

# FREE BURMA RANGER

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

**“I WANT TO GO BACK AND  
HELP UNTIL IT IS FINISHED...  
I AM ABLE TO GO AND HELP  
BECAUSE OF GOD.”**

ZAU SENG, FBR KACHIN RANGER & CAMERAMAN - KILLED IN SYRIA IN 2019



# FREE BURMA RANGERS

## OUR MISSION

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

## OUR VISION

To bring help, hope and love to people of all faiths and ethnicities in conflict areas, 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 spiritually, physically, relationally and professionally 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 war zones and to improve logistics and medical evacuation.
3. To develop information networks that document, report and disseminate accounts of human rights violations and provide an early warning system.
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.



FBR AND KAREN VILLAGERS RIDE WITH FLAGS FOR FREEDOM

# LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

Thank you for your help and prayers all these years. From Burma to Sudan, from Kurdistan to Iraq and on to Syria, you have helped us serve in love. In 2019 the 92 FBR relief teams gave help, hope, and love in the war zones of Burma, in the last stronghold of ISIS as it fell in Syria, and responded to the invasion of Northeast Syria by Turkey and its proxies. In all these missions we depend on God's leading and help and the support and prayers of our friends. Our family and teams have been in Burma serving with the people for over twenty-six years and for the past six years, we've also been invited to help in other places like Sudan, Kurdistan, Iraq, and Syria. Many of our Rangers have been wounded and killed on these relief missions and on Nov. 3, 2019, Zau Seng, a Kachin medic and videographer, was killed while with us on a mission in Syria.

In Burma, the military still attacks its own people and it is not a true

democracy. Over one million Rohingya have been displaced and are not able to come home. In Arakan State this year, heavy fighting displaced over 70,000 people. In northern Burma, over 100,000 people remain displaced as fighting continues. In Karen State, the Burma Army repeatedly violates the ceasefire.

## **DISPLACEMENT FLUCTUATES FROM 1,000 TO 3,000 WITH EACH ATTACK.**

In Sudan there is a ceasefire in the Nuba Mountains but in South Sudan the situation has become worse. In Kurdistan and Iraq we continue to provide humanitarian assistance and medical care for wounded people we rescued during the battle for Mosul and have given aid to children whose parents were killed in the ongoing protests in Baghdad. In Syria we provided relief in the battle for Baghouz, the last stronghold of ISIS in Syria. We fed over 25,000 and treated over 4,000 wounded ISIS family

members. It was a blessing to be able to share Jesus's love with ISIS families and to develop friendships with many of the children and some of the parents. No one is beyond hope and, while evil like ISIS must be stopped, we have the opportunity to share the redemption

and transformation that Jesus can give to any life.

In the fall of 2019, after the U.S. broke its promise to stand with and protect the Kurds, Christians, Yezidis and Arabs of Northeast Syria who helped us in the fight against ISIS, Turkey and its proxies immediately invaded.

## **OVER 300,000 PEOPLE WERE DISPLACED AND MANY WERE KILLED AND WOUNDED.**

We went to help those under attack and it was during this relief mission that our teammate, Zau Seng, was killed by the Turkish forces as he documented the attacks.

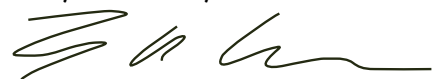
This was a great tragedy but we believe his loss was not in vain and that God will bring good from the evil there.

## **ZAU LIVED THE WORDS OF JESUS, "GREATER LOVE HAS NO ONE THAN THIS: TO LAY DOWN ONE'S LIFE FOR ONE'S FRIENDS" (JOHN 15:13 NIV).**

Zau gave his life for his friends and prayed for his enemies.

Please pray for all those who commit evil and please join us as we stand in love with those under oppression. Prayer changes our hearts, showing a way of love and showing us that even though the things of this world are fatal, they are not final. With God, nothing truly precious is eternally lost. Thank you for joining us in prayer and for helping our teams share help, hope, and love.

May God bless you,



David, Karen, Sahale, Suu, and Peter Eubank and all the Free Burma Rangers



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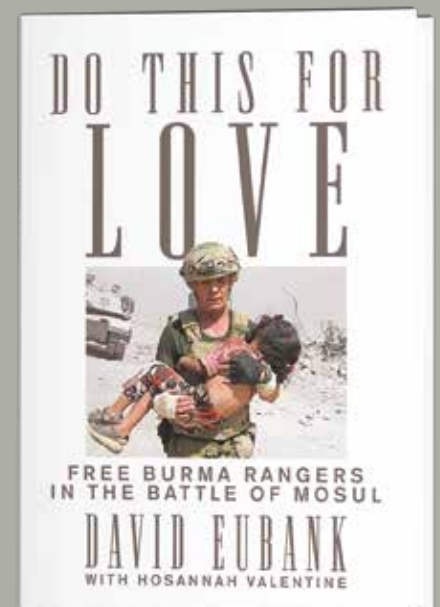
## NEW WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT FBR

### DOCUMENTARY

FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO PURCHASE, VISIT: [FBRMOVIE.COM](http://FBRMOVIE.COM)

### BOOK

AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE ON AMAZON



# AREAS OF OPERATION

## BURMA RELIEF TEAMS

### ARAKAN STATE

**ARAKAN: 9 FULL-TIME, 6 PART-TIME**

**Partner Organizations:** Arakan Liberation Party and Arakan Army.

### CHIN STATE

**CHIN: 4 FULL-TIME, 3 PART-TIME**

### KACHIN STATE

**KACHIN: 2 FULL-TIME, 6 PART-TIME**

**Partner Organizations:** Kachin Independence Organization and Kachin National Organization.

### KAREN STATE

**KAREN: 26 FULL-TIME, 8 PART-TIME**

**Partner Organizations:** Karen National Union.

### KARENNI STATE

**KARENNI: 3 FULL-TIME, 6 PART-TIME**

**Partner Organization:** Karenni National Progressive Party and UKSY.

### SAGAING DIVISION

**NAGA: 2 FULL-TIME, 3 PART-TIME**

### SHAN STATE

**SHAN: 6 FULL-TIME, 6 PART-TIME**

**Partner Organizations:** Restoration Council of the Shan State and Shan State Progressive Party.

**PA-OH: 1 FULL-TIME, 1 PART-TIME**

**Partner Organization:** Pa-Oh National Liberation Organization.

**LAHU: 2 FULL-TIME**

**TA'ANG: 8 PART-TIME**

**Partner Organization:** Ta'ang National Liberation Army.



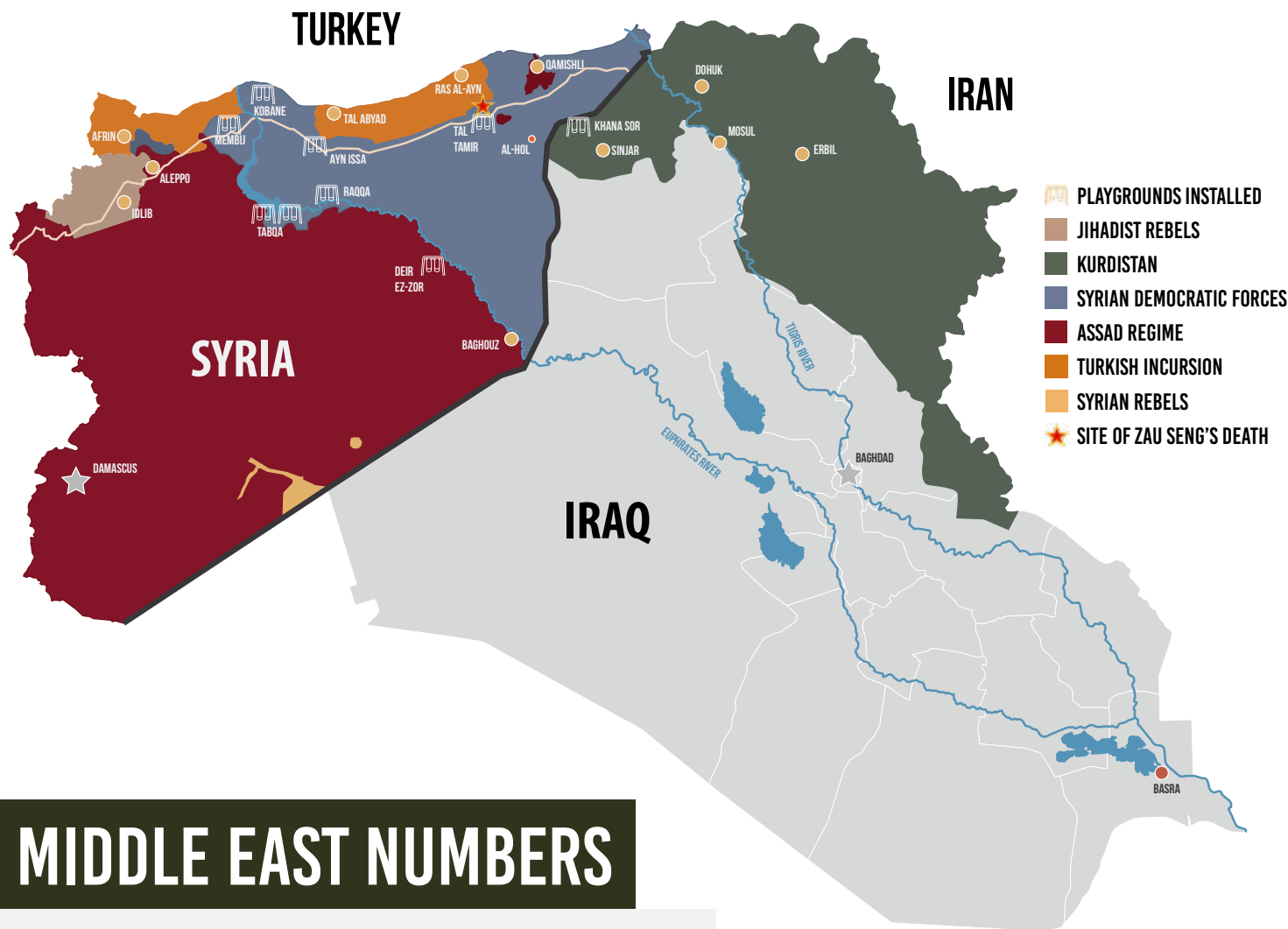
## BURMA NUMBERS

**MISSIONS IN BURMA: 86**

**NUMBER OF PATIENTS TREATED: 65,000**

**NUMBER OF PEOPLE HELPED: 120,000**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF TEAMS: 105**



# MIDDLE EAST NUMBERS

**25,000**

People provided with food, water and hygiene supplies in February and March, during the fighting for Baghouz.

**4,000**

Patients treated in February and March during the fighting for Baghouz.

**30,000**

People provided with food, water and other relief supplies in the Hassaka Province of northeast Syria during the attacks of the Turks and FSA, October and November 2019.

**10,000**

People provided with food, water and other relief supplies in the Kobane area, during the attacks of Turkey and the FSA.

**153**

Wounded civilians or SDF soldiers rescued and treated by FBR medics in October and November of 2019. 84 more dead were evacuated.

# HEADQUARTERS

**3 ACTIVE TEAMS**

2 teams work all over Burma and 1 works in the Middle East as well.

# FBR TRAINING

The 2019 Free Burma Ranger Servant Leadership and Relief Team Training was conducted from Oct. to Dec. 2019. 140 people from across Burma participated in the training including 102 new basic students, making up 22 new FBR teams. 20 advanced students, partnering with 18 students from JSMK, made up our advanced training, going deeper into the topics they had learned in their basic training the previous year.

This year students came from eight different ethnic groups and represented ten different ethnic organizations. FBR had five Arakan basic teams and one advanced team, as well as four Shan basic teams. The Karen, Karenni, Kachin, Naga, Lahu, and Chin also sent men and women to be trained. One focus this year was on having the ethnic leaders teach and lead as many classes as possible. From start to finish, our ethnic headquarters leaders did an amazing job running the training, dealing with problems together, and making sure that this was one of the best trainings ever delivered. The staff that leads the training is made up of instructors and junior instructors, all who have been through FBR training and involved with FBR for many years. Most of the ethnic groups that send teams also send an instructor.

This year the Kachin team travelled to camp with Zau Seng, one of FBR's most beloved instructors and headquarters leaders. When Zau was killed serving in Syria in November, the leaders and students mourned together. Taking a day off from regular training, the staff organized a memorial service for Zau and gave time and space for the students to grieve and process the loss, but also learn from Zau's death; he was one of the best videographers FBR has ever had, and he did everything with so much joy and love.

Graduation took place on Dec. 26 and part of the celebration was baptizing four Rangers. Three were new Rangers and one was JSMK staff.

After graduation the teams divided into four groups to complete follow-on relief missions, together with instructors. They will have an opportunity to practice their new skills on a real mission but with instructors and experienced Rangers available for further coaching and feedback.

Once finished with the mission, they will return to their home areas, ready to conduct missions there. They will have learned and practiced many new skills to be able to help their people in many kinds of crisis, as well as having gained new relationships across ethnic lines. Both these skills and relationships will be of vital importance as Burma and her people move into an uncertain future.

**Love each other.**

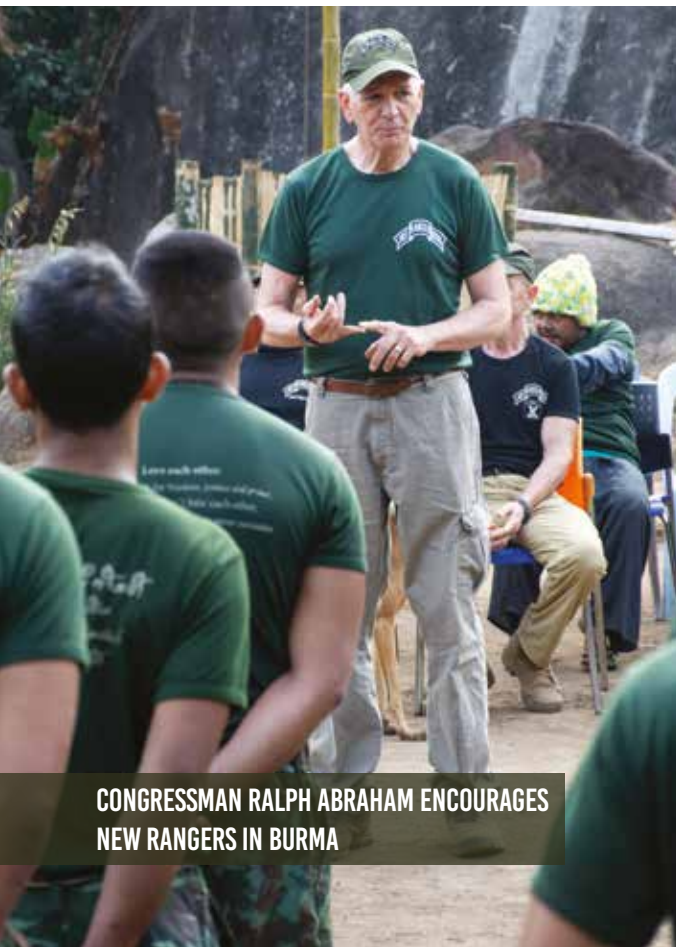
*Unite and work for freedom, justice and peace.  
Forgive and don't hate each other.  
Pray with faith, act with courage, never surrender.*



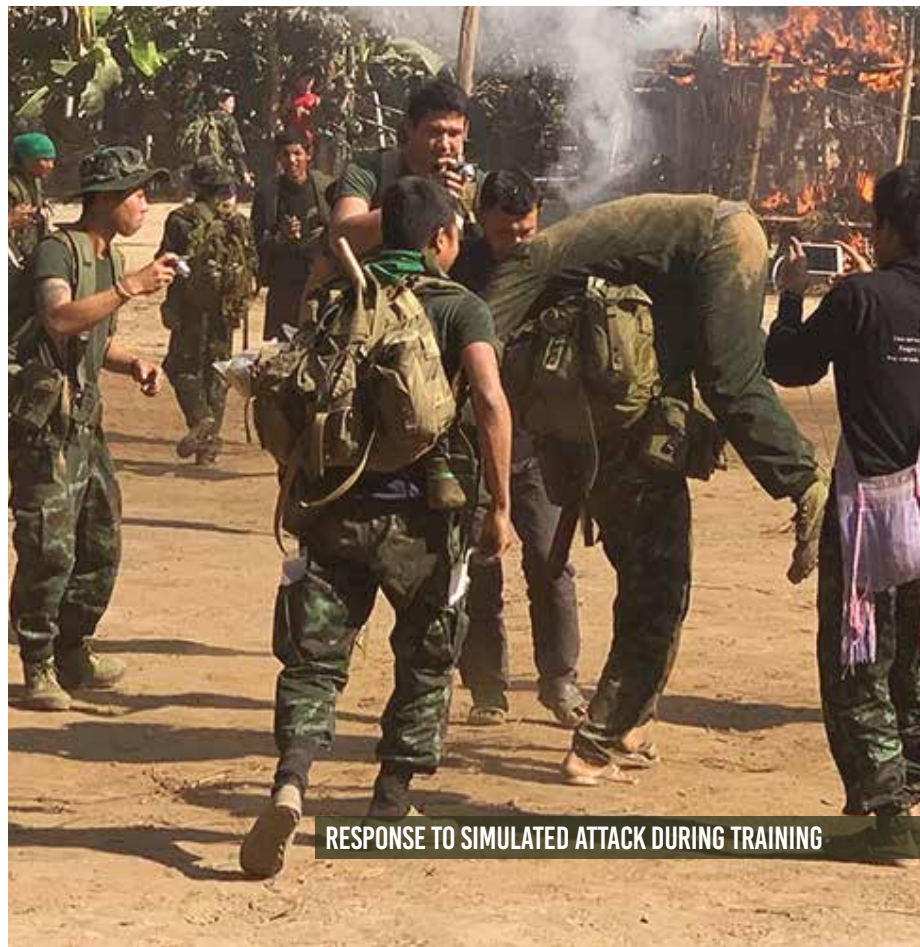


## REQUIREMENTS TO BE A RANGER

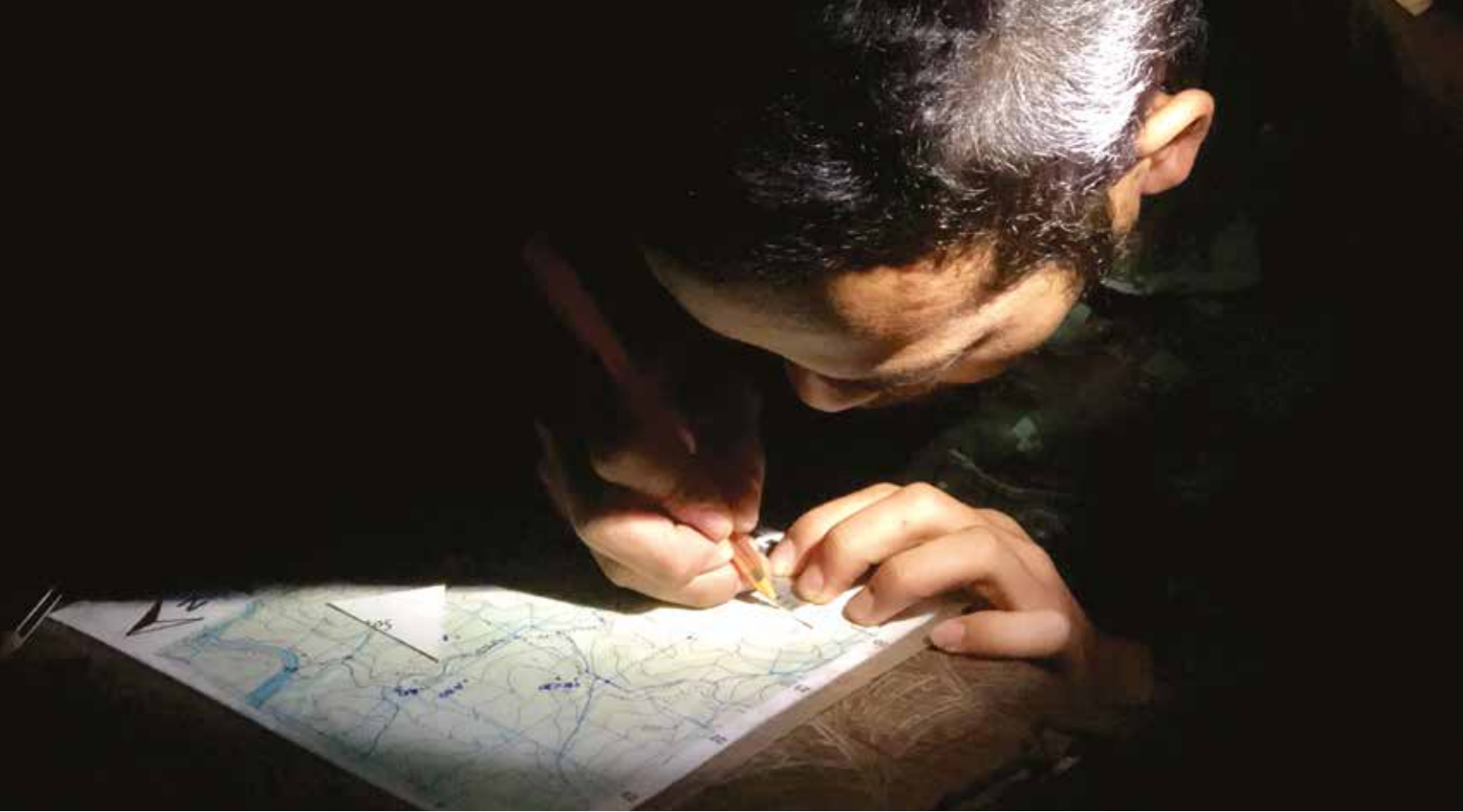
1. MUST BE LITERATE IN AT LEAST ONE LANGUAGE, TO BE ABLE TO SEND OUT REPORTS AND PROVIDE MEDICAL CARE.
2. MUST HAVE THE PHYSICAL AND MORAL COURAGE TO BE ABLE TO DO PHYSICALLY HARD AND DANGEROUS MISSIONS AND CANNOT RUN AWAY FROM THE ENEMY IF THE VILLAGERS THEY ARE HELPING CANNOT RUN.
3. MUST DO THIS WORK FOR LOVE; THEY ARE NOT PAID BY FBR.



CONGRESSMAN RALPH ABRAHAM ENCOURAGES  
NEW RANGERS IN BURMA



RESPONSE TO SIMULATED ATTACK DURING TRAINING



# FBR PROGRAMS



# AVIATION

## AVIATION MISSION

The purpose of Free Burma Rangers Aviation is to share the love of Jesus in any way we can through the use of aircraft. FBR aircraft are used medically to transport patients and medicine, as well as medical personnel. They are also used to transport relief supplies and personnel in support of FBR's humanitarian purposes. FBR Aviation is for the joy of flying and the inspiration it gives people to know that God's gift of aviation is for the good of everyone, including the oppressed.

## FBR AVIATION TIMELINE

**SUMMER  
2014**

• Kittikoon's (Kit's) first year of flight training in Alaska with Kingdom Air Corps (KAC).

**SEPTEMBER  
2015**

• Kit receives his private pilot certificate.

**SEPTEMBER  
2016**

• KAC donates and ships a Cessna 172 to FTO in Thailand.

**MAY  
2017**

• First test flight of the plane in Thailand.

**JANUARY  
2018**

• First medical mission flight, to save life of newborn baby.

**AUGUST  
2018**

• Kit completes his FAA commercial certificate. Kaw Say begins private pilot training with KAC.

**JUNE  
2019**

• Kit completes his instrument rating in Alaska.



## FBR AIR AMBULANCE

Eh Khu Taw was born in remote northern Karen State and arrived to JSMK, FBR's clinic, less than 24 hours later. The medics quickly realized he had an anorectal malformation and would likely die soon without emergency surgery. They contacted the patient care team, who contacted the aviation team, who agreed to try this inaugural rescue flight. It involved landing at a small airport they'd not used before, and transporting a baby and dad who had likely never been in a car before, much less a plane. Six hours after the diagnosis, baby Eh Khu Taw was admitted to the emergency room of a large hospital and life-saving surgery was performed.



# CHAPLAINCY

## **“DO THIS FOR LOVE” ~ PART OF THE TITLE FOR THE NEW FBR BOOK WHICH COMES OUT IN PRINT LATER THIS YEAR ~ AN ENCOURAGEMENT TO CONSIDER: “WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO” - KEVIN JOHNSON (FBR CHAPLAIN)**

FBR has people of different faiths. In life there are many jobs that we can do as people, from food service to customer service, from maintenance projects to medical projects. We can serve in professions like pastoring, teaching, public works, public health or politics. Whatever it is you do, please take a moment and ask yourself, “Why do I do what I am doing? What is the motivation behind the energy spent in my life?” This is an important concept to consider.

It has, I believe, a necessary universal answer that transcends workplace, environment, culture, time, and professions. The answer is love.

Love should be our motivation. Love needs to be the drive behind why we do all that we are doing. The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 about our speech, spiritual gifting, understanding, knowledge, faith, generosity, and sacrifice and sums all these things up by saying “If I have not love all of these things are just noisy, irritating, empty and worthless” (my paraphrase). Love is the more excellent way. It is that all-important thing behind all that we do. And it must be in all that we do and say if those things are going to be meaningful, impactful, fulfilling and satisfying. Why?

### **BECAUSE “GOD IS LOVE” (1 JOHN 4:6).**

When God is in all that we say and do it is powerful, purposeful, and productive. Because love is the fulfillment of all God’s commands (Romans 13:8-14; John 13:34-35;

14:21; 15:12). As we are motivated by love we bring Him glory and fulfill His desires for us.

### **BECAUSE “LOVE COVERS OVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS” (1 PETER 4:8; PROVERBS 10:12).**

Throughout a day there are many occasions for sin, yet God’s love as it permeates all we do has a way of smoothing out and covering over our inadequacies and mistakes.

### **BECAUSE “LOVE CASTS OUT FEAR” (1 JOHN 4:18).**

Many things in life can and do cause us to fear. And when that emotion begins to well up in our heart love can help us to move beyond fear and its paralyzing effects.

### **BECAUSE LOVE IS “THE BOND OF PERFECTION” (COLOSSIANS 3:14).**

Love knits our hearts together. It creates the unity and cohesion necessary for harmony and peace.

In FBR is love a key component of all that we do? Our motto is: “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.” Notice it starts with love. FBR has 3 requirements: 1) Love, 2) Physical and moral courage,

3) Ability to read and write. Love is the most important. “Each volunteer should be motivated by love” – (FBR requirements for team members). Love is in our mission statement, love is found in our list of objectives, and love has been demonstrated in our history. If we are going to continue to move forward well we will need to continue to do this for love.

I hope you will be able to do the same. My prayer is that you will “let all that you do be done in love” (1 Corinthians 16:14). That your heart will be enlarged with God’s love for people, for your profession, and for your passions. That your love will enable you to say of the people in your life, “you are my ‘crown of rejoicing’” (1 Thessalonians 2:19) as Paul said of the people in his life. In Jesus’s name! Amen.



GIVING AWAY ARABIC BIBLE IN SYRIA

# INFORMATION

Rangers are to “Help the people, get the news out.” Rangers learn to document the human rights violations they encounter on missions by taking videos, photos and conducting interviews with the people they meet, including villagers who have experienced violence or oppression, local leaders, teachers, soldiers and others they are trying to serve. They go into conflict zones to give a voice to those who are oppressed and to tell their stories.

Ranger reports are processed — cataloged, collated, photos and videos filed, translated when necessary, and shared all over the world. We desire to bring change by catalyzing action in those who see our reports. We stand for the dignity of those we serve by sharing their story, because every person counts.

In 2019, FBR provided frontlines reporting as fighting continued in Burma, in violation of ceasefire agreements, and as the Turks launched a violent ethnic cleansing operation into northeast Syria.



## LOSS OF A RANGER

On November 3rd, 2019, Kachin Ranger and cameraman Zau Seng (pictured above), was killed by a Turkish munition while filming the attacks of the Turkish and Free Syrian Army. Read more about Zau on page 31.



In October and November 2019, FBR reported from the front lines of the Turkish invasion of NE Syria.

In July of 2019, FBR director Dave Eubank met and prayed with Vice President Mike Pence and reported on the situations in Burma, Syria, Iraq, and Kurdistan.

# JUNGLE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

**“YEAR AFTER YEAR, THE JUNGLE SCHOOL OF MEDICINE-KAWTHOOLEI IS RUNNING SMOOTHLY AS GOD IS WITH US.” - SAW TOH WIN, JSMK MEDICAL DIRECTOR**

The Jungle School of Medicine-Kawthoolei (JSMK) is a small hospital and medical school nestled in the hills of Burma and part of FBR's Tha U Wah training camp. Patients come here to receive medical care from highly trained Karen medics, western doctors, and medics-in-training.

Students participate in patient care in the morning and evening and attend classes in the afternoon.

**THIS YEAR JSMK TRAINED 20 MEDICS, THREE INTERNS, AND FOUR SECOND YEAR STUDENTS.**

JSMK provides assessment and

laboratory testing to patients; the results of these tests are then reviewed by the Karen staff and remote doctors across the world through email. A treatment plan is agreed upon and implemented by the Karen medics. JSMK has a reputation in Karen State that draws people from days away.

Every year medics and students treat waves of patients with a plethora of conditions: wounds and skin infections, abdominal pain, traumatic injuries, tumors, and fevers with many causes, to name a few. But this year the team faced new challenges with three outbreaks. Early 2019 saw a measles outbreak that reached the JSMK area. Many children in the area were protected by the vaccines they've received through the Kawthoolei Village Project (KVP). Other children and adults, however, became ill. Measles usually kills through a secondary infection like pneumonia or malnutrition, or it can cause blindness. Several babies were treated at the hospital, and all villagers who had been ill were treated with Vitamin A, which prevents blindness after a measles infection.

In summer 2019, Karen State saw a few cases of poliovirus. The WHO responded quickly, working with a local NGO to initiate a mass vaccine campaign. While the children around JSMK participate in KVP and were already protected, most villages have no vaccine programs.

**JSMK SENT SEVERAL MEDICS TO HELP WITH THE CAMPAIGN IN UNVACCINATED AREAS.**

At the end of the summer, reports started trickling in of rabies, starting with the death of a two-year-old in a



neighboring clinic. Throughout the fall the reports, and subsequent fear, continued to spread. Villagers and parents understand little about the disease, and routine vaccination for rabies is not practical in this setting. Instead, JSMK medics are talking to villagers about proper wound care and encouraging them to come to the clinic if bitten by a dog. They will also vaccinate the dogs around JSMK and neuter the males.

The influence of JSMK is growing; not only are medics seeing and treating diseases, but they are fighting disease before it starts by promoting vaccination and village health.

## JSMK BY THE NUMBERS

### CLINIC NUMBERS

264	Inpatients
1980	Outpatients
63	Patients Referred from Other Clinics
28	Patients Referred by JSMK

### SCHOOL NUMBERS

8	Senior medical Staff
11	Junior Staff
20	Basic Students
4	Second Year Students
3	Interns
2	Facilities Managers
9	Years in Operation

## ONE PATIENT'S STORY

Saw David is a 9-year-old who fell from a tree two days before presenting to JSMK with an open fracture of the left forearm.

We were able to perform a debridement, and an open reduction under general anesthesia.

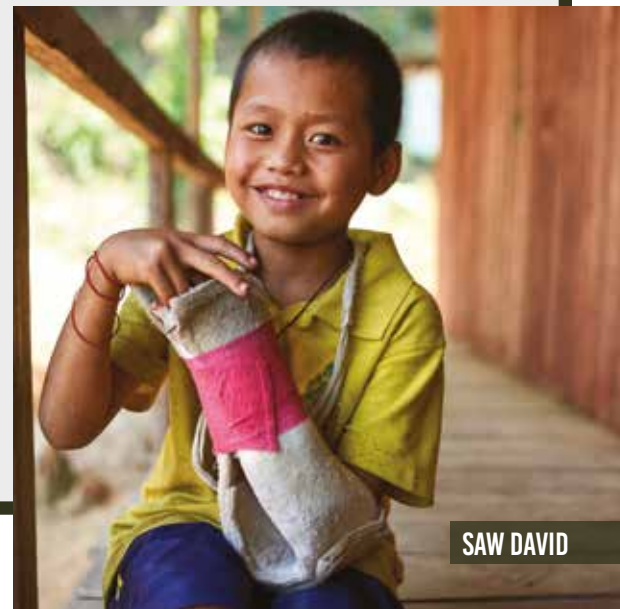
At the time our X-ray wasn't functioning. We also had no plaster, but did have splinting material. Over the next few weeks, we did wound care until his wound healed entirely.

By that time casting material had arrived and our X-ray was working. We were able to confirm a radius and ulnar fracture on X-ray and apply a cast. He went home in a cast, grateful for a healing forearm fracture.

## JSMK PROJECTS

**Kawthoolei Village Project:** The Kawthoolei Village Project was established in 2014 with just a few villages. It has now grown to eight villages, an auxiliary program in another area, and a nascent nutrition program. 500 children participate in routine vaccinations, deworming, vitamin supplements, and nutritional status assessment.

**Patient Referral:** While JSMK is by far one of the most advanced clinics in the region, sometimes a patient's needs exceed the limited resources of JSMK. In many cases these patients are brought to a neighboring country for continued care. One such patient is Saw Poe Lu, a 16-year-old boy who accidentally swallowed battery acid that was being stored in a soda bottle. His esophagus was severely damaged and he was unable to eat. For the last six months Saw Poe Lu has been undergoing a procedure to gradually reopen the damaged esophagus. He loves drawing and math, and has been eager to learn English while in Chiang Mai. His prognosis is good, and after treatment he will return to his parents and nine siblings.



SAW DAVID

# GOOD LIFE CLUB

**FOR THE THIEF COMES ONLY TO STEAL, KILL AND DESTROY BUT I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT MORE ABUNDANTLY.**

**JOHN 10:10**

The Good Life Club (GLC) was founded in the midst of a mission to Karen villagers who were hiding from Burma Army soldiers who were trying to capture or kill them. It was founded in faith that this verse was true, even as children had to hide in the jungle with only the few supplies they and their parents could carry, faith that God's promise of abundant life was true even for them. The GLC has wrestled with this promise from Burma to Sudan to Iraq and Syria. What is abundant life in a hide site in the jungle? What is it in the ruins of your home in Mosul, Iraq? What is it when your family is ISIS and is making a last stand against the entire world?

As we encounter all kinds of oppression we have found that God's promises sustain us while we try to follow His example to share His abundant life. This is the Good Life Club.



## WHAT DOES A GLC PROGRAM LOOK LIKE?

**TEAM INTRODUCTION.** The FBR team introduces itself - many times, the kids will never have met someone from a different country or ethnic group.

**SONGS.** Kids love to sing! And so do Rangers. Some of the songs have a Christian message, others have a health message and some are just for fun.

**SKIT.** The Rangers also love to ham it up! The skit usually has a Bible lesson or a health lesson.

**JUNIOR RANGER.** Rangers teach the older kids Ranger skills, including: first aid, leadership, land navigation and reporting.

**GAMES.** If there is time and space, the Rangers play games with the kids.

**GIFTS.** We try to give a GLC shirt to every kid and a bracelet with five colored beads, where each bead helps share a message of hope.





# GLC DRAMA

Skits are a big part of the GLC program. In planning and practicing them, the team decides on a relevant lesson to share with the kids as well as a performance that engages the audience. This year's message was drawn from the story of Noah. Noah lived in a time when, according to the Bible, "the earth was filled with violence" which God decides to solve with a giant flood, saving only Noah and his family. The purpose of our drama, besides being entertaining (as our Ranger actors tend to be), was to reinforce the theme that God has given us a second chance to be loved by Him, work together in unity, and take care of His creation, which is a beautiful gift.

During the performance, children were pulled from the crowd to act as "lumber" while Noah and his family built the boat. Other children twirled around the boat as waves in a storm. Still other shy children were brought up to act as animals, two by two, with their older Ranger friends helping them along.

The healthcare skit this year focused more on environmental issues, which also correlated with our Noah skit. Villagers were shown littering into the local river. Later, when they went to the river to fish and draw drinking water, it was gone. A monster rose from where the river had been and the villagers were afraid and sick. Then a little girl heard the monster say, "Help me," and realized it wasn't a monster at all, but the river which had been polluted and covered in garbage.

As the villages gain more access to outside products, such as packaged snacks, due to increased development in their areas, we hope to remind children - and parents, teachers and leaders - to take care of their environment.



## STORIES FROM BURMA TO THE MIDDLE EAST

The thick roots gnarled their way across the path and I stepped high to cross them. Mighty trees lined the ridge like sentinels, surveying the terraced rice fields below. Across the valley, a bald hill, punctuated with small huts and a fence, rose from the dense green jungle around it; from there, a different kind of sentinel surveyed the valley: Burma Army soldiers in their camp, projecting the threat of the regime onto the villagers

below. This hilltop camp is connected to the valley by a two-track trail that serves as a seasonal road for Burma Army resupply trucks. According to the seven-year-old "cease-fire" agreement, the Burma Army soldiers must stay on their hilltop and not leave the road – yet they have operated with impunity in the area for so long that only the most daring farmers attempt to farm this land, within mortar range of the camp and in reach of soldiers who have for decades looted and destroyed the lands of the Karen. Despite these shadows, the beauty of the ridge's old forest and long view to either side beckons one to thank God for life in this moment.

We are on an FBR and GLC mission,

on our way to a village in Mutraw District, Karen State, Burma. This is the first mission for new teams fresh from graduating FBR training and Dave directs them in reconning the Burma Army camp a mile away. With binoculars and spotting scopes they note details in equipment and personnel; from local villagers and soldiers, they get intel on recent activity. This practical application of the training follows the FBR tenets to put a light on the situation, get the news out and leave more faith, hope, and love in the village than when you arrived.

The message to the families at the GLC kids program reminds them of strength in unity; to be discerning; and



TEACHING HANDWASHING IN KACHIN STATE



JR. RANGER, KACHIN STATE



KARENNI RANGER WITH KAREN KIDS

that God saves us out of destruction. Our team brings cultural education as Shan, Karenni, and Karen rangers introduce themselves. Our Shan coordinator, with us on this mission, has the job of uniting new Rangers from two Shan factions that are even now in armed conflict, and reminds the audience that Karen State has geography and social diversity that could also cause conflict. “Don’t fight each other,” is his message.

The Rangers act out a skit of Noah’s ark. Unruly Rangers depict a drunken and destructive society, and tell how God is eagerly looking for someone, anyone, who loves Him and is daring enough to risk for a better future.

Children come from the audience to fill different roles in the skit. The Ark lands in a new place on earth and the rainbow illustrates the eternal promise that God seeks us and saves us from destruction, both of our own making and caused by others.

The teachers, despite coming from villages still without plumbing and electricity, ask us to help them buy printers and generators for their high schools. Even though our group still walks the 5-8 hours between villages on our route, more and more students are arriving on motorbikes; after the program, they pull out their cell-phones to take selfies with us. The health-care skit teaches to keep plastic trash out of rivers, a message timely for the repopulation and coming development of this valley.

The medics and dentist help bring healing and, as a special treat this year, an American husband and wife team, professional Christian rap musicians, brought concert speakers and crazy,

loving energy at evening concerts in Burmese, Karen and English. The lyrics of one of their songs, ‘Miracle,’ say, “We’re ships tossed by the storms of life, but we’re free tonight... chasing after life. Give me a glimpse of your world...show me a little piece of heaven.” These Karen friends we meet, and the Rangers from all over Burma have certainly been tossed on the storms of life. Yet, it seems never to have stopped them from looking for, and seeing, and seizing, the little pieces of heaven all around.

It was harder to find pieces of heaven in the windswept desert of Baghouz, Syria, as the Syrian Democratic Forces

(SDF) fought to push ISIS out of their last territorial holdings. ISIS, realizing that in a very few days the caliphate would live on only in the hearts of its loyal members, began surrendering its women and children, sending them into the hands of the enemy – but not in defeat. Rather, they were to keep the spark of the movement alive. They came, flooding into the desert by the thousands, women uniformly swathed in black hijabs that billowed in the restless desert wind, with their children clustered around them. They came, little knots of fear and anger and desperate need.

Together with the SDF and with support from friends who wanted to be part of sharing love with these ISIS families, we did our best to help them. We set up at SDF screening points, the initial destination of the SDF lorries evacuating them. These points had no facilities; they were simply designated locations in the desert. The families would each find their own little spots to settle in the dirt, and wait for the next thing. They no longer had any control over their lives. Sometimes they waited a few hours, sometimes several days. Nighttime temperatures dropped below 32 F (0 C). Once, when there was icy rain and wind, the SDF bulldozer began digging holes, about six feet deep, for people to shelter in. These helped, until they began to fill with water. Very soon, the entire screening site was littered with trash and dotted with human waste.

We had blankets, water, food, diapers and other hygiene supplies, and set up some 50 big tents. The first people to reach us, who usually bypassed screening, were the most seriously injured. The trucks would roll in from the front, and one would beeline to us, 200 meters from the initial drop-off point, and drop its load of moaning patients.

One young girl I won’t forget. She was 11. Her left leg had been amputated at mid-thigh. It was after dark when I began to work on her and she was swathed in blankets. She

directed me away from her amputated stump to her other leg, where there were small shrapnel wounds. I started cleaning and bandaging them, working my way down her leg. As I got towards her foot and pulled the blanket off, I realized her right foot was also gone. The stump was about mid-shin and was covered in a moist, stinking bandage which steamed with the heat of infection in the cold air as I unwound it. She screamed in pain as I cleaned her wound. And later, as we tried to give her a shot of antibiotics to fight the infection, she screamed in terror. Afterward, she calmed down and became animated and cheerful. We found out her mother and brother had been killed in an airstrike and her father was an ISIS fighter. She was alone. We gave her all the comforts we could for the night. The next day she was cheerful when it came time to leave. We carried her to the back of a big, high-sided flatbed truck and loaded her up with dozens of other wounded, to be carried across the desert to a refugee camp. There were several we thought might die on the way.

One morning, though, I saw a piece of heaven, and it was one of our Karen Rangers who shared it. It was a clear cold morning and the sun shone hard and bright. Our relief supplies were in high piles, thousands of blankets in one pile, thousands of cases of water in another, stacks of baby formula boxes, diapers piled high. Some of our team had slept there to guard the supplies, while the rest of us had returned to our main base. As we pulled up, I saw most of our team was in the one tent we had set up – but then I looked and saw Eliya, our main Karen medic, and he was busy-busy.

Around him had gathered a ragtag

group of kids, who had stayed the night and seemed unattached to any families. They scavenged around like so many stray cats, in oversized jackets



ISIS AMPUTEE ORPHAN IN SYRIA WITH PETER EUBANK



ELIYA MAKES FOOD FOR ISIS CHILDREN

or undersized sweatshirts, nothing to do but survive. But now Eliya had them all working. He had built a fire of the trash that lay all around, paper and cardboard and plastic. He'd set up an abandoned mat and some cardboard to shield the fire from the wind. A few rocks served to hold a large pot, in which boiled a huge batch of noodles that had fallen out or been discarded from food packs we handed out. He'd thrown in a few vegetables that we had

brought for our team food, and some spices.

A couple boys were busy at each of these stations, feeding the fire, monitoring the wind-shield, stirring the noodles. Eliya took an empty water bottle and cut it in half to make a dish. All was in place except cutlery, which seemed tough to produce from trash. But then he found a broken wooden tent pole and began carving at it. Soon he had a set of chopsticks, which these Middle Eastern kids had never seen before. He demonstrated how they worked; the kids' eyes lit up with appreciation of a problem solved. The boys set about making their own dishes and chopsticks, showing each other how to use them. Then they happily started in on hot noodles. Later, as we looked for Eliya, we were told, "Today Eliya is only working with the kids."

During this mission we had no time to do our normal Good Life Club programs. But on this day I was reminded that Jesus said, "I have come that they might have life, and have it more abundantly." I have no pictures of where Jesus came to us from, but I know that he came to a place that is not a normal picture of abundance: a dirty stable 2000 years ago. Today, babies are still being born into those same conditions (four were born in the Baghouz desert with help from our medics). So then

what is abundance? Perhaps it is in the coming. The abundance is in Jesus coming to be with us, regardless of our circumstances. And so perhaps we can be part of bringing abundant life also, simply by coming and being with the people. At least, that morning as I watched Eliya with those kids, they had an experience of abundance, that he gave them with his presence and his participation with them in their situation.



# FIELD REPORTS



# BURMA SITUATION UPDATES



GRADUATION OF NEW RANGERS IN KAREN STATE, BURMA

## KACHIN STATE

The 17-year ceasefire (1994-2011) between the Burma Army and Kachin Independence Army (KIA) shattered after years of Burma Army troop buildups and attacks which ended the peace. Kachin State from 2011-present is fiercely contested as the Burma Army secured natural resources: gold, jade, timber, hydropower.

With a foothold in Kachin State and a reduction of clashes, the Burma Army proposed a four-month unilateral ceasefire in northern Burma's conflict areas in Dec. 2018, and two-month



ROI SAN

extensions followed until Sept. 2019 when the ceasefire expired and wasn't renewed. Approx. 100,000 displaced people reside in 139 IDP camps.

## PERSONAL STORY

Roi San is a 19-year-old woman from Myitkyina, Kachin State, where she has worked as a staff member of the Kachin IDP Committee for three years. She completed basic Ranger training in 2019. She is the medic on her team. She hopes to return home and be able to apply the medical knowledge and leadership principles she learned at FBR training. Here she shares how conflict came to her home, and her hopes for the future.

**Roi San:** *"In 2011, the Burma Army launched an offensive in Myitkyina, where they had a base. However, they didn't have enough soldiers, so they sent 100 more troops. Then, fighting broke out between the Burma Army and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). Many villagers ran away before the fighting broke out, but others refused to leave their homes and were caught in the fighting. During this conflict, my family and I fled to Laiza where I live and work now. There are no Burma Army units in Laiza itself, but there are some in the surrounding mountains. I want more media coverage to shine a*

*light on Burma's conflict. We want the fighting to stop. Pray that we can return to our homes and live peacefully."*

## SHAN STATE

**Shan State is the largest state in Burma and home to multiple ethnic groups, including several Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), and is rife with conflict. While much of the conflict is between the Tatmadaw and EAOs, ongoing disputes over territory and resources have also led to clashes between some EAOs themselves.**

## PA-OH

Civilians of the Pa-Oh Self-Administered Zone, located in southern Shan State's Pinlaung, Hsihseng, and Hopong townships, continue to feel the effects of inter-ethnic conflict.

On December 21, 2018, the Burma Army declared a four-month-long ceasefire in both Kachin and Shan states. The peace was short-lived for Pa-Oh civilians as, in January 2019, conflict erupted between the Pa-Oh National Liberation Organization (PNLO) and another EAO over a territorial dispute. The conflict resulted



PA-OH VILLAGERS WAIT FOR FOOD DISTRIBUTION

in the destruction of property and displacement of 1500 villagers.

In 2019, relations between the Burmese government and the Pa-Oh National Organization (PNO - another Pa-Oh faction) seemed to have improved. In June 2019, Myanmar military chief Senior General Min Aung Hlaing made a visit to Shan State and met with U Aung Kham Hti, the patron and former chairman of the PNO, to discuss regional development. In November 2019, Myanmar State Counselor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi made an unprecedented visit to the Pa-oh SAZ to attend a religious ceremony held by a Pa-Oh leader.

Many Pa-Oh civilians have yet to feel the benefits of the easing tensions between the PNO and the Burmese government, as the new relation has led to the infringement of land rights. In December 2019, the chairman of the PNO and Myanmar's military chief signed an agreement to develop tea and coffee plantations on the farmland owned by Pa-Oh civilians. Allegedly, the PNO had taken over 1,700 acres of avocado farms owned by over 2,000 villagers and offered little monetary compensation in return. Some farmers have refused to accept the compensation and said they would fight against the confiscation of their land.

## NORTHERN SHAN STATE

Northern Shan State conflict intensified in 2019. In response to Burma Army attacks, an alliance comprised of TNLA, MNDAA, and AA forces launched a coordinated attack against Burma Army facilities in Pyin Oo Lwin in Mandalay Region and Nawngcho Township, Shan State in Aug. 2019, which surprised the Burma Army. Villager displacement is around 9,000 in N. Shan, and IDPs have better access to relief from local providers and humanitarians.

However, the Burma Army has restricted aid from arriving and personnel from going to relief locations, slowing the process of relief and resettlement.

### PERSONAL STORY

Yan Lay is a 44-year-old Lisu Ranger from Taunggyi City, Shan State, and has served as an evangelist at Lisu Baptist Church for four years. He is a father of four and on his Ranger team he is the team leader and photographer. He is from Taunggyi City in northern Shan State. Here he shares his personal experience and hopes for the future.

**Yan Lay:** "Before I was an evangelist,

*I used to farm chickens. In 2005, the Burma Army threatened to steal my chickens. I told them that if my boss approved, I would willingly give them the chickens. I just wanted them to ask first. But they didn't listen and stole five chickens without permission. Fortunately, there is no conflict in my area now. I want people to realize that the conflict in Burma is not fake. Fighting is real. I want to continue evangelizing and reporting human rights violations. Please pray for the Lisu villages that don't know God. Also, pray for the Lisu Political Party, Lisu Du Lay Party, to have wisdom as they lead our people."*

## KAREN STATE

In the spring of 2019, Burma Army construction projects in Karen State displaced villagers and put the Karen on alert as they anticipated fighting would break out between the Burma Army and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), the armed wing of the Karen National Union (KNU). Previously, construction like road and bridge building brought an increase in Burma Army troops and supply which in turn indicated an increase in armed conflict in Karen territory. The rebuilding of the road between Kyaukkyi and Paw Kaw Hta has followed a similar pattern. The construction violates the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) and



YAN LAY

villagers believe the construction to be a sign of war starting again.

By the end of 2019, construction was growing along with restrictions. On Dec. 9, the Burma Army released a statement in the Kyaukkyi area saying that “anyone seen on the road, civilian or otherwise, would be shot immediately.” Additional restrictions included a 6 p.m. curfew on the road between Kyaukkyi to Pa Kaw Hta and a shoot-on-sight command for anyone traveling from Pa Kaw Hta to Maw Law, regardless of what time they are seen.

In response to the construction, villagers held multiple protests in late 2019 and early 2020. They’ve voiced their concerns but have so far been ignored by the Burma Army and government officials. The protests have centered around five main goals:

1. To get back the rights of the people in the area.
2. For no new Burma Army camp construction to happen.
3. For the Burma Army camps and soldiers to withdraw from the villagers’ land so that the villagers could return home.
4. For villagers to travel around the area and work in their land freely.
5. For the new generation to be able to live in peace and free from fear.

## PERSONAL STORY

Saw Htoo Wah is an advanced Ranger from Day Pu No Village, near FBR’s training camp. He’s the second child in his family, which owns a shop that sells supplies to the Rangers. He is currently a student at JSMK and he is the medic on his team.

**Saw Htoo Wah:** “Growing up, I was familiar with the Free Burma Rangers because the Rangers shopped at my family’s store for their groceries and other supplies. When I was five years old, my family and I fled from Lah Baw to Day Pu No. Then the Burma Army came to Day Pu No and we ran to live in the jungle for one month. One of my

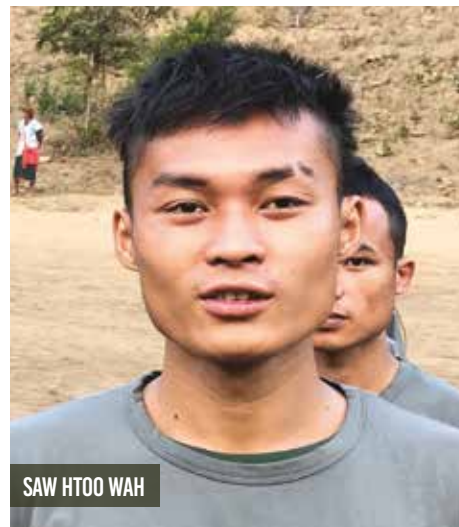


KAREN IDPS ON THE RUN

*uncles died when we fled but we aren’t sure how. Then we finally returned to Day Pu No.*

*My Karen people are tired of running. We want freedom to live in peace. I want to continue helping my people by providing medical treatment. Please pray that Karen people can have freedom soon.”*

## SAGAING DIVISION/ NAGALAND



SAW HTOO WAH

Nestled in the mountainous region of northwestern Myanmar, the Naga Self-Administered Zone is characterized by remoteness, pervasive poverty, and food insecurity.

In February 2019, the Burma Army took control of Naga headquarters in the village of Ta Ga near the Indian border. Burma Army troops from six battalions were involved in the takeover but no one was injured or killed. The Burma Army captured the headquarters on suspicions that the local Ethnic Armed Organization (EAO), known as the National Socialist Council of Nagaland – Khaplang (NSCN-K), was harboring Indian insurgents. The NSCN-K has denied these accusations. The Burma Army has shut down businesses, cut off commerce, and the supply of food and medicine to the area. Despite the occupation, the NSCN-K refuses to sign the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in hopes of one day achieving a unified and autonomous Nagaland.

The opium crisis of the Naga is worsening. According to reports from FBR’s Naga team, opium poppy



CHIN RANGER WITH DISPLACED VILLAGERS WHO FLED FROM BURMA ARMY ATTACKS

dominates much of Naga's landscape, growing even in schoolyards and on church grounds. The land in the Naga area yields poor rice crops, therefore local farmers have turned to the cultivation and trade of opium for

profit. Consequently, as the production of opium has increased, so too has opioid addiction amongst the Naga people. After observing entire villages, including children, addicted to opium, the FBR Naga team leader hopes to combat the endemic opium crisis through education and anti-addiction medication.

*video to shine a light on the situation. Please pray that Burma can become peaceful."*

## CHIN STATE

Chin State, on the western edge of Burma, has long been one of the more impoverished regions of Burma, but has also largely escaped the violence that has plagued other parts of the country. It is remote, with few natural resources and not in any direct trade route. The Chin people do not have a resistance army and are mostly subsistence rice farmers.

This year, that changed: conflict came to Chin State, as fighting between the Arakan Army and the Burma Army spilled across the southern border of Chin State. In early 2019, Arakan villagers displaced by fighting in their area fled to Chin State where they are currently living in IDP camps. The Burma Army promptly restricted access to the camps for humanitarian aid. The Arakan Army also began using checkpoints to regulate the flow of supplies and spread of information.



NAGA TEAM PROVIDES MEDICAL CARE

### PERSONAL STORY

Tun Hla (name changed and no picture provided for security reasons) is a 25-year-old Ranger from Sagaing Division. He's the youngest of three children and his family are rice farmers, though he himself is a ferry operator on a river. He graduated from 10th standard and, on the Naga FBR team, he is a videographer.

**Tun Hla:** *"There has been no fighting in my area for 15 years, but when I was 9, the situation was very bad. My family and I all had to flee to the jungle and hide for a week. None of us were injured, but we were separated during that time. Later we could find each other. I think the solution is love between people. I want to help by using*



In early 2020, seven Chin villagers were killed in a Burma Army airstrike. All of this only compounds the widespread poverty due to scarce resources, frequent flooding and rat infestations, and Burma government land-grabs.

## PERSONAL STORY

Ma Nwe is 19 years old, the oldest of two sisters in her family, who are rice farmers in Chin State. She has finished 10th standard and completed her first year of FBR training in December 2019. She is the video and camera person on her FBR team.

**Ma Nwe:** *“I joined the Free Burma Rangers to help people. I want to show the world how the people are suffering and so I decided to learn how to take photos and video and be a reporter on my team. I am tired of fighting in my home.”*

## ARAKAN STATE

The Burma Army has intensified their attacks in Arakan State, displacing over 70,000 Arakan Buddhists. This is in addition to the over 1 million Rohingya Muslims who were displaced earlier. The 2019 Rakhine State conflict has seen over 650 battles in and around villages with many civilian casualties.

Fighting is reminiscent of Kachin State in 2016, with soldiers



ARAKAN VILLAGER WOUNDED BY BURMA ARMY AIRSTRIKE



KACHIN TEAM PROVIDES MEDICAL CARE

indiscriminately firing into civilian areas and the Burma Army use of artillery and air strikes. In Dec. 2019 there were 24 IDP camps and 130,000 IDPs in Arakan State.

Travel bans prevent people from leaving or entering conflict areas with aid, and an internet ban has prevented information from going out. Battles are spreading south along the coastline, with Ann Township in central Arakan becoming more contested.

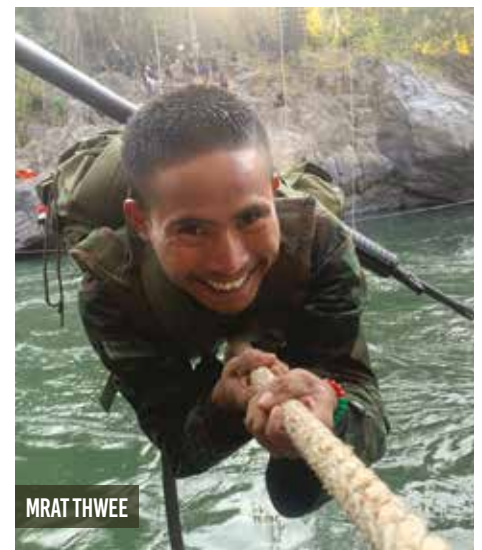
## PERSONAL STORY

Mrat Thwee, a 22-year-old Arakan Ranger, is the youngest of four children and has been a soldier in the Arakan Army for the past three years. He completed Ranger training in 2019. On his team he is the videographer.

**Mrat Thwee:** *“I’m from Mrauk-U city, and the Burma Army’s Light Infantry Battalion (LIB) 540 is based there. My village was attacked just before I arrived at Tah U Wah Camp for Ranger Training at the beginning of October. Many villagers were wounded. I wasn’t home so I’m not exactly sure what happened. Thankfully, I have*

*access to Facebook and YouTube, which is where I get information about the fighting at home.*

*Whenever there’s fighting, the civilians are the ones that get hurt. Both the government and the armed groups should warn the people first before they fight. If they want to fight, they should fight in the jungle and not involve villagers. I wish the villagers weren’t the ones caught in the middle. Pray for a solution for peace. Pray for the Arakan people to get freedom from the Burmese as we’ve been oppressed by them for 235 years. We want independence.”*



MRAT THWEE

# MIDDLE EAST UPDATE

## STAND AGAINST EVIL SHOW ANOTHER WAY: THREE STORIES

GIVING WATER TO CHILDREN DISPLACED BY THE TURKISH ATTACK



### LAST STRONGHOLD OF ISIS IN SYRIA

By February 2019, all that remained of ISIS's territorial holdings was a one-square mile village in Syria called Baghouz, which held the most hardcore members of ISIS — those who had survived multiple defeats and never surrendered. As coalition forces closed in on that last remnant, some 35,000 people, mostly women and children, surrendered, submitting themselves to an uncertain future.

As they were shuttled into the desert from Baghouz, they were initially detained at desert screening points, to be checked by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and U.S. forces. It was here that our team met them and provided food, medical care and relief supplies until the screening process was over, which sometimes took more than 24 hours. Once screened, the

people were loaded into trucks and driven to either prisons (most of the men) or refugee camps — for many this was Al-Hawl.

We worked to spread a message of love and not of hate. We treated the wounded, hugged and prayed for those who allowed it, and, through translators, shared about Jesus as the source of our own hope and love. To those who questioned why we would help ISIS, we said, “Is there any other way to change hearts? Only love does.” And, sometimes, we were gifted to see it, both on our own team and amongst the people we were trying to help.

One evidence of changed hearts was a friendship that sprang up, between Sahale and Suzanne Eubank and a girl named Raghad, who had been hit in the back by shrapnel from an airstrike, paralyzing her from the waist down. As the medics cared for her physical wounds, Suu and Sahale talked to her, gave her gifts, and prayed

for her. Despite her wounds, Raghad was smiling and cheerful; a special connection was formed between these girls with such different lives. When the time came to load Raghad into the bus that would take her to Al-Hawl, the girls cried. They didn't know if they would ever see each other again; love sometimes hurts.

Al-Hawl camp, a sprawling, dusty tent city, held over 73,000 people, mostly ISIS families. Most (91%) of the population were women and children and 65% of the children were under the age of 12. The population represented some 50 different countries and more than 3,000 children were separated from or without any adult family members. It was the kind of situation where hearts could grow hard from grief and bitterness.

Months after the battle of Baghouz ended, we were able to visit Al-Hawl and there we found Raghad again. Her mother had obtained a phone and called Dave Eubank, saying, “We love you. You've shown us another way. Please come and see us here.” And so we were reunited.

Suu and Sahale hugged Raghad and her mother; they all cried. Raghad's mother had procured small gifts for the team and handed them out in pink gift bags covered in hearts. It was jewelry, and the pendant on each piece was a silver, jeweled, zigzag line, like an EKG line, with a heart at the end.

We see there are hearts that have changed and not been consumed by hate. There are families, like Raghad's, who yearn for another way, children who had no choice where they were born and are desperate for love and a new life. Yet ISIS is still alive as well, with a heart that beats for death and

destruction to those who oppose it. There is still a need for the love that conquers all – however, sometimes the ultimate victory requires the ultimate sacrifice.

## TURKISH INVASION OF NE SYRIA

There was a brief respite in northeast Syria after ISIS was defeated. Seven months later, in October 2019, after insisting the SDF remove their defenses along the Turkish border, and promising to protect them, U.S. troops were ordered to withdraw from the border and opened the door to a long-threatened Turkish attack on the Kurds. The Turks and their proxy, the Free Syrian Army (many of whom are former ISIS), immediately attacked, killing hundreds, wounding thousands and displacing more than 200,000 civilians.

We returned as soon as we could, to stand by our friends, the Kurds, who had given so much to defeat ISIS. The abandoned Kurds were fighting for their lives against the armored and air attacks of the Turks, which was supplemented by the ground attack of the Free Syrian Army (FSA).

One of the first to raise his hand to come back and help was Zau Seng, one of our primary videographers, who had been with us through the entire battle of Mosul and later in Baghouz. Zau believed in the power of showing the world the truth being lived by people on the ground in the middle of conflicts. In 2013, he had captured footage of Burma Army attack helicopters and bombers attacking the Kachin. The Burma government had denied fighting was happening – until international news outlets ran Zau's footage. In these attacks, he had lost five good friends when an airstrike hit their bunker just meters from where he was filming. He was wounded multiple times yet he did not give up.

Zau was one of eleven different



KAREN MEDIC TREATS KURDS WOUNDED BY TURKISH ATTACK

ethnic team members from Burma who have rotated through our missions in the Middle East. These Rangers, coming from the war zones of their homeland, come to help others out of love. They have experienced horrific war: people they know and love have been killed by the Burma Army, their homes have been destroyed and their lives uprooted. They know what it is to feel as if the world doesn't care about their fate. They know the temptation to respond with hate, the powerful urge to seek revenge when justice is denied. And yet, they believe in something stronger: they believe in love and they go in that love.

Zau had experienced love and was grateful. He wanted to give it. "People have come to help us in Burma and so when God opens the door for us to go other places and they ask for help, we



DISTRIBUTING BREAD AND WATER TO IDPS IN DESERT NEAR TEL TAMR

want to be able to respond," he said. Like his fellow Rangers, he had risked it all many times to respond with love to the needs of others.

On Nov. 3, 2019, that risk became reality: while helping man a mobile Casualty Collection Point with our team near Tel Tamr, Syria, Zau Seng was killed by a Turkish munition that hit just seven meters from our vehicle.

Zau had just finished editing a video of a rescue under tank fire the previous day, in the middle of a proclaimed

ceasefire. His video would show the world the reality of the oppressed people on the ground. But his death would show the world, and especially the Kurds – who he was there to help – what the greatest love looks like.

John 15:13 says, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” Zau had always been a great friend; as remembrances of him poured in after his death, many involved his laughter, his humor, his joy – the way he had made every situation, no matter the difficulties, easier for those around him, with laughter and joy. He had been a friend, always; and in the end he was the friend that laid down his life and showed the more excellent way.

Bashir, a Syrian Christian and FBR coordinator, once told us, “We are all just drops, but we are part of God’s rain, and God’s rain will turn into a river and flood Syria with His love.” And so we believe that Zau’s sacrifice was not in vain, that he is part of God’s river, not just in Syria but around the world. John 12:24 says, “Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds.” And new life springs forth. Thank you, Zau,

for your love that gave everything that others might live.

## CHRISTIANS IN NE SYRIA UNDER THREAT

The war in Syria rages on. In Idlib, western Syria, Syrian, Russian and Iranian forces are on one side attacking Turkish-supported terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and Al-Nusra, and jihadi-affiliated groups such as Hay’at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Both sides rely on terror and the slaughter of civilians to achieve their aims.

Caught in the middle are over 700,000 civilians who have fled north into the countryside. Barred from entering Turkey, they crouch against the Turkish border wall and live in tents and shelters scattered across the countryside. Over 2,000 people have managed to flee into northeastern Syria and into the territory controlled by the SDF. This area was one of the few relatively safe areas of Syria and the only one with any form of democracy.

In October 2019, the U.S. broke its

promise to the Kurds, Christians, Yezidis and Arabs of this area and allowed the Turks and their jihadist proxies, the Free Syrian Army (FSA), to invade and displace over 200,000 people. This was an act of ethnic cleansing as Turkey drove out the Kurds and Christians and brought in Arabs from other parts of Syria. The disaster in Syria has become worse but we believe God has a way and that it is not too late to take corrective action. Our recommendations are at the end of this article.

During our recent mission in January and February 2020, we went back to northeast Syria to give help, hope, and love. After providing relief for people fleeing Idlib, as well as follow-up care for some of the over 200,000 people displaced by the Turkish-led invasion of northeast Syria, we were asked by the Syrian Christian community to help them. The Christians of northeast Syria used to number over 200,000 and now, due to the attacks first of ISIS and then the Turkish-led forces, only about 60,000 remain. In the area of Derik (northeastern corner of Syria) over 90% of the population used to be Christian, but now less than 30% are.

On the border, we joined a group comprised of a local Syriac Christian NGO, the Syriac Cross, and Syriac Military Force, part of the SDF, the U.S. and coalition partner against ISIS.

Turkey has threatened to increase the area of their invasion zone beyond the area taken in October/November 2019 and the remaining Christian communities in this zone are under direct threat. The Turkish military has shelled their villages, chased thousands from their homes, and killed those who dared to stay.

We drove along the border close to the wall the Turks have put up and passed by empty or near-empty villages. We visited eight manned outposts of the Syriac Military Force and saw how they had nothing to stop Turkish armor or air attacks. For the entire front, over 70 miles stretching



CHURCH ATTACKED BY ISIS OUTSIDE TEL TAMR

from Qamishli to the Derik/ Semalca border area, the Syriac Forces have only two two-wheel drive vans.

The soldiers asked us, “How can we stop anyone from attacking us? Actually, we do not want to be soldiers. We only are because no one will defend us. Please tell our story and help us. We trust in God and we will not give up.”

As we drove along the Syrian-Turkish border, we passed through empty villages that used to be full of Christians. Even the villages that were still populated only had a few families left. All are afraid of another Turkish invasion and the Christian militia is too small and under-armed to stop it. The Christians are appealing to the international community to help prevent another Turkish invasion that would sound the death knell of Christians here.

They are also afraid of the Assad regime taking over as many will be arrested for their stand for freedom

with the self-administration government of northeast Syria. Many Christians we met had been jailed and tortured earlier by the Assad regime and fear their return. The Assad regime keeps a tight control over the Christian population and bans the use of the ancient Syriac language the Christians use; there is a constant threat of imprisonment. While Christians in the Assad-controlled area would rather have the Assad regime in charge than ISIS or the Turks, what they really want is to live with more freedoms than many do now.

We talked with one Christian farmer who said, “My grandfather was one of three in his family who survived the Turkish massacre of Armenian Christians in 1915 and he fled here to Syria. Now we have had to flee again, first from ISIS, now the Turks. We are forgotten and abandoned. Will America help us? Will they keep their



SYRIAC CHRISTIAN FAMILY IN VILLAGE SHELLED BY TURKEY

promise? We joined them in the fight against ISIS and they betrayed us. They told us that if we worked with them, they would not let the Turks attack us. But instead, they ran away and let the Turks in. Why? What did we do wrong? What did we do to deserve this? Can you tell me?”

We told them we were sorry and agreed that what the U.S. did was wrong. We prayed for a change to U.S. policy. We stood with them in the cold wind and prayed, our hope in God who changes hearts.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend the U.S. maintain the three points of strategy already declared for improved stability in the region: enduring defeat of ISIS, support of democracy, and limiting destructive foreign forces such as Iran. These are all connected: the enduring defeat of ISIS in Syria requires social, religious, relational, educational, political, economic and military action only possible in a stable and democratic NE Syria.

## ACTIONS

- 1. Politically recognize the Autonomous-Administration of North and East Syria as a state in the future Syria and lift sanctions from this jurisdiction.** They have a functioning, multi-ethnic, multi-lingual democracy with freedom of religion, justice, and opportunities for all people. This has been attacked, the area of democracy diminished, and its existence threatened by the invasion of Turkey and Turkish-led proxies. This has strengthened Iran, Assad’s Syria regime, and the Russians. A strong and whole NE Syria limits these forces and gives the U.S. a strategic partner and friend in the region.
- 2. Establish a no-fly zone over NE Syria and work with Turkey so that the Turkish forces and their proxies, such as the FSA, immediately leave the zone they invaded in October 2019.** Secure this border instead with U.S.-supported Christian, Kurd and Arab SDF forces. Facilitate the return of over 200,000 Kurds, Christians and Arabs who were displaced by the Turk/FSA invasion.
- 3. Provide relief assistance to displaced people who come or are already present in the SDF area.** Work with the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and SDF to increase the flow of humanitarian assistance and to support the rebuilding of the destroyed infrastructure and cities in NE Syria. This will provide jobs, improve the quality of life, give hope and create places the old and new IDPS can settle in.

# 2019 FINANCES

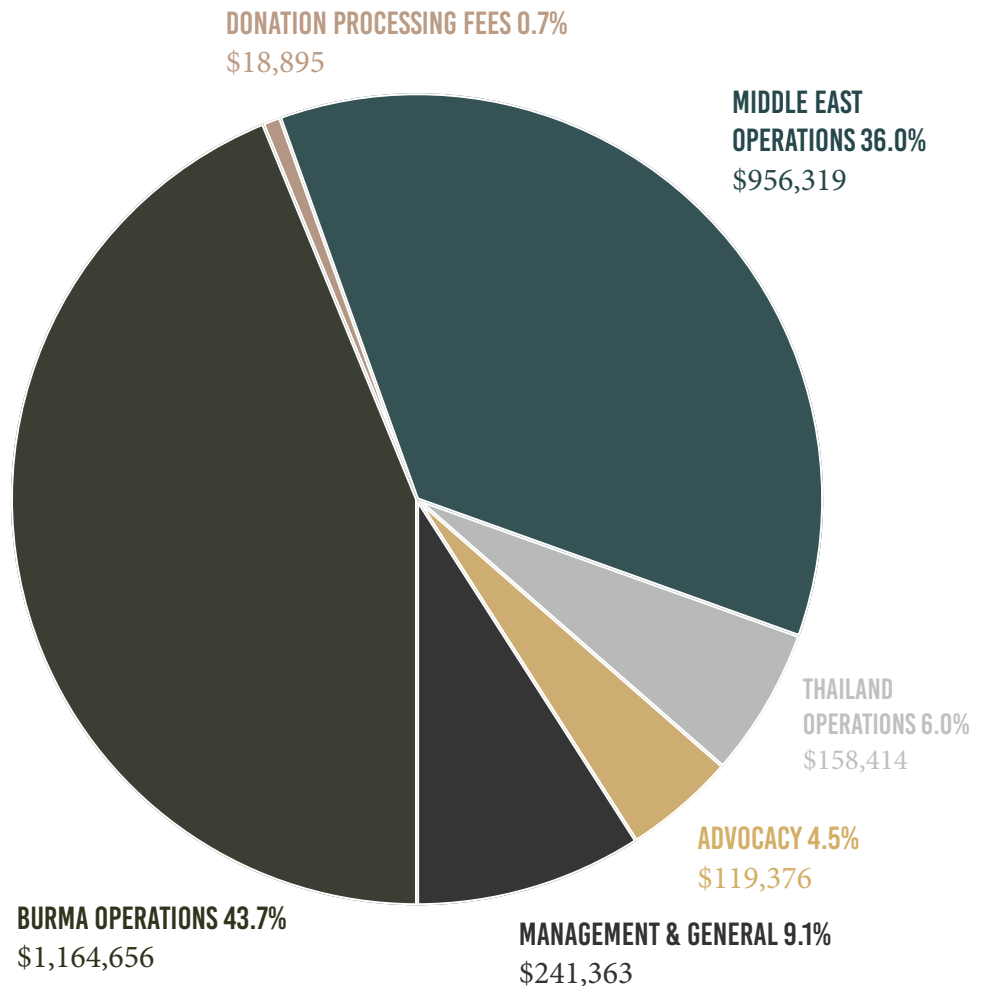
**2019 REVENUE: \$2,647,412**

**2019 EXPENSES: \$2,659,023**

FBR is funded by donations from individuals, churches, and other organizations from around the world. We are encouraged by and grateful for all of those who give to support the work of FBR.

FBR is registered in the United States as a 501(c)3 organization called Free the Oppressed (FTO). FTO is inspired by the words of Jesus in Luke 4:18-19: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

FBR uses Thai Baht, Iraqi Dinar, Myanmar Kyat, Syrian Pounds, and U.S. Dollar (USD) currencies in its operations. The numbers here reflect the totals in USD using the actual or average conversion rate of each currency.



**Free the Oppressed also participates in several matching programs including:**

1. **smile.amazon.com** (donates 0.5% of your purchases when you shop using this website and designate Free the Oppressed as your charity)
2. **www.benevity.com** (used by hundreds of companies such as ADP, Apple, Google, Microsoft, etc. for employee matching)
3. **www.cybergrants.com** (also used by hundreds of companies such as Caterpillar, Nike, Nordstrom, Walmart, etc. for employee matching)
4. **www.yourcause.com** (another used by hundreds of companies such as ATT, Dell, AMD, Chevron, Nvidia, Samsung, Best Buy, etc. for employee matching)



Free Burma Rangers is approved as a charity to receive donations from federal employees through the Combined Federal Campaign. See more at [cfcgiving.opm.gov](http://cfcgiving.opm.gov), CFC# 40763.



Free the Oppressed DBA Free Burma Rangers has earned a Gold star seal of transparency from Guidestar.org. Please see more at [www.guidestar.org/profile/47-4648581](http://www.guidestar.org/profile/47-4648581).

# IN MEMORIAM

## ZAU SENG

On Nov. 2, during attacks by the Turkish and their proxy forces, our team rescued three people from Qasmia Village area (about four kilometers northeast of Tel Tamr) and Zau Seng was there filming it all. The next day, we rescued two more people, sent them out of the area, and kept moving our location. Zau Seng was there with us on Nov. 3, editing the footage from Nov. 2 before and after the rescues. He finished the footage just before we were hit at 2:28 p.m.

Zau died instantly in the hit, even though we did everything we could to save him. We are not sure if it was a drone or mortar that hit us.

Back in March of this year, Zau Seng shared with one of our team that he wanted to continue to go to the Middle East when given the chance because “there are still constant battles so the civilians have to constantly flee. When they flee to us, we, the FBR, give them medical care and distribute food. I still want to

go back and do those things, and at the same time, record and report the situation.”

### “I WANT TO GO BACK AND HELP UNTIL IT IS FINISHED...”

*The main thing I would like to say is that I am able to go and help because of God,” he said. “I can’t do much but I am able to report what is happening there. Now, in Iraq and Syria, I am able to go and help and I am thankful for that opportunity. [Sometimes] I feel sad, [because] I don’t know what to do. The one thing I know as a cameraman is to report what is happening here and report to the world.”*

Always ready to go and film wherever attacks were happening, Zau Seng filmed a lot over his 13 years as a Ranger. He filmed Burma Army airstrikes against civilians. He filmed



on the streets of Mosul during ISIS’s final days there. And he filmed in Syria, showing the world that there has been no ceasefire and the cost of fighting to the civilians who have fled this area.

Zau, we are continuing on in your honor and memory. We will continue to get the news out from here. We will continue to love and laugh as best we can and we will take care of your family.



### SAI LAO, 20, DIED 29 JAN. 2019, IN LASHIO, SHAN STATE, AT YU LE KHA HOSPITAL.

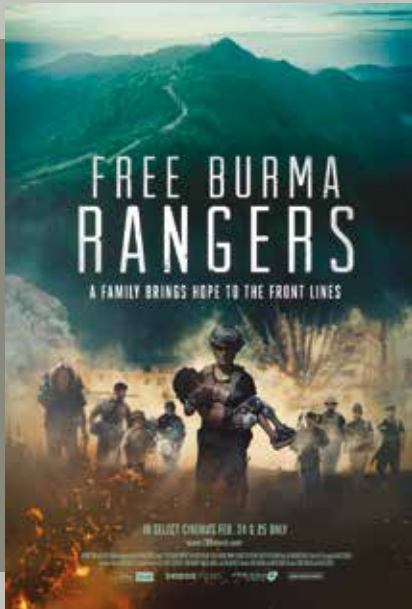
Sai Lao had just graduated from Basic Ranger Training in Dec. 2018 and began to show signs of an illness while on a Karen State mission just after graduation. The Rangers who worked with Sai Lao said, “He was well-known to put a smile on other

peoples’ faces. He practiced generosity and love to everyone he came in contact with. When he was in pain or wronged by others he never complained but continued with happiness.”



### MR. NEMA, A CHIN RANGER, DIED ON 11 JAN. 2019 AFTER SUSTAINING FATAL INJURIES IN A MOTORBIKE ACCIDENT IN KALAY MYO, CHIN STATE.

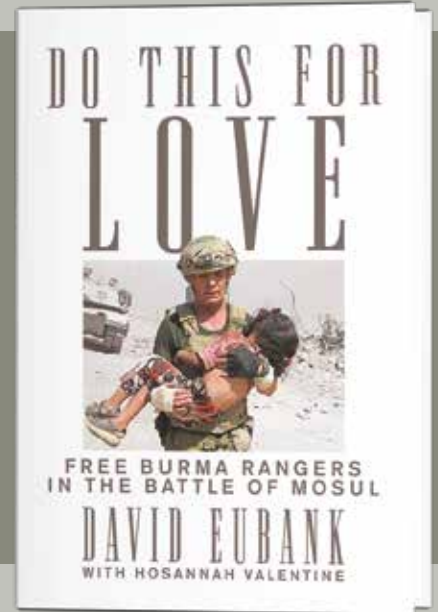
Mr. Nema joined FBR in 2010 and was in charge of communications over numerous missions in Chin State. Mr. Nema continued to fight for a better life for his people until the day he died. He is survived by his wife and three children.



# NEW WAYS TO LEARN ABOUT FBR

**DOCUMENTARY**  
FOR MORE INFORMATION & TO PURCHASE, VISIT: [FBRMOVIE.COM](http://FBRMOVIE.COM)

**BOOK**  
AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE ON **AMAZON**



## ORGANIZE A RUN FOR RELIEF FOR BURMA

Races have been held in 21 different locations, in six different countries, on three continents. Offshoot events include a ski-for-relief and a climb-for-relief. Email [info@freeburmarangers.org](mailto:info@freeburmarangers.org) for more information.

## PRAY FOR THE PEOPLE OF BURMA

Join in the Global Day of Prayer for Burma with churches and individuals from 56 countries on six continents to pray for the people of Burma every year on the second Sunday of March. For more information or to order a Day of Prayer magazine, email: [info@prayforburma.org](mailto:info@prayforburma.org)

## DONATE YOUR TIME OR SPONSOR A RELIEF TEAM

It costs approximately \$6,200 to train and equip one team of Rangers. Each training is completed with the help of volunteers at the home office.

## LEARN MORE AND BECOME AN ADVOCATE

Advocate in your school, workplace or church, and with your government. Follow FBR on social media for reports and updates from the field. Request more information and resources at: [www.freeburmarangers.org](http://www.freeburmarangers.org)

**TO GIVE A FINANCIAL GIFT, PLEASE SEND YOUR CHECK, MADE PAYABLE TO FREE THE OPPRESSED, TO THE ADDRESS BELOW. OUR EIN IS 47-4648581. ONLINE DONATIONS CAN BE MADE AT [WWW.FREEBURMARANGERS.ORG](http://WWW.FREEBURMARANGERS.ORG).**



### Mailing Address:

Free the Oppressed  
PO Box 912938  
Denver, CO 80291-2938

### Contact us by email at:

[info@freeburmarangers.org](mailto:info@freeburmarangers.org)


For more information visit us online:


[www.freeburmarangers.org](http://www.freeburmarangers.org)

**THE FREE BURMA RANGERS (FBR)** is a multi-ethnic humanitarian service movement. Ethnic pro-democracy groups send teams to FBR to be trained, supplied and sent into areas under attack or in crisis to provide emergency medical care, shelter, food, clothing and human rights documentation. In addition to relief and reporting, other results of the teams' actions are the development of leadership capacity, civil society and the strengthening of inter-ethnic unity. Rangers are volunteers. They choose to work for freedom for all people of Burma, working for spiritual freedom first, to lay the foundation for political and physical freedom. **They go towards the attack to help people and they cannot run away if the people they are helping cannot escape.**

**FOR RECENT NEWS AND REPORTS, FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA:**

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