

Global Day of Prayer for Burma



March 11, 2007



Population of Burma:
Approximately 50 million
IDPs in Burma:
Over 1 million
Refugees from Burma:
Over 1 million in countries neighboring Burma with over 150,000 living in camps



Children from a Wa hostel doing a traditional dance

The Attacked



In hiding in Mon Township, Karen State, following Burma Army attacks.



Karen families flee Toungoo District.



Fleeing Burma Army's attacking troops.

2006 Offensive by Burma Army Displaces Over 25,000 Villagers in Northern Karen State

The people in these photos are some of the over 25,000 displaced by the Burma Army in the worst offensive since 1997. The unrelenting attacks in the Karen State are part of the plan by the dictators to completely dominate, chase out or crush any Karen people in these areas.

While the scale of displacement and destruction is massive, people die individually, each death an irreplaceable loss. Saw They Shur was burned alive by Burma Army soldiers in his home at Play Hta Village, near Hoki, Toungoo District. He was 47 years old and married with six children. His wife and children are now in hiding.

In April 2006 in Nyaunglebin District, we treated a 9-year-old girl, Naw Eh Ywa Paw, or the “Flower that Loves God” after she was shot (her father and grandmother were shot dead in the same attack). She is now on the run again with over 1,500 others in her valley. They were attacked for trying to stay with their families in a hiding place near their destroyed village.

The disruption of their food production, the burning of their homes and the shoot-on-sight orders of the Burma Army have made staying in their homeland untenable for thousands more. They need immediate protection and the freedom to return to their homes. Because of these attacks they also need food, medicine, shelter and help to rebuild their homes, schools and lives.

The Attackers

Burma Army soldiers in a Karen village. This photo was taken at great risk by a relief team leader hiding in an area occupied by the Burma Army.



Naw Eh Ywa Paw



Here she is recovering in late April at a new hiding place. In November 2006 she had to flee again and is now in hiding with over 1,500 others.



The body of her father, Saw Maw Keh, where he was shot carrying her 80-year-old grandmother (who was also shot) as all three were trying to flee the Burma Army.

Naw Eh Ywa Paw

The Flower that Loves God

Dear friends,

These are pictures of “the Flower that Loves God”, a 9-year-old Karen girl who was shot and wounded while her father and grandmother were shot to death by the Burma Army in April 2006. She eventually recovered and with her mother, brother and sisters, moved to a new hiding place near their old village in Mon Township, Karen State. The Burma Army is now attacking the place where she and others are hiding, and she is on the run again.

The Burma Army needs to be stopped, and she, her family and the other Karen need to be able to go home. Until that happens this is an emergency situation and she and her people need protection, food, medicine and shelter.

Thank you and
God bless you,
*A relief team leader
Northern Karen State
FBR*

*Eh Ywa Paw being
treated by the team
after she was shot by
Burma Army troops,
early April 2006.*



Relief team holds service for Naw Eh Ywa Paw's father and grandmother with her aunt, the sister of Saw Maw Keh.

With Displaced Karen in Burma: A Message from a Relief Team

We have spent most of the year on relief missions with some of the over one million displaced Karen, Karenni and Shan people in Eastern Burma as they fled Burma Army attacks. Bad things happen here, but I would like to share some of the good things, starting with an excerpt from a message we sent from the field.

“Over 150 people in a long straggling line were moving towards us across the rice fields. One of our team members said, ‘Those are newly displaced people from Toungoo District who have been on the move for two weeks fleeing the Burma Army’. As I approached them I saw the strain on their faces and heard the babies crying. I suddenly felt like I did not have much good news to share. That night, as our team and I spent time with these people, a different picture began to emerge: families huddled around small fires eating rice supplied by the local village and resistance invited us to join them and soon children were laughing and adults were smiling. We treated patients, talked and prayed with them. The next morning as they prepared to keep moving we joined them for prayer and our team sang the hymn “Holy, Holy, Holy” with them. When we finished, Naw Nancy, a 60-year-old Karen school teacher, said to us, ‘Thank you, but please wait, we want to sing for you and give you something’. All the people stood up as she led them in a Karen hymn, “God is Full of Power”. We were all moved and departed with smiles and handshakes – we to continue our mission, and they to a safer place.”

Joy in the midst of difficulty; faith in the midst of uncertainty; choosing to be thankful instead of dwelling on misery. These are the lessons the Karen people keep teaching us. The following are a few of many other good things the team and I have experienced on these missions.

- 1) People like you, who pray for, encourage and support us. You care about these people; you choose to have an eternal perspective and you lift us up.
- 2) The wonderful, amazingly capable and brave men and women who make up the relief teams. They are full of love, humor, and the toughness to go anywhere needed.
- 3) How people under direct Burma Army attack help each other. Even as some are killed, others run back to help the survivors, especially to carry the children.
- 4) For Eh Ywa Paw, the 9-year-old girl shot by the Burma Army, and her survival.
- 5) For people in the resistance like Mr. Eh Wa, a high school teacher for displaced children, who always smiles and yet only sees his family twice a year and has already spent seven years in prison. When asked why he endures separation from his family and the risk of capture or death, he said with a smile, “For the freedom of my people”.
- 6) For faith and making the best of each day. After one service with IDPs we walked a few hours to where the



Karenni IDPs join in the Global Day of Prayer.



Saw Brave born in hiding during the 2006 offensive in northern Karen State.

Burma Army had attacked a village destroying homes, looting possessions and burning the village church. It was a thing of beauty to watch the Karens' agility and speed in the jungle. They watched for the Burma Army but when we passed under a fruit tree, they stopped and climbed high in the tree to bring us some fruit. They exemplify men completely at home in their environment, sure of themselves yet not arrogant. They are fluid in motion and appreciative of all of nature's bounty. At the remains of the village, these men looked at the destruction and then at us. They shrugged and one man smiled saying, “We have to try... this is our home... we will not give up”.

We are reminded that evil is not the only power in the world. God is here with us, has suffered for us, and knows our suffering. Through it all, love triumphs and the soul cannot be killed. We are thus free to do what is right, to ask forgiveness when we do wrong and to try again. To build and rebuild, to love and serve and to enjoy all the gifts of life. This lesson was taught by you, by the Karen people and I believe, by Jesus who shows us the way and with mercy, helps us on that way. For Christ's sacrifice and friends like you I am grateful.

*-A relief team leader and the teams and families inside.
Matthew 28:1-20*

Internally Displaced People (IDPs)

running for their lives



Families Displaced in Eastern Burma.



Village burned by the Burma Army on 27 April, 2006, Taw Ko Toe Baw, Muthraw District, Karen State.



Burma Army attacks and chases Karenni villagers from their homes, then burns their villages.



Arakan relief team gives medical attention to displaced persons.



Porters

This man was used as a porter by the dictators' army and beaten. He escaped and was cared for by the Karen resistance. After receiving medical treatment he began his journey home. On the way he was captured and killed by the Burma Army in a betel nut grove.



Cooking pot and cover destroyed by the Burma Army to terrorize villagers and drive them from their homes.

Forced Labor and Captivity



Villagers in Nyaunglebin District forced to build a fence around their village and the new Burma Army camp nearby.



Burma Army Division 66 soldier recording the names of the forced laborers.



Some of the 850 people forced to carry supplies for the Burma Army Division 66.



IN PRISON

Naw Baby, a Karen nurse, age 22 years, captured by the Burma Army and now serving an eight-year sentence. Naw Baby is the second lady from the right, wearing red. Before she was captured she and the other nurses had said, "We are afraid of the Burma Army, but we want to help our people and our Karen Nation, so we try." Please pray for this young woman and her freedom. Thank you,

*The Free Burma Rangers
November 1, 2006*

Aung San Suu Kyi

Aung San Suu Kyi, a Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, has now spent over 11 years under house arrest. She is the leader of the National League for Democracy (NLD), the party which won over 80% of the vote in the 1990 elections in Burma. The military dictatorship responded by ignoring the results of the elections and jailing members of the opposition.



Good Life Club



"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." John 10:10-11

Kachin relief team member carries displaced Karen child.

GLC Counselors

"If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,' but do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?" James 2:15-16 (NKJV)

I recently went on a three week trip to Shan State in Northeastern Burma. My job was to train eight team members who would serve as Good Life Club (GLC) counselors for eight FBR relief teams. After an intensive period of training each team is deployed for a six-month mission. The GLC Counselor is responsible to help children in crisis. He provides basic trauma care, arranges for the children's welfare and ongoing care, documents conditions and violations, and shares a message of hope and faith with the displaced people encountered.

I have met many of the children these men and women have helped. In one day alone, I met three girls who were brutally raped by Burma Army soldiers. One was 11 years old, another was 14, and the one worst affected by her ordeal was merely 9 years old. These three girls epitomize what I found to be commonplace in IDP areas: the children of Burma are in constant danger of abduction, violation, forced slavery, and abuse by a regime that seems to operate without a conscience and with impunity.

The GLC counselors help children like these three girls. They reach out with compassion and demonstrate love and faith, often saving lives. The T-shirts, toys, health and hygiene kits, and literature they distribute provide some aid, but in my view, they are secondary to the primary role the GLC counselors play in providing hope, safety, and compassion for kids whose lives are marked by the loss of childhood and innocence.

Steve Gumaer, a relief team trainer
Partners Relief and Development
www.partnersworld.org



Shan relief team provides medical treatment, T-shirts and encouragement to Shan villagers.



Lahu relief team provides dental aid to displaced Lahu villagers in Shan State.

Kid Packs

- small comb and mirror
- a box of children's chewable vitamins
- 2 children's toothbrushes
- fingernail clippers
- a small toy
- a drawing or photograph of you or your group
- a postcard from your city or state with a verse of scripture

Mom & Baby Packs

- small fingernail clippers
- multi-vitamins for mom
- pediatric vitamins (not needing refrigeration)
- 2 sets for baby including cap, hand mitts, shirt (not a onesie)
- a teether
- a drawing or photograph of you or your group
- a postcard from your city or state with a verse of scripture

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" on the customs form. Send packs standard airmail (USA: not to exceed 79 inches/length/girth) to the address on the back of this booklet, with the name, "GLC".

Shan State

From Forced Labor and Drug Addiction to Freedom: *One Shan Story*



This Shan family fled their village in Shan State where they had been forced to work for the Burma Army under brutal conditions. The father was addicted to opium and the mother to amphetamines. They told us the Burma Army gave them drugs as payment and to keep them under control. Their two little daughters were dirty and malnourished. They had been walking for days and hiding from Burma Army and Wa Army patrols as they escaped to the south. They told us they heard that the Shan pro-democracy resistance had a protected area for displaced people like them and that the Shan State Army could help them kick their drug dependencies. We were glad to lead them there, and put the family in the center of our column as we headed back to this protected area.

It became very difficult for the family to move fast as the Burma and Wa armies pursued us, even though we were already carrying their two girls and belongings. We had to give the mother an IV and were just able to get them to the safe area.

Two years later we were preparing for a mission deeper inside and met this family again. They were in the same safe area of displaced people that we had brought them to. We were amazed at how healthy and strong they were. They smiled when we met. They had been off all narcotics since they arrived two years ago. They were free, had a solid cabin, farmed the hills around the site and sent their daughters to the local school for displaced people. To see them strong and smiling is a wonderful answer to prayer. Thanks to all of you for being part of this.

-A relief team leader, FBR

Massacre of 16 Shan villagers on 22 October 1996, Ho Yan Village, Khun Hing District. Remains found on 30 May 2006.



Nang Sap, captured by the Burma Army when she was 5 years old, has been missing for seven years. She is reported dead, sacrificed at the Ho Mong temple by Burma Army troops.



Nang Sap at 4 years old.

There are multiple eyewitness accounts of her capture by the Burma Army, which put her in a backpack and took her to a new pagoda being built in Ho Mong, Shan State. There she was reportedly entombed with two other children as a sacrifice. Her mother is still in trauma. This is not the only case of human sacrifice that has been reported.



Raped by the Burma Army

Mway Khan (*above-name changed*), a young Shan girl who was raped by a Burma Army soldier. She was 9 years old at the time and is deeply traumatized and still suffering from the violent rape. Her family fled to a displaced persons site after the rape. The rape occurred in Ho Mong, Southeastern Shan State. A Shan FBR team helped this girl and her family escape last year. She is 10 years old now.



(*Right*) A seventeen-year-old girl raped for two days by three Burma Army soldiers, 16-17 May 2006.

Relief Team Members Lost and Remembered



Saw Mu 1983-2006

A Letter from a Relief Team Leader, 6 May 2006

Yesterday we lost one of our best men due to a landmine placed by the Burma Army. His name was Saw Mu (Mr. Happy). We called him Mr. Afraid because he was not. He was the Muthraw District FBR team video cameraman. He was the team counselor and volunteered for additional duty, with the Good Life Club's children programs. He was a bright, humble and brave young man. We are saddened by his death but believe he did not die in vain and was the finest example of Karen manhood. His was a full life of giving to many and he set an example of servant leadership. He died putting a light on the current Burma Army attacks on civilians and that light is shining. Saw Mu was single, a Christian and his hope was in God. He was always smiling and laughing and was a friend to me and my family. Even though his life has made a great difference for good, for me, only God's promise of a new life gives me any hope in the situation of his death. We will do our best to honor Saw Mu, help his family and are blessed to have walked in this land with him.



Mya Win (left) documents road crossing

Saw Mya Win

A Letter From Mya Win's Wife

(He died while serving displaced people in his home, Toungoo District, Northwestern Karen State.)

Dear Free Burma Rangers,

First, I want to thank all of you because you let me know about my husband's passing away. Until now, I did not know where my husband died or the disease that he died from. I was very sad, but when I saw and got your letter and your encouragement, I was happy. If not, I did not know nothing. Please do not find a replacement for him, I will replace him on the FBR team. My husband has died, but I won't give up, just as my husband tried for his people while he was alive. So, I will try and do something for my people, too. Please do not replace him. I will replace him. Please excuse me for one year and I will prepare, right now I am quite busy, but for the coming years I will find and do something for my people.

Dear Tha-U-Wa-A-Pa,

(An FBR team leader's name meaning "Father of the White Monkey")
I need your help to have two or three men help me to go back to do a memorial service my for husband. I would like to request you to send Mya Win and his daughter's photo that he took before he died. Please, if you see it send it back to me. I will keep it for a remembrance. If Mya Win's photos show any of you, please send it back to me too please. I wish for all of you, that you will pray for Mya Win's family always.



The Face of Relief

One year ago, medics found this boy with a badly burned face. After initial treatment from the medics and additional treatment at a nearby mobile clinic, the boy is now completely healed.



This letter was found placed next to a Burma Army landmine. The following text was found on a similar sign found later, that was placed with a Burma Army landmine.

From Burma Army:

"For the hiding villagers"

- (1) No one is allowed to live in this area.
- (2) People must move to Muthey or beside the car road at the relocation site as soon as possible, by 5 May.
- (3) Our troops do not want to shoot and capture.
- (4) By this date (5 May) anyone who

stays in this area will be shot. This is a command from above.

(5) You can come back when this area has peace.

(6) Karen soldiers, do not do work that God and angels don't like such as putting landmines and setting ambushes. Make peace and live together happily with your family.

Resources

World Wide Web and Email

Amnesty International	www.amnesty.org
AP News	www.apnews.com
Burma Campaign UK	www.burmacampaign.org.uk
Burma Forum of Los Angeles	www.burmaforumla.org
Burma Issues	www.burmaissues.org
Burmanet News	www.burmanet.org
Burma Relief Centre	brccm@loxinfo.co.th
Christians Concerned for Burma	www.prayforburma.org
Christian Solidarity Australasia	www.cswoz.org
Christian Solidarity Worldwide	www.csw.org.uk
Democratic Voice of Burma	www.dvb.no
Free Burma Rangers	www.freeburmarangers.org
Human Rights Watch	www.hrw.org
Irrawaddy Magazine	www.irrawaddy.org
Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre	www.internal-displacement.org
Jubilee Campaign UK	www.jubileecampaign.org
Karen Action Group	www.kagint.org
Karen Human Rights Group	www.khrg.org
Karen National League (USA)	www.karen.org
National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB)	www.ncgub.net
Open Society Institute Burma Project	www.soros.org/burma
Online Burma Library	www.onlineburmalibrary.org
Partners Relief and Development	www.partnersworld.org
Radio Free Asia	www.rfa.org
Shan Herald Agency for News	www.shanland.org
Tears of the Oppressed	www.human-rights-and-christian-persecution.org
US Campaign for Burma	www.uscampaignforburma.org

In Print

Licence to Rape: The Burmese military regime's use of sexual violence in the ongoing war in Shan and Karen States. Shan Human Rights Foundation and Shan Women's Action Network. May 2002.

Fink, Christina. *Living in Silence: Burma Under Military Rule.* Zed Books 2001.

Lintner, Bertil. *Burma in Revolt.* Silkworm Books. Revised Edition 2000.

Lintner, Bertil. *Outrage: Burma's Struggle for Democracy.* White Lotus Co.

Rogers, Benedict. *Land Without Evil: Stopping the Genocide of Burma's Karen people.* Monarch Books 2004.

Smith, Martin. *Burma: Insurgency and the Politics of Ethnicity.* Zed Books Ltd.

Tucker, Shelby. *Burma, The Curse of Independence.* 2001.

Videos

This Is Our Home: Standing for Freedom in Burma. 3.5 min. A brief look at the problems facing the country of Burma and those who resist its military dictatorship.

The Enemy Came. 3.5 min. Internally Displaced People on the run from the Burma Army in Karen State, Burma.

In Hiding: A year of survival under the Burma Army: 2004-2005. 12 min. Documentary on human rights abuses committed by the Burma Army.

Steps to Freedom. 18 min. Training relief teams and emergency relief to displaced people in Burma's war zones.

Fear and Hope: Responding to Burma's Internally Displaced. 6 min.

Love in Action. 12-minute video about the war in Burma and relief teams in action.

Good Life Club. A video showing the practical ways to take action for IDP women and children.

Beyond Rangoon. 1995 Castle Rock Entertainment. Stars Patricia Arquette.

Forgotten Allies. 1994 BBC Timewatch.

(Please contact CCB for a free copy of *This Is Our Home*, *The Enemy Came*, *In Hiding*, *Steps to Freedom*, *Fear and Hope*, *Love in Action* or *Good Life Club* videos).

For more suggested resources please see www.prayforburma.org.



Villagers on the run from Burma Army attacks in Eastern Burma.



Displaced villagers praying in a hiding place during a rainstorm.

Message From an FBR Relief Team Leader:

These pictures of people praying, hiding, fleeing and of a medic carrying a child to safety show faith, suffering, uncertainty, love in action and hope. In Proverbs 3:5-6, we are urged, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight." It is not easy to trust God with all of our hearts, especially when we suffer. But there is no other way to live with faith than to give God our whole hearts no matter what each of us are facing wherever we are. May we give ourselves wholeheartedly to God as He leads us on.

Thank you for your prayers and for your stand with the people of Burma.

God Bless you,
A Relief Team Leader
Free Burma Rangers

Christians Concerned for
Burma (CCB)
P.O. Box 14, Mae Jo
Chiang Mai, 50290
Thailand
ccb@pobox.com
www.prayforburma.org



Relief worker carrying a displaced child running away from Burma Army attacks.