father with a young daughter carrying rice from their fields. We could see the fields up ahead of us with a Burma Army camp behind them. The family said when they tried to harvest their rice the Burma Army would shell them and try to kill them. The Burma Army mortars from their camps at anyone trying to harvest their crops. Patrols from these camps do the same.

As I looked at the small girl who narrowly escaped death resting with her sack of rice I thought of my own daughter about the same age. I felt sad that she had to live with this terror. I was also angry that anyone would be vicious enough to target families as they tended their fields. We got as close as we could to the camp and photographed and recorded its

location. There are 40 - 50 Burma Army soldiers who man this camp. It is one of many along a Burma Army road that divides this area, displacing over 7000 people. This camp and the others act as launch points for larger attacking Burma Army units to base out of. The Karen pro-democracy resistance is too small and unsupported to push the Burma Army out and instead focuses on early warning, protecting villagers and slowing down attacks from the camps. The next day we joined with the rest of the team to put on a Good Life Club and medical program in a valley two hours away from the Burma Army camp where displaced people had made their new homes. They said this area was also shelled but on the day of the program there was no shelling; instead, there was a celebration of songs, gifts, and games for the children (thanks to Partners Relief and Development for the support of the GLC). I looked out at the crowd of Karen families who had joined with the teams for the Good Life Club program. The family we had met on the recon were also there. They were singing and laughing. The field was green with the mountains behind and a blue sky above. It was a perfect day. It was perfect even though the Burma Army was just on the other side of those mountains. It was perfect because of the love shared, the joy expressed, and the beautiful day God gave us together.

We don't know why suffering and injustice are allowed in this world. We are aware of our own failings and that the line between good and evil runs through all of us. But we believe in redemption and we thank all of you who pray and enable us to stand with the people of Burma, no matter the odds.

May God bless you all,  
A Relief Team Leader  
Northern Karen State, Burma





**Good Life Club in Karen State,  
December 2009.**



**Children receive Good Life  
Club packs, December 2009.**

## **“We will rebuild our village starting with the church”**

**- Karen elder in Tha Dah Der Village, which was burned by the Burma Army, 27 July 2010.**



**Tha Dah Der students in front of  
their school and church before  
the attack.**



**Tha Dah Der church  
after the attack.**



**Villagers building their new church.**



**Families harvesting rice near  
rebuilt homes in Tha Dah Der,  
November 2010.**



**Karen IDPs singing Christmas carols to other IDPs**

They call us a displaced people  
 But praise God; we are not misplaced  
 They say they see no hope for our future,  
 But praise God; our future is as bright  
 as the promises of God  
 They see, they see the life of our people is a misery,  
 But praise God; our life is a mystery  
 For what they say is what they see,  
 And what they see is temporal.  
 But ours is eternal,  
 All because we put ourselves  
 In the hands of the God we trust.

*- Pastor Simon, a leader among refugees from Burma*

Learn to do right!  
 Seek justice,  
 Encourage the oppressed  
 Defend the cause of the fatherless,  
 Plead the case of the widow.

*- Isaiah 1:17*

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Thank you to Partners Relief and Development for all of its support. Thank you to Acts Co. for its support and the printing of this magazine. Finally, thanks to Amy Galetzka and team for this magazine.

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